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BEULAH LAND

by Rev. Mr. Beverly Carradine

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BEULAH LAND

BY

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CHAPTER 1

THE COUNTRY OF PROMISE

It has pleased God to take three countries, and make them represent as many distinct states of the soul: Egypt, standing for the life of sin; the wilderness, illustrating, in the wandering of the Jews through its boundaries, that spiritual condition which is certain to result to the Christian who led up to his Kadesh Barnea refuses to go over into the fullness of salvation; while Canaan, with its “green fields beyond the swelling flood,” is made to typify the blessed experience and life of holiness.

This same Canaan is called by Isaiah the Land of Beulah. To this beautiful and fertile region the Jews were led from Egypt that they might possess and enjoy it as an abiding inheritance. They were conducted forth that they might be brought in. This was promised them even before they crossed the Red Sea. The land was described to the people in the following striking word picture: “The Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths, that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil, olive, and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.”

This was the country that filled their minds and drew their hearts as they plodded through the burning sands of Arabia. This was the land that Moses viewed from the summit of Mount Pisgah, and felt his soul swell with unutterable emotions as he beheld in the softened distance the vineclad hills, the fields covered with waving harvests, while ranges of blue mountains against the remote horizon shut from the vision still greater reaches and stretches of material loveliness and wealth. Studded with walled cities for its protection, enriched with precious metals, beautiful with variety and profusion of fruits and flowers, a land flowing with milk and honey, — no wonder the country fascinated the eye, moved the

spirit and drew the plodding feet in that direction. To be shut out of such a delectable region was a sorrow and calamity indeed.

The day came when after forty years of wandering in the desert the people of God beheld outstretched before them the land of promise. As one of the grand old hymns has pictured the scene,

*“Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood
Stand dressed in living green;
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
While Jordan rolled between.”*

All this was a type of a spiritual experience and life which God has for his children. It constitutes the great topic of the Bible. It is the great work of God for, and in man. It is the thrilling promise of heaven to the wearied journeyer on earth. The Creator’s image restored to the creature. The heart purified and filled with perfect love. Unbroken communion with Christ established. God dwelling in us evermore. The Shekinah in the temple. The Holy Spirit flaming in the soul.

It is for this that we are brought out of an Egypt of sin to be led into a Canaan life of spiritual rest and plenty. Filled with an inheritance of good, the heart laughs, the spirit flourishes, the face shines, the head is lifted above all our enemies, and none can make afraid.

In a most blessed sense we lie down in quietness, and go forth in security. We dwell under our own vine and fig tree, eat the good of the land, obtain the desires of our heart, and walk in perfect peace and bliss with the King of the country.

The facts of the past are a jet black conviction, a blood red justification, a sky blue conversion and a snow white sanctification. The individual has certainly something to be glad over and talk about.

The facts of the present are that the blood of Christ has cleansed him from all sin; perfect love like a lump of golden honey drips with a steady sweetness through a nature purified and clear as transparent glass. By actual experience he has got to understand the symbolism of the white robe, the crown of joy, the tuneful harp, the palm branch of victory and the crystal sea mingled with fire upon which the harpers stood.

The soul has become calm in the midst of life's storms. With a serene brow the victor passes through the agitations and commotions of earth. His treasure is on high. He dwells in the secret place of the Almighty, and finds himself hidden from the strife, pride and wrath of man. He has a table prepared for him in the presence of his enemies, his head is anointed, his cup filled and overflowing and he knows he will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

In a word, he has come into the rest prepared for the people of God. He has crossed the river Jordan and entered Canaan. He has reached the Land of Beulah.

We all remember in the days of childhood and youth, how the sight of a remote line of hills and mountains, or the white clouds resting on the horizon, or a broad river winding its way in the distance, or the ocean and sky meeting far away, would fill and thrill the heart with unutterable and indescribable longings. The nearest explanation, or interpretation of the wishful feeling was, that over the purple mountain, or down the river, or across the sea, there was something that could we obtain, or somebody that could we see or know, would bring rest and contentment to the unsatisfied spirit, and we would be happy and blessed for life.

Many of us sailed over the ocean, crossed the hills and went to the end of the river; but we never found what we wanted and needed. We turned hither and thither, trying again and again to secure in place and circumstance what can only be realized in spiritual condition and character.

We do not doubt today with the knowledge that has come from the flight of years, that this very heart discontent and inward sigh for something without and beyond, was the soul's craving for the true rest, for the life in the Land of Beulah.

It is wonderful what simple things would arouse and intensify this longing. Chords of music heard faintly in a drowsy summer afternoon, the voice of some one singing in the distance, the sound of a far away church bell, or the sight of a peaceful sunset, were sufficient to fill the eyes with tears, and the soul with sighing and longing for something or somewhat that we did not possess and without which we felt desolate and bereaved indeed.

Happy the man who will understand correctly his spirit hunger, recognize his real need and obtain the true relief.

Blessed is the man who discovers that it is not a material but a spiritual something he wants; not an earthly circumstance but a heavenly condition; not a terrestrial friendship but a divine love; not this man or that woman, but the indwelling Christ; not a ranch or estate, but a home and broad possession in the Land of Beulah.

In the enjoyment of holiness we thus spend our days in a country “Where the flowers bloom forever and the sun is always bright.” Here we walk and talk with God, and can easily understand how Enoch did the same thing without a break for three hundred and sixty years. Here the messenger from the skies will at last find us, and with a smile and shout we will go up from a heavenly life to a heavenly world, from the kingdom of grace to the kingdom of glory.

We append as a conclusion to this chapter a poem about Beulah Land, written by that most gifted author of spiritual hymns and songs, Mrs. Mamie P. Ferguson, of Los Angeles, Cal.

No Land Like Beulah.

*“No fetters gall in Beulah land,
The curse of sin is lifted;
The Savior’s fan is in his hand,
And chaff from wheat is sifted.*

*The inward war is ended here,
And perfect love has cast out fear,
The clouds are gone, the sky is clear,
There is no land like Beulah Land.*

*“There is no drouth in Beulah Land,
‘Tis full of brooks and fountains,
With living springs on every hand,
In valleys and on mountains;*

*No famine gaunt nor scarceness there,
The bread of life is everywhere
And all its plenty we may share,
There is no land like Beulah Land.*

*“There is no night in Beulah Land,
Our sun shall know no setting;
In God’s own light our souls shall stand,
Their mourning days forgetting;*

*To all around they love to tell,
I’m glad I came and I may dwell,
My Jesus hath done all things well.
There is no land like Beulah Land.
“There’s lovely fruit in Beulah Land,*

*And olive oil and honey,
With wine and milk on every hand
We buy them without money.
The winter’s past of gloom and care,*

*The spring has come with flowers so fair,
The song of birds fills all the air,
There is no land like Beulah Land.
“There’s wondrous rest in Beulah Land,*

*The days on earth of heaven;
A peace that none can understand
Until to them ‘tis given.
The cleansing blood has been applied,*

*The root of sin has been destroyed,
Within the Holy Three abide,
There is no land like Beulah Land.
“The Lord has called it Beulah Land,*

*Because that land is married;
His bride the Pentecostal band,
In upper room that tarried,
His blood has washed them white as snow,*

*The fire has set their hearts aglow,
To all the world their heralds go,
There is no land like Beulah Land.”*

CHAPTER 2

THE STONES OF JORDAN

In the crossing of the Red sea, and later in that of the river Jordan, in both instances the water was divided by the power of God in behalf of the Israelites. There was this difference in the Jordan miracle, that before the waves opened, the command was to put the foot in the river. This was done before there was any cleaving asunder of the flood.

It is to be observed that no such thing was required or took place at the Red sea; and from this significant difference is brought out the fact that God expects a larger faith at sanctification than at our justification.

We are persuaded that the reason many do not enter into Beulah Land is that they are seeking admission with the same degree of faith which they exercised when asking for pardon and salvation. This measure of faith is insufficient and unacceptable to heaven, if for no other reason than that we have known the Lord longer and should have a greater confidence, and trust him more implicitly, profoundly and unquestioningly.

In addition to dividing the waves, God commanded that twelve stones should be placed in the bed of the river Jordan for his priests to stand upon. They were not to tramp on mud and ooze, but rest on something solid.

As stone is one of the figures in the Bible symbolizing divine truth, the circumstance of the twelve rocks is a striking type lesson to the effect that when we would go over into Canaan or the life of holiness, we are upheld by the word of God. We cross resting upon and sustained by the promises of God.

The prayer of Christ in the ~~eight~~ seventeenth chapter of John for his disciples and those to come after, was, "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth." In perfect agreement and fulfillment of this petition of the Savior, we have observed that all who obtain heart purity or enter Beulah Land do so from hearing, believing, and resting all upon the word of God. As the

statements of Scripture relative to the work of grace are heard, faith is naturally aroused, increased, perfected, until suddenly the seeker steps out on the promise, gets under the blood, and the wonderful, beautiful, satisfying blessing come sweeping into the soul.

We knew one preacher to offer another the following verses of the Word for his consideration and use. The first was, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification."

His question to his friend was, "Can you believe that?"

The reply was, "Certainly."

The next verse or stone was, "Every devoted thing is most holy unto the Lord."

The queries were, "Do you believe that?" and, "Are you devoted to God now?" The answers given in a steady voice were, "I do," and, "I am."

The third Bible stone put before him was, "The altar sanctifieth the gift."

This was followed by the explanation that Christ was the altar; that every one entirely given up and consecrated to God was the gift; that his consecration was not God's sanctification; but if he held steady the heavenly fire would fall from the skies upon the devoted, yielding trusting soul, and faith would be turned into rapturous knowledge. Then came the question, "Do you take hold of these things?" and the response was, "I see it and do."

The fourth Scripture rock was, "If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Here the attention of the preacher was called to the fact that the blood cleansed from all sin, inherited, as well as personal. That the word was "sin," and not sins; and that the cleansing referred to came to one walking in the light and having fellowship with God, showing clearly the second and deeper work of grace as held up in the doctrine of sanctification. The answer was, "I see and believe." And by this time the man was almost across the Jordan.

But his instructor had a fifth Bible stone for him to stand upon. It was, “Whatsoever things ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.”

At this point, the spiritual Philip, or Ananias, turning a face full of tender interest upon his friend said, “You know what you desire, and you have been praying for it. Now here is the plain statement of God himself that if you believe that you receive you shall have what you crave. What will you do now? What more of his Word do you want?”

And the man he had helped exclaimed, “I need no more.” And with his spirit filled with prayer, his heart bounding with expectation, he took a final leap of faith from the fifth stone, and landed clear on the Canaan shore, laughing, crying and shouting, “I am over!”

Until that moment he never knew the full meaning, bliss and blessedness bound up in the little chorus,

*“I’m over, yes over,
On Canaan’s shore I stand;
I’m over, yes over,
In the Promised Land.”*

The writer knew of another instance still more remarkable, where a noble young Christian woman went over into Beulah Land on three stones of verses in the Word of God.

We give the passages of Scripture in the order that the Holy Spirit presented them to her mind.

The first verse was, ^{<4521>}Romans 12:1, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

The woman lifted up her eyes and said, “I will.”

Then as distinctly and powerfully impressed upon her was another verse. This time it was ^{<4009>}1 Peter 4:19.

“Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing as unto a faithful Creator.”

The fervent reply of her soul and lip was, “I will do that also.”

Then came a third Scripture, ⁵¹²2 Timothy 1:12.

“For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”

When with a thrilling cry, “I do believe,” the woman suddenly found herself with happy tears and holy, joyous laughter, in the Land of Beulah.

We know of a third case, where the individual crossed over on a single stone. He found the rock in ⁵¹⁴1 Thessalonians 5:24: “Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.”

And thus abound passages of Scripture which the Holy Ghost has used to vitalize the faith and further the effort of God’s people to go over into the good land or life, “Where the flowers bloom forever, and the sun is always bright.”

The Bible tells us that after the children of Israel had gone over, God commanded that the twelve stones should be taken up, piled on the bank and later set up in Gilgal as a memorial of the great occurrence of that day. God also commanded that when their children should ask their fathers in time to come, “What mean these stones?” they were to reply, “Israel came over this Jordan on dry land.” The very sight of these stones in after days when hardships and difficulties arose would be an inspiration and blessing to the people. It would recall the divine faithfulness and deliverance, and be equal in its comfort and power to an attendance upon a great campmeeting.

We love every verse of the holy Word, but those passages that were instrumental in bringing us over into Beulah Land have a peculiar attractiveness and preciousness to us. We never meet them in our reading, but the heart warms at the sight.

We have, so to speak, piled them up on the Canaan shore; and when we are smitten by the hand of false friend and implacable foe, when opposition is intense, and the unbelief of church or community is great and trying, we go down and take another look at the living stones we used in crossing over into Beulah Land. And, behold, every time, our soul is refreshed, our faith strengthened, and the happy swelling heart cries out,

“Hallelujah!” We call the place Ebenezer. The meaning of the words is,
“Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.”

*“Here I’ll raise my Ebenezer,
Hither by thy help I’m come,
And I hope by thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home.”*

CHAPTER 3

“A LAND OF CORN AND WINE”

The caption of this chapter is one of the Bible descriptions of the Land of Canaan. It is a word picture of striking loveliness, and we find ourselves gazing through the sentence at a landscape perhaps as fair and bewildering as that which Moses looked upon enthralled as he sat alone on the top of the mountain.

The first suggestion made by the word painting, “a land of corn and wine,” is that of beauty. Truly, if a man could contemplate a broad country with hillsides crowned with vineyards, and wide plains covered with corn that rippled before the eyes like an inland sea, and behold it with undelighted vision, he would be a being whose perception of form, color, lines of grace and loveliness itself had perished by the way; if indeed it had ever existed. To such a person there is nothing in a gold and scarlet sunset; nothing in a starlighted prairie; and nothing in an outspread ocean whose every rolling billow is crested with the silver glory of a full moon. A traveler in Palestine sat on his horse at the summit of a hill, and looked upon a broad valley four or five miles in width, over fifteen in length, and that was covered with an unbroken field of wheat. As it stretched away in the dim distance it reminded him of an emerald ocean asleep. Suddenly as he was gazing with a fascinated eye upon it, the evening wind sprang up and turned the surface first into ripples, and then into waves of green that ran in every direction. Finally forming in long regular billows they rolled up the sloping hill on the brow of which he stood, and broke at his feet, a beautiful but noiseless surf upon a silent shore. Here was beauty in full exuberant measure indeed in the vision of a sea of corn set in delightful motion by a breeze from heaven.

In like manner the blessing of holiness or full salvation is full of beauty. Its language is pure, its conduct is upright, its pleasures elevating, its pursuits noble, and the whole life full of spiritual loveliness.

There is such a thing as physical comeliness, but there is also such a thing as moral loveliness. Then there are higher grades and types of this last mentioned excellence, as perfect love is more attractive than love, and perfect peace more beautiful to the sight than a calm that is superficial and only temporary.

The Bible speaks of the beauty of holiness, and it is so true that we have beheld such a soul state, and godly life transfigure and glorify a naturally homely face and uncouth figure.

In an early pastorate of the writer, there was a young woman who, judged by the physical standards, was faultless in a comparative sense. But her soul had never been awakened. The face was that of a cold, haughty, repellent woman of the world. One would almost as soon thought of entwining his affections around a marble statue gleaming in the moonlight, as to cherish a warm, glowing love for this ice and stony-natured handsome female.

In the same town was a woman with neither face nor figure to speak of save that the first was exceedingly homely, and the second most ordinary and unattractive. But she was a holy woman, filled with the Holy Ghost. Her face fairly shone with the light of full salvation which she enjoyed. Her eyes would fill in an instant at a history of sorrow and wrong; her tongue was the kindest in the community; her feet were the first at the bedside of the sick and troubled; and her hand did a thousand acts of kindness which drew as many hearts and lives to her.

If a young man came to the town, lonely, friendless and far away from loved ones; she would somehow find it out, and become in quiet, faithful Christian ways a sister and mother. Her Sunday-school class doubled and trebled continually. The poor rose up before her and called her blessed. A number of times we have seen her go down the street, and have heard men say as she passed with her illumined face, "God bless her." More than once we have seen tears in their eyes, and heard a choking sound in their throats. And we do not doubt that if the vote had been put to the great body of them as to who was the most beautiful woman in town, the society queen we have described, or this daughter of heaven, they would have elected with an overwhelming majority this gentle-hearted follower of

Christ. She was lovely in life, and this with the beautiful spirit within, made her actually lovely in face.

No land of waving green harvests, and blushing vineyards was ever as fair to the eye, as the countenance, character and life of one who is purified by the blood of Christ, filled with the Spirit and dwelling happily and contentedly in Beulah Land.

A second teaching of the words, "A land of corn and wine," is that of abundance.

No sight of corn cribs fairly bursting with the stored yellow grain, or long rows of golden shocks and stacks lining the fields, is more suggestive of plentifulness than the striking sentence a land of corn and wine. There can be no lack of bread in such a country, and leanness, weakness, and starvation should be unknown. "Bread and to spare" could easily be one of the set speeches of the inhabitants in welcoming visitors and purchasers.

Even more truly and remarkably is the Canaan life one of spiritual plenty. The genuinely sanctified man has no lack. The soul is continually fed and satisfied. The cup runs over. The head is anointed. He eats at a full table not only when alone, and on the street, and in the great congregation, but in the presence of his enemies.

Spiritual famine is gone. The cribs and barns are full. He has corn to give away. People are welcome to come with their sacks, he will fill them and put a silver cup in the bag on top of it all.

Such a soul cannot be starved out by ceremonies, ritualism and dry preaching. The manna has been carried in behind the veil, put in the golden pot and is sweet and ready for use all the time. The garden is watered in time of drouth; the palm tree flourishes in a desert; the cedar waves on top of a rocky Lebanon.

A third feature of the Canaan life bound up in the caption of the article is that of gladness.

The Scripture says, "And wine that cheereth the heart of man." In other words, the Holy Ghost takes the stimulating, exhilarating, warming effect of wine to describe the rich and overflowing gladness of the sanctified life. The very transport of the spirit, the abiding quality of a joy that is pure,

unselfish, noble and heavenly, is bound to excite attention, and hold the gaze with a fascinated approval.

A fourth meaning buried in the words is the evenly and properly balanced life, suggested in the verbal combination “corn and wine.” It is most blessed and profitable to have both in the soul and in the life.

Some Christians have strength and force as typified in the first word, but lack what is breathed in the second. They have character, but no glow; principle but no warmth. Truth and uprightness are seen in every line of their existence, but their face never lights up, their lips never respond to burning gospel messages, they never seem to realize or exhibit a rush of feeling from heaven to the soul, or from the soul to the eye and the tongue. They somehow chill you with all their strength and steadfastness. They have corn, but no wine. And one could but wish that a dash of the heavenly intoxication would come upon them at least once in a while.

There are other Christians who seem to have the wine, but not the corn. They overflow and bubble and laugh and shout at a moment’s warning, but they also lack in the strength, power, steadiness and endurance which belongs to the Christian character. They have an abundance of feeling, but often lack principle. They get happy, but cannot bear contradiction and persecution. They have ecstasies but, also bear grudges. They shout, but also scold. They see visions, but likewise behold motes, beams, rafters, scantlings and whole sides of houses in their brothers’ eyes. They abound in the wine of jubilation, but are woefully lacking in the corn, or strength, faithfulness and steadfastness of the Christian life.

Blessed is the man who possesses the corn and wine combination; who has character and emotion, principle and feeling, can pray and pay, glow and grow, shout as loud as God wants him, and yet live a life fully and truly up to the measure of his loudest shout.

And happy the church and community who have in their midst a people of God who are so genuinely and symmetrically redeemed, so fully and completely saved, that the contemplation of their consistent and beautiful lives is as pleasant and delightful to the spiritual vision, and even more so, than a view of a wide landscape awash with green corn, and adorned with vineyards loaded down with red and purple grapes.

*“I am walking today in the sweet Beulah Land;
I have crossed to the sunny side,
I am washed in the blood, and my soul is made white,
And I know I am sanctified.*

*I am now going on to explore Beulah Land,
‘Tis the gift of my Lord to me;
I am tasting its joys, I am walking in light,
And the face of my Savior I see.”*

CHAPTER 4

“HONEY OUT OF THE ROCK”

It is the mission and work of salvation to put a final end to every kind of evil and iniquity. It is the province of sin to destroy all goodness. It is the mistake of ignorance and fanaticism to advance some single Christian virtue or moral excellence at the expense of other spiritual qualities and attributes. The result is easily recognized and well known in the character and religious world as a moral monomaniac or veritable crank.

Starting out to be straight on one line, these individuals actually bend in their uprightness and are seen to be crooked another way. Refusing to compromise, which is all right, they become intolerant, which is all wrong. Passing from self-denial and proper self-restraint they become ascetics and monks. Avoiding lightness and frivolity they land in the middle of an Egyptian gloom of spirit and darkness of countenance. Protesting against popery in the churches, they themselves become popes. Entering upon the unpleasant task of reprovers, they end in being habitual faultfinders, and first-class scolds.

Such people seem to be profoundly ignorant of the beauty and power of character symmetry. Straight lines and angles, and not a curve or circle is to be seen in all the geometry of their religious experience and life. They abound in bayonets and cannon, but possess neither liniments nor splints and have not a single litter or ambulance in their train.

In vain for these personages, have noble and beautiful characters lived, illustrating the fact that

*“The bravest are the tenderest,
The loving are the daring.”*

In vain for them is recorded the fact that the most courageous and self-possessed man in a shipwreck after a six weeks' storm, was the same person who wrote the ~~fourth~~ thirteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians. In vain for them Christ has lived on earth, showing that all the graces and virtues can

reside in the same breast, and be carried about in the same human form; that it is possible to be absolutely fearless in heart, and yet perfectly lovely in character; to be sweet as honey in spirit, and yet firm as a granite rock in principle.

There are people who enter upon the Canaan life and make the same mistake that is mentioned above. The possibility of possessing the complete family circle of Christian graces seems to have escaped their conception, desire and effort in life. They adopt one virtue and raise it, sparing no pains in its education and development, and yet allow all other spiritual excellences to be neglected, and even to starve and perish in sight of their plump and rubicund brother.

The Bible has plainly stated that there should be honey in Canaan, but inspiration adds the words, "Honey out of the rock."

The significance of this expression, the great truth brought out in the combination of the two words, honey and rock, appears to have escaped the entire class and tribe of whom we are writing.

It seems that with the strange perversity and one-sidedness already mentioned, some people get their eyes on one word and some on the other, and thereupon follow after their choice to the complete forgetfulness and exclusion of the other. Of course havoc is made with the intended junction of different qualities, and God's plan is defeated in the case of the extremist. A melancholy divorce is observed where heaven proposed a beautiful wedlock, and confusion and harm are bound to follow.

Some make Canaan to be all rock.

It is a sorrowful fact that we have in our midst people claiming the blessing of perfect love or sanctification, who do not seem to have a drop of honey in all their composition. They are exclusively in the rock business. Every time we see them they are throwing missiles at some one. Every time we hear from them they have been pelting somebody. Every time they put pen to paper, or type in print, or move tongue in pulpit or from platform, it is to stab, cut, skin, knock down, drag out, and generally belabor everything and everybody in sight, and especially those who do not agree and follow with them in all they say and do. David used a sling, they manage catapults. The young shepherd had five stones in his scrip,

they carry a million. They constitute with their multitudinous rocks the Meteoric Belt of the ecclesiastical sky. Shimei throwing rocks at the king of Israel is their pattern saint, and a raging volcano their mount of worship.

Who has not seen this kind of people. They act as if they would get into condemnation if they were kind, gentle and loving. They propose evidently to save men by putting them up in vinegar, and to get converts by knocking conviction into them with personal abuse, and win them to God and duty by flaying them alive.

On the other hand there are people who seem to think that Canaan is all honey.

According to the idea of this class they would have the Scripture teaching to be that one was fairly swallowed up and buried in honey. Applying their misconceptions of holiness and perfect love to life they would have everybody who professes the blessing to live in a candied or sugared state; and nothing but sugar or candy.

With them everything is all right. They believe in endorsing, and rubbing down, and patting, and smoothing everything that is taught in the name of religion, no matter how false the doctrine, and dangerous and misleading the error.

Perfect love with them is to smile and bubble and gush over every teacher and teaching, whether they come from Shiloh Maine, Boston Mass., Chicago, Illinois, or from the Pit itself.

They think it is a complete violation of the law of love to condemn anything or anybody, no matter how faithless and dangerous and false they may be. With them all religions are right, whether they arrive from India, Africa or Utah. Moreover, the false doctrines believed in by different denominations, though they belittle the Holy Spirit and undefine the Son of God, are all to be smoothed with a tender approving touch as becometh their idea of love.

So with this kind of people it does not matter much what is offered the credulity, or faith of the community, it is to be received with warm, loving smiles and entertained with the confidence and honor given to distinguished guests. Therefore, from Unitarianism to Spiritualism all alike

find themselves beamed upon and made to feel at home by this wretched counterfeit of perfect love.

And this very moral fraud, this indiscriminate distribution of attention and favor, reminding one of a harlot, is horribly miscalled love! Instead of faithfulness to God it is unfaithfulness; instead of the perfect love taught by the Word of God it is perfect cowardice, a wholesale compromise and habitual surrender of truth. Instead of Canaan honey, it is Egyptian molasses, with lumps of rotten wilderness manna floating on its surface, and clogging the sickening stuff.

Some years ago there were gathered on a platform on a certain great religious occasion, a number of Christian ministers, Jewish rabbis and East India priests. The two latter made notable speeches in defense of their religions which, if true, robbed our Lord of his superiority and divinity. Men for whom Christ had died on the cross applauded these harangues. Women clapped their gloved hands as they listened to words which dishonored and degraded the Savior who had liberated and uplifted their sex. Christian preachers sat smilingly, and amicably by the side of these heathenish and Christ rejecting orators. The newspapers commenting on the occurrence, said, "What a spectacle of Christian fraternity!" But when we read of the scene we cried out, "What a spectacle of Christian disloyalty!"

We do not believe for a moment that if a woman saw her husband walking arm in arm with a man who was slandering and traducing her character, that she would ever dream of saying, "What a beautiful proof of my husband's love and devotion to me." Rather, she would exclaim, "What a poltroon I have for a husband!"

God's message by his prophet to a king who had made affinity with one of his enemies was, "Do you love them that hate me?"

There is a love which the Almighty extends even to the vilest of sinners; and he commands us to be like him in that respect; but this love is not one of approval and companionship. The platform equality business is nothing but the rankest disloyalty to Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

The Bible insists on the combination, "Honey out of the rock!"

Why will we not be obedient? And why can we not have sense? God has joined the two together, and they cannot be divorced without harm and injury all around.

We live in a world so full of demands on our patience and long-suffering, that to do God's work properly we must be filled with love; but at the same time that very spirit of tenderness must be accompanied with the fixed principles of righteousness. Love must be embodied in truth. The honey must be in the rock.

On the other hand, when we oppose wrong and denounce sin, love and pity must go along with the denunciation and opposition. The rock must be dipped in honey. And as the stone flung by the consecrated hand pierces the head or heart, there should be a certain sweetness felt in the very blow, showing the victim that it was not hurled in hate or anger; that there was a hive of honey near which the rock was quarried.

The Savior possessed the combination in its perfection. Who ever loved like him? And yet who could rebuke equal to him. But even while he condemned and doomed he burst into tears.

Paul had the combination. His epistles are marvels of tenderness, and yet he rebuked Peter to his face, and struck error and false doctrine death-dealing blows whenever he met them.

May we all obtain the beautiful and blessed combination. Not all rock, and not all honey. But honey and rock. Honey in the rock, and rock around the honey. There are few human doorlocks in heart and life that can remain closed before this rare and powerful combination. There are many who have tried one word or way, and still remain shut out. The thing to do is to take another turn, and try the other word in connection with the one already used. We have somehow a little, tender, trembling suspicion that the door will give a delightful kind of shiver and fly open, and the person with the combination will find a loving admittance.

CHAPTER 5

“UNDER HIS VINE AND FIG TREE”

The Scripture expression, “Under his vine and fig tree,” is a picture in itself. The dweller in Canaan is beheld in the six words of the sentence quietly abiding in a home of beauty, comfort and plenty. The brief description is eloquent of peace, prosperity and independence.

One sacred writer uses the words in a prophetic description of the glorious reign of Solomon. A second inspired penman employs the language to show forth the good time coming to God’s people in the age when the gospel shall have universal triumph. The expression is thereby lifted from a merely temporal and material meaning, and made to be resplendent and powerful with a deep spiritual significance.

As thus applied the child of God is seen to have entered a religious experience of a most beautiful satisfying and blessed nature. It is surprising how many gracious facts are brought to the mind by the figure “Under his vine and fig tree.” Not only is beauty here seen, but nourishment, exhilaration, rest and independency.

Among a number of blessed truths taught we select three.

One is the attractiveness of such a life to others.

Any one can see how a barren moor or lonely landscape would be relieved and brightened by the sight of a single home nestling with its gardens and orchards in its midst. And not only would it be a beauty spot, but a drawing power to observers to settle in that neighborhood.

In like manner the Christian abiding continually under the rich foliage of “The True Vine,” and manifestly nourished and gladdened with the fruits and wine of the Canaan life, is a vision bound not only to impress people with its spiritual loveliness, but inspire numbers of observers with longings to live, possess and enjoy what is so evidently the portion of the one looked upon. The man’s unmistakable, soul-tranquility, prosperity,

abundance, satisfaction and independence, is found to awaken the most ardent desires on the part of other Christians to enter upon such an experience, or in other words, settle in such a spiritual country. For just as it is impossible for the homeless individual to behold a beautiful home, without a swell and ache of the heart for a like temporal blessing; so the follower of Christ, and even the man of the world will find it difficult to look upon the fully saved Christian with his restful and abiding experience, without there being heart agitation, soul inspiration, and in many instances life emigration. The sight of that happy-faced dweller under the vine and fig tree is enough to move the coldest and hardest.

A few months since a sanctified woman well known to the writer, attended a prayer meeting in a city church that was as icy as it was stately and colossal. The leader of the meeting, evidently through the leading of the Spirit, allowed a few moments for testimony. Among those who took advantage of it, was the lady just mentioned. With full heart, glowing face and tender utterance, she spoke briefly about the sweet indwelling grace of holiness that God had given her, and then sat down. The acknowledged leading lady member of the church was present and pierced to the heart with the simple scene. As soon as she could get to her room she flung herself down in agony before God and cried with a bitter cry, "Oh, my God, I want that woman's look on my face, and I want what she has in her soul. Oh my God, I must have it!"

And she got it.

Verily there is a power in the mere living under the vine and fig tree. The life may be cast in a barren ecclesiastical moor. The religious landscape may appear lonely. But even if that be so, then all the more striking, beautiful and attractive to people will be the spectacle of that solitary person, sheltered and embowered in grace, with every spiritual want supplied, and flourishing as does the palm tree in the midst of a desert.

A second fact brought out by the figure is that of spiritual independency, or superiority to outward states and circumstances.

There is no doubt but that many Christians are altogether dependent on persons, localities and even conditions for the reception of spiritual benefit. They obtain their food from other hands. Their strength is secured

away from home, and down the road somewhere. They have to take a trip to get blessed. They dwell under other people's vines and fig trees. They do not seem to have any of their own. With them it is to beg, borrow, sponge or die.

Nor is this all; for when this grapeless and figless class go to one whom they depend upon for light and strength, for food and help, the instrument of grace they lean upon must be in a good mental mood and overflowing spiritual state, or he cannot reach their case. If the man happens to be fagged in body, jaded in mind, and not with his usual unction; or if he takes what they think is the wrong text or subject, then in a sense they are outdone and undone. No figs at home, and no figs abroad! It is too bad! Behold starvation is at the door!

Such people seem to know nothing of a grace that makes them independent of person and locality, and most delightfully superior to all kinds of unfavorable surroundings and circumstances.

What a contrast to this class are the people of God who dwell under their own vine and fig tree. They know what it is to continually enjoy the warmth and exhilaration typified by the grape, and possess the nourishment as clearly shadowed by the fig. As an experience it remains. They have an abiding grace; a regular home blessing. Spiritual famine may be around them, but they have constant soul plenty. The sermon to which they listen may be dry, the prayer empty, the hymns unctionless, and the church cold and lifeless, but under their own vine and fig tree they fear and suffer no want. Corn may be lacking in Egypt, but they serve a Joseph who keeps their cribs full. The bread of life may be scarce in many quarters, but they sit down at a table that abounds in good things, which the Lord has spread for them in the presence of their enemies, both from earth and hell.

Walking away once from a church where the preacher in a sky-scraping effort had utterly failed to feed the people, and had also failed to scrape the sky, we were struck with the number of people who vented their disappointment and spleen on the minister and his unfortunate sermon. They had been rung up to a table, and finding nothing to eat felt sore and angry, and took no pains to conceal their displeasure.

Among the crowd were a few who possessed the vine and fig tree experience. They had not suffered like their brethren, for while the preacher was dividing his time between dry bones and some skyrocketes, they had quietly pulled grapes and figs from their own vine and tree, spread a table in the wilderness, so to speak, and had a full meal in spite of the famine in the land. It was also observable that they did not join in the criticism of the man and his failure, but called attention to good things he had said, and to other redeemable features of the hour. As the lamplight fell on their faces here and there on the street, it revealed a light on the countenance that came from another world. There had been no bitter, blinding disappointment to them. Their springs were in God, not in man, and their God had not failed them. They had dined with Christ on the shore. Perhaps their own grapes had never tasted sweeter than when they had to sit for an hour and behold the rocking and swaying of a ministerial tree or vine whose boughs and branches were empty and bare.

Just a thought and a glance then are sufficient to show the excellence and blessedness of an experience which flourishes in a godless community and amid a churchless landscape. A life that cannot be starved by the coldness and deadness of the times and people into a surrender to sin and the world. Garrisoned and provisioned within such a man's flag floats triumphantly from the wall. Dwelling contentedly and joyously under his vine and fig tree, he has a spiritual abundance for himself, and likewise plenty for those well known neighbors, Sister Hungry, and Brothers Beg, Borrow and Steal.

A third teaching of the words, "Under his vine and fig tree," is deliverance from religious trampdom.

We have today in our midst a class of people who could not be described better than by the expression, "Religious tramps." They are always on the move. They are anywhere and everywhere. They bob up here, and pop up there. They attend every meeting or convention, be it far or near. They do not care whether it is orthodox or heterodox, so there is a crowd. Whole truths, half truths or no truth at all is equally acceptable to them. Neither do they care who it is that leads, nor what it is he teaches. It may be truth or falsehood, fact or fancy, wild or tame, fox fire, false fire or simply ire-behold it is all the same to them; they are tramps, and are always ready to swallow anything or everything that comes along.

At one place they receive much illumination on the oyster, at another they get great light on the hog. From a third meeting they come radiant and verbose over the merits of some breakfast food with which they think it is the religious duty of everybody to line and plaster their stomachs. At a later convention they become converted to Postum Coffee and talk more about that than they do salvation. A fifth meeting somewhere makes them "No breakfasters." After that they obtain the key to the book of Leviticus, and finally in a convention led by some long-haired, wild-eyed teacher they become perfectly acquainted with all the beasts and animals that Daniel and John saw, get a whole bunch of keys to the book of Revelation, discover the exact dates of all unborn events of the future, and are virtually hereafter where no practical, thoughtful, sensible person can teach them a single thing. They know it all.

With what relief we look from these nervous roamers and wanderers, these beings who are never rooted and grounded, to the beautiful restful picture of life fixedness, character establishment and soul content so clearly painted in the words, "Under his vine and fig tree."

We devoutly thank God that there is a steadily increasing number of holy people in the land who have become settled and established in grace. They are not to be enticed hither and thither with cries of "Lo here!" and "Lo there!" They are not tossed about with the wind of every new and strange doctrine. They are not man followers, and hero worshipers. They follow Christ.. They worship God.

While they love the regular convocations of the church and holiness cause, and stand for them and with them in purse, prayer and influence, they do not dance attendance on any and every old thing that comes around. Hence it is that while they do not know as much as others about different religious fads, side shows, and general tomfoolery, yet they enjoy holiness, walk with God, enjoy unbroken communion with the Spirit, and are blessings to the church community and family. They are not tramps; but dwell in spiritual gladness and abundance under their own vine and fig tree.

CHAPTER 6

THE VICTORIES OF CANAAN

The triumphs of the Israelites over their enemies after they entered Canaan were of a crescendo nature, They became, as the years went by, more remarkable in character and more wonderful in results.

Their first achievement was the taking of the walled city Jericho. This was a great victory indeed, and has been considered by many careless readers as the greatest, but in reality was one of the lesser triumphs. In this success we notice that it required a siege, thirteen encirclings of the city, while horns and trumpets and shouts were used, and after that the sword and firebrand fell upon the people and the doomed locality. Later than this came another battle where the number of the enemy was vastly greater than the Jericho garrison and where God's people used no weapons, but played on harps and praised the beauty of holiness. The Scripture tells us that a panic broke out in the ranks of the enemy, they commenced beating down one another, a great slaughter and greater defeat ensued, and the Israelites were three days gathering up the spoils.

At another time there was a still more amazing triumph. A vast army confronted them, and judged by earthly and military standards they had no prospect of winning in the approaching conflict. But the victory was even mightier than any that had preceded. For on this occasion they had no weapons, and no harps and singing, and were commanded to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Their deliverance came entirely from the skies and consisted of a perfect storm of rocks and stones rained out of the heavens upon the enemy. The result was an overwhelming defeat and destruction of the foes of Israel.

These different cumulative victories of God's people in Canaan are recorded with a deep spiritual significance. They are rich in suggestion, quickening to faith, and brim full of comfort and strength.

The triumphs that come to us in Beulah Land should be greater as the years roll by and we possess the country. And the spiritual success should come in a double way or two-fold order.

First, as to the number of our troubles or foes. As we advance in the sanctified life, know God and our hearts better, and grow in faith and grace, we ought to be able to withstand and overcome greater numerical odds in the line of temptations, trials and the many besetments of earth and hell. That is, we should march from the triumph over a garrison in town to a greater army in the fields, and then to a still greater one in the hills and mountains beyond.

And true it is, that he who is faithful to the laws of Beulah Land, and the King who reigns there, will discover with unspeakable gladness of heart, that he can stand more buffeting, assaults, ridicule, opposition and downright persecution each subsequent year than he did in the twelve months preceding. Enemies multiply, and influences of evil thicken, and yet he realizes with thrills of inward delight that he stands steadier now with an hundred on his hands than he did in earlier periods with one or two or ten individuals arrayed against him. He has swept not only from grace to grace, and glory to glory, but from power to power and from victories that are great to those that are greater and even greatest, in the matter of numbers against him and the results obtained over all.

The second feature of the increasing triumphs in Beulah Land is seen in the remarkable change of weapons. In the siege of Jericho the implements and instruments used were trumpets, rams' horns, swords, spears, bows and arrows and javelins. In the second battle mentioned in this article the people of God carried harps and went into the fight singing. In another and greater conflict they had nothing in their hands, did not sing nor shout, but stood still and beheld God do the amazing work of scattering and destroying their adversaries.

The lesson in all this is that when we enter into Canaan we are apt to bring with us the weapons used in Egypt and the Wilderness, and rely on the human, the earthly, and above all, the warlike to obtain our victories.

It seems difficult at first to see that witty repartee, stinging rejoinder, debate and controversy are not the best things to sweep all opposition

before us. The idea of many is that a cloud of arrows, a forest of bristling spearheads, a flourish of trumpets, and a whoop and hurrah procession around the walls is the surest and only way to capture the opposition.

Of course there are victories obtained here, but they are not the greatest, nor the best.

As we go farther into Beulah Land and drink deeper of its heavenly spirit, and gather more of its divine wisdom, we begin to drop the javelin and take up the harp which stands for harmony and melody of character and life. The everlasting ego, the constant "I," "I," "I," is dropped, and holiness is lauded. The language becomes one of genuine praise and devout thanksgiving. The whole movement against opposition is changed in spirit and style, and the result, as typified in Scripture, and realized in life, is larger and better every way.

But even this is not all. To abide in Canaan is to grow in grace and knowledge, and gather in the soul and life an ever increasing confidence in God, calmness of spirit, and blessed consciousness of holy power.

So the day comes when with greater forces than ever against us we were never so quiet and full of assurance. So wonderful has the faith become, so perfect is the reliance upon God for deliverance, that the hands are empty, the feet are still and the fully saved man stands without an offensive or defensive movement upon his part, but certain of a perfect victory that is to come sweeping from heaven, for him and upon him. Here is a wonderful change indeed from swords, trumpets, harps, down to empty hands. It means that the soul has learned to rely implicitly and altogether upon God.

We have seen all these grades of spiritual life in Canaan, from the brother with the javelin and trumpet, past the person with the harp and song, down to the man of folded hand, quiet life, upturned face and profound restfulness in God. Some attack and defend with swords, and rely on trumpets and a noisy procession around the walls in face of the enemy. Some though deeper in Canaan than the foregoing trust much to harp and song. But there are others who do not lay hand on a single thing in self defense, be it sword, horn, harp or hymn, but look entirely to God.

The writer is well acquainted with Beulah Land people who never raise their hand or open their lips in attack against their enemies, or in defense

of themselves. Written against, lied about, publicly attacked and privately slandered, they keep quiet in heart, still in lip and leave all with God, who says, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay."

And we have seen them wonderfully delivered and marvelously vindicated. The deliverance was greater than they could have achieved, and the vindication far beyond that which mere human power and good will could have secured.

Nor is this all of the victory taught in the figure of the empty hand. There are some people in Canaan who do not see how a triumph can take place without clashing of swords, and sounding of trumpets. Still others depend on harp and the voice of praise. Unless they feel the instrument is strung up, and they are in the happiest and most jubilant of moods, they do not expect conquest over the hour, circumstance, individual or general opposition.

Deeper in the land are God's people who have learned not only not to rely on means and methods however good, but also not to trust to or lean upon their own moods and feelings. They like the sounding of a tuned harp within, the bubbling spirit of praise overflowing their hearts and lips, but they have discovered they can conquer, even without these. They have often gone into battle without jubilant emotions. Exhaustion had done its work, and there was no particular harp playing or singing. But the tired man or woman of God, the sorely beset and tested follower of Christ, had a sublime and unshaken faith in God, and in reward for such a confidence in such trying circumstances saw the field swept by divine power, and complete victory given to him who stood still and waited for the salvation of the Lord.

A third feature of the victories in Canaan is seen in the character of the deliverance.

At Jericho, a stone wall was knocked down. In the second battle a panic was sent upon an army, and in the third conflict God rained down great stones from heaven upon the hosts that had gathered against his people. This last display of heavenly help far outstripped the second, as the second had gone beyond the first. A quietly beholding body of God's people, a storm of rocks and stones falling out of the skies, and a fleeing,

scattered, overwhelmed and annihilated army of the enemy was the amazing spectacle of that never to be forgotten day. There was even a command to the sun and moon to be stationary until the defeat was complete and irretrievable.

The teaching is that if our protection, rescue, vindication and victory be left entirely with God it is certain to come. There may be no signs of help, nor possibility of assistance from other quarters; but still relief will come. It will fall from the skies. It will be sent from the hands of God himself, and it will accomplish that whereunto it has been sent.

We have known people to deliberately lay a trap for the downfall and undoing of a servant of God, and while they were busy with the mechanism of the instrument of ruin, stones seemed to fall out of the skies on their plotting heads, and ended both their plans and themselves forever.

He that dwells in Beulah Land, if faithful to its King, has nothing to fear from his enemies. One day a sword may be given him for conquest. Another time a harp and song. Then the hour may come that he will have neither. But still, if he is true to God, he need not be one whit alarmed.

Friends may be false; foes numerous and violent; and devils may swoop around him in clouds. Yet in the midst of all this he has but to trust and wait patiently on the Lord. At the very moment that help must come, succor will arrive! It will burst out of the heavens! It will sweep all before it like chaff driven by a storm. It will consume the adversaries, while the astonished suns and moons gazing from mountain tops will forget to go down, in the spectacle of the overthrow of sin, the triumph of truth and the perfect deliverance of the people of God.

CHAPTER 7

A PRINCE WITH GOD

The world's definition of prince is a ruler, chieftain, or sovereign. It means not only rulership, but a certain superiority in a number of respects over the main body of men. As long as person and quality agreed we can see how exalted the name and office was, and how by an easy transition the noun became an adjective and the term princely was used to describe a noble and magnanimous man or act.

Men in this rank have so lived as to degrade the position, and bring into contempt the very word; but we all know what the term originally stood for, and still insist in making the adjective do duty in describing an exalted conduct far above the average in human life.

God called Jacob a prince, and in doing so adhered to the moral quality of the word, or the virtue and character it stood for. So the fact is established we can be princes in the sight of God, be pronounced such in his judgment, and realize as well the blessed reality in our souls.

Of course it should not be expected that God's princes should look like those of earth. It was this wrong idea that caused the Jews to blunder so fatally in their treatment of Christ. He was the chief among ten thousand, therefore altogether lovely, the prince of peace, and the prince of the kings of the earth; but he had not the gaudy trappings of temporal sovereignty upon him, and was rejected for his meek and lowly appearance, and humble surroundings and following. Prophecy had spoken of his crown, scepter, throne, sword, and wonderful conquests, referring to spiritual things; but the Jew construed all literally and materially and so was "offended in him" who was in their judgment without form and comeliness, and slew him on the cross.

The same misjudgment prevails today in regard to those who have been made princes under Christ by the grace and power of God. Men looked for the strut, swagger, swell, arrogance, display, finery and general top lofty

appearance and conduct connected with high rank and position in this world; and lo! all such had been taken out, and instead was a natural, simple, childlike and profoundly humble man, who took no advantage of power; was not puffed up by praise; did not lose his head by success; was perfectly content to be overlooked; and when despised and reviled, like his Lord and exemplar reviled not back again.

Truly God's princes are not like those that men put robes on, bow down to, and almost break their necks after in frenzied efforts to see their faces and touch their hands. On the contrary, we have beheld them arrayed in jeans and calico, penniless in pocketbook, silenced in pew and pulpit, set aside in church council and assembly, and ridiculed and denounced in private letter and printed article of paper.

One of these noblemen of heaven sat in a conference session and heard three excited preachers liken him to the devil; and like his Lord he never opened his lips in reply. We have been present on a number of occasions when we heard princes of God called fanatics, schismatics, church-splitters, deceivers of the people, and devil possessed, and never knew an instance where one of them replied. We have seen men flung from great appointments to a broken-down circuit, and their faces never changed, and their tongues never uttered a murmur. We have heard them called sinners, backsliders and hypocrites, and have yet to hear them deny or reply with tongue from the platform, or with pen in a newspaper, secular or religious.

God's princes are certainly strange beings, and altogether unlike the great ones of this earth, who will take your life if you offend them; while God's man commits all to his Lord, and is silent not so much from force of habit and power of labored self-control, as from the natural, easy working of a royal nature within which was the gift of God and by which he became a prince.

From an ethical, practical and good sense view of the character we are speaking of, such a man cannot be a blusterer. His greatness is within, and will be felt in time so that he is under no need to placard himself and indulge in self-laudation and horn-blowing. Conscious spiritual greatness brings a certain kind of quietness to spirit, manner and life, and makes

morally impossible the fence-top wing-clapping and vociferous crowing of some characters to secure public attention.

Neither can God's prince be an indiscriminate abuser. Christ was a reprover but not a scolder or vilifier. The very mind of Christ dwelling in one, will in its treatment of men, follow lines of love and justice in the midst of faithfulness to truth itself.

When a man stoops to scurrility and billingsgate, he immediately discloses his true nature and character, and neither the most darkened of sinners, or the most illumined of Christians, will ever agree to call such a man a prince with God. Princes do not deal in slime and throw mud. This is left for characters who deal in carnal weapons, or for men of sin and crime who have lost self-respect and are in a morally abandoned condition. It is curious to see who cast mud on Christ, who struck him; and who in later days beslimed and befouled the Wesleys.

If Jacob had thrown a rock at Esau as he crossed the brook, we do not believe God could have called him a prince. And if he had flung a missile at some priest or prophet in the land who was serving God, he certainly could not have kept the title.

Saul hurled a javelin at David, while David, full of grief at such unreasonable hatred, quietly slipped away. Saul was called king by human laws and customs, and David was a stripling from the sheepfold; but the whole world can see that David was the truly royal man, and was the real prince of the two. The judgment of time can be relied on in finding out at last which and where is the prince in the struggles and conflicts that are going on.

Again, the character of a prince precludes the suspecter in nature and practice.

All of us are acquainted with the individual who is perpetually looking out for sin in others. Innocent conversations are misjudged; wrong motives attributed when the heart is clean and right; and foulness suspected where the life is blameless in the sight of God. Such a mental life is bound to affect the face, and by and by the dreadful result is turned out upon society. Mean, low, unworthy thoughts will certainly write themselves

upon facial lines, and the wolf and fox and snake will surely stand before us arrayed in masculine or feminine attire.

A princely nature is an unsuspecting nature, and a princely soul will declare itself in a noble and open face. Clean, kind, loving, unselfish thoughts will leave their unmistakable transcript on forehead, lip, and eye, and be heard ringing in the clear, honest, frank voice.

The prince character also excludes the gossip and tattler from the nature and life.

There are some nations that like tainted meat for food; and some birds devour dead flesh or carrion; and some people who feast on scandal, slander and all histories of uncleanness and impurity. No buzzard ever looked up more expectantly and gladly at the odor of a carcass than do these people at the mere whisper or suspicion of a moral fall in life, or over the details of some unclean transaction,

Some few months ago we saw a man of this stripe approach a preacher with a question and a proffered narration of this order. We will never forget the pained and disgusted look of that minister as he said, "No, sir, I know nothing about it, and I don't wish to know anything about it," He was a prince, lived on royal food, and did not care for carrion.

Finally the nature of a prince prohibits the doing of anything mean, little and contemptible in character.

We all have seen persons who did not scruple to be eavesdroppers, telltales or tattlers and busybodies, spys and gazers in forbidden directions, and systematic and impertinent pryers into the private life of a man and that of his household.

To a prince, any and all of these things are simply moral impossibilities. The very thought is revolting to him. He moves away to keep from hearing confidential talk, a letter does not have to be sealed to preserve it from his eye, a postal card is inviolate to him, and a confidence is sacred forever. A friend may become an enemy, but he never takes advantage of the secrets obtained in happier days to turn them upon a man now become an opponent and adversary. He is a prince and finds it impossible to do a mean, low, unworthy and ignoble thing.

Thank God that in spite of the large number of little-minded, shallow-centered and life-contracted people in the world, the Lord has an ever-growing company of men and women who show in every word and act, and in the whole spirit and bearing of their lives, that they are of royal birth, that they are sons and daughters of a King, and that they are princes in the deepest, truest and best sense of the word.

CHAPTER 8

THE DIVINE WHISPER

It would be very strange indeed, if God in making immortal beings, with everlasting destinies before them of weal or woe, should have failed to endow them with a capacity or faculty of understanding and even of communicating with him. It would have been the most remarkable of oversights, and as we can all readily see, been productive of endless confusion and also of present and eternal disaster.

But there was no such failure in the plan of our creation, and the soul hidden away somewhere in the body, viewless to the eye and defying human hand or weapon or surgical instrument to find and reach, yet can unmistakably hear God's voice, know his will and understand his holy character and commandment more thoroughly and surely than we comprehend and know each other, whom we see with the eye, hear with the ear, and touch with the hand in the most intimate fellowship.

Of course we do not plead for an audible voice, though God can and has thus spoken to men. That day, however, has passed, and we hear now from him with the spirit through his Spirit. The soul has undoubtedly a hearing of its own. This is proved not only by the physically deaf receiving the witness of the Spirit to salvation with tears of grateful joy; but by Christians hearing from heaven in a sermon where the sinner fails to receive a single sentence, word, syllable or even accent of the message. The soul hears and distinguishes the voice of God in a way indescribable and unexplainable, but delightfully feelable and knowable.

All this is very absurd or incredible to the man of the world, and testimonies made in his hearing about such facts and experiences, are full of nonsense to him, and are promptly attributed in his judgment to conceit, delusion, ignorance and fanaticism. The trouble here is not in the truth he criticizes and denies, but resides in himself. He is not spiritually where he can hear the voice of God.

In the old hall of representatives in Washington City, there is a block of marble in the floor on which, if you stand, you can hear your guide whisper on the opposite side of the great chamber fully sixty feet away. The person immediately by your side cannot recognize what is perfectly distinct to you. The condition of receiving the sound is to stand on the block of marble.

Just so there is a place or condition in the spiritual and character world, where we are compelled to be if we would hear the voice of God. Let the vilest sinner who ever lived repent of and forsake his sins and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and instantly he will hear all the way from heaven, and it will be the divine voice that sounds in his soul, speaking pardon, peace and salvation. Let a Christian make a complete consecration and exercise an unquestioning faith in the blood of Christ to sanctify and he will receive another whisper from the skies deeper, sweeter and far more thrilling than the first. It will be to the effect that he has a pure heart, that in the sight of God he is clean. Let this same Spirit-baptized child of God live a life of perfect obedience to heaven, and he will know the bliss and blessedness of unbroken communion with the Lord. The gracious mystery of the divine voice heard speaking from the mercy seat in the sanctuary will be thrillingly fulfilled and understood in his own religious experience. He lives where he can always hear the whisper of God.

We noticed in the representative hall at Washington, that when we got off the marble block in order that our friend could hear what we heard, we at once found ourselves shut out and off from the sound. So we obtained a second lesson from the stone in the floor, viz., that if we would enjoy constant fellowship with God, keep the divine whisper in the soul, we must abide in the obedient life and stand and live on the true Rock.

It needs no argument here, nor proof from the Scripture, nor illustration from life, to show how men who once heard the voice of the Lord, do so these days no longer. God still lives and continues to speak, the voice still sounds, but they are off the Rock, and thus situated they do not and can not hear.

Aside from the positive joy of listening to Christ speak in the soul, there is another feature of the experience to which we call especial attention, and that is its delivering power.

All of us get to places where we seem to be confronted with conflicting duties; where the road forks and we hardly know which branch to take; where a cloud is banked up on the horizon and we know not whether it is a providential or Satanic sign and work; where choices and decisions have to be made, and steps taken, where we cannot rest on human wisdom and take human advice. We must have the divine whisper, the voice of the Lord, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it," or we are uncertain, confused, may make the gravest mistakes and even land in ruin.

These crises come not once nor twice, but many times in the life, and so we must for duty's sake and wisdom's sake, keep the inward voice sounding over the mercy seat or we are undone.

Still graver, both physical and moral perils beset us as we journey down the years. We often have no idea of their location, and many seem to crouch in hiding and wait for our coming.

The divine whisper is our best hope here, and both the Bible and life are full of instances by way of proof or confirmation.

Paul speaks of being hindered by the Spirit from going into a certain region of country. If the unwritten history were known, it would read doubtless that the people there would have put him to death. It is true that the Lord could have raised him from the dead, but God is an economist in the line of physical miracles, for reasons that we need not mention.

In the case of David, we see the hunted man taking refuge in the city of Keilah. Feeling some uncertainty and anxiety about the magnanimity and faithfulness of these people, David went to God and asked, "Will the men of Keilah deliver me into the hand of Saul?" And the Lord said, "They will deliver thee up!" Then David arose and fled. The divine whisper saved him.

In looking at the many deliverances in the man's life at this time, as he was pursued through the country and wilderness like a wild animal, the attentive reader can see throughout that God was the cause and explanation of every escape. One can readily see in his case the necessity of keeping on talking terms with the Almighty.

Very few of us who have followed the Lord in full salvation, but have recognized the strangest and most persistent impressions to leave a place, or to refuse to see a person, or not to take a certain route, or not to accept some kind of invitation.

We could not understand the uneasy pressure upon mind and heart, but the instant we obeyed the voice without waiting to understand, there came an immediate sense of gladness and relief which declared we were walking in the light, and under the smile of heaven.

Who of us have not been suddenly checked in the glow of some occasion, from opening up our hearts and sacred histories of the life to people who were agreeable and seemed all right. Afterwards, with a better knowledge of the parties, we saw that God had saved us again.

A young Christian woman started to entrust a confidence to a man whom she had begun to like. As she commenced, the voice of the Savior whom she loved said as clearly in her heart as uttered speech, "Do not do this thing." In a single hour she saw that Christ had saved her. It was the old whisper repeated, "The men of Keilah will deliver thee up."

A preacher was telling the writer last year a circumstance that had occurred in his state. A very godly woman was entertaining a number of people in her home, when one night, and some time after midnight she aroused her husband and told him something wrong was going on in the house. The husband did not live on the same talking terms with God as did his wife, and said, "O no! Everything is all right." But she insisted, and he arose and descended the stairs to discover that sin was transpiring as she had affirmed.

Elisha lived so that he had the divine whisper in his heart, and also in the ear. The Syrians were amazed that all their well-laid plans of sudden inroads upon Israel seemed to be known beforehand, and caused every expedition to be fruitless. Finally the king of Syria suspected treachery among his servants; but one of them said to him, "None my Lord O king; but Elisha the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speaketh in thy bedchamber." Even the Syrians knew that God talked to Elisha and kept him forewarned and forearmed for everything.

It would have been a sad day for Israel, and a sad day for Elisha himself if he had lost the divine favor and presence, and with it the informing, guiding and delivering voice of God. Both man and country would have been soon ruined.

It will not be less calamitous to us in the present day, if we should lose the divine whisper from the soul.

It would mean that we would be alike helpless before false friends and open foes. That traps would be laid for us and we would walk blindly into them. Peril would be near and we altogether ignorant of its neighborhood. Death imminent, and we dreaming not that our feet were standing on the edge of our own grave.

On the other hand, if we live so that the voice of God is ever heard in the heart, then shall we not only be restful and happy in spirit, but safe in life. The javelin hurled by the hand of an angry Saul will not touch us. The counsel of an Ahithophel will be brought to foolishness, in our behalf. The men of Keilah will discover to their amazement that the man they had determined to ruin was not delivered up to them. And every evil design emanating from the most secret chambers of earthly motive will be exposed and brought to impotency and nothing, because of the declaring, protecting and delivering whisper of God.

CHAPTER 9

THE TRAINING OF FAITH

The importance of faith is seen not only in its being the condition of salvation, but also the measure of salvation. The first exercise of a true faith brings pardon to the man, but a perfected faith leads to the deeper experience of holiness.

This wonderful trust power of the soul is declared to be the victory that overcomes the world; and as the world is always making new attacks, and effecting unexpected combinations against the Christian in his way to heaven, hence the need of an increasing faith.

This is not all that comes to us through believing, for we find that it opens the heart to fresh visions and a deeper knowledge of God. Men of faith know the Lord, but they who possess greater faith are far more profoundly acquainted with him.

Because of these things we can readily see why God is always at work with our faith. Why it is subjected to tests, passed through a rugged discipline and constantly called forth to new and greater efforts.

One mode adopted by the Lord to increase this cardinal virtue, is that of the divine withdrawal or absence from the life. This does not mean that God leaves the soul, but he hides himself as to the plan concerning the individual, and gives no sign of heavenly recognition and deliverance from many of life's difficulties and troubles.

All this is very trying to the man, but at the same, time is a call upon him to believe where he cannot see, and trust God where he cannot understand him.

The development of the body is brought about by demands on bone and muscle to enter upon the field of exercise. The child is taught to walk, gather strength and confidence, by the mother retiring from it and saying,

“Come to me.” Moreover, a child is taught trust in, and obedience to, the parent by the command, “Stay right here until mamma gets back.”

All these natural, simple tests are projected into the life of the child of God for character development on a much grander scale.

All of us ought to be familiar by this time with the orders, “Come to me,” or “Stay here until I return.” We doubt not that the reader knows perfectly well what it is in the divine providence to have the light taken out of the room, to be left in the dark, and to lie listening for days, months and perhaps years to the patter of sorrowful things on the roof. He also knows what it is to see the returning gleam of the candle, hear the step on the staircase of the best friend of the soul, and realize his gracious presence filling and glorifying the life once more. But this is not all; the end of the particular providential discipline found you far mightier in faith than when, for wise reasons, God first allowed the radiance of certain earthly comforts and blessings to be taken away from you and seemed to go with them in a sense for a while, and left you alone in the dark.

What a chance there was for trust in those long, sad hours. What an opportunity for faith, in that weary night of sorrow, when the winds of temptation and adversity swept down upon you and sighed and wailed and died away in solemn murmurs around the eaves and gables of the life.

But how each morning that followed such nights, found the soul stronger and more trustful in God! And so the reason for the long, hard trial was explained.

Again for the training and development of faith, it is necessary for God to draw our eyes upon him for supplies of body as well as soul.

A bank account is a very restful thing to have, but somehow people with large incomes must confess that they cannot pray, “Give me this day my daily bread,” like the one who has to receive it directly from the hand of the Almighty.

There are many Christian workers, and preachers, who, if wealthy, would not have the faith they now possess. Their very riches, with the steady supply of material things, would prevent them from seeing the direct presence and interposing hand of the Lord in their temporal matters.

There are thousands of people today receiving one or two thousand dollars a year. If, instead of coming to them after the angel and raven fashion, it was a regular annual income from United States bonds, their faith would not be the same, but suffer a great falling away and a dropping off. While the believing faculty could, of course, and would be exercised in other directions, yet it is manifest that the steady, undeviating income would wonderfully cool the ardor of the petition, "Give me bread today, my Father," and in like measure affect the faith that should go with the prayer.

Third, our faith is developed by the withholding from our sight of a great part of the result of our lives and labors in the service of Christ.

Much, thank God, we can see, but there is even more that we are not permitted to behold, and know, for months, years, and even until the Judgment. Then oftentimes immediate results from our most faithful toils are not granted. All this is painful, but it fastens the eye on the Lord and brings out what he desires, faith in him and his Word, and so the soul prospers.

It is perfectly natural that we should prefer to have everything in barrel, box, and on the shelf; to see instant results from every Christian effort; to behold our way through to the end in every difficulty, and trouble. It is natural also that we would prefer a large bank account for ourselves and for the enterprise we are carrying on for God and the good of souls.

But the question is, would it be best for the training and development of faith? All of us know people who only seem to have faith in God when they have money in their pocket. And there are still others that, if they do not see an immediate result of a prayer, conversation or sermon, go down instantly into the depths of unbelief and discouragement.

Over against these we are told in the Bible of the faith of Noah as he toiled unsuccessfully for one hundred and twenty years, and of the unshaken confidence of Elijah as he gave cheerful directions to the woman about the baking of the last cake of bread in the house.

Walking by sight is undoubtedly pleasant to the flesh; but if that had been the plan of heaven to lead the soul into its best powers and highest influence, we would never have heard of Abraham in the olden time, nor of George Muller in the latter days.

It would have been very easy for God to have moved some man to endow the Muller orphan asylums, but he wanted to show the world that faith, to say the least of it, was fully as reliable as an earthly endowment; and he desired likewise to develop his faithful servant by a daily life of prayer and trust and expectation, into a prince in the spiritual realm where he lived, and a recognized undethronable monarch among men of faith in this day.

It is in ignorance of this method of God that so little effort and energy are put forth by Christians in gospel lines. Men seem to be waiting for lumber and brick to come together of their own accord in order to build a church. They want to be assured of the tail end of a meeting before starting in with the head. If God would send an express package containing all the money needed for the revival services they would go in with a vim and vengeance and holy boldness. They have no faith in God. They have forgotten the Word, which says, "Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges?" Gospel work is God's war, and if we do our part as soldiers and workmen, he has put himself on record that he will bring up the expenses. Soldiers enlist and fight, and the government back of them sees to the bills. This is what God promises to do, and this is the very argument that Paul makes in the ~~ninth~~ ninth chapter of 1 Corinthians.

When we were in the pastorate and proposed to do certain things in the line of building, enlarging, beautifying, starting a mission, establishing a camp ground, or sending out a missionary we always promptly encountered the brethren who believed in waiting. They would drawl out the sentence, "Let-us-wait-a-while," with a tremor in the voice, until it sounded like the wail of an oriental mourner. We suppose they wanted to see an express package of money, or to have a shower of brickbats fall beautifully and noiselessly from the skies, and assume the form of a stately church on the corner.

Since we have been in the evangelistic life we get letters from some of the preachers that would move the risibilities of the famous Henry of England, "who never smiled again." He could not but laugh if he read some of these epistles, and see how little they know of faith while preaching a gospel of faith.

“They want a meeting very badly — the church is lifeless and the town going to the devil. But the time does not seem ripe — the circumstances not propitious — the brethren not agreed — the money is not in sight — the Chautauqua was to be held the very month he wanted the meeting — the Woman’s Missionary meeting followed that — and the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union had engaged the hall for the month following the missionary gathering, etc., etc., etc.”

As we have finished some of these productions we have felt like saying, “Alas, my brother!”

The letter began with a whimper, elongated itself into a whine, and figuratively burst into tears with the closing words, “Yours in the bonds of the gospel.”

If we had to pictorialize the document we would place three whip-poor-wills on the short line beginning “My Dear Brother.” The main body of the letter should be made up of whole lines of the “seventeen-year locusts” with the “W” standing for Woe on their wings and all indulging in their mournful, dirge-like song. A very proper conclusion would be the picture of a weeping willow and tombstone in the corner. This would answer for the signature.

In striking contrast to this desire to walk by sight, we see a band of men and women in this life who have learned to begin, carry on and complete blessed undertakings for God sustained alone by the Word and promise of God. As a result the greatest victories are achieved, the most gracious and abiding works accomplished, and the bodies and souls of thousands of men and women have been fed and clothed, saved and sanctified, and the wonderful statement of John fulfilled again and again that “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”

CHAPTER 10

THE JOY OF FULL SALVATION

Nothing is more clearly taught in the Scripture than the fact that God wants his people to be full of joy. David has much to say of it. Isaiah speaks of the redeemed on their way to Zion with this grace in an everlasting form. Habakkuk writes of a gladness that remained in the face of stripped fruit trees, grape-less vines, and empty stalls. Paul exhorts a church to rejoice evermore. Peter tells about a rapture that was unspeakable and full of glory. While the Savior declares to his disciples that he wanted to add his joy to their joy, that their joy might be full and remain.

Evidently here is a spiritual condition as well as an emotion. Here is an obtainment that must result in a state of soul, a poise of mind, an attitude of character and a force and power of life full of blessing to the man himself and fraught with meaning and gracious consequence to the world.

The sinner has no joy. According to the Bible he has not even peace. Joy is one of the fruits of the Spirit, and so is felt for the first time in regeneration. But it is not a full or abiding state of gladness. Hence Christ tells of the purging of the fruit-bearing branch in the vine, and says, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

In a word, he would add his own joy to their regenerated happiness; and the result to them would be a spiritual transport full and abiding. Let us see why the Lord would have his followers filled with such a joy.

One reason is that it puts his people at their best in his service.

It needs no argument to prove to Christians that just in proportion as the Spirit of God leaves them with his warm gladdening presence, they become limp and lifeless, juiceless and useless. While with the swelling rapture of a conscious full salvation, there is inspiration, stimulation,

push, force, and successful accomplishment of work gladly undertaken for the Lord.

Men are constantly making efforts to recuperate and restore the flagging energies of an overworked body and overtaxed mind. They have discovered in certain foods and drugs, elements and properties which meet in a greater or less measure the demand, and so the jaded intellect, and exhausted physical nature can be whipped and spurred on to fresh exertions as though they had received new life.

But while the mind and body by these excitants and stimulants can be made to go beyond ordinary into extraordinary labor, no one has been able to find that which can quicken and vitalize that profounder, immortal nature of man, the soul. Here in this realm is required the touch and voice of God himself. Here the Holy Ghost is supreme and can have no successful rival.

Now it is remarkable that when the Spirit of God fills the human soul with the brightness and gladness of his unclouded presence, that soul full of joy is not only at its best, but in turn acts upon mind and body, and puts them at their best. Who with any religious experience at all does not know that with the presence of the Holy Ghost cheering, warming and gladdening the heart, they can work for God and man with an ease, power and success that is as delightful to themselves as astonishing to others. The pen flies, the tongue is loosened, the brain fertile, the voice unctuous, the face shines, the prayer is effectual, the visit is a blessing, the sermon sweeps the audience, and the life tells with unquestioned power on the community.

All this comes, with much more we cannot mention, from the possession of a deep spiritual gladness. Then does it not stand to reason that if we have a joy that is “full” and that “remains,” we will thus be at our best all the time?

This blessing we speak of is not an overwhelming, prostrating kind of experience, in which the person is borne off to his tent or house, unable to do anything. But it is a steady, energizing grace, a warming force, a tender melting glow, an inward inspiration, a blissful state in which the soul is

delighted to do the will of God, finds the yoke of Christ easy, his burden light, work abundant, and victories occurring all the time.

Hence it is that after the study of this question for twenty years, we are compelled to say that the most excellent and desirable thing for the soul, mind and body of a man is the joy of full salvation.

Second, God wants his people to possess this abiding gladness, because it best recommends the gospel to the world.

How to bring men to Christ and duty and heaven is a great question with the church. Many and varied have been the methods adopted, but the trouble is that so few follow the plan laid down in the Bible.

God has a way, and when faithfully observed it never fails of success. It would be difficult to believe that he has placed his church on earth, and neglected to leave it some endowment, or grant it some peculiar gift or grace that would make it superior, and more attractive and powerful than anything the world could offer in the line of competition and rivalry.

And this God has done, and has subject to the demand and use of the church a mighty blessing, which, producing a spiritual state in his people, will draw men from sin and the world as with an omnipotent magnet to salvation and heaven.

The church as a rule has a vague idea of such a need, and of some kind of power to meet the want. They observe that men go where they are attracted, and where they will find some style of pleasure. Hence the multitude throngs to places of amusement, where the burdens and sorrows of everyday life are forgotten for a while through the agencies of music, wine, games and the drama.

The church that tries to draw men away from these resorts by something on the same line, but of a milder order, is bound to lose in the contest. Social gatherings, literary exercises, concerts, charades and magic lantern exhibitions fail, not only because they are poor rivals of the world's entertainments and pleasures, but in themselves they are also powerless to reach and minister to the soul life; so they are double failures.

But God has not only a deeper joy for his people, but the deepest. And on the principle that men will leave the poor and indifferent for that which is

superior, and the better for the best, so when the world sees that the people of God possess something sweeter, richer and greater every way than that which they own and enjoy, then it is that men will forsake the broken cisterns, idols of clay, painted pleasures and dead-sea fruit and come with a rush to that which is solid, substantial and satisfying. The exalted nature of the blessing, the evident enrichment of the grace, with the overflowing satisfaction and gladness of the Spirit-filled man, will convince the believer, silence the gainsayer and draw the people like a flood to the house of God and the service of God.

We have noticed in a town where there are two boarding houses, that it is but a question of time when the one that treats its patrons best in the line of nutritious food and good cooking will secure the crowd. Also that the more attractive summer resort will empty the less pleasing competitor. In a word, men go where they are pleased and best served. They will not remain in a dingy room at a slovenly table, and there eat fried cowhide for steak and drink jimson weed for coffee, when they can have a juicy tenderloin and fragrant Java in a bright, attractive room, and at a table with snowy cloth and plates and glassware shining with cleanness. Men want the best that is out.

It is the operation of this very truth projected in spiritual things, that is destined to empty the beer gardens, brothels, saloons, billiard halls, ten-pin alleys, operas, theaters, and every other place of worldly amusement. The time shall be when the church as a whole shall obtain the crowning grace of God, and shall be filled, transfigured and made irresistible with the complete abiding joy of a perfect salvation.

Prophecy declares that in this coming golden period, the people will flock to the house of God like doves to the windows. No more card signing and chromo bestowing, no more begging and pleading with the people to attend or to join the church. But as men rushed to a discovered America, as multitudes flocked to the gold fields of California, and as great crowds hurry on galloping horses to take possession of lands thrown open to settlers, so will men rush to God and salvation, when the church is filled and fired with a joy as far superior to what the world has held up and offered to sinners, as a mountain is above a mole hill, and a star of the first magnitude is beyond the size and gleam of a glowworm in the dust.

If we were on a boat going up a river with a view of building and settling for life somewhere on its shores, we would certainly look carefully before deciding a matter that so affected the health, happiness, and prosperity of the household. As we passed along low banks and swampy regions where the inhabitants had complexions of a sickly yellow, we would not stop there. As we went higher and saw an improvement, but still behold the cypress brake with banners of trailing moss declaring the presence of malaria, the men idling about, the children looking languid, the fields seeming only half tilled and cultivated; still we would say to the captain, "You need not land me here; I am going farther up."

But when we reached a region where the banks had become bluffs, the country rolled in beautiful ridges crowned with abundant harvests, where the men looked strong and prosperous, the women rosy and healthy, the children happy and frolicsome, we would cry out, "Ring your bell, captain, and blow your whistle! Land trunks, furniture and family, for we have found a place of health and prosperity, and will live here, and cast our lot amid such a people."

So it is no use to expect the multitudes of earth to come with us to heaven, when we look tired, sick, dragged out, and melancholy; and when our testimony is a history of trials and tribulations, and our life record one of failure and backsliding, and our favorite hymns are "Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it," and "Look how we grovel here below, fond of these earthly toys."

But when the funeral cypress, the weeping willow, and the trailing moss of spiritual lethargy, sickness and death are all out of the heart and life; when we live in a healthful country, in the midst of abundant harvests of righteousness, rosy, strong, happy and bubbling over with the gladness of a full and constant salvation; then the world will blow the whistle, ring the bell, back the paddle, run out the plank, land everything they have, and join us not only with great thankfulness, but also join us to stay and go out no more forever.

There are other reasons we could mention why God wants his people filled with joy, but the two given above are sufficient to make thousands of Christians put on their thinking caps, and above all get down on their knees with importunate cries to be filled with that blessing, which gives us according to the words of Christ a full joy, and one that remains.

CHAPTER 11

“A SOUND MIND”

Among the numerous and blessed gifts of the Holy Ghost to believers is the one forming the caption of this chapter, and which the apostle calls, “a sound mind.”

This settles at once the charge that the religion of Jesus Christ will upset the mind or run people crazy. According to the Bible its effect is directly the opposite. It is to save from insanity. It makes us right in head, as well as pure in heart, and healthy in body. One remarkable description of the recovery of the prodigal given by the Savior, is in the words, “He came to himself.”

This is really what occurs to every repenting and pardoned sinner; he comes to himself. Sin is insanity, and salvation is to put an end to the malady. But as we advance in the spiritual life, and greater blessings come into the soul, and trying circumstances confront us, and all kinds of moral problems arise, affecting every stage and state of life, and demanding solution; we have an ever-pressing need of the wisdom that cometh down from the skies, and for a judgment polarized by the Star of Bethlehem.

In stressing the baptism with the Holy Ghost, the perfect love it brings, and the zeal it inspires, it is well not to forget the sound mind which the same spirit has promised to impart with the other gifts. There is vital need for it, and we cannot get along without the all-important grace.

We find that ships carry ballast, that watches have balance wheels, and engines need an attachment called the “governor,” without which the machinery would tear itself to pieces and scatter destruction and death all around.

The sound mind is the ballast, the balance wheel, or the governor. It is intended to steady, control and regulate. Its absence is instantly recognized even in a good life; while its presence fills the observer with a profound sense of pleasure and approval.

A convention or general assembly of any kind has its eyes wide open to select as a chairman the man who has a head on his shoulders, one who is not easily excited or upset, one who can see both sides of a question, and keep the reins of government easily, quietly and yet firmly in his hands. The following gentlemen are never elected to preside over an assembly of grave men, who have great interests to consider, viz.: Messrs. Ranter, Raver, Hothead, Wildeye, Monkey, Clown, Popinjay, Fly-off-the-handle, and Fly-up-the-creek. Who has not been struck with the serious faces, and dignified bearing, of men called to preside over a mass meeting in time of importance and deepest moment. It is the general recognition of a wise head and solid judgment that secures the almost unanimous elevation to office. Even in the world, men see the necessity of a sound mind in their affairs. How much more do we need it when called to deal with conditions and circumstances of a spiritual character, that will affect the soul's destiny forever.

Perfect love is a beautiful grace, but unattended by a certain steadying hand or power, it has been known to switch off in the wildest follies and even sins. Zeal is most desirable for the Christian soul and church, and yet if not tempered with perfect love, and regulated by a sound mind, it is only too likely to become a pope instead of a servant, a Jehu instead of a Jesus, and in what is called righteous indignation pull flames down to burn up God's creatures and children instead of getting them baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire to burn up the old man.

A sound mind, with its accompanying good judgment, will lead to a just dealing with individuals.

It is impossible to conceive of justice coming from men subject to frenzies, and ridden by passion and prejudice. It was such conduct on the part of kings, who infuriated would rush a man to the scaffold or prison, and that without hearing a word from him, or making a single inquiry into the case, which gave to history some of its blackest pages.

The same spirit not only characterized but made the Dark Ages, and occasioned the death of millions of innocent people. Passion, hate, prejudice, bigotry and intolerance completely swept away every vestige of true judgment and justice.

Not in the boasted light of this last century, nor even in the borders of the church itself can we expect proper treatment where that spirit is dominant which can only look on one side of a question, a fact, or the life of an individual.

In one of our books we made reference to the Egyptians' contempt of and harshness to the Jews; the Jews' treatment of the Samaritans, the Catholics' attitude to the Protestants; the Episcopalian aloofness to the Methodists; and the Methodists' excommunication of the holiness people. We thought we had struck the bottom, but we have lived to see numerous splits and divisions among the holiness people themselves, and to note an antipathy and intolerance of one wing or following to another which seems to differ in spirit and character in no respect from the instances mentioned above.

From this we would infer that not all who have received the baptism with the Holy Ghost, or say they have, have obtained with the blessing that most desirable accompaniment, a sound mind.

Again, a sound mind will deliver us from those extreme views and practices which have been properly called fanaticism.

The fanatic is the zealous man gone to seed. It is the locomotive which ran clear past the depot, into the sidetrack, over the bumper, down the hill, into the woods, turned upside down, with wheels still going, but getting nowhere and only working damage and distraction. It is the ship dipping water on both sides for want of ballast. It is the engine flying and tearing itself to pieces for lack of a regulating governor.

We know a man who started a peculiar school for children. He pronounced an unqualified disapproval of all kinds of play, and kept the little things at manual work when they were not in school. It was all work and no play with him. To have been consistent he should have caught his lambs that were frisking and gamboling over the fields and tied them hard and fast so as to prevent all such physical movements. The glad chirp and flutter of birds should have met with his displeasure; and all smiles and innocent merriment and laughter of the human family have been gravely condemned. The fact was that he so dreaded the last feature mentioned, that the man assumed a funeral expression of countenance which he carried about with

him more faithfully than he did his shadow; for the shadow left him at night, but his undertaker's face abided with him day and night. The man had a good heart, but not a sound mind.

Again, a sound mind keeps the doctrines in their places, and so in proper relation to one another.

No correctly informed, well-balanced person will exalt minor doctrines to the level of those that have been truly called essential. This has been the fatal mistake not only of individuals, but churches. When a rite or ceremony is made the staple and burden of preaching instead of the vital, all-important and everlasting truths of the new birth and holiness, we have only to open our eyes to see a dead church. And when persons stress a practice of life, a voluntarily assumed duty, the cut and character of religious dress, or exalt a doctrine which is non-essential and about which good people honestly differ, and which does not affect the salvation of the soul; when they do this, urging and pressing these things upon the people, instead of regeneration and entire sanctification, already the power has departed, and Ichabod may be written on the walls.

They may make a noise to hide the inward defect, and use loud professions to beguile the simple; but "God will not go up" with doctrinal unsoundness, and thoughtful people will not accept as leaders men of such poor spiritual judgment.

One can hardly ever tell what an unbalanced character will do before leaving this world. He starts out with a good heart, but alas! for that crotchety, notiony, whirligig head! He will sooner or later take his fancies for divine revelations, and because God blesses the honesty of his soul, thinks heaven is smiling upon, and endorsing his absurd and extreme ideas, teachings, and practices.

Fortunate indeed is the man who escapes moral damage who moves along the line of intellectual error. It would be a miracle if he did, as the two are so linked together. The rule is that spiritual hurt comes, and graver departures from the right way are seen, with complete loss of soul sweetness and holy power.

A famous writer has said that many people are like a placid-looking, flower-fringed pool of water in Florida, with an alligator at the bottom.

This is a dreadful picture, and the soul feels it is not overdrawn. We firmly believe that “the old man” is cast out in sanctification; but we have seen an alligator get into a life that had been cleansed, bordered with heavenly plants, and beautiful and blessed to look upon. Then came the head of the alligator out of the flowers!

We suppose that all unknown to the outside world, a young reptile was somehow allowed to crawl in the lily-decked pool; it developed, and one day the waters became troubled and a thing of moral ugliness and viciousness was suddenly revealed. It had not been suddenly formed!

We had better take care what we let come into the pool. We would do well not to read every so-called religious book or paper that comes along, and not receive every strange sermon or doctrine that is preached. The beginning of error may be small, but the end of it is not. May the Lord grant us a sound mind; and may we keep it, and take care of it as we do his other gifts.

Finally, a sound mind will help us as intimated, to evenness of life in the midst of all the changing conditions and circumstances of time.

Not an evangelist, pastor, or private Christian but knows from trying experience to what we refer. There are winds that blow upon us as changeful and different as the breezes and gales of the four seasons. There are high tides of success, and ebbs of reverses. Human favor in abundance is followed by as sensible loss of the same, without any discernible or explainable cause. Oxen with garlands for sacrifice are brought out one day, and showers of stones another day. A triumphant procession into Jerusalem is followed soon after by the march of a great multitude to Calvary.

There are many persons who become confused, mystified, discouraged and defeated, by this motley succession of events, and growing faint and heartsick, give up their confidence in God and fall by the way.

The purified mind, strengthened by the grace and Word of God, and taught by human experience, as well as by the Spirit of God, learns to look through and above all these fluctuations and variations, these approvals and disapprovals, these smiles and frowns, and loves and hates; and

sweeping evenly, steadily, and faithfully along the course or orbit of duty, presses on its triumphant way to the judgment bar of the Son of God.

Truly, as we see its effect upon the possessor, and the undoubted influence upon the beholder, we might well wish and pray that all who claim enjoyment of the experience of perfect love, might as surely realize the blessing of a sound mind.

CHAPTER 12

THE BRIDLED TONGUE

The apostle James has several things to say about the human organ of speech. In one place he declares that “the tongue no man can tame.”

He does not say that the effort has not been made, and that no one at times has doubted his success in the endeavor; but states that it can not be done. That is, if only human strength is brought to bear, the effort will fail. “No man can tame it,” is the declaration.

Neither does he say that simply human strength will not bridle the member. On the contrary, we have all seen it wonderfully restrained and improved at times. But the word the inspired writer used was “tame;” a very forcible expression signifying a perfect and permanent change from foreign to domestic, and from the wild to the gentle.

We have all seen birds and animals that we thought had been domesticated, because they fed from our hands that were slipped in behind the cage door. But the instant the wings struck the outside air, or the feet pressed the sward in the forest, the old nature leaped up, and they were farther than ever from being what we had supposed.

Bridling a horse does not necessarily break him to the saddle or harness. To slip the halter, is to see him flying like the wind the moment he realizes his freedom. And in like manner we have seen the tongue act just as remarkably. Men have a way of bridling it, but it does not stay bridled. It seems in the unconverted life to take revenge on the owner for certain hours or days of restraint. It had been bridled but not tamed.

Until the grace and power of God comes to it, we have the following remarkable description of this piece of muscular flesh which lies just inside the lips and between the teeth. It is called “a fire” — “kindleth a great matter” — “setteth on fire the course of nature,” and “it is set on fire of hell.”

Not a single expression is too strong, or figure overdrawn. All of us have felt the tongue's blistering, scorching power; known it to set homes, churches and communities by the ears; and seen it occasion the death of happiness and reputation, the murder of bodies, and the ruin of souls.

A second statement made by James is that, "If a man bridleth not his tongue — that man's religion is vain."

The truth taught in this declaration is that in the religious realm and life there is victory for us over what has been previously called the "unruly member" and a thing untamed. The knock-down part of the sentence is in the words that if a Christian does not control his speech, his "religion is vain." This may mean he is deceived in thinking he is a spiritual man, or he has failed to apply the redeeming, transforming, delivering power of the salvation he professes to the place where it was needed. It is not that Christ's religion is vain, but "this man's religion is vain." A general with a vastly superior force is being whipped by an inferior army; a merchant with a large capital is thrown into needless bankruptcy.

All of us have had bitter experiences here. Because of it, repeated private and public confessions have been made, and the saddest of tears wept in secret before God. Then would come inward determinations, and outspoken resolves that we would be more careful in future. That we would bear our wrongs silently; that we would not judge hastily; and we would give up all criticism of individuals. It all sounded well, and we felt better for making the promise, but the trouble was, that the vow would be broken, the bridle would slip from the head, and the steed of a tongue would career for minutes, perhaps hours, over wide-spreading fields of unkind remark and harsh judgment before we caught it again. With what tremendous conviction we would see after that, those inspired words of James standing out from the sacred page, "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain."

Impatience under contradiction; intolerance with those who differ with us; bitterness of retort; verbal retaliation; repining and fretfulness under trouble, and many other tongue transgressions are transfixed as by a javelin, by this verse of the apostle.

But James made a third statement about the tongue. He says, "If any man offend not in word the same is a perfect man."

According to this, we can get in grace where our speech will continually please God, and that spiritual condition is the perfection the Bible has so much to say about.

Truly, if anything could or should make us cease to offend with the tongue, as in the cases mentioned, it would be the blessing of perfect love or Christian perfection. With perfect love for God and man filling the soul, how could we make the objectionable utterances of other days? Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, and perfect love cannot be harsh, bitter, intolerant and unjust. The same is a perfect man, says James.

Time itself, with all its varied experiences, brings a wonderful change to the character of one's speech. Both quality of words as well as quantity are affected. Young people are disposed to think their elders are lacking in mental quickness and enthusiasm. They fancy they have cooled down, slowed up, and even become stupid with increasing years. The fact is they never had more good sense and genuine wisdom. They have seen into, and around, and clear through, so many things; have beheld so many objects they thought were stars turn out to be fireflies, and so many fancied day dawns to be a will-o'-the-wisp in a cypress brake; that they quit flaming, and blazing, and gushing, and raving over everything that comes along. It is a study to observe old men in a convention or great assembly listening with a kind of retrospective look to young men on the floor who are saying that if such and such things are done, or not done, that everything will be undone. They said the same foolish things forty years ago, and no thing of the kind happened, and so they do not get excited over this kind of talk.

But time, while bringing gravity, wisdom, sententious speech, and broader judgment, cannot do what only the grace of God can accomplish. So how blessed it is to have a work wrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost which will manage the tongue perfectly; and which will cause a delightful agreement between that member of speech and the heart itself. What gladness it causes to discover that the tongue is not only bridled, but tamed. That we can endure wrong and be silent; that we can suffer long, and be kind; that we can be put in possession of facts that, if used, would

bring confusion and distress to men that have injured us, and yet not only not speak the word, but have no desire to indulge in such an unholy revenge.

In early days we were told to “think twice before we spoke;” and to “count ten before we got mad,” but the trouble was that we had something within us that went all to pieces before we could count one, much less ten.

When a young preacher the author was made chairman of some kind of committee at conference. After making a written report, the paper was before the body of preachers with the usual question, “What will you do with it?” A venerable minister of the gospel, in making some remarks about the document, said something that the hot-blooded young preacher construed into a personal attack. At once he was on his feet with a sharp, quick reply. To this day he recalls the quiet, grave, patient look the aged servant of God cast upon him, as he said, without the slightest heat or rancor in his voice, “Our brother has failed to recognize that there are many sentences which are susceptible of more than one construction. My meaning was not the one he imputes to me.” Then as quietly he turned to the conference and resumed his speech as if he had never been interrupted. Meanwhile the rebuked stripling felt that to be a doormat on an outside gallery in heaven would be a proper office for him, and he saw with equal clearness that “his religion had been vain,” while the gray-haired preacher who had been so gentle with him, had proved, according to the Word of God, that he himself was “a perfect man.”

Such a grace is bound to declare itself. It is seen in a moderated pen, in the dropping of superlatives and extravagant terms in the description of places, persons and events. It is heard in temperate speech, and felt in silence itself. It will not be swept away by the influence of the hour or the excitement of the crowd. It holds itself aloof from councils of cruelty, and refuses absolutely to speak evil of any man or woman. Plans are laid to entrap such people in severe speeches, but as often have they refused to enter the snare. Their lips are sealed in remembrance of him who said, “Judge not that ye be not judged;” and in recollection of the words, “Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up.”

With this grace comes the “word fitly spoken,” that is, “like apples of gold in pictures of silver.” It is the “kind tongue which breaketh the bone,” and “the soft answer that turneth away wrath.” The constant ability to be silent when we should be still, and when we speak, to utter the right word at the right time and in such a right spirit, brings forth the scriptural commendation of such speech in the simple statement, “How good it is!” May heaven grant us all such a tongue, tamed, bridled and saddled; girded with truth, spurred by a proper zeal, ridden by love, and wherever and whenever in movement, always doing so for the good of man and for the glory of God.

CHAPTER 13

REPARATION

We are confident that the explanation of many weak and sickly lives among us in the kingdom of Christ, is to be found in the fact of unrectified wrongs.

One would be disposed to wonder how a man could claim to be a Christian at all, with the memory of injuries of some kind inflicted upon a fellow-being. With our knowledge of salvation, and the Christian character as drawn by the Savior, together with the memory of the darkness and unrest which has come to us for violations of the law of love; how can there be light, peace and assurance in the Christian breast, when he is conscious that by tongue, pen, word or deed, he has brought suffering and sorrow into the life of another?

The wrong may be inflicted upon the reputation by the tongue of detraction; or it may be a financial injury; or an ecclesiastical stab or blow of some kind. Time would fail to enumerate the different ways in which serious hurt can be done for a lifetime to an individual, and on account of law or lack of law the penitentiary be escaped. By the working of a higher code, however, the soul that thus transgresses is speedily brought into gloom and bondage. And yet these practices are visited by Christians on one another.

The marvel is that some of them insist on the possession and enjoyment of great light, liberty and power, in spite of such histories; and the wonder is not lessened when at various meetings the proposition is made that all who enjoy entire sanctification, or the blessing of perfect love, to stand on their feet; these same people immediately arise.

It is possible to maltreat conscience, make the soul to believe a lie, and go on in a horrible delusion; but above the hoodwinked spirit is God himself, who cannot be deceived. In faithfulness to his own truth, and to the man's

soul, God will surely bring leanness and darkness to the interior life of such a being, in spite of the blustering professing lips on the exterior.

A couple of years ago there was an evangelist who went over the country denouncing all who disagreed with him in regard to a baptism of fire experience which he held to be distinct from the baptism with the Holy Ghost. One of his favorite denunciations of his brethren who differed from him was that "They had a tame holiness devil."

The writer said at the time, and wrote as much to a friend, that no one could make him believe that this preacher possessed entire sanctification or perfect love, who thus indulged in tirades against men who were serving God, and whom the Holy Ghost was honoring.

The end of this man's career is well known. And yet in one of his camp-meetings they had what was called a religious dance. At the time it was considered by a number as an indication and proof of an exalted spiritual condition, of high religious attainment, thereby casting all other camp grounds quite into the shade.

Truly the mouth can be so eloquent, phrases can be so mastered, the body itself put into such training, that many are, and will continue to be, deceived by the outside display. This is why the Bible says so solemnly that "God looketh on the heart;" and why Jesus says we are to know men by their fruits.

There is another class, however, who are not adding hypocrisy to wrongs done in various ways to God's people; but ignorant, or fearful, or unwilling to take the steps of reparation, they are literally drying up in their religious experience and Christian activity, and are swelling the band of melancholy faces at our camp-meetings and protracted meetings. They hear described by flaming tongues and unctuous lips the beauty and blessedness of full salvation, and yet their own hearts are like lead, their faces full of gloom, and their very presence an incubus upon the service.

The steps that constitute reparation on the human side are, acknowledgment to the injured party; open confession of the mistake or wrong, even as the sin against the victim was committed openly; rectification of the deed; and restoration of property. In a word, we are to do the right, true, noble and proper thing under every circumstance, where

conscience has been wounded, the Word transgressed, and the Spirit grieved.

But cannot a man throw everything under the blood, and start fresh again; just as one would commence a new life?

In reply we would ask does the Bible tell us to cast our forgotten and neglected vows to God under the blood, or to pay them unto the Most High?

A man may so whine and whimper about just debts that he owes, that his creditors will release him; but what kind of business standing will he have with them afterwards, and what manner of moral character will such reprehensible conduct produce in himself.

Going into bankruptcy in the Christian life, when we have assets to pay in the ability to perform certain duties to man and God, is certain to bring upon the soul the contempt of men, the judgment of heaven, and a deep, swift deterioration of character.

There are laws pervading the spiritual life as well as the natural kingdom; in the religious, as well as business world. To ignore them is the height of folly; to break them is to rush upon ruin.

The Bible declares that wrongs must not only be confessed, but righted. Jesus says that the approach to the altar, no matter whether it is the first, or the thousandth drawing near, shall be preceded by our getting right with the brother whom we have aggrieved,

To ignore these commands; to go straight on as though the Lord had never spoken them, is to cast contempt upon God, and consign ourselves to the "weak and sickly" condition that the apostle mentions.

Men may try to banish the memory of these wrongs; or atone for them by increased Christian work and benevolence; but the all-wise One forgets nothing. And God who could not cease to see the lonely grave of Uriah and his deeply wronged life, even though his injurer was twanging his harp in praises to God in his palace, is the defender, pleader and advocate of every maltreated individual and will not be put off or set aside. A Nathan is sent with sermon, article, prayer or song, and in one of them or all, God

pleads with the soul for Uriah, and for the recovery of the man's own lost whiteness — lost in some kind of wrong inflicted upon a fellow-being.

Uriah may be dead, with the gravestone at his head. The injured person may be far away; and being out of sight why not out of mind? And why not out of the life forever? Is not a thousand miles or more such a great gap between one's self and his victim, that nothing of remorse or retribution can ever occur?

This is the way that men reason in their folly. They forget that God's law permeates the universe. It holds us on the sea as well as the land. It touches us in the air as well as in the mine underground. It is as dreadful and calamitous to sin against God behind the planet Mars, or sailing through the Milky Way, as here in our own world in a Christian land.

God is everywhere! His law is everywhere! Right is right, and wrong is wrong in any sun that blazes, any planet that floats, or any comet that rushes to the farthest boundaries of God's stupendous creation made up of a perfect wilderness of worlds and systems of worlds!

Cain's crushing blow upon Abel is felt to this day. David's wronging of a good man fires and melts hearts still, although three thousand years have gone by.

When will a wrong stop? When will an evil act cease to hurt? And yet there are people who have struck and hurt God's children, and are trusting that time and distance will save them from the rebound which is sure to come.

It comes first in an increasing spiritual deadness. If we do not then repent and make things right, as the Bible commands, then the second arrival is one of judgment, punishment and disaster.

Our only hope of escape is by the route of repentance and confession to God, and of reparation to man.

We once knew a preacher brought up to this fork of the road. He hesitated for days in great trouble of mind. His conclusion was finally reached in defiance of his conscience, the Bible, and the strivings of the Spirit of God. He lived the short balance of his days in uselessness and bitterness, and died in profound gloom.

In one of the writer's pastoral charges a woman found herself at the same "fork." She had wronged several members of her family, and her tongue as well as heart seemed full of bitterness and gall.

In a powerful morning service she suddenly arose from her seat and rectified one of these wrongs. Whereupon such a scream escaped from her lips as made the blood fairly tingle in all who were in the church. There was an accent of partial relief in it, but it also declared an agony, as well as a gathering of strength to do a harder thing. It was the first cry of travail, with other wails to follow.

With her face deadly pale, she, after a minute's pause, commenced speaking again, and rectified a second great wrong. When immediately she screamed again. In looking around I found tears streaming down many faces among the people. All knew that the Holy Ghost was working with the woman, and she was obeying.

After another pause, in which she grasped a large wooden pillar to steady herself, she opened her lips and rectified the third, and greatest, and last wrong of her life — and with the concluding word of her confession gave such a piercing cry of relief, of unspeakable rapture, of a perfect overflowing rest and joy, that not only was the entire congregation moved, but men and women in every direction burst into tears.

After hearing that glad shout of the soul, and looking upon the beaming face of the devil-delivered woman, no better proof was wanted that day by the crowd that it pays to obey God, and get right with those whom we have wronged, and who have aught against us.

He who made the soul, and knows what is best for it here and hereafter, in this world and in all worlds to come bids us get right with our brother.

And when a certain man who had wronged others cried out in his presence then he would rectify his evil life and restore four-fold, this same God of ours looked at the penitent before him and said, "This day is salvation come to this house."

CHAPTER 14

“KINDNESS”

Paul was enumerating in the ~~sixth~~ sixth chapter of 2 Corinthians the things he considered necessary for a servant and follower of Christ to possess in order to spread the truth and give blessed victory to the gospel. Such facts as guns, swords, pistols, finances, political influence, social standing, eloquence, good looks, fine clothes and a finished education were all left out. He said nothing against these things, but simply did not mention them.

He did, however, make such a list of circumstances and happenings; and recorded them as essential to success, which would not only never have been thought of by worldly wisdom, but would have been ruled out as so many hindrances in the way of the triumph desired and the end labored for. For instance, he writes of such melancholy occurrences and conditions as “necessities,” “afflictions,” “distresses,” “stripes,” “being poor” and “having nothing.”

And yet in these very states, and through them and by them the most wonderful victories of Christianity have been achieved.

Other character features of the minister or representative of Christ appear in the words, “power of God” and “armor of righteousness.” And still another grace or endowment is mentioned which beyond all question is completely underrated or over-looked by many who profess devotion to and are diligent in the service of the Lord. This spiritual quality as it is to exist in the heart and manifest itself in the conduct, appears in the caption of this chapter and bears the name of “kindness.”

It needs no labor on the part of the writer to prove to the reader that a great number of the Lord’s people seem to have no disposition to possess or exercise this beautiful trait, and seem to look for great success and victory on earth, and actually to fill heaven with souls by a diametrically opposite spirit and practice.

Paul said he proposed to give no offense in anything, that the ministry be not blamed, and would prove what he was “by kindness.” A Christian preacher or layman who comes with any other spirit is an exceedingly poor representative of heaven, and the moral contrast to the God he holds up and for whom he labors.

God is winning the world to him by kindness. Nature itself, with its fruits, flowers and harvests, is a divine benefaction. The gift of Christ to the world is God’s highest expression of love. The gospel is a transcript of his goodness; his providence reveals his pity and long suffering; and redemption declares his mercy.

That the divine plan of drawing men and changing their nature is a success, appears in the third chapter of Titus, where Paul advises gentleness and meekness to be shown to all men, adding, “For we ourselves also were some time foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God, our Savior, toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us!”

So it remains that he who would truly and worthily represent God in this world must abound in kindness, and he who would prevail with men and break them up and melt them down, and win them to better lives and to heaven itself, must come at them with the spirit of love.

Kindness, whether felt in heart, heard in tone and word, or seen in deed, is nothing but love in action. The unkind man in his harsh language and pitiless conduct simply shows himself without love. For where love is, there is bound to flow out from such a life a constant stream of graciousness and goodness.

To have such a spirit as Paul describes in the ~~thirteenth~~ thirteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians is to possess the highest Christian grace given the soul on earth. The apostle distinctly states that it is the greatest of all spiritual possessions, and the loftiest and most enduring of all the Christian virtues. Prophecy may end, he says, tongues cease, knowledge shall vanish away, but love will abide, and never fail. Faith is great, hope is great, but he declares the greatest of all is charity or love.

It is something the world needs, and it is something we all crave. Take it out of the home, and what have we left but a little hell on earth! Take it out of the church, and we behold confusion, clamor, bitterness, and by and by pandemonium itself. Take it out of the human heart, and the result is a devil incarnate. Let it depart from a multitude of souls, and put them together in a world to themselves, and the name of that place is known as Hell.

Plant kindness in the human spirit by the deep, sweet grace of God, and with its consequent gentle, systematic, persistent thoughtfulness of others, we are made to think of angels. Let it preside over and abide in a home, and no matter how humble and lowly it may be, when evening comes there is a bright-faced, quick-stepped, joyous-hearted, sweetly-expectant return to that household by father and husband, sons and daughters who have been absent all the day. In its beautiful moral influence over their lives, it is like a lighthouse with kindly ray welcoming them into port; a haven of rest to their wearied bodies; and to their souls a portion of the Garden of Eden which has survived the destruction of that earthly paradise.

Let this love abound in the house of God, and the unity, harmony and heavenly life thus produced among the people of the Lord will constantly draw sinners to its pews and altars, and usher in, and steadily retain, a gracious, glowing and growing revival of religion.

When a great many people thus filled with holy love die and are gathered in one place, it is called Heaven.

Oh, then for kindness! And more of it all the time. Something is certain to happen if we get the spirit, and begin to practice it in face of every condition and circumstance of life, and in spite of anything and everybody. No liniment was ever made by man that can extract pain as quickly and thoroughly; no cool lotion can remove fever and burning as rapidly; and no weapon was ever forged which can give as deep and mortal a wound and terminate as surely the existence of an enemy.

It is true that swords, bullets and bombshells destroy the physical life of one's adversaries; but the foe is simply transferred to another world; he is an enemy still in a different part of the universe. But kindness shoots the

opponent down in his tracks, and leaves a lifelong and eternal friend in his stead.

Then kindness is not only most remarkable as a spiritual weapon, but it seems to come against the most defenseless side of our nature. It is said that there was a city in Asia Minor which was most formidably walled and protected on every side but one. Relying on the natural protection of a river, the inhabitants failed to barricade that portion of the town. History tells us that it was in that quarter Alexander captured the city.

Somehow we are all built quite feebly in a certain part of our spiritual being. Prejudice, pride, anger, jealousy, envy, hate, and the human will itself make towering walls against which people fling themselves in vain. But there is a love side to us all, where most of us go down with a crash. We look around for materials to build up against and oppose the steady, repeated charges of genuine good will and kindness, and we can find nothing. We feel helpless, are put to confusion, and do not know what to do but surrender.

Then it is hard indeed to strike, and shoot at as beautiful a thing as kindness. There is also a kinship feeling between it, and the love nature that is left in us. And one should dread to aim a blow at his own kith and kin. Look at it as we will, we shall never find a more effective weapon in subduing the enemies of God, and drawing men to repentance and salvation, than the kindly life which derives its being from a heart full of a genuine Christian love.

The wounds inflicted by kindness are left in the form of recollections. In one sense these blows never heal. They are mortal, not to say, immortal wounds. But in another sense they become things of loveliness. Think of a scar growing beautiful and getting more so all the time. And why not? If a blow given to a certain kind of shellfish is changed in a few months into a valuable lustrous pearl, why should not a wound inflicted on the soul by the hand of kindness be metamorphosed in a manner to astonish and delight both wounder and wounded?

There is this difference: The blow on the oyster is transmuted into a pearl, while the stroke given by kindness is changed into a picture which we call

a memory, that seems to grow more beautiful and more affecting to the sight with every day that goes by.

It was only a cool, soothing hand laid on the aching head, but somebody has never forgotten it. It was but a smile or a gracious, encouraging word spoken in time of discouragement, but it worked wonders then, and continues to bless as a recollection until today. You were a poor boy or girl and some one far above you took interest in you, and there came a verbal, social or financial lift that sent you on a successful way. People wondered why you wept so when you heard the news of the death of that person, and you could not and did not explain; but the world looked wonderfully empty to you at that time, and the memory picture never looked more beautiful nor felt so sacred.

The writer, when a boy, was taken with a burning fever on a train in Alabama. In his physical suffering he became conscious of a kind face bending over him and a gentle hand putting to his parched lips a cup of cold water. The good Samaritan was Dr. C. K. Marshall, of Vicksburg, who dreamed not he was alleviating the misery of a lad whose mother had entertained him at her home in Mississippi.

Still again, when the writer joined the church as a young man, and went back to his seat and bowed his head in tears in the corner of the pew, an old gray-headed steward of the church came down the aisle, took his hand and cried over him.

Both of these men are in the grave, and both affected the writer powerfully in drawing him to, and confirming him in, the way of righteousness. And they did it by acts of kindness.

Forty years have passed since the lad was sick on the train, and twenty-eight since the young convert wept in his pew. But over the wide wastes of years these two gracious acts shown him by Christian men shine out like stars of the first magnitude, that have not set and will not go down forever.

It was only a heartsick, homesick boy, leaning his head against a car window; and only a lonely-looking young man who had given his hand to the church and gone back to his seat. These are ordinary sights, and so what need to say or do anything?

But these two men not only said something, but did something; and both word and deed were full of kindness. In the first case the boy wanted to be like a man who did such things, and in the second instance his heart and life were strengthened in the new life he had lately chosen and just entered upon.

God grant us to be thoughtful and good to everybody, and as Christians to give no offense in anything. May we also commend ourselves to all men, not only by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, but also by the use of that beautiful and all-powerful weapon of heaven, the spirit, word and deed of genuine Christian kindness.

CHAPTER 15

POLITENESS

We have not wandered out of the religious or full salvation realm in the selection of the topic of this chapter. Indeed, we are in the Christian life proper, and dealing with an important ethical question when we call attention to a practice which, when even not proceeding from the heart is agreeable, and when reflected from a true inward state becomes a beautiful Christian grace, and a blessing indeed.

In the dictionary, politeness is defined as “good breeding.” Its synonyms given in a book of that character are refinement, civility, gentility, courtesy, courteousness, urbanity, decorum and elegance. Certainly no man who has any regard for the proprieties of life and the feelings of others could object to the possession of such a personal attraction and character endowment as we see shining out of such words.

Paul wrote to one of the churches, “Be courteous.” It was a plea for this very same charming, ingratiating thing called politeness: a spirit and conduct full of consideration for the comfort, views, opinions and rights of other people.

The apostle himself evidently abounded in it. He could never have written certain chapters in his epistles if he had not been the soul of courtesy. Let the reader turn to one of the briefest of his pen productions, called Philemon, to read a perfect model of a letter of introduction. None but a Christian gentleman of the highest order could have composed such an epistle. We do not wonder that crowds accompanied this man to the ship to say farewell, and that numbers fell weeping on his neck and kissed him, sorrowing for the words which he spoke that they should see his face no more.

There are several reasons why we plead for the exercise of courtesy or politeness, especially among Christian people.

One is because of its beautifying and ornamenting power to the life.

We have all looked out upon an evening sky, and but for the adorning touch of the Almighty hand, would not glance again. But God has a way of making golden gates out of the sunset clouds; giving the appearance of a resplendent city with domes and battlements of fire; creating a wide blue sea with strand of purple and islands of pink and scarlet and gold, edged with silver as if waves were dashing against their shores; so that the evening, fair and peaceful in itself, is made beautiful and memorable by an added loveliness and glory.

We have seen the same order observed in the depth of the forest, where it was not enough to the eye of God that trees stood thickly about a pool of water; but he sprinkled wild flowers over the bank, star like lilies on the lake, and swung grape vines with purple clusters, or scarlet blossomed creepers trailing from tree to tree.

So it is not enough for us that we possess truth, uprightness, principle and character. There are beautiful dispositions and graces that we must possess for our own adornment. The apostle plainly declares that a certain spirit which he names is of greater ornament to a woman than pearls and braided hair. And true as it is in the virtue he mentioned, it is equally true in regard to that graciousness and considerateness which is possessed by some Christians, and is all unknown to others.

Truly, if God will adorn the evening sky, and glorify a tangled dell in the woods, how much more would he seek to clothe an immortal soul representing his kingdom with heavenly tempers and spiritual graces that would make it in a true sense attractive to men and so all the more powerful to do them good.

A second reason for the possession of the virtue of Christian courtesy or politeness is found in the certain enrichment it brings to the possessor.

It is impossible to be courteous without feeling a reflex beneficial influence on the heart. Let the cross-grained, rough-mannered brother who is believed to be good in nature, try to be agreeable and pleasant in life. Let him dispense with his blunt, offensive and bearish ways for a little while, and try civility, urbanity and graciousness for a few days, and see if a tenderness, sweetness and actual blessedness of spirit will not come down

upon his soul, richly repaying him for any outlay and sacrifice he may have made.

A third reason for exercising a refined courtesy is to be found in the vastly increased influence for good it brings.

There is no doubt that we have excellent people in our midst who have not done, and cannot do in the religious life what might and should be accomplished, on account of their harshness of speech and roughness of manner.

It is perfectly natural to us all to feel repelled by, and to wish deliverance from the presence of things and persons that are personally offensive. And yet this fact is utterly ignored by persons in the religious realm. We have people today in our ranks who think they have been ostracized from social circles, and cast out from synagogues and communities on account of the truth they preached and lived, when the real cause of their exile and expulsion was to be found in harsh and coarse speeches, and in a conduct that refined people could not tolerate.

There are other Christians whose conversion or sanctification was no more powerful than the persons just described, but they literally ornamented the truth, and “adorned the doctrine” by a sweetness of spirit, kindness of manner, and studied regard for the views, tastes, privacies and rights of other people that won at once the esteem, confidence and regard of congregation and community.

Just as there are evenings which we recall because of a lovely sunset, and some woodland depth we remember from its peculiar sylvan beauty, so there are certain people of God whom we can never forget, and, whose memory always fills us with pleasure because of the courteousness, tender consideration and unfailing politeness which distinguished their lives.

All of us have known Christians who never compromised the truth, were unswerving in principle, and yet, at the same time, never ceased to be ladies and gentlemen in the truest sense of the word. They were never rude, never impertinent and never discourteous. They did not go around saying that everybody who did not agree with, and go with them, were on the road to hell. And yet such was the shining face, the true life, and the blessed atmosphere of love, peace, and holiness which they carried about,

that people somehow felt that if they did not alter their own conversation, spirit and conduct and become like them, that they would never live in the same heavenly world to which they were evidently going.

Some of these saintly persons have crossed the flood, and are now face to face with God. But such were their lives that a reflected glory has been left behind, though their earthly sun has set in this world however.

We remember a preacher who drew upon himself the severest of criticisms from Christians who could not understand the royal make-up of the man. His wholesomeness, kindly tolerance of others who differed with him, his catholicity of spirit and true liberty in the gospel, were all misconceived, misconstrued and condemned by the little minds and narrow lives he encountered in his different pastorates. Through it all he was the unchanging Christian gentleman. He patiently accepted the fact that many did not understand him, and returned courtesy for discourtesy, and a polished, refined deportment, to coarse, cruel and untrue attacks made upon him by unthinking and rude-minded people.

He has been in the grave for years, while a number of his misjudgers still live. But there are many besides the writer who can never hear his name, or think of him, without seeing arise before the gratified eye and heart the vision of a gentleman and prince indeed, who would have been at home in palaces, and graced the period and fashion of knee pants, silk stockings and silver buckles.

The effect of his courtly Christian life is still felt in the community where he lived and finally died, Men could not but be drawn to a religion which made not only a true man, but also a gentleman. Somehow it seems easier to believe in a salvation which works on the outside as well as the inside, which affects the manners as well as the morals of a man, than to take to one which, whatever it may do for the soul, seems to be powerless to prevent the individual from being a bore in speech and a bear in behavior.

It is true that some persons have done good who were very rude and offensive in their ways; but their success was not because of their roughness, but in spite of it.

If the world liked bearishness they would ransack the woods for such animals as domestic pets and companions. It seems, however, that they

prefer them at a distance, and so they are left in the forest, or kept in a cage when in town.

Just as truly men shrink from the bear at home, in society, or in the religious life. Mr. Bear, Mrs. Bruin and Miss Cub may be slow to believe this, but it is true all the same. They may be Christian workers, but their claws, teeth, gruff voice and rough handling, indispose people to hear or receive anything from them. The heart may be right, but the bear hug is just death.

A final reason for politeness we mention without amplifying; and that is, it is profitable to be courteous. It pays to be polite.

A gentleman once said that he had gone around the world and was not refused a single request, nor treated ungraciously a solitary time. He said in explanation that he made it a rule to be polite to every one he met. The result was a string of favors and kindnesses shown him which encircled the globe.

One night last summer in Texas we passed over thirty buggies on the road, when each occupant was at first altogether unwilling that we should get ahead. As we drew near they would whip their horses up to keep us in the rear. But standing up in our vehicle we touched our hat and told the gentleman who was driving in each rig that we were trying to make Marshall in time to catch the midnight train, and then courteously asked permission to go ahead. In response every one of the thirty young men drew aside and allowed us to pass on, while they took the dust. We made thirty speeches that night, and gained thirty cases. It was done not by an eloquent but a courteous tongue. It pays to be polite.

There are men today wondering why their friends have dropped them. The answer is to be found in their own disagreeable and offensive conduct.

We know preachers and singers who are constantly missing calls for work for the same reason that people are dropped from the social group and avoided in the family circle. We can so impertinently pry into private affairs, be so rude in speech and disagreeable in our ways, that nobody wants us around. We may think it is because we sing, talk and preach full salvation, but it is often because we do not live full salvation. It is because that our religion has fixed up our morals, but not our manners.

Truly, as we said, the spirit and practice of courtesy is not only an adorning grace, a developing exercise, a potent influence for good, but it is profitable as well. It is a positive advantage in this world to be a courteous, genteel, refined man or woman. It pays to be polite.

CHAPTER 16

HUMILITY

We are told that there was no word in the old languages to stand for meekness. The nearest was meanness. Such a moral quality was inconceivable and unknown to the multitude. If present in a human life they could not understand it; the man was a puzzle and would be described by a most unflattering title.

In the present day we have the words meekness and humility, but they are still comparatively unknown by the world, when embodied in a human life, Such a character, full of the humbleness, quietness, simplicity and gentleness of Christ, would be according to the judgment of earth, a man without fire or spirit, a contemptible man, a mean man. So the ages in their flight have not improved the understanding and judgment of men much yet, in regard to some very important things.

It is certainly a pity that the world should confound one of the loveliest Christian graces with one of the most contemptible states of the depraved heart; that it cannot see the vast chasm between the words meekness and meanness.

It is also to be lamented that the Christian Church itself does not have more who possess this heavenly spirit; while so few even of the best seem to care for, strive after, or cultivate it.

Meekness or humility was one of the striking characteristics of the Savior. This alone would distinguish him from all other leaders and teachers in the spiritual realm. It is certainly strange to see that many of his followers want his power; crave to preach, pray and work miracles like he did; want even to look like him, but do not desire his lowliness of heart and life.

Inbred sin is unalterably opposed to a spirit of humility. The unsanctified heart needs no whisper from the devil to “Stand up for your rights,” “Don’t let people run over you,” etc. It possesses the nature that goes very easily and willingly out upon lines of pride, and while acquainted

with little spells of humbleness, attributable mainly to defeats, crosses and mortifications, yet it knows not that spirit of habitual lowliness that is the result of a work and state of grace promised by Christ.

It would lead to some interesting developments if preachers would ask themselves what spirit is that which causes them to strike certain attitudes upon a great platform before a crowd of observers. What occasions the tilt of the head, the pose of the body, and the general air of importance and bigness. Let the layman ask himself the cause of the peculiar sensation that comes over him when he is escorted up the aisle by an usher. Why is the form and head suddenly made to render tribute to this invisible power within? Why should the man feel that every eye is upon him, and that he must, or has already made a fine impression.

Of course we do not mean to say that a man should try to look ungainly on a platform or walk slouchily, or with a hang dog look, up the aisle. We are speaking of something very different from awkwardness of body or meanness of nature which would prefer to drop out of sight altogether. We are referring to a grace which becomes a state and life, where the man can appear well, and conduct himself easily, and all the more easily, because he is delivered from a dreadful self-consciousness, and bears within a humble spirit.

If the reader is hard run for living types of what is being referred to, then the sight of a sweet, unspoiled child may give some conception of what is intended to be conveyed. We have seen them in their play, or in a crowd, perfectly oblivious of attention, criticism, or any kind of observation.

Christ has been called the child-like man, not childish. There is a vast difference in the two terms. Could we but see him today walk up an aisle, sit on a platform, or preside over an assembly, there would be ample cause for wonder. He would need no black silk robe, as was recently worn at a college commencement by four of our dignitaries, to impress the audience with his spiritual greatness. He would not need to adopt the swollen air of conscious self-importance, for such a thing would be impossible with a lowly and holy heart. Without the help of trappings, studied attitudes, or rolling utterances, he who said he was meek and lowly in heart would be felt in gracious power all over the house.

Humility as a Christian grace possessed by the soul brings a life of restfulness. Such a spirit has no desire to dispute, wrangle or strive about anything, much less for the high places in church or state. It could be elevated to them, and still serve God and do well there; but it has no inward fret or worry over their absence, and no scheming for their obtainment. The sword has been beaten into a plowshare, and the spear into a pruning hook. The great, flaring sunflower, thrusting its head over the fence to stare at and be stared at, by everybody, has become one of heaven's lowly and sweet violets. What an inwardly restful life it is bound to prove to one of God's little ones, the genuinely humble man.

In addition, the spirit of humility as an expression of a real inward life, is a very beautiful and heart-touching sight to men, We have never been able to behold it since God converted our soul without being deeply moved. Just as physical beauty commands admiration, so this high type of spirit loveliness is compelled to win the approval of one who has any spiritual discernment at all.

A young preacher was being made to suffer on the floor of a conference for his views and sermons on holiness. He was very roughly handled. A prominent minister was present who afterward became a bishop, and as he turned his eyes upon the victim, he observed that he made no reply to any attack, and with a meekness that was written on every line of his face, showed that he was the happiest man in the assembly. The observant minister never forgot the sight, but referred to it repeatedly after he became a bishop. It was a spectacle of moral beauty that he could not forget. He confessed that his eyes grew wet as he looked upon the man.

Recently the writer at one of his meetings saw in his audience one of the humblest spirited of all the evangelists in this land. He is a man that never had the benefit of an education, and we doubt whether he was ever at a school in his life. Drawing near to him we asked him to preach to the people that night, and at once, with that simplicity and genuine humbleness of the devout soul, he replied, "Brother, you know I am very weak and ignorant."

The tears jumped into our eyes, and a lump suddenly got into the throat as we answered:

“That’s all right, my dear brother; but you possess the knowledge this people want.”

A preacher recently told us that some months ago an evangelist wrote to another giving him a flaying for something he had said in his sermon and done in the pulpit. The letter writer was a noble man of God, and hesitated long before he sent his skinning and blistering epistle. But he felt it was his duty and away it went. The answer that came back was so gentle, kind and above all humble, that it perfectly melted its receiver. The attacked brother admitted that “he had made these mistakes, and greatly grieved that they were made. He also wondered why they had used him in the pulpit that morning; that he felt others were superior to him as teachers, and that they should have been there rather than himself, for the greater glory of God and good of souls.”

In a word, the letter was so genuinely meek that it disarmed the brother, and made him, we doubt not, a loving and lifelong friend to the criticized.

Some fifteen or twenty years ago, one of our preachers spent the night at the home of a southern Methodist bishop, who since then has passed away into the skies to his reward. The preacher told the writer that early next morning he was aroused from his sleep by hearing some one blacking his shoes. Peeping over the foot of the bed he saw the bishop kneeling on the floor cleaning and polishing his shoes as softly as he could, to keep from awakening his guest.

The preacher said to us that when he saw the sight his heart melted and yet felt like breaking. Such a sense of unworthiness rolled over him, as well as pain that a bishop should be his bootblack, that he felt all but overwhelmed. There were two immediate spontaneous cries that went up, one from the bed, and the other from the floor. The one from the bed was, “Oh, bishop, how could you do such a thing for me!”

The one from the floor from the bishop, who was embarrassed at being discovered, was, “Oh, brother, I am only too glad to do it. You are one of my Master’s servants.”

Here was humility in both, and beautiful in each case.

In a word, we notice that wherever we extend our observations and find humility, it is always lovely. It is beautiful everywhere.

We could write much more under this head, but will conclude with the fervent wish and prayer that all of us who know and love Christ shall resolve from this very hour we will obtain more of the spirit, and practice more of the life of genuine humility. We not only believe that heaven will be pleased, but the church and the world itself will be tremendously moved and wonderfully blessed at the spectacle.

CHAPTER 17

THE BEAUTY OF JUSTICE

To many of God's people the attribute of justice in the divine character is one of the loveliest and most heart cheering in the glittering constellation of the Almighty's perfections.

It is not an attractive quality to the sinner, for he dreads it and would be delivered from its exercise. But to faithful servants of God who have been unrecognized, misunderstood, misrepresented, deprived of proper reward, and even cruelly wronged not only by the world but in the church itself, the thought of the divine justice is one of unspeakable consolation. The strongest and best of Christians under peculiar trial have been kept from utter despair by the consideration of this divine virtue from which is to come sooner or later righteous judgments that shall stand forever.

Very comfortable to these oppressed and distressed Christians are such passages in Holy Writ as the following, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" "He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon day." "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

When this moral quality exists in a man it is certain to bring him into prominent and respectful notice. Such men are sought after in the councils of the nations, and their value is above that of silver and gold. When the virtue is in a Christian, it at once invests him with a spiritual charm that is sure to affect every observer. When it is absent, we know of nothing that can take its place; for it is not only unlovely and unloving to be unjust, but also unrighteous as well.

We fear that real justice will never be given by man to man in this present world. In some instances it fails to reach the line of desert, and in others it goes beyond. It may take the form of too severe a punishment for an offense, or be seen in a failure to render that recognition and reward which

a faithful act demanded. Injustice is seen in words of detraction, in the imputation of wrong motives, in the slurring or discounting of a good work, or the neglect or refusal to properly represent the spirit, character, utterance, doctrinal belief and actual conduct of a fellow being.

This failure to bestow what all should like to give, and all certainly want to receive, springs from more than one cause.

One is the self absorbed life. Men are so full of business or pleasure, or so devoted to self in some form, that they will not or do not take the time to consider the woes, wrongs or rights of another. It would take hours if not days to unravel certain life cases, and they have not the time nor the inclination to even enter upon the solution.

Another cause is the profound ignorance we labor under in regard to the man who is criticized and condemned. We may have seen certain external actions that looked wrong, but how little of the motives, trials, temptations, besetments, and long battles of that individual's life do we know or have ever imagined. Because of this lack of knowledge of the real character and life of people all about us, both the world and church are rewarding men who need punishment, and condemning others who stand high in the favor of God. Persons have been consigned to hell who are today in paradise; and others have been eulogized to the skies and established in high places in heaven by platform address and newspaper tribute, who at the very time of the fulsome speech and notice were wringing their hands in perdition.

It is because of this unacquaintance with the real man before us that we make such blunders in our conclusions, and are told of God not to ascend the judgment seat.

A third difficulty in the way of properly knowing people and rendering them justice is to be found in our own varying states of mind. No verb was ever more affected by moods and tenses than are we. To attempt to understand a man in one frame of mind, while we are in another, is to undertake one of the impossibilities of life. The different moods in each make the critic and the criticized mutual mysteries.

In like manner to possess one temperament and to be reviewed, studied and weighed in the balance by a person of an opposite nature is simply to meet with stinging injustice at every turn.

What we want is a being who possesses all the temperaments in himself, and who is not a merely national, or denominational, or one-sided Savior; but one who understands thoroughly every individual. One who is not the son of Judea, or of Israel, or even of Europe, Asia or America, but who is the Son of Man!

A fourth hindrance to the exercise of a true justice among men is to be found in religious intolerance.

Strange to say, we have to enter the ecclesiastical world to find the harshest of judgments and the most unrelenting, undying and pitiless hostility. The Bible speaks of a brother being estranged, and then harder to win than a strong city. We have all seen this in every denomination. Nations have gone to war and butchered each other on a question of church doctrine. Body racks were invented to protect creeds. And multitudes of godly men have been burned at the stake and put to death in different terrible forms, because they did not speak nor act to suit other intensely religious (we did not say pious) people, who said they knew and had it all. And even today, a man filled with the Holy Ghost and walking blamelessly before God may well despair of obtaining justice and proper recognition at the hands of men called "brethren," who understand not the doctrine he teaches, and ridicule and oppose the experience he professes.

We leave it for men learned in psychology to search out the reason for this strange spirit and practice, but for fifteen years we have personally been convinced that the true cause is to be found in the presence in the heart of "the old man."

A final reason for the practice of injustice in our midst is to be seen in perverted character. This is where the desire and the will agree to commit deliberate wrong.

This studied cruelty and evil doing is to be met with in every rank and walk of life. It sits down in palace and hovel alike, and shows its ugly countenance in the church of God as well as in the dens, brothels, courts and business places of the world. The only hope of deliverance is to be

found in the thorough regeneration and sanctification of the soul, with the faithful following after that of the golden rule.

Of course it brings a great shock to the heart to discover such a spirit and practice among Christians; and to find it making a home for itself in what are called tabernacles of righteousness, and sanctuaries of truth and peace, whose altars are declared to be amiable and where the swallow in its helplessness and defenselessness hath made a nest for itself. But so it has been, and so it is until this day.

We have often wondered how a Christian can hear an evil report of another, and then, with mind affected, and biased by a one-sided narration, repeat, write or print the accusation as if it was as true as the gospel, and yet expect to keep a good conscience, or graver still, ever expect mercy from God or man when he has shown himself so entirely without pity, and so utterly lacking in the virtue of common justice.

The New Testament bids us act in a very different manner; and the Old Testament has an ethical code which puts under condemnation both individuals and congregations today who boast of much enlightenment and great advancement in spiritual things.

The world itself has a weighty and wise saying, that there are two sides to every question. The courts run by unconverted men do not condemn a man unheard; but listen attentively to both sides, give the benefit of counsel and jury; ask in the beginning of the case if the prisoner is guilty, waits for his reply, and at the close of the trial, which may have found him guilty, propounds the question, "Have you anything to say why this sentence should not be visited upon you?" This last question is evidently put in view of some confession or plea that might alter the penalty on the side of mercy.

Yet we have repeatedly witnessed in Christian circles a man arraigned, verbally condemned and executed, with no benefit of a doubt allowed the victim, no witness summoned in his behalf, and no question asked or statement received from him in reference to the matter.

A couple of years ago we were shown a religious paper with a column headed, "Some Things that Jesus Would Not Do." Then followed the scathing of certain acts that had been reported to the editor. The editor had

not taken time to investigate, to hear the other side, or even to write a letter to the vilified brother asking if the charges were true. But he, so to speak, reversed all the forms and methods of the courts, and first executed the prisoner, then tried him, and later asked the corpse whom he had slain in his editorial, if he had anything to say why sentence of death should not be pronounced upon him.

After finishing the strangely headed column, we remarked, one thing Jesus would not do, is the very thing that this editor has done. Our Lord is not only merciful, but he is just.

And as we said in the beginning, it is this attribute that is so lovely whether seen in God, or man the follower and imitator of God.

As for man, no star shining out in a black tempestuous night from a rift in the swirling storm clouds is a more beautiful and cheering spectacle than the sight of such a character in the midst of the gross injustice that abounds in this world.

As for God, the realization in our hearts that he is always faithful and true, keeps our lives steady and our souls on the wing. Like Israel we are tempted some days to say, "I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for naught;" but with the very next breath, as we remember the good and just Being we serve, we cry with the same prophet, "Yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God."

CHAPTER 18

THE CONVICTING POWER OF JOY

The desire is deep and sincere with many of God's servants to see a profound conviction for sin brought upon the people. What they crave to behold is not a passing emotion, a mere transitory regret; but a tremendous breaking up of the whole man as he realizes his lost condition, his wickedness of heart, and complete unlikeness to God.

We have in the course of over a score of years seen numerous plans put in operation by the church looking to that end. Some succeeded in a measure, while the balance failed altogether. Abusive preaching has been tried, and while some were turned to righteousness, many more were disgusted, outraged and driven away. A few of the excoriating order who succeeded were listened to because they were richly endowed in other ways, and men bore the tongue flagellation because of humor, originality, and genius back of the utterance and in the man. Still the gospel conviction, as described in the book of Acts, was not seen.

Then the power of reason and argument has been tried, and great discourses, full of an unanswerable logic and mighty with intellectual force, were turned on the people, and not without result and fruit. But it is to be remembered that the world's fall was not an intellectual but a spiritual one. Men can answer propositions with similar formulas of thought, and meet premises with other syllogisms, and never be stirred in nor moved out of their sins.

A third effort is made in the preaching of the law. Sinai is brought forth and made to flame, and quake, and rock once more. Moreover God always honors such presentations of truth. Still it is to be borne in mind that if the old dispensation was the best, what necessity would there have been for the new?

It is true that we must have the preaching of the law, even in this gospel day, and no one can thunder such sermons as fully saved men. They know

it is needed as a kind of a backbone and background. They know there is always a place and a most important place for Mount Sinai. But they also know that Mount Zion is a more wonderful mount than Mount Sinai. The former is not as high as the latter, according to the surveyor's chain, but it is much larger in other respects. It is far more significant in spiritual meaning, and vastly more potential in obtaining instantaneous and everlasting results. On Mount Sinai the law was given; on Mount Zion the Holy Ghost was given. The lawgiver is mightier than the law; and God, who gives truth, is bound to be greater than all truth.

Naturally it would seem that what Mount Zion stands for would outrank, and outdo, that which Mount Sinai is and does in the spiritual realm. And in perfect harmony with the thought the Bible gives a description of the greatest revival that thus far has ever been witnessed on earth, and it all came from what belonged peculiarly and essentially to Mount Zion, namely the baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire.

Here we notice that in a few minutes' time three thousand men were put under a sudden and overwhelming conviction for sin, and while beating their breasts cried out to the joy intoxicated disciples, "What shall we do?"

The one thing perfectly apparent in the whole scene was the deep, overflowing, rapture of the disciples. They were so filled with ecstasy that they acted like drunken people, and were thought by some to be drunk.

The sight of this overwhelming, supernatural gladness put three thousand men under tremendous conviction, and in two days' time led eight thousand souls to Christ, and into the church of God.

Nothing of the kind had ever been seen before in the church, and nothing equal to it has been witnessed since; and it was brought about not by argument, abuse, or the thunder of the law, but by the sight of one hundred and twenty believers filled with the joy of full salvation.

All this as we have said was not intended to displace the law, or the preaching of the law, but is to show us that the highest figures and greatest results on salvation lines will only be obtained when the church enters upon its exalted privilege, moves up to where it ought to live, gets filled with the Holy Ghost and becomes drunken with the pure, beautiful,

transfiguring happiness that comes from the possession and enjoyment of holiness.

Men can answer argument with argument, and keep up against controversy and debate, with tongue and pen, for weary years without being convinced or surrendering to anything or anybody. But what can they say when their own fellow-creatures stand before them sublimated and intoxicated with an invisible wine that was evidently manufactured in a world of grace and glory. The shining eye, luminous face, thrilling speech, and uncontrollable transport are so evidently of God, and make such a startling projection of the spirit and eternal world into time, and right before their own eyes, that profound conviction is compelled to take place and the old-time query is certain to be heard, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

Once in a meeting in a southern state, the writer was having a hard time in preaching against a perfect wall of coldness and deadness. No presentation of truth seemed able to break up the sluggishness and indifference, and very few came to the altar.

One night in the pulpit, and while the thick, dark condition gendered by human unbelief and Satanic assault was most keenly realized, suddenly a sanctified woman in the audience commenced laughing. And oh, such a laugh! It seemed in its ineffable gladness to have fallen out of heaven. Its indescribable rapture and triumph broke in and upon the congregation like a bombshell shot from the walls of the New Jerusalem. In breathless silence every eye was fixed upon her, and the preaching of the evangelist was unheard. In just a minute's time more another laugh of the same pattern, spirit and power burst forth on the opposite side of the church from a sanctified man. And oh, how he laughed! Every eye was turned upon the man, while a great wonder and silent awe settled on the people. Next the woman broke out afresh; and then the two laughed together with such an unmistakably exultant, triumphant gladness of heart and voice, that not only profound conviction seized the audience but a panic such as God only can send came on the crowd. There was nothing on earth to do but to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Men and women rushed to the altar without waiting for an invitation. Others fell prostrate

in their pews with tears, groans and prayers. The power came down; the revival started that night and rolled on after that like a flood of glory.

The responsibility of the world's salvation rests upon the church. It is in her power to break men up in their sins and backslidings, and bring them with a rush to the altars of God. The Lord has a weapon for his Zion that will make her irresistible. He has a gladness and rapture for his people that will outshine and outdraw all the pleasure shams and happiness counterfeits of this world. He has a joy for his followers in the baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire, and in the life of holiness which follows, that will empty the resorts of sin, and fill the long emptied and silent sanctuaries of grace with rejoicing multitudes.

There is still another way to account for the convicting power of holy joy, in the fact of the potency of the new and unusual.

In one of our western states a woman attended the funeral of her only son, who had been killed in the Philippines. His body had been shipped home by the government, and on a cloudy, rainy afternoon the interment took place. Several hundred men were present, and as the coffin was lowered in the grave in deep silence while the mother, stripped of her only child and only earthly support, stood by looking into the sepulcher, all expected bitter sobs and tears, or loud wails. To their amazement the sanctified woman turned up to the sky a face literally shining, and shouted the praises of God, who was supporting her in this hour of fearful sorrow and desolation. The effect on that crowd of men, many of whom were sinners, was beyond language to describe. We question whether any sermon on the judgment, hell and eternity could have so completely solemnized and convicted them. Not a soul present but felt that God was there, that he was in the woman, and that the strange, unearthly joy which filled her came from him.

It is the unusual connected with the spiritual that intensifies the conviction of men. If Paul and Silas had wept and groaned in the dungeon, all the prisoners around them would have slept on, for the world is used to such sounds and has learned to slumber in their midst, and is actually put to sleep by them as a lullaby. But instead of tears and lamentations, the two beaten and manacled servants of God commenced singing and praising

God; whereupon a tremendous scene of conviction, repentance, prayer and salvation took place, and to this day men have not ceased to talk about it.

On a steamer in the Atlantic the writer was lulled to rest and slept tranquilly on, amid the great throb and roll of the machinery in the hold of the vessel. But one night the big engine stopped, and we instantly awoke. The unusual aroused us with a big start, not to say shock.

So in this world of sighing, sobbing and lamenting, men seem to get accustomed to the sight and sound of sorrow. But if instead, they are confronted with men and women happy and rejoicing in the midst of, and in spite of life's ills and woes and tears, the effect on mind, heart and conscience is one of a most profoundly awakening and lasting nature

If the reader will study the prophecies he will see foretold a great coming glory and power to the church. Multitudes will flock to her courts like doves to the windows. Gold and silver will be poured into her treasury. The nations and isles will sit at her feet and receive the law from her mouth. Her gates shall not be shut at all day or night, because of her vast, world-wide work. And they who afflicted her shall come bending and doing honor to her.

This amazing spiritual power over men by the church arises from her having entered upon her high privilege in grace. Her light has come and the glory of God has risen upon her. She has put on her beautiful garments. She holds the king in the gallery with her moral loveliness. Her gates are called salvation, and her walls praise. She draws men to her, and empties the resorts of sin by possessing and holding up a joy that outstrips all the pleasures of earth, and that is to the convicted and convinced man like the glory of the sun compared to the flickering gleam of a rush-light.

The procession that is to stop all the parades and excursions and journeyings of this world after pleasure and happiness, is described in the thirty-fifth chapter of Isaiah. The prophet says that the persons constituting it are in the "way of holiness," that they are "on the way to Zion," that sorrow and sighing have fled away, that they are singing, and that they have everlasting joy upon their heads.

CHAPTER 19

“THE GREATEST OF THESE”

It is curious to see what the world thinks to be great, greater, and greatest, and then mark the opinions and utterances of heaven. The judgments are not only seen to be diverse but antipodal. God’s wisdom is foolishness to men, and behold the wisdom of this world is foolishness to God. When we leave the ignorance of spiritual things that abounds in the ranks of the unregenerate, and come among God’s people, great is the change and the relief. There is something of commonness of language, agreement of view and harmony of spirit. Certain great essentials are recognized by the evangelical denominations, and we feel that cast out by the world on our common faith in Christ we are brethren.

But even here among the ransomed and blood-washed there is not a seeing eye to eye as should be, and many are the divisions of opinion and life that should not exist.

Two and a half tribes of Israel camped on the banks of Jordan and would not go over to dwell in Canaan. The others crossed. So today there are many of God’s people who dwell in the ^{<421>}twelfth chapter of 1 Corinthians, when just as plainly as Canaan lay across the Jordan, the thirteenth chapter of the same book stands for a deeper, sweeter religious experience, and one which cannot be grown into, but has to be entered upon by a divine work of grace. A crossing of faith is the only means of admission into the good land or life.

And many are going over and into it. They do not decry the good things mentioned in the twelfth chapter, but quote Paul and say that there remains something better; “a more excellent way.”

They do not leave faith or hope behind, for they become the most hopeful of people, and are mighty in faith. Indeed, these two graces reach a permanency as found in the words, “Now abideth faith and hope;” but there has come a blessing which has magnified love. Not only have they

got light on it, but it has been enlarged, perfected, glorified, and in becoming so has enlarged, perfected and glorified them.

Something has come to the front, ascended the throne, filled and now sways the whole being and life in such a way that the utterance of the blissful and blessed heart is that the greatest of all is love.

Paul places it in comparison with other things of a most excellent and desirable character, and shows its superiority. Without a single blow at gifts of healing, knowledge, and governments, yet he declares there is something far ahead of them all.

He does not teach that the preceding blessings are to be given up; on the contrary says "Covet earnestly the best gifts;" but in the next breath affirms, "Yet show I unto you a more excellent way." The better experience is enlarged upon in the ~~four~~ thirteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians, and is seen to be perfect love.

What he declared to be actual facts and experiences in the first century, we find to be as true and real today in the twentieth.

He said faith and hope were great, but love was the greatest of the three, and we all feel and say amen to that to this hour. We have been thrown with men of mighty faith, and individuals of the most hopeful turn of mind; but for a steady companion give us a man full of Christ-like love.

The apostle then mentions the eloquent man; and we all know the marvelous spell produced by the gift of oratory, and the pleasure felt in listening to such a gifted one and the thrill felt in having him give us his hand, a smile, and a word of recognition. But if this is the main endowment of the individual, and pretty much the only one, how we soon weary of his rolling periods, and how tired in the neck we become in contributing the constant upward gaze of admiration and adulation which such persons expect and by and by demand.

It is so much pleasanter to have a man full of love around. And love we know is restful, abounds in beautiful ministries, and is a benediction to mind, soul and body.

Then the apostle compares the blessing with the mere acquisition of knowledge, and places it far ahead.

Doubtless we all rejoice that we have men of wisdom in our midst; beings who seem to understand all mysteries, and are walking encyclopedias of information. No one can make the slightest historical, biographical, theological and doctrinal mistake and misstatement, but down they come upon the party with the force of an Alpine avalanche. The result of several of these experiences of being buried alive by one of these intellectual landslides is to make one pine for the company of a man full of perfect love. For such a person wants us to be right, but he also wants us to live. He intends to correct us, but is going to do it in such a loving, gentle way and in such a private manner, that not only will our stock of sense be increased but our affection for the man doubled, and our gratitude to God intensified an hundredfold for making such humble, patient, faithful, tenderhearted people.

A third character Paul mentions is the charitable man. He is so benevolent that he gives all his goods to feed the poor. And yet declares the inspired writer, if he has not the experience of love described in the thirteenth chapter, it profiteth him nothing.

Here charity is compared, not to say contrasted, with perfect love. The teaching is that the first can exist without the second; though we all know if we have the second we must have the first.

This is a day of much charitableness of a public character. Prominent men, newspapers, orders, fraternities, and society itself court the title, and are proud of the appellation. At the same time they flout the idea of perfect love. They want to be known as being charitable, as heading all subscription lists in behalf of communities suffering from plague, famine, volcanoes, earthquakes and lack of coal. They can be counted on for one, five or ten thousand dollars, but please do not talk to them about being filled with the love taught in the Bible.

Some of us have beheld this charitableness even in the ranks of the holiness movement, and yet all unattended with that spirit which Paul exalts in the wonderful ~~431~~ thirteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians. We have known men generous and liberal to the extreme, but when would brook no contradiction to themselves, or opposition to their plans in any way from anybody. They gave their money freely, laid their goods on the altar at the call of the preacher, church, or religious movement to which they belonged,

but if one got in their way they would run over him and grind him in the dust with no more compunction than the insensate Juggernaut crushes in its course the writhing victims of India.

After knowing and being with Brother Juggernaut for a while, it is certainly refreshing, delightful, life-renewing, not to say life-sparing, to be with a man who has the perfect love taught by Paul and the Savior.

The apostle says that all the money given without this holy, tender, Christ-like love “profiteth nothing.” What does God care for the dollars of a man who in the next moment abuses and vilifies and afflicts the people whom his Son has died for and whom he loves with an everlasting love.

We heard a preacher once draw a picture in words that profoundly moved the audience, and which throws considerable light on the matter in hand.

He said that a father lamenting the waywardness of a sinful son, cried out in the presence of a friend, “My boy is breaking my heart!” Whereupon this friend takes a train, and seeks for weeks the erring lad among the slums and in the brothels of a great city, and finds him at last in a bar-room. Leading him out to a lonely street, with the words that he had a message from his father, he plunges a dagger up to the hilt in his breast, and the youth falls dead at his feet.

Wiping his bloody blade on the corpse, he returns to the father and says, as he meets him, “I have delivered you from your life-long trouble. You need grieve no more. I have removed forever the cause of your heartache.”

“What do you mean?” asked the father.

“Well, I found that ungrateful, disobedient boy of yours, and I killed him in his tracks.”

The words have scarcely left his lips when the father, with a wail of anguish, cried:

“You have broken my heart! Oh, my poor boy!” and falls senseless on the ground.

Verily it seems today that we have men and women in the land who have this strange, horrible idea of love, to go around stabbing and wounding and

slaying the children of God and thinking thereby they will win the smile and approval of heaven.

We have nothing to say against their zeal, earnestness, activity, liberality and charity; but we remember that Paul said there was something greater in the sight of God than these very things: something that would please him better and do far more good in the world. The name of this fault-covering, long-suffering, man-helping and beautiful, heavenly spirit and life is Love.

CHAPTER 20

“THE EVIL DAY”

St. Paul speaks in one of his epistles of “The Evil Day.” From the direction he gives the Christian for guidance for such a time, and from the plain teaching of the context, he was referring to a time of peculiarly heavy temptation.

The evil day in a protracted meeting is recognized by those in attendance, but not understood by all. Some from the heaviness of the service, the limpness and lifelessness of hymn and prayer, and poor results around the altar, fall into the mistake that the Holy Spirit has been grieved, when the real truth is that a new brigade of devils has arrived. Roosting on the pulpit and in the pew, depressing the spirits of God’s people, and stirring up sinners to greater resistance and even devilry, they produce a condition inexplicable to many, but to the evangelist and experienced worker that season thoroughly well known as the evil day of the meeting.

Satan is not omnipresent nor omniscient, and has to be informed by his emissaries as to what is transpiring in all parts of the earth. So oftentimes a protracted meeting has been going on for days before he knows it. But when intelligence comes to him that the holy fire is falling and salvation is flowing, at once he marshals a division of devils and sends them flying earthward, to settle like a black cloud upon workers and audience to hinder, and prevent all they can, the work of salvation from going on. This is the evil day, when mistakes abound, poor sermons seem to be preached, wrong hymns sung, lifeless prayers are offered, and everything seems to be set back and failing generally.

The “evil day” in the Christian experience is just as real, painful and trying a fact. One awakens in the morning with a kind of prophetic sensation or intimation that a hard time is going to be had that day. At breakfast the gale is blowing strong, and at noon a hurricane is on hand. This is the time that nothing seems to go right. Earth seems arrayed against one, and hell is turned loose upon the soul. There is a terrible pressure from without,

while joy runs low in the breast, and the daughters of music are almost dumb.

This is nothing else but a cloud of evil spirits making a united attack upon the child of God. It is not the nagging inward whisper, and nerve drilling temptation of one devil, but the dark encompassing and bearing down upon the heart of a whole regiment of the army of Satan that would, with a steady, combined assault, bring the man down to discouragement, despair and sin.

The sky seems to be of brass that day, the earth iron like, while friends are few, listless, and unsympathetic, and enemies are numerous, busy and unrelenting.

There need be no condemnation nor sense of guilt at such a period, although the tight pressure about the spirit, the absence of spring in the soul, and a strange kind of mental and spiritual torture may be so misconstrued by the young Christian under the false witness and explanation of the devil.

It is not a sinful day, but an evil day. The plan of God in the life seems temporarily lost. The past appears to have been fruitless. A heavy cloud rests on the future. A combination of circumstances pleads for the necessity of retreat and defeat. Analyzed under another light it is a Gethsemane and Gabbatha hour crowded into one. It is felt as a season of lonely sorrow while friends sleep. It is realized in standing bound and silent before false witnesses. It comes again in the rush of a javelin toward you in reward for your playing on a harp before a sulky, sin-possessed Saul. It reaches a culminating power in the consciousness of burning life wrongs where one's own hand cannot be lifted for self-deliverance.

At such times there is a natural cry of the heart for human understanding of the case, and for human help as well. And yet neither were ever scarcer than at such an hour. How many bright, happy homes shine out on the street in almost mocking vision to the lonely pedestrian. On the cars and railway trains, everybody seems to be traveling in couples and groups, to the solitary traveler. The bloody sweat is on the face, while the three friends sleep, and the angel does not appear to strengthen the sufferer.

The apostle gives directions to the Christian for the endurance and deliverance from this sore experience. One is to “put on the whole armor of God.” He enumerates all, the breastplate, shield, helmet and sword; these standing for righteousness, faith, salvation and the Word of God. To get through the evil day successfully, it is necessary not only to be justified, but to be helmeted with full salvation. Not only must we use the shield of faith to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one, but we must handle the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God. Not a single piece of this armor can be laid aside if we would be victor in and over the evil day.

Another direction which St. Paul gives is that we “stand.” This is a most remarkable command, and one that an uninspired man would never have given. The wisdom of earth would say either “retreat” or “charge.” God says “stand.”

It is a wonderful thought that there are such besetments and trials in our life, that the Lord does not expect us to advance a single step at that time. There is no command to go forward, but the word is, “Be still, be quiet, say nothing, do nothing, and stand!”

On the ocean, when a great storm is sweeping the deep, the sailing vessels reef their sails and lay to; while the big steamers turn their heads to the hurricane and keep their propellers going just enough to mount the billows and not drift. In other words, they stand in their evil day.

So it is a blessed thought to know that when the awful blast is upon us from the lower world, God expects no forward movement, but bids us to stand still. We reef sails, front the evil day with its awful storms, and, keeping the wheels of prayer and faith going, wait for the hurricane from hell to end.

It seems that God is depending much upon two forces, an outward pressure and an inward resistance to develop the soul and bring it into the employment as well as enjoyment of its best powers. The outside storm we all know, but the inner resistance we must also know. In full recognition of its importance the apostle writes, “Ye have not yet resisted unto blood striving against sin.”

What a picture this is of a man struggling against dark powers of evil and fierce temptations until the blood leaves the veins and oozes from the pores of the skin to trickle down the body. The sacred reference is well known to the Christian world in the history of Gethsemane.

The standing in the evil day is not only possessing the soul in patience, the keeping quiet under wrong, the being still under noisy accusations and misrepresentations, but if needful the striving and struggling unto death itself against that influence, human or infernal, which would sweep us from our course and engulf us in moral ruin.

It is remarkable what strength is imparted to the spirit, and what force to character by a victory over the evil day. At first when these seasons come, they are very alarming, often misunderstood, and mistakes are made thereby. But with a better understanding they are entered upon by the soul, never with pleasure or enjoyment, but with the assurance that it will come through them victorious; and not only triumphant, but stronger than ever before. Under the blessing of God the evil day is not only a gymnasium, but field of labor, work shop, and battle plain, all in one to the soul.

There is a fable which tells of a hunter who had the strange and peculiar virtues of each animal he slew to enter into him. Of course he became a mighty Nimrod. The Indians have a superstition that the power of the warrior they kill becomes their own. All these are but shadows of a great spiritual truth. We gather an increasing strength with every evil day we triumph over. Not only new lessons of truth come to the mind, but a greater patience to the soul, a profounder sweetness to the spirit, and a mightier force to the character.

With such views of this dreaded testing time, we should not be dismayed when its eclipsing shadow falls upon us: but do as Paul says; see to the whole armor of God being on us, and then patiently, quietly, firmly and faithfully stand until another storm of trial is over, another battle of life fought, another victory over the evil day achieved, and another triumph for Christian faith and character scored and passed into history.

CHAPTER 21

THE BURNT OFFERING

Christ was the great burnt offering for the world. In addition to his death, his whole life was a burning up for mankind. Zeal consumed him for his Father's house; he spared not himself; he became as a root out of a dry ground; he was thought to be fifty years old when he was only thirty.

But we also can be burnt offerings, under and through Christ. The wholly surrendered and devoted Christian life is found to be and is nothing else than a whole burnt offering to God and the human race.

The instant that the child of God puts himself on the altar completely and forever, the holy fire from heaven in the form of the baptism with the Holy Ghost, will fall upon him and he will be truly a burnt offering. The heavenly flame has destroyed the old man or inbred sin, thereby purifying the heart, and remains a cleansing, glowing, warming, cheering, stimulating force and presence in the soul. Just as the fire abided on the altar in the old dispensation through the years and centuries, so the pure, loving flame of the Holy Spirit should never leave the sanctified heart. We should be God's perpetual burnt offerings.

As soon, however, as it becomes apparent that men have thus been honored of God, the devil tries to make burnt offerings out of them in a very different way. He tries to destroy them with his fires of hate, opposition, persecution and death itself.

The adversary did not seem to particularly dread the disciples prior to Pentecost. When he saw all twelve of them unable to cast a devil out of one little boy, he had no reason to be alarmed at the spiritual force they possessed, and so paid them scant attention. But after the Holy Ghost had fallen upon them and each one had become a living, active flame and power, so that thousands of souls were being brought to God in salvation, then it was that Satan fairly rained destruction and death upon them.

Every one of the disciples save one died an unnatural death; while history records the slaying of millions of Christians in the first two centuries. The favorite mode of torture and destruction adopted by the devil was the stake. He burned them up by hundreds of thousands. Doubtless this mode of death was pursued by him, because they were speaking so much of the baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire. "I will baptize you with fire," he said, and behold the hillsides gleamed and sparkled with the death conflagrations of Christians at the stake who thus witnessed in martyrdom for Christ, and sealed their faith with burning flesh and boiling blood, and yet with rapturous shouts to the end.

Unable through Christian law to put men in the dungeon and on the scaffold today, yet the great adversary never forgets his baptism of fire, and if he cannot destroy and torture in one way, he can in another, and so is diligent in these times as ever to oppress, distress, goad, madden, afflict and ruin those who walk with God in white and would follow wherever Christ leads them!

To be God's burnt offering is the signal at once of entering upon a series of trials devil instigated, and hell enforced, which but for the greater grace within, the mightier holy fire in the soul and life, would unquestionably overwhelm the victim, both for time and eternity.

In addition to this the holy man becomes the world's burnt offering. Fagots are piled, and furnaces heated on all sides to consume a being whose godly work and life, whose superior spiritual light and grace makes him a torment to the lukewarm, backslidden and worldly.

Calls are made to him to come down and surrender. Information is imparted that the ages have changed since Christ's time and there is a delightful broadness of indulgence, a latitude of pleasure, a freedom from criticism, a friendliness with everybody, which, though unknown in Christ's day, has been discovered, practiced and enjoyed in the present century.

To refuse this call, and to persist in the narrow way of the gospel, is to bring down a storm of fire from tip of tongue, and point of pen, on all sides.

The temptation to escape all this suffering may be great; but there is a picture flung out by the Word of God, the voice of the Spirit, and the completing touch of a sanctified imagination upon the near coming future, in a scene beheld in the New Jerusalem which may well bid men to pause before adopting a life of compromise and settling at ease in Zion.

We doubt not that great epochal events in the history of the redemption will be honored and celebrated in heaven. At one of these the central figure is seen to have been wounded in head, hands, and feet. A great gash is in his side. Twelve men standing nearest to him are scarred and marked in a like wonderful way. Surrounding them is a great multitude whom the people call “the army of martyrs.” These all suffered and died for Christ. By and by they commence singing, and such a song of sweetness, rapture and triumph that the heart fairly breaks to hear it! Moreover many would like to sing it, but discover to their amazement that they cannot do so; that only the one hundred and forty and four thousand, who “followed the Lamb whithersoever he went,” can sing that song. In other words, there is a peculiar rapture in heaven, and a distinguishing, honor granted to those who suffered greatly on earth for the truth and were made burnt offerings by the hate of a cruel world.

We present, as a fourth thought the fact that men who are burnt offerings to the Lord also consume themselves.

The sinner or man of the world lives for himself. His motto is look out for No. 1. His idea is that this is the highest wisdom; and so he constantly advocates the doctrine. Moreover, his life is a faithful fulfillment and practice of his preaching. He hoards his money, steals his sympathies, pampers his body and systematically escapes from every kind of demand made upon him in the line of generosity, liberality, magnanimity and even humanity itself.

On the other hand, God’s burnt offering lives for others. He or she is a kind of spiritual capital upon which people of every class, age, and condition draw, for their financial, social, intellectual, moral and spiritual betterment and welfare. There seems to be nothing that such living sacrifices are not requested and expected to do. And they do it. The run is steady on their banks, and they meet the demand. So true and devoted are they to the eternal good of their fellow-beings that their very lives seem to

say with one of old, "If thou wilt not have mercy upon them, then blot my name out of the book of life." Again the voice is, "I am willing to decrease that he might increase." And still again, so sublime is the sacrifice of the whole man to the work of doing good, that the words of the great apostle make not simply the framing of such a character portrait, but is the picture, the life, and the man himself as shown in the two verses, "Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus," "For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

Here was a burnt offering indeed, and the world is perishing today for the lack of more like him. An evangelist, in conducting a testimony meeting one day in a large southern city, said to the audience, "If the Christian life was to be described under the figure of a locomotive, which part would you rather be?"

There was a number of prompt answers, which elicited smiles and laughter, and some deep responses of approval. One wanted to be the whistle and let the people know the gospel train was coming. Another wished to be the bell, and warn souls of danger. A third would be a coupler and hitch the churches together. A fourth was willing to be the cowcatcher and save sinners who were fallen in the way. And a fifth desired the office of a brakeman, to slow things down if they got dangerously fast.

Finally after many answers of this order, one of the best laymen in the city arose to his feet and fixed his eyes on the leader of the meeting. Felt and known by all to be a thoroughly good man, his testimony was waited for in profound silence. But owing to some kind of deep, inward emotion that was evident to all, he did not speak for fully a half minute. He then, with a husky voice said, "I would like to be the black coal thrown into the furnace and there burn for the glory of God."

He sat down, and for a whole minute there was not a word heard in the assembly. But there were many wet eyes and swelling hearts in the crowd. All felt instinctively that the most beautiful and forcible speech of the morning had been made in that simple sentence. A true and Christ-like sentiment had been uttered, and it had been spoken by a true and Christ-like man.

A window of heaven seemed to have been opened for a moment just above the heads and hearts of the audience and something of the skies pure and beautiful was beheld. An angel flying past dropped something from his snowy wing upon the souls of the people, and it was of a tenderness and sweetness beyond anything that earth could manufacture. A burnt offering of God had stood up in the congregation, and the flame that was glowing in his own heart and life had warmed and melted and fired the spirits of scores of his fellow Christians. The symbolism of the Levitical or Old Testament dispensation was again vindicated; and the possibility, actuality and perpetuity of the burnt offering shown that very morning, in the fact that one of them was even then standing in their midst.

CHAPTER 22

THE MEAT OFFERING

The meat offering in the Levitical economy consisted of fine flour, beaten oil poured on the same, and frankincense emptied on top of both.

Without stopping to dwell upon this remarkable feature in the old temple worship as observed for many centuries, we would say that as the sin offering still remains in the person and sacrifice of Christ; as the temple and altar continue to abide with us in higher and better forms than known to the Jew; so the meat offering is yet offered to God in the presence and with the undoubted recognition of men.

It has occurred to the writer that after a penitent waits on God with the sin offering Jesus Christ and receives pardon, and then with the baptism with the Holy Ghost becomes a “burnt offering” himself, that he will at that moment realize what is meant by the “peace offering.” He is filled with that tranquillity that comes from a clean heart and the abiding presence of the Holy Ghost, and he approaches the family, community and church bringing genuine peace, albeit like his Lord the Prince of Peace, he comes with a sword.

Just as a surgeon wields a knife before handling a liniment, so the true peacemaker of the gospel declares to men the necessity of the fire and sword in the heart and life of the individual and congregation, before a healthy, abiding tranquillity is possible to the soul. The peace of compromise, or covering up, is a fraud, delusion and snare. Because of their insistent statements God’s peacemakers are not always recognized to be such in the world, and are rather regarded in the light of agitators and belligerents, but they are true offerings nevertheless.

Out of such a divine work, and combination of grace and experience as seen in pardoned sin, the holy fire, and permanent peace, there is certain to come the meat offering that is needed today beyond anything we can mention in the human line.

It pleases heaven to save men through men. The hand, foot, eye, tongue, heart, brain, body and soul are all under tribute in the plan of salvation to spread the gospel, lead men to God, and bring temporal relief and spiritual blessing and blessedness to the world. The reasons for this are so evident that there is no need to state here a single one of them. The fact is palpable, however, that the hitch, and delay in salvation is never on the divine, but the human side. The world is starving and perishing for lack of the help, strength, food and life that comes from the meat offering.

The Lord has a way of so cleansing, filling, firing and furnishing a human soul, that such an one instantly becomes a meat offering to the morally poverty stricken and spiritually famished of this earth. There is a famine in the land; God would relieve it; who will carry the relief?

There is no question but that the Divine Being would have every pulpit in the city and country to be like the filled cribs and barns in the time of Jacob. Starvation was widespread in Egypt, but Joseph had abundance of corn laid up in his granaries, and the people came in multitudes and were supplied. So while there is awful need in the world today, and the famine general, yet Christ, the great Joseph of the skies, has plenty over against all this spiritual want, and would have the pulpits to be his storehouses, where the people could flock in their hunger, and go away filled and satisfied as well as saved.

It is a fearful thing to find a vacant repository when we wanted fullness. To have presented us old dry shucks when we desired corn. To get a stone when we needed and were dying for bread. And this is no infrequent experience, for there be many empty cribs in the land.

The blessedness of being one of God's meat offerings becomes now all the plainer and more important to the mind. And we are profoundly grateful for the fact that we have such, and the tribe is increasing.

Such a man is felt to feed the soul. His words have in them spiritual nourishment, and we realize an increasing strength, as we follow his thought and take in his utterances, even as we feel the gathering in us of a new physical force and energy when we eat after a time of emptiness and faintness.

All of us have listened to sermons that were so full of spiritual meat that the very memory of them in after years gave us help and did us good. Even as the ruminating animals that extract nourishment out of a cud that had been previously swallowed; in like manner we chewed and were invigorated and then afterwards got additional good from that which has already been received and blessed us months and years before.

The same gracious power is felt in the testimonies and prayers that come from the pew. All of us know what it is to listen to windy experiences, frothy exhortations, and voluble supplications, which left us as weak as they found us, if not weaker. We derived no refreshment, or renewal from what was a mere array of words without life or unction.

On the other hand we recognize instantly when we have one of God's meat offerings around in the class and prayer meetings of the church. Their simplest utterances seem to go at once to the heart. What they say cheers, strengthens and builds us up in a most unmistakable and abiding way.

It is not simply that God blesses what they say, but God is in what they declare. It is not alone the truth they speak, but the truthful heart and consistent life that stand back of the verbal deliverance. Then through the constant indwelling of the Holy Ghost their very tones and manner get hold of us.

The flour represented in their moral make-up was not a poor article, but, as the Bible says, "fine flour." The oil was not rancid, but the "beaten oil" of the sanctuary. There was no stale smell, but the bread was fresh; and on top of all, some frankincense of delightful fragrance was laid. How full of meaning are all these things to the spiritual man. God's meat offering in a sense commends itself by its own excellency.

We once knew an elderly Christian woman who possessed the experience of holiness, and was the meat offering of the entire neighborhood in which she lived. People came to her with every variety of care and trouble, and though misfortune and ill health often visited her and her household, yet she was a blessing to every one who came into her presence. They all went away helped, strengthened and cheered. Repeatedly the writer as a young preacher would call upon her, burdened with the duties, trials and discouragements of a minister's life, and he would leave her house with a

strange, sweet sense of newness of life, hope and energy. Somehow the world outside looked brighter, and the coming victory of Christ's kingdom took the form of an absolute certainty. In addition to this would be realized a willingness to work longer and harder for the Savior, and to endure with perfect patience all the sorrows, difficulties and opposition of this life, to the very end.

This woman kept our soul from spiritual starvation for years, until the time of famine was over in the land. Many times as we have glanced backward over the years that are gone, have we thanked God for this "meat offering" which he providentially placed in a certain large city to save a number of souls from hunger, faintness, failure and death.

We have known people so saturated with the grace of which we are writing, that their very presence in the sick room, class and prayer meeting, and in the pulpit was inspiration, sustenance and power. One's faith was quickened, hope brightened, and love deepened by the very company of such godly, saintly men and women. They were meat offerings, indeed, to the weak and hungry in heart.

Christ said that we had to eat his body and drink his blood to have life in us. This great mystery but profound truth deeply offended the Jews. But many of us in being partakers of the divine nature are rejoicing in an experience that is perfectly described by these same misunderstood words of the Son of God.

So in a deep spiritual sense we feed upon each other. A man's life that has been blood-washed and Spirit kept is like actual food to the soul. We derive spiritual nourishment and help from the contemplation as well as contact with the godly. We grow strong in listening to the faithful words and also in looking upon the devoted life of a holy man.

Thank God for the "meat offerings" he has sent to dwell among us. For the glory of the church and good of the world may they be multiplied a thousand fold.

CHAPTER 23

THE TRESPASS OFFERING

The trespass offering mentioned in the Old Testament with frequency, was not synonymous with the sin offering, though both were of shed blood, and were made because of transgression. But the trespass offering presented because of a sin of ignorance, followed the sin offering in order of time, and was brought by an Israelite or child of God.

God in this offering distinguished between the guilt of a lifetime which required pardon for a multitude of evil words and acts, and the single transgression of a follower who had been betrayed in some manner into iniquity. If there had not been such a discrimination between the willful wickedness of years, and the momentary weakness of a servant springing oftentimes from lack of knowledge, then would the plan of redemption been a faulty one, and the Almighty less merciful, and even just than earthly parents.

No matter how excellent a Christian one may be, yet he cannot but feel the difference in extending pardon to a man who has wronged him for ten or twenty years, and the granting of a swift, loving forgiveness to a dutiful child who has erred in a single respect. One is a deliberate transgressor, the other a momentary trespasser. One has an unbroken record of guilt, the other a history of devotion with but a single or few departures from obedience and faithfulness. Such a man would be unnatural and unjust as well, if he felt the same to the two parties. Pardon, full and free, may and should be given in both cases; but with what a different look would the two be regarded, and how peculiarly tender would be the throb of the heart toward one who had been betrayed into error in the midst of affection and devotedness. One would be necessarily accompanied with all that is meant by the sin offering, the other relieved and illumined with a privilege conceived by love and justice, and extended because of previous integrity, and an inward rectitude that had been bent, but not destroyed.

It is in ignorance of this fact that many of God's followers are in darkness and bondage today. They allowed him no discrimination of character. They clothed him with a cast-iron treatment, unbending and similar to all. They made past faithfulness, and a remaining abiding love in the heart for God to amount to nothing with him. So when they stumbled into some kind of error, they immediately cast away all their confidence, felt they had exhausted the atonement, and straightway moved into the ~~sixth~~ sixth verse of the sixth chapter of Hebrews, or into the ~~twenty-sixth~~ twenty-sixth verse of the tenth chapter of the same book; and had all their letters directed to themselves under the name of reprobate, apostate, crucifier of Christ, and a certain hopeless looker for of a coming judgment and fiery indignation.

If God had made no provision for the possible mishaps occurring in the great moral battle now going on in this world, he would neither have been omniscient or merciful.

A general in time of war provides for the emergencies and contingencies of the conflict by a body of troops held in the rear and called the reserve. This same body of men has saved many an army from defeat. The question is will God be less wise than an army officer? When an immortal soul engaged in the awful struggle against sin, the world and devils, should be borne down, is there no rescue or deliverance thought of and provided? Has not God a great reserve force of grace, that can be summoned and rushed forward like re-enforcements to the fainting soul? The surgeons and nurses have bandages, liniments, stimulants and medicine for the wounded, to heal and restore them to the ranks. Has not the Lord the same precious blood on hand, which first saved the soul, to quicken, revive, renew, cleanse and heal it, when smitten and wounded by the darts and arrows of the great adversary?

To say no to this, is to rank God beneath men in foresight and wisdom.

Every artillery wagon which rolls into battle, goes there not with four but five wheels. The four are on the axletrees, but the fifth is strapped on behind as a provision for the untoward events of the engagement about to take place. The fifth wheel is a kind of trespass offering.

It is a rare thing for a cannon ball to take off two wheels from the gun carriage or caisson. Generally it is one. So when the catastrophe occurs,

the driver is not at all in despair; but leaping from his horse, he cuts the rope binding the fifth wheel, claps it on the axletree, drops in the lynch pin, springs upon his horse, cracks his whip and away he flies over the field of conflict with his cannon pouring forth death and defeat upon the enemy from every elevation.

Will God let one of his creatures outstrip him in foreknowledge, and in provision for the casualties and mishaps of the greatest battles and most dreadful war ever waged in the universe? When one of the combatants is struck by a shot, the spirit injured, and the life vehicle leans and drags, is there no fifth wheel application of grace, to send us flying back to conflict and victory? When the soul is hurt by some thought, word or deed, is the Christian soldier at once counted out, and left dead on the plain, or cannot the touch of the life-giving blood make him leap to his feet, and do more wonderful things for God and man than he or she ever did before?

In reply we say that the institution of the trespass offering is the sure, unmistakable and abiding answer to that. The wounded spirit can be instantaneously and thoroughly restored by a fresh faith in, or presentation of the blood of Christ, and this time as a trespass offering.

This offering, as has been said before, was to cover sins of ignorance. On reflection one will be surprised how many mistakes and mishaps in the spiritual world are covered by this single word. There is an overrating of our own strength, and an under-rating of the power of temptation and the devil. Then there is distrust of good people, and the belief in false friends. So through many kinds of ignorance, the soul may be shot and hurt. But the goodness of God has provided restoration and recovery in the blood of Jesus. The Word is, Fly to the blood! Bring the trespass offering! Leap forth from moral danger and disaster, clean, free and exultant through the wonderful abounding grace of the Son of God.

Many awaking to the fact of the profound gracious meaning of the trespass offering are doing this all over the land, and are bidding farewell forever to Doubting Castle and Giant Despair.

They see the difference between apostasy, and momentary weakness; between willful, deliberate sin, and the temporary staggering under

bewildering spirit voices, wrong conceptions of duty, and the crushing power arising from a combination of most trying circumstances.

It is a case where the sin offering is not needed. It is not a rebel and alien who approaches, but a loving servant of God, who has been betrayed into intellectual mistake, switched into error, spoken unadvisedly, and acted so as to grieve the Holy Spirit and injure his own soul.

The word from the discriminating Almighty is to bring the trespass offering. It is the same precious blood of Christ, but it is not an enemy or stranger who brings it. And it is not for a long array of sins in the past, but for a child of God who has stumbled, blundered, got hurt, and now, in a tender, holy sorrow, would obtain victory out of defeat, wisdom out of mistake, and plant the feet on higher ground than he has ever stood upon before.

A famous authoress tells of a lady who had obtained the blessing of sanctification in one of her meetings. For two weeks she fairly rode on the sky, and the moon seemed to be under her feet. Nothing seemed to worry her. One morning everything went wrong, the children were cross, the stove refused to cook, the husband was impatient. Suddenly, in dressing a refractory child, she spoke quickly to the offender in rebuke. In an instant the “Accuser” was whispering “You have sinned! Where is your sanctification?”

She believed in the voice, thought it was the Lord, cast away her confidence and fell into gloom for a whole year.

The woman who led her into the blessing, brought her back, with the words, “I am not sure that your quick word to the child was anger or petulance. Anyhow the voice that whispered to you so exultantly that you had sinned, was not that of the Lord. But better than all, even if your spirit had been ruffled, and your speech unadvised and wrong — you should instantly have fled to God with the blood, crying, the blood cleanses, the blood cleanses, and believing faithfully what you said until the witness was restored.”

This was only another way of telling the woman what we have presented in this chapter, that the blood of Jesus is not only a sin offering for the far-away, rebel stranger and alien, to make him a citizen of the kingdom

and servant of God; but it is also a trespass offering, a blessed mode of instantaneous restoration and recovery to the follower of Christ, when he has been darkened, saddened, and wounded in the struggle and battle of life.

CHAPTER 24

PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERING

We are not made pure by suffering. Purity comes through the blood of Christ. But there is a certain perfectness that comes as the caption indicates, along the line of pain and tribulation.

The soul is remarkable for many things, and not least in the fact that it becomes trained, disciplined, developed, enriched by suffering. The photograph of a thoughtless, giddy being of sixteen laid down by the side of another portrait taken forty or fifty years afterward of the same person, with face all luminous, ennobled and glorified with the profound changing experiences of life, while spent in the service of Christ, would fully and plainly illustrate what we mean.

Suffering is a big word, and covers many kind of heartaches and life sorrows. No soul can enter upon and issue from these spirit histories and be the same. Sometimes the stoic is made thereby. Oftener there comes forth the sour or embittered member of society. In addition we see the infidel emerging from the conflict with all faith in God and man gone. Or we read the act of the suicide who could not wait on God for deliverance but went down with a crash into perdition by a self-inflicted murder.

There are still others who never become Christians, yet are benefited in different ways and measures by the afflictions of life. They are sobered and sometimes shocked into nobler lives. They are scourged into good sense, better behaving, and a wiser and kinder treatment of others.

It remains, however, for those who know God, walk with Christ, and feel his cleansing blood, to declare the full blessed power, the gracious ministry of affliction to the soul. Purified before, yet they come to know after years of bitter trial what is meant by being perfected through suffering.

One result of such experience is weanedness from the world.

According to the Bible, this earth is marked for a dreadful coming destruction. Unless something happens to cut us loose, we will go down with it. Faith opens our eyes to see its hollowness, corruptness and danger, but suffering under God completes the work of disenthralment.

It is significant to see how protracted physical pain can reconcile even unsaved men with the thought of death and the grave. What must it do with the saved. Now add the pangs of disappointed hopes, the death of loved ones, the coldness of friends, the ingratitude of children, the wrongs and injustice of men, the loss of property, the humiliation of failure and countless days of temptation and trial, and who does not see a most wonderful disentanglement of the heart from such a world. One can all but hear the snapping of the cords which formerly held with so many strands the deluded spirit to this planet. Like a swaying balloon fastened now by a single rope to earth, the soul kept by the solitary connection of duty, has the steady longing to fly away and be with Christ.

All this under grace is accomplished without the child of God being soured or embittered. He is simply disillusioned, disenchanted, corrected in judgment and desire, and now feels the attraction of gravitation in him set another way, and that upward and heavenward.

A second result is the development of the passive graces such as patience, gentleness, and long-suffering.

It is the presence of these virtues, rather than a restless activity, that declares the deeper Christian life. And it is such a character that reminds us more of Christ and affects us most profoundly for good. Jehu had zeal, but it is the meek and gentle Jesus who is winning the world today.

By his blood we obtain the pure heart, and then follows the long, severe training, which develops and perfects his own work in us to highest excellence and maturity.

We have the words of James that divers temptations try the faith, and this same trial of faith produces patience, and patience itself has a work, that we might be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. Peter also declares that there may come to us a heaviness through manifold temptations; but that this trial of faith will bring forth something to us and in us far more

precious than gold, and to be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

Just as bread and meat by some law of our physical being is changed into blood and strength and life; so the sufferings, tossings, testings, temptations and trials of life, laid hold of by faith and endured as pleasing God, become transmuted into moral force, greater heavenly mindedness, and Christian character itself.

A person need only begin to fret and rail over some untoward circumstance, instead of enduring with the gospel spirit; or accept it humbly and prayerfully instead of complaining and worrying, to see the whole truth of what is declared in this chapter. It is as we receive these heart-breaking calamities that they become food or poison to our souls, life or death to our experience, and salvation or damnation at last, at the end of our earthly probation.

The words saint and suicide both begin with the letter "s." They branch out fearfully with a most divergent meaning because of such different attitudes to the sorrows that are bound to come upon the soul. The one fell on the rock, was broken but saved; the other fell under it and was ground to powder. One gathered sweetness, wisdom and strength from the vicissitudes of earth, while the other wore himself out fighting with the inevitable and the unconquerable by human strength alone, and so filled with bitterness, unbelief and desperation, finally took the life which God gave him and sank into hell.

In watching bathers at the seashore we noticed that they who stood and received the great breakers were swept from their feet; but those who went in farther and cast themselves on the bosom of the deep were borne upward and carried most easily and delightfully onward by these same great billows of power. Just so there is a casting of the soul on the wave of trouble by faith, and behold we sink not, but are lifted up and borne along in the better life and toward the better land with every fitful blast or howling tempest that sweeps upon us.

A third result of suffering is a truer knowledge of the heart, our own as well as those of other people.

It is too late to find out our weaknesses of character in death, or in eternity. This world is the place, and our present life the time to make all such discoveries. And true it is that no drill and probe of the dentist finds out more surely the nerve that needs treatment or removal, than the sorrows and ills of earth expose our moral blemishes and diseases. And no surgeon's knife goes more surely on its revealing way in the body, showing where the poison worked or the bullet lodged, than the sore trials of life cutting deep in the spirit, make plain to the moral consciousness the absence of faith or lack of steadfastness where there had been fancied strength and boasted confidence in God.

This knowledge of the heart is all essential for deliverance from temptation, for increased waiting upon God and for the existence of humility. So we see how God makes tribulation, by his overruling power, a handmaiden of grace to the soul.

A fourth result of suffering is a kinder and more pitiful dealing with men.

Some men crave justice to be done them, but all need kindness. We have yet to see the soul that does not yearn for and appreciate such treatment.

Our observation is that a life of sorrow and trial is a wonderful perfecter of sympathy, gives a tenderness to the voice, compassion to the spirit and an amazing readiness to forgive and forget, to bear and forbear, and to extend the fallen one a chance to recover and try again.

We recall in both political and religious assemblies how severe and drastic measures are always strenuously and heatedly advocated by the young. After their fiery denunciations, it is refreshing and edifying to look at the quiet faces and hear the moderate tones of elderly men who, knowing the weakness of human hearts and the weariness, discouragements and besetments of human lives, counsel for pity, mercy and another chance given the criticized and condemned.

Who does not recall the martinet methods adopted by young parents with their first children, a military rule with frequent and fearful punishments introduced into the family life and called the home government.

We give a picture seen more than once in the past where the erring boy is arraigned for rebuke and to receive sentence before the whole household.

The offense was a torn jacket, mud brought in the hall, or something wrong done at school. The father declares with crimson face that he ought to be trounced to an inch of his life. The mother with high voice says she is determined to pack him off to bed and not let him have anything but bread and water for a whole day. The boy knows he is guilty, but somehow the language and faces around him have only turned him to stone in feeling and appearance. By and by the grandfather, sitting near, and whose heart has been aching over and for the boy, puts his arm around the child, draws his head upon his shoulder, and says in a tender voice, "Let us give him another chance, I know he is sorry;" and instantly the lad bursts into tears.

It was a simple scene, but how much was in it and back of it. The gray-haired man remembered his own boyhood, his many faults, blunders, mistakes and misdoings. The pain and suffering of years, with the knowledge they had brought him of his own shortcomings and failures, made him wonderfully tender to the lad at his side. And somehow the lad never forgot that look, voice and plea in his behalf, though the grass has been waving over the grandfather's grave for thirty years.

Finally the sufferings and sorrows of time add wonderfully to one's influence and power for good in this world.

When the young mother has lost her first born, it is not the gay friends of her social circle that she wants to see, or who can do her good. They may sympathize in word, but they cannot relieve the breaking heart as the eye falls on the empty cradle, or the arms stretch out in the night for the little form that is laid away in the cemetery. But when the serious browed yet peaceful faced Christian woman calls, who has buried her all in the graveyard, her every touch brings comfort, and the soothing voice, speaking of submission to God, and reunion in heaven by and by, causes sweet, blessed, relieving tears to gush from the eyes, while the precious rest that Christ can give the storm-tossed of earth comes stealing into the soul.

Recently a lady who had known much sorrow wrote to the author that a couple of boy evangelists had been conducting a meeting in her church. She added, "Doubtless they were good young men, but they were powerless to reach my case and supply my need."

The hungry, trouble-smitten heart does not have to write that way when one stands in the pulpit not only approved of God by his attendant Spirit, but who, like his Lord, has known sorrow, become acquainted with grief, and been tempted, tested and tried in all the severe and melancholy ways known so well by the race. Somehow such a hand sweeps with thrilling power every chord of the human breast, such a voice while searching to the spirit's depth brings healing with it, and such a face lined with sorrow, but illumined with victory, shines in hope and directing power upon the drifting, fainting soul in the audience, even as a lighthouse gleams with a gladdening cheer and inspiration upon the lonely mariner tossing in his boat on the waves.

Deep as any affliction may be, and keen as any suffering shall prove, yet if by them, through the grace of God we are made tenderer, wiser, kinder, more pitiful, and better able to help men and women in their journey through life and in their battle for heaven, we have certainly not suffered in vain, but sorrowed to present and everlasting good.

CHAPTER 25

“THE RENEWING OF THE HOLY GHOST”

The above expression as used by Paul in his letter to Titus describes the second work of grace. He wrote, “He saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” So, according to the apostle, salvation is a double work. It is the washing of regeneration and something else which he calls the renewing of the Holy Ghost. This “renewing” he mentions again in ⁶¹⁰Romans 12:2, where the “brethren,” after being told to make a perfect consecration are informed that they will be then and there “transformed by the renewing of your mind.” This came after having made a living sacrifice of themselves.

Five years afterward the apostle writes to Titus and seems to hold the same view as he says, “He saved us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.” We emphasize the “and” to show the force of the copulative conjunction.

In further distinction of the first expression, “washing of regeneration,” Paul says the renewing of the Holy Ghost was “shed” upon them. “Which he shed upon us abundantly,” is the language of the following verse. One work, then, is a “washing,” the other a “shedding.” And it was the latter that Peter referred to when he cried out just after receiving the baptism with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, “He hath ‘shed’ forth this which ye see.” So the “shedding” refers not to the new birth by the Spirit, but to the baptism with the Spirit. Therefore, according to the Word of God, “the renewing of the Holy Ghost” is not regeneration but a shedding of the Spirit upon believers, in other words, the baptism with the Holy Ghost.

Paul says, “He saved us,” and makes salvation to stand connected with a double work. This at once throws light on the words of Cornelius, where he told Peter that he had been sent for that he and his house might be “saved.” Evidently the man used the word in the sense of full salvation, for as Peter was preaching the Holy Ghost fell upon Cornelius and his

already “God-fearing household.” Afterwards Peter declared plainly in ~~415B~~ Acts 15:8, 9, that the blessing which came upon Cornelius was identical with that which occurred to the disciples at Pentecost.

The trouble with most Christians is that they make salvation mean too little. They do not take the Bible teaching about it. They stop at justification, when that is merely the gateway. They make regeneration a final grace when it is an initial act. We have been brought out of sin that we may be brought into holiness. We are bidden, after the new birth, to go on — not grow — to go on to perfection.

There is the salvation of justification, but that is not all of salvation. Jesus was “manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil.” “He gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people.”

So Cornelius was fully saved when he received the baptism with the Holy Ghost. And it is full salvation that we all obtain, when, after the washing of regeneration, we have shed upon us the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

In a sweet, though lesser sense, our spirits are blessed in the regenerated as well as sanctified life with renewings of the Holy Ghost. By this is meant refreshings from the presence of the Lord, regirdings, reanointings, and all those blessed energizing and vitalizing influences of the Spirit, which come upon, and go through the soul, in times of labor, temptation, wrong, loss, bereavement and sorrow.

These tender touches, blessed smiles, heartmeltings, thrillings, and overflowings of the Holy Spirit, not only enrich the experience, but reinvigorate and re-empower the whole spiritual man, and one is made delightfully conscious of advancement and the undoubted possession of higher ground in the realm of grace and Christian character.

In many ways the soul may be smitten, sorely hurt, and come into languidness and feebleness. The loss of friends, the tongue of detraction, the sapping power of loneliness, the grief of injustice done and wrong inflicted — all these things and more, have temporarily afflicted the lives of many of God’s best children.

They will not go under the juniper tree, but still they are hurt. They will not give up the duties they owe to man and God, but there are often inward pangs while they walk with faithfulness of life to do the will of heaven.

At such times the Spirit descends with healing in his wings, to make well the wound, and sound and strong again the drooping heart. He may enter the soul gently and gradually, or suddenly; it matters not; in either case there has been a blessed “renewing,” and it came from the Holy Ghost.

It is remarkable the different agencies and instrumentalities used by the Holy Spirit to thus bring relief to the burdened heart. Sometimes it is under the preached word, sometimes in listening to a hymn, sometimes in a conversation with a godly person, and still again when one is alone in thought and prayer with God.

The beauty of a sunset, the stillness of the stars, the stroke of a bell and the voice of one singing in the distance, have all been used by the Holy Ghost for the melting as well as strengthening of the soul.

We read once of a woman who, sorely pressed by poverty, was on the borders of despair; when, looking out of her window at the snow-covered ground, she saw a sparrow hopping about as brightly and cheerfully as though his food was not covered up six inches by the white bands of winter. At once the words of Christ rushed over her, “Not a sparrow shall fall to the ground without your Father.” “Ye are of more value than many sparrows.” At once, under the touch of the Spirit, there came not only a rush of tears to her eyes, but a sweep of mightily increased faith to her soul.

But there are times of still graver moment to individuals, when fierce opposition beats on them from earth and hell; when one is “wounded in the house of his friends,” when, after days and months and years of being nagged at, and hounded after, the soul, still loyal to God, gets acquainted with the word Gabbatha, and the shadowy recesses and bloody sweat of Gethsemane. When cries go up for deliverance, and sighs for heaven fill the heart and life.

The Savior in his great trial in the garden had an angel to strengthen him. We can have the Holy Ghost. And fly he does to the relief of the tempted

and tortured spirit, and with one touch of that hand which is to raise the dead, the drooping, toil-worn servant of God leaps to his feet, and with a brighter hope, a greater faith, and sweeter joy than ever, takes up the load, stretches his hands upon the cross, and is ready for duty or sacrifice, for life or death, according to the will of God. This is a renewing of the Holy Ghost,

We find nothing like this anywhere else. In the physical realm, when a man's health breaks down, the rule is that the next thing, he is missed from the office and street, and then the hearse is beheld at his door.

We have found this to be so often the case that when the papers state that a certain public man has begun to fail, we all know what is soon to come. So the announcements of Grant's illness and of Hobart's sickness, were soon followed by dispatches of increasing weakness, next the death, and then the burial.

But in the spiritual kingdom one has a source of everlasting health and life and power back of him. The Holy Spirit can get into the dispirited man, and breathe afresh upon him, and touch him, and lo, strength, joy, health, life, and victory are seen throbbing in his soul, shining in his face, and overflowing in his utterances, labors and achievements, beyond and above anything that was ever beheld in the life before.

Those that expected to see an invalid saw a man of war, panoplied with gospel armor from head to heel. Those who came to attend a funeral found a coronation on their hands.

Truly, in the name of all the toil-worn, lonely, misunderstood, misrepresented, bereaved, discouraged and afflicted people of God, we can say thanks be unto God for the tender, precious, blessed renewings of the Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER 26

ACCOUNTABLE FOR CHARACTER

Character is something that we are all born without, but which every one reaching the years of moral accountability must and will possess in leaving this world. Being moral quality, a baby has not a particle of it; but as the years roll by it is certain to come.

Every individual stands in it before the judgment bar of the Son of God. Men secure it between the cradle and the grave. It commands the scrutiny of the all-wise God, brings from him a righteous sentence of approval or condemnation, and settles the question of destiny.

Strange to say, while the man was born without character, it now has become, in a most striking sense, himself. He goes to the right hand or left at the judgment, and after that rises to the skies, or sinks into hell, by reason of that which has been made in him during his moral probation, and which he feels in a despairing or exultant way, to be his true self.

For this character, after the close of earthly life, there is no change, and from it no escape. If in hell the man grows worse through the ages. He finds within himself a bottomless abyss, down which he falls forever. If in heaven there is steady enlargement and ascension! While soundless depths confront the lost, topless heights of unspeakable glory rise up through the cycles before the redeemed. But while there is such a change of progression, there is no alteration of nature; the bad never gets good, the good will never become bad. There has been such a fixing and settling of moral quality, that a change in either becomes an utter impossibility.

This being the case, every one should be profoundly concerned about what produces character. How do we come into the possession of such a nature, such a heart, thought, and life fixedness and establishment, that its existence or presence decides the question whether we will live rejoicing with Christ and the angels, or lift up our voices in wails of despair among devils and the lost in hell?

It seems that in our creation, with avenues of various kinds leading up to the citadel of the soul, there is but one gateway opening into it; and God has been pleased in his goodness to give the key of that portal to its true owner. He can lock or unlock the door of his heart to those things or beings who beat and knock on the outside. He can say yes or no to God; and he can say yes or no to the world or the devil. Before any man or woman can commit an outward sin, there must be first an inward consent. The transgressor falls inside before he goes down on the outside. In other words he unlocks and lets the adversary in. So marvelous is this power, or moral door, of which we are writing, that neither God, man or devil can force it. It has always to be opened from within.

This cannot be made an argument for the absence of inbred sin in the heart of the young, nor a plea for Adamic innocence and purity in children. On the contrary, the sin inheritance or proneness to wander is beheld in them all. The fact that we possess this wonderful attribute is felt by every living man or woman. We can say no to right or wrong, we can open or shut the heart to God or the devil.

It is this very power which is the basis for the action of conscience. If we were forced to do right there could be no inward approval, and if we were compelled to do wrong, there would be no lash or sting from the monitor of the soul. The agony of mind and heart felt by the transgressor over his sin arises from the fact that he committed evil when he needed not to have done so. He could have said No! to the tempter on the outside, and kept the door locked.

Of course this tenderness of conscience, and these pangs of remorse will disappear with continued iniquity, but the mental and physical suffering existed in all at one time, and so proves the point we are presenting.

If a merchant has a store and valuable goods, his desire is to have a burglar-proof door. Say, also, that he procured one, and that it was not possible for outsiders to break it down. Inside he stations his clerk, who sleeps there at night. The entrance is closed, and locked, and the key is within. Now, when he, the owner, comes down some morning and finds the portal wide open, the building gutted, the goods destroyed and the money stolen from the drawer, he knows beyond all peradventure that the clerk must have admitted the robbers. If the door and lock were faulty and

weak, and were found to be forced, there could nothing be said to or against the clerk; but as examination proves that they were not battered down nor wrenched open, but are intact — only open — then the condemnation falls upon the employee. He opened the door! It could only be done from the inside, and he was on the inside!

The application of this simple parable shows why human beings suffer when they sin. It is because they unlocked the door!

Now the spiritual man is made by a series of door openings. In other words, character is the result of moral choices and a life that harmonizes with these decisions. It is fashioned in us, and takes a certain image according to that which we let into the house, or life building. If we open to God and good, it is evident to any what will take place. If we unlock to sin, of course “the goods” will be destroyed. The precious things of heart and mind will be trodden under foot or stolen away.

In Christian character the beginning is made by taking Christ as the justifier. The soul is blood-washed and begins the blessed and endless life of growth in grace and advancement in the knowledge of the Son of God. Later, Christ is recognized and received as the sanctifier. When purity of heart is thus obtained by the baptism with the Holy Ghost, the door of the soul is ever open to holy influences and shut against sins. The transformation is apparent to all, and the character is seen in every act, heard in the voice, and appears all luminous and glorious in the countenance.

Just as clearly does the evil admitted to the heart loll in the doorway of the mouth, peer out of the windows of the eye, and trace an unmistakable handwriting on the face. Whenever the will consents, or the lock is turned in the portal, sin rushes in and takes possession of the house. The ruin of the soul is seen in the establishment of evil. Wickedness begins and progresses steadily before every eye.

Defense has been made for the sinful character and ruined life with the plea of the power of circumstance or environment. Notice is called to the fact that noble plants have not only their growth retarded, their stature dwarfed, but their very nature changed by unfavorable soil and the proximity of noxious weeds. This may be true in the vegetable kingdom,

but man is greater than a vegetable. The wonderful power God has given to him is that he can choose between good and evil, can close the door of his heart to God or Satan, and, carrying this amazing attribute or power into the kingdom of grace, he can rise superior to every circumstance of life.

The whining excuse made by many that they were overwhelmed by temptation, could not help sinning, is absurd and false; for no outward sin or violation of God's commandment can take place until there has been a moral weakening and yielding, yea, an actual consent to it from the invisible man within.

If we were compelled to sin, then not only would conscience fail to accuse, but the laws of the land could not be executed upon us. The transgressor is hung or sent to the penitentiary for certain crimes, because he, in full exercise of intellectual and moral forces, went into wrongdoing. How could the jury pronounce the word guilty, and the judge affix the sentence of punishment when it was known that compulsion had been used throughout by evil parties upon the prisoner. Instead of wrath, there would be pity in every heart for the unfortunate one.

One teaching in the life of Daniel is that a man can live surrounded by worldliness, with its wassail and revelry, and yet remain uncontaminated in spirit and life. The similar lesson in the biography of Joseph is that a child of God can dwell in the heart of a sensuous and sensual nation and keep pure and unspotted.

These two lives confirm what we say about one's ability to open or shut the portal of the soul to righteousness or wickedness. Daniel, though in Babylon, opened his windows toward Jerusalem and prayed in that direction. It was a figure or sign of a great spiritual act taking place, and it naturally resulted in an amazing difference between himself and the people of Babylon.

Judas flung wide the doors of his spirit in the direction of the Pharisees, the love of money, and the betrayal of the innocent blood. No wonder he was called a devil by Christ, and departed by the route of suicide to "his own place." And yet he was once an apostle and had his name in the Book of Life.

It makes a great difference to what and to whom we open. The inevitable result of widely varying moral choices and decisions is a dissimilarity of character as striking as light and darkness, cleanness and foulness, and life and death.

It is the possession of this key to the door of our souls that places the fearful burden of responsibility upon us. With it we can open to or shut out the infinite God himself. And when we have received him, the “key” is still in our hands, and it is according to the moral quality of the thoughts, desires, purposes, motives, affections and ambitions we admit, that we change from glory to glory, or drift steadily further and further from God, and finally stand, forever, in the character that has been invisibly but not less surely produced or built up from within.

This nature for good or evil becomes set or fixed at death. At the end of probation, the possibility of change is ended. It enters upon immutability in a most solemn sense. It is brought to judgment before the Son of God. It is the man himself! And as he possessed volitional or will power; as he had set before him for choice both life and death; as he had offered him the cleansing blood, the informing Word, and the regenerating and sanctifying Spirit; then of course, by his own choice and decisions in life he made himself what he is. He is responsible and accountable to God for his character. And so God will judge him at the last day.

CHAPTER 27

ACCOUNTABLE FOR INFLUENCE

If any of us should be asked to define the word influence, we would find difficulty in putting within a sentence, or even several sentences, all we saw embraced in the expression. We all know in a general way what influence is, have felt it in other people, and exercised it ten thousand times ourselves, but how is it to be accurately described? After calling it a moral potency, an ascendancy that one individual has over another, a peculiar effect produced by one being upon another; yet still something is left unsaid, about this life phenomenon, for the reason that it cannot be spoken.

Yet everybody possesses this strange force or power. The Bible has settled this fact long ago in the words, "None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." Here is stated that it is not only wielded in life, but remains after death.

A certain great religious writer has said that every man carries about with him an atmosphere. His idea was that just as the worlds move through space with belts of air so many miles thick around them, and which enswathement they bear wherever they fly, so each human being has a certain indescribable enduement which goes with him everywhere, and which he can no more drop than he could shake off his shadow, or a world fling away its aerial envelopment.

This moral or spiritual investment is only another name for influence. It is the outward revelation of the inward nature. It is the invisible character making itself seen and felt.

All of us know what it is to come in contact with these different "atmospheres." We have felt the chill thrown over the social circle by the entrance of an individual; contrariwise the brightness and warmth produced in a moment by the smile, greeting and very presence of another arrival.

One man has a warmth of soul about him in which we fairly bask and luxuriate; while another generates a chilly air around him that is felt the very instant the words of introduction are uttered.

We are constantly being affected by each other, and it would be marvelous if one could look back and see how often the course of life has been changed, and how the garment of character has been threaded and colored and shaped by the words, deeds, bearing, spirit and presence of different people. In many cases the effect has been a regular "crazy quilt" of a life; while others have had all they could do to keep right and true because of adverse human influence.

It is safe to say that all of us are making it easy for people to go to heaven, or hard to do so. On the other hand, to put the truth in another light, we are making it easy for our friends and families to go to hell, or very difficult to get there. The family altar has been erected or taken down according to some individual power in the household. The revival meeting was helped or hindered by something we said or did. Somebody is going to be saved or lost because of our lives.

It is simple folly to deny the fact of such influence. And it is more than absurd to admit the existence of such a force in others and say that we do not have it ourselves. Just as people affect us pleasantly or unpleasantly, or for good or evil, so we impress people in like manner.

We read of a milestone which was set up in the midst of a large plain. For years it directed travelers aright to the next town, which was ten miles away. But one night some one turned the post so that it pointed incorrectly; and then for quite awhile, until the matter was rectified, travelers went in the wrong way, were belated and lost, and a number of mishaps occurred.

We are all just such milestones. We point right or wrong. The journeyers through life look in our face and get directions that lead to heaven or hell.

A child has influence. A baby may be born in the family and live but one hour, and yet that household will never be the same again. The little one stayed but a few minutes, or days, but it flitted away with a cord which pulls steadily on the hearts of the entire home toward the heaven into which the child has disappeared. From that time the remaining children

talk with reverent whisper about “little brother or sister in heaven,” while the mother dreams by night and thinks by day, and her heart is filled with yearnings to go to the country where the baby has gone.

Suppose the child lives to be three or four years of age, and then passes away; who can estimate its influence on hearts and lives left behind?

When a little boy the writer has followed his mother to an upper floor in the house, where trunks, boxes and unneeded furniture were stored. With surprised but sympathetic gaze we have seen her as she was unpacking some old trunk, come across a toy, picture book, ball, or little shoe, and then bow her head over them and weep as if her heart would break. The absent one had been asleep in the cemetery many years, but it still lived. It had gone long ago into the skies, but could reach back and with a single touch of memory cause all the fountains of sorrow to break forth in the breast of the living.

The longer we live the greater and broader becomes this influence. The hearts of men are made lighter or heavier because of it, and that continually. People come to us in critical hours and have lifted us up or pulled us down according to the character they possessed. We are all today better men and women, or worse men and women because of certain people who have come into our lives.

Recently, at a meeting held in the South, we saw a mother bring her two daughters and a son, not only to the altar but to Christ in full salvation. At the same meeting a preacher, with eyes full of tears and voice completely broken, pointed to his wife and said, “But for that blessed woman I would not be where I am today, in the grace and service of God.”

Another striking thing about influence is its perpetuity or everlasting nature. It lives on in the beings it has touched.

We were told once when a boy that a surveyor was re-running an old line in Yazoo county, and came to a point in an open field where the chart stated there should be a tree standing, and with a surveyor’s mark on it. But there was no tree there within hundreds of yards. The man retracing the line said it was bound to be there, and set his laborers to digging, and sure enough, several feet under the ground, he found a tree, which had been covered up by the washing of the soil for fifty years. He next said there

should be a surveyor's mark on it, about five feet from the end. On inspection there was no such sign; but taking a hatchet he cut through some outer layers of bark and wood, when suddenly the letter X stared them in the face. Buried out of sight, and covered up, yet there it was. The surveyor was dead and had been in his grave a half century, but his mark was left.

Just so, through influence, we make impressions on the lives and character of others. We may pass away into distant parts of the world, or into eternity, but our handiwork is left. Those whom we affected may also move away or be buried — but they bear the mark we gave them.

Because of this we shall give account at the judgment day of Christ.

Ingersoll gave a lecture on the Pacific coast in which he convinced a number that they had a right to take their own lives. Sixty suicides followed in the course of a few weeks in that locality because of the potent influence of the lecturer. God will make him answerable at the last day for those souls whom he persuaded into sin and everlasting destruction.

Tom Paine, in his writings, shipwrecked the faith and damned the souls of many men who admired his genius. He will have a dreadful reckoning to give for the movements of his blasphemous pen. And it is an ever growing account, for the influence of his books is still going on in the land.

John Wesley found the blessing of holiness in the Bible, and wrote a little book called "Christian Perfection," and preached a number of sermons on the subject. The result was a tidal wave of salvation that rolled around the world, gladdened countless thousands of homes, quickened the churches, and brought millions of souls into heaven. Moreover, the blessed influence of the man is still sweeping on. He had gone, but his mark is left. The singer is dead, but the song he sung remains echoing not only in the hearts of individuals, but arising in steady, increasing volume from multiplied thousands of churches and camp grounds.

Because of this, the man John Wesley will stand before the judgment bar of the Son of God and give an account. Very glorious will be that divine interview and inquiry and most marvelous and blessed will be the reward that will come upon him.

We cannot fly from the fact; we not only must give account to God for what we are, but for what we have done. We shall not only be judged for our character, but for our influence.

CHAPTER 28

ACCOUNTABLE FOR OPPORTUNITY

One definition of opportunity is a convenient or favorable time. The word, however, possesses a deeper meaning, and stands for privilege, and through privilege a possibility of advancement, improvement and good. In the moral realm it represents the practicability of highest attainment in blessedness and usefulness.

Opportunity in the spiritual life may stand incarnated in an individual sent to teach us, or appear in a book, a sermon, an open door of some kind, a Sabbath day, or a series of revival services where a free, full and complete salvation is presented. Back, then, of what often seems commonplace events and natural happenings, is the directing hand of God, who brought these various occurrences and conditions into the life, that the individual thus sought out and reached might come into the highest good, and that afterwards the very best results should flow from him to others.

The fact that God sends opportunity should alone invest it with an atmosphere of gravity and solemnity, while the thought of what is sure to result from its use or abuse in the character and destiny of the man thus visited, ought to impart to it such an additional weight that anxious thought and profound concern should be aroused in the mind and heart of the most careless and sinful.

These opportunities do not tarry. They are on the wing. Like Abraham's angels they are passing by. If we do not run after, and stop them, they will vanish from our sight.

They all in a strange sense precede us to the judgment. We will find every one of them awaiting us, and ready to testify against us. We will have to give account for the way we treated them. The question will be, What did you do with them? What did you let them do with you?

This solemn truth that we must answer to God not only for our character, and for our influence, but also for our privileges and opportunities, should

certainly be a fearful reflection to all who have not altogether animalized their natures and become stupefied and dead in trespasses and sins.

Certainly no thinking being ought to be surprised at the divine exaction mentioned in this chapter when not one of us but have exercised it ourselves, while the principle itself is so familiar in every day life.

For instance, when a father gives his child a slate and arithmetic, he expects something more than these two things from the boy after an interval of six or twelve months. Suppose the son should say at the end of a year, "Here, father, is the book and slate you gave me. I have taken fine care of them and now return them to you in good order." Do we not all know that the father's answer would be: "This is not enough, my son. What about your knowledge of figures? Can you cipher? How much do you know about addition, subtraction, multiplication, division and fractions?"

There can be no question that the parent has a right to expect more from his child than the book and slate; that he would have every reason to be disappointed and grieved if there was no knowledge of mathematics on hand. The book, slate and twelve months constituted the opportunity out of which should have emerged a goodly amount of arithmetical learning.

So, when God gives us Sabbaths and Bibles, they are to be used as a means to an end, namely the salvation, enrichment and enlargement of the soul. When the revival meeting was sent, it was for our conversion, reclamation, sanctification and spiritual upbuilding. To go through such services and obtain nothing, is certain to bring upon the soul the present and future condemnation of heaven.

This principle is plainly recognized in the parable of the pounds where the servant who had but one went and hid it in the ground. Afterward, when the master was reckoning with his servants, the one talent man was asked for a settlement and rendering. His reply was that he had hid the money in the earth and now restored it as he had received it, without any increase. The rejoinder of his Lord was one full of wrath, and the servant was called not only unprofitable, but wicked and slothful. The Lord said with indignation that the pound should have been invested in such a way as to

have brought in interest. His final utterance concerning the servant was that he should be cast into outer darkness.

This all shows in a very fearful manner that God will hold men to a rigid account for gospel privileges and opportunities. That mental gifts, life talents, means of grace, Sabbaths, sermons, human examples, calls to duty and many other similar things, constitute what is called opportunity, and which, if properly used or invested, would bring an overwhelming interest in the line of personal, spiritual good, and of general blessing to mankind.

Men grow accustomed to the sound of the gospel, and remain unchanged through all its different messages. But it is the gospel of the Son of God just the same, and they will be judged by it at the last day.

Sabbaths come so thickly that they have grown commonplace and even tiresome to some people, but these very holy days will witness against us at the end of time as to what they brought us, and the gracious possibilities bound up in them for our souls both for the present and future. And yet how they come to us in vain. We would have none of them. In a sense they were wrapped up and buried. We put them out of sight and mind.

How ordinary and familiar is the spectacle of a preacher delivering a sermon. But in the discourse was a message from God to the listener which, if obeyed, would have not only brought salvation to the hearer, but redemption to hundreds besides. But the heart hardened, the will resisted, the treasure box was not opened, and a history of failure, disobedience and sin was made contrary to the desire and purpose of God. Away goes the man from the church, feeling he is delivered from responsibility, and relieved of all obligation to his soul, to God and to mankind, by a mere change of locality or by so many yards or miles of territory intervening between himself and the place where God met him with the message and the messenger. But he has not escaped. Both speaker and sermon, and the God who sent them will confront the fugitive from duty, at that day for which all other days were made, and where a man gives account not only for what he has become, and what he has done, but for what he might have been and ought to have done.

In the day of judgment it will appear that it is a fearful thing to have sinned in the face of salvation; to have remained obdurate in spite of reproof and light; and to have declared for darkness though raised in the light of religious households, and surrounded by the benefits of a Christian land.

It will be found to be a peculiarly dreadful thing to go to hell from a land of Bibles and churches and campgrounds. The man who enters the world of the damned from Christian and enlightened England and America, will sink into deeper depths of misery, and taste a profounder and bitterer despair, than the being who gets there by way of poor, benighted Asia or Africa.

The great fact that we are morally responsible beings, and therefore accountable for our character, influence and opportunities, is ample explanation for the existence of the day of final awards and satisfactory reason for the return of the Son of God at the end of the world to sit in solemn judgment upon every human soul. May we all be ready for that day.

CHAPTER 29

THE SUMMING UP OF LIFE

There is a final account of every life to be given at the judgment day. A kind of immortal concrete will stand before God. Touched by ten thousand beings and influences, a human everlasting product will appear before the Judge, that had sifted, separated or appropriated all the happenings of time by virtue of a regnant will power, and now ready for destiny awaits the final sentence. A whole life is there gathered up or epitomized in something which we call character.

But there is a summing up of one's life this side of the judgment, where a man's probation on earth is closing or has just terminated in death. Hearing of the end, we sweep a hasty glance over the past of the dying or dead man. We mark the divine dealings with the individual; his own relations to God and man; what he did for the human family in the way of good or evil; and how he departed himself in the various phases of prosperity, adversity, joy, sorrow, temptation and trial. We draw a line, multiply, add up, subtract and divide, and then approximate as far as human vision and judgment can go, the remaining, living quotient, product, sum or remainder.

As we see ourselves people are coming into and going out of our lives continually; friends are made or fall away; money increases or takes wings; health improves or departs; we are thrown in a throng or made providentially to sit in solitary places; our hopes and ambitions cluster with richest fruitage or are stretched like trailing, smitten vines in the dust.

The question is, How have these things affected the man? What has the result been on the soul life or character? There is bound to be a moral quotient or product. The spirit is so constituted that it is compelled to come out of these conditions and happenings weaker or stronger, worse or better, poorer or richer, as the soul stands related to what the Bible calls true wealth, real health, and that highest form and plane of life, spiritual, divine and eternal. What has been the result with the man who has just passed away; and what with us who are passing away? Is it quotient, or

product? Is it something, nothing, or worse than nothing? Have we been so divided and subtracted by evil men and influences that good people are grieving over the pitiful remainder, and the preacher officiating at the funeral dare not say anything commendatory about the hollow shell in the casket? The very wreath of flowers on the coffin may suggest in its roundness the naught of Christian character, the zero of religious performance, attainment and obtainment in the life that is ended.

We read once a poem telling of five men sitting on the strand together, where they had accidentally met, and rehearsing the sorrows and calamities of their lives. One had lost a fortune, the second his health, a third his family, while the fourth had seen every plan and ambition frustrated. After a pause all looked at the fifth, who seemed to be the saddest of the group. His confession was that his faith had been shipwrecked and with it religious experience and character. Whereupon the others agreed that his disaster was the greatest of all.

Concerning the afflictions of the first four, we all know that there is no guarantee given us that we can escape a single one. Money, friends, health, plans, loved ones must all go, as the years roll by. But it is blessed to know that among our heartbreaking losses, faith need not be included. Salvation should never be parted with, and character created by the blood of Christ and the Spirit of God can be ours and remain ours through all the mutations, shocks, onsets, temptations, trials and bereavements of this world.

More than that, all that comes to us, and that happens in and round about us, can be made tributary to the spiritual life within; and no matter what may be the alteration of our temporal circumstance and condition, and what the change in people to us for good or evil, yet by a steady faith in Christ and strict obedience to God, all things will not only be felt, but seen to, be working together for our spiritual and eternal good.

One thing under grace that should help us is the existence of enemies. No matter how close to God a man lives he will have his foes. Even Jesus had them. Paul writes of his, and calls them “unreasonable men” and “false brethren.” Wesley had them both in and out of the church, and was assailed, ridiculed, denounced and lampooned by them for years.

The question with the man trying to be like Christ and reach heaven is, What will he do with his adversaries?

Some go down under the hostile element, in the sense of losing sweetness of spirit, and confidence in the providence and love of God to protect and deliver. Theirs becomes the loss of faith and love — a greater woe than the departure of friends and their transformation into enemies.

There is no doubt but that our foes can be made a blessing to us in more than one way. Their very attacks should and do often drive God's people closer to him. Then, their criticisms of us are exceedingly valuable. Our friends' vision and judgment are partial and blinded by affection, while they are slow to wound by criticism. The enemy spares not, and as he lays to upon us, we should examine our hearts and lives and see if the accusation is true. If so, we should repent and amend; and thus an adversary is made a help to our spiritual improvement and development. An additional thought is that the fact of a perverse, hateful and hating individual on our hands creates a first-class opportunity for the exercise and enlargement of Christian patience and forgiveness. No gymnasium is better for the body than these people in a blessed sense are for the soul.

So in reviewing one's life, it is well to ask the question, What have my enemies done for my soul? Am I better or worse for their existence? Am I a blessedly increased product, or a pitiably diminished character and life quotient?

A second thing by which we should be benefited is the flight of time.

With many the flying years find silliness and sin, and leave a profounder folly and deeper guilt. Warnings, teachings, examples are all exhibited and delivered in vain. As Solomon declares of a fool, "Though brayed in a mortar his foolishness will not depart from him."

To the thoughtful man there is an education in the passing of the days. A liberation of mind is felt in the simple observation of life, and a broadening of heart and judgment comes by contact with many individuals and classes of people.

A vicious life should be regarded not to be imitated, but avoided; while narrowness, prejudice, intolerance and every kind of contemptibleness and

meanness ought to be object lessons of sufficient power to drive us in the opposite direction.

And yet we have only to look around to see people after the flight of ten, twenty and thirty years, remaining in the same little mental mold, the same prejudice and ignorance, and the same groveling habits with which they begun life. They remain the moral and intellectual dwarfs and runts of the household and community. Life with its tremendous lessons, with its vast ever-changing procession of immortal beings, each one with a different message, seems to have come and gone by them in vain, They have learned nothing.

Hence it is that we ought to ask ourselves again and again, What has time under the blessing of God done for us? Are we still the shallow thinking, quick speaking, snickering, giggling nonentities of early life; or have we sobered and become wiser with the years?

It is possible to laugh less and cease many foolish utterances and practices, and yet be a great improvement on ourselves and a corresponding blessing to others.

Truly we have lived with closed eyes and stopped ears if all that comes to us in time has not left us calmer in spirit, broader in our sympathies, slower to condemn and quicker to overlook and forgive.

Another force in our lives is our successes.

At some time they come to all. The school, college, the political and business world, the church and the religious life itself, have alike seen the record of great victories and performances.

What effect have these triumphs had upon us? Have we given thanks and the glory to God, or have we crowned ourselves? Are we inflated or humbled over these high favors which the Divine Providence has permitted to visit us? Are we Christ-like, or Pope-like?

Some who read these lines have scored many successes. Their names have been often sounded in praise by the press and the people. Have these victories drawn the soul nearer to God or created a distance? Is the character better or worse for them? And every man is bound to know.

A fourth mighty influence upon the life is seen in what is called our failures.

Many go down with a crash under sorrow, disappointment and adversity. Suicides abound, a greater number make shipwreck of the faith, and still more become soured and embittered for life.

An eagle receives the brunt of the storm at such an angle against his breast as to lift him higher and higher, and finally far above the blast. Nature here teaches us in parable. What a pity to be outdone by a bird!

Thank God there are many who use trouble to sweep them upward to altitudes of divine grace and knowledge that they never knew before. Just as Christ first bore his cross and then his cross bore him, so his followers by a patient, humble, faithful acceptance of the ills of life suddenly find themselves uplifted by them with a strange, sweet power, and actually glorified by suffering.

We live in a world, where we are compelled to lose health, wealth, friends, loved ones and public positions and honors sooner or later. But there is no need to undergo the loss narrated by the fifth man in the group on the seashore. We need never part with faith in God, and the salvation of our soul. On the contrary, while all else is certain to leave, this moral treasure and character condition should grow richer and stronger with the flight of years. Even the untoward things of time under the blessing of God can help us on in the transfiguration of spirit, and in the race for the crown of glory in heaven. Better still, we have the statement of the Holy Book itself that "All things work together for good to them that love God."

CHAPTER 30

THE GRANTED REQUEST

The air above us is filled with all kinds of petitions to the God and Maker of us all. Such is the need and sin of the human race that it has to be supplicating all the time. Consciously or unconsciously men and women are continually begging the Almighty to do or not to do something.

Sinners are as busy as Christians in this matter, although with a very different spirit and desire. Man in his ignorance and impotence has to pray. Deists who deny the Christ; atheists who reject God in total and skeptics and unbelievers in general of every stripe and variety cannot keep from praying, and are busy at it all their lives. A sudden fright; a severe physical pain; a crushing trouble; or a violent fit of fury, are amply sufficient to knock down their boasted infidelity, and put them in the position of ardent petitioners and requesters of a God who has been suddenly wheeled into view, if not created, by the exigency or emergency of the hour. For it has been noticed with great amusement by the Christian world, that infidels can pray in a dreadful storm at sea, with as much naturalness and readiness, not to say eloquence, as one who has been brought up to the business in prayer meetings or a theological college.

Some requests going up from earth to heaven are for things and conditions that make the supplicator and the world better for the answered petition. It is impossible for the soul to be blessed without its being immediately made an instrument of blessing to others. Hence for a member of the family to get the heart quickened, warmed and overflowing, is to send a breath of heaven all through the household. In like manner a preacher moves his congregation; and a great life and character filled with the glory of God stirs and uplifts the nation.

There are other requests made of God that to grant would work the sorest disaster and trouble, end probation with millions, and land multitudes in hell who otherwise would escape. Well for this world that the prayers and requests of thoughtless, angry sinners, and sore and impatient Christians

like Jonah are not answered. Who would be living and out of the pit if they were?

Sinners think they do not pray, but they abound in the most frightful of supplications. We have heard a man in a single day request God to damn his friends, his son, his wife, the whole country and his own soul! Suppose God had granted his request!

Again there are requests made by good people of the Lord that if allowed them would mean present and everlasting ruin to soul and body. Let the child of God who reads these lines remember certain wishes of the past, certain things the heart was set upon and that he thought he must have, and that not to have was affliction and punishment indeed. And yet today that same person can see that had these desires been fulfilled, these conditions obtained, that not only would usefulness have been ended, and present grace not obtained, but the soul itself would have been wrecked. Well indeed for him that the request was not granted.

But stranger than all is the fact, that there are some requests made by God's own people, as well as by the unsaved, for certain things which they should neither desire nor ask for, which are not best to be had, and yet which, under urgent solicitation God has been observed to send both repeatedly and abundantly.

A remarkable instance of this divine answer is seen in the history of the Israelites, when all dissatisfied with the manna God had provided for them, they clamored for flesh.

The Bible says that "He gave them their request." And then follows the horrible description of God raining quails upon the camp and upon the people until flesh was knee deep everywhere, and the people ate until the food came out of their nostrils!

Sometimes the very best thing for a man is to let him have what he wants, and have it outpouringly, multiplyingly and most abundantly. He will not believe that God only can satisfy the soul, but that certain material and terrestrial things must be his for his contentment, enlargement and general blessedness. Then let him have them knee deep and chin deep. Let him fairly wallow in physical abundance. Let him get the moon he is crying after, and find hugged to his heart a cold, barren something full of ghastly

caverns and burned out volcanoes, without warmth, without atmosphere, dew and rain, and without life itself. Let him have quails, as he cried for them, turning from the Bread of Heaven. And let them come in clouds, and showers, and piles, and banks and hills, until he is smothered in feathers, buried in wings and claws, and choked on bird meat. Let the fowls roost on his tent poles, fill every vessel, block up his road, and the flesh of the same come forth from his nostrils. In other words, let him be fed, surfeited and stuffed to repletion with the indulgence, folly, or sin itself which he preferred to God. As he was so set upon certain objects of sense, or courses of wrongdoing, let him have what he wanted not only in abundance, but in a superabundance that shall be disgusting, sickening, and horrifying.

There is no doubt but that the surest and quickest way to undeceive people about time and earth and sense and idols and sin is to allow them to have a good dose of the painted, bedizened, lying, poisonous thing.

Men want their own way — let them have it until their soul is nauseated with bossism. Let them find out that rulership and undisputed authority can never make up for the loss of friendship and affection. Men will have idols instead of the true God. Then let these stony, lifeless, helpless images fill the heart and home, and the man grow sick of their monotony and inanity and find himself appalled at their utter inability to bring relief in the time of trouble.

We once knew a student and author who conceived the design of getting his wife and children to leave him for a six weeks' holiday trip. Ostensibly for them, the vacation was really for himself. He wanted to be in the house alone with his pen and a box of new books he had purchased. The family went away according to the plan, and as the last wheel died away down the road, he turned into the house with a chuckle of anticipated enjoyment. But to his amazement he could neither read nor write. The new books lay on the floor and table. The writing pads, ink, pen, pencil, India rubber eraser and all were there; but he could do nothing. He found himself listening and waiting for the prattle and steps of the children, for the entrance of his wife into the room, for the chords of the distant piano, for the laugh, whistle, song and call of different ones of the family. But a death-like stillness was all through the house. He found himself appalled at

the silence. He caught himself wandering from room to room and from hall to porch like a restless ghost. Back he went to the library, but the pen would not write, and thoughts would not come, and the books were all stupid, and he would discover himself listening again and again for steps and voices that never came or sounded.

He had the loneliness that he wanted pressed down, shaken together and running over. The silence he craved was there, room deep, house deep, and landscape wide. The quails had arrived, and the flesh was coming out of his nostrils.

He had enough of quails or loneliness — and so telegraphed next day to the absent family to make their excursion shorter. On the third day he packed his valise and went after them!

We knew a woman with an unlovely, arrogant and dictatorial spirit empty her own home. She had a large and attractive family, but such was her bossy, rule or ruin nature and policy, that her sons left the household, the daughters married early and moved away, and the husband himself departed. She was left with a big house on her hands, with solitary halls and rooms full of echoes. At last she had no one to differ with or dispute her way. She had everything for herself and to herself, empty rooms and all. She had quails in abundance knee deep, chin deep, and life deep. When we last saw her she had the unmistakable look of life failure, soul ennui, and quail sickness. She had a yearning gaze in her eyes, as if she would give anything and everything for the sound of a loving voice, and the clasp of a devoted hand. It was not vacant rooms she wanted after all, but somebody in the rooms. She was slow learning, but she learned at last. The quails taught her.

Truly the famous birds of the wilderness had a profounder mission than is at first suspected. They brought fullness and sickness, it is true, but they also brought repentance, deeper light and better sense.

Happy for us if the granted request of which we have written, and which may have brought “leanness to the soul” and confusion and distress in different ways, if at last through its illumining convincing power we see our mistake and folly, turn from the creature to the Creator, and give up the flitting, fleeting things of a day, for the Bread of God which comes down steadily from heaven.

CHAPTER 31

SPIRITUAL SENSES

We are accustomed to speak of the senses of the body, in remarking upon the five channels which God has dug or made in some way in the physical nature for the incoming tides of pleasure and knowledge.

In describing the soul men use the terms faculties and sensibilities. Hence we are told of the will, the intellect, the affections, and a great crowning attribute called the conscience.

But in addition to these endowments of a man's spirit, are what may be called the senses of the soul. In a word our spiritual nature has something in it that is marvelously similar to what we recognize and feel in the body. Corresponding to the senses, of the physical man, yet these strange, sweet forces are far more exalted in their character, and deal not with the material, and earthly, but with the spiritual and heavenly.

One of these is the hearing of the soul.

That the human spirit has such a power appears for several reasons. One is that under a gospel sermon a number hear what a large body of the audience fail to recognize. Eyes are filled with tears, hearts comforted, lives strengthened in scores of listeners, while a gaping, untouched portion of the congregation wonder what on earth the others are so moved about. The one division has simply heard a human voice talking, while the other caught the voice of God incarnated in the spoken message of the preacher.

This doubtless was what Christ referred to when he said, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." All indeed have ears, but there is an inner spiritual hearing that when exercised, first stands convicted and overwhelmed at the truth of revelation, and then thrilled and blessed with assurances of divine pardon, acceptance and full salvation.

To this faculty of the soul comes "the still small voice" and the witness of the Spirit to our being born again and wholly sanctified. We have known of

totally deaf people who never received a single earthly sound, yet burst into blissful tears, and rippled into happiest of smiles through this power of the soul that heard from and recognized the voice of its God.

Certainly the Almighty would never make such a wonderful thing as the human spirit, with an everlasting destiny before it, and surrounded with a babel of tempting and distracting voices, without giving it the power of hearing from heaven, and knowing the voice of its Maker, Redeemer and Judge. Christ settled this point for all ages and centuries when he said of his sheep that they heard his voice, and knew his voice.

Before passing from the consideration of the strange attribute or sense of the soul, it is well to remember that the Savior in speaking to the dead maiden, youth, and Lazarus, could not possibly have been heard by the corpse. If their spirits were in their bodies, then was there no miracle. But the Bible tells us differently, and to their absent spirits came the divine voice. It reached them, and they returned into their bodies; and he that had been dead four days came forth from the sepulcher.

In the conversion of Paul, when the flash came and he was overthrown, they who were with him saw the light, but he alone heard the voice of the ascended and glorified Son of God.

In addition we notice that the man who is truly called to the ministry, does not obtain it by inheritance as a younger son, or through colleges, nor is it to be taken up as a profession or means of livelihood, but it comes and only can come through the power of the soul to hear the call of God.

Men in criticism of these wonderful facts of salvation and a heaven sent ministry, dub them by the name of impressions. But the Bible says that the Spirit witnesseth with our spirit, and that no man taketh the honor of the ministry upon himself but he that is called of God as was Aaron.

Let it be remembered that we are not pleading for any physical audible sound. No one in religious testimony should say this. We are simply stating that the soul has a hearing of its own. Bless God we have heard, and therefore have we spoken.

A second sense of the soul is that of tasting. David writes, "O taste and see that the Lord is good." Again he says that the judgments or

commandments of the Lord were “sweeter also than honey or the honeycomb.” Much is said in the Scripture about “feeding the sheep,” while a spiritual bill of fare is seen to consist of milk, honey, wine, bread, meat, grapes, and every kind of delicious fruit. All this of course involves and necessitates the fact of taste and the enjoyment that it is known to bring.

What is here plainly taught in the Word is and has been experienced in the soul. The spirit feasts on the word and truth of God, as the body partakes of agreeable and delightful viands. Gospel sermons and hymns actually taste sweet, and spiritual books and articles are like marrow and fatness.

We once saw a lady at a full salvation meeting who had been deprived of the gospel for months. Her gaze was never taken from the preacher, while her eyes as well as ears seemed to be drinking in the truth. Her lips worked at times as if she was eating the word; and reaching a hand occasionally to touch a neighboring lady friend, she would say under her breath quickly, as if fearful of losing a word, “Did you hear that? Wasn’t that delicious?” A ravenously hungry person at a full table with keenest enjoyment of every mouthful was the picture conjured up most naturally and easily by this scene.

At a large holiness campmeeting in the South, we have seen hundreds of sanctified people crowded around the pulpit, and some almost under the preacher and looking up eagerly into his face as if they would catch and swallow every word he uttered. The working and almost smacking of their lips, with the genial, deeply satisfied expression of their faces, showed their souls were feasting and everything was tasting good.

A third sense of the soul is that of sight.

The Savior said that “Abraham rejoiced to see his day; and he saw it and was glad.” Paul declares that the patriarchs died in faith, not having received the promises, but “saw them afar off” While it is said of Moses that he feared not the wrath of the king. but “endured as seeing him who is invisible.”

Of course it will be affirmed that all this was the action and result of faith; and so it is in a sense; but what is faith but soul sight after all? It makes

“substance” of things hoped for, and creates “evidence” out of things not seen.

But the Bible and religious experience have both much to say concerning spiritual illumination and revelation, coming to us from the divine and heavenly side, and that are unspeakably ahead in vividness and power of anything reaching us from the human and terrestrial side.

It is through this faculty of the soul that the Holy Spirit is enabled to flood passages of Scripture with new and blessed meanings to the devout reader. It is this that explains the sudden, deeper visions of God while in prayer; the thrilling imagery of holy testimony; and the marvelous uplifting power upon an audience of a sermon preached in the fullness of the Holy Ghost.

Here we can understand how Newton wrote,

*“I saw one hanging on a tree
In agonies and blood,
Who fixed his dying eyes on me,
As near his cross I stood.”*

And right here we can understand in a measure the solemn awe-inspiring mysteries of the Island of Patmos; and feel that it was true when the exiled servant of God wrote, “I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea. And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”

This soul sight has wonderful flashes of power on the deathbed. And it is remarkable that just when the physical sight begins to weaken and fail, the vision of the spirit commences to assert itself. The former has reached its sunset, the latter its sunrise. There has been a dawn before this, but now the east begins to glow, and a glorious high noon of an unclouded spiritual sight is at hand.

A certain president of a church college lost his wife in early life. He never married again, but remained true to her memory. When an elderly man he died in Christian triumph. Just before passing away he suddenly looked up, said the angels had come, and then with an expression of amazement and delight on his face cried out, “My wife!”

Senator L. Q. C. Lamar, of Mississippi, was present in the death chamber and witnessed the scene. Afterwards in conversation with Bishop Kavanaugh he said in reference to it, "How do you account for it, Bishop?" The Bishop replied, "I account for it very easily. The Lord is good, and when he sent the angels for our brother's soul, he let the wife come along with them to add to his confidence and happiness as he was swept up to heaven. I doubt not that she was in the room, and he saw her."

Very numerous and amazing have been these death-bed scenes, where time ends and eternity begins, where earth recedes and heaven bursts on the sight, and where the soul shaking itself loose from and standing on the ruins of the worn-out body, sees no longer through a glass darkly, but face to face, and enters upon a knowledge where it knows, even as it is known, perfectly and altogether.

There is a soul sight. But for it many of us would have gone down long ago. By it we read our titles clear to mansions in the skies. Through it we give up the world with its pleasures and rewards, and choose to suffer affliction with the people of God. By it we endure labor, weariness, reproach, slander, and sorrow of all kinds, seeing him who is invisible. And by it we look for rest and reward at the glorious reappearing of our Lord at the great final day. And all who live this kind of life declare plainly to the observing world, that "they seek a country." But it is an heavenly country. For they "look for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

CHAPTER 32

A GOOD CONSCIENCE

The conscience is that attribute or power of the soul which pronounces judgment upon the moral quality of our thoughts, words and actions. Some one has said that it has the fourfold office or work of watchman, witness, judge and executioner. It stands before the portal of the heart scrutinizing everything that passes in and out; testifies loudly against sin and wrong-doing; next leaves the witness stand and ascending the judgment seat passes sentence of punishment; and then vacating the judicial throne gets a lash in its hand and goes to work on the victim.

Conscience has a smile as well as a frown, and a voice of approval as well as one of condemnation. Some people never feel the smile, and never hear its thrilling, melting voice of approbation.

When outraged and violated by sin and neglect of duty, the conscience until utterly calloused and dead, asserts its offended existence by a steady, gnawing pain in the heart. A dull, continuous physical pain can utterly unfit a man for business, pleasure, duty and everything; yet the conscious presence of Christ in the soul will bring such a compensation as to make the time of trial endurable, and spiritually blissful and blessed.

But a low, dull, aching conscience takes pleasure from every realm of our nature, and the load is felt to be heavy indeed, and sorrow unmixed. Its pain darkens the very sunshine, embitters the natural sweets of life, and of course terminates the joys of the spiritual kingdom as they stand related to the soul. The man with this endowment of pain, this enduement of inward restlessness and suffering is shut up from and out of both worlds. He is blessed nowhere, and is a burdened, heart-sick man everywhere.

As we take note of the inward dislocation, and the outward unadjustment to life and its happenings, we are compelled to admit that here is real loneliness, genuine bankruptcy and unquestionable failure.

There is some question as to what may be considered defeat and overthrow on this earth. But we have not the slightest question in our mind but that we are speaking now of a disaster that overtops and overlaps in its loss and suffering all the Black Fridays of Wall Street, the pricking of Mississippi Bubble Schemes, and the wiping out at a blow of all the markets and crops of the wide world.

A man may by some advantage or power he may possess, reach forth and hurt the interests of another; but he has lost more than his impoverished brother. He may with tongue or pen or influence stab and wound the reputation, standing, influence and even the character of a fellow-being, but he has injured himself more than he has his bleeding victim. Better far a righteous though dead Abel than a living tormented Cain. Better a murdered Naboth than a be-crowned but miserable Ahab. Better a David living in caves and in the wilderness with a smiling God, than a jealous, envious, easily angered Saul, who though king in the land, was filled with "a dark spirit," and admitted that God never spoke to him any more.

In one of our meetings a young woman confessed that she obtained the first honor of her graduating class at college by stealing the written questions of the final examination from the portfolio of a professor. She received an ovation from her friends when the diplomas and medal were given her. Her family gave a great social send-off. Compliments poured on her from college, and town, from friends and acquaintances, and all the time she was supremely miserable. From the well-known record of the faculty, she knew that she did not deserve the academic honor, and the community laudation. She knew that it all belonged to another girl whom she had cheated and robbed. She had gained an outward honor by inward dishonor. She had obtained a medal, some white ribbon and a number of bouquets, but she had also secured a worm of undying regret, an internal lash, a burdened breast, and a flame of mental suffering that has burned in her ever since. So it is evident that here was the real failure of that day. She lost infinitely more than the young woman whom she had so contemptibly wronged.

Recently in a debate in a far-away western state, a minister won the prize offered by a college. He enjoyed his fraudulent greatness only a week, when the newspapers came out, and with what is called "The Deadly

Parallel,” proved that he had stolen the ideas and even the language of his oration from Senator Vance of North Carolina. Not to speak of the man’s shame that has filled him since the discovery, what shall be said of the dull inward ache and pain of his conscience during the seven days he wore the peacock feathers that did not belong to him? What self-contempt, and inner loathing, coupled with anxiety and apprehension must have been his portion through all that oppressive interminable week.

Men who wrong other people in money matters; in settlement of wills; in trades; in getting off inferior goods; in stealing car rides; in taking and keeping books that do not belong to them; in originating and circulating reports and slanders about others that are simply founded on hearsay — all who do these things lose the priceless treasure of a good conscience. By such conduct and transactions they have lost unspeakably more than they have gained. They have injured themselves far more deeply than they have hurt their victims. They have given a mortal blow, and received in themselves an immortal wound. Men may forgive, and God pardon, but they themselves cannot forget, and have by their own action laid away in the storehouse of the mind a sorrowful memory and an eternal regret.

Evidently it is better that we lose property, position, office, friends, loved ones, and what is called earthly enjoyment and happiness, rather than part with a good conscience.

This is a different looking world to a man who has the coo of a dove of peace in his heart instead of the flap and croak of a black raven of spiritual unrest. When filled with kindness to all men, and doing good and not evil to all, he can, like Paul, not only appeal to God, but to the whole of mankind how justly and holily and unblamably he has walked and worked in their midst.

Food itself tastes better to a man with an easy heart. The simple pleasures of home, the little ordinary duties of life take on a gladness and preciousness altogether unknown to the transgressor. And the drudgeries that look so common to many, sparkle and blaze like the bush did to Moses, when the breast is light, as the conscience follows faithfully after the will and word and call of God. Even the hardships of life drip sweetness as the trees in the wood streamed honey when Jonathan walked amid them after his victory over the Philistines.

The Sanhedrin with a bad conscience could not sleep the night they put the apostle in prison, but Peter, the wronged man, the abused and maltreated man, had with him not only the presence of the Lord, but in him a good conscience; and as a consequence slept so soundly, although condemned to death, that the angel had to strike him three times to awaken him from his slumber.

Paul in the midst of a large ecclesiastical assembly testified that he had lived in all good conscience until that day, and we all know that he outweighed in happiness and towered in character above the whole crowd that was judging him, and the high priest who had him cruelly struck on the mouth.

David speaks of compassing the altars of God. It means much, and it is made plain in the Word that it requires conscious integrity and faithfulness to know this remarkable adjustment and relation.

How a man expects to make a happy trip through life, and a safe entrance into heaven without this good conscience is one of the strange and dreadful delusions of life. John in his epistle sounds the funeral knell over every such vain expectation and false conception of the character world. He says, "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." In other words, if we go down in confusion and shame at times before the little judgment seat in our own spirits, what will we do, and what will become of us when we stand before the Great White Throne, where the Judge who sits thereon knows us thoroughly and altogether?

Evidently it is profitable for the life that now is, and that which is to come, to have a good conscience. Without it we are poor indeed, though clothed in fine linen and faring sumptuously every day. But with it we are rich beyond valuation. And in heaven we shall be comforted and blessed though we lacked on earth for the necessities of life, had dogs to lick our sick and trembling bodies and died on an ash heap before the gate of some wealthy and arrogant man of the world.

CHAPTER 33

THE DISCARDED SHELL

It has been said that there are “sermons in stones and books in running brooks.” We would add that there is a library in empty shells.

All of us have come across in our walks by the sea-shore, in the woods, or along the road, the forsaken or discarded shell. It was but an empty house; for its owner and former occupier had departed. Whether death or transmigration had been his lot we could not always tell, we only saw the silent, deserted home.

In some instances we knew that demise has taken place. In others that a higher form of life had been entered upon. In both cases the former inhabitant never returned. He either would not or could not, and anyhow did not come back.

The simple sight is full of suggestion and explanation to many on life's road today. It should be a revelation to people who are wondering why they cannot return to certain conditions, and be satisfied with early experiences, creep into long past social and moral environments, and curl up snugly and be content as of yore. Such a life proceeding should not and cannot be; and the shell by the wayside is a kind of tombstone and monument to any such expectation and desire.

The shell, as applied to human life, stands among other things for the plays and playthings of childhood.

It would be impossible for a business man to become engrossed again in tops, marbles and mumble-peg. Time was when these pastimes absorbed him, but now he does not give them a single thought. He never goes back to them. He has outgrown such things.

The shell stands for a certain class of books that held us breathless in the days of boyhood and youth.

Men who have swept onward into intellectual fields, wrestled with and mastered great mental problems, and now feed on the solid and profitable in literature, wonder as they scan the volumes of Robin Hood, Robinson Crusoe, Mayne Reed, Marryatt and others, where the charm has gone which once hung over their pages. The developed mind is unable to go in its former little home. The shell is too small.

Again this suggestive shell is beheld in one's childhood home and early life surroundings.

A great many touching poems and beautiful songs have been written and sung about these same aforesaid relations, situations and environments of life. Tears have sprung as memory has been stirred, and sentiment and affection touched as we listened to words and agreeing chords about the "Old Folks at Home," the "Cabin Door," "The Old Oaken Bucket," "Where Are the Friends of My Youth," and "Would I Were a Boy Again."

There is no doubt in the mind of the writer, however, that much as men prize these early and prized associations, they in their great, busy, active, useful employments would never be content to return to these incipient social and mental conditions. Their old home would look wonderfully small and plain, and be marvelously uncomfortable after living for twenty years in a three-story brown stone front, with all the modern conveniences and appliances. The old oaken bucket, with its facility for spilling liberal quantities of its contents down the neck and breast, is good enough for a heated country boy, bare-footed and with open-necked shirt, but we all know of better and more satisfactory drinking vessels. As for being a boy again, unless all laws of nature were reversed, and the individual could have a boy's mind, tastes and ambitions replaced in the lad's body, the metamorphosed creature would be perfectly miserable over the change.

Think of the expanded horizon of a man's great and useful life, contracted again to cover a swimming hole; the riding of a horse to water; eating some green apples in an orchard; and going to a quilting or log rolling.

No, the shell of those early surroundings was once large enough; it was sufficient for a child; but it is now too small for the developed man. And so he does not ever come back again. He hears a song about being a boy again, or getting into his former shell, and wipes his eyes and feels like he

could write poetry for a few minutes; but it is noticeable that he forges on ahead after this in his usual busy, ever-enlarging life. The shell is left on the roadside.

Again the shell is seen in what is recognized as the surfeit of time.

At the outstart the human race seems to think that happiness is ready made to order, and is lying around generally, and to be found boxed up and ready to be delivered in no end of ways like eating, drinking, dancing, card playing, theatergoing and sightseeing. Sooner or later all such objects and pursuits pall upon the taste and leave the person a disappointed, and often bitter man. What he craved is not to be found in tureens, goblets, bits of paste-board, painted faces and tinsel drapery. The very law of progress; the enlargement that comes from experience; the wisdom that is gathered in disappointment, all alike thrust him out of the shell in which he once lived contentedly, and tried to abide perpetually.

Hardly knowing how it happened, he found himself out of doors, and unable to get in his shell again. He may not have become a good and spiritual man, but he finds that he cannot dwell satisfyingly in the like of former years of ignorance and inexperience. The French word "ennui" covers the case in many instances; but with others the terms heart-sickness, soul-weariness, and life disappointment better describe the character situation.

Again the shell is seen in sin itself.

Time was that the soul was tabernacled contentedly with iniquity. Then came a going forth into a new world of light, love and the sunlight of holiness.

When such a man thus set at liberty and transfigured by and in the new life, comes across the old shell of former years, he marvels how he ever lived in it. He is amazed that he saw any charm in the bar-room, loved the sound of rattling dice, and could laugh at profane and unclean narratives. He needs no rope and pulley now to keep him out of ballroom and theaters and places of sinful revelry; a capstan itself and cable could not drag him in. The very sounds pealing out on the night air from these resorts fill his soul with horror. Physically he does not go back into the old shell, and morally he cannot.

Finally the shell can stand for this old world itself.

It looks very large to the child, and is still quite big to many grown people. But much travel has a remarkable way of stealing this glory of amplitude and taking away the charm that held us once as with a breathless spell at the window of the flying train or on the deck of a panting, rushing steamer.

Great travelers confess to a surfeit, even here. They have seen so much, and beheld it so often, that they scarcely raise their eyes to look upon the familiar scenery. The same principle of which we are writing is at work even in this realm to push a man out of his terrestrial shell into greater and nobler worlds.

A book has been recently published trying to prove that the human family is to abide forever on this renovated globe of ours. It is true that this is to be a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness; but to the redeemed human family it will be a discarded shell.

The words of Christ are clear, that he has gone away to prepare mansions for us, and that he will come again to bring us to them. They are not here, but elsewhere. They will not come to us, we will go to them. No wonder, then, that men look up when they pray; or say when dying to those who weep around them, "I am going home." Or with Stephen, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Or with Paul, "I long to depart and be with Christ." The words of the Bible are against our remaining in this earthly shell.

Then the law of which we have written is against the idea. We will outgrow it. Some have already done so. Some are doing so. This little eight-thousand-mile-thick planet has had, or is having its day. The soul is already drawing itself away from its limitations, restrictions, and soon-ended windings. We have sailed its seas, threaded its forests, climbed its mountains and crossed its plains. We have done so many times, and now find ourselves thinking of other worlds and profoundly interested in God's universe that is silently floating along above our heads in illimitable space.

By and by we will burst the walls of our material prison, and standing on towering hills of splendor in some majestic globe, will see afar off on the edge of creation the little world on which we once lived, but have now left forever. Like an empty shell it will glisten on the roadside which winds its

way through the centuries into the dim eternal distance, but its former inhabitant now all outgrown in every respect the early tenement never returns. He is dwelling far away in some galaxy of transcendent beauty and glory. He is a citizen of the seventh heaven!

CHAPTER 34

THE DAY OF ONE'S LIFE

Life is so great, complicated and full of tremendous results that it has been likened to many things of the most widely differing nature. Hence we meet with the descriptive terms of a storm, a battle field, a work shop, university, course of a ship, flight of an eagle, and so on without end.

It has occurred to us, that the period of time which we call "day" is not to be despised in its suggestiveness when used as a figure or illustration of our stay through a probationary time on this earth.

Of course the day means privilege and opportunity to begin with. Men have to wait for it to begin certain duties, and its close marks the cessation of that same toil. Such a meaning, all will readily admit, goes with the existence we spend on this planet.

A labor has to be done in our allotted three score and ten or never done. A night cometh when no man can work, is the gospel statement, which finds an echo in the human breast. Moreover, as a day that is gone never returns, so this peculiar probationary life of ours will never be repeated. We go this way once. We shall not return. Death ends this kind of life, referred to, forever.

It was not, however, to these features of the day that we desired to call attention, but to certain periods of the time that strangely correspond to the four seasons of the year. The day, like the year, seems to have its spring, summer, autumn and winter; but we call them by very different titles.

One is the morning. It would be difficult indeed to describe with pen, pencil or brush the freshness, beauty and nameless charm of the opening day. There is something in the sky, in the air, on the grass, in the song of the birds and resting upon the fields and hills and woods, that in its loveliness and glad inspiring power is beyond description. It seems not only to breathe promises but begets expectancy in the beating heart.

Something is felt to be waiting for the individual, out there in the coming trooping hours.

This is just as we find life at the outstart. Everything looks very fresh and beautiful to childhood and youth. The sunlight and dew are everywhere. The bird is in the air. The hill looks like a throne of velvet. Hope spans the future like a rainbow. The approaching hours all bear cornucopias full of pleasure, honor and success to be emptied at their feet. The brightness, expectancy and promise of the morning beams in the faces of the young. It would be impossible at this period of existence to make them believe that life will be anything else but what they have mentally painted and fondly wished for in their hearts.

Then comes the noon of early manhood and womanhood.

And here, just as we find in the solar and calendar day, the dew and freshness of the morning gone, but still a certain power, vigor and glory left; so something very tender and beautiful about childhood and youth seems to depart, while there is beheld instead a high noon of mental and physical force realized in every line of activity in the world, and making the possessors feel that they are to be regarded with anything but sympathy and pity.

How self satisfied is this period of life. Many cannot be taught, but seem to know it all. Elderly people are regarded as old fogies, and behind the times. The quiet, self-contained man is supposed to have lost his fire and usefulness. Parents are to be borne with and everybody else ignored or tolerated. As it is twelve o'clock, they see no shadows. Thoughts of a declining sun, and finally a sunset, never seem to enter their minds. They have an idea, or act as if they did, that they have, like Joshua, commanded the sun to stand still, and it has obeyed.

This being the case, of course there will be no change in anything. They will always be as they are; and things, persons and conditions they like will remain stationary and unalterable. Thus we find, and thus we have to leave, countless thousands of our fellow beings who have made all their plans and arrangements on the basis of a twelve o'clock day experience of a purely terrestrial order.

After this comes the afternoon.

As autumn is to the year, the afternoon is to the day. There is an unmistakable change. There is a ripeness, a soberness and a growing quietness hard to describe, but plainly felt to be in both. The work on the farm or in the marts of trade has not the same rattle, rush and jerk of the morning, but there is a steadiness and accurateness that gives the advantage to the afternoon hour. There is less light talking and loud laughing in the white and golden colored cotton and wheat fields; but the scythe of the reaper is accomplishing great things and the wagons are piled high with the fleecy and yellow staple. A strange but attractive autumn tint has come upon the day.

In like manner comes the afternoon of life. Men who reach this hour, if they have lived and learned at all, have mellowed, ripened and sobered. In the beginning of their days, they thought little and talked much, but here they find themselves talking little and thinking much. They have seen farther around the mountain, and had views over the hills. They have met many men as they worked, and their thoughtfulness and silence have increased. Much of the merely physical whoop and hooray of life has passed, but they cut more wheat, and stack more corn than the other man. They do not jump the branch in going to work, but they stay longer in the field and plow more furrows. They also begin to believe that there is such a thing as the sun going down; that twilight can take the place of midday; while their eyes have in them a strong and patient expression, but also a thoughtful, undeceived and unexpectant look.

Last of all comes the evening.

Many gifted pens have written of the tranquillity and pensive beauty of this hour. It is a time of accomplished work, the return of the laborer from the field, and a period of thoughtful, restful enjoyment on the porch of the comfortable home. The sun has set, but the stars have come out in the sky, and cheerful lights sparkle from the windows of the dwelling. It is a time of regathering and reunion of the household, and a quiet converse stirs at moments the loving home circle, while now in pleasing recollections of a well spent day, and again plunged in voiceless enjoyment of the beautiful summer night before them, they linger until the hour of bedtime.

Full of a similar, thoughtful, tranquil, pensive loveliness is the evening of life. Pleasant indeed is the period if it comes to us as the close of a well

spent day. Happy are we when we sit in the sunset and twilight of our earthly existence, if we can know that we have pleased God and been a blessing to man; that we were faithful in the field, helpful to the laborers about us, and kind to the wayfarers we met on the road.

The sun of this earthly life must of course go down. But to the man who has done the will of God very beautiful and comfortable will be the evening. Stars of divine consolation will shine upon him from the sky overhead, and lights will beam from the windows of the home to which he is going.

The fussiness and jerkiness of the morning is gone and a most grateful and attractive quietness steals over the spirit. The eyes have a meditative look, and the speech is subdued and gentle as becomes the close of day.

It is not to be wondered at that the conversation is of a retrospective character to a marked degree at this period. And so the young people gather about on the doorsteps, and listen to words that are instructive as well as entertaining from one who has lived so long and felt so much. The eyes gazing kindly upon them have looked upon persons and scenes that belong to the long ago, and now have become history. Time also has softened asperities, properly regulated and adjusted many things once in controversy and doubt, and so the conversation on the porch in the evening is a legacy in itself of truth, justice and wisdom.

It would be a calamity indeed to the church and to the world, if certain people died in the morning, or even in the afternoon of life. We stand unspeakably indebted to the quiet, unobtrusive figures on the evening porch, whose judgments are so full of pity, whose counsel is so good, whose speech is so gentle and loving, and whose presence is a benediction in the hour of sorrow and trial.

How we hate to miss them from the verandah. Their empty chairs bring a choking feeling to the throat and a mist of tears to the eyes. But they had to go at last. They themselves felt it, and thought more of the great coming tomorrow than they admitted to others. This was the explanation of long spells of silence. "Their eyes were with their heart, and that was far away." They were thinking of forms and faces long gone to the spirit land. Their dreams were of an endless day and of another life beyond the stars,

for which they had been fitted by their faithfulness in the day given them in this present world.

Then the time of retiring was near. Their bed was ready. A candle had been lighted and was shining in the passageway awaiting them.

And they were not sorry to go. The day had been long, the labor heavy and protracted, "their company had gone before," those who knew and loved them best were in heaven waiting for them, and they were tired and wanted to be with Christ.

So momentarily expecting the summons, how kind and thoughtful they were to everybody. Their last utterances on the porch savored in love and tenderness of the world to which they were going. When suddenly the signal came, and arising quietly with the light of their candle shining on the face, they said good-night and lay down in their last long sleep.

They are now with Jesus, and we will see them again in the morning of the resurrection, and in the beautiful day of heaven. But how we miss them! How vacant is the chair! How empty seems the room! How lonely looks the world.

CHAPTER 35

THE DEATH ANGEL

We all know that death, simply stated, is the dissolution of soul and body. The material vehicle for some reason ceases to perform its functions, and the invisible spirit that for weeks, months, or years has dwelt within, now flies away.

It has pleased men, however, to personify this solemn occurrence and call it the Angel of Death. So they say when they see the white or black crape fluttering from some doorknob that the Death Angel has visited another home.

The personification is not without scriptural foundation, for we read in the Word of God that the angel of the Lord in a single night smote with death one hundred and eighty-five thousand Assyrian soldiers. While in a pestilence that was slaying scores of thousands of the Israelites, David looked up and saw an angel in the sky standing over Jerusalem with a drawn sword. Destruction had been again committed to an angelic hand. And still again we read that when Herod, after making his speech, took to himself a praise and glory that belonged to God, instantly an angel smote him and he died miserably eaten with worms.

For all we know there are countless deaths taking place about us that happen not from the ceasing of the weary wheels of life to go around because of old age, but because of a presence, an intelligence, a personality full of flaming force delegated by an outraged heaven to strike the transgressor down. The appearances oftentimes are fearfully that way. There are similarities of suddenness, hopelessness and general dreadfulness that make happenings of today sound like chapters in the Word of God.

This view of death is not without its influence and lessons.

One effect is to fill any thoughtful mind with awe. For it is one thing to look on death as the result of the gradual wearing out of the physical machinery of life, and thereby allowing us opportunity by care and

diligence to obtain a full measure of days in the four score years and sometimes ten added to that; but it is quite another thing to feel that the end may come in the fullness of health, strength and spirits, as an instantaneous and crushing blow from an invisible angel's hand.

The record in the Scripture of an Uzziah smitten by an unseen being in the presence of the priests; of an Ananias and Sapphira knocked into hell from the floor of a testimony meeting; of a king brought down among the animals; and of a Dathan and Abiram hurled through the opening earth into the pit because of their false worship; these histories are full of warning voices to men and women who through sacrilegious conduct, or false testimony, or pride or heart, or wrong teaching, actually tempt the holy indignation of heaven, and compel God to an instantaneous settlement with them of wrath, judgment, and destruction.

It is certainly one thing to look at the calendar of years, and see three score of them for sin, and ten for repentance and amendment possibly; and another thing to wake up to the fact that though young in years, and full in purse, and with no human power able to stop the career — that an angel of God is standing over the house, or office, with drawn sword, and ready to let it fall with a lightning-like rush upon the doomed victim.

We are seen in this view not to be toying with the years, or acting unwisely toward ourselves, but are beheld trifling with Almighty God, who has a government to uphold, and a number of flaming officials to execute its sacred laws when they are violated.

A second thought that arises is the utter hopelessness of trying to avoid this messenger of a just God.

We may dodge men, escape a number of diseases and perils, but all our wisdom, labor, journeying and precaution amounts to nothing before this strange emissary whose paths are among the lightnings, who makes the clouds the dust of his feet, and stars the mileboards of his journeys. Countries and oceans are nothing to him who bursts forth from immensities and infinities in a moment, does his judgment day work in a second, and is gone back into eternity in the flash of another second.

We once read of a certain prince who was at a banquet given by King Solomon, when looking up he saw the Angel of Death gazing steadily at

him. At once he cried out to Solomon in fear, "Oh, King, use thy great power and have me transported back to my home in Chaldea." And Solomon had him instantly conveyed through the air to that distant land; and then turning to the angel said, "Why did you look so earnestly upon my guest?" And the Death Angel made the remarkable reply, "I had been commanded to get him in Chaldea and was surprised to find him here!"

The parable fairly overflows with the awful thought that there is no escape from the messenger, of death when he is sent upon our trail. Our very attempted flight will land us where the inexorable officer of the skies has been commanded to take us.

A third thought is how exceedingly important it is to the soul, that death finds us not only in a right condition but also in a right place.

Men have died while in the commission of a gross sin. Numbers have dropped into eternity from bar-rooms, and houses of infamy. A piece of eternal history has been made in this peculiar end of life that will never, and can never be altered. It belongs to the biography of those souls.

In the Iroquois Theater horror, when six hundred people were suffocated and burned to death, many of them church members, and two of them preachers, it is possible that some in the dreadfulness of those indescribably frightful fifteen minutes of strangling, choking, struggling, and dying, may have been heard by a pitiful God, and been forgiven and saved in almost their last breath. But an immutable record had been made just the same and the scene gone into an eternal history of the soul — that the Death Angel found the man in a theater! That a backslidden child of God was overtaken and overhauled by the Death Angel spending and frittering the hours away, when the Bible says, "Redeem the time;" and in a temple of the world when John declares if we love the world the love of the Father is not in us; that the friendship of the world is enmity to God. And so the sentence is added to the concluding page of life, "Died on the devil's territory."

Finally there is a brighter, sweeter thought connected with the visit of the Angel of Death. That is, he can find us in a proper place, in a right moral attitude and spiritual condition, and prepared to go at once into the presence of the King.

Death can have no terror to the pure in heart and upright in life. For sin is the sting of death according to Paul, and this by the cleansing blood of a full salvation has been taken away, and death having lost its sting has nothing to torture the soul with. So the apostle called his death a departure; and many since his day rejoicing in the same grace and victory, have gone from time into eternity like one taking a journey, certain of a delightful time all along the way, and assured of a glorious reception and welcome at the end of the trip.

In some of our beautiful southern homes in ante-bellum days, we have seen the children playing happily together under the great shade trees of the grass-covered yard, until the hour of sunset. Then as the shadows began to steal up from the west, and a chill air gather from the woods, a black servant would come from the home mansion a few hundred feet away with the words, "Your father or mother says come in."

The children were not afraid of the summons. They knew there was no loss in leaving their stick horses, weed bouquets, and bits of glass and rock, and going into a warm, beautiful home with crackling fires, a smoking supper, charming books, parlor games, and above all the loving presence of their parents and the grateful companionship of elder brothers and sisters. Nor were they afraid of the black servant. They knew who had sent him, and what he had come for, and so dropping their toys and playthings of the yard, they went off with him well contented into their father's mansion.

So the Death Angel will finally come to all of us who read these lines. He is robed in black, and will find us at our work or pleasure under the trees in the big yard of life. He will give us the message, "Your Father says come home!"

And some of us will not be sorry to go. And we will not be afraid of the Angel of Death, the black servant of God. But we will drop everything from our hands at his voice, and will rise up and follow him away into the skies, and enter into the mansion of our Heavenly Father that our Savior told us was prepared and waiting for us in heaven.

It will be so comfortable and blessed there; no lack of bread; no more pain and sickness; no partings nor deaths; no one to hurt or wound us any

more; and we will see again and be once more with those we knew and loved on earth; and there will be so many good people there; and the angels will be there, and our Elder Brother, and our Heavenly Father; and the Bible declares we will go no more out forever. We will not want to leave. We will be perfectly satisfied with what we find in the heavenly home, and anybody that wants them can have the things we left under the trees.

CHAPTER 36

THE HEAVENWARD GAZE

In Pilgrim's Progress, Christian and Faith are represented as standing in the midst of a flowery field gazing at the distant delectable mountains. The picture showing them, staff in hand and with intent faces looking upward at the country toward which they were journeying, has remained from the days of boyhood an imperishable memory in the mind of the writer.

The statement and illustration stand for something which we find in the Bible, and also realize in life. For from the sweetness, beauty and blessedness of Beulah Land, the sanctified are sooner or later found gazing forward and upward to what we call the home land, the perfect country, which the Bible speaks of as Heaven.

Such is the power of this present world over its inhabitants that when the hopeful lateral glance is changed to the steady gaze heavenward, we are compelled to believe that great life and character changes have taken place. The wise men looked upward for direction in regard to the Messiah. The shepherds near Bethlehem gazed into the sky where the singing angels had disappeared. Daniel watched an unfolding future. John brooded upon an opening heaven. The disciples on Mount Olivet gazed steadfastly into the sky where the form of the Savior had vanished behind a cloud. Every one of these beholders obtained something for their glance, from a star, and angel, to the vision of the Lord himself.

Today men look up for pardon, obtain it and go on. Others fix their eyes on heaven for a temporary relief, and deliverance, and find it, and push onward. Still others cry with upturned face for holiness, and it is given.

In addition to these glances, stands out distinct and preeminent the heavenward gaze that sooner or later we see being cast by sanctified people from the beautiful flowery fields of Beulah Land. The question is, What does this look mean and declare, and what has brought it about?

The first explanation is the failure of many excellent hopes and undertakings in this deeply spiritual life.

There is no failure in sanctification and no disappointment in Beulah Land itself, but there are miscarriages, comings short, and defeats in things and persons connected with the land and life. Plans are laid and efforts are put forth for great and gracious ends, and yet failure comes to some, others are diverted, and still others perverted. So that the soul finds itself frequently looking to the heavens for a consolation that was not realized in the success of the Christian work itself.

We are not allowed to build an abiding nest for ourselves this side of the stars, not even out of our excellent intentions and undertakings. So if we think to settle down with the blissful idea that earth is heaven, men are angels, and that some good enterprise we have started is all feather-lined, hypocrite-proof, mechanically self-oiling and of unchangeable and everlasting character, we are certain to be fearfully awakened and completely disenthralled.

Thus it is that the building erected at such cost burns down without insurance; the great undertaking did not go in the channel expected; the young man or woman educated at much expense did not measure up to expectation; the gospel trip did not accomplish what was hoped for; and the people did not flock as anticipated to the school, college, mission or church which had been founded at such an outlay of money and labor.

These things happening repeatedly through the months and years, will naturally and as by the working of a law cause the eyes of the tested and sorely tried follower of God to look far away from the ever-changing field of Christian activity, to the quiet blue heavens where moons, planets, suns and systems remain steadfast under the hand of the Almighty, and nothing ever fails.

A second cause of the heavenward look from Beulah Land is to be found in the slow but sure discovery of the difference between Christian perfection and human perfection.

The only perfectness-promised in the Bible to us in this life is the complete cleansing from all sin, and the perfecting of Christian love. This

is the perfection spoken of in the Word of God, and called Christian perfection by John Wesley.

In Beulah Land, this side of the grave, we enjoy perfect love. In Heaven, with glorified intellect, and with a resurrected body, we will possess human perfection. But at first we fail to discriminate here, and so put grievous burdens on ourselves and others, and are thereby doomed to various grievous disappointments.

Then Satan sees to it that many spirits shall go out, and many voices distract and disturb the happy-hearted dwellers in Canaan with cries of “Lo here!” and “Lo there!” while bringing promises of all kinds of perfection as to mind and body, as to diet and dress, as to statement of doctrine and mode of church government.

The very wisest and best are liable to be deceived and led astray; and even when not sidetracked, may be confused and bewildered for a while. Such perils and their escapes and remedies have been noticed in previous chapters.

But as the days go by, there comes a deeper knowledge of the truth which makes us free indeed; and the life becomes settled, rooted and blessedly established. The diverse and discordant voices are unnoticed or ignored. The soul becomes continually more calm and serene. The eyes are turned away from the contemplation of the nervous, fussy, fummy, jerky, spasmodic and contradictory movements of individuals round about, and are fixed in profound trustfulness and sweet expectancy on the deep, quiet, fathomless heavens.

Like David, some sanctified people can say, “I have seen an end of all perfection.” That is of the human and earthly kind. Such people are wearied out in listening to its incoherencies, and beholding its inconsistencies. Happy in the enjoyment of Christian perfection, the purified soul looks to the skies for human perfection, where it will abide forever in the company of angelic and divine perfection, a blessed trinity indeed.

Nor is this all that is in the upward look, but the very disadvantage under which Christian perfection is placed by the limitations laid upon it by human imperfection as to ignorance, poor judgment, and frail or wearied

bodies, makes the sanctified man long all the more ardently for the heavenly place and hour when Christian perfection shall meet human perfection, and there take place between the two an everlasting wedlock.

A third cause of the heavenward gaze is to be found in the snapping of earthly ties.

We all began life with a large circle of kindred and friends about us. We were so accustomed to their presence that we failed to realize how much of beauty and gladness their love and life gave to the big world in which we dwelt.

As the years went by these loving, faithful hearts dropped off one by one into the grave. At first we were not alarmed, nor stricken with a sense of utter loneliness, because we still had so many left to us in the home, social, and church circle.

But there comes a time when the stripped life takes notice of its numerous bereavements and its loneliness in a human sense. It is a memorable hour when one awakes to the fact that over half the household have gone over into the far country; and later still realizes that all are departed but himself. It is pathetic to read about Jacob being "left alone" in the night on the side of the brook, with his family far removed in the distance. But it is more pathetic to see a man left alone on earth with all of his household gone into the silent land from whence none ever come back.

It takes full salvation to keep one sweet, patient, loving and faithful under these circumstances. But even the blessings of holiness will not prevent the eyes from filling, and also from looking heavenward, into whose wondrous depths precious ones have disappeared, even as Christ vanished in the clouds before the tearful vision of his disciples.

As a youth we visited the beautiful home of an uncle and aunt who had a household circle of six children and three grandchildren, nearly all grown. Very happy and devoted they were, and a most lovely memory they gave to us in their cordial entertainment of their visiting kinsman.

Twenty years after, we returned to the same city to hold a gospel meeting of ten days. The entire family had disappeared. We looked with an aching heart upon the home which had passed into the hands of strangers, and sat

grief-stricken in the family burial lot in the cemetery which held the silent forms of every one of the household except a solitary surviving daughter, who was then living in a far distant state. The town was crowded with people, but felt wonderfully empty to us. The park on the side of the river where we had walked together was filled with laughing, chatting groups, but it looked desolate and stripped to the writer. Full salvation kept him in the trying hour, but as he sat gazing over the broad Mississippi into the western sky beyond, he felt an unspeakable loneliness, and his heart fairly ached to see those he had known and loved on earth, and who had gone away into heaven.

We once knew a gifted preacher whose tongue has thrilled and delighted thousands, and who died a few years ago at the age of seventy. His daughter told us that the last year of his life he would take his stick and go out to the city cemetery and there spend hours amid its quiet walks and shadowy nooks. Asking him one day, why he went so often and stayed so long in such a place, his eyes filled with tears and his voice grew husky as he replied, "More of my friends are out there, my daughter, than I have here in town."

He was not soured, embittered or misanthropical. He was a genial, loving, sympathetic man to the last. But his generation had passed away. His old co-workers had preceded him within the veil. His kindred were under the sod. His company had gone before! He did not know the young people springing up around him. Strange faces continually met him on the streets. He stood alone in a new generation who knew little or nothing about his early and middle life. He may have felt sometimes that he was in the way. Anyhow he felt that he was lonely. And so his eyes sought the heavens into which kindred and children, and friends had preceded him.

A fourth cause of the upward gaze is the consciousness of completed work.

We doubt not that to many is granted the knowledge that their main mission or labor in life is over. A feeling is given that the evening is near, and that the worker will soon be called off and away.

As a boy we have noticed the slaves in the cotton fields of the South watching the setting of the sun in the west. Some of their songs were very

pathetic at that hour, when wearied with the long day's toil, they welcomed the shades of night as they told of work ended, and rest and the cabin home.

So in the ardent, active labors attending the life of full salvation, the thought of the approaching end of the toil and conflict comes with very grateful power to the heart. The conviction that only a little time is left before we are called from duty to eternal rest is bound not only to affect life and manner but the look itself. The eyes will insensibly take on the upward expression, and one will gaze into the heavens as though expecting an angel to come from behind a cloud and bid him come out of the dark and cold into the warmed and lighted house of his Heavenly Father.

A final cause for the heavenward gaze is found in the actual homesickness of the soul for God and heaven.

It matters not how blessedly we may be sanctified, and how deep in Beulah Land we may go, there is felt in the spirit at times a longing for the Savior and heaven which is wonderfully like the heartache of a homesick child. The sight of a sunset may arouse the feeling; or it may be the ringing of a distant church bell; or the voice of some one singing over a field. Suddenly the homesickness for God and heaven is upon us, and with swelling heart and filling eyes, we with upward gaze cry out for "a land that is fairer than day," and

*“Where the sun never sets,
And the leaves never fade,
In that beautiful City of Gold.”*

It was this same homesickness that made Paul say he had "a desire to depart and to be with Christ;" and David cry, "Oh, that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away and be at rest." And it was this very same spirit which produced the immortal

*“When shall these eyes thy heaven built walls
And pearly gates behold,
Thy bulwarks with salvation strong
And streets of shining gold?”*

And it is this identical longing which makes the blood-washed and Spirit-kept soul look upward from the beautiful fields of Beulah Land, and say,

*“When shall I reach that happy place
And be forever blest;
When shall I see my Father’s face,
And in his bosom rest?”*

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