Exodus - Commentaries by Walter Thomas Prideaux Wolston

Forty Days of Scripture, Moses' Second Forty Days: Mercy and Blessing; or, God's Sovereignty and Its Ways

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(Exodus 32:30-35; 33:1-23; 34:1-9, 27-35; Deuteronomy 9:25-29; 10:1-5)

Those of you who were present here, last Lord's Day evening, will remember that we followed Moses up to the mount, where he spent his first forty days receiving from God the ten commandments, the law, the claims of God upon man, written down on the tables of stone. And when Moses came down, you remember what was the condition of affairs below. All was ruin. Everything was hopeless.

The people who had put themselves upon the ground of responsibility before God, declared with the utmost folly possible, that they would do all that the Lord commanded them. The very first word of the law was, that they were not to make any graven image, and the first thing that meets the eye of Moses is a golden calf, and Israel dancing round about it, and saying, "These be thy gods, O Israel." The ruin was absolute. The breach was complete. The ordered relation between Israel and God was absolutely broken by this open act of sin. I can quite understand how deeply Moses was affected when he brake the tables of stone. What must God have done if he had carried them down? He must have brought in immediate judgment upon the lawbreakers. Moses met the difficulty in this way, so to speak, saying, If I do not carry them down, there will be an opportunity for God to bring out His resource, if there be any resource. God is holy, they are guilty, and if the law be bound on them He must judge them. So he brake the tables of stones, and God did not chide him for so doing.

Then he calls for any who are on the Lord's side to make it manifest. Levi responds, and three thousand men die. That is, the day the law was broken, modified judgment came in. The lesson is this, man cannot stand before God on the ground of a command. No, beloved friends, he must either be before God in the sense of His grace, and on the ground of His mercy, or else be condemned.

Next you see Moses turns to the people and charges their sin on them. In verses 11-13 he had been zealous for the people before God. Here he is zealous for God before the people, and says, "Ye have sinned a great sin" (Ex. 32:30). It is a great thing to know that you have sinned. I have sinned; so have you. Their sin was idolatry. It was breaking the known commandment of God. For that sin, Scripture tells us, they got all their future punishment. There was the root that brought forth such bitter fruit in Israel's history in days to come, because idolatry was in the heart. Now I do not say that your sin and my sin have been exactly the same; but you have sinned a great sin. What is it? That is not the point. I am not going to unfold what your sin is. But this I know, you are a sinner, and sin is a serious thing. Sin, God will not pass over. He could not. If He did, He would not be God.

Cecil said once, that an unconverted man was half a beast, and half a devil. He resembles the beast in his lusts and passions, and he resembles the devil in his pride. It is a true statement. Take man as man, and you will find that is his history. Corruption and violence appear all through the scene. You may have a few exceptions. But, broadly speaking, man will follow his lusts and desires. He does not care for God. Then there is another thing, in which he resembles Satan. He finds the world a place in which he can get on, and when he gets up in it he is proud. The Word of God is perfectly plain, "All have sinned." And the man who has a deep sense before God of his sin, does not minimize it.

Now we think, that when sin comes out, then is the time for God to judge. Ah, that is man. But you see God is not like that. What comes out in this scene at Sinai is, that when everything was ruined and gone, and Israel's case absolutely hopeless, then it was that God retired into the blessedness of His own being, and the absolute goodness of His own nature. When grace had been abused, mercy came out, and God said I will be sovereign, I will do what I like, and I will bless them, spite of their sin.

Ah, dear friends, it is a wonderful thing to know God. You may ask, "What do you mean by grace being abused?" Well, what had it been but grace all the way till then? God drew near to Moses in the burning bush, and said to him, "I have surely seen the affliction of My people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters: for I know their sorrows: and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey" (Ex. 3:7-8). Was not that grace? Pure, sovereign, blessed grace. You know how He led them from the burning bush right up to the last act which we have seen in the previous chapter. The manna came down day by day to them, and pure water followed them.

If you want to get God's ways in grace with them traced out, go and read the Psalm 115. It is the record of all that He did. How He brought them out and blessed them. It is the tale of the unfailing goodness of God. He brings them to Mount Sinai, and then He says, "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto Myself" (Ex. 19:4). Then He proposes the law; and in self-confidence, without really knowing what the claims of law were, they boastfully say to God, "Whatever You want we will do." What is the next thing? The first moment they are really on the ground of obedience they fail, and all is over. Thereon Moses charges their sin upon them, "Ye have sinned a great sin." Do you not hear the Holy Spirit saying to you, "You have sinned a great sin"? The greatest sin you have committed is this, you have never believed the Lord Jesus Christ. If you are not a converted person you have never bowed to God's Son, and that is the greatest sin that any sinner can commit. And by-and-by, if you die in your sins, even though there may be ten thousand sins laid at your door, the damning sin of all will be this, you have heard of Jesus, and yet never believed in Him. That is the great sin of every unconverted person in this hall tonight. And, if you feel it, all the better for you.

Then Moses says, "And now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for

your sin" (Ex. 32:30). Mark the word "peradventure." He is not sure that he can effect what he sees necessary, the making atonement for their sin. And you say to me, Is that all the comfort you have for

me? By no means, listen. There is a Man gone up to God with no "peradventure" on His lips. There

is a Man at God's right hand who was once on the cross, and who once bare the sins of sinners, went

down into death under the judgment of God, and died with a thief on either side. But mark, He has risen

from the dead and gone up to God, a victor. He has gone up as the One who has made atonement — gone

up as the One who, in death, has met all the claims of God, and having finished the work which God gave

Him to do, has taken His seat on the very throne, the judgment of which He bore at Calvary. Blessed

Victim, glorious Victor.

Do you know the legacy He has left to you? Do you know what a legacy is? It is a gift that comes to you from a person that is dead. And I rejoice to tell you tonight that you have been left a wondrous legacy. What is it? When that Saviour died on Calvary's tree, do you know His last words? "It is finished." There is His legacy to every anxious, laboring soul, a finished work. Moses must say, "Peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin." Not so the Lord Jesus Christ, whom I preach to you tonight. He has gone up with no "perhaps" on His lips. Note what the Holy Spirit says of Him: Who "when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. 1:3). It was when atonement was fully effected, when every claim of God had been met, when He had crushed Satan's power, and borne man's sins, that He annulled death, and, raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, that He went on high.

Resurrection is the evidence and witness of the satisfaction of God in that which Christ has accomplished, and if you see a living Christ at God's right hand, you will get peace in your soul. You will not get peace by only knowing that Jesus died. There is no dead Christ now. I take you to His grave. There is no buried Christ. Where is He? He is risen! "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" No, my friend, look up. I want you this evening to look up and see at God's right hand that blessed, adorable, holy Man, the Lord Jesus, God's only Son, who was once in death for us. Nothing is left for you or me to do, nothing except to appropriate and enjoy the benefit of the blessing that is connected with Him who died and rose. I was saying to you last Sunday evening that the law did not give life, power, or an object. What does the gospel do? It gives the believer in Jesus all three. It gives you life, eternal life, the gift of God, in Christ Jesus; it gives you power, because the moment you receive the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour, the Holy Spirit falls on you, and you have power. And what is the next thing? You get an object for your heart in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. I repeat that is what the gospel brings you.

Last week we noticed that when Moses came down from the mount, after the first "forty days," and broke the tables of stone, his face must have flashed with righteous anger. When he came down the second time, we read that " Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone: and they were afraid to come nigh him" (Ex. 34:29- 30). Why was his face shining? He had got a sense of what mercy was. It was the result of his discovery of the revelation of God's own blessed absolute goodness, taking now the shape of mercy to a people who were hopelessly lost.

When Moses went up, he said to God "Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin." He felt it almost impossible. He does not say, "You will do it, because he did not know the heart of God well enough to say that." So he only says, "Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin: and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written" (Ex. 32:32). In this instance Moses is like Christ. He is prepared to lose everything if only the people might be blessed. He was not called upon to do it, but there is where his love and the love of Christ came in. Jesus absolutely gave Himself up to God, and He gave Himself for our sins. The discovery that He has loved you and given Himself for you will bring blessing to your soul immediately.

God replies to Moses here: "Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book. Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto Thee: behold, Mine Angel shall go before thee" (Ex. 32:33-34). When you come to the next chapter, God "spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend" (Ex. 33:11). And you now find a most beautiful point in the history of this blessed servant. He is in the company of God, and at length Moses gets very bold as, filled with the sense of what Israel's sin is on the one hand, and equally with the sense of the goodness of God on the other, he says, "I beseech Thee, show Me thy glory" (Ex. 33:18). The answer of the Lord is beautiful: "I will make all My goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee." If the glory of the Lord had then shone, Moses must have been withered up. Only in Him, who is God's Son, can that glory and majesty be revealed without man being overwhelmed. But He who Himself was God, left that glory, the glory which he had with the Father, came down here, became a man, and passed through this scene as the revealer of God. That perfect Man closed His life in death for the man who had no link with God. Then God "raised Him up from the dead and gave Him glory: that your faith and hope might be in God" (1 Pet. 1:21). Get into His presence and see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

"I will make all My goodness pass before thee," is God's response to Moses' wish to see His glory, and then He lets out what I may call the secret thought of His heart, as He retires into the absoluteness of His being in goodness, in order to spare a guilty people. He, so to speak, says to Moses, "The case is very bad, and if I let law have its way, I must cut the people off to a man." And then adds, "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will show mercy on whom I will show mercy" (Ex. 33:19). Had righteousness had its sway at the moment Israel must all have been cut off. But He says, "Although they have abused My grace, and broken the law, there is one resource I have left — mercy. I will show mercy," is divine prerogative, and divinely charming.

It is a wonderful thing when the soul has the sense of the mercy of God. In the words "I will show mercy on whom I will show mercy," He, so to speak, says, "I will do what I like. I am absolute." Beloved friends, do not set your face against God. Do not oppose God. You leave God alone to exercise what I may call the prerogative of His love, and what will He do? "I will show mercy on whom I will show mercy," is His way of meeting the guiltiest sinner that ever trod the earth.

I will ask you to turn to Psalm 106 for a moment. How wonderfully there does the truth of the mercy of God come out. Psalm 105 gives the detail of what God had been for Israel in grace. And then the next Psalm opens with "Praise ye the Lord. O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good: for His mercy endureth forever" (vs. 1). Then the whole of that Psalm is occupied with showing what obdurate rebels Israel were. But why do they say, "His mercy endureth forever." Because it says further on, "And He remembered for them His covenant, and repented according to the multitude of His mercies" (Psa. 106:45). It is mercy that God falls back on. And you will find in the next Psalm, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy endureth forever" (Psa. 107:1). If you trace out Israel's history from first to last, the keynote of their song has ever been mercy, fruit most truly of the absolute, blessed goodness of God. When the nation had utterly ruined themselves

because of their sin, then it was God retired into the infinite goodness of His own Being, and mercy rejoiced against judgment.

How beautiful is it to hear, “For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him” (Psa. 103:11). Do you want to know the measure of God’s mercy? Try to measure the distance to heaven. You would have some difficulty to do that. You cannot measure it. And then the Psalm goes a little further, “But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and his righteousness unto children’s children” (Psa. 103:17). That is what God is in His own being. He delights in it.

Do you remember the lovely expressions regarding mercy in the Gospels where the Lord speaks. It is a lovely theme for a troubled soul to dwell upon, and for all our souls to dwell upon. “And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, “Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?” But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, “They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.” It is not whole folk that need a doctor, but people who are sick. Then He says, “But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.” There is the keynote to all God’s ways. Did you think God wanted something from you to put things right? “ Go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance (Matt. 9:10-13). That again is what comes from God. Now go a little further. You find it comes out in the twelfth chapter, where He was blessing and healing on the Sabbath Day. “But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless” (Matt. 12:7). Observe, they were condemning Him for blessing a man on the Sabbath Day. What is His answer?

“But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.”

That God delights in mercy has perpetual testimony in His Word; and a lovely instance of it is found in the Book of Micah. There you get the character of God, and the attitude of God towards a troubled people, beautifully expressed. Well may they exult in God’s mercy and faithfulness, saying: “Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger forever, because He delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which Thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old” (Mic. 7:18-20). What a thrill of joy goes through the heart to find that a holy God so delights in mercy. And if you are here this evening a wretched, good-for-nothing, undone sinner, understand that the Lord delights to meet you, and He will gladly show you mercy, pardon all your sins, and give you the knowledge of His forgiveness.

Do not delay to taste His mercy. If you owed me a ten-pound note, and you came to me and said that you were hard up and could not pay it, I might say, “Oh well, it can be paid later on.” “But I shall never have it,” you reply. “Then I shall just have to score off your debt,” is my remark, and you go away and say, “He did not do it with very good grace.” Well, that would be like me. But when God forgives a man his debt, his sins, He delights in it. He is rejoiced to meet a man trembling in his sins. His very nature thrills with joy in giving you the sense of His love, and He receives and blesses you on the ground of righteousness. God has immense joy in blessing a man like me, on the ground of what His own dear Son has effected. “I will show mercy on whom I will show mercy,” reveals the depth of the goodness of God’s heart.

Some people stumble at the sovereignty of God. They think His ways are arbitrary. I do not. Did not God say, “Jacob have I loved, but Esau have hated”? (Rom. 9:13). Yes, but God did not say it when the two lads were born. You find this statement in the last book of the Old Testament (Mal. 1:2-3). He said it long after they were gone off the scene. With all his crookedness Jacob was a believer, and God loves faith, and always blesses the believer. But Esau was a real man of the world. He would sell his birthright for a mess of pottage — a little bit of enjoyment in this world. And what about his posterity. Why, they were always fighting against God and God’s people. Israel were His people, and their very sin gave Him an occasion to show what He was in goodness. This is the next thing we read in Romans 9, “For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion” (Rom. 9:15). Do you not see, beloved friends, that God is sovereign? His sovereignty He retired into, in the scene before us, that He might exercise the most blessed attribute of His nature, mercy. Have you tasted it, man? He is rich in mercy. May you taste it this night, and go on your way and say, “I have tasted God’s mercy.” If God had dealt with Israel as they deserved, they would have been cut off to a man in their sin. Instead of that He had mercy on them. If God had dealt with you and me as we deserved, do you know what would have happened? I can speak for myself, and surely for you too. He would have cast us both headlong into hell for eternity. But He has saved me with an everlasting salvation, and I hope He has saved you. I have tasted His mercy. Have you? If not, may you taste it tonight. And mark, you need not be afraid of Him.

“I will make all my goodness pass before thee,” said God to Moses. How has God made all His goodness pass before us? In the gift of His Son. Did you ever think God would give His Son for you? Did you ever think that His Son would come right down to Calvary’s cross and go through sorrow, suffering, and death, in order to bring you to God on righteous ground? No. But He has done it. His goodness and His righteousness have been displayed in His Son. Remember that the wages of sin is death. But I know that He died for my sins. You say, “I do not know whether He died for mine.” I wish you would be like the old woman in the workhouse whom a friend of mine went to see. He said to her, “Come, tell me, my friend, are you quite sure you are forgiven and saved?” She replied, “Yes.” “How do you know that for certain?” continued her visitor. “Well, sir,” she said, “I am no scholar, but it says in the Bible, Christ died for sinners, and I am quite sure I am a sinner, and therefore I am certain Christ died for me.” That was a bit of heavenly logic. The syllogism was perfect. It had its major and minor premise, and its right conclusion. What was the major premise? “Christ died for sinners.” And what the minor premise? “I’m a sinner.” And what was the conclusion? “Christ died for me.” Good. Well done, old lady in the workhouse. That is the way I got the assurance of salvation, and that is the way every soul has to get it.

What follows this revelation of God’s mercy is intensely interesting, and I would commend the study of Exodus 34 to each of you. Again God calls Moses up into the mount, “And he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights” (Ex. 34:28). For the second time, at the end of the forty days, God gives him the tables of stone. And what do you think Moses was doing during that second forty days? I believe that he downright enjoyed God. He enjoyed the Lord’s company those forty days and forty nights, for “the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin” (Ex. 34:5-7). He was in the enjoyment of His grace, as well as the deep sense of the mercy of the Lord. He had the sense that God would spare His people, guilty though they were. That was a wondrous forty days for Moses.

And when he came down, what was the effect? His face shone. And I tell you what will be the effect if you spend forty days with the Lord. Your face will shine. “The skin of his face shone” (Ex. 34:30). It was like Stephen’s in the Acts of the Apostles. There is always joy, peace, and blessing connected with the company of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Will you read at your leisure the third chapter of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians? where we get the Spirit’s comments on those instructive forty days. There it says, “But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?” (2 Cor. 3:7-8). That “ministration of death” is the inevitable consequence of law, as such, and is connected with the first man’s trial. It is in contrast with the ministration of the Spirit, which is a ministry of life and righteousness. That is all connected with Christ gone on high. The effect is liberty, not bondage, hence it can be said, “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Cor. 3:18). You can draw near to God now on the ground of the death and resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, with the knowledge that the blood of Christ fits you to draw near to God. You can draw near with the happy sense there is nothing in the heart of God towards me but love, goodness, and grace, and your soul gets the sense, He meets my state, and loves to have me near Him.

We could not clear away one sin, but the blood of God’s Son has cleared every sin away. And we are brought to God with the discovery of the deep amount of mercy that is in His bosom. Well may we exclaim with the Apostle Paul: “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen” (Rom. 11:33-36). He has acted for Himself, and worthy of Himself in connection with the death and resurrection of His own blessed Son, and He will by-and-by have His house filled with emancipated and profoundly happy souls, who can now call Him Father. He will have all His children there in the likeness of Christ, and He will have them there on the ground of sovereign mercy. Oh, my friend, if you have never turned to and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ till this night, may God give you to taste of His mercy now, for His name’s sake.

From Egypt to Caanan, Sustenance: the Manna and the Water

({vi 1943-1948;1949}Ex. 15:22-27; 16:1.36; 17:1-16.)

If we did not know the incorrigible evil and the deep unbelief of our own hearts, we might perhaps wonder a little at that which is recorded in these chapters. But the fact is, Israel were like us. They found it very difficult to trust God. And you and I, as saints, find it very difficult to trust God. In view of the difficulties of our pathway, God has told us all this for our comfort and encouragement. You will observe that what comes out is this, the murmuring of the people only brings out the grace of God. That is at this point of their history. You will have to notice that they are under pure grace, right up to Sinai. It is nothing but sovereign grace. They are on the ground of atonement, and nothing but grace comes out.

You will find it makes all the difference in the history of your soul, whether you are before God in the sense of what His grace is, or whether you are before Him in a legal condition, thinking of what you ought to be. Grace is the discovery to my soul of what God is in every possible circumstance. We saw how this multitude made the heavens ring with a song of praise to God, as they saw all their enemies dead upon the sea-shore. I wonder if you have ever noticed this verse: " And he saved them from the hand of him that hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy. And the waters covered their enemies; there was not one of them left " ({vi 15662-15663}Psa. 106:10,11). Beautiful touch of God's Spirit, as to what God did then. And you would have thought as you read the next verse, " Then believed they his words; they sang his praise " (ver. 12), they will be sure to go on brightly, joyously, and happily. When you were converted you thought that. You dear young people, perhaps you thought you would never have a difficulty when you were converted. Is it not striking, the next thing you read? "They soon forgat his works; they waited not for his counsel " (ver. 13).

Let us now follow Israel's steps in the wilderness, the place where we, as well as they, are tested, and where we have to learn what we are, as well as what God is, revealed in Christ. " And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter, therefore the name of it is called Marah " (ver. 23). That is, I believe, practically speaking, if death has delivered us we have to taste death. What has delivered us? The death of Christ, and we have to accept death. We do not like it. In our circumstances we often have to taste death, for death is rolled in on us. Here we often meet with that which we cannot drink. Perhaps you have such a cup just now. You say you cannot drink it. No, you cannot drink it bitter, but if you connect it with Christ, if you put the cross in, you will be able to drink it.

"And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?" Christ always said, no matter what was in the cup," The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" How different these two queries! " And Moses cried unto the Lord: and the Lord showed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet" (ver. 25). It was another miraculous intervention of God. I have no doubt it typifies the cross. It was a tree, and we know that Jesus suffered on the tree. if sorrow meets us, cast the tree in; connect the cross with it, and God's love therein displayed, and that the bitterness of expiation was borne by Christ, and all will be sweet to you. When the tree was cast in, the waters were made sweet. And so we read, " We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us " ({vi 28051-28053}Rom. 5:3-5). You connect the cross with the sorrow which perhaps just now is breaking your heart, and all will be changed and sweetened. What was the cross? It was the revelation of the love of God to me. Is He less loving to-day in His dealings with you and me than He was the day He gave His blessed Son to die for us? You have just to see that all His dealings are the acts of perfect love. It is sweet when love gets in, and you can then drink the water, no matter how bitter previously.

The next thing was, " They came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm-trees: and they encamped there by the waters" (ver. 27). That is beautiful. They were tested, and they murmured, but God does not chasten them. No matter what you are passing through, if you take it from God, it is accepted as from Him, and blessing is always the result. If you take the cup from the devil's hand, you will have to drink it with the devil. But if you take the cup from God you will have God's company, and God's support. Elim is a lovely picture of the tenderness of the ways of God with His people, in the very opening step of the wilderness pathway. When we are

converted we are in the same circumstances outwardly perhaps, but all is changed in our souls, for we are no longer slaves of sin in Egypt, but saints of God rejoicing in the freedom wherewith Christ has set us free, and on our road to glory. Refreshment from God meets us at every step, just as He brought Israel to the twelve wells of water, and the seventy palm-trees. These are the very picture of what you would call grace in its fullness giving refreshment and shade. Twelve wells are the completeness of refreshment. Twelve in Scripture is the number expressing completeness in the way of human administration. Seventy palm-trees suggest the perfection of care, in giving shade. The Lord sent out twelve disciples, and then He sent out other seventy ({vi 25303;25365}Luke 9:1; 10:1) to minister blessing, and one cannot but connect these numbers at Elim with the twelve and the seventy there. I think then that the twelve wells and the seventy palm-trees are the perfection of the love of the Lord in His desire to meet the need of His people.

Refreshment and shade, are wilderness mercies, and Israel found Elim a very beautiful place, doubtless, but they could not stop there, and you and I have to pass on. When we find an Elim, the very thing that suits our hearts, we would like to settle down, but that God will not permit, and we must again take the road. In chapter 16, they "came unto the wilderness of Sin." There is no mention here of a most pregnant fact, recorded in Num. 33:10. " And they removed from Elim, and encamped by the Red Sea." Oh, you say, I thought they had done with the Red Sea forever. Why were they there again? Just because they had lost, if I might so say, the sense of the mighty power of the hand that had opened the Red Sea for them. In three days they were murmuring, and wondering what they were to do. God turns the bitter water into sweet, brings them to the twelve wells and the seventy palm-trees, and then says, Go and have another look at the way by which I have brought you out of Egypt.

Ah, beloved, God would turn our hearts back, again and again, to the wonderful truth of the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. We do well to turn back in the history of our souls to that moment, which the Spirit of God would never have us forget. Read the history of Israel, and note how often God says to them, " Thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee " (Deut. 15:15). He would always keep fresh in the soul the sense of what His grace is.

Led by God, they pass from the Red Sea into the wilderness of Sin. A very remarkable thing, that the name of the place indicated what came out-sin. " And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness" (16:2). It is a very striking thing, how this word "murmured" comes in repeatedly in their history, yet God meets it in grace. " 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 this whole assembly with hunger. 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. And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily. And Moses and Aaron said unto all the children of Israel, At even, then ye shall know that the Lord hath brought you out from the land of Egypt: and in the morning, then ye shall see the glory of the Lord; for that he heareth your murmurings against the Lord: and what are we, that ye murmur against us? And Moses said, This shall be, when the Lord shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full; for that the Lord heareth your murmurings which ye murmur against him: and what are we? your murmurings are not against us, but against the Lord. And Moses spake unto Aaron, Say unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, Come near before the Lord: for he hath heard your murmurings. And it came to pass, as Aaron spake unto the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and, behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud" (16:3-10). What a contrast, man's murmuring and God's goodness. It is very often our circumstances which produce this growling at Him. It is the voice of unbelief!

We generally find out where we are, by a murmuring spirit. Nothing is more easy than for a murmuring spirit to get into the heart of a saint, or an assembly. Oh, the mischief that is done by a murmuring saint! Hence the solemn injunction, " Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer" (1 Cor. 10:10). Where was the first outbreak of evil in the New Testament? Not long after the Church of God was set up, a man and a woman agreed to tell a lie. They wanted to appear more devoted than they really were. God would not have that in His assembly, and they were cut down ({vi 27061-27071}Acts 5:1-11). Then we read, " And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration" (Acts 6:1). Grace cured that murmuring splendidly, as it appointed seven Grecians (not an equal number of Hebrews and Grecians) to look after the assembly's funds, and deal with the poor. The murmuring was really against God, and not against the servants of God. Every bit of murmuring, when we fairly examine it, is not against the circumstances, nor the saints, but is always the outcome of downright unbelief towards God. That is the point.

And that is the lesson we learn here, in the wilderness of Sin. It is met by the words, " Come near before the Lord: for he hath heard your murmurings" (ver. 11). Ah, He does not judge them. On the contrary, He lets His glory draw near, that the very light of His presence might shine in on this murmuring people. They had said, " Would to God we had died " (ver. 3). My dear friends, which was better? to toil at the brick-kilns of Pharaoh, or travel in the desert with God? Who for a moment could have any difficulty as to that? They had forgotten their bondage. All they remembered was what they had fed upon. They were away from the flesh-pots of Egypt. But they had not yet learned the sufficiency of the fullness of the hand of God. How does the Lord treat them. Oh, look at His grace! " And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, I have heard the murmurings 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 when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna: for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat " (vers. 11-15).

What is the bread, beloved? Why, it is Jesus. This manna is Jesus. " Bread from heaven." The Lord Jesus said to the Jews, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven " (John 6:32). What a beautiful answer to murmuring is God's tender action. Here were those people all murmuring, and the Lord steps in and " rains bread from heaven " for them. I will ask you to read the sixth chapter of John, because you will find it is manna. There are only two things we find Israel fed on in the wilderness-quails and manna ({vi 1961-1964}Ex. 16:13-16). When they got to Canaan they had "the old corn of the land."

What is manna? Manna is Christ in this scene, come down from heaven, passing humbly through this scene, and living just exactly as man should live here for God. He tells us Himself what the manna is. But we do not understand it. We say as they did, " Manna," " What is it?" But then you and I cannot feed upon that manna unless we come to it through death. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you " (John 6:53). Manna, therefore, is Christ humbled, as He was in this scene. " The old corn of the land," is Christ

glorified. You and I have to eat both. Because, although we are in the wilderness, we are going to heaven, we are on our road home to God, and the Spirit of God carries our souls into heavenly places now. You must eat both.

The person who only eats the manna never touches heavenly ground. And the person who is only occupied with what is heavenly, and neglects the study of the humbled Christ, and does not appropriate His death, will not walk in the fullness of the truth, nor the grace of Christ. For courage and power you must have your eye upon a glorified Christ. But to walk like Christ in this scene, in all the circumstances and difficulties that we have to walk in, we must keep our eye on Christ as a lowly, humble man in this scene. I find a perfect pattern in the pathway and life of the blessed Lord Jesus Christ as He went through this scene. A pilgrim feeds upon manna. A soldier feeds upon the old corn of the land. You will find that the person who only feeds on " the old corn of the land " may be rough, hard, rude, and practically graceless in his ways. Then the one who only feeds upon the manna, the life of Jesus, you will find very lowly, gracious, and tender, but he does not know much about a heavenly Christ, and so lacks energy and boldness in the faith.

What we want, beloved friends, and, thank God, what He has given us, is all truth. We want Christ for our souls in every aspect in which God has presented Him. If you read in the Gospels, you get the unfolding of what the manna is. Read them over and over again. They are God's food for our souls as we pass through this wilderness scene. Was not He tempted? Yes, just as we are. How did He maintain Himself? By simple dependence on God. He is the food of our souls, for it is Christ alone that we have to feed upon down here.

There are many important principles in this chapter (Ex. 16). Every man was to get the manna for himself. He was to get a full measure, and he was to get it early. If he did not get it early, he did not get it at all. And he was not to keep it till the morning. I must gather the manna, gather Christ, early in the day, to be suitably fed for the day. I can only gather Christ out of Scripture, so that is what makes the reading of the Scripture, and the study of the Scripture, so important. Feed on Scripture. That is the way to get on. Read the Word of God, because if you read the Word it will feed your soul.

You must not forget that you still have the flesh in you, and the flesh likes the onions and the leeks of Egypt as much as ever. You, however, by sovereign grace, are a new creature in Christ. You have a new nature, and that feeds on Christ, and nothing but Christ. Am I set to feed the old man, or to feed the new? That is the point, do not you see? The only thing that will feed the new man is Scripture, or that which may help me to understand Scripture. Let me just say, be careful what you read, but read. Paul said to Timothy, " Give attendance to reading " (1 Tim. 4:13). Wise counsel! He valued reading, hence to the same man he wrote, " When thou comest, bring with thee the books, but especially the parchments" (2 Tim. 4:13). Those who read nothing but the Bible are usually the most ignorant people I know. It seems pious to say, "I only read the Bible." In reality it is pride of heart, for we must remember that God has given many precious servants, who, by stroke of the pen, have unfolded His truth. Bear that in mind. It is very important to read, but I say again, be careful what you read. Books, you know, are great companions. But at the same time, it is important to bear in mind how the contents of a book will leave their mark on you. A book which the Spirit of God did not write will feed the flesh, but it will not feed the life of God in you. Scripture detects me, judges me, and feeds me. Read Psa. 119, and note how 174 of its verses extol the value of the Word. Be careful to get the manna, and get plenty of it.

We read in Num. 11:9, that " when the dew fell upon the camp in the night, the manna fell upon it." That, I take it, is the care the Spirit of God has for the blessed Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. It never touches the ground, though on the ground. Christ was on the earth, but was not earthly. He was the heavenly upon earth. It is the beautiful care of God's Spirit with regard to the incarnation of God's own dear and blessed Son.

At the close of Ex. 16:33, we read, "And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a pot, and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the Lord, to be kept for your generations." And we also read of "the golden pot that had manna" (Heb. 9:4). This is Christ again, the eternal memento in glory of that divine vessel which contained a perfect, humbled, human life on earth. The Jesus who was down here, is the Jesus who is up there; and the Jesus whom the Holy Ghost would have you fix your eye upon, is the Jesus who walked down here, and said, " Follow thou me."

The sixteenth chapter of Exodus thus presents the food of God's people in the desert. This we must ever gather from the written Word. Hence, the more you have of the Word of God the better. By-and-by in the course of your life you will perhaps come to some difficulty and you will say, I, really do not know what to do. If you had the Scriptures pervading your mind, you would know what to do. " Then remembered I the word of the Lord " (Acts 11:16), saved Peter from error. The Word of God teaches us our road for every bit of the pathway here. The book of Proverbs is immensely interesting, and of great value in this respect. I commend it to your careful study, while at the same time I would urge you to have no favorite portions of Scripture. Read it through, and study it carefully, and prayerfully. Because otherwise, you will not get into the breadth of the truth of God. Oh, how unspeakably valuable, then, is the Word of God. Well, that is the sixteenth chapter.

But you have the other side of the truth, which comes out in chapter 17. Again they were murmuring. " The people thirsted there for water; and 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? " (ver. 3). They were ready to stone him (ver. 4), but God's grace was paramount. " 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 thine 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. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel " (vers. 5, 6). What was that rock? Just turn over your Bible to Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, "They did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them: and that rock was Christ " (10:3, 4). I do not know that you and I would have said that, " That Rock was Christ," but it was. What you have here, is another figure of the cross. It is the death of Christ, with most lovely consequences. " He smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed " (Psa. 78:20). This without doubt represents the Spirit of God. You have the manna, Christ, in the sixteenth chapter. And now in the seventeenth, the gushing waters are the figure of the Spirit of God, that carne down from an ascended Christ in heaven. " In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, 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. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified)" ({vi 26366-26368}John 7:37-39).

Not only have I Christ to feed on, I have the Spirit of God. Therefore, my friends, see how fully God has furnished us for the pathway, yea, for the battle, and the conflict of the pathway, which immediately follows. Wherever they went, the overflowing streams followed them (1 Cor.

10:4). I do not think the rock moved, but that which came from the rock followed them. Behind, in their track, that shining river came right along. Morning by morning down came the bread, and day by day the water followed them. It was the care of God, exercised in a miraculous manner.

We too are the subject of miracles of grace all along the road. All we have to do is to be simple, childlike, and confiding. God keep us from murmuring. There is nothing so deadening to the soul. The Lord give us more sweet, simple confidence in Himself. The death of Christ has delivered us from the hand of the enemy, you have Christ to feed on, and you have the Holy Ghost dwelling in you. You are well off!

And now see what follows. The moment there has been refreshment from God, the enemy comes in like a flood. The enemy always tries to oppose your spiritual progress. It is not until you have received the Holy Ghost, that there is any real conflict going on. " Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim " (ver. 8). Amalek is a type of the flesh. You read the Epistle to the Galatians in connection with this incident here, and you will get help. " This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are

contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" ({vi 29179-29180}Gal. 5:16, 17). The flesh and the Spirit are contrary one to the other. You have now really two natures. You want to do right, and the flesh opposes. If you allow the flesh, you would do what would not please the Lord. But if you are in the power of the Spirit, you gain a victory. The gaining of the victory was dependent upon Moses.

" And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to-morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword" (vers. 9-1 3). When it was a question of Pharaoh, the word was, " Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.... The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace " ({vi 1903-1904}Ex. 14:13, 14). God does all the fighting if it be a question of delivering you from the power of Satan. But when it is a question of the flesh-and mark you, you have always the flesh in you-then there must be conflict, and, " Fight with Amalek " is the order. What is the power for the conflict? It is the Holy Ghost. The very fact of the conflict shows that the Holy Ghost is in me. It is not a question as to whether I am saved or not, but it is a question as to whether the will of God is to be wrought out, or whether the flesh, which is always trying to hinder me, is to stop me in my course as a Christian.

Observe what follows. Moses prays, and Joshua fights. Here is the first time you read of Joshua. You get a great deal about him afterward. I have no doubt that Moses' praying is figurative of our Lord's present intercession on high, and that Joshua is a type of the risen Christ in the energy of the Spirit of God. If you walk in the Spirit you are bound to get the victory. When I make provision for the flesh, then I am defeated. This may lead a young believer to doubt his conversion, or that he is really saved. This is a great mistake, for Israel never go back into Egypt, though they were carried to Babylon. You never can be anything but a child of God. You may go down to Babylon, i.e., get into the world morally, but will come under God's hand there, but you are still His child. I may choose to take my own way, and He may have to send me a prisoner, so to speak, to Babylon, but I am always God's child.

The conflict between the flesh and the Spirit within us is a sign that we are converted. " And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed " (ver. 11). We are dependent on the continual intercession of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ. Do you think His hands ever hang down? No! Do they ever get weary? Impossible! " He led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven " (Luke 24:50). He was seen to go up into heaven with His hands uplifted in blessing, and so they are to this day. Oh, no! His hands never get weary. " Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" ({vi 28150-28151}Rom. 8:33, 34). Again, " He ever liveth to make intercession for us " (Heb. 7:25).

Amalek was defeated that day (vers. 13-16), but God remembered his wickedness. " Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt; how he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou vast faint and weary; and he feared not God. Therefore it shall be, when the Lord thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about, in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it, that thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; thou shalt not forget it" ({vi 5565-5567}Deut. 25:17-19). Saul was told later to exterminate him, but he did not do it fully (1 Sam. 15). The point is this, the flesh must go. But what a blessed thing! You have the Spirit of God in you, and you have Christ on high for you. We are a well-cared-for people (vers. 15, 16).

" And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi," i.e., The Lord is my Banner (ver. 15). You will be a worshipper now. I think that is what leads the soul into worship. The Lord is my Banner! If the Lord is your Banner, victory is certain. Well, that is the way God opens up the history of His people. Clean out of Egypt, and tested in the wilderness. The more you are tested, the more you learn what God's grace is. You have Christ to feed on, and the Spirit of God to sustain you, and carry you on to victory, coupled with the wonderful truth of the intercession of the blessed Lord Jesus, now at God's right hand. Happy people are all those who walk in these precious truths.

Thou art my bread, Lord Jesus,

Evermore I live by Thee:

Thou art my wine, Lord Jesus,

For Thy blood was shed for me.

Ere my race, my course be run,

Ere the crown of life be won,-

Thou art my bread.

Thou art my wine, mine exultation,

Thou art the strength of my salvation.

Thou art my strength, Lord Jesus;

Power and praise belong to Thee:

Thou art my song, Lord Jesus,

For Thy grace sufficeth me.

Till the tears of time be o'er,

Till the tempter tempt no more,-

Thou art my strength:

Thou art my song in tribulation,

Thou art the horn of my salvation.

Thou art my light, Lord Jesus,

And I love to gaze on Thee,;

Thou art my life, Lord Jesus,-

Thou did'st give Thyself for me.

Though the lesser lights may pale,

Though my flesh and heart may fail,-

Thou art my life:

Thou art the sun of God's creation,

Thou art my light and my salvation.

Thou art my hope, Lord Jesus,-

I am waiting here for Thee;

Thou art my gain, Lord Jesus,

Thou art all in all to me.

Thou my joy, my peace, my light,

Thou my life, my hope, my might,-

Thou art my praise;

Thou art my Lord, mine adoration,

Thou art the God of my salvation,

From Egypt to Caanan, Song: Satisfaction, The

(Ex. 15:1-21.)

There are a good many songs given to us in Old Testament Scripture. This is the first, just as the Song of Solomon, I suppose, is the last. This is the song of redemption. The Song of Solomon is the song of reciprocal affection. Both are beautiful in their place. And I think we all should seek to sing each of those songs. It is our portion.

In this song, which is beautifully simple, and very refreshing to the spirit, God is everything, and SATISFACTION the result. Even though you and I may have been a good long time on the wilderness journey, yet we can turn back with joy and gladness to re-echo this song. There are many here who have just set out on the road, and I want to point out to such how suitable it is that you should sing. Observe, there was no song in Egypt. You must be out of Egypt before you can really sing to God. It is not a question of people having the vocal capacity, but the state of soul which warrants such a song, so you must not " join the choir" till you are saved. Then you will find yourself in it without joining.

I think it must have been a wonderful thing for God that day when six hundred thousand men opened their mouths and sang this beautiful song. Depend upon it heaven listened that morning. They were very happy that day. They had a right to be. Was it not a beautiful song. It was a lovely song. And what was there in the song? Well, there is a peculiar absence of a great deal that is found in what you and I are wont to sing. Nineteen-twentieths of our singing is about ourselves. This redemption song from first to last is all about the Lord.

But I hear a sorrowful voice saying, I cannot sing, for I am very miserable, and I fear that I am not converted. You would not be miserable, my dear friend, if you were not converted. If you were still dead in your sins you would be insensible. Why are you wretched now? Because there has been an action of God's Spirit in your soul, and you have had a glance at the value of the cross, but then, instead of keeping your eye resting on Christ, you have been looking into your wretched miserable self. If I were you, I would drop all that, and get into the spirit of this beautiful song.

Israel sighed, wept, and groaned in Egypt, but they could not sing. Even in the twelfth chapter they did not sing. Why? Because they were not in liberty, but the moment they were, out comes the song. So will it be with you, the moment you learn the fact that the cross, the death, and resurrection of Christ are for you, and that in His death and resurrection you are dead and risen, you will not then be able to help singing. The song will burst from your lips spontaneously without a bit of effort. This gives us the true thought of worship. A religious service will in all probability be a great deal about ourselves. But that is not worship. Worship is the overflow of a full heart. No one can worship unless he be in the sense of the liberty of God.

Let us now briefly listen to this new song of redemption. It begins with, " I will sing unto the Lord, for he bath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea" (ver. 1). It celebrates His victory. How does it finish? " The Lord shall reign forever and ever " (ver. 18). It proclaims His glory. This song begins with the sense of the grace and power that has delivered, but it closes with the glory. It takes us right into the glory. Faith enjoys the salvation that it has found in the Lord, and faith takes a flying leap right over all the difficulties of the way, saying, " Thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation " (ver. 13). There is faith's confidence, that what grace has commenced it will finish. Doubting friend, take up this language, and let your doubts go. They are the fruit of unbelief. It is Satan diverting the eye from Christ. You let the eye rest upon Christ, and all your doubts will go, and you will be occupied simply with God, and with what Christ is.

Note how this chapter opens. " Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song," &c. (ver. I). Really the state of many a professing Christian to-day would find its expression, not in the word they " sang," but they " sighed." Oh, my dear friends, I believe our lack of joy is a great sin. It is a very serious matter, because it is a positive testimony against Christ, to His enemies. Instead of being a testimony for Him, oftentimes we are a testimony against Him, and a kind of encouragement to halfhearted sinners to go on with the world. The reason of this poor state is because our souls are not in the joy of this song. Listen again to the words, " I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously." It is the first outburst in Scripture of real worship, and is based on the fact that " He has triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." All the power of the enemy is broken. And if you look back for a moment and see what is connected with the cross, the death and resurrection of Christ, you will see that the power of the enemy has been absolutely crushed, and we stand in the victory, deliverance, and acceptance of Christ. Christ is all. What joy fills the heart when that is seen. What joy filled the heart of the prodigal when he got the sense of the Father's love-(Luke 15).

There is music and dancing in our chapter (ver. 20), and you have music and dancing in the fifteenth chapter of Luke 1 want you to get into the spirit of the beginning of the chapter. In the end of the chapter we find that Israel murmured. It is true that the song of the fifteenth of Exodus did die away, but did you ever hear of the song of the fifteenth of Luke dying away? " They began to be merry," it says. And we never hear of it ceasing, and we must live in the spirit of our dispensation.

What is Christianity? It is the knowledge of the Father, and the Son, with the Holy Ghost dwelling in the body of the believer, and setting him up in this scene in the power and spirit of Christ, that he may live in this scene as the Lord lived. Christianity is the repetition of the life of Jesus, in the life of the Christian. 1 cannot therefore allow myself any comfort from this chapter if I am a bit dejected. No, no! That might be overlooked in that day, when God was testing the flesh, as He was, but when I come to the full expression of the truth of the day we are in, you get Christ as the pattern. Did you ever hear Him murmuring? No, never! Even in the darkest day, we hear Him say, " I thank thee, O Father" (Matt. 11:25). Always subject, always obedient, always peaceful. " Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you'' (John 14:27). Always joyful is also our normal state. " These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full" (1 John 1:4). Ah, beloved, we have a perfect pattern in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us follow Him.

Observe the way their soul's vision is filled that resurrection morn: " The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation " (ver. 2). I think, beloved friends; that some of us will have to put it this way: " The Lord was my strength and song, but now I am so weak." Israel says here, " The Lord is my strength and song." Is there not refreshing vigor about that note of the song? Do you think that as you and I get older, we are to get colder? As we go on are we to become feebler? Away with such unbelief. Let me show you an old convert. Four years in a prison, cut off from everything, and all Asia turned away from him, listen to what he says, " Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, Rejoice" (Phil. 4:4). It was Paul the saint. He writes as a saint, not an apostle there. What can keep a saint right? The company of Christ.

Brethren, let us get a little more into this element of joy. We want it. You usually see young Christians very bright. Should we older ones be the reverse? God forbid! If we see one joyful and bright, we should judge ourselves if we are not the same. " The Lord is become my salvation " is a fine note to sing when we have learned our own absolute weakness and incompetence. His heart was filled with gladness as those voices rang from the borders of the Red Sea. Shall He not hear ours also? They saw that the road back to Egypt was blocked. They had heard the word, " Stand still." They had seen God come in and deliver them in that marvelous manner, and now they turned, and gave to God all the praise, and all the thanks. Further, they say, " He is my God." It is a nice thing when the soul is able to say that with distinctness and clearness. And more than that, " I will prepare him an habitation " (ver. 2). That to me is the most lovely bit of the whole chapter. The moment I am upon the ground of redemption I am fit for His company, and He loves to have my company. " I will prepare him an habitation " is faith's apprehension of God's ultimate purpose. They seized the thought that God was going to dwell with them (see also ver. 1:3). Mark, it is His strength that brings you out of a defiled world, and it is to a holy habitation He leads you (see also ver. 17). They seem to say, Lord, you will never be content till you have got us in your own company.

Ah, but you say, we have not got there yet. No, beloved, but is it not a wonderful thing, that while you and I are here, God can dwell with us. How few of God's people ever rise to this. The scripture says, " Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Cor. 3:16). " In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. 2:22). It is an immense thing for the soul to see that, and that it is only upon the ground of redemption. God visited Abraham. He paid him a visit, and then retired. But when I come to this chapter, what is the first thought that comes into their hearts? They say, He will come and dwell with us. We shall have His company permanently.

Are we not going to dwell with the Lord by-and-by? Certainly, but here you have the thought of God now dwelling with us. God's people are now formed into a house, the body of Christ, by the presence and indwelling of the Holy Ghost, and that only upon the ground of redemption. The thought of this you have in this chapter, " I will prepare him an habitation." The way is clear for God to dwell in our midst. Before the moment of our going to dwell with Him, comes the wonderful truth of His dwelling with us (see John 14: 16, 17). Our going to be with Him is all certain of course, but, before we go to dwell with Him, He comes and dwells with us. This is made good, and known only by the Spirit of truth, as the Lord said, " I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever: even the Spirit of truth... he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (John 14:17).

Further, " If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him " (John 14:23). This is not only in the assembly, mind. It is individual. It is a wondrous privilege which the soul has now, and I believe it to be conditional on our practical state of heart. You will see in a previous verse Jesus says, " He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him " (ver. 20. What is the meaning of that? You keep His commandments, and He will pay you a visit. But He says also, " If a man love me he will keep my words." What is the difference, beloved friends, between keeping His commandments, and keeping His words? There is a very great difference. There are many things that come to you and me in the form of a command in Scripture, and there is also a great unfolding of God's thoughts, His wishes, His words, and what would please Him. You set yourself to keep what you are commanded to do, and you will get a visit from Him. But if you love Him, and treasure His words in your heart, you will do always that which pleases Him, and you will secure His company abidingly. How blessed is such a privilege. May we seek it fully!

It is of the last importance that Christians should be instructed as to the indwelling of the blessed Spirit of truth, both individually, and likewise in the assembly. The moment you are upon the ground of redemption, you will find that God has a people. We are saved to be part of a people, God's assembly. Do you observe that God had a people here? " Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed " (Ex. 15:13). He has that which He can call His own. Now it is the Church of God. We are only a bit of it. God's Church in any place to-day is composed of every saint of God therein. We ought to be together, and we ought to be clean separate from the world. But we are not. To-day you see where the Church is, alas, all divided and separate. Scripture shows us what God's thought for her was-to walk together as His people. It is always good to get back to the beginnings of things.

You go and read the Scriptures. Get back to the Bible, and read what God has written. Whatever you may hear me say, or any other man say, do not believe one word of it till you go back to Scripture and test it. What we want is to get back more to what God has said, and to take our thoughts from what God has said.

Moreover, this song celebrates that it is not only a people that are redeemed and purchased, but a people brought right home to God. They rejoice that every enemy has melted away, and every opposer is " as still as a stone till thy people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over, which thou hast purchased " (ver. 16). Is not that beautiful? They are God's people. Wake up, fellow-believer in Christ, you are one of God's people. It is a wonderful thing when the soul gets the sense of this. What God has begun, you may depend upon it, He will carry on to the end, and by-and-by the top-stone will be laid in glory with great shouts and rejoicings.

The secret of much of the darkness among God's people to-day is, that they are reading the New Testament through the dimness of the Old Testament. What ought we to do? Read the Old Testament with the light that God has given us in the New. It is a profound mistake to read the New Testament through the Old Testament. Everything was in type, shadow, and figure in the Old Testament. But it is all out of type now. Everything is wrapped up in Christ, a living Man at God's right hand. And I am in Him, and you are in Him. As far as the practical ways of a saint down here are concerned, whether individually, in the assembly, for worship, or whatever be connected with God's people here, what is the secret of power? Only the Holy Ghost. And therefore you can easily see the folly of the present day in going back to the Mosaic ritual. You are behind the times. You are all out of date. Everything now must be in the power of the Holy Ghost. Perhaps this is never more true than in song.

A redeemed, rejoicing people, with God in their midst, have the sense that they are a delivered people; they know they are God's people, and they know they are sure to get to the spot He is leading them to.. But there is something more than that. They have this sense, holiness belongs to this company. " Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders" (ver. 11). They had a deep sense that "holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, forever" (Psa. 93:5). Do not let us forget it. I hear some one say, I am not happy; May I ask you a question? Are you holy? Ah, that searches me. It ought to search us all. It is not that sin is not in us. but that does not give a bad conscience, if it be not working. Holiness is the soul walking in the light, and in separation from the flesh, the world, and from the things that do not suit God.

But supposing I am making provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof. If I am walking in the flesh, I shall not get the support of the Spirit, nor the comfort of the Spirit. " But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof" (Rem. 13:14.), is the injunction. If I do not, my joy will go, and I shall inevitably lose my brightness. And what is the secret of this? I have not been holy. Happiness walks just one foot, and one foot only, behind holiness. The secret of a happy life is a holy life. It is very simple. " Be ye holy; for I am holy " (1 Pet. 1:16). You walk with Christ, and you will become holy. Do not try to be holy. The moment you try to be anything, it is not of Christ. There is no effort in Christianity. Walk in holy fear, and your heart will be kept in the company of Christ. It is a beautiful thing when a soul walks in that kind of holy fear. You walk with Jesus, my friend. Tell everything to Jesus. Have no secrets with Him. If you are in weakness, go to Jesus, and tell Him about it. Count on the heart of Jesus, and the strength and love of Jesus. He has no reserves on His side, do not let us have any reserves on our side. You will be happy then.

But more than this, holiness leads to such confidence in God that the soul can triumphantly say, "The people shall hear, and be afraid " (ver. 14). Will you meet enemies? Plenty of them. What will happen? They will all go down before God. Every difficulty becomes opportunity for God to display His power. The Lord comes in to show Himself strong. My friend, is all the world against you? God and you are a match for them. God and I together are invincible. All the difficulties will disappear, because you will have the strength of the Lord. " My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness " (2 Cor. 12:9).

The song closes very beautifully: " Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in; in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established " (ver. 17). They are a holy people on the

road, and they are going to the sanctuary. That is the spot where there is neither enemy nor evil occurrent. And, beloved friends, we are going to it, and what ought to mark us by the way is holiness.

" The Lord shall reign forever and ever" (ver. 18), is the triumphant conclusion of faith's song, and the reason thereof is very blessed. His glory and their deliverance are based on the same thing-" For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the Lord brought again the waters of the sea upon them; but the children of Israel went on dry land in the midst of the sea " (ver. 19).

They got back to the starting point. It is very interesting to notice that the end of the song is the beginning of it. The older a saint gets the more his soul enters into and enjoys the simplicity of the grace of God.

Miriam and her fellows ring out the chorus of this redemption song, " with timbrels and with dances," saying, " Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea " (ver. 21). The chorus is not on a level with the song itself, for Miriam is a type of a soul that never gets beyond the thought of escape. She has not -a note about getting into the land. She rejoices in what had been done in destroying the foe, but breathes not a word about getting into the land. It is very striking; she never got in. She died in the wilderness (Num. 20:1). In the history of her soul, she never got over Jordan.

It is our privilege now to pass in spirit to where Christ now is. And God will sustain us, and keep us, and carry us on, a bright living witness for Himself. Oh, you be for Christ in this scene. Are you a young convert? Be out and out for the Lord. It is His purpose to carry you in. You may be a Caleb, or a Joshua. They fully followed the Lord. They were the only two that got into the land (Num. 14:26-30). Had I met these two men, forty years after, and said, Were not you among the men that stood on the shores of the Red Sea and sang that song? Yes, we sang that song, and are not we here, two witnesses to the truth of what we sang? A h, it is beautiful to see this. And I believe there will be many a saint in glory by-and-by, whose history has been something after the pattern of a Caleb, and a Joshua. They had been kept and sustained by God the whole way along, and they had fully followed the Lord. May God give you to fully follow the Lord Jesus Christ, for His blessed name's sake.

O patient, spotless One!

Our hearts in meekness train,

To bear Thy yoke, and learn of Thee,

That we may rest obtain.

Jesus! Thou art enough

The mind and heart to fill;

Thy patient life-to calm the soul;

Thy love-its fear dispel.

O fix our earnest gaze

So wholly, Lord, on Thee,

That, with Thy beauty occupied,

We elsewhere none may see.

From Egypt to Caanan, Sanctification: Its Practical Aspect

(Ex. 13:3-22.)

We have considered the subject of sanctification on what I call the absolute, or the positional side of it. Now we will look at the practical or progressive side of it. It is very important to see that there is the positional side, and then the practical side is the logical sequence. But you will never get a saint to enter really into the practical side unless there be first the apprehension of the truth of the positional side. I have a new place before God upon the ground of redemption. And that place is Christ's place. No less. Christ, bearing the judgment of God on the cross, was the measure of your distance and mine from God, when He was made sin, and when God dealt with Him as sin on the cross. You will never learn the badness of your own heart by looking at it. We never get the measure of our distance from God, and the extent of our guilt by looking at ourselves. If I look at Christ in the place where He once was, bearing sins, and made sin, and judged by God, wholly given up by God and cast off by God, in the agonies connected with the work of atonement,-I get the measure of my distance as a guilty sinner from God. When I see Him now where He is at God's right hand, in all the favor and love of God, I learn the measure of my nearness. I learn what I am in Him.

Get clearly hold of this, your sanctification-in the positive thought of it-before God, is not what goes on inside you, but Christ, as, and where He now is. The moment the soul sees that, it gets into liberty. But then if you have this new place, this new life, and relationship (I do not say that you are really in the full truth of it, but if this be your new place), we shall have a new walk.

Very naturally, the moment the truth of its separation to God breaks upon the soul, it will say, Then there will be a new kind of walk now. You have been set apart to God, and His word alone can be your guide for your path as a saint. Heed to it is at the bottom of all progress in sanctification, viewed from the practical side. I have more faith in Scripture than anything I can say about it. You will never get on in your soul if you do not diligently and carefully read the Word of God. Nothing can take its place; nor any amount of hearing what others say about it supply the lack of your own personal study thereof. Because, you see, if you come to a meeting, by the end of the week very much of what you have heard is gone from you, unless you study the Word thereafter to gain, in the Lord's presence, the truth for yourself. " The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting: but the substance of a diligent man is precious " (Prov. 12:27). The first half of that verse

illustrates the history of many a young convert. They have enough energy to turn out to a meeting and listen attentively to a teacher of the Word, but have not enough energy to turn again to the Scriptures in their own room, and get the truth of God wrought into their souls by meditation and prayer. They caught the hare, but were too lazy to skin and roast it, just because it was not " precious " enough to them. You have to get God's truth into your own soul in His presence if it is to be really food to you by which you can grow. The secret of much of the lack of spiritual growth among young Christians-and perhaps older ones too-is that there is not enough dealing with God about the truths of Scripture in our own chambers.

We have to thank God for any help He affords us by His servants, who minister His Word, orally or by stroke of pen. God can help me from a hundred sides, and I think it is a great thing for us to be on the outlook for help to our souls. On the other hand, we must remember the Lord's words, " Take heed what ye hear " (Mark 4:24), as well as " Take heed therefore how ye hear " (Luke 8:18). My beloved young Christian, you must get every side of the truth. We want all the truth that God has given us, presented to us in every way in which He is pleased to give it. Why? Because of the varied necessity of our souls.

Now look at the practical side of the truth which we have, in figure, in this chapter. " And Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out from this place: there shall no leavened bread be eaten" (Ex. 13:3). Never forget that God has saved you. Start with this, that a wonderful event has happened in your life. God has taken you out of Egypt. Is not everything changed? Surely! The point is this, when you are brought to Christ and know a heavenly Savior, your sins are forgiven and you are clear of the world. I do not mean to say it will not seek- to attract you. It will. You may be in precisely the same external circumstances after your conversion as before, but nevertheless all is changed, and there is a new life. What was true of Israel in three parts of their history, is true of you and me all at once. They are found in Scripture in three places. They were in Egypt, then in the wilderness, and then in Canaan. It took them forty years to get from Egypt to Canaan, but that was because of their unbelief. We are in the world till we are converted. But the moment I am a converted man, this scene becomes the wilderness to me. I am clear of the world in my soul if I apprehend the Lord's words, " They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17:14-16). We are in the same circumstances, but the knowledge of God has changed all, and as we press on we find that we have to learn as we go through the wilderness, what we are ourselves, and what God is. You are set to get to heaven, but if you enter into the truth of Christianity, you will find that the Spirit of God will bring your soul there now, while your feet are treading this wilderness scene. He will bring your heart into the heavenly place, and give you now the apprehension and enjoyment of that which is yours for eternity. That is what the epistle to the Ephesians unfolds.

We are no longer of Egypt, because the blood of Christ has separated us from a world that is under judgment. We find this is a wilderness, where there are pitfalls and dangers, but at the same time the Spirit of God takes us into Canaan in our souls. There is a very wonderful sphere before you. Get

into it. " Remember this day in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage," was Moses' word to Israel, and " Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5:1), is the word to us. " For by strength of hand the Lord brought you out from this place: there shall no leavened bread be eaten," was God's injunction. What is leaven? It is the symbol of evil. The moment you are upon the ground of redemption, God looks for a different walk. I would greatly desire to get into your soul, just to be what you are. That is it. You be what you are, and you will be a wonderful Christian. What am I? You are a delivered person, you are a child of God, you have the Holy Ghost, and you are in the knowledge of the love of God. These are wonderful things. Remember, you are out of Egypt-the world-and there must be no leaven (ver. 4).

Leaven, in Scripture, always means what is evil. I know that the term has been used in a very false way, as the gospel spreading, and leavening the world. If God uses a figure, He always gives it a definite meaning. The leaven of the Pharisees was hypocrisy (Luke 12:1). The leaven of Herod was worldliness (Mark 8:15). Malice and wickedness are called leaven (1 Cor. 5:8). When the day of the Passover came, the head of the house took care to see that every bit of leaven was swept out. We must do the same. The leaven of malice and wickedness forms no part of a Christian's life. If you are occupied with what is of God, it will lead to a very lovely, holy, and practical Christian life. If I take the figure, I understand it means that when the day of the Passover came round, the Israelite brought a light to bear upon every corner of his house. Every dark cupboard was carefully examined, and he swept out every single crumb of leaven. I really believe that if we let the light of God's Word fall on us, we should find it might sweep out from our hearts a good many little crumbs of leaven. The way to keep out evil is to be occupied with good. Paul said, " Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8); and a dear servant of God, now gone to the Lord, once said, " For a Christian the secret of peace within, and power without, is to be always and only occupied with good." Will you book that, young Christian? Will you write it out, and stick it up where you can see it every day? It will do you a world of good all the days of your life. God keep us ever occupied with that which is good. I am not to be occupied with, or to feed on what is leaven, i.e., evil in any shape, but on Christ, nothing but Christ.

If you will take the trouble to read God's injunctions regarding the unleavened bread and leaven in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, you will be struck with how, again and again, there is exhortation on these points. If evil be allowed, I grieve the Holy Spirit, and all light and joy is gone. I lose the enjoyment of God's love, and I lose that which He wants my heart to be enjoying, communion with Himself.

Most important is what the apostle says to the Corinthians: "Christ our Passover is 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). The feast spoken of there is the seven days of unleavened bread (Ex. 12:15-20; 13:6-10). God never supposes that you and I will be occupied with anything but what is of Christ. That is practical sanctification. We are to begin, and to continue walking in holiness, because of that which the Lord did for us. The Israelite kept the feast, and said to his son: " This is done because of that which the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt. And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that the Lord's law may be in thy mouth " (Ex. 13:8, 9). You show me a person who is walking on these lines, and I will show you a downright, practical, happy Christian " And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand." Beautiful, the hand that used to do what the owner liked, that hand belongs to Jesus now. So with the eyes and the mouth. When the priests were consecrated, and the leper was cleansed, the blood was put upon the tip of the right ear, and upon the thumb of the right hand, and upon the great toe of the foot (Ex. 29:20; Lev. 14:14). The moment you are redeemed, you are looked upon as altogether belonging to God; the eyes, the mouth, the ear, the hand, and

the foot are all His servants.

But our chapter teaches another striking lesson, as to what to do with what God cannot use " And it shall be when the Lord shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, as he sware unto thee and to thy fathers, and shall give it thee, that 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 it thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the first-born of man among thy children shalt thou redeem " (vers. 11-13). What is the meaning of that? It is very simple. Can you devote an ass to God? No. Break his neck. You have something that you were very good at before you were converted; can you use it for, and devote it to the Lord? No. Have you broken the ass's neck: have you judged and set the thing aside as unfit for the Lord? I do not know what the thing is in your history, but you know. The point is this, we used to belong to the world, but now we belong to Christ. What I have, and what I am, all belong to Him. You cannot use some acquirement for the Lord. What is the result? You break its neck, so to speak. Whatever would be a hindrance to you, judge: do not spare that ass. Break his neck. If you can redeem it, do so. If not, break its neck.

" And it shall he when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage: and it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the Lord slew all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both the first-born of man, and the first-born of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem. And it shall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes: for by strength of hand the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt " (vers. 14-16). Whatever I have is the Lord's, and if I cannot devote it I judge it, and this others can see. If your ways are changed that is manifestly seen by those round about you. Many young Christians lose a great deal of blessing because they do not take a decided, bold stand for Christ when they are converted. If you confess Christ, out and out, it will save you an immense amount of trouble. If you do not, you will escape persecution, but you will not have the support of the Lord, nor the comfort which the Holy Ghost would like to give you. You are not in a state to have it. By our cowardice we may save ourselves a good deal of what we do not like, but at the same time we rob ourselves of the triumphs and victories God would lead us to, were we faithful.

Let us now glance at a few verses in the New Testament. Every epistle speaks of the practical side of holiness. Look first at Rom. 6 What do I find? " In that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus " (vers.-10, 11). Everything is connected with Christ, and you are in Christ, alive from the dead; hence " Let not sin reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof" (ver. 12). Sin is no longer to govern you. Sin was the will of your old mind, and governed you while living, but being dead you escape from its mastery. " Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness " (ver. 18). You are doing the right thing now. All your members, your eye, your tongue, your voice, your ears, your hands, your feet, your mind and strength, all that marks you as a man here, are to be servants to righteousness, unto holiness. That is sanctification. Holiness and sanctification are the same word in Scripture. You begin to walk in a holy way. " For when ye were servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now, being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life " (vers. 20-22). That is practical holiness. And what is the end? Everlasting life. That is beautiful fruit. It is worth while going in for this.

Suppose we go to the first epistle to the Corinthians. We saw that this epistle is addressed to saints by calling. We are told in chapter 3:16, 17, that " the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." You are a holy people, and God dwells in you. If God dwell among His people, what must be the next thing? Everything that is unholy has to go, no doubt about that. And therefore when you come to the sixth chapter, 19th verse, we read: " What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body."

Pass on to the second epistle to the Corinthians (chap. 6:16, 17): "Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing: and I will receive you." If I touch an unclean thing, it will soil me. Is there any harm in this?

Well, it is not a question of the harm, but it is a question of what will suit the Lord. The point is, How can I walk here to please Christ? I will give you another question to put at the back of yours. What would Jesus do? Would Jesus do this? Oh, He would not. Then I do not think you and I can. Note now the blessed promise to the separate ones: " And I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (6:18). You will get the sense of it. He is my Father, and I am His child. " Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God " (7:1). That is the practical side of the subject. " Perfecting holiness " is really walking in the footsteps of Christ.

In the Galatians and Ephesians you have injunctions which lead to sanctification, but the word does not exactly occur in either of them. " If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25). That is part of the practical holiness of the Christian. " And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption " (Eph. 4:30). Holiness is the great mark of God's people, God's house, and God's Spirit. If you read the epistle to the Philippians you will find that it describes the man who is in the enjoyment of a most blessed, holy walk before God. In the epistle to the Colossians we get a most practical unfolding of the truth (chap. 3:12): " Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another." Fancy God addressing you as a holy person. Is it not remarkable that the Lord should address you and me as " holy and beloved." There is the thing in its practical outcome.

In the next epistle you have more about the practical use of the word sanctification than in any other. To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints " (1 Thess. 3:13). What is the meaning of that? That you might so walk here that there should be nothing the Lord would have to change but your body. Paul desired them to be in such a state as the Lord could set them in forever. Again: " This is the will of God, even your sanctification... that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor... For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness " (vers. 3-7). That is intensely practical, and the power for it is found in verse 8. There is the power for a holy walk. It is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Again: " Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ " (5:21-23).

Just one word as to the epistle to Hebrews. Very remarkable is the way in which they are addressed in chapter 3:1, " Wherefore, holy brethren," &c. Is that the way God addresses us? It is, and as a consequence the heart is at once checked. It is not what I practically am that is the point there, but what I am in Christ. The sense of this will act on the soul. How it pulls us up. Look also at chapter 12. That is a very remarkable piece of instruction: "Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed." If I do not make straight paths, I shall make a crooked path, for myself and some one else. Then, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Very simple, but nothing could be more plain or practical. I am to follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. Of course I believe this is true as a matter of communion, and if I am not walking in the enjoyment and love of the Lord, and in holiness, I am not very happy. Do you know the secret of happiness? Happiness always follows holiness. If you are going to be a happy Christian, you will have to be a holy one. That is it. You cannot have happiness if you do not go in for holiness.

Why should you be holy? 1 Peter 1:14-16 tells us, and further enjoins us not to be living like when we were in Egypt, " Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." That is very simple, beloved friends. When I come to his second epistle, he says to us: " What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness" (2 Peter 3:11).

The apostle John thus addresses us: " Beloved, now are we sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself; even as he is pure " (1 John 3:2, 3). He makes Christ's life, walk, and ways, the standard of our ways. That is practical sanctification. Similarly, I find in the Revelation that the blessed Lord, in giving encouragement to those in Philadelphia, says, " These things saith he that is holy, he that is true " (iii. 7). He says, Do not forget that I am the Holy and the true One. There is also what is very beautiful when we look into eternity in chapter 21, " And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God, out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband " (ver. 2). It was not a great city. Men like what is great. Babylon is called " that great city," but God looks for what is holy, and finds it in the Church. We get a blessed picture of eternal purity in that chapter.

And now, as though God would press holiness upon our souls, we read lastly in chapter 22:11, " He that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." Holiness is always to mark the saint, and if you will trace out the scriptures which thus present sanctification in its practical and progressive aspect-for we ought to be more holy today than yesterday-you will find that they will help your soul in this direction.

As Thine, Thou didst foreknow us

From all eternity;

Thy chosen, loved ones ever,

Kept present to Thine eye;

And when was come the moment,-

Thou, calling by Thy grace,

Didst gently, firmly draw us

Each from his hiding-place.

Thy Word, Thyself reflecting,

Doth sanctify by truth,

Still leading on Thy children

With gentle heavenly growth.

Thus still the work proceedeth,

The work begun by grace,

For each is meet, and training,

Father, to see Thy face.

From Egypt to Caanan, Sactification: Its Positional Aspect

(Ex. 13:1-22.)

The lessons from this chapter are exceedingly simple, but most important. They are these. The moment God has a redeemed people, He would have that people understand that redemption puts them on a totally new footing before Himself; and secondly, that their walk and conversation is to be very different to what it was before they were His. The second verse gives you the keynote of the chapter, " And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Sanctify unto me all the first-born, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine " (vers. 1, 2). The first point is that the believer is sanctified to God. Then you get, thereafter, practical instructions as to the walk. In plain language, if you are a young convert, there is a new walk, a new path altogether, opened up to you. God has saved you for heaven, but you are not there yet, although you can say, " I know perfectly well I am going there." You have a title to be there, it is the blood that secures and shelters you, only do not stop, but go steadily on the road. Because you know you are forgiven, you may think that means everything. It is not everything. It is only the beginning. You have to go on. And you have possibly to go a rough road before you get

into that of which Canaan is a type. You have a journey before you, and you will very surely have difficulties in it.

But the point is this, What is the character of the pathway to be, and how am I to get on in it? You separate them to me, says God (ver. 2). I shall then expect them to eat unleavened bread, i.e., to keep " a feast to the Lord " (ver. 6). That is the walk of holiness. They will then judge what will not do for God (ver. 13). The next thing was this: " God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt. But God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea " (vers. 17, 18). The Lord was their leader. And then the next thing, They took the bones of Joseph with them (ver. 19). They took the bones of their savior with them (see Gen. 41-50). It has a meaning, and you and I, as we are passing on through this scene, are never to forget the fact that we are delivered by the death of the Savior. That is where the Lord's Supper comes in. So they carried with them all through their wilderness journey the bones of Joseph, who had saved them in the day of famine.

At the close of the chapter we find, " 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 " (ver. 21). They had always the blessed sense of the presence of God. It is a figure, I admit. The glory of the Lord, the pillar of fire gave them light by night, and then, when everybody else was in the heat, they had the pillar of a cloud like a huge umbrella over them. Light by night, shade by day, and God for their guide. They were very well off. It is a picture of the way God leads out His people.

But I am going now- to speak a little more on the important subject of sanctification. What is sanctification? Holiness. The primary presentation of it is in the scripture before us. It has two sides -the absolute side, and the progressive side. There is the positional side, and the practical side. On the positional side you have the truth of the soul being set apart for God. And then there is the practical change, and holy progress in the walk of the saint. He first learns that he is set apart for God, and then learns to shape his ways accordingly. Where would you begin if you were thinking of the subject of sanctification? I know where I began. I began with myself. I thought, Dear me, what an immense amount of change and progress ought to go on inside me. But if I am going to talk of sanctification according to Scripture, I must begin with the positional aspect first, and hence I must begin with Christ. Oh, you say, do you think that the Lord Jesus can ever be altered? No, God forbid. Turn to Scripture and let us hear what it says.

When here upon earth the Lord said to the Jews, "Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God" (John 10:36). What a remarkable thing that the Father had sanctified Him. Could He ever be more holy than He was? God forbid the thought. It means simply this, the Father had set apart His blessed and only Son, and sent

Him into this world in order to bring God to man, to reveal God, and to make God known here. It was a totally new position for the Son of God to occupy. As become a man He is seen in this world. You find another aspect of sanctification in relation to Christ in John 17.

There the Lord says: " As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth " (vers. 18, 19). Where does He sanctify Himself. Where He now is. He has set Himself apart in heavenly glory, and, as Man, taken an entirely new position, that He might unite us to Himself there. Where is Christ? In glory. He is out of the world. And what, beloved friends, will take the heart out of the world? Only the knowledge of a heavenly Christ. Oh, yes. That will take your heart out of this world. It will make you a pilgrim.

If you have seen Christ, a victorious, ascended Christ, outside this scene altogether, everything is spoiled for you in this world. He sets Himself apart in heavenly glory that His people might be sanctified through the truth. The Christian is a person who has his heart in another sphere altogether, while his feet are traveling through this world. He is clean outside this world, although, as a saint, he will fulfill the duties of life infinitely better than before. The primary thought of sanctification then is separation, and a new place occupied. In John 10 I see the Lord Jesus taking a new place, as Man here, and in the seventeenth chapter I see Him again taking a new place as Man at the right hand of God, for Manhood has been carried into the very glory of God in the person of Christ. The result is you have a new place, and a new life, because He is there. You belong to a new company.

Now let us come to the development of this subject in the New Testament. In Saul of Tarsus I find the Lord picking up a very wonderful vessel for the unfolding -of His truth, and in the very hour of his conversion he gets his commission to the Gentiles-viz., " To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me" (Acts 26:18). That is what the gospel does. You cannot convert people, but God can do it by the gospel. The apostle Paul got his commission, and the character of his service to the Lord here, and if you are just starting in the Christian life, I would like you, and urge you, to be out and out for Christ. Then He will use you in His service, and it is happy work indeed to be an instrument in His hands of turning sinners " from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God," and leading them to " receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified."

But who are the sanctified? All who have received light from God. It will come if you are set for it, and all who get a glimmer of the light never rest till they know they are among the sanctified. The moment Israel got under the shelter of the blood they belonged to God. They were not then quite clear of Pharaoh's land, and before God saved them they were sanctified. Every Christian is sanctified before he is saved. You have thought that sanctification came at the end of the road.

Quite a mistake, it is at the commencement. The twelfth chapter of Exodus is shelter, the thirteenth sanctification, the fourteenth salvation, and the fifteenth satisfaction. Shelter comes the moment you trust Jesus. Sanctification is the next thing you learn, and the soul must learn the truth according to the steps in which God puts it. That is a step, I am trying, if I can, to help you to take just now. When you believe in Jesus, and have faith in His blood, you receive forgiveness of sins. That act of God is good forever. You never can lose it, and you never can forfeit it. It is the joy of God's heart to forgive you.

Long ago I thought that if lily sins were forgiven I should be the happiest person under the sun, and that that was everything, but there is deeper blessing still in possessing " an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." But you say, How can I be sanctified? That is the whole question, and the answer simple. The fact is that the two things go together, forgiveness and sanctification. The man that is forgiven is a sanctified man. He does not perhaps know it. But when he knows it, it will give his soul the most wonderful joy and peace before God. Oh, you say, I find my heart so bad, I am sometimes afraid I am not forgiven. Well, my dear friend, when the Lord forgave you, He knew how bad you were, and He forgave you all when He knew all about you. The knowledge of this last truth will save you from a

great deal of distress.

There is no such thought in Scripture as "sanctification by faith," as some speak of, i.e., an act of faith by which the saved soul suddenly becomes sanctified. The sanctification spoken of here the soul receives

the moment it has faith in Jesus. Faith in Him places you among the saints. Are you a saint? Oh, I should not like to take that place. Why? Well, of course, saints are very holy persons. That is indeed what they should be, but they are saints first. Who are the saints? All those who are sanctified by the effectual work of the Spirit of God in them, and the work of Christ for them. " Them which are sanctified," include all the Lord's people. Do not let Satan trouble you about your experiences, and raise the question as to when you are sanctified. If you trust the Lord Jesus, and are under the shelter of His blood, you are separated to God, and that means a great deal, for He regards you as His from that moment.

It is a wonderful thing to be separated to God, because, do you not see, when Pharaoh a little later comes out saying, that he is going to overtake those people, God replies that the people are His, and means to deliver them. " Sanctify unto me all the first-born, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and beast: it is mine," are His words. So, by-and-by, when " the enemy " said, " I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my Sword, my hand shall destroy them " (Ex. 15:9), God replied, " They are my people," and smiting His enemy and theirs at once, "the sea covered them, they sank as lead in the mighty waters." Thank God, with all my feebleness and badness, I belong to Him.

If you learn that you have been thus set apart for God, it will have a great effect upon your soul.

In thus speaking, I am thinking of the lambs of Christ's flock,-those who have just started. I wish the older ones would think a little about them. Suppose we were to try to help them-we old ones, I mean now. Go and give them what will help their souls. Not dry stuff,—advanced theological or ecclesiastical dogma—that they cannot swallow. Feed them on the milk of the Word. " Feed my lambs " is a sweet word of the Chief Shepherd, and to do so is lovely work. I want to get all you dear young people to see that you belong to the Lord, absolutely and irrevocably. You receive the forgiveness of your sins, and sanctification at the same tune. In plain language, beloved young convert, you are among the saints-you are one of them. Do not go about talking of what you feel. Faith, not feelings, regulates your position. Having faith, you are in the family of God, and have not only your sins forgiven, but you have an " inheritance among them that are sanctified." Wonderful words. How are we sanctified? By faith that is in Jesus.

The first thing for you to learn is, that you are set apart to God in all the value of the work of Christ, and on this ground He addresses you in Paul's letter to the Corinthians. That letter is addressed to you as well as to the Corinthians. It is " Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours" (1 Cor. 1:2). You have been set apart for God in Christ Jesus. Mark, it is not called to be saints, but " called saints," i.e., saints by calling. Oh, you say, then I shall have to walk very carefully. Yes, that will come presently. You will observe that all believers are looked upon as a sanctified company.

We belong to God in virtue of that which the Lord Jesus has done for us. " For of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption " (1 Cor. 1:30). He has set Himself apart before God now, and we are in Him. Who is my wisdom? Christ. Who my righteousness before God? Christ. Who is my sanctification? Christ, and He is my redemption also. If you have not a sanctification up to Christ's, you are not fit to belong to the family of God, but since He is your sanctification you possess what you need. You will have to learn this, that what you are is utterly valueless. You died with Christ, and all that you are, as a man in the flesh, disappears from God's eye. We are in Him. Will that do? I could not have anything better, and God will not let me have anything less, " That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord " (1 Cor. 1:31). Now you can boast in the Lord.

In the sixth chapter of 1St Corinthians you get the kind of people God sanctifies: " Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind. Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God " (1 Cor. 6:9-11). " And such were some of you." It does not say that they had all been this. But some of us are convicted. " And such were some of you: but ye are washed." Is not that nice, after getting/all this terrible list of sins? " But ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." You see, beloved friends, there are two sides to this positional aspect of the truth of sanctification. There is the work of the Lord Jesus Christ for us in death, and there is likewise the work of the Holy Ghost in our souls, and the order is striking here, viz., that sanctification precedes justification in the soul's history.

Now if you come to the epistle to the Colossians, you will not exactly find the word " sanctification," but you will find the thing expounded in the way the Spirit of God presents the actual state of the believing soul. " Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins " (Col. 1:12-14). So what is the truth? You and I can give thanks to God that we are fit to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. You will never be more fit for the inheritance of the saints in-light than you are at this moment. Your fitness is what the Lord Jesus is. He is your sanctification, and " giving thanks to the Father " is the outcome. Are you doing it? Does your soul go out in thanks to the Father for making you fit to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light? Fit for God. God is light. And you are fit for God. Not in yourself, of course, but through that which Christ is, and Christ has accomplished.

How is this brought about? We will look at the work of the Lord first of all. Turn to Heb. 2. You get the truth presented in rather a different way there. Yet it is very important. " But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee" (Heb. 2:9-12). God is bringing many sons to glory, and in order to it makes the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. That is Christ. " He that sanctifieth " is Jesus, and "they who are sanctified," all that are Christ's, and they are " all of one." He does not say what. No one word could describe it. But they are all of the same order -of one Father, one

character, one family. What a wonderful thing for the soul to get hold of. Of every believer in Jesus, is it true that they are " all of one."

Amazing grace! Get hold firmly of this, that you, as a believer in Jesus, form one of this sanctified company. Glorious truth, they " are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." I hope you would be ashamed to call him "Brother," even " Elder Brother." He is not ashamed to call us His brethren, but remember, He is our Lord. That is the point for us to take in. In chapter twentieth of John He said to Mary, " Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God " (ver. 17). She went and told them, and they all came together. Then came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, " Peace be unto you." Thomas was not there on the first Lord's Day, but when the brethren told him about the meeting afterward, he took good care to be there the next time, and when the Lord came in Thomas knew that it was Jesus, and he said, not " My Brother," but " My Lord and my God." That is it. Young convert, never forget that He is your Lord. He calls us His brethren by infinite grace, saying, " I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the congregation will I sing praise unto thee " (Psa. 22:22). He gives us His own place before God, and then leads the praises of the sanctified company.

You will find the basis and groundwork of all this in Heb. 10, where the atoning work of Christ is unfolded: " By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all " (ver. 10). What is it that sanctifies us? It is the death of the Lord. On the altar has been offered this blessed, holy, spotless Victim. All the credit, the value, and the blessedness of that which Christ was in His perfectly acceptable and infinite holiness Godward, that is all yours and mine. He took our place in death, and bore our judgment, thus we get His place in life and glory. Oh, what rest for the soul to see this. I have not to look at, or expect anything from myself any longer. " For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." So here I find that I am not only a sanctified person, but I am perfected. It is perfection as to the conscience before God. The conscience of the worshipper is to be the reflection of the value of the offering. If the offering be not perfect, the conscience of the worshipper will not be easy, and vice versa. The offering was not perfect in the Old Testament, God was not pleased, and the worshipper's conscience was not purged. What is meant by " perfect as pertaining to the conscience," is that the full light of God is on me, and it cannot find a spot. The offering has been so perfect that it has put every sin forever away from God's sight. This could not be till Jesus came, " For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins," but one great truth of the gospel now is, that the condition of the conscience of the worshipper is the reflection of the infinite value of the sacrifice.

The blood of Jesus has infinitely glorified God about sin, hence your conscience is to be absolutely purged by that blood. By His offering you are sanctified, and more than that, you are perfect as pertaining to the conscience. You will find three beautiful things in this tenth of Hebrew's: The will of God, the work of Christ, and the witness of the Holy Ghost. You have the Trinity active in our blessing. The will of God was to have us fit for his presence; Christ wrought the work of atonement for us on the cross, by which we are made fit; and the Holy Ghost came down to give us the witness that we are fit, saying, " And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (ver. 17). It is not only, beloved friend, that your sins are forgiven, but God says, My memory has been so affected by the blood of atonement, shed on Calvary's cross, that I have not only forgiven your sins, but I have forgotten them. If I offended you, you might forgive me, but you will never forget it. That is what man is. He does not forget. But look at this, when God wants to give your soul deep solid eternal peace, He says, " Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Ah, what solid rest does that give.

Then there is the other side of positional sanctification, which I shall just touch on for a moment. That is the work of the Spirit of God. Paul says, " But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you by our gospel " (2 Thess. 2:13). It is not sanctification by the blood, but sanctification of the Spirit. Now there we get the Spirit's work, the separation to God which the Spirit produces in the soul, and there is no doubt that the sanctification of the Spirit is a most important truth. In 1 Peter 1:2 you get a somewhat similar expression. There believers are declared to be " elect- according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." You have there the effective work of the Spirit of God, the deep, real, inward work of the Spirit. If it had not been for the touch of the Spirit of God, we could never have been blessed. What was the first effect when you were touched by-the Spirit? Was it happiness? No, the very reverse. See that man, convicted by the Spirit of his sins, he is very miserable. Never you mind, that man is sanctified, and next he will believe the truth. He goes to some preaching place, where he hears of the love of Jesus, and the death of Jesus, and that the blood of Jesus was shed for him, He exclaims, " Christ died for a poor wicked sinner like me." He believes the truth, and gets peace, and the knowledge of salvation. That is it, do you not see? He will very likely tell you that he was converted that night. But no, there had been a work of God going on in him for some time previously. That then is the work of the Spirit of God in us. We are brought to see ourselves. Then come the- exercises and agonies of the new birth. And now that soul begins to learn. He finds himself accepted in the Beloved, and he gets peace.

This may suffice on what I call the positional side of sanctification. God be praised for the grace that gives us this side of the truth, because it puts the soul clear in its relationship to God. Another night we will look at the practical side of the subject.

Eternal ages shall declare

The riches of Thy grace

To those who with Thy Son shall share

A son's eternal place.

Absent as yet, we rest in hope,Treading the desert path,

Waiting for Him who takes us upBeyond the power of death.

We joy in Thee, Thy holy love

Our endless portion is,

Like Thine own Son, with Him above,

In brightest heavenly bliss.

O Holy Father, keep us here

In that blest name of love,

Walking before Thee without fear

Till all be joy above.

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