

Lessons from Exodus

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Lecture 1 - Egypt

(Exodus, chap. 2.)

The historical books of the Old Testament present to us a regular series of types, each book having a set of its own, connected with a special line of truth, upon which in perfect order the separate gems are strung. To read them aright, therefore, we must see first what is the truth which characterizes each, and then each individual type will find its place. For instance, in the book of Genesis, a series of seven lives is given exemplifying the life which God gives to man - not the life which is now natural to him, but, in contrast with that, the life which we have as born of God, shown in its different stages and features from the first point where it begins with conviction of sin, in Adam, to the time when, in Joseph, it is master of the world. A series of seven lives gives its whole history. In Exodus we have a fresh beginning, and a new line of things. It begins a little later than in Genesis; for we must first of all have life before we can be redeemed. It is His people whom God redeems out of bondage, redemption being this actual deliverance, which must be accomplished in order for any practical Christian life.

In Leviticus we still find an advance on this. We enter as priests into the sanctuary, and are instructed in all that suits His presence there. The theme of the book is Sanctification; having learned which, we are prepared, in Numbers, to go out into the world, and walk with Him there.

I need not go any further, but the order in which they are given is to be as much observed as anything else.

And we must not run these things one into the other. Each is a picture by itself, and we must be careful how we join together even things which are apparently the same, until we have learnt their peculiar significance in the separate books. We shall have, no doubt, examples of this as we proceed.

To come now to the book before us: It has two main parts. In the first part, the first eighteen chapters, we have the redemption or deliverance out of bondage itself. In the last part, from the 19th chapter onward, we have the other part, so to speak, of redemption - we are redeemed to God.

In the first part, the tyrant who rules over us naturally is dispossessed; in the second part, we are brought under the yoke of our true Master. Each part is the complement of the other. It is absolutely necessary, in order that deliverance should be realized, that the Deliverer should become the Sovereign. His service is indeed the only perfect freedom. It is necessary for the house not only to be emptied of its former occupant, but the way whereby he will be kept out is by One stronger than he being in possession. Before we speak of the deliverance itself, let us first look at the land of bondage, the state to which this deliverance applies.

Egypt is a very remarkable land in itself, and in every point peculiarly fitted for the type for which God uses it. As we think of it we realize how true it is, as the apostle says in 1 Cor. 10, speaking of the history of Israel: "All these things happened unto them for types," God controlling things that really happened, so as to make them fit representations of the greater things which He has in His heart through these to communicate to us.

What a wonderful thing it is to be permitted to look upon these things thus unveiled !- to have things which were kept so long waiting till God could reveal them, now made known to us "upon whom the ends of the ages have come!"

The land of Egypt is a remarkable land in this way; that it is a little strip of country along the great river which makes it what it is, and is in perpetual conflict with the desert. This desert runs on both sides, and a little strip through which the river flows alone is Egypt. The desert on each side hems it in, blowing in its sands in all directions, and the river is as constantly overflowing its banks and leaving its deposit upon the sand. and renewing the soil. The Scripture name is not Egypt but Mizraim; and Mizraim means "double straitness." This doubtless refers to the two strips, one on each side of the river. Mizraim was son of Ham, the Ammon, or Khem, of profane history - a very significant name in this connection. It means black or sun-burnt - darkened by the light. Ham is the father of Mizraim. That is, what we call the natural state is not what is really natural; for it is not the mere absence of light, but the effect of the light itself. And such is the darkness of the world.

For instance, the heathen often are spoken of as groping after the light and unable to find it; and it is looked upon as their misfortune, not their sin, because they are bound down by circumstances too hard for them. Now that is not really so. The truth is, "There is none that seeketh after God." God's account of it in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans is a totally different one. God states there by His apostle that, "When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and

their foolish heart was darkened." That was the beginning of heathenism. It is man, not seeking God, but endeavouring to escape from God, and has escaped, so to speak, into the darkness. The darkness is the darkness of resisted light, not the absence of light. The light has not been absent. The very character of the darkness shows that it has not.

The land and river of Egypt present a scene of perpetual conflict between death and life. While the mercy of God is feeding that land by the rain of a far country, no rain comes, or seldom falls in Egypt. The rain falls far off. The people know nothing about it. It comes rolling down in the shape of a mighty river, and that perpetual stream ministers unfailing plenty to the land. It is, so to speak, independent of heaven. I do not mean it really is independent; but that it is watered not from the clouds, but from the river. In their thoughts the people do not look up for it, but down. It is the very thing God points out in contrasting the land of Canaan with the land of Egypt, that Canaan, Israel's portion, drinks in the water and the rain of heaven. Canaan is a land of dependence. Egypt is a land of independence, figuratively.

And that is the serious character of our natural condition, alas! what is natural to us now - that we are independent of God! God indeed supplies the streams of plenteous blessing, and none else than He; but they come so regularly, so constantly, that we speak of natural laws, and shut God out. Just as for long years men were sent to find the sources of that river, so men have been constantly seeking to explore the sources of natural supply, and have hardly succeeded yet. They are taking up as new a very old question, "Canst thou by

searching find out God?" to settle it in their own fashion (Job 11: 7).

From the side of so-called science, they are beginning to say "God is the Unknowable." God said long ago, that that would be the result of their unholy efforts to remove His veil. But they did not believe it; and now, when they find it out themselves, they vaunt it as a new discovery, and yet will not believe. They only decide that, if science cannot find out, He is not to be found at all. The gracious revelation, by which He has come near to put away the darkness, they will not accept; but putting forth their very ignorance as knowledge, prate of Him as Unknowable.

Egypt worshipped her river. The river came to her so constantly that she was practically independent of heaven; yet heaven was the source of her supply. She did not see the blue hills which shed down the blessing they received. And they worshipped but the river. It is our state of nature away from God. God was far off to us. We did not realize the blessed hand from which all things came, and we took the blessings in willing ignorance of the hand upon which both they and we really depend.

This Egypt was remarkable in other ways - as the abode of science and civilization. To that wonderful country people go now to study her monuments and her architecture. Egypt built as if she had eternity before her to enjoy it in. Her buildings were made to outlast by ages the people of a day who builded them; they could not make the people last, yet tried their best at that. They embalmed their dead; and sent their dead down to the generations yet to come side by side with what their

hands had made, as if solemnly saying: "Here are the mighty works of those over whom a mightier has triumphed." What a comment upon all her grandeur! Her main literary memorial is a "book of the dead." In her monuments death is stereotyped. The desert, after all, has vanquished the river. The land of science and of art is a land of death, not of life.

And that is the history of the world. Death is what is stamped upon it everywhere. It is the stamp of "vanity" upon a fallen creation. It is more; it is the stamp of Divine reprobation. For "in His favour is life." Could He repent and unmake, unless we had given Him cause for repentance? Surely He could not. What a solemn thing that we should have given Him a reason! When God is able to rest in His love, as He will by and by, that will necessitate the eternity of the condition in which He can rest. All that in which He can rest, will be stamped as eternal. When He "rests in His love," nothing can deprive Him of the object of it.

The religion of Egypt was remarkable. They had a religion in which were embalmed the relics of another religion, the dead tradition of a life that had been. It is remarkable that the very expression which God employs when He tells Moses His name, "I am that I am," is attributed to God in the monuments of Egypt. Yet, with all that, what did Egypt worship? Emphatically, and universally, the creature - not the Creator. Egypt, which testified of the true God, took up everything that was His total opposite, and deified a hundred bestial objects - the images of their own lusts, debasing themselves by the service of these!

Their worship was a deification - as all heathen worship is - of their own lusts and passions. That is everywhere what controls man naturally. In the garden of Eden, Satan said to the woman, "Ye shall be as gods." it was the bait he presented to her: and man has sought after this ever since. There is a craving in man's heart for what will satisfy; and not being able to find satisfaction in God, not able to trust God's love and care, lust and care devour him. He worships himself, in a way continually more and more brutalizing and degrading.

Let us now look at the king that reigned over

Egypt. Pharaoh is a title, as "king" or "kaiser." A very absolute king he was. The key to the interpretation of types is found in Scripture itself. The types of Redemption in Exodus, for example, are interpreted for us in the epistle to the Romans. There we find one from whom we are delivered, who is exercising a despotic power over man his captive, and the steps of the deliverance are there detailed. "Sin hath reigned unto death." How that expresses Pharaoh's iron rule over the Israelites in Egypt! Verily, it was a reign unto death. And then, for deliverance, "Our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed; that henceforth we should not be the slaves of sin." There you find truly and exactly what answers to Israel's deliverance at the Red Sea. Pharaoh and his host were cast into the sea.

We have looked at the land, and its king who rules over the land; let us look at the state of bondage in which we find Israel.

It is striking how the book opens. "Now these are the names of the children of Israel who came into Egypt.

Every man and his household came with Jacob." Jacob means Supplanter. His other name, which God gave him, is not given: it would be out of place here. They are indeed the "children of Israel," but "every man and his household came with Jacob." We also came into the land of bondage with our father Adam.

The bondage itself does not begin at once; for bondage is not the expression of our mere natural state. You take the man in the 7th of Romans. Some say it is the natural state, but it is not so. In the natural state you will not find a man crying out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?" That is an expression of great bondage. There was a time when Egypt pleased us well enough, as for a time it pleased Israel. We know how in the wilderness they not only lusted after the good things of Egypt, but went after its gods too. The golden calf was made in imitation of the worship of Egypt. They had a flourishing and happy time, a time when they were not slaves, but the very contrary. And it was God, who, as He says, "raised up Pharaoh," and thus brought about this state of bondage. God promised Abraham this very furnace of affliction in the vision of Gen. 15. This iron furnace is God's representative, along with the lamp, when it passes between the pieces of the sacrifice. It was the necessary means to bring them out for the inheritance He promised them. It is His way to make them the people He wants them to be. God pledges them they shall have this fiery furnace, and Pharaoh was the instrument in God's hand for this. And it is surely part of God's faithfulness to us when He allows us to know what real bondage is; and although in the first place we do not cry to God, God hears. Mark that, in this 2nd chapter, it does not say they cried to God because of

their bondage; but "they cried," and the Lord heard them. And when we wake up to find out what this world is, what a place of useless conflict with death, what an iron hand rules over us - when we wake up with yearning at last after some better condition, when we begin to find out where we are, and a little what we are, it is God that is producing that in our souls already. It is light breaking in, though the discovery is of darkness. Thus the life of God begins. It enables us to feel even death. We never know really what it is to be dead, until we are alive. It is when we come to live, when life begins, that we learn what death is.

And so here, and always, it is God that makes us open our eyes to see - if it be not, at first, so much a yearning after Himself, as yearning after relief. And when we do come to Him, is it not, as the prodigal, for the bread in our Father's house, rather than for the Father's sake? Yet He receives; for He says simply, "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest." He does not say, "Come in such a way"- nay, not even, "Come, feeling your sins." In fact there are different ways in which God draws men to Himself. On the one hand, a sense of guilt which needs a Saviour; and on the other, through hunger and thirst and weariness, which need rest and satisfaction. But the Lord says to just such, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

We may take the Lord's words in the largest way. We can say there is no weariness to which the Lord's words would not apply; no state of desolation and unrest and evil in which and by which He is not calling souls unto Himself. Yet sin must of course be felt; and this will come. And bondage to sin is what is typified here.

Let us look at this a little more closely.

You find in the first chapter, "There arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph. And he said unto his people: Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we. Come on, let us deal wisely with them... and they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses."

They built "treasure cities" - magazine cities, cities of warlike provision. Pharaoh sets to work to keep the people down and in bondage; and for this purpose he uses their own strength against themselves. He makes them labour to rivet their own chains: for these cities were in Goshen, the land allotted to themselves. And that is what is being done everywhere the world over. Men are rivetting their own chains; are building Pharaoh's magazine cities to enable him to hold them fast. Take the drunkard: every cup he takes makes him more and more a slave to it, although he knows what a hard and bitter service it is, and what a terrible master he is working for. "He that committeth sin is the slave of sin," says the Lord. He cannot give up his master's service, when he pleases. There is One surely ready to hear his cry; but that is another matter. If it is money that man covets, every dollar that he puts into his treasury only makes his heart more set upon it. The very heathen had a proverb:

"The love of money increases with the increase of money."

And so it is; the more you succeed in getting what your heart prizes, the more it will attach your heart to itself.

And this is true of Christians too. If we allow our hearts to go out after the world in any shape, the more we gain of it, the more its weight will drag us down to earth.

Now let us look at the deliverer. We have Moses brought before us in the 2nd chapter. I need not say that Moses is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is son of a Levite: and Levi was the third son of Israel. The third speaks of resurrection, and of Divine display. Leah says when her third son is born, "Now will my husband be joined to me," and she calls him Levi, "joined!" The true Levite is He who really joins God to man, and man to God. Need I say who He is?- the Risen One who, having passed through death for us and gone on high, is thus our Daysman, the "One Mediator between God and man." We find thus the genealogy of Moses and Aaron carefully given in the early part of Exodus, in order that we may know these men as the double type of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Moses is exposed to the death-sentence under which Israel lies in Egypt: he of course by birth. We must distinguish and contrast, however, for here we have the shadow, not the very image. The Lord only came to put Himself under our sentence, in grace, not being exposed to it naturally, I need not say. Nor did it have title over Him at any time. He could have gone to God in that sinless, perfect humanity of His with twelve legions of angels from the garden where He delivered Himself up into His creatures' hands. "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," but no principle of mortality lurked in the body prepared Him. It was only when He came into it for others that He could die. He took of course a body capable of dying. That is truly so: but He did not take a body with a seed of death in it. He took a

pure spotless humanity; a true humanity, of course: truer than our own because it was humanity without flaw or defect, entirely according to God's thought of what humanity should be. Even in the grave the Holy One of God saw no corruption.

Moses was naturally exposed to death; but the Lord went down into it in grace. In this sense too His zeal for God was what devoured Him.

Before Moses becomes a deliverer, he has to be exposed to death and taken out of it. He does not actually die, we know. He could be spared, as Isaac too was spared. Only His own beloved Son God could not spare. Sentenced to death at the world's hand, Moses is taken out of it; then he has to take his place in rejection at the hands of his own people, else he would not be properly a type of the Deliverer here. He is not only cast out by the world, but rejected by his brethren, as was our Lord. True, there was failure on Moses' part, however much the affliction of his brethren was in his heart. There was a true desire for them, and a presentiment that God had chosen him to be the deliverer. As you find in Stephen's words to the Jews, he thought they would recognize him as such. They did not recognize him. They say, "Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?" and Moses fled into Midian, rejected by his brethren. It is in that character that we have to do with the Lord Jesus Christ now. We find Moses then in the land of Midian, and soon with a Gentile bride. But his son's name tells us that no real home is yet found by him. He names his son, "Gershom"--"a stranger"- for he says: "I have been a stranger in a strange land." Beautifully here Moses reflects our character and position in the world, and of Him to whom we belong. The wife belongs no more to

Midian, but to her husband. The "stranger" son becomes no resident of the land in which he is born. These things should want no interpreter to any of our hearts. God grant us only to be more Gershoms in the land of Midian - strangers in a world where, if Christ can find a bride, He cannot a home.

In the next chapter, Moses will appear distinctly as the divinely appointed saviour. This tonight, is a preliminary sketch, by way of introduction to that which is the great theme of the book. The story in Exodus itself is so far brief and rapid. We shall have soon abundant details of the deepest interest - details of our own history as God's redeemed: a history which transcends this wonderful story as the antitype must needs transcend the type. From the Passover to the Land, the wonderful and majestic dealings of God with a people whose weakness and waywardness made them the objects of his tenderest care, and the subjects of the display of His power and grace, are our types, "written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come." What must we be to Him who has written our history in the records of these bygone ages! Oh, may we adoringly accept the love, and bow our hearts to receive the admonition!

Lecture 2 - The Call of the Deliverer

(Exodus, chap. 3.)

We have looked at Israel's deliverer from Egyptian bondage. We have seen him given over to death and brought up out of it. We have seen him put himself forward as the saviour of his people, and rejected by them. Then, as rejected by his own, making affinity for himself in the land of his exile. Now we come to look at the call of the deliverer, in the next two chapters. I only take up one of these tonight, as we shall find abundance in it for meditation.

Here we see the one who was indeed to be the instrument of Israel's deliverance, who had hitherto run before his time, now drawing back when he receives the needed call. The man who had illustrated the forwardness of nature now illustrates the backwardness of nature. With instinct in his heart, forty years before, he had been ready to run without a call. But those forty years have made their mark upon him, and he is a changed man. The voice of God, now authoritatively urging him forward, is not enough for him. With his eyes upon himself, he responds, "Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?"

That may look like humility in us, but is not. When God has laid hold of us for a certain thing, to turn round and say, "Who am I, that I should do it?" is not humility. God did not raise any question as to who or what Moses was. If He chooses and sends, it matters not who the person is. The power lay in the One who was sending; so the Lord says, "Certainly I will be with thee." But, even so,

Moses' reluctance is not overcome. There is just this tendency on the two sides. The forwardness of nature, I may say, is the failure of our youth, constantly - our spiritual youth, as well as our natural youth; eagerness to run in God's path, but not apprehending what the path is, or what it needs to walk in it. On the other hand, when the cost is counted, and our weakness known, the energy begotten of self-confidence being gone, we need a stimulating call on God's part, to get out of the persistent occupation with our weakness now, as with our strength before.

You find that very strikingly in the

Gospel of Matthew, when our Lord, at the commencement of His labours, is addressing some of the disciples, at the end of the eighth chapter. One proposes to follow Him without any call at all. He says, "Lord, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest." The Lord says - Do you know where this will lead you? "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has not where to lay his head."

Of this man we hear no more; but to another

He says, just as He says to Moses now, "Follow Me." But he says, "Suffer me first to go and bury my father." If we count the cost on our side, we shall always find it more than we have resources for. Yet we need to consider the cost; to look at it gravely and solemnly, until, in the sense of our utter insufficiency, faith roots itself in Divine omnipotence, and finds ability to stand where God calls.

Now let us look upon Moses as the type of One in whom was no defect. A very plain type he is. First, in that employment in which we find him. A shepherd was the

type of the Divine deliverer and king. King David was a shepherd, and the beautiful word in the second chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, which speaks of Christ as the Governor who shall "rule" God's people Israel, is literally, "shall be a shepherd" to them. That is God's thought of a true ruler. Moses was trained for forty years as a simple shepherd, until he is fit to go forth to lead God's people; then power is entrusted to him - the meekest man upon the earth. We who know in whose blessed hands the sceptre of God's kingdom now is - for whom God's throne is a throne of grace - can realize a little the unspeakable blessedness of this!

You remember when the disciples were indignant with James and John because they had asked for places on the right and left hand in His kingdom, the Lord turned to them, and said, "You know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them; but so shall it not be among you; but whosoever will be great among you shall be your minister, and whosoever of you will be the chiefest shall be servant of all; for even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

How beautiful! Not merely does the Lord inculcate humility, and forbid the craving after place and power; but the places themselves are not such as would suit those ambitious to get them. They would not satisfy ambition - the greed for place. They are places of service in which the highest ministers to the lowest, as the mountain-tops send down their streams to the vales below; and the highest place of all is His whose love made Him come not to be ministered unto, but to

minister, and to give His life a ransom for many. "It is more blessed to give than to receive," is His own utterance, and ever true - in glory as well as on the way to it.

This training in service shows the character of the place for which He is training us. And He of whom Moses is but the picture, true Shepherd of the sheep, will never, however different the circumstances, give up the service to which love consecrated Him. With love, rule is service; and how blest the time when love alone shall rule!

We find Moses then, in the course of his service, leading his flock to the back side of the desert, to the Mount of God (called so, no doubt, from what now took place there) even Horeb. And there "the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. And he looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed." There the Lord addressed Moses; and, as the Angel of the bush, gives him his commission.

This is a wonder for our eyes as well as those of Moses. God had before, in reference to this very captivity in Egypt, revealed Himself under the similitude of fire. The "smoking furnace" had been His symbol, when (as we have already seen) in covenanting with Abraham He passed between the pieces of the sacrifice. And how striking is the symbol here! Abram had kept watch by the Victims, driving away the unclean birds which would have come down upon them. But the sun goes down; night comes on; a deep sleep overpowers him, and a horror of great darkness falls upon him. It is to these points that the vision addresses itself. The smoking

furnace and the burning lamp are what the deep sleep and the darkness demand; and these the sacrifice secures, and the faithfulness of God supplies to His people. If the activity and vigilance of faith fail, the furnace of trial will not fail as the appointed means of purification; while for the darkness which is the result of unbelief, the burning lamp is equally provided. How sure the inheritance for those to whom God is thus pledged in Christ to bring them through to enjoy it, securing the conditions which His holiness of necessity imposes!

Thus the fiery trial which was trying them in Egypt was in reality God's remembrance of His covenant. It might not look like it. It might look any thing but that. Alas, unbelief mistakes the simplest dealings of God with us; nevertheless, if the people's deliverance from Egypt was to be really deliverance, they must realize in their own soul what bondage was. Thus it was God who raised up Pharaoh, just as it was God on the other hand who raised up Moses.

Now, if we look at this thorn-bush (for such it is), it is a striking picture of the people. In the tenth chapter of Isaiah, speaking of the Assyrian scourge, the prophet says: "And the light of Israel shall be for a fire and his Holy One for a flame! and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one day." These thorns and briers picture those of whom David speaks as "sons of Belial" who "shall be all of them as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands." You remember that thorns were the sign of the curse at the beginning. They are, in fact, as botanists tell us (at least of the kind we have to do with here), abortive leaves, parts of a plant incapable of fulfilling their original purpose. Sinners are thus in this symbol naturally

connected with the curse upon sin. And the thorn-bush itself we may, without forcing, view as the type of sinful flesh. This is what the people are: hence the fire; but the bush is not consumed - for the Angel of Jehovah, their covenant God, is in that fire.

As afterward, in the judgment which swept over Egypt the night of the passover, they had to be taught that, as far as they were concerned, there was no difference between them and the Egyptians. The judgment which delivered them must have fallen on them, had not grace provided them a shelter from it.

They needed tribulation then; needed the purifying fire, in which God was. For what were the Egyptians?- they had their part in what the fire symbolized. Nevertheless it was God who was dealing with Israel in love - a holy love, or it would not be God. It is a hard thing oftentimes to learn, that while God has power to save His own to the uttermost; while He has got in Christ's sacrifice a full and sufficient satisfaction for our sins, nevertheless the necessities of His holy government oblige Him to deal with us as to the very sins which the sacrifice of Christ has put away as wrath bringing. For instance, in 1 Cor., chap. 11, we find this doctrine: "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged; but when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world" (ver. 32). Now mark, these are redeemed men.

They are those for whom

Christ's blood was shed, and to whom Christ's blood had been applied. They were "in Christ" before God, and delivered from the wrath to come. Does it not seem

strange to read that, if they were not chastened of the Lord, they would have to be condemned with the world?

Surely it was not because God had not sufficient power or grace for them. But God is a holy governor, and a throne of grace is still a throne. It is not a question of judgment in the sense of wrath, or of exacting anything from His people, but He must display Himself as the Holy One. And this is necessary in a double way: for the sake of His people and for those who are looking at them. All must learn and own the God of grace to be the thrice Holy One. Thus, again, the apostle Peter says: "The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God" (the people of God), "and if it first begin at us - what shall the end be of those who obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous are difficultly saved"- that is the force of it - He has, so to speak, to take pains about it, "where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?" We find this all through Scripture. God says to His people, "What a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Grace does not set this aside but confirms it. In reaping he finds out what it is that he has sown, and learns to judge in the fruit what he did not judge in the seed.

So also our Lord in

His Sermon on the Mount: "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will men give into your bosoms." Thus, as we can judge in others very clearly what in ourselves is not so clear, we are made to learn in others' dealings towards us, our own towards them.

It is so with the first thing: in repentance in order to salvation. God has to show us what sin is. I do not say it is by chastening; but still He has to bring us face to face with our sins, that grace may be grace, and salvation be from sin as well as from wrath to come. It is the necessity of His holy government that "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Not that repentance is the price we pay for salvation in anywise; for Christ's work is the only price of what to us is absolutely free. Repentance only makes us learn how needed and free it is.

This bush then reveals the ways of Him who is the Saviour of His people. And Moses' unshod feet should teach us reverent contemplation of them.

And now God reveals Himself to Moses as the God of their fathers, "the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob;" to which He adds, when Moses further asks after His Name, "I AM THAT I AM: thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you ... the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my Name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations."

That with which God begins here, and to which He returns, is that He is God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob. He has taken a name in relationship to men, which is to be His continual memorial. Back of that He has another name, which, simply rendered is, The Unsearchable. "I AM THAT I AM" does not so much reveal as declare the veil that hangs before Him, when man would "search out the Almighty to perfection." Inscrutable, He "dwells in the light unapproachable,

whom no man hath seen, nor can see." He declares Himself the Ever-present: the One who is; the great fact for man always to realize, which gives reality and meaning to every thing else.

"Jehovah" is the title which God takes throughout the Old Testament, and which for us remains with all its significance, in spite of the dearer title, by which as sons now we know the "Father." Jehovah is the name by which He declares Himself in covenant with His people. Throughout their fleeting generations He abides "the same yesterday, today, and for ever."

What God here insists upon is, that He is the "God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob," and that this is to be His memorial unto all generations. He was to be known as in connection with those three honoured names.

(The

Almighty) is the name God took with Abraham; "I Am" or "Jehovah" is that which He took with Israel; "The Highest" is that which He will show Himself to be in millennial times. None of these in themselves declare, His nature, or the character of His ways toward us. But in the mouth of the Lord Jesus, "Father" has become indeed a revealing name, and we know God as He was never revealed before.

He identifies Himself with them, as the apostle shows us, because of the practical faith they had in Him - a faith which manifested itself in a life of pilgrimage, in obedience to His call. God is not ashamed to link Himself with those whose faith in Him gave Him so good a character. If He had called Himself the God of Lot, what would Lot's conduct have led men to suppose God

to be? But (spite of Abraham's failures) God's character is shown by calling Himself the God of Abraham. Look closer, and you will find this true in a still deeper way. Why does God connect Himself with just these three? Why no more nor less? These three displayed Him in His true character, in three ways, as the God of each separately. With the light of the New Testament, we should at once interpret what His threefold name expresses - as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Who can read the 22nd of Genesis without discerning in the offerer and the offered another Father than Abraham, and another Son than Isaac? As in the Gospel of John, which gives this side of the Cross, it is all between the Father and the Son. The Father is giving; the Son too is giving Himself up. There is no word of dissent from Isaac; and nothing is suffered to mar the precious representation of Him who spared not His own beloved Son who came expressly to do the Father's will. How the narrative dwells upon each point in the father's trial! - a three days' journey to the place - three days with the word in his heart which bade him give up his only, his beloved son! The whole extent of his sacrifice revealed to him in measured terms: "Take now thy son, thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of."

It is inexpressible comfort to see that God knows every ingredient in the cup of trial He mixes for us. It is His own heart He is telling out while He is thus searching out Abraham's? Did it not cost Him to give up His own beloved Son? Was the sacrifice all on the Son's part, and none on the Father's? Shall we call Him "Father," and

not credit Him with a Father's heart? Is our God revealed as an impassive God who does not feel? We must not ascribe to Him human defect or frailty, surely, but must we not credit Him with love? He would rather come under imputation of defect than that we should think this of Him. "God is not a man that He should repent," yet He will talk about repenting. Nay, not only did it repent the Lord that He had made man, but "it grieved Him at His heart." Blessed to know such a heart; and that what the Son of His bosom suffered, the bosom that held the Son suffered also.

Thus the "God of Abraham" tells out the Father to us, and He bids us know Him as our Father also; for, as the apostle tells us in Gal. 4, Isaac was a picture of the sons of the freewoman; sons is what God calls us now - the child of the bondwoman having been put away. That the God of Isaac reveals the Son to us also, we have already seen. Every Christian heart will recognize in Isaac the figure of the Lord Jesus Christ. Not only the 22nd of Genesis, but many other passages speak of him as such. I need not enter upon this as perhaps none will question it; although blessed it is to see God thus coming near to us in human guise to draw us as it were with the cords of love to Himself.

But what about "the God of Jacob?" Can self-seeking crooked Jacob speak of God to us? His brother Esau says, "Is he not rightly called 'Jacob'? for he has supplanted me these two times." Is he not a strange person to be linked with a holy God?- not concealing his name either; for He does not in this connection call Himself the God of Israel, but expressly the God of Jacob.

Do you realize how fearless a book Scripture is? Do you think all the infidels in the world could ever make God ashamed of what He has written? Never! No, the very things they think to shame Him by, are the very things He takes up to show us how His "foolishness" is wiser than all man's wisdom.

No, He is not ashamed to be the God of Jacob. Well for us that He is not. He takes up this Jacob as the very one in whom He can show His power and grace. Whom shall He take to show His grace, but the chief of sinners? Whom shall He take up, in order to show His power, but one of the most intractable material? And so Jacob is just the person in whom to display His grace and power. If He is the God of Abraham and Isaac on the one hand, it is not less Jacob's God. It is Jacob, in fact - crippled as to human strength, in which he trusts - who gets the name "Israel"- a prince with God. If the God of Abraham shows us God the Father, and the God of Isaac shows us God the Son, surely the God of Jacob shows us God the Holy Ghost.

How beautifully then does this last name (so different from the other two) unite to tell us what God will perpetually have as His memorial! What a gap there would be, if Jacob had not his place here! In it, our connection with God is seen; Jacob's need brings him in, as our need it is that practically brings us to God. God too has need of Jacob to display the riches of His grace and the power of His salvation.

Before we close, let us look at what answers to this memorial name of God in the New Testament. No need here to take up three men to tell Himself out. There is now One Man who is by Himself all-sufficient to tell out

God. He does not now say, "I am the God of Peter, or of Paul, or of John," but He is "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." How could He put another beside Him? And as He stands upon earth, heaven opens, and the Father's voice is heard declaring, "This is my beloved Son in whom I have found my delight." The Holy Ghost comes down visibly upon Him in the form of a dove, and abides upon Him. God is manifested now, openly and completely.

Lecture 3 - A Savior's Signs

(Exodus, chap. 4.)

In our previous address we have seen God declaring Himself to Moses as a prelude to the deliverance of His people. In that deliverance He is coming forward according to the significance of His memorial name, to exhibit what He is Himself for His creatures. In salvation God reveals Himself and is glorified; not only in the redeemed of earth, but to the principalities and powers in heavenly places, who learn in us His manifold wisdom and His marvellous grace. Thus in revealing Himself God is glorified in the very opposite way from man, who when he glorifies himself only seeks to exalt himself. God, in glorifying Himself, ministers to others, for "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

Can His creatures add aught to Him? Did the making of a universe put more into His treasury than it had before? Being sufficient to Himself from all eternity, if He would display His glory it must be from love's delight to fill with happiness the vessels which His hands prepared for this.

Such, then, is the fitting preface to the story of redemption, in which God acts according to the name He has chosen to display Himself in connection with man. Whatever the people are, in whose behalf He acts, in no wise lessens the greatness of His object, which is to display His goodness and love to the utmost bounds of creation. The earth itself may be small indeed among the multitudinous orbs which spangle the heavens, but connected with the display of God's character, it is redeemed from littleness. Nay, man's littleness and his

sin are means whereby He shows out fully His condescension and His grace. Upon the Son of Man the hosts of heaven adoringly wait.

Let us notice now, in the chapter before us, how faith in the deliverer is to precede and produce faith in the deliverance. Upon Israel's faith in Moses, as the one sent of God for their deliverance, everything turns; therefore signs are put in his hand. And so with us: faith in Christ Himself - not yet in His work, nor in the salvation which is the effect of His work - is the first and absolutely necessary thing upon which all else depends.

All through the Gospel of John we find the possession of eternal life is connected with faith in the person of Christ. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." "These things are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name." This is of all importance to remember in connection with the gospel and the conversion of souls. The Saviour first: then, and from Him, the salvation. And if this order be not preserved, most serious effects will follow. Look at what the Lord states in the same Gospel. He says, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." We naturally ask what words do they hear. But not yet is it the words that are in question, but the Voice. There are words, of course; but the point is, the Voice is that of the Son of God. The eye is fixed upon the Person who utters the words. It is the Son of God who is made known, and the dead become alive thereby - hearing the voice which by and by will wake all that are in the graves, and bring them forth to the resurrection of life, or to the resurrection of judgment.

Oh, it is a wonderful thing to hear the voice of the Son of God - to have, through His Word, the Son of God revealed to you in the Man Christ Jesus! But people say, "We are all orthodox, we all believe in Him." Can mere orthodoxy save? No! Though it says, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God," that is not a mere orthodox proposition, but the faith of your heart in a Person. You may be very sincere in saying, "Oh, I have believed the Bible from my infancy - never doubted it;" but Christ revealed to the soul as a real living Person, the Son of God Himself, ah, if this has indeed shone into your heart, it is a different thing. It is He "who commanded the light to shine out of darkness" that hath shined in your heart.

It is not yet, What have I got by it? Not yet, What has it shined upon? - perhaps upon a mass of corruption; but the Light, has it no glory? Can you not distinguish Him from ten thousand others by the glory in His face? Down on your face with Simon Peter you may be saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord;" but as you are with Him at His knees, He will say to you, "Fear not."

This is God's way: Christ first, and salvation from Him. Otherwise a soul may even mistake orthodoxy for salvation - may believe in justification by faith, and yet be unsaved. Oh, to ring in men's ears: "He that hath the Son hath life; and He that hath not the Son of God hath not life." "This is eternal life, to know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."

I do not say or believe that the question of salvation is really settled thus; but God has a place He never had before; and, if with Job still we cannot find Him in the

way our hearts long after, yet He is that for which they do long. Nothing short of this, is "conversion." There may be any amount of alarm and distress, which after all is no certainty of a divine work in the soul.

Man is never driven by fear of God to God. Fear there may be, but except we are "drawn" we never really come. "No man can come to Me," says the Lord, "except the Father which hath sent Me draw him." Notice there again that precious character of God - "which hath sent Me." Thus Christ becomes the interpreter of God to man, as well as of man to himself. Thus He takes the controlling place He is henceforth to keep with us. For peace it is necessary to know the work of the Cross; but this knowledge becomes not merely a way of securing blessing for ourselves, but as the Lord said of it, "The Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him."

How many have got apparently the gospel in another way than this. They call it "the glorious gospel," but they do not know it as what Scripture really entitles it, the "gospel of the glory of Christ!" They have not learned it in His own presence, from Himself. They preach and believe in a utilitarian gospel, in which man's blessing is everything, and God's claim very little. They are orthodox, and evangelical, with a "great heart for the gospel," and a little one for Christ. His claim, His commandments, the truths of His blessed Word, are pared down to the smallest fraction that the gospel may be exalted into His place, and souls may not be hindered from accepting that which brings with it little responsibility, and introduces into no "narrow" path. Thus the Christian life is marred, Christ dishonoured, and the gospel itself pitiably disfigured, while unconverted crowds are its adherents, and men scoff

without rebuke at cheap religion. Thus we may see the importance of the "signs" in this chapter: they are signs of Satan's power vanquished, of sin removed. They serve to mark out the Deliverer, and justify faith in Him.

"And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor harken unto my voice: for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee.

And the Lord said unto him, What is that in thy hand? And he said, A rod. And He said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. And the Lord said unto Moses, Put forth thy hand and take it by the tail: (and he put forth his hand and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand) - that they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee."

The shepherd's rod in Moses' hand is the sign of power. We find, as we travel on through Exodus, how truly this is so. "All power belongeth unto God," and this shepherd's rod shows us how He uses it. Power with Him waits always upon love. Do you doubt this? Do you ask, "Is the rod of iron, with which He will crush His enemies - is that love?" I answer that in all the passages where this is spoken of, the exact rendering is, "He shall shepherd them with a rod of iron;" for, severely as it may smite, love guides it. Woe to those indeed whom everlasting love has thus to smite! "Still the hand that wields the sceptre of the universe is guided by the heart of Him who has revealed Himself, not as power, nor even as righteousness, but as Love." The rod in Moses' hand, then, is the type of power divine, characterised by tenderness and care, as a shepherd's rod. Moses then is

told to cast it on the ground; and out of his hand, the rod changes its character; it becomes a serpent. Who that looks round upon the earth with the thought of power being in the hands of eternal love, but must own to bewilderment at finding everywhere what seems to negative the supposition. Scripture itself puts the perplexing question: "Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with Thee, which frameth mischief by a law?" Surely the rod is to all appearance out of the Shepherd's hand, and the "prince of this world" is not Christ, but Satan. The claim he makes to universal empire, when he displays before the self-humbled Son of Man all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, with the boast, "All that is given unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it," has but too much truth. And by and by he will find one, the antipodes of the blessed Lord, willing to receive this from him. Of one yet to rise we read, "The dragon gave him his power, and his seat (or rather "throne"), and great authority... And power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations."

This is the apparent contradiction which sin has wrought. The rod seems not in His hand to whom it belongs, but upon the ground, and Satanic. But observe the beautiful accuracy of the type, and the comfort prepared for us in it. The rod was cast out of Moses' hand; it did not slip out. God has not lost control of the world, after all; of His own will, and for His own wise purposes, He has subjected man to the sway of him whom he has chosen to have for his prince. It is the scene at Gadara over again. If the Lord come in, Satan is displaced at once, and his victim is delivered. But alas, the real foundation of Satanic empire lies in man's rejection of the Deliverer. They "besought Him to depart

out of their coasts." Very respectfully indeed, man may refuse his Saviour and Lord, but if Christ leaves at their bidding, to what must He leave them but to Satan?

There is no middle ground. Man cannot be his own master; if his house be empty, all the sweeping and garnishing will only make it ready for a tenant: if his wisdom come not from above, it will not be only "earthly," but "sensual," and then "devilish."

It is untrue that

Satan will reign in hell. The chief malefactor will be then chief sufferer, not tormentor of others, but himself tormented. His reign now is a thing permitted in the meantime by an all-wise God, wherein evil is allowed to manifest itself and show its fruit; and that good in conflict with it may be proved also, and show its supremacy over it as no arbitrary thing. God has cast (in a sense, and for a time) the rod out of His hand, and the rod, cast to the ground, has become a serpent!

Yet, not only "shall judgment return unto righteousness," but even now wherever and whenever He please, the rod returns to the hand of the Shepherd as before. Let a soul cry out in its misery to God, though indwelt by a Legion, His hand is not shortened that it cannot save. Do not suppose that because "the god of this world blinds the eyes of those that believe not," he can build about them a wall impervious to the light without their consent. The apostle in this very place says, "We commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." Even "in the heart" of the wayside hearer, the seed of the gospel was "sown," but the heart, unchanged by it, gave it up to one who knows its value,

alas, better. "Then cometh Satan, and taketh away that which was sown in his heart," are the Lord's own words.

So, while the truth commends itself to every man's conscience, man by his unbelieving rejection of it puts himself into Satan's hand; and no wonder if he be then blinded effectually. Solemn is the responsibility of one to whom the truth is evidencing itself, yet by rejecting it gives himself up to believe Satan's lie!

But the rod of power in the Deliverer's hand is found on the side of love, and in behalf of the victim of Satan's tyranny. Joyfully we recognize Him in the One who is gone up on high, having led captivity captive; who, "having spoiled principalities and powers, made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." But this is only the first sign.

"And the Lord said furthermore unto him, Put now thy hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow. And He said, Put thy hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again, and plucked it out of his bosom: and behold, it was turned again as his other flesh. And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither harken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign."

Leprosy is the Old Testament type of sin, in its loathsomeness, malignity, and power to spread. It might at first give little evidence of itself externally. The spot upon the skin might not truly represent the extent of the disease, which lay much deeper - in the blood itself; no local thing, but corrupting the whole man. Its sure tendency too, except God come in, is to spread

continually, blanching the hair and exposing the raw flesh, and finally rendering the man the vivid realization of Isaiah's picture:

"From the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, no soundness in him, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores."

Spreading, moreover, from one to another, it infected first those most in contact with the leper, his nearest and dearest, the inmates of his tent and heart. God's treatment of it therefore was to prescribe the complete isolation of him in whom the plague was. Away from his tent, outside the camp, he had to cover his upper lip and proclaim himself, as people passed, a source of pollution, with the wail, "Unclean, unclean."

Sin is thus with God no accidental and no local thing, but a virulent, growing, contagious evil, deeper than the surface, not to be measured by the outward appearance, and absolutely fatal, if He come not in to save. In Moses' case it is strikingly pictured as that which from the heart affects the hand, not from the hand the heart. The clean hand, placed in the bosom, is drawn out leprous, white as death. Let no man think that sin is the effect of his circumstances, or a mere act or deed. Let none talk of sinners with a "good heart." "The tree is known by its fruit." "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." Oh, be sure, if the hand is leprous, the heart is not better, but worse: it is the seat of the whole disease. And cleansing must begin, not with the hand, but with the heart.

And so with the type here.

Moses' hand thrust into his bosom becomes leprous: thrust into his bosom again it is restored. Defilement and cleansing both begin at the heart. What has cleansed the heart? We are not wrong in saying, The simple power of God. Leprosy in the heart is sin hidden; but leprosy on the hand is sin exposed. The hand plucked out of the bosom makes manifest what is there. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." It is not the mere confession of sin being in our hearts or our natures, but of sin actually committed - a very different thing. We can easily own, and without any conscience, that "we are all sinners:" but whatever we may say about our natures, we feel we are responsible to God for the sins we have actually committed. "All have sinned," is God's solemn judgment, which, when realized, becomes a personal thing: "I have sinned." How wonderful that through the precious blood of Christ which I bring to God, I find His faithfulness and justice on my side to forgive and cleanse me, upon my simple confession! The hand plucked out of the bosom, then, makes sin manifest. Put into the bosom again, it shows that thereupon sin has been put away. "Repentance and remission of sins," God has joined together. Faith owning God's judgment says to Him, "I have sinned," and finds remission of sins preached through Christ by the same precious Word of God.

These then, are the signs of the Deliverer. The third sign is a prediction of judgment for obstinate unbelief:

"And it shall come pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither harken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take the water of the river, and pour it upon the

dry land; and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land."

For, indeed, must not the stream of life and blessing from God ministered to us here, become wrath and judgment if His goodness leads not to repentance? Every blessing is so much judgment, if a Saviour's voice be disregarded. I do not dwell upon this here. I trust I need not. What is given here as a sign to Israel, is given as a testimony to Pharaoh afterwards. God's principles are indeed invariable. Although the believer in Christ is, as to eternal condemnation, safe for ever, may we realize our responsibilities as well as His complete and triumphant grace.

Lecture 4 - The Breadth of Salvation

(Exodus, chaps. 8: 25; 10: 8-11, 24-26.)

Moses is now commissioned and authenticated as Israel's deliverer. Still he hesitates. "O my Lord," he says, "I am not eloquent neither heretofore, nor since Thou hast spoken to thy servant; but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue."

How hard it is, amid what we call "second causes," to trust simply in God alone! All God's power, for a Moses even, is not sufficient without an eloquent tongue! Paul was wiser when he came to the Corinthians "not with excellency of speech or of wisdom," that their "faith might not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God." Our idolatry of means thus affects and characterises our work. The work will show the workman. The motives, the thoughts, which influence us, and which we suppose hidden in our hearts, will manifest themselves in those who are the fruit of our labour.

God does not gift Moses with an eloquent tongue, but He allows part of his honour to be transferred to Aaron, who becomes his spokesman to the people. Thus provided, Moses starts; but before he reaches Egypt, the divine holiness which cannot pass over the uncircumcision of his house is made manifest. At the inn on the way, Jehovah seeks to kill His accredited messenger, whose life is only saved by Zipporah's performance of the neglected rite. Thus he is warned as well as commissioned.

Now, he and Aaron gathering the people, deliver their message and show the signs of their authority: and the people believe with a facile faith, soon to be tested as to its depth and reality, for Pharaoh does not mean to let his bond-slaves step so easily out of his hands. Here begins that prolonged contest between Jehovah and the king of Egypt, in which God's judgments fall with increasing severity upon the devoted land, until He finally brings His people with a strong hand and an out-stretched arm through the sea itself, overwhelming their enemies in it.

These plagues represent the judgment of God upon the natural man, as the eye, divinely opened, sees it: they expose the hopeless evil of man's condition; and the world, stripped of its bloom and attractiveness, is turned into a desert under Divine wrath, until the one so convicted is forced to abandon it and accept rejoicingly God's deliverance from it all. Then the wilderness path begins indeed. And, while the world is thus being exposed as under condemnation, the beauty, extent and purport of God's salvation become more and more told out.

It is a "feast to Jehovah" that they are to hold in the wilderness. Gladness is characteristic of His presence, when once the heart is free to enjoy that presence. Then we learn that the feast is to be connected with a sacrifice - a sacrifice which alone averts God's judgment, and enables the heart to be in His presence without fear.

"The God of the Hebrews hath met with us. Let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God, lest He fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword."

Thus, first, God's heart is revealed, then man's guilt and need, which the blood of sacrifice alone can meet.

Not in

Egypt, however, can that feast be held; for on the ground of nature no true joy in God or worship in the Spirit is possible. From this there must be three days' remove-the distance between death and resurrection alone can carry us into our place of blessing and intimacy with God. But this will be developed hereafter.

At once, however, Pharaoh's spirit is declared: "I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go." The flesh in us never does; its obduracy, allied with the prince of this world, Pharaoh fully exemplifies. At the very outset, when faith begins to move in us, and the good news of salvation begins to be really that, we find the opposition of that in which "dwelleth no good thing," and is but enmity to God as revealed in Christ and the gospel. Sin's reign is a despotic one, and terrible it is to find, from the first moment in which we would do good, evil present with us, and how "he that committeth sin is the slave of sin." Israel, beginning already to think salvation come, find instead augmented labour and the stripes of taskmasters. So that their transient joy is swallowed up in worse sorrow, and unbelief takes the place of faith: "The Lord look upon you and judge," they say to Moses and Aaron, "because ye have made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us."

And even Moses betrays his impatience in a bitter complaint to God. How many a worker since in like manner would have salvation at once realised, not

understanding the necessity of all this parleying with Pharaoh - in experience of sin and of sin's bondage.

But as God assures them, if they are made afresh to realise the burdens of the Egyptians, it is only that they may realise redemption out of them by His own hand, and that they may know Him in their salvation, bringing them out from under these burdens. Fresh promises, however, fail to revive the drooping hearts of the people, and Moses himself is discouraged. God, however, gives to him and Aaron a solemn charge to bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

And here it is that the genealogy of Moses and Aaron is introduced, the double type of a Saviour whom accumulated types fail fully to express. The sons of Reuben and Simeon are also given here, though set aside for Levi, the third son; and how plain the spiritual purport of this is, which looked at superficially seems without meaning. Reuben is the eldest, and his four sons have beautiful names, full of promise; but it is "first that which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual." So he is set aside. Simeon, too, with his six sons is passed over; and Levi is chosen - the third son (spiritually, child of resurrection) in whose name, "joined," the mediatorship of Christ, only fully reached in resurrection, is surely implied.

And now ensue the plagues which are to manifest Jehovah's power, and make His name known throughout all the earth. Long and stubbornly Pharaoh resists, but is at last, though unchanged in spirit, overpowered. Upon the history in detail I cannot dwell, but we may look at the compromises which Pharaoh attempts to make with God or with Moses as to the people; they

illustrate not less the breadth of His salvation than the treachery of the heart which would impose limits to His sovereign grace.

The first attempt is to secure the retention of Israel in Egypt. They may sacrifice - he will permit that - but let them do it in the land, and not leave it. His object is to retain his hold upon them, which three days' journey into the wilderness would assuredly loosen. The spiritual meaning is also manifest. Worship in Egypt is worship in the flesh, Cain's worship, which owns not our ruin, nor Christ as meeting it. Death and resurrection have no place there. Redemption there is none, and, therefore, practically no Redeemer. Moses' answer shows this: "It is not meet so to do, for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the Lord our God: lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us?"

The word "abomination" stands here as often elsewhere for idolatry, as Chemosh "was the abomination of the Moabites, and Milcom of the Ammonites." The worship of Egypt was that of Apis - the sacred bull. It was paramount amid their animal deities; and it came up in the minds of the children of Israel when they worshipped Jehovah in the golden calf. It is throughout Scripture the type of the labourer, and is preeminently seen in the sacrifices as God's Labourer, who to do His will in behalf of man, laid down His life.

But of such a Worker, and of such a work, Egypt knew nothing; and to maintain the truth of this will ensure decisive rejection at the hands of those whom the Egyptians represent. That cross by which the world is crucified to us, and we unto the world, can never be but

an offence in it; and the true place of witness to this, as the only possible place of keeping the sacrificial feast, is three days' journey into the wilderness - the full remove of death and resurrection.

By His death Christ has passed out of the world, and in resurrection has taken a new place for us before God. We therefore, who in His death have died, are by His resurrection put also into this place, and according to His own words, "are not of the world, even as He is not of the world." The old standing is gone; the place is changed. The separation is not of our own effecting, but of His, who has cancelled for us the long dark history of what we were, and instead of our place of distance, has given us His of nearness to God: "Who died for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father." Thus our feast is connected with His sacrifice.

This new place with God is given us (apart from anything of our own) by the death and resurrection of our Lord; but it is ours to find, through faith in this work of His, our place in the wilderness, where alone the feast is to be kept. Here Israel is our type. Their journey to Sinai is a picture of what must be a veritable journey (spiritually) on our part, though by faith alone we travel it - not by sense nor in any mystical way. Faith's acceptance of the work of Christ puts us upon this road, and carries us into a place of actual separation from the world - the sign of our practical apprehension of our position. The wilderness-place is not positional but practical; not "standing," as we say, but state; the state resulting from a believing appreciation of the position which God's grace has given us - apart from and not measured by our apprehension of it. Let us not ignore

the actuality of this journey. Let us not confound it with the position which Christ's work secures and which faith apprehends. And again, let us not suppose any mystical realisation, but of what faith produces. Faith is a reality, connecting the soul with the living God. It is not content to accept a heavenly inheritance without setting its face, pilgrim-wise, towards it. Unseen things become substance and reality to it, and every truth received by it becomes living and fruitful. Hence the journey. The Word is not a description of lands separated from us by impassible seas, but is a pilgrim's guide-book, meant for use and to be put to use. The things we shall have put before us are like mile-stones, which measure so much actual travel, or they have no meaning.

Let us keep faith and practice ever thus together: they will not live divorced. For if faith without works is dead, works that are not of faith are "dead works" also. It is plain how to this first device of Pharaoh the large proportion of Christians have yielded themselves up. They are worshiping in Egypt without the knowledge of re-demption: therefore not free. And they have so assimilated their worship to Egyptian patterns, that instead of being stoned for it they have taught the men of the world to join in with them. But this, alas, is no victory, but defeat.

Salvation, in God's thought of it, takes you out of the world. You are no more of it than Christ is. And though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more; for Christ has passed out of the world altogether, and left it under the condemnation of the cross. We are either in Him before God, and so out-side it, or involved in its condemnation.

But let us look at the second compromise:- go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go: for we must hold a feast unto the Lord. And he said, Let the Lord be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones: look to it; for evil is before you.

Not so:

go now ye that are men, and serve the Lord; for that ye did desire."

Thus the limits of salvation are attempted to be narrowed in another direction. The men may go; the little ones must remain. In God's plan, however, the little one's place was with the parents. Pharaoh's thought was to retain hold of the fathers by means of the children; God's thought is to save the children with, and by means of, the fathers. Noah's house, in the ark with him, is the first example; then the blessing of Abraham's seed, and circumcision of the Israelite's house gives the divine rule for the old economy. The new is still more full of this: "This day is salvation come to this house," says the Lord as to Zaccheus. "The promise is unto you and to your children," says the apostle on the day of Pentecost. To Cornelius the angel says: "Who shall tell thee words whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved." And once again to the Philippian jailor: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."

This then is the universal tenor of Scripture. God's all-embracing love would make His people reach out to others, and of the human ties which He has established, He forms links toward the new creation. He would thus claim for His own that which, with no acquiescence of His, has departed from Him, and use for this the natural

affection which, fallen as it is, is not incapable of being renewed and spiritualised. Thus He meets and satisfies the deepest instincts of our manhood; the Divine Father manifesting Himself as not strange to what is best in human fatherhood, and teaching us to feel in ourselves the original likeness in which at first He created us to Himself.

The children of believers are of course like others: we impart to them the old nature; the new is only given of God. In this respect they differ in nothing from others. The universal law, "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" applies to them as to others." Nor does it follow as a matter of course, that if a man is saved himself, his house will be. In Abraham's case-pattern as he is in so many ways for the believer - God says: "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord... that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken of him."

Thus we have a clear testimony of

Abraham's exercise of authority over his household and their keeping the way of the Lord connected with the fulfilment of the promise to him. The wise man's saying also is, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." Here is the thing which tests us; and here, as elsewhere, what we sow, especially in the ductile mind of a child, we do not fail to reap. But it is not our words only that bear fruit: it is the combined influence of our words and ways. That three days' remove from Egypt, if really taken, will have immense effect. If not, teaching as to Egypt will not avail. The coming out to keep a feast to the Lord will

give the positive side of this, and prevent the other from being a cold and hard asceticism. Let but this be real, it will not fail to have its effect; and though we may have shortcomings to mourn over, and faith too may be tried in us, the Lord we serve is tender and pitiful, and faith that counts upon Him will not count in vain.

These things are our types, and the God of Israel is as full of power to-day as ever He was. Let us credit Him with it, and fear not.

Now we come to the third and last compromise: -"And Pharaoh called unto Moses and said, Go ye, serve the Lord; only let your flocks and herds be stayed; let your little ones also go with you. And Moses said, Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt-offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God. Our cattle also shall go with us, there shall not an hoof be left behind: for thereof must we take to serve the Lord our God; and we know not with what we must serve the Lord until we come thither."

Thus if Pharaoh cannot prevent their going out, he would make them as poor as he can. Their flocks and herds were the main part of what as a shepherd-people they possessed. They are thus the type of our possessions - that which we have in the world. Our business relations are evidently connected with things termed "secular," which so often are divorced from the "sacred," and in relation to which we may be, and are, something other than "men in Christ."

How successful is this snare among us! How few in fact have their all out of Egypt, honestly owning God's title to all! How few are in relation to their business or worldly connections just what in the Assembly they claim to be!

How few have the riband of blue, the mark of heavenly character, right down to where their garments touch the earth! A certain claim upon their worldly things, no doubt, every one recognises the Lord to have; but the things are theirs, outside this tax on them. They do not look on it as connected with their salvation, as part of their deliverance itself - that what they have should be the Lord's as they themselves are. But does not the one involve the other? Does it not show that we know little what it is to be in Christ, while we have another self with independent aims and motives?

This then is the salvation of which we are the subjects. We have yet to trace it out in detail; but it is plain that Israel's deliverance was from the power of Pharaoh under which they groaned. And for this there was much more needed than the display of power, even Divine. There was needed the Passover night as well as the Red Sea deliverance. They had to learn in the blood applied, that grace alone, through atonement, could take them up and rescue them from the enemy's power. And their rescue was not complete until the other side of the sea was reached. Then it was, when horse and rider had been cast into the sea, and their proud tyrants were carcasses upon the shore, that they sang how the Lord had triumphed gloriously.

And so the apostle does not stop with justification by Christ's blood, in the Epistle to the Romans; he rests not till in His cross we know "that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin may be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve (or be slaves to) sin." This is the bondage, and this the deliverance; and we must keep this steadily before us if we are to penetrate

these shadows, and possess ourselves of their divine realities.

Lecture 5 - Under Sheltering Blood

(Exodus, chap. 12.)

With just the brief notice given in the last lecture, I must pass over the history of the plagues of Egypt, until we come to the last, in which we find what is more or less plain to every Christian heart - the death of the first-born, and God's deliverance from it by the passover blood.

The apostle has given us inspired interpretation as to it: "Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor. 5. 7, 8).

It is to the

Christian memorial feast that the apostle refers, of course; and, in several respects, that is different from the passover. This we shall see hereafter. I am not aware that this in Egypt is even called a feast at all. The circumstances were perhaps too solemn. And we may remember that Israel's feast to Jehovah was to be held in the wilderness. However this may be, the passover lamb figures Christ Himself, as the blood that sheltered them figures the blood of the Cross. The blood anticipated the judgment upon the people, so that when it came, they were untouched by it.

In this last plague Israel was made to realize their own solemn position before God. They were subject, naturally, to His judgment as much as the Egyptians. They had to meet, not a lesser infliction than the Egyptians, but death itself, which is God's sentence upon

all men, and the figure of the final doom beyond this life. Death they must meet, pass through it, and leave behind them, before they can be freed from Egyptian bondage or their feet leave Egyptian soil. In Egypt they must keep the passover: and to this the very first verse of this chapter points: "And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt."

There is no progress on the part of the people up to this. God has been moving, no doubt, steadily onwards towards the accomplishment of His own purposes in their salvation; but to them, as to all others to whom God's mercy comes, it comes where they are. "The people which sat in darkness saw a great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up." There may be plenty of exercise and experience of a certain sort in this condition, and plenty of effort also at self-help; but it only confirms the fact that no advance is made in the path of God, nor even towards God, until the shelter of the Cross is reached and known. They sit in darkness and keep the passover in the land of Egypt - the land of bondage.

This is declared in another way in this divine communication: "And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you." The preceding months of the year are blotted out, as it were, and God begins afresh for them with the paschal month. Grace gives them this new beginning; and it can do nothing kinder than to blot out the past. And so it is with our history until that which is the antitype of the passover is known. Our previous history has its use as a lesson, no doubt; in that sense it is not all lost. Will anything be really so, even in

this world's history? All will have its moral lesson in the coming day of revelation; instead of being forgotten, it will abide in profit for us forever. But when God says, "I will remember no more," it has a very different meaning. He cannot really forget any more than He can repent; yet both terms are relatively used of Him. He does not remember our sins and iniquities when He treats us as if these had never happened - when we can find nothing whatever in His conduct toward us which indicates His remembrance of them; when not only they are no more a shadow in our heavens, but not a mote even in the sunshine of His perfect love.

His "not remembering," however, has its solemn as well as its gracious side. Love would gladly remember, not forget. If our deeds and words be such that love itself can only draw the veil over them, what must they be! Yet the veil that love can draw may be so surpassingly glorious, that the glow of it may enable us to look back, as well as forward. For, if God sets aside the past with a new beginning, He directs our eyes to the beginning - in fact to the veil with which He has covered the past. Thus our passover month is henceforth the beginning of months to us. The blood of Christ, which has blotted out the past, has begun for us all things anew. The veil of the past is the glory of the present and the future.

But the year does not begin exactly with the passover itself. If the death of Christ for us blots out our past, it surely blots not out His blessed course on earth - that path of perfect obedience which led Him to the cross! Thus, the Passover is on the fourteenth day of the year, not the first. On the tenth day, the lamb was taken, and kept up four days, until the fourteenth day at even, when it was killed. That all this is significant, I suppose none

of us will doubt; and the numbers are, of course, a special part of it. How full of meaning is this fourteenth day for the passover, a number compounded of the number of testimony - two, and that which speaks of divine and perfect workmanship - seven! For have we not here the perfect work which is the great subject of God's testimony?

The other numbers are no less clear and beautiful. Ten days of the month are passed when the lamb is taken. The ten days point to the measure of human responsibility, as the ten commandments do. They pass in silence before the lamb is taken - a silence which answers to what seems so great a gap in the Gospels. What account have we of those thirty years in which our Lord grew up in retirement at Nazareth, and lived in the quiet fulfilment of human duties in the carpenter's house? We have a brief vision of Him at His birth; a still briefer one of His visit to the temple at twelve years old; then no more till He comes forth at thirty (the Levite age), to take up His work among men openly. Then, fulfilling righteousness in that Jordan-baptism - in which all others confessed their departure from it - He is sealed with the Holy Ghost, and proclaimed by the Father as His own Beloved. John announces Him as the Lamb of God; and the Father's Voice, and the Spirit's act, declare Him how much more than without blemish!

The lamb being taken, not immediate sacrifice follows, but the keeping it up four days. Four speaks of testing; and this follows immediately the announcement of the divine satisfaction and delight in Him. Hitherto He had lived under God's eye alone; now man and the devil are to test Him as they please. To the devil He is at once exposed; not going there of His own mind, but led of the

Spirit expressly "to be tempted:" all circumstances designedly permitted to be as adverse as to the first man in Eden they were favourable. His language to His disciples, at a later day, tenderly acknowledges their companionship, even though it had been so deficient; but in these forty days of temptation by the devil, He is alone. And this testing brought out only His perfection. The four Gospels show the result; how, as Messiah, Minister, Son of Man and Son of God, He approves Himself the same blessed One whom all circumstances only magnify.

At the end of these four days, the lamb was slain; its life is surrendered in meekness: "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth."

The character of the offering is not otherwise dwelt upon in Exodus. It is in Leviticus, where as priests we go in to God, that the various aspects of the sacrifice are displayed; for the soul at first is not in condition to take it in. Here, in Exodus, it is naturally more the effect of His work for us than the glories of the work itself; although some details, necessary for our full peace, we shall find in the sequel. But first of all, and most prominent, is the power of the redeeming blood under which the people find refuge. What we have here, in an unmistakable way, is that redemption must first of all be by blood before it can be by power: that the wrath of God must be met, before the enemy can be - that the enemy's full judgment and our deliverance are only completed at the Red Sea. But the first and deeper question is to be settled between the people and God. As we have already seen, the enemy is the sin that reigns over us and holds us in bondage. We are apt to think

that the first thing is, by God's help to deliver our selves from the bondage of sin. We are slow to realize that first of all, and while still slaves in Egypt, God's sure and dreadful judgment upon sin must pass over us where we are; that whilst power over sin may yet be an unsolved problem, our peace with God is made by the precious blood, by which, if under it, we are sheltered from the wrath to come.

"And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are; and when I see the blood I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt."

I need scarcely dwell upon the fact that God's eye was upon the blood; His judgment therefore could not be on the people. Whether young or old, whether good or bad, whether experiences and feelings were right or wrong in any one of them, was not the point: God looked upon the blood. Had judgment entered a house so shielded, not only the blood would have been dishonoured, but the truthfulness and righteousness of God would have been done away with. These stood on the side of all those who had fled for refuge to the hope set before them. And so with us. The glory of the gospel is that the righteousness of God itself is on the side of every one who welcomes it in faith.

The

Blood was for the eye of God, rather than for the people's eye. As often said, it is not, "When you see the blood," but "When I see it." As it is God whom sin has offended, it is to Him that the blood of atonement speaks. And in the resurrection of Christ He has declared His complete and perfect satisfaction with that

atonement. He only can take in its full value. He rests in it. He has found a ransom. Peace is made. It is not ours in any way to make peace, but only to enter into it, and enjoy it. There may be no need to dwell upon this for those present here tonight, yet to recall it to our minds is unspeakable comfort, and should be the occasion of fresh praise in our hearts.

Let us now look at another point in this picture, of which there are so many, and so important. While outside the house the blood of atonement spoke to God, inside He had provided what was to satisfy them, and enable them for that path with Him upon which they were now to go forth.

The lamb is theirs to feed upon, and God is bent upon their enjoying this provision of His love. They are not only to be sheltered, they must be sustained also. The lamb is to be eaten - all of it. If the household were too little for the lamb (we read nothing of the lamb being too little for the house), then, says the Lord, "Let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every one according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb."

Thus

God would have Christ apprehended by us. He would have our souls sustained; He would have Christ honoured. We are to eat - to appropriate to ourselves what Christ is. Eating is appropriation for our need; and that which we appropriate becomes part of ourselves; so God would have Christ become as it were part of ourselves - that we should be characterized by what He is. As Himself said, "He that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me." And there is such a laying hold of Christ for

our soul as makes Him to be reproduced in us. In the measure in which we spiritually feed upon Christ, our life will bear His character.

Oh that we knew more of this! How would the truths of Scripture change in us from hard, dogmatic, unlovely forms, into those soft and beautiful lineaments of the life itself! Christ Himself is what we want, in the midst of a utilitarianism which "wastes" no box of ointment on His head; not the Christ of a mystic dream, but a living and life-giving Christ.

Let us note another thing here:

that God has ordained death to be the food of life. We are so familiar with this that we are apt by the very fact to miss its significance. Nature everywhere is thus instructing us (if we would but learn) in the deeper lessons of divine wisdom! The laying down of life becomes the sustenance of another life. For man, this did not begin till after the deluge; at least it is only after this that we read of divine permission to slay animals for food. And when we see in that deluge the ark of salvation as its central figure, bearing within it the nucleus of a new world (figure of how God saves us, bringing us in Christ into a new creation), its similitude to what we have here bursts upon us. It is as sheltered and saved from death that we can feed upon death. Thus is Sampson's riddle fulfilled: "Out of the eater comes forth meat, and out of the strong sweetness." Death is not only vanquished and set aside by the Cross, but it is the sweet and wonderful display of divine love and power in our behalf, accomplished in the mystery of human weakness. Christ's death is become the food of

life - of a life eternal. Let us observe also the mode of eating the lamb.

"And they shall eat the flesh in that night, Toast with fire, and unleavened bread, and with bitter herbs shall they eat it. Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire: its head with its legs, and with the purtenance thereof."

We are to notice three things, which destroy the dangerous dreams which are abroad with regard to the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. First of all, it was not to be "raw" or "underdone." The fire must do its work, do it thoroughly, upon that which was to be the representative of Christ - for our redemption. In God's Word, fire is everywhere used as a figure of God's wrath. The lamb exposed to the full action of the fire, thus represents to us the Lord in atonement, not merely laying down His life, but "made sin for us"- the chastisement for our peace falling upon Him, in our awful place. The whole lamb, roasted with fire, they were to eat, and so are we.

And again, "Not sodden at all with water,"-or rather, "not done in water," or boiled-"but roast with fire." The water would hinder the direct action of the fire; and as water is the type of the Word, His delight in God's will, in God's Word to Him, was not to hinder the action of the fire. Could He be made sin, who knew none? That is just what Scripture affirms. The holiness of His life, the blessed perfection of His obedience, did not prevent or soften the agony of the cross which He endured for us. "He who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." The lamb was not sodden in water, but "roast with fire!"

"His head with his legs, with the purtenance thereof" (or "inward parts"), were all exposed to the searching fire. The head expresses the thoughts and counsels with which His walk (the legs) keep perfect company. The inward parts, the affections of His heart, were the motive power which impelled Him upon the path He trod. The fire tested all; it brought forth nothing but sweet savour to God, and is for us the food of our true life; and for us now to appropriate. It is the great want - may we not say?- to know more Christ's mind, to walk in His blessed ways, to apprehend His love! All this is set before us to enjoy and make our own, at the very beginning of the way in which He would lead us. It is not merely peace that God would have us enjoy, but Christ - Christ bestowing all these, and made known in them, yet Himself immeasurably more than all these things put together. It is a Person, without whom the heart is not sustained, the soul is not fed. Indeed, without occupation with Christ Himself, the superficial knowledge of peace and salvation may but too easily be associated with very worldliness. Christ alone keeps and satisfies.

I pause here. The rest of what the passover scene unfolds, so far as I am able to speak of it, we may take up next time.

Lecture 6 - The Accompaniments of the Passover

(Exodus, chap. 12.)

Having considered the passover itself, let us now look at its accompaniments. The former shows what faith receives from God; the latter points to its Godward results. First, the unleavened bread-"roast with fire, and unleavened bread." These two things are purposely brought together, as we shall presently see. But first let us look at the "unleavened bread."

Literally, it is "compressed bread"- bread of which the particles have not been separated by the ferment of leaven. There are two words for leaven: the one means a "leaving, or remainder," because it was a lump of dough left from a former time; the other is simply "leaven," or ferment.

The "unleavened bread" is spiritually translated for us by the apostle as "the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." Of leaven itself we have various interpretations. There is "the leaven of malice and wickedness" in 1 Cor. 5: 8. In the Gospels we have the "leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees," which, we are told is their "doctrine;" and the "leaven of Herod," which from its connection with these we must interpret similarly. Ritualism, rationalism, worldliness, are identified severally with these three, and give character to what they taught. They point to three paths, not far separated, by which souls have ever been seeking to escape from God. They may also be characterized as only different forms of the

leaven of malice and wickedness, in contrast to "the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

The "old leaven," of which the apostle speaks in the same passage, gives a connected and very significant thought. It refers to the lump of old dough which was used as the ferment of the new lump. "Purge out therefore the old leaven," he says, "that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened." The introduction of the "old" into that which God has made "new," is what the enemy ever seeks to use, to transform and corrupt what is of God. It may be the spirit of the "old," legal covenant into God's "new" covenant of grace; or that which is of the "old," natural man, into the "new" man, the Christian. It may come in as formalism and superstition, or more positive Sadducean unbelief, or adaptations to the world. In either case it is corruption-leaven; and in every case it betrays real departure from God. If we leave Him and His directions, what can we do but take up with our own? And this evil is not negative and passive, but works. The nature of all evil is a ferment, a revolt, an antagonism to what is of God.

The unleavened bread is that "of sincerity and truth" - Godward, of course. It is the spirit of integrity with Him, which means whole-hearted surrender to His blessed will. It is the spirit which says, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; see if there be any way of wickedness in me; and lead me in the way everlasting." It is what the apostle means when he says, "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."

No less than the surrender of all to God can properly be called obedience; as the deliberate keeping back from Him of what is His due, is rather to be counted rebellion. This latter is "leaven," which in the practical life of the Christian betrays itself by the retention of that which belongs to the old natural man, which the Cross has put away. How solemn and penetrating, then, is the exhortation to eat the lamb "roast with fire, and unleavened bread!" It is as much as to urge that the Holy One's blessed surrender to that awful fire of sacrifice, makes imperative, and should make easy, the full surrender of ourselves to the pure and holy love which has laid hold of us. Therefore at the Lord's table the apostle speaks of examining ourselves, lest we eat and drink judgment to ourselves, not discerning the Lord's body - the holiness of what the least represents. For how can we bring evil before that awful Cross? or how measure evil, but as insubjection to Him whom we call Master and Lord?

And this leads us to the next point, "With bitter herbs shall they eat it." For the discovery of what self is, and the rein of the old creation, is bitter. It is bitter to realize that our Lord Jesus had to be bruised for my sins. How suited, then, is this accompaniment to the Lamb "roast with fire!" How utterly inconsistent with the deliberate or careless allowance of evil! A chastened spirit surely becomes us in the presence of the Cross. Not yet - not here - can we let out our hearts in a world where that cross has stood.

Beloved, have we understood this? Have we purged out the old leaven which, if allowed, becomes an active power of evil, taking us out of the blessedness which our God even here designs for us, and with whom alone we

can "keep the feast?" Now we have the pilgrim garb in which the passover was to be eaten:

"And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste; it is the Lord's passover."

They were now to enter upon their journey. What was an impossibility before the passover is now at once commanded to them. The passover itself is to be eaten in haste, as expecting to go forth immediately. Judgment must roll over first. They must start with it behind them - not in front where they would have to meet it. Then, and thus, must they go forth. Let us note this well, that we also start on our journey heavenward with judgment anticipated and borne for us at the cross, already and for ever passed away. "He that heareth my words," says our Lord, "and believeth Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life." Personally, into judgment the believer can never come. He will appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, and give an account of himself there to God, and "receive for the things done in the body, according to that he hath done;" but the issue does not affect his salvation from God's wrath, which will be upon the ungodly. Our exemption from God's judgment is by Christ having borne it Himself. He that has fled to Christ is already "saved"- already "delivered from the wrath to come" (1 Thess. 1: 10). And it is a first necessity for a walk with God, that this should be so. It is in this way alone that holiness is made possible. We must be at peace with Him before we can walk with Him. The false gospels and half-gospels, which under the plea of holiness maintain a salvation conditioned upon

our works, ignorantly destroy the very holiness they contend for.

The power for a Christian life, one who knew it well thus declares to us: "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Faith, which has Christ before it as its object, works by love; not self-love, but a devout, adoring remembrance of a Saviour's wondrous sacrifice. And the pattern and power for this walk is He whose life and death had been for others, not Himself. Thus the apostle could say as to the moral transformation wrought by Christianity, how Christ "died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him that died for them and rose again." Not mere correct living, not mere conformity to an outward rule, but a life issuing from devotedness of heart to a Redeemer-God!- this is, in the apostle's view of it, Christianity. But this is in entire opposition, in principle, to a life which finds its motives in personal needs and ends in fear of eternal judgment. "Faith worketh by love," not by fear; and, "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment." Thus God, whose love alone is perfect, casts fear out of our hearts, that He Himself may reign there.

Yet men ignorantly speak as if this tormenting fear cast out of the heart would enthrone there, not God, but Satan! And they bring in the fear of judgment as the motive for holiness - fear to effect what Christ's love alone may not have the power to do! Incentives to self-seeking are religiously brought in, not discerning that it is not Christianity at all that they are producing by it - not real godliness, but the destruction, rather, of true godliness. Think of obedience to a father - of true

obedience - being helped in a son's heart by the fear that his father might cast him off! Ah, God is wiser than we are, and He has made Christ to be our sanctification - not the day of judgment. Holiness such as the lake of fire may engender, is not what God calls holiness at all.

And thus, "That they which live may not live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them and rose again," teaches us to look back to the Cross to see wrath borne for us there; judgment is removed for ever, that we may begin our path with Him in the light of His love. "God commendeth His love to us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," and "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which He hath given us." This is the power, and this the actuating principle of our lives henceforth. Judgment - personal, eternal judgment - is for ever gone for us. Christ delivered for our offences has been raised again for our justification; and, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Not only so, but we have access by faith into a relationship of grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Alas, judgment indeed rests upon the land out of which it hastens our retreating steps, but for us it is over; our place with God is definitely and eternally settled. He who has died for us is risen. He took our place and burden on Calvary's cross, and has taken for us another place, in the presence and glory of God. There, love rests, satisfied. There He sits, because His work is accomplished. The eye of God, which dwells with unchanging delight upon His Beloved, sees us there in Him, linked in the bundle of life with Him for ever. "Because I live, ye shall live also." "If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his

Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

Now we are prepared for the pilgrimage dress - our travelling dress. It is not the "best robe," which fits us for our Father's house; but it is that which we are to wear in the world. God grant that we keep it on throughout our pilgrim journey.

First, "Your loins girded." "Having your loins girt about with truth," says the apostle. The garments are spiritually what we may designate by the old word "habits." It is the moral guise in which we appear before men - what they identify us with. And if not just "ourselves," we may in many ways be read in them: pride, or lowliness; self-will, or meekness; sloth, or diligence; and in many other things.

The long robes of the East required a girdle, that they might not hinder in a march such as Israel had now before them. Flowing loose they might get entangled with the feet, trip the wearer, and gather the dust of the road. The truth is to be our girdle, keeping us from loose and negligent contact with an ever-ready defilement in a world characterized by "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," and from the entanglement to our feet which lax habits are sure to be. It is "as pilgrims and strangers" we are exhorted to "abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." It is having our eyes fixed on the goal of our journey that will keep us clear of defilement and entanglements in passing through a world "where foes and snares abound."

The girded garments are akin to the "weights" which the apostle bids us to "lay aside." Things which in

themselves may not be sinful, may yet betray us into sin. Notice the connection in that exhortation, "Lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us." If a pack of wolves were following you, you would quickly understand why carrying a weight would hinder. And herein many a soul may discern why he has so little successful conflict. The "weight," like the flowing garment, shows, that whatever else we may be, we are not racers. And it is to run a race that we are called. Hence the "all things" which might be lawful, as the apostle says, may not be expedient; and though "lawful" unto him, he would not be brought under the power of any. We may permit "lawful things" to gain power over us, while rejecting unlawful ones. But if the power we submit to is not of God, it is against Him; for that which is not with Him is against Him. We do not see the mire that sticks to the bottom of the weight we are lifting, nor even perceive when we have been defiled.

Fit companions then with unleavened bread and bitter herbs are these girt loins. We must arise and depart, for this is not our rest. It is polluted, and polluting. Next we have: "Your shoes on your feet." Travellers tell us that their shoes are in a short time cut to pieces in the desert that Israel had to traverse; yet Israel, shod of the Lord, traversed that desert from end to end, and for forty years their shoes waxed not old upon their feet. The shoe, so eminently needed, and miraculously preserved to them, what is it spiritually? Scripture gives us a twofold aspect of it. Israel's shoes, or sandals, were of badger skin. Recounting His mercies to Israel God says: "I shod thee with badger skin." The badger, or perhaps, sea-cow skin, is familiar to us as one of the tabernacle coverings, fitted by its nature to repel outside

influences, and protect the more destructible materials beneath. This character makes it a fit type of the holiness which abides unchanged by all that surrounds it, preserving the more delicate things from deterioration, as salt does from corruption. This shoe, then, represents that fidelity to God which abides unchanged in an adverse world, resisting all its disintegrating influences.

The apostle gives us another and direct interpretation of the shoe by saying: "Have your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Here is an important effect of the gospel itself upon us. Bringing us into peace with God, it brings us into peace with all things, which He governs and makes to work together for our good. Our God is over all. Without Him not a sparrow falls to the ground. The Lord of all is our Saviour. What provision we have in this for our feet, whatever be the way in which we may be called to walk! "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee."

Finally, they were to eat the passover with

"your staff in your hand." The staff is God's word that supports our steps in the way He leads us. His promises are our prop and stay. We have but one staff, but it is unfailing. "Scripture cannot be broken." Lean upon it, fellow-Christian; the more you do, the more you will find its strength.

We close for tonight with one solemn thought. Exact and stringent as were all these directions, leaving no room for hesitation or mistake, it is a painful lesson of what man is, to find how, even at this solemn season, they were carried out. We read, "And the people took their

dough before it was leavened, their kneading troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders... And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt; for it was not leavened; because they were thrust out of Egypt and could not tarry; neither had they prepared for themselves any victual."

Thus the command seems to have been carried out, not because it was commanded, but because of the necessity of the case: Egypt sent them out in haste, while their bread was unleavened.

When we think of the spiritual significance of all this, it becomes doubly solemn. How little has the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth ever characterized any considerable proportion of God's people! When the world has forced them out of it, then indeed, in times of trial and persecution, brightness and devotedness have become more manifest; but when the storm relaxed, how soon the leaven again was introduced!

Shall we not challenge ourselves in view of all this? Beloved brethren, where are we? Keeping the passover feast according to the ordinances? Or retaining only that which suits our convenience, with more or less affiliation with Egypt? May the Lord keep us from this for His name's sake!

Lecture 7 - The Memorial of the Passover

(Exodus, chaps. 12: 43-13: 16.)

Having dwelt upon the passover and its accompaniments, we have yet to consider the "ordinance of the passover" as the Lord prescribed it for a continual memorial. There are restrictions here which we have not read of before - restrictions which it is important to note and to remember, which apply, not to redemption itself, but to the enjoyment of it. God begins with us as sinners, or He could not begin at all; but having redeemed us, it is as saints that we enjoy the blessedness of our portion, and then must conform to the conditions which the very nature of God imposes upon those who are called to have part with Him. The "salt of the covenant of God" (which was never to be lacking in any of the sacrifices) is the type of what preserves from corruption, therefore of the holiness which our relationship with God implies; and no joy can be enduring which is not thus perpetuated. Salvation from wrath is from sin also. The gospel of peace is the gospel of reconciliation to God, and therefore of separation from that which is opposed to God. In the unleavened bread we have already had the first intimation of this; but we now find God insisting much more strongly upon it, and guarding the precious feast of redemption from the profanation of those who would turn God's grace into licentiousness. All is in symbols, of course; for the redemption itself was a symbol of that which, I trust, all of us here know in its substantial reality.

Deliverance was but just effected; the people were hardly yet upon the road, before God proclaims how henceforth the passover is to be observed. The deliverance is made the argument, as it were, for the injunctions which follow immediately upon it. If we keep in mind the meaning of the types that we have considered, that Egypt stands for nature as fallen away from God, Pharaoh for the reign of sin and its bondage, there will be no difficulty in apprehending that, while the first question to be settled is between God and the soul (as the passover has shown us), it all bears upon our deliverance from sin itself. That passover night sees the people's bonds broken, and at once they begin to leave the place of their captivity. And so in what these types point to. In the safe shelter which love has provided we adoringly learn the love which has provided it, and it is that love which, laying hold upon our hearts, secures them for God. "We love Him because He first loved us." And then, "This is the love of God; that we keep His commandments." Thus not only are we, as sinners, justified by His blood, but as "enemies reconciled to God by the death of His Son." Christ's blessed work, while it shelters and secures, purifies also; so that wherever we do not find this effect of purification we are obliged to question whether the soul really knows the shelter.

You will not suppose, I trust, that I am at all meaning to put souls at building their peace with God upon their own walk or works. Thank God, we are privileged to build wholly upon Christ. We are justified by faith, and faith has never self as its object, but Christ. We are never called to believe in ourselves. It is the Pharisee who thanks God that he is not as other men are; and his

thanking God for it does not make him any whit the less a deluded Pharisee. The publican who can only smite upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner, went down to his house justified rather than he. While that is fully so, it is none the less certain that "faith, if it have not works, is dead, being alone." That would be a melancholy doctrine to teach that faith might be in the soul and work nothing in it. It is not magnifying grace to suppose it less mighty for purification than it is for justification. "Little children," says the apostle, "let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous." He cannot be righteous by his doings as Christ is righteous, of course; but his practice of righteousness marks him out as one whom God has justified, or declared righteous. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God," says the apostle, "they are the sons of God."

How blessed to see in a soul which has just gone through its passover night, and found in the blood of the Lamb its own judgment borne by Another - and therefore for ever rolled away - the promptitude with which it starts to leave the land of its bondage. "Sin shall not have dominion over you, because ye are not under law, but under grace"; and grace having been learnt, joying in God as having now received the reconciliation, the joy of the Lord is the sure antidote for "the pleasures of sin." There may be, and will be, much to be learnt yet: and Pharaoh's power once for all broken, as it should seem, may struggle again for the ascendancy; yet in the true knowledge of grace will be found the secret of power and the guarantee of holiness. Thus, then, the "ordinance of the passover" connects these things:- "And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron,

This is the ordinance of the passover: there shall no stranger eat thereof: but every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof. A foreigner and a hired servant shall not eat thereof... All the congregation of Israel shall keep it. And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover unto the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it... for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. One law shall be to him that is home-born, and to the stranger that sojourneth among you.

First, the foreigner was to be excluded: the passover-feast was to be for Israel alone. The seed of Abraham, the family of faith, alone can commemorate a deliverance which they only have known. Yet God kept a door open for the stranger who would submit to Israel's law; no more stringent conditions were required from him than from the "home-born." Beautiful it is to see how all lines of demarcation give way before the faith that asks, "Is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also of the Gentiles?" What can the answer be but, "Yea, of the Gentiles also!" It is man that has fallen away from God, not God from man; it is man that puts distance and erects barriers. God's choicest gifts are His most universal gifts: air, rain and sun are for all; not a bird of the heavens but is welcome to dip its bill in any of God's streams; and in the very centre of the city of God, spite of its "wall great and high," flows that "water 'of life, clear as crystal," as to which it is proclaimed: "Let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely."

Yes, the wall is impregnable to enemies, but the door is open to receive friends; no "strait gate" either, save as

the world makes it; not "strait" as if divine love were straitened; not "strait," as if His arm were shortened that it could not save, or His ear heavy that He cannot hear; not "strait," if you remember that it is Christ by whom men enter in; but strait only to His enemies, to His despisers, for no man cometh unto the Father but by Him.

The condition here upon which the stranger could be received and be as one born in the land, was that of circumcision: "Let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof." For the meaning of this we must go backward and forward. Back to Abraham, the "father of circumcision," who received it as "the seal of the righteousness of faith which he had, being yet uncircumcised;" but we must read this in the light of the apostle's saying, that, "We are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

Though "Abraham believed God" when under the starry sky God said to him (a lone childless man), "So shall thy seed be," we cannot say that he had no more confidence in the flesh. Though the flesh had thus far failed him, he later took the bondwoman to his heart, and has a child which is but the "wild man," and not the child of promise after all. Nature being yet strong in Abraham, God has to go on for fourteen years as if in His own mind the promise slept-unfulfilled. But "when he was about a hundred years old," and Abraham's body "was now dead," God can come in again, and with a simple yet grand announcement which Abraham's faith had never yet grasped, He says, "I am the Almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfect." For a dead Abraham an

Al-mighty God alone would do; for Abraham could not help God to raise the dead. There He gives him the covenant of circumcision. The apostle Christianizes it for us in the epistle to the Colossians: it is "the putting off the body of the flesh." Abraham's confidence was no more to be in the flesh, and thus his faith is now shown in that "he considered not his body now dead, neither yet the dead-ness of Sarah's womb." The Almighty God could do all, must do all. It is this God we are called to know, and upon these terms are we to be with Him-the terms of "the circumcision of Christ."

This is the secret of unclouded joy, as it is of perpetual worship. For "in Christ are we circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in the putting off the body of the flesh." His cross is God's sentence upon the flesh, His judgment upon it as finding nothing in it that He can accept or take pleasure in at all. But He has put it away thus by the Cross, that it may be removed out of our way, as out of His. In Christ raised from the dead He finds all His pleasure; and in Christ raised from the dead we find all our acceptance with Him. In Christ, to us there can be no condemnation; in Christ no body of flesh, no trace of sin inherent or adherent. In Him then our joy abides unbroken; and the "joy of the Lord is our strength." We may even glory in our infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon us. We rejoice in Christ Jesus entirely when we have no more confidence in the flesh.

How simple then, and how emphatic is the statement:

"No uncircumcised person shall eat thereof!" The circumcised man is the man who has heart for the feast,

the one with whom faith is in simple exercise; and faith, as I have said, is in an outside object, never in self.

This will make us understand readily some further distinctions. Not only a foreigner, but a hired servant also is excluded: "A foreigner and a hired servant shall not eat thereof." Mark it well; a hired servant cannot eat the passover. This should speak loudly to us. The bondservant, born in the house or bought with money, may eat. Such an one as Paul delights to call himself Christ's bondservant; and His redeemed love to own that they are indeed His, bought not with silver and gold, but with His precious blood. By birth also - new birth - we are His servants. But how many systems of teaching there are which deliberately adopt the principle of hire, and make eternal life itself a thing to be gained by service! It is the natural thought in man's heart, doubtless, as it was in the prodigal's before he met his father: "Make me as one of thy hired servants." But when his father had met him, fallen on his neck, and kissed him, could he look in that face and dishonour his father's love by such a request? And how can God's children do this now, except by not believing that love?

Grace and works are two entirely opposite principles; by uniting them, grace is destroyed: "If by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace." Grace alone breaks the dominion of sin, as the apostle says, "Sin shall not have dominion over you, because ye are not under the law, but under grace." The hireling with God is the very type of a self-seeker, of one who serves God for his own ends; but the power of Christianity is exhibited in this, "that they which live, live not unto themselves, but unto Him that died for them, and rose again." The principle and power for

service under grace is expressed by the psalmist when he says, "O Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant and the son of thy handmaid: Thou hast loosed my bonds." It is a loved bond-service for bonds loosed!

Do you understand this, beloved friends? It is what in another way is expressed to us in the last chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews. "We have an altar," says the apostle, "whereof they have no right to eat that serve the tabernacle." The "altar that sanctifieth the gift" is Christ Himself; the value of His blessed Person gave virtue to His own offering. The offering has been accepted. God has received His portion of the peace-offering, and we have ours still to "eat;" that is what the apostle refers to. But the altar as such is now empty; there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins: none is needed, for "By one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," and therefore our altar is empty; but the Sacrifice, once offered there, is the food of our souls. If propitiation is effected, if the blood has once for all sprinkled the mercy-seat, can we avail ourselves of the altar? Most certainly; but it is now to the priest's golden altar that we come. It is Christ still; and now "by Him," says the apostle, "let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually; that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name." But is "the fruit of our lips" the only form this takes? No; surely; the next words in the passage are, "But to do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Thus upon this praise-altar, not alone our praises go up to God, but our deeds also, as part of the self-same "sacrifice!" Our lives are to be the outflow to Him of adoring gratitude. Here the hired servant has no place, while redemption's bondservant is fully at home.

Then we have, "In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth aught of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof."

The lamb was eaten under the shelter of the atoning blood, and there alone. Men may admire Christ, as it is the fashion very much to do, while denying the whole reality of His atoning work; but the Lamb can only be eaten really there where its virtue is owned. Apart from this, He cannot be understood or appreciated. Thus the denial of His work leads to the denial of His Person. Universalists and Annihilationists slip naturally into some kind of Unitarian doctrines, as is evident on every hand; and so do Rationalists of various classes.

This unites naturally with the commandment: "Neither shall ye break a bone thereof." God will not have the perfection of Christ disfigured, as it would be, in type, by a broken bone. With the bones perfect, a naturalist can show the construction of the whole animal. Upon the perfection of the bones depends the symmetry of form. God will have this preserved with regard to Christ.

'Reverent handling becomes us as we seek to apprehend the wondrous Christ of God. And how suited a place to preserve this reverence is "the house," the shelter which the precious blood has provided for us! One might ask, How can irreverence be found in any one so sheltered?

Alas! the injunction, we know too well, is not unneeded.

We must pass on to what is still among the memorials of the passover - the sanctification of the firstborn.

Sanctification naturally connects itself with redemption, as this whole book of Exodus is witness. In the epistle to the Romans, in which so many types of the first part of Exodus find their counterparts, immediately after the

full liberty of the redeemed man is reached, we hear of sanctification in the 6th chapter. In Hebrews we find how we are sanctified to God by the blood of atonement: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

This connection is what we find here in Exodus. Deliverance from wrath through the blood of the lamb and our path begun with God; then we find the sanctification of the firstborn among the memorials of their redemption (ch. 13).

It was upon the firstborn that the judgment in Egypt had descended, but they were spared in Israel. The firstborn are types of human excellency, the sons who had natural claim to birthright, the place of honour and rule. "He smote the firstborn of Egypt, the chief of all their strength," says the psalmist. "Reuben," says the dying patriarch, "thou art my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity and the excellency of power," though he had to add, "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel." Hence the firstborns in the book of Genesis lose the place of blessing. Cain, what is he? Ishmael gives place to Isaac; Esau to Jacob; Reuben to Joseph. "That which is first is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual."

But God takes up the firstborn here to show us in this passover scene His judgment upon all that comes of us, and after the blessing of redemption is learned, to teach us to devote to Himself "the chief of all our strength." "Sanctify unto Me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and beast; it is mine." All these must be claimed for judgment or preserved by redemption according to what

is afterwards said:- "Thou shalt set apart unto the Lord all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the males shall be the Lord's. And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb, and if thou wilt not redeem it then thou shalt break its neck; and all the firstborn of man among thy children thou shalt redeem."

How vain to read these typical institutions merely as ordinances in the letter, and no more! Why, of all beasts, the special introduction of the ass here, and only of the ass, to be redeemed with the self-same "lambs" wherewith man himself must be redeemed? Does it not show, when our eye is upon that to which all these ordinances point, that man is himself identified with the "ass" that must be redeemed or slain? Surely so. We have only to listen to the words as to Ishmael, firstborn child of Abraham, to find God characterizing him, not merely as in our version, "a wild man," but as it is literally, "a wild ass man"- not the drudge, the ungainly ass we usually see, but the Eastern animal, fleet, beautiful, uncontrollable in spirit and energy. Nature shows itself in this child of Hagar: he, father of the Bedouin Arab of our day; and she a type of "the law which gendereth to bondage."

Hagar's seed is thus the child of law - that law by which God educated Israel in His holy ways, which after so many centuries of patient training developed but a race which, like the wild ass, refused the "easy yoke" of Him who came to teach us, in Himself, the lesson of obedience - the Son of God, yet Son of Man in man's own world.

Such is man! whether educated, refined, trained up in piety, unless God comes in. Ishmael is not merely Israel's picture, he is yours and mine naturally; and in him we may surely find the ass for whom the lamb must die; or whose neck - a neck that will not bear a yoke - must be broken!

But we can read even more in this Ishmael was not the child of Hagar only, but of Abraham also. The man of faith had taken the bondservant to his heart, and Ishmael was the fruit of it. Though Abraham's seed, Ishmael is cast out. Is it not easily seen here that even the man of faith, if he take up law to produce fruit by, will find that the law is the "strength of sin," not of holiness? The wild ass nature will declare itself in the fruit which God cannot own, instead of the fruit He has promised! Thus "the firstling of an ass" speaks to us. Blessed be God, for us, because of what we were, the Lamb has already yielded up its life. We have but to apprehend, in peace, the blessedness into which we have entered under the shelter of the atoning blood.

Lecture 8 - The Passage of the Sea

(Exodus 13: 17-14: 31.)

We have before us now the completion of Israel's deliverance out of Egypt. Not till they crossed the sea were they fully delivered. Indeed, salvation is not spoken of until they come to it. It is manifest that salvation, as typified in the things we are considering, implies much more than deliverance from wrath and condemnation; and yet this is the sense in which we habitually use it. Here, at the sea, the question is no more between the people and God, but between them and their enemies. The question with God was settled on the night of the passover - fully and entirely settled. The question here was the old, the first question, that of servitude to Pharaoh or of liberty, but which they had learned could not be answered first. This question God Himself now takes up on their behalf, and they find God for them in a more manifest way than ever yet. Already, from the time of the passover, God was with them; but how vividly the Red Sea makes this manifest to them.

If we look at the doctrinal part of the epistle to the Romans, the first eight chapters, we shall see that the first part of it (to the middle of chap. 5) is occupied with the blood of Christ and its effects. There we see that the righteousness of God itself, which that blood-shedding declares, provides a place of assured shelter. We are "justified by His blood," which in its effects reaches on to the final judgment of the world, and assures us that "much more shall we be saved from wrath through Him." The certainty of final salvation is argued (triumphantly settled, let us say) from the simple and

blessed fact of present justification. All possible charges are then repelled; judgment is rolled away for ever; and with our standing in present grace, and glory as our confident expectation, we are enabled to glory even in tribulation also, conscious that it, as all else, is working together under God's hand in blessing to us.

This is essentially passover truth: sheltered from judgment, eating the lamb, and equipped for the journey. But now in the next part of the epistle, from chapter 5: 12 onwards, the question of practice at once comes in:

"What then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" "Shall we sin, because we are not under the law but under grace?" and when the discovery of the hopeless evil of the flesh is made, one question more: "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

All through this part the question is as to the dominion of sin, from which we are delivered by death, and brought into a new place beyond it: "That the body of sin might be annulled, that henceforth we should not serve sin." It is by death we are "made free from sin;" we have died with Christ, and "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Thus the divine method of deliverance is given us.

But we must look more closely at this, and in detail. By God's grace, may those who listen to me now, trace, if they have never done so before, the steps of this deliverance, and make it their own. It is a wonderful and real thing, and we cannot take for granted that those who have peace with God have this deliverance.

Peace with God we have found already in the 5th of Romans; yet, in the 7th chapter, we find the cry of, "I am carnal, sold under sin!" It is no longer peace with God that is in question; but sin in my nature as a law of sin; this is the subject debated upon. And though souls yet ignorant of peace may pass through this experience, and thus naturally mix it up with the question of peace, the two things are in Romans kept quite apart. Let us not be afraid then to entertain this question: Have we passed through this experience? - for experience it is, and we must pass through it as such. O friends, have we learned that song of salvation as having passed through the sea, untouched by it? Is Egypt finally and for ever behind you? Happy indeed if it be so! Bondage to Pharaoh!- Does it not cease on the night of the passover? In a most important sense it does. Chains are broken, and a real start is made. God is with them; never can His claim to them be cancelled, nor the enemy retain possession of His people. In a true sense, therefore, their slavery ceased that night; the stroke of judgment upon Egypt became the means of their own escape. But passing from God's point of view to that of the people, with whatever "high hand" they may start, we soon find them trembling again before their old tyrant, and in such fear that the actual presence of God with them does not remove it! Shut in between the desert and the sea, with Pharaoh's chariots and horsemen in full pursuit, their cry is a cry of despair. The question between them and their old enemy has to be taken up afresh by God in their behalf, and to be ended finally. God fights for them; and they do nought but "stand still and see the salvation of the Lord."

And so with a soul who has learned the safe shelter of the blood of Christ - seen the judgment of God rolling past; the chains broken off his hands; the question of deliverance from sin's law really settled. God, who has definitely called him from sinnership to saintship, will not fail to make him what that word imports. As in the type of the leper (Levit. 14: 14-18), if the blood first sanctifies, or sets one apart to God, the oil cannot fail to be put upon the blood: the power of the Holy Spirit is there to make real and actual that to which the precious blood has redeemed him. But it does not follow that he comes into the proper realization of this at once. Alas, the first teaching of holiness has to be, "That in me (even as a believer), in my flesh, good does not dwell;" and for deliverance from sin in ourselves we have to learn the painful and humbling lesson of thorough and continual weakness.

When one has just learned the blessed fact of justification by the blood of Christ, and seen the shadow of death turned for him into morning by faith in a risen Saviour, whose death has made atonement for his sins, it seems indeed to him as if sin could no more put shackles upon his enfranchised soul. The joy of this deliverance seems as if it would be power from henceforth. Joyfully he starts with God; for God is indeed with him.

"And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, to go by day and night; He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night from before the people."

Thus the path is begun with full provision for mastery over the difficulties of the way. By day, by night, they are

to make continued progress. So led, so cared for, His presence with them, what progress should theirs be! Alas, in a few days all seemed to have failed. Instead of a short path out of Egypt, by the way of the Philistines, with no sea to obstruct their way, they are turned round by "the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea." In a new way they must learn deliverance from Egypt's dominion, and out of its territory. They find themselves on the border of Egypt with the sea in front, the desert around, and all Egypt is poured out after them! Do we not hear the cry, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me?"

Did it not look as if God had deserted them? And we, in whom God has created holy desires after holiness, have to learn that these desires can only be truly attained in God's own way - to turn away in utter helplessness from ourselves to Christ - and Christ not in power, but in death, where "our old man" was put away, buried out of sight.

At peace with God through the precious blood of Christ, yet how many think that as to inbred sin (the sin that dwells in us) there is no effectual deliverance! Their "mind" is indeed changed. With the mind they serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin. They do not see that they have reached the border of Egypt, and that though further progress seems impossible, God is at hand to give such a deliverance as to make their hearts sing of it forever.

The Red Sea is the border of Egypt which represents the world away from God. If we ask how men pass out of the world, the universal answer is, "By death." And our Shepherd has made by His death a dry path for us

through death, as the rod of Moses made a dry path for Israel through the sea. The "strong east wind" of adversity blowing through all the awful "night" of His distress, cleaved the way for us through the waters of death, through which, by faith, we pass out of sin's and the law's dominion, as Israel out of Pharaoh's rule. Let us trace this experimentally, for it is experience we have now to do with. Let us follow the actual track of a person whom God delivered from bondage to sin, and whose history is the type of an actual and realized deliverance.

Let us get before us then this soul just started on the path with God. Full of the precious reality of escaped judgment, his bonds fallen off, the joy of his salvation is too much in his heart for the world to have place there. He almost thinks, in his earnestness and self-ignorance, that he never can fall into sin again. But as time passes, it begins to change: his joy becomes less absolute; the world begins to have more reality and power; he realizes the fact that he has still within him, child of God as he is, a nature which is not all "new." He realizes that sin is in him still. Things presented by the world awaken lusts within, and there begins a struggle of which those who know it realize its painfulness. The old enemy is reviving, gathering strength, and putting on the old chains again; and the soul sinks in dismay at the return of what it thought almost gone for ever. Israel's despairing cry finds its answer in the groan over a body of death which passes its power to deal with, whether to improve or cast aside: "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

It is "between Migdol and the Sea" that Pharaoh comes upon them. We have seen what the Sea is; what is Migdol? It means "watch-tower;" often a military post,

as the natural accompaniment of a border region. Did jealous eyes watch the escaping hosts of Israel? Egypt was not friendly now, and a watch-tower in an enemy's country is not a place of help or refuge, but a stronghold armed against them to the teeth.

And the New

Testament gives this view. In the 7th of Romans, which is the key to the situation here, we find Migdol (the law) looming threateningly enough to the soul seeking to escape from sin's law. However strange it may sound to us, Scripture it is that says, "The strength of sin is the law." Yea, even because "the law is spiritual." But, says the one whose experience it is, "I am carnal, sold under sin."

Men will have it that because the law is spiritual it must be power for spirituality, power against sin. But Scripture decisively says, "Without the law sin was dead; for I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died; and the commandment which was ordained unto life, I found to be unto death; for sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me!" Is not this just the position between Migdol and the Sea, where Pharaoh overtook Israel? Do you know this position? If you have but reached thus far, it will explain itself much better than my words can do? Indeed, if you have not reached it, it will be impossible to explain it. The questions, objections, reasonings, which fill this part of Romans, show the difficulty with which souls apprehend the true power of the law of God. Think of one seeking to obey the divine commandment, finding that the sin he is seeking to subdue, is slaying him by the law he is

seeking to keep! That the law instead of being the strength of holiness is actually the strength of sin (1 Cor. 15: 56).

Let me remark here that it is not now a question of justification or of wrath; that was all settled before. No; the point now is entirely how "we should bring forth fruit unto God;" a question of being "delivered from the law that we should serve God in newness of spirit, not in the oldness of the letter." This is what so many find hard to understand. That the law cannot justify is comparatively simple; but that it hinders fruit-bearing is hard to realize. As sure as Migdol was in the enemy's country, and that Israel must be out of it to escape attack, so must we be out of reach from the law to escape its condemning power. Under the law, self-occupation ends with the discovery of an impracticable body of sin and death, from which I, "wretched man," see no deliverance. I cannot improve this flesh in which sin dwells. I cannot bring about the spiritual state I long for, which would satisfy me. God gives me no help at achieving self-complacency. I desire the consciousness of holiness; but His law gives me the consciousness of sin! Whence then can deliverance come?

Now then let us look at the type again. Mark that God does not arm Israel's hosts and lead them out against Pharaoh. He strengthened not their arm to bring salvation to them. They have, instead, to "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." So with us in the antitype of this memorable struggle. God does not call us to fight against the flesh and subdue it. He neither points nor leads us in that direction at all. "What other course?" many a heart might ask. Ah, God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor His ways as our ways. So now: as

Moses' rod is lifted up over the sea, the east wind rises, and as the night falls the waters are divided from shore to shore! How strange this pathway! How impossible for aught but divine power to effect! People of God, this is your escape from the enemy! Know you this path, beloved friends? See you what it means? Your deliverance is by the way which Christ has made - quite out of Egypt to the other side.

The awful

"night" of Christ's unequalled sorrow, as the wail of the east wind of calamity, has opened for us the path of deliverance. That precious death is ours! Do you understand? We are dead by it, dead with Him, passed out of the condition of men in the flesh. It is not merely that our sins are gone: blessed be God, they are, every one of them; but that is not all - myself, my miserable self, is gone! The death of Christ has put me away as a man in the flesh, as a child of Adam. I have died with Christ. His death has ended my history before God. In Him who has passed through death, I have passed through it; my standing now is in Him alone!

This is true of every child of God. It is what is his from the first moment of faith in Christ - not a matter of progress or of attainment, though there is an attainment of it too. What is ours already, we are called to apprehend as our own; thus it is that we find the passage of the Red Sea not taking place on the passover-night, but after several stages of journey beyond this. To enjoy the blessedness of the place, we must in fact have reached it experimentally - must have come by way of Migdol through the Sea. May some of you travel it with

me now for the first time, and prove for yourselves the blessed end of Pharaoh's, of sin's, tyranny forever.

Dead with Christ! In Christ beyond death! May God teach us all these two lessons. The self I was taking up to improve and cultivate, He has set aside forever by the Cross. To cultivate the flesh is of no use, for "it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

Some may turn upon me, and say, "But, sir, I am a child of God, I am not all flesh, I am born again, I have a new nature." And so had he a new nature, who cries, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" It was his new nature that made him groan so! "I delight in the law of God," he says, "after the inward man;" "With the mind I myself serve the law of God." Yes, but that did not hinder his having to say also, "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." Thank God for a new nature; but deliverance is another matter. Is there not a law in your members warring against the law of your mind? Are you not learning impotency rather than power?- the strength of sin rather than the holiness you seek?

You have a new nature, and think you have something to cultivate. I do not deny it; but do you understand what is its cultivation? The principle of the new nature is faith. Faith, hope, and love are its characteristics. Do you not see that all these require, not self-occupation, but occupation with Christ. You take up the law to help you, and the law tells you just what you must be and do, but it gives you no power for it. Power is in the Spirit, which we receive through faith in Christ. Thus grace, not law,

is the way of holiness. "Sin shall not have dominion over you, because ye are not under the law, but under grace."

"Israel who followed after the law of righteousness, did not attain to the law of righteousness. And wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law." These principles are essentially different. You must come away from the place between Migdol and the Sea. You must follow Israel's path through the waters before you can know deliverance from Pharaoh and from Egypt. You must learn death with Christ, and leave yourself as it were in the Sea, and take your place as in Christ; then you will find, to your unspeakable joy, you have left your enemies also in the waters.

What a moment for Israel when they looked back in the dawn of the morning from the other shore, and saw the dead bodies of their enemies upon the waters and upon the shores! What a victory, for which they had never lifted a hand! And what rapturous joy to the soul that has apprehended Christ's death as its own, when in the light of resurrection it sees how God has delivered him from the rampant evil he could not meet or control!

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be annulled, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

Notice that it is "in the morning watch" that "the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians,... and troubled the host of the Egyptians." And this also, that "the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared,... and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea." Christ is "raised from the dead by the glory of the Father." Here is the morning for us. His work accepted -

Himself accepted as the representative of His redeemed people, and in Him is now our standing; in Him is our happy place, and Himself is the object of our hearts and happy service. Faith, love, hope, twine around Him their tendrils, and flourish there. Here the new nature expands and develops and bears fruit - fruit which is not for her own taste or enjoyment, but for Christ. When will Christians give up the thought of feeding upon their own fruit? When will they give up seeking satisfaction in their own attainments? When will they learn that self-consciousness and self-occupation are the antipodes of holiness, instead of essential features of it? When will they cease to loiter between Migdol and the Sea, and pass to the other side, away from Egypt and its bondage?

Blessed be God, He has given us the title to turn away from self. The self we would cultivate He has set aside by the Cross; and the faith which characterizes the new nature, turns ever away from self towards Him in whom It delights. Be content to be nothing; God has made Christ all to us - sanctification as well as righteousness. We grow up to what we have before us. We learn the manners of the company we keep. "We all with open face beholding the glory of the LORD, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Lord the Spirit," as the margin of our Bibles more truly reads.

Our Lord has called us to be His own. We are not "in the flesh;" we belong not to Egypt, but to Christ. May the wonderful type we have been looking at instruct many a soul in this. How great the confirmation and clearing of our faith it will produce, as this last verse teaches:

"And Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and His servant Moses."

Lecture 9 - The Song and the Testing

(Exodus, chap. 15.)

Having seen the salvation wrought by Jehovah, and the carcasses of their enemies upon the sea-shore, the people sing of their deliverance with praises to God. He has delivered; He will deliver, and bring them in the land to which they are going. Not until now was salvation apprehended in its fulness.

Three things mark this song: First, the deliverance just effected from Pharaoh and his hosts. Second, the assurance that God will bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of His inheritance, in the place which He has made for Himself to dwell in. Thirdly, they themselves are going to prepare Him a habitation.

We have already dwelt at length on the deliverance. But we may yet observe, that while the deliverance itself is once for all effected, there is need to have it kept in remembrance continually. While "Christ died to sin once," and therefore we are dead to sin, once and for ever, we have yet to be reckoning ourselves dead to sin continually. We have not to die continually, nor die at all. We are dead, and must be, before we can rightly reckon ourselves dead. The fact itself is independent of our faith about it, but our faith in the fact is nevertheless what is needed in order that sin may no more reign in our mortal bodies. "Let not sin, therefore, reign." On the Egyptian side of the sea there could not be an exhortation to that effect. It would have been of no use to bid Israel not to let Pharaoh reign. He was master on that side, and not they. But now we can be addressed as consciously masters. If sin reigns, we let it reign. But

our death to it must be a constant realization, that sin may not reassume power in any measure. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof," says the apostle.

Scripture makes a distinction here. Our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin may be annulled - practically brought to nothing - that henceforth we should not serve sin. It does not say the flesh is crucified with Christ, but our old man is. Our old man represents what we were by nature - the man in the flesh; but although we are not in the flesh (that is a wholly past condition), yet the flesh is in us, and we may permit it, in fact, to assert itself. It is we that are dead, not the flesh; the flesh remains, but as a foreign thing which is no more accounted our own, from the Christian point of view - that is, from the wilderness side of the sea. It is, in fact, a mere Egyptian carcase; nothing but corruption attaches to it; nothing but corruption can we expect from it; it is the carcase of an enemy, not ourselves. That we are not men in the flesh is a matter of faith entirely. The moment, therefore, we slip out of this, we have the flesh to deal with, either as an antagonist or a tempter.

But notice now, how strikingly God guards His truth from the abuse which man might make of it. It is easy to say that if you reckon yourselves dead to sin it leaves you free to do as you list. But the apostle shows (what is evident indeed upon a moment's consideration) that if we are holding ourselves dead, we have no will of our own to serve, no lusts to serve. It is therefore impossible for a man to be reckoning himself dead to sin and yet living in it - we cannot. If we do, the necessary conclusion is that in our actual faith at the moment, we

are not dead to it; and to assert that we are dead would be hypocrisy, which would stand self-convicted. So in this sixth chapter of Romans, the apostle points out to us the responsibility of this position if we take it. First, he asserts positively, "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law but under grace;" then he asks the question, "What then, shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace?" And he adds, in answer, another question: "Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey - whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"

A person who takes distinctly the position of being, in this sense, free from the dominion of sin, if he is yielding himself to it, chooses a master. He is not at all the person in the 7th chapter, who mourns under captivity to the law of sin in his members, and cannot escape. He is a free man choosing a service; and if as a free man he can choose the service of sin, this will only manifest in the fullest way what he is. Therefore says the apostle, If you yield yourselves servants to sin, the wages of sin is death. You have chosen a master, and will get his wages, however much you may talk about deliverance.

Still, the fact remains that if we are reckoning ourselves dead to sin, we are free, free from conflict and free from its allurements. This position is therefore the very basis of holiness, and of a life to God.

We may notice here, too, the importance of salvation being their song. The apostle enforces this upon the Colossians, that they be established in the faith as they have been taught, and abounding therein "with thanksgiving." If our hearts are not full of the joy of the

deliverance, the deliverance can scarcely be in proper realisation. There is power in joy to keep the soul. "The joy of the Lord is your strength." Happiness with Christ and holiness are linked together; therefore the apostle at the close of the first part of the Epistle to the Romans speaks of "joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the reconciliation." Joy in God is indeed a further thing, a thing beyond joy in salvation, but here they unite. This song on the other side of the sea is a song of praise to God, and if our hearts are there we shall find emphatically how strong we are. The apostle therefore urges upon us: "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice;" and this joy is of necessity worship also: it is a song of salvation.

The second point which we find in the song is that now of a certainty they see that God will bring them through to His own habitation. We shall find this character marking the close of the two divisions of the doctrinal part of the Epistle to the Romans. First, in the fifth chapter we have this conclusion, "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him." And again, "If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." "His life" here, we must remember, is not Christ's life before the cross, but after it, life in resurrection, that life in which He lives before God for us; that life therefore of which He says to His disciples, "Because I live, ye shall live also." It is Himself in the presence of God, Himself accepted, brought finally out of death - Himself abiding in His own unchangeable perfection, abiding there for us and we in Him, which is the absolutely sufficient argument for the perseverance

of the saint himself. His perseverance is in fact Christ's perseverance for him; his being carried through is linked with Christ being his representative already in the presence of God.

Therefore in the question of priesthood, of who is able to carry a people through the wilderness - spite of all that is in them and all that is around them - it is the rod that buds out of death in the sanctuary, and bears blossoms and yields almonds, which is the sign of a true priest. He has come through death, and come out of it. He is a risen priest, the representative of His people, whose own presence in the glory necessitates theirs. If justified by Christ's blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. If reconciled by His death when we were enemies, much more we shall be saved by His life.

In the 8th chapter - our position as having passed to the other side of the sea - we have a more decisive challenge, as it were a defiance of everything to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. There everything that can possibly come is looked at:

"Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come."

"Things to come" necessarily must cover whatever there may be of suffering; whatever there may be of temptation; whatever there may be of change. But notice another thing here; it is to God's habitation we are coming. Now God brings us to His own house. We have nothing of this until we have the story of redemption complete. A redeemed people is redeemed to God - to have for Himself and with Himself forever.

"In my Father's house," says the Lord, "are many

mansions I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am ye may be also."

"Where I am," is Christ's own eternal dwelling-place. "I am" is the phrase descriptive of unchanging Deity. No earth how ever beautiful and adorned, not even a new earth, we may say, is for us the "Father's house." The Father's house is where the Father is, where the Son dwells from eternity to eternity.

But there is a third thing, another habitation which His people are to prepare for Him. "He is my God, and I will prepare Him a habitation," they say. This points, clearly, to the tabernacle in the wilderness in which God's presence was manifested to His people. This tabernacle which the people's hands and hearts prepared for Jehovah, was of course a very different thing from the people who prepared it. Israel was in no sense God's house. We must go to the New Testament to find this. Now, Christians are His house. We have thus the truth of 1st Corinthians uniting to the truth of Romans. We have passed through the doctrine of Romans, we may say, and now find ourselves in Corinthians. The Church is the house of God. It is also the body of Christ, and here we have what passes all figures. What a wonderful testimony it is, even now, to the completeness of our redemption, that God Himself can, as Scripture expresses it, dwell in us and walk among us! The Holy Ghost can dwell in our bodies, as individuals, and dwell in the saints collectively as the house of God.

It is evident that this could not be, if the question of our sins were not settled, and of our nature also. It is as in Christ before God, sanctified in Christ, and therefore absolutely perfect, that the Holy Ghost can dwell in us.

And if we have the house of God before us, and the saints as that house in which He dwells, we cannot but remember how holiness is linked with this house.

"Holiness becometh thy house, O God, for ever." He who dwells in it, must have it according to His own mind - must be Master in it. Our own wills will not do, even religiously. It is not every one doing what is right in his own eyes, even though it be right. God's word must be that by which our service is in all things directed.

How little, oftentimes, we think of this. Measuring things by a mere rule of right and wrong, we never really estimate them aright. The question is, What is His will for us? Can He be unconcerned about our path, our walk and ways? Who would desire any other than the way of perfect wisdom and perfect love? Who would desire to follow his own will into the ditch, where it surely would lead him? Who could think of taking more care for himself than God takes for him? or of being wiser than He? or of having power to shape his path which God has not? Thus that sanctification which is ours in Christ becomes a practical thing to us.

We must now follow Israel into the wilderness, which begins from this point. It is not a condition of failure to be in the wilderness, but a consequence of redemption. The world is not for sense a wilderness; it is for faith.

This truth of a wilderness is not in itself a pleasant, but a bitter thing. The good of it is in the necessity that brings God in. The wilderness is a place of most wonderful display of divine power and of divine love, but it is evidently the necessity of the people which occasions it. Had the wilderness brought forth bread for them, there would have been no bread from heaven. Had it produced

water, there would have been no need for the water from the rock. God's supplies are not proportioned to the necessity, but occasioned by it. They are more than proportioned; the supply is over-abundant.

Here, in this chapter which is begun with the joy of salvation, we find for the first time the true meaning of the wilderness.

"And when they came to Marah they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter; therefore the name of it was called Marah."

Lying low by its shore, the saltness of the sea rendered, and still renders, the waters brackish. It is the sea itself, let us notice, that makes the bitterness of Marah. Now, if the sea is death, as we have seen, we shall easily understand how this gives the realisation of the wilderness as the place of death, which not only provides nothing for our thirst, but what is there is provocative of thirst. Just so is the wilderness to us as a redeemed people. It is a place where that death, which in Christ we have passed through, as Israel passed through the sea, meets us and presents itself to our taste.

Naturally we shrink from it. The people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? Marah is in itself never pleasant. The Christian's spirit with regard to all the sorrow and sin that is in the world can never be apathy, never indifference. We are never placed in a position in which not to feel what a scene we are passing through. On the contrary, we are in the very position in which we shall feel it. It is as redeemed we come to Marah. It is as having been brought through the sea that we have to drink it. The Lord has not tasted this path for

us to keep us from tasting it; but on the contrary, the death which we have escaped from we are yet called to realize as characterizing the whole scene through which we pass.

But God has a remedy:

"The people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? And he cried unto the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet."

We know this tree. Surely it is a simple fact that the cross of Christ makes what is naturally bitter sweet to us. It is the fellowship of His sufferings; and the knowledge of suffering with Him, what can it not sweeten? We are sharing His experiences who gives us therein to realize the wonderful path in which divine love led Him for our sakes. We have the reality of His sympathy with us. We have communion with Himself in such a way as we could not else enjoy, for nothing brings hearts together like sharing a common lot of toil and sorrow.

The cross was, as we know, not only that upon which atonement was wrought, but it was also the end of His whole sorrowful pathway; the lowest point in it, which He had been steadfastly pursuing from the first moment of His entrance upon the path. The body prepared Him was that He might die in it. It was necessary for Him to be made in all things like unto His brethren. It became Him for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering. Perfect in Himself He always was. Perfect, as the Leader of salvation, He became through suffering, and we follow

our Leader in this - not as regards atonement, of course, which is His work alone, as the Lord distinguishes in His words to Peter. He tells him, "Thou canst not follow Me now." When atonement was in view, Peter could not follow; when atonement is made, Peter can follow, "Thou shalt follow Me afterwards."

In that sense, the cross is that which we may bear with Him. It is linked with the glory, as what characterizes our path now. We follow a rejected Master. We are made partakers of His sufferings - sufferings which are peculiar to us as His followers - not the experience of what falls to the common lot of men. It is not the bitterness of enduring the ills which "flesh is heir to," but that which results from being linked with Christ in His path of suffering here. "If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him." If we endure shame, rejection, persecution for Him, the sweet reality of being thus linked with Him makes Marah sweet.

Then, it is added, "He made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there He proved them, and said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians, for I am the Lord that healeth thee." Here a special exemption is promised them: the diseases which God brought upon Egypt are to be escaped from conditionally. But in order to escape from them, they must endure the test which God here applies to them. Marah is in fact this test. It is at Marah, that the Lord makes this ordinance with them. If we accept the path of sorrow and trial which the Lord gives us, we shall escape the afflictions which are His

judgments upon His people when they take their place with the world. And how many of His people prove them, because they will not accept the path of rejection with Himself.

How important it is to realise this condition - which, let us remember, is not a legal one in any wise. Let us not confound conditions with legality. Very different, they are. Under the government of God, we must of necessity submit ourselves to the laws of His government, and God will and must manifest Himself a holy governor, who has power to enforce also the statutes of His holiness. And let us be assured, He has made for us too a statute and an ordinance whereby He proves us. The question is to us also, whether we will hearken to His voice and do that which is right, not in our own sight, but in His.

This is what divine love says to us as His redeemed. Love itself cannot give us escape from the necessity of conforming to these conditions. It would not be love to do so. We shall find at the last how only in this way we could enter into some of the deepest secrets of God. It is here in this scene of sin and sorrow that we are in fact learning Christ - the Christ whom we are to enjoy forever. We cannot even in the glory learn what we must learn here upon earth. But to learn Christ's path of sorrow, there must on one hand be sorrow of our own, as on the other hand it is, so to speak, lost in the infinite joy of being made like Him, and learning that in Him which is to be ours forever.

Marah being passed, "They came to Elim where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees, and they encamped there by the waters." They are

the divine provision of refreshment for a thirsty people. When we have conformed ourselves to God's conditions we find that the water is not always such as must be sweetened for us, but refreshingly sweet - a pure unalloyed satisfaction and joy, which has no sorrow in it.

Twelve wells of water give us the thought of God's grace being still in the order of His government. It is in having submitted ourselves to Christ's yoke that we come to this rest - "Ye shall find rest to your souls" (Matt. 11: 29).

Lecture 10 - The Manna

(Exodus, chap. 16.)

We are now to consider God's provision for the wilderness. The present chapter gives us the bread from heaven; the chapter following gives the water from the rock. The history of the wilderness we must not expect to find in Exodus - the book of redemption; the book of Numbers gives us fully that. Here, we have the provision of divine grace for the need of the people - a provision which is the necessary result of redemption. God having brought them forth out of Egypt, has made Himself responsible for them all the way through to the land to which He is bringing them; therefore, if the wilderness yields nothing, He must provide in another way. Bread shall be given them; their water shall be sure.

The manna is to us the significant type of the

Lord Jesus Christ, and fully interpreted for us in the sixth chapter of John's Gospel. Our Lord says:

"Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you; for Him hath God the Father sealed."

It is the Son of Man who gives us this food. Most striking it is in that Gospel in which His divine glory is its special theme. But the manna is the Son of Man down here in the world, in the scene of His humiliation. It is thus that He becomes the Bread for us; the One whom the Father has sealed; upon whom He emphatically set the stamp of His perfect approbation and delight; the One in whom, as a man, we find what is near and intelligible to us, yet,

at the same time, all divine fulness bodily in the Man Christ Jesus.

In this Bread is no element of corruption. It is the food for that life which endures eternally. Not only the Life endures for ever, but the Bread itself endures unto everlasting life. We partake now of the food which we shall feed upon eternally. Although manna is the food of the wilderness, the hidden manna is kept for Canaan, and the promise is, "To him that overcometh, I will give to eat of the hidden manna" (Rev. 2: 17). We must look in detail at what we have in this chapter.

The children of Israel come to the wilderness of Sin. There we find them murmuring against Moscs and Aaron:

"And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh-pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill the whole assembly with hunger."

The character of grace is stamped upon this gift of the manna for the people's need. Their murmuring, instead of bringing down judgment, is met by the supply for their need. "Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no."

Even

God's grace in this way proves us. In fact, nothing proves us more than grace. The very name, "manna" (significant in the type as it was in the history), reminds us of how little even the people of God enter

into what we have here. "They said one to another, 'manna' (what is it?): for they wist not what it was." And we find correspondingly in that chapter of John's Gospel, that when the Lord brings out in plainer language what this bread from heaven implies, many of His disciples depart from Him; so much so that He turns to the twelve and says to them, "Will ye also go away?"

The manna falls but in the wilderness; and the wilderness is only the world as faith realizes it - not as to the senses, nor the natural man. The consequence is that if faith be not in proper exercise, the wilderness, spite of a doctrine about it, is not a reality, and the food for the wilderness is neither craved nor understood. It is a solemn thing to realize this, and especially when we connect it with the eating of the hidden manna hereafter. Connection there surely is, as we find in that epistle to Pergamos which we have already quoted. In Pergamos, the Church united to the world ceased to be in the wilderness as to her practical state: thus it is to the overcomer, to him alone, that the Lord gives this promise. But the overcomer is he who realizes the world to be a wilderness, and is therefore in the place where the manna is both needed and supplied. The promise of the hidden manna is to be fulfilled, as are all these promises, in the future state; and as the Lord has told us in the sixth chapter of John, the bread endures unto everlasting life. Thus the future is linked with the present, and we must make no line of separation in this respect between them.

Now let us look at the manna itself.

"The Lord spake unto Moses saying; I have heard the niurmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them,

saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God. And it came to pass that at even the quails came up, and covered the camp; and in the morning the dew lay round about the host. And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar-frost on the ground... And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat."

Thus divine grace ministers, and they are dependent absolutely upon it. No human hands bestowed this bread. God Himself showers it around their tents in the night while they sleep. It comes in the dew, the beautiful figure of the Spirit, who ministers Christ, and not Himself - the dew rises and the manna is left upon the ground. But it lies there, an insignificant thing, and small as the hoar-frost.

God's way constantly crosses our human thoughts; and if it is only our thoughts, they will make light of God's provision. Yet it feeds the hosts of Israel forty years! We find another description of the manna further on.

"And the house of Israel called the name thereof Manna; and it was like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey" (ver. 31).

It was white, the colour of the full ray of light, and "God is light." In Christ alone is this perfect reflection of God found. As to its taste, "it was like wafers made with honey." It was not honey, which as such was not to be mingled with the meat-offering, which again speaks to us of Christ as the food of His people. Honey typifies the sweetness of nature which will not abide the fire, and is

unsuited to the Lord's offerings. The manna only resembled the honey in its sweetness; the fire prepared it for the people's food. Just as in Christ, there was all the sweetness of nature, but a nature unfallen, pure and incorruptible. It was the reality of a manhood we can apprehend, enjoy, become intimate with; but a manhood upon which God can put the seal of His Spirit in perfect approbation of it all.

Thus the manna, as the Bread from heaven, is Christ come down into the world, a Man among men, yet the perfect expression of God in manhood; in manhood He is "God with us"- Immanuel. The title He constantly employed as to Himself was, "the Son of Man." With the cords of a Man He draws us - with the cords of love! He is "a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother," a Friend tried in adversity, who walked in paths such as ours, and whose heart is with us in the same path still.

In the preparation of this food we find, no doubt, a reference to the peculiar experiences of sorrow and trial which the Lord constantly endured, and in which we have found "a brother born for adversity."

In the gathering of it we are reminded of the Lord's words, "Labour... for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." They did not indeed labor to bring it from heaven; their labor was to gather it where it lay, upon the ground, and for which they had to use diligence. It would not keep; they could not lay up a stock of it for the future; every day it must be gathered. If they were not out early, when the sun rose upon it, it melted. Here is where diligence on our part is so much needed. Would that we understood it better! Manna did not fall into their utensils, but around their tents. Do we

realize the necessity of diligence in the apprehension of divine things? Do we understand that the character of the Word of God is such that, however plain in a sense it may be, yet it ministers its fullness only to those who have the earnestness of heart to seek after it.

"If thou criest after knowledge," says the Wise Man, "and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God." He adds: "For the Lord giveth wisdom," but He gives it according to the rules of His holy government.

The manna was a daily provision for daily need. It could not be hoarded; if attempted, it bred worms and stank. So also we cannot live upon yesterday's enjoyment of Christ. We must enjoy Him today. Our past experiences will otherwise only turn into corruption; they will feed pride; they will be a knowledge that puffs up. And how much we see of this! Constant dependence upon God, constant drawing from Him, is what He ordains as the way of blessing for us: He would thus keep us with Himself. We must realize the divine hand that ministers to us, and gives us no stock to live upon in any measure of independence of Him. And this is true of all spiritual graces, for He would have His hand and His heart to be known. He would have us near Himself, because He delights in us. And our true blessing is that in manifesting Himself to us, He at the same time weans us from our own resources, and teaches us His own faithfulness and truth. This means, gathering the manna for actual need; and the taste of it will be "as fresh oil" (Num. 11: 8) - a freshness which the true ministry of the Spirit always implies.

"And when they did mete it out with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack."

You cannot have too much of Christ.

Of the mere outside of the Word, one may. You can have a breadth of truth out of proportion to depth; but where Christ it is that you seek, it will ensure depth as well as breadth. We can never have too much of Christ. On the other hand, the amount that we shall possess does not depend upon the mere measure of time or effort spent in the gathering. Not the amount of time, but the amount of heart counts with God, and in which fruit is found.

"There is much fruit in the tillage of the poor;" and the poor need to be reminded of this. He who knows well our need as well as our hearts, knows how to minister to the need as He sees our hearts in reality occupied with Himself. Much study may be but a weariness to the flesh; but negligence of His Word God will not own nor countenance.

And let us remember, beloved, that we are speaking now of the acquirement of food, and that Christ is that food. He Himself is the truth. All that we learn must, and will, if it be really learned, give us more knowledge of this living Person. It is food we are to gather - not mental furniture - but that which will sustain and bless us and glorify Him. It is still and ever as in the angels words that night at Bethlehem: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace." Peace follows as the result of God being glorified in the highest. This we shall find significantly told out in what is connected with the manna in the chapter before us. As soon as the manna is given, the Sabbath appears.

"And it came to pass that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man; and the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto Me."

"Sabbath" means rest. Here, if there be any significance in the connection typically, as there surely must be, the teaching is that rest for our hearts is found in connection with the appropriation and enjoyment of Christ as the Bread from heaven.

Their rest is provided for before it is enjoined upon them. Thus the food for the Sabbath is given before the Sabbath is mentioned. So they rest not merely as a duty, but as a privilege. And this rest the Lord connects with the reception or rejection of Himself in a striking way in the Gospels. The Son of Man was the Lord of the Sabbath. They could not reject the Son of Man and have a Sabbath at all. Thus when His disciples gathered ears of corn upon the Sabbath, He justifies them, not because of bodily need which they might have, but by what was done in David's day, when the people over whom he was anointed king acknowledged him not. "Have ye not read," He says, "what David did, when he was an hungered, how he entered into the house of God, and did eat the showbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for those that were with him, but only for the priests?" To the superficial hearer this might seem the justification of one unlawful thing by another. The whole point turns upon David's being rejected as the anointed king. Priesthood having already failed as God's link with the people, David was himself the link upon which all depended, in order that the holy things might have their holiness. David himself says: "The bread is as

it were common, though it be sanctified this day in the vessel." How much more, then, when the Son of Man is rejected - the Lord of the Sabbath, the Lord of rest, by whose reception only could rest be attained. The Sabbath without Him? Impossible!

Thus the Sabbath is connected with Christ known and fed upon, realized in a love which has stooped so low, to give us the joy of companionship with Himself, and bring us in Himself to God. Disjoined from God, man lost rest, and became as it were a Cain, cast out of His presence, and so a fugitive and vagabond upon the earth. We cannot cease to be fugitives and vagabonds except as we return to Him, and find rest as having the seal of His own approbation. When God rested, it was because all was good; and when creation was fallen, rest was no longer possible. He must come in again into the world to take possession of it as His own for the earth to have its Sabbath.

Circumstances are not what make peace for us; Our Lord said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation;" it is enough that He can add, "In Me ye shall have peace." Tribulation does not take from us this peace. His peace is known in the very midst of tribulation, and thus God glorifies Himself.

Let us notice that it is not of atonement we are speaking here. True, that is absolutely necessary for the enjoyment of peace at all. But we are now tracing the record of a redeemed people - a people who have known the shelter of the blood, and are now enjoying the manna, and resting under God's gracious care. God has spread His table for them even in a wilderness, and they rest, and we likewise, under the shadow of the Beloved,

and His fruit is sweet to our taste. The long Sabbath of eternity will be due, surely, not only in the knowledge that He has made peace, but is our peace.

Now this naturally connects with what we find at the close of this chapter, where we find the meaning of the hidden manna spoken of, "And Moses said, This is the thing which the Lord commanded: Fill an omer of it to keep for your generations, that they may see the bread wherewith I have fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you forth from the land of Egypt."

Although manna could not be kept even for one day's need in the wilderness, it could be kept for the land of Canaan. And so we shall find that while we cannot feed upon our yesterday's experience and make that satisfy the need of today, it will be for rich blessing when reviewed with our blessed Lord above.

The golden pot speaks of how God is glorified in what this manna discloses. Although the Son of Man it is who shall give it to us although it is of His humanity here that it speaks of, we shall find Him the same above, and God will be glorified in Him forever. We shall find in the One upon the throne of glory the very One whose "face was marred more than any man's" down here for us.

We shall not only "see" the hidden manna, but "eat" of it again, as the Lord expresses it to Pergamos. Fresher than ever will be our realization of His love and the perfection of the grace manifested towards us. In fact, it is when we come to be there, that we shall have the full enjoyment of all the experiences of the wilderness. We shall know as we are known and find, then, the full interpretation and blessing of what we have learned of Him here.

But not only this, our feeding upon the manna here will have very practical relation to our feeding upon It there. It is the overcomer here, let us mark it well, to whom it is given there. It is he who has fed upon Christ here that shall enjoy Him in the future more than ever he has enjoyed Him in the past. This manna is not to supply our present need, merely. It is not a mere provision for sorrow. It is not merely to enable us to tread in courage and confidence the path towards the land; but it is what we shall find in the land itself in a fulness in which we have never yet known it.

God grant that we may not have to ask, as Israel did as to this, "Manna?" - "What is it?" In a sense, we shall have to ask that question - not as lost in perplexity, but as the hymn says-

"Lost in Wonder, Love and Praise"

Lecture 11 - Spirit and Flesh

(Exodus, chap. 17.)

"BREAD shall be given him, his waters shall be sure," says the prophet of salvation. We have seen how the first part of this was fulfilled to delivered Israel; we are now to see the fulfilment of the rest; with deepest significance in their application to us, as those upon whom "the ends of the ages have come," and for whom their accumulated wealth of blessing has been reserved.

In the gift of water, as of bread, we find the stamp of grace. It was in answer to the people's murmuring that it was sent.

"And the people did chide with Moses,... and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst? And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, What shall I do unto this people? They be almost ready to stone me. And the Lord said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel, and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thy hand, and go: behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink."

Grace is a mightier triumph over sin than is judgment. When we look through the figure to the reality, how mighty is the triumph here! For the interpretation we have the 7th chapter of John, as the 6th has already interpreted the manna for us.

In this 7th chapter the Feast of Tabernacles had come - the remembrance of that wilderness - journey past, of which the manna speaks as of a present thing. Divine power has brought them to the land, but, alas, Israel has not recognized the Hand that has led them there. Himself is there, but unknown, unrecognized - He is not the Master of the feast, but the witness of its hollowness. Thus He goes not up at first, but after it has begun, and not openly, but in secret. Then in the last, the great, day of the feast, in which its mockery would become apparent, "Jesus stood and cried, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." And the inspired historian adds, "This Spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."

Thus if the manna shows forth the Lord upon earth, in humiliation and rejection, the living water depends upon His exaltation and glory. If men are to be recipients of the Holy Ghost, His blessed life on earth alone suffices not for this: the work must be accomplished for them which alone enables them to receive, or God to give, this unspeakable gift. The glorification of Jesus in fact begins in the very depth of His humiliation. It is on the night of His betrayal - the traitor having been dismissed to do the terrible work to which he had sold himself, and the cross being now in near and full view - that the Lord says to His few faithful ones, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God be glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway glorify Him" (John 13: 31, 32). Thus, in the cross, the Son of Man was glorified, and all the bright

display of divine perfection shone out there. What manifestation of power could so exhibit God in His innermost nature, as where for man He stooped to human weakness and more than human suffering? What judgment upon sin could so tell out His holiness as where in atoning sorrows "righteousness and peace kissed each other?" Nowhere was sin seen so evil - nowhere God so supreme in goodness.

Hence if God were glorified in the Son of Man after this fashion, God must, as the result of this, glorify Him In Himself. Christ's present place is the witness of what that work is to God. He is exalted to heaven that all may see and rejoice in it. And, upon earth, the descent of the Holy Spirit as the divine seal put upon the men who are the fruit of His work, is as complete a testimony to the efficacy of His work.

In view of all this, this scene in Exodus becomes most significant. Here Horeb, "the dry place," yields water. The Lord Himself is there. He stands upon the rock which is to display at once His power, His sufficiency and His grace. The rod which had smitten the river smites it - the rod of power in behalf of His people - and the streams gush out in abundant supply for all Israel's thirsty multitude. The smiting of our living Rock has created for us a spring of refreshment and satisfaction as inexhaustible as the eternal source from which it comes; and its source is in God Himself - the God whose name is love.

The type of water is pregnant with instruction, as that which supplies man's strongest craving, and deepest necessity. Thirst unsatisfied kills sooner than hunger; nor can hunger itself be really satisfied where thirst is

not, at least in a measure, met. A glance at the need to which water ministers will enable us to understand this.

Without water most fruitful soil is unable to yield nourishment to the rootlets of the plant, which will die of drought in the midst of abundance. Water dissolves the nutriment, and supplies it in a shape suited to be taken up and assimilated into sap and juice. In the plant, and in the animal body, every constituent part is saturated with water, which alone enables it to fulfil its function and take its place in living relation to the whole. How perfect and beautiful an expression thus of that constant ministry of the Spirit, with which for due and healthy life we must be "filled," and by which alone we are enabled to absorb and digest all spiritual food!

From the beginning of all true life on earth it was so. Every one who has preceded us upon the path of faith has been sustained of the Spirit as born of the Spirit at first. This is not peculiar to Christian times. Yet the streams from the smitten Rock have in them that which is peculiar, and we should learn surely to appreciate and thankfully acknowledge the distinctive grace that has been shown toward us. All streams carry with them the witness of their source to the soil through which they flow. The Spirit of God is come down to us, is the fruit of accomplished redemption and of our acceptance, and the Spirit of adoption is within us, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. A new relationship to God, in and through His Beloved, such as could not have been known before is now made consciously our own. "At that day," says He, in anticipation of it, "ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." Thus the Spirit ministers Christ, and in Him the Father; communion with the Father and the Son becomes our portion, and

herein fulness of joy is ours. It may rebuke the littleness of our apprehension of it to be told that, in result of the Spirit's presence in us, "rivers of living water" would flow out from us; for the vessel is not the measure of the stream at all.

The last half of our chapter is the history of another thing. A new foe appears; one but too well known, and conflict with whom is but too constant an experience of the redeemed of the Lord.

The new foe is Amalek; we have his genealogy in the book of Genesis. He was a grandson of Esau or Edom, whose latter name, earned by his actions, is almost identical with Adam. Esau, the "profane person, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright," and when he would have inherited the blessing was rejected, is thus a representative of the "old man."

If we compare this chapter in Exodus with the 20th of Numbers, we shall find a strikingly similar scene in the first part of each, though separated in time by nearly forty years. The murmuring of the people in their thirst; the name Meribah (strife) given in each case to the place; the water brought from the rock to supply their thirst; and while in Exodus conflict with Amalek follows, in Numbers, correspondingly, follows a scene with Edom. There are great differences too, but the coincidences are not meaningless; there is nothing haphazard in the word of God; and I point them out as confirmation of the view I take, that Amalek typifies the flesh's will, or lust. The apostle Peter refers to this, it seems to me, when he says, "Dearly beloved, I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul."

"The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary one to the other, so that ye may not do the things that ye would" (Gal. 5: 17).

"May not" is the literal rendering of this passage - not "cannot," as the common version reads. The constant opposition between "flesh" and "spirit" is to hinder the man who has the Spirit from doing what he would. If it said "cannot," it would deny the power of the Spirit to control the flesh. On the contrary, the apostle says, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." But the flesh is still there for all that; ready, alas, ever to assert itself. How solemn in this way to find, when spiritually interpreted, after the water from the rock, the conflict with Amalek!

We must mark just with what Scripture associates this attack of Amalek. The connections in Scripture are very important; and the exact connection we shall find to be this:

"And he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us or not? Then came Amalek and fought with Israel in Rephidim."

That is, the moral link as thus given, is not between the gift of the water and Amalek's onset, but between the unbelief of the people and this attack.

Let us particularly note that Amalek assaults Israel, not Israel Amalek. God had not called to this war. He had not said, Seek out Amalek and destroy him; but Amalek seeks out Israel; and Israel's unbelief exposes them to the attack. So the apostle does not say, "War against

fleshly lusts," but "abstain" from them - which, if it were done, no war would ensue; if not, then fleshly lusts war against you: you are entangled, and need to fight.

This sort of conflict is not a necessity of God's imposing, but the result of faith not having been in exercise as it should be. Did we "hold off from" the lusts of the flesh by the whole length of death with Christ to sin, as we have already seen it - were we actually reckoning ourselves dead, as we are bound and entitled to do - conflict of this kind we would not have: dead men neither fight nor are allured. The apostle similarly presses the force of it by saying, "He that is dead is freed" (or rather "justified") "from sin." That is, you cannot charge lusts upon a dead man. This, of course, is faith's reckoning, but it is a true one. Let us hold fast to this, that we have died with Christ, and give no place to the flesh and its lusts. This is faith's prerogative, our privilege, our duty.

This conflict, then, comes from faith's failure, with us as with Israel in the picture here. Being entangled, we must fight in order to be free; and this chapter in Exodus may teach us the method of it.

A new leader appears now against this new foe:

"And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek... So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek."

Joshua is Jesus. The names, as we know, are the same, and Christ in us is our Leader now. Christ acting by the Spirit is distinctively what Joshua represents to us, the Captain of our salvation, who leads us into the practical apprehension of our portion in the heavenly places into which He is gone. It is most important to realize that, for

fighting the battles of the wilderness, we want such a Leader. A positive link with the heavenlies must be sustained in order to have successful conflict upon earth. Thus the appearance of Joshua fitly connects with the water from the rock, type, as we have seen, of the ministry of the Spirit. This tells us too that, while in a certain sense, wilderness experience may precede Canaan experience, yet the two must in fact go together for successful traversing the wilderness itself. We want the positive enjoyment of what is ours in the heavens in order to be really pilgrims and strangers upon earth. And this we shall find all through these types henceforth.

Joshua, then, is our leader; but even Joshua's success is dependent, as we see directly, upon Moses being on the hilltop before God, and the holding up of the rod of power - God's rod, as it is significantly called here - before Him. If Moses' hands are kept up, Israel prevails; but if Moses' hands are let down, then Amalek prevails. They put, therefore, a stone under Moses, and Aaron and Hur on either side hold up his hands, and his hands are upheld till the going down of the sun. "And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword."

Moses is here also a type of Christ, as he is almost everywhere. And his position on the mount, holding up the rod of power, speaks plainly enough of Christ gone in to God, presenting before Him the value of that work in which divine power has acted in behalf of His people. All spiritual actings in us depend upon the position Christ has taken for us. And these supporters of Moses' hands figure, as it seems, that in Him (not external to Him) which keeps Him in the place He has taken for us.

On the one hand Aaron represents the priestly character of One "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," gracious and compassionate; on the other, Hur, "white," speaks to us as the manna did, of one who fully reflects the light which God is. Here, then, is mercy towards man, with righteousness Godward: an "Advocate with the Father," and also "Jesus Christ the righteous."

Thus we prevail: Christ's action in us depending upon His acting for us; and Amalek is defeated. Blessed be God for this security as to all His own! It is our only hope and confidence.

But, while all this is surely true, I feel that some will ask, Is there nothing on our part in defeating the enemy? The question is reasonable and right. Let us seek to answer it.

In the first place, it is as important as it is plain, that our dependence is upon Christ all through. Joshua, Moses, Aaron, Hur, surround us with testimonies of our dependence and His care. And he who knows himself best, will know how needful is this reminding. We are prone to go in our own strength instead of His, and even when failure testifies of our weakness, we are still prone to lean upon it as if we had strength.

Here, Joshua is the Leader, that is, Christ as entered into the heavenly places. It is occupation with Him there that gives power over our enemies here, and frees us from the power of earthly things. Of this the whole series of wilderness types constantly bears witness. We cannot insist too strongly upon its importance.

Let us remember, too, that it was "with the edge of the sword" Joshua discomfited his enemies; and the "sword of the Spirit is the word of God." It is this which "pierces

even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." It is this which enables for self-judgment, which is really the judgment of the foes of our peace and blessing. Our Amalek is within. Our battleground is that of our own hearts. The citadel secured, all foes have lost their vantage ground and means of access to us; God Himself can be manifestly for us; and if God be for us, who can be against us?

How good to have in this Word what completely exposes us to ourselves, and the world also amid which we move, and with which our natural links are! How blessed, above all, is its testimony to my soul that Christ is for me, loves, is mine own; who not only searches me out, but enables me to welcome the searching! The light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ shines down into my heart, and my heart unfolds to receive it as a flower to bathe itself in the warmth and brightness of the summer sun. "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

Real dependence upon God on the one hand, thorough subjection to His Word on the other, these principles with one who knows redemption and acceptance in the Beloved, are what will carry him safe and victorious through all oppositions and hindrances. They will enable him to break through every entanglement and allurements of the "fleshly lusts which war against the soul." Only let us again remember, and be thankful for it, that what we are called to is not continual conflict, nor (properly indeed) conflict at all, but the happier path of those who have died unto sin once, and in that they live,

live unto God; who reckon themselves dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amalek is beaten off, but Amalek is not destroyed. Israel have gained nothing by the conflict; and by the victory only a free and unobstructed road. If we know what this means, let us bless God for it, and in peace pursue our way. The battle with Amalek was but an episode in their history, not a day by day struggle, as so many of us find it, and make it to be. In the epistle to the Philippians, the epistle of Christian experience, pro-perly so called, the flesh is only mentioned to say, "We have no confidence in it"; and these "are the true circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." May we be more fully such!

We reach in the next chapter the end of the first section of the book of Exodus; and of this final chapter I can say little in connection with the story of our redemption. I shall close, therefore, here. We have followed out, so far as I have been able to read it, the deliverance of the people of God from the hand of the enemy, a type of our own from one more dread and mighty. We have traced out briefly, the provision made for them in the wilderness into which they are now come.

May our hearts prize these wonderful lessons more; and may God make them to us all that He designed in writing them, and laying them up for instruction!

Lecture 12 - The Giving of the Law and its Typical Meaning

(Exodus, chap.

20.)

We are come now to the second part of the book of Exodus. In the first part we have seen the grace of God meeting the miserable condition of the people, putting away the moral barriers to their deliverance, and then freeing them from the bitter and galling bondage under which they groaned. We have seen, too, His gracious care of them in the wilderness into which He had brought them. We are now to see the throne of God established over the people He had redeemed - to see them under divine government. This is the meaning of the giving of the law at Sinai.

But we must distinguish between the type and the anti-type. The law in its typical meaning is in contrast to its literal meaning, which is true of many another type. Law and grace are on the one hand perfect contrasts; and this has hindered many from seeing that Sinai has a typical side at all. They could not deny this as to the tabernacle and its ordinances, which have so large a place in the latter half of the book, and they have no difficulty as to the typical character of the deliverance which fills up the former part of this book; but the law itself is to them only bitter, and in the book of redemption seems like a disfiguring scar to them. Yet God has given it a place there, and we must keep it in its place. Nay, God has stamped the redemption-character upon the law itself in an unmistakable way.

"I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage,"

is His preface to the ten commandments.

In fact, only to a redeemed people could He give a law at all - a truth however which some have turned into positive mischief. We shall do well therefore to look at both the literal and typical aspects of the "mount that might be touched."

As I have just now said, until God had a redeemed people, a people in relationship to Himself in another way than that of nature merely, He could not give a law at all. Of course you will understand that I am speaking of man's condition since the fall. That God gave Adam a law in paradise we all know; but that law, suited to an innocent man, was not and could not be a moral law, commanding right affections, and forbidding wrong ones, as the ten commandments do. It simply forbade the eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, a thing which was only immoral as forbidden of God. Thus, as it would seem, Adam might have learned what good and evil was in a happier way than by the actual experience of evil. But he chose the experience, tasted of the tree, and fell. Thus he became a sinner, cursed under the law which he had broken, and communicating to his seed the sad inheritance of sin in which he now was.

But the Eden-law passed away. Outside of paradise it could have no existence, no meaning; and, outside of paradise, to children of corruption and of wrath, God could not come and speak of law-keeping to bring us back to what disobedience had deprived us of. A deliverer was what God spoke of, even before Adam had

left the garden of delight; sacrifice, as we see in Abel, became the way of acceptance proclaimed by Him; and a long silence of 1600 years followed, unbroken so far as we know - except Enoch's removal might be so spoken of - until Noah's testimony began, 120 years before the flood, in which the whole world perished, except those sheltered in the ark.

After the flood human government was established for the repression of those deeds of violence which had just brought down the visible judgment of God. But He still established no moral code, gave no law as at Sinai. Of grace - much older than law - He still spoke; to Abraham He reckoned faith for righteousness, and therewith linked a promise of blessing to his seed, and to all nations of the earth through him, entirely apart (as the apostle argues) from all condition of law, which came 430 years after.

Thus the whole of this period, from Adam to Moses, was what the apostle Paul calls "the time before the law." A law to bring into relationship to Himself by obedience to it, God never proposed. Relationship to Him, for sinners, must be of His grace. Outside of this there can be only wrath and judgment; and from this, as our natural portion, there must be deliverance, wrought by God Himself, before there can be any proper relationship to Him. This the sacrifices always recognized, and in the most solemn way we have seen the passover enforcing it. Brought into relationship, God gives them a law upon the express basis of the wonderful deliverance He had vouchsafed to them: "I am the Lord thy God that brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage:

Thou shalt have no other gods before Me."

But while God thus maintains His testimony to man's condition, to his need of divine mercy, man, ignorant of himself as of God, needed yet a deeper lesson - a more personal searching out. For this cause the law was given - a cause which in some shape or other is in man's heart everywhere - as the condition of approach to God. God then takes it up in order that man by personal experience might learn his inability to stand before Him. Without this personal experience man will not believe God's testimony as to him: the personal experience therefore he shall have.

"Ye have seen," says God to them, "what

I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagle's wings, and brought you unto Myself." The truth is insisted on, of how this relationship to Himself was of His gift alone. Then He says, "Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people (for all the earth is mine); and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."

"And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do."

Thus they undertook to fulfil the law as the condition of continuance in relationship to God according to His nature. They must be a "holy nation," to suit His holiness. They would be a holy nation if they obeyed His voice, and so, as a "kingdom of priests," have continual access to Himself.

But they were never able to put in their claim to this; for the law they never fulfilled. Instead of a national

priesthood, one family alone, the family of Aaron, was taken up to be priests for a people unfit to approach God in the mass; and even from these the face of God was hidden. The high priest alone, and he but once a year, could enter the holiest; for he was but on the same ground as others: "No man can see Me, and live."

Yet in all this the purpose of the law was fulfilled - completely to expose man to himself. "God is come to prove you," says Moses at the time it was given; it was the proving of one already pronounced a sinner, continually evil in every imagination of his heart - for so had God declared him at the flood: so the law could be but the manifestation of this to himself. God of course knew well; He had spoken; no discovery could be new to Him.

Of this trial then, as given in this book, there are two parts, answering to the giving of the law the first and second times. Of the issue of it the New Testament speaks. When summing up the condition to which Christ's death applied, and speaking of the "due season" in which that precious death took place, it says, "When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." Ungodly, and without strength, are what these givings of the law respectively reveal. And that word "yet" tells us of the long time of expectancy in which man had been allowed, if he could, to show himself other than the issue declares.

In fact the first part of the trial was soon over. "Ungodly" indeed was he who in the space of forty days from the time in which he heard the voice of God out of the mount, could turn from the God who had manifested Himself in delivering them with a mighty arm from

Egypt's bitter bondage; and give the glory of his Redeemer to the similitude of an ox that eateth grass! And of this the people in one mass were guilty. Under the shadow of Mount Sinai they "sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play"- in honour of a graven image such as Jehovah had expressly forbidden, and in evident remembrance of those gods of Egypt upon whom He, under their very eyes, had executed judgment.

The tables of the covenant had not come down to them from God when they were already convicted and condemned under it. Moses breaks them therefore in testimony against them, and judgment takes its course, till God at Moses' intercession (the figure of a greater One) takes them up again. Here the second trial begins, which from its nature, not from any change in them, was necessarily of longer continuance.

Under the law as given the second time the people took possession of the land of promise, and held it for 800 years. But they held it, not as those who had kept the covenant, but in the long-suffering of a patient God, whom day by day their iniquities provoked. And with the captivity in Babylon this also was ended. Then the glory of God (which went outside the camp at the time of the first trial being over) departed from the city and went up to heaven. They were then Lo-Ammi, not Jehovah's people, and have never since been recognized as that. Only the voice of prophecy remains, calling the things that are not as though they were - anticipating the Voice that shall yet call them out of their graves, when redeemed from their iniquity and gathered out of their long dispersion, the glory shall yet dwell upon every dwelling-place in Zion. But that will be under the new covenant, and not under the old.

The question in this second trial was not any more whether man was ungodly, but whether he had power of self-recovery - whether he had "strength." Hence the ground was no longer that of pure law which gave no room for repentance. The same ten commandments were given again, neither more nor less, for the standard of holiness could never be lowered, but they were now in the hand of the mediator, and attended with the proclamation of Jehovah's Name and goodness, who "forgave iniquity, transgression and sin," if yet He could not, as under strict law He could not, "clear the guilty."

Thus the law became, according to what was afterwards its type, a Bethesda, in which if divine power manifested itself in an extraordinary manner, to give virtue to that in which naturally there was none, yet the really "impotent," the helpless, got no healing. The condition of healing was that he should do that which his disease forbade his doing. Yet a gleam of light shone out, as at the first giving of the law, there had not been. No goodness of Jehovah had been mentioned at the first, and no glory shone as the result in the face of the Mediator. Yet even with goodness shown, God is not seen face to face. When Moses asks to be shown His glory, he is told, "Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see Me and live." Solemn preface to declarations of goodness, but not yet over-abounding mercy! "And Jehovah said, There is a place by Me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock; and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock and cover thee with my hand while I pass by: and I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see MY BACK PARTS; but my face shall not be seen." What a distinct declaration of a glory yet unrevealed, which is

the "excelling" glory of Christianity! Long after this an apostle says, as echoing what is here:

"No man hath seen God at any time;" but then adds, as looking at the glory of the Word made flesh, "The Only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." And thus with Christ that Father's name is revealed. "I have declared unto them thy Name," are His words.

In Exodus it is not the Father's but

Jehovah's, an immense difference, which left God indeed in His proper character unrevealed. And all the Old Testament names of God are similar. "Almighty" to Abraham is the declaration of His power, not His Person. "Most High" is His title as assuming His great power over the earth. "Lord" spoke of authority as His. And "Jehovah" here speaks of the Eternal, and it may be Omnipresent, and so Omniscient. But who is He to whom all these titles of glory belong? Alas, poor man, that has to ask it! - thy God and thou knowest Him not! thou canst not see His face! For us, the darkness is passing, and the true light now shineth; for us, the Father has been seen in Him who is the "brightness of His glory, and the express image of His Person" in the meek and lowly Man on earth, and yet "the Son of Man who is in heaven."

The goodness of Jehovah proclaimed in the 34th chapter, is the goodness of a Lawgiver and Judge, the wise and gracious Governor of His creatures.

"And Jehovah descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of Jehovah. And Jehovah passed by before him, and proclaimed, Jehovah, Jehovah God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and

abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children unto the third and to the fourth generation."

It is plain that this is not the announcement of the gospel, of One who "justifieth the ungodly." It is goodness that can take up a wicked man to bid him "turn from his wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, and he shall save his soul alive." It is the putting a man upon the ground of self-salvation, to see if he has "strength." The past may be forgiven, the future he must provide for; and after all, there is a God who can by no means clear the guilty to be met at last.

The apostle Paul tells us plainly that the law so given, when the glory of Jehovah reflected itself in Moses' face (not as when first given, when no glory accompanied it), was still a "ministration of death" and of condemnation. Man could not save himself, nor be helped to do it. Law for him, however put, was curse, not "glad tidings." Upon this ground the trial might be, and was, a long one, for the patience of the Lord would give ample time to let the result be seen. That result, after 1500 years of patient waiting, was declared: "There is none righteous." Man is "without strength" as well as "ungodly." Put on the ground of requirement in any form, however softened, he cannot meet it. He has nothing wherewith to pay: grace and forgiveness alone will suit him. But that is not here revealed. And thus the glorious face of God is hidden, even when the tabernacle becomes His habitation, and He dwells among the people of His choice. But in that tabernacle is given us, in types, the

reality and the justification of that grace which could not as yet be spoken out. The veil over Moses' face was the type of the hiding of that mercy in which the God, who dwelt in the thick darkness, ever acted toward those in whom He wrought - the men of faith in that and other generations. The veil is done away in Christ, and "hidden things" are now unsuited to the plain speech of Christianity. God Himself is in the light - revealed to us.

If we see only the letter of this law given at Sinai, we must renounce the thought of its being consistent with the grace of the book of Redemption. But must we take it only in the letter? Cannot the law be typical of something that is not law, and which suits the truth of redemption? "Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood," is the song of the worshiping elders before the throne. "Redeemed to God," what does it mean, but that by redemption we become as much the property of God as when unredeemed we were the miserable slaves of sin? Blessed be God that, in our guilt and misery, He should have attached value enough to us to make us His own! It will be our everlasting joy that we are His. But does not this involve His setting up His throne in us, and making good His claim to possess us wholly?

Thus as part of our very deliverance, or what is involved in it, we must reckon the establishment of the Redeemer's throne over us. If for us it is a "throne of grace," as in the fullest sense it is, it is none the less a throne; as in the New Jerusalem, the city of eternal gladness, from "the throne of God and of the Lamb" pours, clear as crystal, the "river of the water of life."

In harmony with this, the gift of the Holy Ghost as the living water to us, is the fruit of the session of Christ

upon the Father's throne. "Thou hast gone up on high, Thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men." "Therefore," says the apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost, "being by the right hand of God' exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." Thus the water of life even now comes from the throne.

In this thought of the throne, the two special features of this last half of Exodus unite together: the giving of the law and the tabernacle. The latter, which especially manifests the provisions of grace, is yet God's dwelling-place, where between the cherubim He sits sovereign. The ark and mercy-seat are His throne, and in the ark the tables of the law are continually kept.

Viewed as a type then, we see in the law the presentation of that holy government of God under which as His redeemed we come. Even that which was said of old to Israel, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for your iniquities," contains a principle as distinctly recognized in the New Testament as it is in the Old. A father corrects and chastens his own children, not those of other people. And so the dear relationship of grace involves that our Father "scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." This makes its sternest lessons precious to the soul of the saint: it is ever His dealing with us "for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness."

Thus, upon the ground of being brought to God, we are brought under the yoke of His commandments. The law is only the type of this, for it is not under the law we come. It is not our "rule of life," for the simple reason,

that it was the Israelite's. It is plain, then, that as the Christian is not a Jew, the law is not for him. "Holy, just and good" it is, but the Christian's rule, as given in Gal. 6: 15, is another thing. That rule is, "In Christ, a new creature." The Christian's place and rule is to walk as a "pilgrim and a stranger" upon the earth. The law has nothing of this. Had it been fulfilled, it would have made earth morally a paradise; and will, when written upon Israel's heart in millennial days. But strangership on earth and a heavenly walk, it never taught.

In this typical teaching of the law then, the second part of the book of Exodus is in full moral keeping with the first part. And, however sternly evil may be dealt with, we who see the Deliverer's heel upon the head of the serpent, can even rejoice in it. Would we have God less holy? Would we have His ways less characteristic of Himself?

Thus then we may read the scene at Sinai. In the second giving of the law we learn, however, that the God of judgment remembers that the creature He is dealing with is but dust. Even in government, while maintaining fully His holiness, He can nevertheless show patience and long-suffering mercy. In judgment He remembers mercy. Surely His people daily realise that.

Yet, if long-suffering be shown, holiness is in no wise touched by it. While forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, He will "by no means clear the guilty." Thus to us it is written, that "what a man soweth, that he shall also reap" (Gal. 6: 7). And the same apostle writes to the Corinthians: "If we would judge ourselves we should not be judged; but when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the

world." Thus it is clearly taught that the holiness of God's government requires His judgment of sin in this life, or eternally. The work of Christ therefore has not set aside this necessity, and we see still further how the setting up of the throne of God over the redeemed should have place in the redemption-book.

We reap what we sow; but thank God, that does not mean to the full extent of what we sow. No; for it is our Father, who "without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work;" and thus there is no exacting of penalty, as will be the case for those who have despised His grace.

"I will put thee in a cleft of the rock," the Lord says to Moses, "and cover thee with my hand, while my glory passeth by." And which of us knows not this debt of the rock from which alone the glory of Him who passeth by in the cloud of judgment can be rightly seen? Yet we must notice that even so, it is not His "face." His ways of holy government are in question here, and in the path of His judgments we do not meet Him face to face. From our place of repose and security, our cleft in the rock, hidden in His wounds, so to speak, can we alone hold aright the glory of Him who (even as our God) is "a consuming fire."

Yet, even so,

"no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous;" it is not the same as the enjoyment of the sunshine of a presence where, as we sometimes sing, there is, "Not a cloud above"

to dim it; just as, looking at ourselves as in the Beloved, there is, "Not a spot within."

It is a different line of things, though not contradictory. The same grace is acting; for if there be spots, it is a Father's eye that discerns, and a Father's love deals with them. Still, chastening is not in itself joyous, nor the undimmed manifestation of the blessed face of God. He is there, however, even if He wrap Himself in the cloud; and I knew that He who has manifested Himself to me in Christ is unchangeably the same for me there.

The first part of Exodus is thus the preparation for the second part; the delivering grace enables for the learning of His ways in holiness. We do, in fact, prove how far we have learned the grace by our practical subjection to, and delight in, His ways in holiness. Too many who talk much of grace show how little they have learned it by their practical distaste for this line of things. Here where God's voice is heard, nature quakes, the people tremble and stand afar off. His own saints are practically saying, "Let not God speak with us, lest we die." And still Mose's words apply: "Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that His fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not."

The throne for us is a "throne of grace." It is grace that speaks, as we shall surely know, - indeed we have learned to recognize its voice. "Nature shrinks," as we often say, meaning rather the nature of the "old man" than the nature of the "new". "All the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning," may be its sore complaint. But what does that prove, but that we are out of the "sanctuary," where alone the meaning of all this can be rightly apprehended? There we learn to apprehend our nearness to God as that which necessitates and secures to us all this painstaking care and love. "Nevertheless I am continually with Thee; Thy

right hand upholdeth me." And "it is good for me to draw near to God." Yea: "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee."

Near Him, the strokes which we almost felt as from - the hand of an enemy are but delivering strokes - for us, not against us. We realise the words of the prophet: "The Lord his God is with him; and the shout of a king is among them"- our jubilee-shout. Yes, we learn of Thee, Lord Jesus, who wast meek and lowly in heart; we take thine easy yoke, and thy light burden, and we find rest to our souls.