Exodus - Commentaries by John Nelson Darby

Collected Writings of J.N. Darby: Apologetic 1, Name Jehovah, Elohim, El-Shaddai, The

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As regards God's saying, "But by my name Jehovah was I not known to them,"1 the meaning is as simple as possible. The words are-"And Elohim spake unto Moses" (in the previous verses it is "Jehovah," showing how unfounded is the supposition of their belonging to distinct documents), "and said unto him, I am Jehovah: and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty; but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them." Now here we have Elohim, Jehovah, El-Shaddai, all spoken of the one supreme God as different names; and then the Lord declares, exactly according to Genesis, that to the patriarchs He had revealed Himself as El-Shaddai. (See Gen. 17; 35:11.) This was the name the power of which He was specially to make good in their favor, in protecting them in their wanderings, "what time they went from one nation to another people."

Now that He was calling His people, He reveals Himself to them by another name, as the ground of relationship and of the expectation of faith on their part, as the existing One "who was, and is, and is to come," though still the Almighty. He who now promised would live ever to perform, unchanged and unchangeable. Jehovah was God's proper and peculiar name with His redeemed people. He had never taken this name as the ground of His dealings with Abraham, nor laid it as the basis on which his faith was to act.

In the New Testament, God takes yet another-that of Father. Hence He says, "I will be a Father, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." That is, God (Elohim), who had the two former names, Jehovah or "Lord," and Shaddai, "Almighty," now took this special one of Father with the saints. From the first calling out of the world to be separate from it, God Almighty, Jehovah, Father, characterized successively the position which God assumed for faith. Nothing can be plainer. I believe He is now God Almighty; but it is not the name by which He is known to me: He is known to me by the name of Father. "To us there is one God, the Father." If this be all German discoveries are worth, they deserve to be designated by a name which I shall not, however, permit myself to give them. I am sure they are not distinguished by any intelligence of the bearing of the work they are exercising their wits upon, nor the force of the expressions contained in it.

Notes and Comments 1, Exodus 40

9. As regards the facts of the Old Testament, of the holy places and vessels, they are these. When the tabernacle was set up, all was anointed. The altar of burnt-offering was daily sprinkled with blood, when Aaron and his sons were consecrated; see chapter 29: 36. Blood was put upon the mercy-seat the day of atonement, but this was not to cleanse it, but it was also put on the altar of incense. But an atonement was made—a ka-phar—for the Holy Place by the former, and for the altar of incense, i.e., the places of approach, by the latter—there is nothing said of candlestick or shewbread—it is the place of priests (saints) approaching. The place without, and altar, was for sinners to come to God by—there God must act in His ways to bring them to Himself; that was another thing.

15. Note in this sanctifying no blood is used as to any, or anything—it is the sanctifying in itself.

35. Yet he was in the cloud on the top of Sinai. How the relationship with God is of His own grace and way!

Letters 3, Self; Setting Up to Be a Testimony

A question was communicated to me by ' What would be sufficient to deprive the assembly of the testimony of God?' Now the question is, to my mind, a profound mistake—that the testimony they bear is the governing object of the mind of saints. It is no new thought to me, but what I have insisted on, I know not how long (some thirty or forty years), that wherever an assembly, or the assembly, are such to bear a testimony, they will be a testimony to their own weakness and inefficiency; because the object of their walk cannot be one which efficiently forms a Christian. When they have a right one, they will be a testimony; but to be one is never the first object. To have Christ, I mean practically to walk with Him and after Him, to have communion with the Father and the Son, to walk in unfeigned obedience and lowliness, to live in realized dependence on Christ and have His secret with us, and realize the Father's love, to have our affections set on things above, to walk in patience and yet confidence through this world—this is what we have to seek; and if we realize it we shall be a testimony, whether individually or collectively, but in possessing the things themselves, and they form us through grace, so that we are one: but seeking or setting up to be it does not. Moses did not seek to have his face shine, nor even know when it did, but when he had been with God it did so.

Wherever Christians, so far as I have seen, set up to be a testimony, they get full of themselves, and lose the sense that they are so, and fancy it is having much of Christ. A shining face never sees itself. The true heart is occupied with Christ, and in a certain sense and measure self is gone. The right thought is not to think of self at all, save as we have to judge it. You cannot think of being a testimony save of your being so, and that is thinking of self—and, as I have said before, it is what I have always seen to be the case.

Yours sincerely in the Lord.

[Date uncertain.]

Miscellaneous 5, Vail on Moses' Face, The

THE excellency of the ministry of the gospel consists in its simplicity. The main difficulty, both for the servant of the gospel and the hearers, lies in keeping this simplicity in view, for the ministry is generally looked upon as capable to be served only by the learned, and Christianity is for most but a tradition. " Seeing, then," says the apostle, " that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech." The excellency of the ministry consists on the one hand in the truth which it presents, and on the other in the saving grace of God which can meet the sinner, who had nothing to expect but His righteous judgment. As to the true condition of man in the presence of God, every distinction disappears before this truth : " There is no difference : for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:22, 23.) Once this truth is established there is no hindrance to the presentation of the word of the ministry in its power and adaptability to the lost sinner. That there is no difference in the light of the glory of God must be accepted by every servant of the new covenant. To deny the lost and ruined condition of man is, in fact, to make the death of Christ of none effect, and to rob the ministry of the new covenant of all its excellency, bringing it down to a mere system of morals. It may be allowed to be better than other systems, still it would be but one of the many resources for the moral development of man, not the sole " power of God unto salvation."

It is, therefore, of all importance to have a clear conception of the gospel. It may make it more difficult to use great plainness of speech, but not more so than in the time of Paul. He had succeeded when he had put on the same platform the pious Jew and the idolatrous Gentile, the learned Greek with the uneducated Scythian. In the present day it is just as difficult to convince Christians by birth that they must perish in their sins if they do not give up traditional Christendom for Christ, as it was for Paul to convince the Jews that they were no better than the Gentiles.

" And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished." Tile apostle contrasts the simplicity and boldness of his ministry -both as regards the hopeless ruin of man and the abounding grace of God-with the dimness in which both these points were seen through the vail of Moses. This dimness had its necessary place for that time. Although God had made known His ways to Moses personally and shown him the mystery of His grace, the public ministry of Moses was that of law and not of grace. " For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John 1:17.)

The people had thoughtlessly entered into a covenant with God when they said, " All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." (Ex. 19:8.) "But when the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear : but let not God speak with us, lest we die." (Ex. 20:18, 19.) There was terror, but no dimness ; Moses had no covering over his face when he descended from the mountain after his first stay of forty days. (Ex. 32) The sins of the people caused him to come down. " And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand : the tables were written on both their sides . . . and the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables." (Ex. 32:15, 16.) Here was the covenant in the hands of the mediator ; all was plain and concise. " And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing : and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount." (Ex. 32:19.) This action was full of meaning : the people had broken the covenant, and the mediator of the covenant bore testimony to it, and judgment follows. No vail was necessary on that occasion ; the mediator had testified that the covenant was broken.

Afterwards he intercedes for the people, and Jehovah proposes to send an angel to bring them into the land Canaan which He had promised them. (Ex. 32:30, 34, and xxxiii. 1-3.) But this could not satisfy the heart of Moses ; he is troubled, and asks Jehovah to show him His way and Himself to go with them. " If Thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and Thy people have found grace in Thy sight ? Is it not in that Thou goest with us ? So shall we be separated, I and Thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth. And Jehovah said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken ; for thou hast found favour in My sight, and I know thee by name." Moses encouraged, and anticipating the word of Him to whom he testified-unto him that hath shall be given -continues his intercession and says, " I beseech thee, show me Thy glory." (Ex. 33:15-18.) Moses had seen the glory of God in a wonderful way when the law was given, but in the tent of the congregation erected outside the camp Jehovah had spoken with Moses face to face, " as a man speaketh unto his friend " (Ex. 33:11), and he now seeks a more excellent glory than that of the law. For behind the law-the end of the law-a way of God and a glory of God remained, and the glory of the law served only to prepare and introduce these. It was that glory which Moses had to hide, because the time of its manifestation according to the counsels of God had not yet come.

This glory revealed to Moses is in reality the glory of God in the face (i.e. in the person) of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. 4:6.) It was thus proclaimed : " I will make all My goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of Jehovah before thee-; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy." (Ex. 33:19.) The sovereignty of God in grace is an essential part of His glory. Israel had destroyed itself, and their only resource remained in Jehovah Himself. (Hos. 13:9.) When all is lost, then is the time for grace to show itself, but the glory of this grace must be seen from a suitable standpoint.

Moses was to be put in the clift of the rock that he might see the glory. For this purpose Moses, after he had hewn two tables of stone like the first two which were broken, ascends the mount Sinai a second time. " And Jehovah descended in the cloud, dud stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of Jehovah." (Ex. 34:5.) After having passed forty days and forty nights upon the mount (Deut. 10:10), Moses descended from the mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in his hand, and he knew not "that the skin of his face shone while he talked with God." (Ex. 34:28, 29.)

There is a transforming power inherent in grace. Forty days of intimate intercourse with God had exerted a wonderful influence upon Moses. On the one hand he had learnt, through the experience of his own heart, the blessing of the grace with which he had communed ; on the other he remained perfectly unconscious of the visible result which was the outcome of this intercourse. Blessed are we if we know the secret of communion with divine grace. The heart is refreshed, while the believer is kept in an humble path wondering that anyone should look at him. In fact, we may be sure that we shall never be used in the service of God till we have come to count ourselves as nothing. When God makes our face to shine for others we ought to be the very last to know it.

The people fear the glory in the face of Moses more than the two tables in his hands. Such is man ! He is quite ready to promise obedience to the law for his whole life, but the nearer God seeks to approach man in grace, the further he draws back.

Distance from God is the natural element of man, and gladly does he remain at this distance, even when it is proclaimed that the cross has removed all hindrances, so that a sinner may approach God. Jehovah bore with a people which was under the curse of a broken law, and Moses had thus learned the way of Jehovah. But it was just this glory which he was obliged to vail, " because the children of Israel could not stedfastly look on the end of that which is abolished." (2 Cor. 3:13.) For Moses the question of human righteousness on the principle of law was settled. He could look on the end, " for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth." (Born. x. 4.) But the majority in Israel could not look beyond the law, but sought for righteousness through it, while all the time they were under the curse. " For His own sake," not on account of their righteousness, God did bring Israel temporarily into the land, but as regards individual dealings He acted as He said to Moses, " I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious." Everyone, therefore, who was quickened by His grace could, according to this principle, look beyond the law and see the glory in the face of Moses.

As long as the vail remained on the face of Moses grace was necessarily hidden. But now, says the apostle, no darkness exists. The ministry is the ministry of the glad tidings of the grace of God (Eph. 3:2 ; Acts 20:24), the glad tidings of the " glory of Christ, who is the image of God " (2 Cor. 4:4), the glad tidings of the blessed God. (1 Tim. 1:11.) It reveals fully the glory of this grace whose rays illuminated the face of Moses, and the tables of the law in his hand could not dim it. " Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John 1:17.)

Is the proclamation of the "gospel of the grace of God " characterised in our day by this great " plainness bf speech " as it was with Paul ?

Is not rather the modern preaching of the gospel to be compared to Moses with the two tables of the law in his hand and with the vail hiding the glory of the grace on his face ?

The present time resembles much that of the apostles as regards the acceptance of the testimony of God's free grace. Paul, writing to the faithful of the nations, speaks of the vail on Moses' face. Legal righteousness, ceremonial holiness, philosophical wisdom form equally great hindrances to the acceptance and understanding of the grace of Cod. Modern Christendom in its main characteristics makes the vain attempt to unite the principles of law and grace. The upshot is a conventional righteousness, for grace and formality result only in obedience to traditions and commandments of men and in self-willed ministry, just as grace and wisdom result in philosophy and vain deceit. (Compare Gal. 5 and Col. 2) All these are but reproductions of Moses with the two tables of the law in his hand and the vail on his face. This is manifest in a remarkable way when we think what importance is given to the tables of the law in the chief religious systems. The doctrine of grace may be expressed with much clearness and conciseness in so-called articles of faith, and may be preached with full understanding from the pulpits. But all this clearness of exposition is much darkened through a ritual which establishes legal righteousness and ascribes a certain efficacy to sacraments. There are many true servants of God who proclaim solemnly that man must be born again to see or enter into the kingdom of God, and who testify to the cross of Christ as the sole power of salvation for sinners. Yet when they minister the sacraments they are like Moses with the vail on his face, and the precious grace which they had preached with great joy and to the edification of many must be kept in the background.

May the Lord give grace to all His servants who labour in the ministry, that they may always be and remain in the position where they may be able to use great plainness of speech.

Letters 3, Druids; Man and the World, The

Dearest -, -,

There is no doubt, I believe, of the emigration of a large part at least of the north and west emigrating from the east. The Cushites, Goths, Scyths, are all the same name and people. The Druidical religion is undoubtedly Persian, and the Druids have been traced across the north of Germany to England. The north of India was one great settlement of this race. They were called there Indo-Scyths, and settled in High Thibet and the Himalayas. You are aware of Epiphanius's division of the progressive corruption of barbaric (quære Patriarchal) religion into Scythism and Ionism, as some say original Buddhism and Brahminism in India, an Parseeism (Sabaism) and Hellenistic, Egyptian, Babylonian idolatry in the west. How old are the divisions of man, how little his history! Still Druidism partook too much of the elements of original Grecian or Babylonian idolatry to make this quite clear....

I apprehend as to seething a kid in its mother's milk, that one of the characters of idolatry, of Satan's power, is to destroy the order, affections and comeliness which God has established in nature. Christianity raises above it, but respects it all. He degrades in every way by what is unnatural. The way this was done in idolatry is remarkable, and diligently and horribly. This was an example as to tender and kindly affections. If you are at all acquainted with the horrors of idolatry—a profitless learning, I am sure, morally—or even remarking what scripture refers to briefly, but perfectly, you cannot but see how true this is. All this the law forbade.

As to 2 Peter 3:10, 12, I apprehend it means but the materials of which the crust of the globe is composed. It will be melted down by fire (as it was once inundated by waters) to form a new earth, atmospheric heaven, etc.

I had seen the Annotator, but did not feel much attracted by the company and olla podrida character it had, though writing in it crossed me. Quiet service I like better if I can.

In haste, ever affectionately yours.

Collected Writings of J.N. Darby: Apologetic 1, Double Promise of a Guardian Angel

The statement (Phases, p. 134) that "there is a double promise of a guardian angel" can have weight only with those who do not give themselves the trouble to read the passages. In Ex. 23 the Lord says, "Behold, I send an Angel before thee to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him and obey his voice; provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him." God goes before them by angelic power, by what He calls (ver. 23) "mine Angel." That is, an

intervention of God in that way which was really Himself, only in the way of angelic power. Thus Jacob says (Gen. 48), "God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads." So where God, as I AM, manifested Himself in a flame of fire in the bush, He is called "the Angel" in the bush. Where Jacob declares at Peniel (i.e., the face of God) that he had seen God face to face, and lived, Hosea says "he had power over the angel and prevailed." So in the case of Manoah it is said "the angel of Jehovah did wondrously," and Manoah says "we have seen God," and the words are received as Jehovah's, telling them such and such things. He is called all through the passage the Angel Jehovah, as many translate it. Subsequently to what is spoken of in Ex. 23 Israel made the golden calf, and the Lord would have refused to go with them, as, if present, He must consume them, and declared He would send an angel with Moses. Moses intercedes, and the Lord says His presence shall go with him. To make of this general promise and the special dealing in reference to their guilt and God's prolonged mercy a double promise, is mere trifling.

Collected Writings of J.N. Darby: Evangelic 2, Blessed Through Faith

Galatians 3

IN speaking of redemption there are always two questions to be considered: firstly, the great truth of the work of Christ on the cross; and secondly, the application of His work to us. The last is principally that in which Christians go astray. It is the manner of availing ourselves of the blessing that is denied. The Galatians did not deny Christ; they were Christians, but they were mixing up the law with the gospel and connecting ordinances with works, which two always come together. When the heart is not satisfied with works, then it ekes out matters by ordinances. But ordinances cannot give peace to the conscience. God will not let you mix them with Christ. The apostle here shows the real ground of peace. Promise is contrasted with law. " Received ye the Spirit by the law or by faith? " (v. 2). The promised One is come: and the work being accomplished, the Spirit is given as the consequence.

Man is so attached to his good opinion of himself, that God had, as it were, to say, Well if you will have a law, here is Mine for you. They ought to have cried, Oh! we cannot keep the law, we are sinners, ruined; instead of this they presumptuously answered, " All that Jehovah hath spoken we will do."

What could such self-confidence end in but death? On the other hand, we Christians are not under law; nor are we under promise but under the effect of the accomplishment of the promise. He begins with the effect (v. 2): " Received ye the Spirit," etc. We are under the effect of redemption, namely sin put away by Christ's sacrifice, and the Holy Ghost present as power for walk, etc. Did we get it by the law or by faith?

Verse 3. " Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? " Whenever the law is brought in, so is the flesh also. I never put myself in any way under the law without being condemned and lost, beyond all help; whereas God must have perfect obedience and nothing less. " The soul that sinneth, it shall die." If we get off this ground, it would be God accommodating Himself to sinners and allowing sin. When we start upon the ground of man's responsibility to God, we always fail. The Galatians professed to have found redemption by Christ. Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth crucified before their eyes (v. 1). Again, had " they suffered many things in vain? " (v. 4). Was it all a mistake? When had they this power? It was in the Spirit. The law never pretended to give power. " He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to Him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham " (v. 5-9). When he turns to the ground of faith, then we find the promise, " In thee shall all nations be blessed."

Here are thus two great principles in contrast. If it is a promise, what I have to do is to believe it. It is another who accomplished it. God undertakes this, and He accomplishes it by Christ. It is all on God's side. This is the difference between promise and the law. " Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And so if I believe God, and it is counted to me for righteousness: " So then they that be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." It is not as many as do bad works, but " as many as are on the ground of law-works." The law is good, but we are bad; and hence all is ruin on that ground; for it is written, " Cursed is every one that continueth not," etc. I cannot keep it so as to be saved.

According to Deut. 27:1-10, they were to write, upon the stones with which they built the altar, all the words of the law on mount Ebal, where was the law; the letter was not on mount Gerizim, where half of the tribes were to bless (v. 12). But there was nothing there-the letter was only on the mount of cursing. In chapter 28 is both blessing and cursing, but these have nothing to do with Gerizim; they are the blessing and cursing of God's government, as regards their daily walk. We may come under chastisement in our daily walk. It is in vain to mix yourself up as the accomplisher of the law with God as the accomplisher of the promise. If your soul rests upon what God is in Christ and nothing else, you get the blessing. If you choose to stand on what you do yourself, how can you escape the curse?

Verse 13. " Christ hath redeemed us," etc. Then comes the accomplishment of the promise. Man was either, like the Gentile, lawless, or like the Jew, under the curse of the law. What is required by the bondmen of sin and Satan is redemption. The way God gives us blessing is, not by enfeebling the law, but by Christ's enduring the judgment of guilt for us. The curse that we deserved, another has borne! I do not fly to a promise for peace to my soul. Peace is the accomplished result of Christ's work (Col. 1), and, if you will, of the promise. Christ has been made a curse for me, and I am redeemed entirely from the curse of the law. The curse is utterly taken away. We ought to be astonished at such grace!-laid in the dust, as regards ourselves, but in perfect peace with God. The curse is altogether put away and gone; for Christ has borne sin and death. Then what remains? The blessing of faith as to all that results from His work. We are not merely born anew by the Spirit; but we have received the Spirit as the seal of the curse being gone-of redemption accomplished.

In verse 17 he speaks of God's way of dealing, in order to show how sure it is. " To Abraham and his seed were the promises made." In Gen. 12:2, 3, the promise is made to Abraham-nothing about the seed. "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." In Gen. 22 There comes a figure of the seed in Isaac. In verses 16 and 17 it is said, "Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son [a type of Christ], I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven," etc. These are the " seeds as of many." "Thy seed shall possess the

gate of his enemies." In verse 18, on the other hand, nothing is said of a numerous seed. "And in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed." Here it is in one Seed, Christ. In chapter 15 is another set of promises, but the promise is to Abraham in himself But after Isaac had been offered, we have the seed [Christ] without any conditions at all.

This promise, confirmed of God in Christ four hundred and thirty years before the law came in, the law cannot disannul or make of none effect. The law being come, God could not bring in the promise till the curse was put away. Christ was born under the law, as a living man. The promise of God is in a Christ who had to die. But He is risen, the curse being borne. Then wherefore serves the law? (v. 19). To bring out transgressions, to convict of sin, to prove man a sinner, a self-righteous good-for-nothing sinner. The effect was to bring out the sin that was already in the heart. " Transgression " is a different thing from " sin," which is really said in John 3:4 to be, not transgression of the law, but lawlessness. If I have a son who is idle and runs about the street, it certainly is a bad habit; but if he refuses or neglects to do what I bid him, this is positive transgression. It is not only lawlessness, but transgression of law.

Thus then the promise came first, next the law, and then the accomplishment of the promise. The law was in the hand of a mediator, till the seed should come, to whom the promise was made (v. 20). Again, a promise does not want a mediator; for it is all on one side. " Now a mediator is not a mediator of one; but God is one," who is the accomplisher of the promise. In Ex. 19 God says, " If you obey my voice... I will bless you." The mediator comes with this statement from God, and God says, If you do all this, I will bless you. Israel says, " All that Jehovah hath spoken, we will do." Here is a promise of our God, conditional on something being fulfilled by man. The result is a total failure; because man has been brought in, engaging to do something which he is sure not to accomplish. The moment there is the legal mediator, man is engaged in a condition and has no possibility of fulfilling it. But (v. 21) the law is not contrary to the promise. The truth is that man was in a condition in which he could not earn the promises, because he could not keep the law. God proposes law and man breaks it. God accomplishes by Christ not merely the law but redemption, so that the original promise of blessing flows out to the Gentiles by faith, who had nothing to do with the law.

After faith is come, even the believing Jews are no longer under the law. We have put on Christ. We are not before God as sinners in our sins. He only thinks of us as in Christ. He does not see it in us, because it is put away; but we see it, hate it, judge it, though we know it has been judged in Christ. He puts the saints in the place of promise in this way. They are in Christ, and therefore they are the seed of Abraham (v. 29). All the promises find their center in Christ Himself. The moment I am in Christ, all the promises of God are mine too, and I am come into the full blessing of all the promises of God. " If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

If I put myself practically under the law, my conscience gets tortured. The more spiritual I am to discern its holiness, the more miserable I become. One proof that a soul is converted is when he feels and says God ought never to give up His holiness, even if he is destroyed by it. It is nothing but pride for a sinful man to go about to establish his own righteousness. Can a bad tree bring forth good fruit? This unbelief hinders the soul from resting on the accomplishment of the promise. If the curse had not been borne, it would have been upon you; but it has been borne, and there is no curse to the believer. Such is your position, because you have put on Christ. If you attempt to mix anything of your own with Christ, you will always be unhappy; besides, it is unholy to think of it, because it is not acknowledging that in "your flesh dwelleth no good thing." We are not our own at all; we are bought with a price. Whenever a man thinks he has a right to do anything of his own will, he is robbing God. We should render to Him our bodies; it is our reasonable service.

After promise the law was added, and this was, till the Seed, Christ, came. This is very important indeed for us to be settled in. We never shall have solid settled peace till the whole man is plowed up and searched out, and we get clearly to see that we have no strength in us. Then we are cast over on accomplished righteousness in Christ, on nothing less than God's own Son made sin for us. To know this puts me down in the dust; but it gives me unchangeable peace. And what then is the claim of Christ on us? We ought to realize that we are given up to Him, body, soul, and spirit, even as we are purchased by His blood.

Collected Writings of J.N. Darby: Apologetic 1, Two Fold Miracle of the Quails

The twofold miracle of the quails1 is, in each case, perfectly in its place, and distinctly dated, and has its own proper moral character. Mr. N. is pleased to say, one shows unacquaintedness with the other. This kind of assertion is very worthy of the boldness of an infidel, but of no one else. An attack upon such a history as the scripture, taken second-hand from flippant German assertions (for such, I must say, they are), without really investigating the grounds of them, does not, I confess, shine, morally speaking, to my eyes. God has permitted, though they have done the best they can, that they should find difficulties (and they are obliged to rest in what is apparent-beneath the surface the conscience would be set at work); as to which the answer is certain and complete in the text (proving that they are superficial, and have not given themselves the trouble to examine the book they judge.) The dates of these two sendings of quails can be accurately ascertained, almost to a day. The only reason Mr. N. has for saying, that one shows un-acquaintance with the other, is that the circumstances of one are different from the other, proving they are not the same.

Quails were given before the giving of the law (Ex. 16), immediately after leaving Elim, on the fifteenth day of the second month after leaving Egypt. They stayed a year at Sinai, for the giving of the law, and constructing the tabernacle, &c. "And it came to pass on the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up... and the cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran" (Numbers 10:11) after three days' journey. (See ver. 33.) Then came the complaints, the judgment on which gave the name "Taberah" to the place; and immediately after, they stopped and pitched their tents at a place called, from the judgment that fell on them, Kibroth-hattaavah, "the graves of lust." This was their first station after leaving Sinai. We have thus clearly ascertained that a year and eight days, and possibly one or two more, elapsed from one of these events to the other. Their moral character is perfectly in keeping with the epoch at which they happened. If the reader examines the history, he will find that, from the Red Sea to Sinai, all is pure grace. They murmur-and it is said, they shall see the Lord's glory; and they get manna and quails without a reproach. They murmur-the rock is smitten, and they get water without a reproof. Conflict arises-they are made to feel their dependence; but the blessing is maintained, and the Lord is their banner- their conflicts are His.

At Sinai they undertake to obey, and to receive the blessing under the condition of their own obedience. They put themselves under law-fruit of that pride of heart which pretends to be able to satisfy God's requirements, and hence is willing to make its blessing depend on its own powers.

The proof is soon given of what the result must be. Before the law is brought down written, they have cast off God altogether. It is broken by them, and Moses breaks the tables.

Mediation comes in; so that they are yet borne with, put again under law, only that they are governed by patient goodness; and chastening and judicial government comes in-a principle which characterized their history up to the Babylonish captivity. Hence when they murmur again, despising the gracious provision of manna (of which the description is thereon again incidentally given2), and insist on meat, and persevere in eating it (though divine power, which they doubted, was shown in sending it, so that they ought to have been ashamed of their request), while thus gratifying their lust without shame, wrath comes upon them. That is, we see in the most distinct way, the difference of that grace shown in redemption and exercised towards the redeemed in their need, and the effects of proudly putting oneself under law, and finding, not the fruit of obedience, but the just consequence of those lusts which hinder our walking according to it.

Nothing can be more deeply instructive than the double giving of quails. Neither, without the other, would have given the instruction which the different events afford.

Collected Writings of J.N. Darby: Evangelic 1, Passage of the Red Sea, The

Heb. 11:23-29

WE have in these verses a little picture drawn by the Spirit of God, of the ways of God in bringing up His people out of Egypt, by the hand of Moses. And we may say it is just a picture of the deliverance of the church from the power of Satan, of the salvation of God and the means by which it is brought about.

Verse 23: God had taken the tenderest care of Moses in his infancy. So in the days of our natural estate, God's care has been over us in a thousand ways.

Verses 24-26: A word here as to guidance through the providence of God. Many cling to providences, as though they were to be the guide for faith. Nothing could be more remarkable providence than that which placed Moses in the court of Pharaoh, but it was not the guide for the faith of Moses. Brought up as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, mighty in words and in deeds-there providence had placed him. If ever there was a remarkable providence, it was the case of Moses. After having been hid three months of his parents, till they could hide him no longer, he is put in an ark of bulrushes among the flags by the river's bank. Thus exposed and crying, the babe attracts the attention of Pharaoh's daughter, who with her maidens is brought down to the place just at the moment. She has compassion on him, listens to the suggestion of the young woman his sister, gives him in charge to his own mother to be nursed for her; and he becomes her son. The first thing he does, when come to years, is to give it all up. Had Moses reasoned, his reasoning might have had great scope of argument; he might have said, God's providence has placed me here; I can use all this influence for God's people, and the like. But he never thought of such a thing. His place was with God's people. He did not act for God's people merely; he did not patronize God's people; his place was with and amongst God's people. God's providence had given him a position which he might relinquish; but it was no guide for conscience. There may be the most plausible reasoning about the thing; but when the " eye is single," the " whole body will be full of light." Moses saw in his brethren (though a feeble people) " the people of God," and he identified them as such with the glory of God. This is what faith always does. They may be in a feeble and failing position, or they may be in a blessed position; that is not the question: faith identifies the people of God with the glory of God, and acts accordingly.

The children of Israel were in a very bad condition: still they were " the people of God "; and the first thing recorded of the faith of Moses is, that he took his place amongst the afflicted people of God. If reproach was on them, it was " the reproach of Christ "; and he " esteemed it greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." He reckoned with God, and this kept his soul clear of every other influence. He looked right on: " Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee," etc. The light cannot shine down along another path.

Verse 27: Faith had brought Moses into a straight line with " the recompense of the reward "; and when in that path, faith enabled him to identify himself with God, to look up to God as his power. At once came " the wrath of the king." But the same faith that saw glory for him at the end of the path saw God for him all through the path. This is the secret of real strength. What unbelief does is to compare ourselves and our own strength with circumstances. What faith does is to compare God with circumstances. Take the case of the spies; Num. 13; 14 They said, " all the people of the land are men of a great stature; and we saw the giants there, the sons of Anak, that come of the giants; and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight." If the Israelites compared their stature with that of the Anakims, they had no business there. What said Caleb and Joshua? They stilled the people, saying, "They are as bread for us: their defense is departed from them, and the Lord is with us: fear them not." That is, they compared these sons of Anak with God; what matter then whether they were giants or grasshoppers? They spoke the language of faith. It was no reasoning about circumstances; it was just simply saying, Greater is He that is for us than all that can be against us. God was there. That is what makes the path of faith so simple. How did David reason? He did not go and reason about the height of Goliath and about his own smallness of stature; he brought God in. There is an " uncircumcised " man, he said, defying " the armies of the living God "-right, and very good reasoning!

When the glory set before us leads in the way of the promises, and we take our place with the despised and afflicted people of God, the world will not like it, and the " wrath of the king " will be the consequence. Now this is always a thing feared and trembled before, until God becomes clearly known by the soul as a God for it. When Pharaoh pursued after the children of Israel (Ex. 14) with all his chariots and his horsemen and his army (he had let them go from serving him, but there was no change of heart towards them), the Lord allowed the people to be shut in between the pursuit of Pharaoh (the power of evil) and the Red Sea. They were quite shut in; and then he says, " Fear not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord," etc.

But if God is coming to deal with sinners, He must deal with them as what He is-a holy God. Let them be Israelites or let them be Egyptians, He must deal with them as what He is. The judgment of God against sin must be met. God's purpose was to save Israel, and in doing this He was about to judge Egypt: But then, He says, if I come to deal in judgment with the Egyptians; if I come to deliver my people; I must come such as I am; and I must therefore raise the question of sin. And it is always so. When God deals with the heart, if there is a question between

it and Satan's power (and when the soul is freshly awakened, the miserable consciousness of Satan's power, the slavery of Satan's service, will often have more real power in producing exercise of heart than all the fear of the consequences of sin), that is not the first question. God never begins there: He does deliver from it; but He never begins there. He begins by raising a question between Himself and the sinner.

The children of Israel had fallen into idolatry. They were worse than the Egyptians; they had the promises of God (Genesis is), and were worshipping the idols of Egypt. But they felt not their sin against God. They groaned under their taskmasters, and sighed by reason of their bondage. Well, in all the tender commiseration of His having seen the affliction of His people and His being love, God came down and spake to Moses as to about to deliver them. But if judgment against sin was coming in, Israel must be secured from that judgment, or it would fall on them as surely as it did on the Egyptians. The question was riot whether Israel could stand in the presence of Pharaoh, but whether Israel could stand in the presence of God.

Verse 28: God told them (see Ex. 12) to take of the blood of the paschal lamb, and strike it on the two side-posts and on the door-posts of the houses wherein they dwelt. " For," said He, " I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast... and the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt." The destroying angel passed through the land. In the darkness and dead of night he did his work. He knew no difference between the houses of the Israelites and those of the Egyptians, unless marked with the blood. Over such a house he passed; he saw the blood on the lintel and on the door-posts, he looked no further-he entered not into the house.

All God's dealings with sinners must be upon the ground of His holy judgment of sin. But then, in the case of salvation He awakens the soul to the sense of this; He says, Judgment is coming in, and there is the consequence of it. And then He puts upon the lintel and the door-posts the blood. Before God sets us out on the journey He makes it evident that He has settled the question of sin; that the demands of His justice have been perfectly met. God will not go on with us until the question between Himself and us is settled. He may deal with us in grace, but He does not set out with us on the journey until that is done which entirely satisfies His moral being. Before Israel began their journey God had passed through the land, and over them, in judgment. They had feasted in the happiest confidence under the protection of the blood of the lamb.

Before we commence the walk of faith, the question of God's judgment of sin must be a settled question. All that which is properly speaking Christian life, the path of experience, the life of faith, is based on God's having passed over us. He cannot pass over sin. What He does (working faith in us by His Spirit) is, He shows us the blood. Having awakened us to the consciousness of sin, before we are even beginning the journey of faith, He teaches us that He has settled the question about it once and forever. " Your sins and iniquities I will remember no more." Then He becomes a God for us by the way. Faith sees and apprehends (not that there is no sin, no judgment, but) that by God's own work and word the question between itself and God is a settled question. Blood has been put between the soul and God-the blood of God's own Son. Never was there such a judgment of sin. I may see myself to be the vilest of sinners, but I see that which has perfectly met the demands of God's justice. " The blood shall be to you for a token," etc.

But then the soul has been accustomed to be a slave. After the children of Israel had seen the blood upon the door-posts, we find them trembling before the power of Pharaoh. They were on the road, but they were not out of Egypt. They were still in Pharaoh's territory. They had the knowledge of deliverance from the judgment of God that had fallen upon the firstborn (of the blood of the lamb as having met and sheltered them from that), yet they were still in conflict with Pharaoh. At the appointed time they set out on their journey. Leaving the world, they forsake Egypt, the place where they had been slaves; and Pharaoh, the prince of the world, pursues after them. Then comes dread and dismay. Till we know that the death of Christ has emancipated us from the country of Satan, we never know full rest of soul. Satan can make some claim on us till we can tell him that we are dead and risen with Christ. Because they had been slaves to the power of Pharaoh, and because they dreaded Pharaoh (and there is no wonder), they had not the faith that says, " If God be for us," etc. Pharaoh was stronger than Israel; but God was stronger than Pharaoh. When they lifted up their eyes and beheld the Egyptians marching after them, they were sore afraid. And they said unto Moses, " Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness." They were here in a worse condition as to their feelings than ever before. And it is so often with saints. We have need of the power of God with us and for us, and to know it too (as well as that when the judgment of God was against us the blood satisfied His judgment) in order to fullness of peace. I may have seen the virtue of Christ's blood to screen from judgment; but it is quite a different thing to have a constant settled certainty that God is for me.

The first thing, when God has awakened the soul to a sense of sin in His sight, is the question how it may be secured against its righteous judgment. Then it sees the blood on the doorposts, and gets peace. Therefore if I lose sight of the blood, God is still, to my soul's apprehension, a judge. Now that is not at all the proper place for a believer to be in. There is the justice of God, and " without shedding of blood, is no remission." If I can say that the blood which has been shed has satisfied that justice, I can see that God is no longer a judge-His justice has been satisfied. But if on the other hand His justice has to be satisfied, God is still a judge.

The Israelites got so terrified, distressed, and dismayed, so under the power of evil which was against them, that they got into the practical question, in conflict whether God or Satan was to lave them. And so constantly it is with saints. We have been such slaves to the power of Satan that we have not a consciousness of redemption to God. There was Pharaoh (Satan to us), the power of evil, pursuing them, and driving them up to this point, till death and judgment (of which the Red Sea is the symbol) stared them in the face. The question must be settled, if they could get through death and judgment. They could not get out of the difficulty by their own strength: the Red Sea was before them, and they could not get through it; Pharaoh and all his host behind them, and there was no escaping by another road. They were quite shut in, and brought to the sense that there must be a deliverer or it was all over with them. All this was exceedingly alarming in itself, but it was God's way of delivering. " And Moses said, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will show to you to-day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more forever." You can neither go backward nor forward; you must just stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. " The Lord shall fight for you; and ye shall hold your peace."

The Lord steps in, and puts Himself between Satan and His people. " The angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: and it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these; so that the one came not near

the other all the night." Before He gives the comfort of deliverance, He always takes care that Satan does not touch us.

What comes to Israel then? Verse 21: The very thing that seemed to be their destruction becomes their salvation. " And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided, And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left." It was no battle for Israel against Pharaoh. " And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, and took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel: for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians. And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them: there remained not so much as one of them. But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore."

Death is the wages of sin; there is no escape; the Red Sea must be passed. " It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." There is not one into whose hands this may fall, looking at it as our natural portion (I am not now speaking of Christ taking it for us, as He has for all those who believe; as it goes on to say, " So Christ was once offered," etc.), but must come there. It is the natural consequence of sin. No matter whether Egyptians or Israelites, death and judgment overtake all. The Red Sea must be passed. But if met in grace, as it was by Israel, we shall see that this very thing is our full and unmingled deliverance. There poor Israel stood and looked at the eternal overthrow of their enemies. When the Egyptians were lying dead on the sea shore, they were safe, singing the song of redemption. True, the wilderness had to be passed, Amalek to be fought with, and the like; but they were out of Egypt. They were singing the song of deliverance in simple-hearted confidence; Egypt was left, and left forever; the power of Pharaoh broken; not an Egyptian to be seen.

And now about the " assaying " to pass the Red Sea: it is that, alas! which many are doing at the present hour (in a better spirit indeed than these Egyptians, yet with an equally terrible result to themselves). I am not now speaking of the avowed enemies of God, though we are all by nature enemies of God; neither of those who are pursuing after the people of God; but of those who are " assaying " to pass through death and judgment in their own way. Just because they are in a Christian country and amongst Christians, they hope with the name of Christ to get to heaven in company with the people of God. But each must pass through all that is in God's road there. If we have got up to the Red Sea, death and judgment must be passed; and where shall we be with all our Egyptian wisdom and learning, with all our chariots and horsemen, before death and judgment? Death and judgment must be passed through. If we are " assaying " to do this without God for us; if the question of death and judgment be not already and altogether settled (as it was for Israel when " by faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land "), it must be our destruction. People confess they have to die, and that after death there is a judgment, and that they must stand in that judgment; but if they are "assaying" to do this in their own strength, it must be then positive and infallible destruction.

We must all, converted or unconverted, give up the world. The veriest votary of the world must sooner or later give up its vanities and its pleasures, its hopes and its interests; he must give them up. The only difference is this, that the Christian gives them up for God; the worldling gives them up because he cannot keep them. The king of Egypt gave up Egypt and Egypt's court, as well as Moses; but there is this difference, that the king of Egypt gave it up for judgment, Moses gave it up for Christ.

The very hopes people have will be their ruin. They see God's Israel going to Canaan, and they hope to get there too. But they are going to heaven in their own way, and they are going to heaven in their own strength. What does the Psalmist say? Give thy servant a favorable judgment? No: " Enter not into judgment with thy servant? for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." They are hoping that it will be all well with them in the judgment; they take the name of Christ upon their lips, and think to get as safely to heaven as real believers. But they must pass through that which brings out into full light, clearly and evidently, what they really are; they must pass the barrier God has set in the way; they must go through death and judgment; and there, there will " no man living be justified."

God's rod of power was stretched out when Israel was passing through, and there was no sea (except as a wall on their right hand, and on their left, shutting out Pharaoh). Where do we find the ground of the confidence of faith? It is altogether of a different sort from that of the mere professor. That sea! says the believer, I dare not go through it; I dare not put a foot in it, except at the bidding of God, and then there is no sea. Because people call themselves Christians, the mischief is that they expect to get through as well as the real people of God. Because the way has been opened to faith, so that faith can tread it, and walk through as on dry ground, they think they can go too. The path is opened to faith, and there is not a drop of water there; death is gone, and judgment is gone-all is over: it is dry ground, and God has made it so; but it is the people of faith alone who can tread it. That which is dry ground to Israel is sea to all besides. Let the Egyptians attempt to follow, and things take their natural course: death and judgment are there, and there shall be no man living justified. The believer has no such thought as that of going to stand in the judgment. When God steps in between him and Pharaoh, what does he see? The " salvation of the Lord." The very thing he dreaded becomes his security. Christ is there in the deep. He sees the judgment of God in all its weight and in all its power borne by Christ. " Deep calleth unto deep, at the noise of thy water-spouts: all thy waves and thy billows have gone over me." The waves and the billows of the Red Sea have gone over Christ. There I have seen death and judgment; I have seen the Son of God sweating great drops of blood because of my sins; I have seen the Son of God crying, " My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? " I have seen Him made sin, bearing the judgment due to sinners; yes, I have seen all the weight and terror of those waves; but they have passed over Christ. It is the thing that saves me, is death; it is the thing that saves me, is judgment. Grace has found its way into death, and it is all " dry land." God takes me there, and says, " Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord."

I see this great and full salvation in a risen Christ; and what I get is, that death is mine. " All things," the apostle says, " are ours "; yes, death is " ours." Satan has meddled with death and judgment, and his power in death is completely broken. Like Pharaoh, he has been overcome in the last stronghold in which he held us captive. " Through death " Christ " has destroyed him that had the power of death," etc. Have the waves of the Red Sea, the billows of the wrath of God, gone over Christ? He has abolished all that was against us. Satan has come and meddled, and what has he done? He has put Christ to death; but the triumph of the prince of darkness was but the display of his defeat. He has come and grappled with Christ, put forth all his strength against Him, struck Him with the whole sting and power he had in death; but Christ has risen out of it on the other side, beyond his reach; and now, morally, death has no power for the believer.

As the captain of salvation Christ had come down and put Himself in the place of those over whom Satan had the power of death by the judgment of God. If He has taken their cause in hand, He must be treated according to their circumstances. He stood there, and felt all the weight and horror of the place. Knowing the terrors of the wrath of God, the bitterness of the cup He had to drink, He prayed that if it were possible the cup might pass from Him. But love had brought Him there: " by the grace of God " He tasted death. God has settled the question. All the account against me, the ground of Satan's accusations appealing to the righteous judgment of God, is gone. God's wrath has all passed over. The moment we come up on the other side of the Red Sea it is all done; we have only our song to sing-" The Lord has triumphed gloriously," etc. The Egyptians whom we have seen to-day we shall see again no more forever.

Israel could sing this song before they took one step in the wilderness; they could say, " Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation. The people shall hear, and be afraid: sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina. Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away. Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of thy arm shall they be as still as a stone, till thy people pass over, 0 Lord, till the people pass over, which thou hast purchased. Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, 0 Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the sanctuary, 0 Lord, which thy hands have established. The Lord shall reign forever and ever."

There was all possible difference marked now between poor Israel who had God for them, and the Egyptians who (with a great deal more human possibility of getting through) were driving on in the carelessness and folly of their own power, to be met and brought to a stand-still by the power of death and judgment; just like poor unconverted people, who, because they see Christians going to heaven, are " assaying " to go also; but without the knowledge of the blood (that which can alone settle the question of death and judgment, so that they should have God for them to step in between themselves and Pharaoh), as having been sprinkled on the houses in Egypt. To all such the very place of salvation will be the place of ruin.

Israel never sang this song when it was merely a question of blood on the door-posts. They did not sing it till they had taken four of five days' journey from the place of their bondage, and had been shut up between the Red Sea and Pharaoh. They were on the road, they had journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, and from Succoth to Etham, and they were encamped before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea. They had left Egypt, and had brought over all the malice of Satan against them. But the power of God was with them and for them, and it was simply, " Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." The controversy was between God and Pharaoh (not between Israel and Pharaoh); and it was soon settled. God would have us broken down to this. They had seen the blood upon the door-posts (there was not any question of sin between themselves and God; weak, feeble, and failing, they might be, but their sins were blotted out); they had set out in good earnest from Egypt, with their kneading-troughs bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders. Now they sing of accomplished redemption. They had the desert to tread, where there was no way, nor food, nor water; the manna had to be gathered day by day, and if the sun was up it was all gone. Spiritual diligence is needed: " The diligent soul shall be made fat." But they were redeemed, and they had God with them, and God for them, to lead and to guide them in the way.

Well, beloved, have our souls seen this redemption? Have we been brought yet to the Red Sea, and to feel that we could not tread the path opened to faith in our own strength; that if we attempted to do it we should be drowned? And have we found that it is no sea, but dry ground, that there is not a drop of water left there? If we have known the blood of Christ as our only hope before God, looking at Him as a judge; if we have known that we must leave Egypt and tread the wilderness on our way to the promised rest, we may still be in measure unable to say, " Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed," etc. That does not mean that we are not on the road, but that we do not know, properly speaking, God to be for us. We may as sinners have looked simply to the blood; but if we have not fully understood the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ as emancipating us from the country and power of Satan, we have not stood still to see the salvation of the Lord. The waves and the billows of God's wrath have gone over the head of Christ; and He has made it to be no sea. He has come down into the very place of wrath on account of sin; and He has risen out of it, and all is over. The thunderbolt has come on the head of Christ, and the storm is over for faith. Nothing gives such a sense of the horribleness of sin, nothing is such a testimony to the judgment of God against sin, as seeing Christ under it; and yet nothing is such a testimony to the love of God towards the poor sinner.

Christian Truth: Volume 12, When I See the Blood

"When I see the blood, I will pass over." It is not a question of my value of that blood, but the conscience rests on the value God finds in it. God looking upon the blood cannot see sin. My heart wants to value it more, but the question is, How could I be in the presence of God with a spot upon me? God looks on that blood and, if He looks on the blood, He cannot look on the sin; if He did, it would not value the blood. Where is the blood? It has been presented to God, not to man, and God has accepted it. Impossible that God can impute sin to a believer; it would be slighting the blood of Christ.

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