2 Samuel - Commentaries by Alfred Henry Burton

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RECOLLECTIONS OF ADDRESS ON 2 Samuel 23:1-7

By the late ROCHFORT HUNT.

THE previous chapter, which speaks of God's deliverances for David, is to be remarked for its length, but this song, which speaks of David himself, is very short. And it is so with us. We shall have to say through eternity, "What hath God wrought for us!" but we shall have very little to say about ourselves. As we go on we find, "He must increase" — a blessed thing — "but I must decrease."

David says, "David the son of Jesse." He delights to recall the time when he was little in his own eyes. "The man who was raised up on high" — the man whom God exalted to the throne — "The anointed of the God of Jacob" — that recalls the time when Samuel anointed him, passing by the man head and shoulders taller than any of the people, and choosing the smallest of all. "The sweet psalmist of Israel" — he thinks of the praises to God from his harp, and the action of the Spirit of God. For in whatever state we are we can always praise. We always have something to praise Him for — something do I say? We have an eternity to praise Him for.

David looks at his history, but he sees it all blotted and stained. "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God" — "My house is not so with God." He would gladly have it effaced. And we, as we think each of our little blotted and stained histories, would gladly have them effaced. He does not speak of what he had done, though there had been faithful times in his life — he left all that to God. It is a relief to him to turn to the Messiah— "He shall be as the light of the morning." His eye rests on the covenant of God, steadfast and sure.

Let us turn to one place of many in the New Testament where we can find perfection. "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee. As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life unto as many as Thou hast given Him. And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent. I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me, with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." There was one Man — "over all, God blessed forever," but let us remember that He was a Man — who could justly point to Himself as a sample of human perfection. "I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." These be the words of Jesus, what a contrast to the last words of the son of Jesse!