Exodus - Commentaries by Charles Henry Mackintosh

Christian Truth: Volume 37, Jehovah's Demand and Satan's Objections: A Word to Parents

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"Let My people go, that they may hold a feast unto Me in the wilderness. Exod. 5:1.

What a volume of truth is contained in this sentence. It sets forth in plain and forcible language the blessed purpose of the Lord God of Israel to have His people completely delivered from Egypt and separated unto Himself in order that they might feast with Him in the wilderness. Nothing could satisfy His heart, but their entire emancipation from the land of death and darkness. He would free them not only from Egypt's brick-kilns and taskmasters, but from its temples and altars, from all its habits and associations, and from its principles, maxims, and fashions. In fact, they must be a thoroughly separated people before they could hold a feast to Him in the wilderness.

So it was with Israel, and so it is with us. We, too, must be a fully and consciously delivered people before we can worship and serve God properly. The world is to the Christian what Egypt was to Israel; only, of course, our separation from the world is not local or physical, but moral and spiritual. Israel left Egypt in person; we leave the world in spirit and in principle. Israel left Egypt in fact; we leave the world in faith. It was a real and thorough separation for them, and it is the same for us. "Let My people go, that they may hold a feast unto Me in the wilderness." To this rigid separation, Satan had and still has many objections.

1) His first objection was set forth in the words spoken by the lips of Pharaoh, "Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land. chap. 8:25. These were subtle words-words well calculated to ensnare a heart that was not in communion with the mind of God. It might (with great plausibility and apparent force) be argued, Is it not liberal on the part of the king of Egypt to offer to tolerate your peculiar mode of worship? Why not take common ground with your neighbors?

This might seem very reasonable, but notice Jehovah's high and holy standard! Listen to the plain and positive declaration, "Let My people go." There is no mistaking this.

There is something uncommonly fine in Moses's reply to Satan's first objection: "It is not meet so to do; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the Lord our God: lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us? We will go three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to the Lord our God, as He shall command us." Exod. 8:26, 27.

There would have been a lack of moral fitness in sacrificing to Jehovah the objects of Egyptian worship. But, more than this, Egypt was not the place in which to erect an altar to the true God. Abraham had no altar when he turned aside into Egypt. He abandoned his worship and his stranger ship when he entered that land, and if Abraham could not worship there, neither could his seed.

Beloved, "The world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not." The motives which activate and the objects which animate the true believer lie far beyond the world's range of vision, and we may well understand that in the proportion in which the world can enter into and appreciate a Christian's motives, must the Christian be unfaithful to his Lord.

We speak, of course, of proper Christian motives. No doubt there is much in a Christian's life that the world can admire and value: integrity, honesty, truthfulness, kindness, care for the poor, self-denial. All these things may be understood and appreciated, but, admitting all this, we return with deeper emphasis to the apostolic statement that "The world knoweth us not," and if we want to walk with God-if we would hold a feast unto Him-if it is our heart's true and earnest desire to run a consistently heavenly course, we must break with the world altogether.

2) Satan's second objection is very much like his first. If he cannot succeed in keeping Israel in Egypt, he will at least try to keep them as near to it as possible. "I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness; only ye shall not go very far away." chap. 8:28.

There is more damage done to the cause of Christ by an apparent, partial, half-hearted giving up of the world, than by remaining in it altogether. Wavering, half-and-half professors injure the testimony and dishonor the Lord far more than thorough out-and-out worldlings. And, there is a wide difference between giving up certain worldly things, and giving up the world itself. We may lop off some of the branches, and yet cling with greater tenacity to the old trunk.

We must carefully see to this. We feel persuaded that what hundreds of professing Christians need is to make a clean break with the world. It is utterly impossible to make a proper start, much less to make any progress, while the heart is playing fast and loose with the holy claims of Christ.

One of Satan's masterpieces is to lead Christians to rest satisfied with looking to the cross for salvation while remaining in the world, or occupying a border position-not going "very far away." This is a terrible snare, against which we must solemnly warn one another. Every believer should be devoted to and walk in fellowship with a rejected and glorified Christ. To walk with Christ and to delight in Him, we must be apart from this godless, Christless, wicked world- apart from it in the spirit of our minds and in the affections of our hearts.

Here, however, we may be asked, Is Christianity merely a stripping, an emptying, a giving up? Does it only consist of prohibition and negation? We answer with hearty emphasis, NO! Christianity is preeminently positive-divinely satisfying. What does it give us in lieu of what it takes from us? It gives us "unsearchable riches" in place of "dung" and "dross." It gives us "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven," instead of a poor, passing bubble on the stream of time. It gives us Christ, the joy of the heart of God-the Object of heaven's worship-the eternal sunlight of the new creation-in lieu of a few moments of sinful gratification and guilty pleasure. And finally, it gives us the eternal sunlight of the eternity of ineffable bliss and glory in the Father's house above, instead of an eternity in the awful flames of hell.

Men do not find it very hard to give up cinders for diamonds, ashes for pearls, and dross for gold. In the same way, when one has tasted the preciousness of Christ, there is no difficulty in giving up the world; no, the difficulty would be to remain in it. If Christ fills the heart, the world is not only driven out, but kept out. We not only turn our backs upon Egypt, but we go far enough away from it never to return. And for what? To do nothing? To have nothing? No, but to "hold a feast" to the Lord. True, it is "in the wilderness," but then the wilderness is heaven begun when we have Christ there with us.

We have already considered two of Satan's objections, and we shall now proceed to the third.

3) "And Moses and Aaron were brought again unto Pharaoh: and he said unto them, Go, serve the Lord your God: but who are they that shall go? And Moses said, We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go; for we must hold a feast unto the Lord. And he said unto them, Let the Lord be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones: look to it; for evil is before you. Not so; go now ye that are men, and serve the Lord; for that ye did desire. And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence." Exod. 10:8-11.

These words contain a very solemn lesson for the hearts of all Christian parents. They reveal a deep and crafty purpose of/the arch-enemy. If he cannot keep the parents in Egypt, he will at least seek to keep the children, and in this way mar the testimony to the truth of God, tarnish His glory in His people, and hinder their blessing in Him. Parents in the wilderness and their children in Egypt would be a terrible anomaly-a thing wholly opposed to the mind of God, and utterly subversive of His glory in the walk of His people.

"Thou and... thy house" is a phrase of deep practical import. It involves the very highest consequences, and conveys the richest consolation to every Christian parent, and we may truly add, the neglect of it has led to the most disastrous consequences in thousands of family circles.

What is involved in the weighty expression, "Thou and... thy house"? There are two things involved in it. In the first place there is a most precious privilege, and in the second place, a holy responsibility. It is unquestionably the privilege of all Christian parents to count on God for their children, but it also their duty-do we dislike the homely word?-to train their children for God. We are to begin at the very beginning and go steadily on from day to day, month to month, year to year, training our children for God. Just as a wise and skillful gardener begins, while his fruit trees are young and tender, to train the branches along the wall where they may catch the warm rays of the sun, so should we, while our children are young and impressionable, seek to mold them for God. It would be the height of folly on the part of the gardener to wait till the branches become old ass' gnarled, and then seek to train them. He would find it a hopeless task. And most surely it is the very loftiest height of folly on our part to allow our children to remain for years and years under the molding hand of Satan, the world and sin before we rouse ourselves to the holy business of molding them for God.

Let us not be misunderstood. Let no one suppose that we mean to teach that grace is hereditary, or that we can by any act or system of training make Christians of our children. Nothing is further from our thoughts. Grace is sovereign, and the children of Christian parents must, like all others, be born of water and of the Spirit ere they can see or enter the kingdom of God. All this is as plain and as clear as Scripture can make it, but, on the other hand, Scripture is equally clear and plain as to the duty of Christian parents to bring up their children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." And what does this bringing up involve? One thing is certain, namely, that Christian training means a great deal more than drilling our children in religion, teaching them to repeat texts and hymns like a parrot, and turning the family circle into a school. It is good to store the memory of a child with Scripture and sweet hymns. No one would think of calling this in question. But also, it is very important to surround our children with a thoroughly Christian atmosphere from their earliest moments, to let them breathe the pure air of the new creation, and to let them see in their parents the genuine fruits of spiritual life-love, peace, purity, tenderness, genuine kindness, unselfishness, loving thoughtfulness of others. These things have a mighty moral influence upon the impressionable mind of a child.

On the other hand, who can attempt to define the pernicious effect produced upon our children by our inconsistencies, our bad temper, our selfish ways, our worldliness, and covetousness? Can we be said to bring our children out of Egypt when Egypt's principles and habits are seen in our whole career? We may use and teach the phraseology of the wilderness or of Canaan, but if our ways, our manners, and our habits are those of Egypt, our children are quick to mark the gross inconsistency and the effect upon them is deplorable. The unfaithfulness of Christian parents has contributed to swell the tide of infidelity which is rising around us with such appalling rapidity.

There is a great deal more involved in child training than many of us realize. Only by the power of the Spirit of God can parents be fitted for the great and holy work of training their children in this present day. That word, "My grace is sufficient for thee," falls upon the heart with heavenly sweetness and power. We can, with fullest confidence, reckon upon God to bless the very feeblest effort to lead our dear children forth out of Egypt. But the effort must be made, and made, too, with real, fixed, earnest purpose of heart.

We have to remember that the foundation of character is laid in the nursery. Christian training begins in the early days of infancy, and it must be steadily pursued from day to day, month to month, and year to year, in simple, hearty dependence upon God who will, most assuredly, in due time, hear and answer the earnest cry of a parent's heart and crown with His rich blessing the faithful labors of a parent's hands.

We would in true brotherly love offer a suggestion to all Christian parents as to the immense importance of inculcating a spirit of implicit obedience. Are we then to be continually chucking the reins and brandishing the rod? By no means. This would be to break the spirit of the child instead of subduing his will. Where parental authority is thoroughly established the reins may lie gently on the neck, and the rod may be allowed to stand in the corner. There is no need whatever to be continually asserting our authority. There is a quiet dignity about one who really possesses authority, whereas the spasmodic efforts of weakness only draw out contempt.

4) We close with the briefest possible reference to the enemy's fourth and last objection which is embodied in the words, "And Pharaoh called unto Moses, and said, Go ye, serve the Lord; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed: let your little ones also go with you." chap. 10:24. He would let them go, but without resources to serve the Lord. If he could not keep them in Egypt, he would send them away crippled and shorn. Such is the enemy's last objection.

Notice the noble reply of a devoted heart. It is morally grand. "And Moses said, Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God. Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not a hoof be left behind; for thereof must we take to serve the Lord our God; and" [ponder these suggestive words] "we know not with what we must serve the Lord until we come thither." chap. 10:25, 26.

We must be fully and clearly on God's ground before we can form any true idea of the nature and extent of His claims. It is utterly impossible while surrounded by a worldly atmosphere and governed by a worldly spirit, worldly principles, and worldly objects, to have any just sense of what is due to God. We must stand on the lofty ground of accomplished redemption, apart from this present evil world, before we can properly serve Christ.

Moses, the man of God, meets all Satan's objectives by a simple but decided adherence to Jehovah's demand, "Let My people go, that they may hold a feast unto Me in the wilderness."

This is the true principle, the true method, the true course, at all times and under all circumstances. The divine standard must be maintained in all its integrity, at all cost, and in spite of all objections. If the standard be lowered the breadth of a hair, the enemy gains his point, and Christian service and testimony are wholly out of the question.

The Mackintosh Treasury: Vol. 5, Jehovah's Demand and Satan's Objections: Part 1

"Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness." Exod. 5:1.

What a volume of truth is contained in the sentence which we have just penned! It is one of those comprehensive and suggestive passages which lie scattered up and down the divine volume, and which seize, with peculiar power, upon the heart, and open up a vast field of most precious truth. It sets forth, in plain and forcible language, the blessed purpose of the Lord God of Israel to have His people completely delivered from Egypt and separated unto Himself, in order that they might feast with Him in the wilderness. Nothing could satisfy His heart, in reference to them, but their entire emancipation from the land of death and darkness. He would free them not only from Egypt's brick-kilns and task-masters, but from its temples and its altars, and from all its habits and all its associations, from its principles, its maxims, and its fashions. In a word, they must be a thoroughly separated people, ere they could hold a feast to Him in the wilderness.

Thus it was with Israel, and thus it is with us. We, too, must be a fully and consciously delivered people ere we can properly serve, worship, or walk with God,. We must not only know the forgiveness of our sins, and our entire freedom from guilt, wrath, judgment, and condemnation; but also our complete deliverance front this present evil world and all its belongings, ere we can intelligently serve the Lord. The world is to the Christian what Egypt was to Israel; only, of course our separation from the world is not local or physical, but moral and spiritual. Israel left Egypt in person; we leave the world in spirit and principle. Israel left Egypt in fact; we leave the world in faith. It was a real, out-and-out, thorough separation for them, and it is the same for us. " Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness."

1. To this rigid separation, as we very well know, Satan had and still has many objections. His first objection was set forth in the following words spoken by the lips of Pharaoh, " Go ye, awl sacrifice to your God in the land." These were subtle words—words well calculated to ensnare a heart that was not in communion with the mind of God. For it might with great plausibility and apparent force, be argued, Is it not uncommonly liberal on the part of the king of Egypt to offer you toleration for your peculiar mode of worship? Is it not a great stretch of liberality to offer your religion a place on the public platform? Surely you can carry on your religion as well as other people. There is room for all. Why this demand for separation? Why not take common ground with your neighbors? There is no need surely for such extreme narrowness.

All this might seem very reasonable. But then mark Jehovah's high and holy standard! Hearken to the plain and positive declaration, " Let my people go I" There is no mistaking this. It is impossible, in the face of such a statement, to remain in Egypt. The most plausible reasonings that ever could be advanced vanish into thin air in the presence of the authoritative demand of the Lord. God of Israel. If He says, " Let my people go," then go we must, spite of all the opposing power of earth and hell, men and devils. There is no use in reasoning, disputing, or discussing. We must obey. Egyptians may think for themselves; Jehovah must think for Israel; the sequel will prove who is right.

And here let us just offer our readers a word, in passing, as to the subject of " narrowness," about which we hear so much now-a-days. The real question is, " Who is to fix the boundaries of the Christian's faith? Is it man or God—human opinion or divine revelation?" When this question is answered, the whole matter is easily settled. There are some minds terribly scared by the bugbear of " narrow-mindedness." But then we have to inquire what is narrowness, and what breadth of mind? Now, what we understand by a narrow mind is simply a mind which refuses to take in and be governed by the whole truth of God. A mind governed by human opinions, human reasonings, worldly maxims, selfish interests, self-will—this we unhesitatingly pronounce to be a narrow mind.

On the other hand, a mind beautifully subject to the authority of Christ—a mind that bows down, with reverent submission, to the voice of holy scripture—a mind that sternly refuses to go the breadth of a hair beyond the written word—that absolutely rejects everything—no matter what or whence it comes—which is not based upon " Thus saith the Lord,"—this is what we call a broad mind.

Reader, is it not—must it not be so? Is not God's word—His mind, infinitely more comprehensive, wide, and full than the word—the mind of man?. Is there not infinitely greater breadth in the holy scriptures than in all the human writings under the sun? Does it not argue much greater breadth of mind, largeness of heart, and devotion of soul to be governed by the thoughts of God than by our own thoughts or the thoughts of our fellows? It seems to us there can be but one reply to these questions; and hence the entire subject of narrowness resolves itself into this simple but very telling motto, " We must be as narrow as Christ and as broad as Christ."

Yes, here lies the grand solution of this and of every ether difficulty. We must view everything from this blessed standpoint, and then our entire range of vision will be correct, and all our conclusions thoroughly sound. But if Christ be not our standpoint, but self, or man, or the world, then our entire range of vision is false, and all our conclusions thoroughly unsound.

All this is as clear as a sunbeam to a single eye and An honest and loyal heart. And really if the eye be not single and the heart true to Christ, and the conscience subject to the word, it is a complete loss of time to argue or discuss. Of what possible use can it be to Argue with a man who, instead of obeying the word of God, is only seeking to turn aside its edge? None whatever. It is a hopeless task to reason with one who has never taken in the mighty moral import of that most precious word—obey.

We must now return to our immediate theme. There something uncommonly fine in Moses' reply to Satan's first objection, " It is not meet so to do; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the Lord Dar God; lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone? We will go three days' journey into the wilder-

mess, and sacrifice to the Lord our God, as he shall command us." Exod. 8:26.

There would have been a lack of moral fitness in presenting to Jehovah, in sacrifice, the object of Egyptian worship. But, more than this, Egypt was not the place in which to erect an altar to the true God. Abraham had no altar when he turned aside into Egypt. He abandoned his worship and his strangership when he went down thither; and if Abraham could not worship there, neither could his seed. An Egyptian might ask, why? But it is one thing to ask a question, and another thing to understand the answer. How could the Egyptian mind enter into the reasons of a true Israelite's conduct? Impossible. What could such an one know of the meaning of a " three days' journey?" Absolutely nothing. " Beloved, the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." The motives which actuate, and the objects which animate, the true believer lie far beyond the world's range of vision; and we may rest assured that in the exact proportion in which the world can enter into and appreciate a Christian's motives must the Christian be unfaithful to his Lord.

We speak, of course, of proper christian motives. No doubt there is much in a Christian's life that the world can admire and value. Integrity, honesty, truthfulness, disinterested kindness, care for the poor, self-denial. All these things may be understood and appreciated; but, admitting all this, we return, with deeper emphasis, to the apostolic statement that " The world knoweth us not," and if we want to walk with God—if we would hold a feast unto Him—if it is our heart's true and earnest desire to run a consistent heavenly course, we must break with the world altogether, and break with self also, and take our stand outside the camp with a world-rejected heaven-accepted Christ. May we do so, with fixed purpose of heart, to the glory of His own precious and peerless name!

2. Satan's second objection is very near akin to his first. If he cannot succeed in keeping Israel in Egypt, he will at least try to keep them as near to it as possible. " I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness; only ye shall not go very far away." Chapter viii. 28.

There is very much more damage done to the cause of Christ by an apparent, partial, half-hearted giving up of the world, than by remaining in it altogether. Wavering, undecided, half-and-half professors injure the testimony and dishonor the Lord, far more than thorough out-and-out worldlings. And, further, we may say, there is a very wide difference indeed between giving up certain worldly things, and giving up the world itself. A person may lay aside certain forms of worldliness, and, all the while, retain the world deep down in the heart. We may give up the theater, the ball room, the race course, the billiard table, the concert, the flower show, and the croquet ground; and yet cling to the world all the same. We may lop off some of the branches, and yet cling, with fonder tenacity, to the old trunk.

This must be carefully seen to. We feel persuaded that what hundreds of professing Christians need is to make a clean break with the world—yes, with the world, in all the length and breadth, depth and fullness. of that very comprehensive word. It is utterly impossible to make a proper start, much less to make any progress, while the heart is playing fast and loose with the holy claims of Christ. We do not hesitate to express it as our settled conviction that, in thousands of cases, where souls complain of doubts and fears, ups and downs, darkness and heaviness, lack of assurance, and comfort, of light, liberty, joy, peace, and vivid realization, it is owing to the simple fact that they have never really broken with the world. They either seek to hold a feast to the Lord in Egypt, or they remain so near as to be easily drawn back again—so near that they are neither one thing nor the other—so near that whatever influence they possess tells all the wrong way—tells against Christ and for the enemy.

How can such people be happy? How can their peace flow as a river? How can they possibly walk in the light of a Father's countenance, or in the joy of a Savior's presence? How can the blessed beams of that sun that shines in the new creation reach them through the murky atmosphere that envelopes the land of death and darkness? Impossible. They must break with the world, and make a clear, decided, wholehearted surrender of themselves to Christ. There must be a full Christ for the heart and a full heart for Christ.

Here, we may rest assured, lies the grand secret of christian progress. We must make a proper start before ever we can get on; and in order to make a proper start we must break our links with the world, or rather, we must believe and practically carry out the fact that God has broken them for us, in the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. The cross has separated us forever from this present evil world. It has not merely delivered us from the eternal consequences of our sins, but from the present power of sin, and from the principles, maxims, and fashions of a world that lieth in the hands of the wicked one.

It is one of Satan's masterpieces to lead professing Christians to rest satisfied with looking to the cross for salvation while remaining in the world, or occupying a border position—" not going very far away." This is a terrible snare, against which we most solemnly ware the christian reader. What is the remedy? True heart-devotedness to, and fellowship with, a rejected and glorified Christ. To walk with Christ, to delight in Him, to feed upon Him, we must be apart from this godless, christless, wicked world—apart from it in the spirit of our minds, and in the affections of our hearts—apart from it, not merely in its gross forms of moral pravity, or the wild extravagance of its folly and gaiety, but apart from its religion, its politics, and its philanthropy—apart from the world in all that goes to make up that extensive phrase.

But here we may be asked, "Is Christianity merely a stripping, an emptying, a giving up? Does it only consist of prohibition and negation?" We answer,. with hearty and blissful emphasis, No! A thousand times, No! Christianity is pre-eminently positive—intensely real—divinely satisfying. What does it give us in lieu of what it takes from us? It gives us " unsearchable riches" in place of " dung and dross." It gives us " an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading, reserved in heaven," instead of a poor passing bubble on the stream of time. It gives us Christ, the goy of the heart of God—the object of heaven's worship—the theme of angels' song—the eternal sunlight of the new creation, in lieu of a few moments of sinful gratification and guilty pleasure. And finally, it gives us an eternity of ineffable bliss and glory in the Father's house above, instead of an eternity in the awful flames of hell.

Reader, what sayest thou to these things? Is not this a good exchange? Can we not find here the most cogent reasons for giving up the world? It sometimes happens that men favor us with their reasons for resigning this, that, and the other branch of worldliness; but it strikes us that all such reasons might be summed up in one, and that one be thus enunciated " A reason for resigning the world—I hare found Christ." This is the real way to put the matter. Men do not find it very hard to give up cinders for diamonds—ashes for pearls—dross for gold. No; reader, and in the same way, when one has tasted the preciousness of Christ, there is no difficulty in giving up the world.; nay, the difficulty would be to

retain it. If Christ fills the heart, the world is not only driven out, but kept out. We not only turn our back upon Egypt, but we go far enough away from it never to return. And for what? To do nothing? To have nothing 9 To be gloomy, morose, melancholy, sour, or cynical? No.; but to " hold a feast to the Lord." True it is " in the wilderness;" but then the wilderness is heaven begun when we have Christ there with us. He is our heaven, blessed be His name!—the light of our eyes, the joy of our hearts, the food of our souls, for even Heaven would be no heaven without Him; and the wilderness itself is turned into a heaven by His dear, bright, soul satisfying presence.

Nor is this all. It is not merely that the heart is thoroughly satisfied with Christ; but the mind also is divinely tranquilized as to all the details of the path—the difficulties—the questions—the knotty points that so constantly crop up to trouble and perplex those who do not know the deep blessedness of making Christ their standpoint, and viewing all in direct reference to Him.

For instance, if I am called to act for Christ in any given case, and instead of looking at the matter simply in its bearing upon Him and His glory, I look at how it will affect me, I shall, most assuredly, get into darkness and hopeless perplexity, and reach a wrong conclusion. But if I simply look at Him and consider His glory, and see how the matter bears upon Him, I shall see the thing as clear as a sunbeam, and move, with holy elasticity and firm purpose, along that blessed path which is ever illuminated by the bright beams of God's approving countenance. A single eye never looks at consequences, but looks straight to Christ, and then all is simple and plain; the body is full of light, and the path marked by plain decision.

This is what is so needed in this day of easy-going profession, worldly religiousness, self-seeking, and manpleasing. We want to make Christ our only standpoint—to look at self, the world, and the so-called church from thence—to make Him our center, and reason from Him, utterly regardless of consequences. Oh! that it may be so with us, through the infinite mercy of our God. Then we shall understand something of the force, depth, beauty, and fullness of the opening sentence of this paper, " Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness."

Christian Truth: Volume 24, Holy Anointing Oil, The

In Exodus 30, verses 22-33, we have the "holy anointing oil," with which the priests, together with all the furniture of the tabernacle, were anointed. In this we discern a type of the varied graces of the Holy Ghost, which were found in all their divine fullness in Christ. "All Thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made Thee glad." Psalm 45:8. "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power" (Acts 10:38). All the graces of the Spirit in their perfect fragrance centered in Christ; and it is from Him alone they can flow. He, as to His humanity, was conceived of the Holy Ghost; and, ere He entered upon His public ministry, He was anointed with the Holy Ghost; and, finally, when He had taken His seat on high, in token of an accomplished redemption, He shed forth upon His body, the Church, the precious gifts of the Holy Ghost. (See Matt. 1:20; 3:16, 17; Luke 4:18, 19; Acts 2:33; 10:45, 46; Eph. 4:8-13.)

It is as those who are associated with this ever blessed and highly exalted Christ that believers are partakers of the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost; and, moreover, it is as they walk in habitual nearness to Him that they either enjoy or emit the fragrance thereof. The unrenewed man knows nothing of this. "Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured." The graces of the Spirit can never be connected with man's flesh, for the Holy Ghost cannot own nature. Not one of the fruits of the Spirit was ever yet produced in nature's barren soil. We "must be born again." It is only as connected with the new man, as being part of "the new creation," that we can know anything of the fruits of the Holy Ghost. It is of no possible value to seek to imitate those fruits and graces. The fairest fruits that ever grew in nature's fields, in their highest state of cultivation-the most amiable traits which nature can exhibit-must be utterly disowned in the sanctuary of God. "Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured, neither shall ye make any other like it, after the composition of it: it is holy, and it shall be holy unto you. Whosoever compoundeth any like it, or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from his people." There must be no counterfeit of the Spirit's work; all must be of the Spirit-wholly, really of the Spirit. Moreover, that which is of the Spirit must not be attributed to man. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. 2:14.

There is a very beautiful allusion to this "holy anointing oil" in one of the "Songs of degrees"—"Behold," says the psalmist, "how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments." Psalm 133:1, 2. The head of the priestly house being anointed with the holy oil, the very "skirts of his garments" must exhibit the precious effects. May my reader experience the power of this anointing! May he know the value of having "an unction from the Holy One," and of being "sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise"! Nothing is of any value in the divine estimation save that which connects itself immediately with Christ, and whatever is so connected can receive the holy anointing.

In the concluding paragraph of this most comprehensive chapter, we have the "sweet spices... tempered together, pure and holy." This surpassingly precious perfume presents to us the unmeasured and unmeasurable perfections of Christ. There was no special quantity of each ingredient prescribed, because the graces that dwell in Christ, the beauties and excellencies that are concentrated in His adorable Person, are without limit. Naught save the infinite mind of Deity could scan the infinite perfections of Him in whom all the fullness of Deity dwells; and as eternity rolls along its course of everlasting ages, those glorious perfections will ever be unfolding themselves in the view of worshiping saints and angels. Ever and anon, as some fresh beams of light shall burst forth from that central Sun of divine glory, the courts of heaven above, and the wide fields of creation beneath, shall resound with thrilling Alleluiahs to Him who was, who is, and who ever shall be the Object of praise to all the ranks of created intelligence.

But not only was there no prescribed quantity of the ingredients; we also read, "Of each shall there be a like weight." Every feature of moral excellence found its due place and proper proportions in Christ. No one quality ever displaced or interfered with another; all was "tempered together, pure and holy," and emitted an odor so fragrant that none but God could appreciate it.

"And thou shalt beat some of it very small, and put of it before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation, where I will meet with thee: it shall be unto, you most holy." There is uncommon depth and power in the expression "very small." It teaches us that every little movement in the life of Christ, every minute circumstance, every act, every word, every look, every feature, every trait, every lineament,

emits an odor produced by an equal proportion—"a like weight" of all the divine graces that compose His character. The smaller the perfume was beaten, the more its rare and exquisite temper was manifested.

"And as for the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof: it shall be unto thee holy for the LORD. Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people." This fragrant perfume was designed exclusively for Jehovah. Its place was "before the testimony." There is that in Jesus which only God could appreciate. True, every believing heart can draw nigh to His matchless Person, and more than satisfy its deepest and most intense longings; still, after all God's redeemed have drunk to the utmost of their capacity, after angels have gazed on the peerless glories of the Man Christ Jesus as earnestly as their vision is capable of-after all, there will be that in Him which God alone can fathom and enjoy. No human or angelic eye could duly trace the exquisitely minute parts of that holy perfume beaten "very small," nor could earth afford a proper sphere in which to emit its divine and heavenly odor.

Notes on the Pentateuch: 2. Exodus, Exodus 2:11-25

In considering the history of Moses, we must look at him in two ways, namely, personally and typically.

First, in his personal character, there is much, very much, for us to learn. God had not only to raise him up, but also to train him, in one way or another, for the lengthened period of eighty years — first in the house of Pharaoh’s daughter; and then at “the backside of the desert.” This, to our shallow thoughts, would seem an immense space of time to devote to the education of a minister of God. But then God’s thoughts are not as our thoughts. He knew the need of those forty years, twice told, in the preparation of His chosen vessel. When God educates, He educates in a manner worthy of Himself and His most holy service. He will not have a novice to do His work. The servant of Christ has to learn many a lesson, to undergo many an exercise, to pass through many a conflict, in secret, before he is really qualified to act in public. Nature does not like this. It would rather figure in public than learn in private. It would rather be gazed upon and admired by the eye of man than be disciplined by the hand of God. But it will not do. We must take God’s way. Nature may rush into the scene of operation; but God does not want it there. It must be withered, crushed, set aside. The place of death is the place for nature. If it will be active, God will so order matters, in His infallible faithfulness and perfect wisdom, that the results of its activity will prove its utter defeat and confusion. He knows what to do with nature, where to put it, and where to keep it. Oh! that we may all be in deeper communion with the mind of God, in reference to self and all that pertains thereto. Then shall we make fewer mistakes. Then shall our path be steady and elevated, our spirit tranquil, and our service effective.

“And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens; and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand.” This was zeal for his brethren; but it was “not according to knowledge.” God’s time was not yet come for judging Egypt and delivering Israel; and the intelligent servant will ever wait for God’s time. “Moses was grown”; and “he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians”; and, moreover, “he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them.” All this was true; yet he evidently ran before the time, and when one does this failure must be the issue.

And not only is there failure in the end, but also manifest uncertainty, and lack of calm elevation and holy independence in the progress of a work begun before God’s time. Moses “looked this way and that way.” There is no need of this when a man is acting with and for God, and in the full intelligence of His mind, as to the details of his work. If God’s time had really come, and if Moses was conscious of being divinely commissioned to execute judgment upon the Egyptian, and if he felt assured of the divine presence with him, he would not have “looked this way and that way.”

This action teaches a deep practical lesson to all the servants of God. There are two things by which it is superinduced: namely, the fear of man’s wrath, and the hope of man’s favor. The servant of the living God should neither regard the one nor the other. What avails the wrath or favor of a poor mortal, to one who holds the divine commission, and enjoys the divine presence? It is, in the judgment of such an one, less than the small dust of the balance. “Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee, whithersoever thou goest” (Josh. 1:9). “Thou, therefore, gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them. For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brazen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land. And they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee” (Jer. 1:17-19).

When the servant of Christ stands upon the elevated ground set forth in the above quotations, he will not “look this way and that way”; he will act on wisdom’s heavenly counsel, “let thine eyes look straight on, and thine eyelids look straight before thee.” Divine intelligence will ever lead us to look upward and onward. Whenever we look around to shun a mortal’s frown or catch his smile, we may rest assured there is something wrong; we are off the proper ground of divine service. We lack the assurance of holding the divine commission, and of enjoying the divine presence, both of which are absolutely essential.

True, there are many who, through profound ignorance, or excessive self-confidence, stand forward in a sphere of service for which God never intended them, and for which He, therefore, never qualified them. And not only do they thus stand forward, but they exhibit an amount of coolness and self-possession perfectly amazing to those who are capable of forming an impartial judgment about their gifts and merits. But all this will very speedily find its level; nor does it in the least interfere with the integrity of the principle that nothing can effectually deliver a man from the tendency to “look this way and that way,” save the consciousness of the divine commission and the divine presence. When these are possessed, there is entire deliverance from human influence, and consequent independence. No man is in a position to serve others who is not wholly independent of them; but a man who knows his proper place can stoop and wash his brethren’s feet.

When we turn away our eyes from man, and fix them upon the only true and perfect Servant, we do not find him looking this way and that way, for this simple reason, that He never had His eye upon men, but always upon God. He feared not the wrath of man nor sought his favor. He never opened His lips to elicit human applause, nor kept them closed to avoid human censure. This gave holy stability and elevation to all

He said and did. Of Him alone could it be truly said, “His leaf shall not wither, and whatsoever He doeth shall prosper.” Everything He did turned to profitable account, because everything was done to God. Every action, every word, every movement, every look, every thought, was like a beauteous cluster of fruit, sent up to refresh the heart of God. He was never afraid of the results of His work, because He always acted with and for God, and in the full intelligence of His mind. His own will, though divinely perfect, never once mingled itself in aught that He did, as a man, on the earth. He could say, “I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me.” Hence, He brought forth fruit, “in its season,” He did “always those things which pleased the Father,” and, therefore, never had any occasion to “fear,” to “repent,” or to “look this way and that way.”

Now in this, as in everything else, the blessed Master stands in marked contrast with His most honored and eminent servants. Even a Moses “feared,” and a Paul “repented”; but the Lord Jesus never did either. He never had to retrace a step, to recall a word, or correct a thought. All was absolutely perfect. All was “fruit in season.” The current of His holy and heavenly life flowed onward without a ripple and without a curve. His will was divinely subject. The best and most devoted men make mistakes; but it is perfectly certain that the more we are enabled, through grace, to mortify our own will, the fewer our mistakes will be. Truly happy it is when, in the main, our path is really a path of faith and single-eyed devotedness to Christ.

Thus it was with Moses. He was a man of faith — a man who drank deeply into the spirit of his Master, and walked with marvelous steadiness in His footprints. True, he anticipated, as has been remarked, by forty years, the Lord’s time of judgment on Egypt and deliverance for Israel; yet, when we turn to the inspired commentary, in Hebrews 11, we find nothing about this. We there find only the divine principle upon which, in the main, his course was founded. “By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible” (Heb. 11:24-27).

This quotation furnishes a most gracious view of the actings of Moses. It is ever thus the Holy Spirit deals with the history of Old Testament saints. When He writes a man’s history, He presents him to us as he is, and faithfully sets forth all his failures and imperfections. But when, in the New Testament, he comments upon such history, He merely gives the real principle and main result of a man’s life. Hence, though we read, in Exodus, that “Moses looked this way and that way” — that “he feared and said, Surely this thing is known” — and, finally, “Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh”; yet, we are taught, in Hebrews, that what he did, he did “by faith” — that he did not fear “the wrath of the king” — that “he endured as seeing him who is invisible.”

Thus will it be, by and by, when “the Lord comes, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God” (1 Cor. 4:5). This is a precious and consolatory truth for every upright mind and every loyal heart. Many a “counsel” the “heart” may form, which, from various causes, the hand may not be able to execute. All such “counsels” will be made “manifest” when “the Lord comes.” Blessed be the grace that has told us so. The affectionate counsels of the heart are far more precious to Christ than the most elaborate works of the hand. The latter may shine before the eye of man; the former are designed only for the heart of Jesus. The latter may be spoken of amongst men; the former will be made manifest before God and His holy angels. May all the servants of Christ have their hearts undividedly occupied with His person, and their eyes steadily fixed upon His advent.

In contemplating the path of Moses, we observe how that faith led him entirely athwart the ordinary course of nature. It led him to despise all the pleasures, the attractions, and the honors of Pharaoh’s court. And not only that, but also to relinquish an apparently wide sphere of usefulness. Human expediency would have conducted him along quite an opposite path. It would have led him to use his influence on behalf of the people of God — to act for them instead of suffering with them. According to man’s judgment, Providence would seem to have opened for Moses a wide and most important sphere of labor; and surely if ever the hand of God was manifest in placing a man in a distinct position, it was in his case. By a most marvelous interposition — by a most unaccountable chain of circumstances, every link of which displayed the finger of the Almighty — by an order of events which no human foresight could have arranged, had the daughter of Pharaoh been made the instrument of drawing Moses out of the water, and of nourishing and educating him until he was “full forty years old.” With all these circumstances in his view, to abandon his high, honorable, and influential position, could only be regarded as the result of a misguided zeal which no sound judgment could approve.

Thus might poor blind nature reason. But faith thought differently; for nature and faith are always at issue. They cannot agree upon a single point. Nor is there anything, perhaps, in reference to which they differ so widely as what are commonly called “openings of Providence.” Nature will constantly regard such openings as warrants for self-indulgence; whereas faith will find in them opportunities for self-denial. Jonah might have deemed it a very remarkable opening of Providence to find a ship going to Tarshish; but in truth it was an opening through which he slipped off the path of obedience.

No doubt, it is the Christian’s privilege to see his Father’s hand, and hear His voice, in everything; but he is not to be guided by circumstances. A Christian so guided is like a vessel at sea without rudder or compass; she is at the mercy of the waves and the winds. God’s promise to His child is “I will guide thee with Mine eye” (Psa. 32:8). His warning is, “Be not as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding; whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.” It is much better to be guided by our Father’s eye, than by the bit and bridle of circumstances; and we know that in the ordinary acceptation of the term, “Providence” is only another word for the impulse of circumstances.

Now, the power of faith may constantly be seen in refusing and forsaking the apparent openings of Providence. It was so in the case of Moses. “By faith he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter”; and “by faith he forsook Egypt.” Had he judged according to the sight of his eyes, he would have grasped at the proffered dignity, as the manifest gift of a kind Providence, and he would have remained in the court of Pharaoh as in a sphere of usefulness plainly thrown open to him by the hand of God. But, then, he walked by faith, and not by the sight of his eyes; and, hence, he forsook all. Noble example! May we have grace to follow it! And observe what it was that Moses “esteemed greater riches than the treasures in Egypt”; it was the “reproach of Christ.” It was not merely reproach for Christ. “The reproaches of them that reproached thee have fallen upon Me.” The Lord Jesus, in perfect grace, identified Himself with His people. He came down from heaven, leaving His Father’s bosom, and laying aside all His glory, He took His people’s place, confessed their sins, and bore their judgment on the cursed tree. Such was His voluntary devotedness, He not merely acted for us, but made Himself one with us, thus perfectly delivering us from all that was or could be against us.

Hence, we see how much in sympathy Moses was with the spirit and mind of Christ, in reference to the people of God. He was in the midst of all the ease, the pomp and dignity of Pharaoh's house, where "the pleasures of sin," and "the treasures of Egypt," lay scattered around him, in richest profusion. All these things he might have enjoyed if he would. He could have lived and died in the midst of wealth and splendor. His entire path, from first to last, might, if he had chosen, have been enlightened by the sunshine of royal favor: but that would not have been "faith"; it would not have been Christ-like. From his elevated position, he saw his brethren bowed down beneath their heavy burden, and faith led him to see that his place was to be with them. Yes; with them, in all their reproach, their bondage, their degradation, and their sorrow. Had he been actuated by mere benevolence, philanthropy, or patriotism, he might have used his personal influence on behalf of his brethren. He might have succeeded in inducing Pharaoh to lighten their burden, and render their path somewhat smoother, by royal grants in their favor; but this would never do, never satisfy a heart that had a single pulsation in common with the heart of Christ. Such a heart Moses, by the grace of God, carried in his bosom; and, therefore, with all the energies and all the affections of that heart, he threw himself, body, soul, and spirit, into the very midst of his oppressed brethren. He "chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God." And, moreover, he did this "by faith."

Let my reader ponder this deeply. We must not be satisfied with wishing well to, doing service for, or speaking kindly on behalf of, the people of God. We ought to be fully identified with them, no matter how despised or reproached they may be. It is, in a measure, an agreeable thing to a benevolent and generous spirit, to patronize Christianity; but it is a wholly different thing to be identified with Christians, or to suffer with Christ. A patron is one thing, a martyr is quite another. This distinction is apparent throughout the entire book of God. Obadiah took care of God's witnesses, but Elijah was a witness for God. Darius was so attached to Daniel that he lost a night's rest on his account, but Daniel spent that selfsame night in the lion's den, as a witness for the truth of God. Nicodemus ventured to speak a word for Christ, but a more matured discipleship would have led him to identify himself with Christ.

These considerations are eminently practical. The Lord Jesus does not want patronage; He wants fellowship. The truth concerning Him is declared to us, not that we might patronize His cause on earth, but have fellowship with His Person in heaven. He identified Himself with us, at the heavy cost of all that love could give. He might have avoided this. He might have continued to enjoy His eternal place "in the bosom of the Father." But how, then, could that mighty tide of love, which was pent up in His heart, flow down to us guilty and hell-deserving sinners? Between Him and us there could be no oneness, save on conditions which involved the surrender of everything on His part. But, blessed, throughout the everlasting ages, be His adorable Name, that surrender was voluntarily made. "He gave himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14). He would not enjoy His glory alone. His loving heart would gratify itself by associating "many sons" with Him in that glory. "Father," He says, "I will that they also Whom thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory, which thou hast given Me; for thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24). Such were the thoughts of Christ in reference to His people; and we can easily see how much in sympathy with these precious thoughts was the heart of Moses. He, unquestionably, partook largely of his Master's spirit; and he manifested that excellent spirit in freely sacrificing every personal consideration, and associating himself, unreservedly, with the people of God.

The personal character and actings of this honored servant of God will come before us again in the next section of our book. We shall here briefly consider him as a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. That he was a type of Him is evident from the following passage, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto Me; unto him ye shall hearken" (Deut. 18:15). We are not, therefore, trafficking in human imagination in viewing Moses as a type; it is the plain teaching of scripture, and, in the closing verses of Exodus 2 we see this type in a double way: first, in the matter of his rejection by Israel; and, secondly, in his union with a stranger in the land of Midian.

These points have already been, in some measure, developed in the history of Joseph, who, being cast out by his brethren, according to the flesh, forms an alliance with an Egyptian bride. Here, as in the case of Moses, we see shadowed forth Christ's rejection by Israel, and His union with the Church, but in a different phase. In Joseph's case, we have the exhibition of positive enmity against his person. In Moses it is the rejection of his mission. In Joseph's case we read, "they hated, him, and could not speak peaceably unto him" (Gen. 37:4). In the case of Moses, the word is, "Who, made thee a prince and a judge over us?" In short, the former was personally hated; the latter, officially refused.

So also, in the mode in which the great mystery of the Church is exemplified, in the history of those two Old Testament saints. "Asenath" presents quite a different phase of the Church from that which we have, in the person of "Zipporah." The former was united to Joseph in the time of his exaltation; the latter was the companion of Moses, in the obscurity of his desert life. (Compare Gen. 41:41-45 with Ex. 2:15-31). True, both Joseph and Moses were, at the time of their union with a stranger, rejected by their brethren; yet the former was "governor over all the land of Egypt"; whereas the latter tended a few sheep at "the backside of the desert."

Whether, therefore, we contemplate Christ, as manifested in glory, or as hidden from the world's gaze, the Church is intimately associated with Him. And now, inasmuch as the world seeth Him not, neither can it take knowledge of that body which is wholly one with Him. "The world knoweth us not, because it knew him not" (1 John 3:1). By and by, Christ will appear in His glory, and the Church with Him. "When Christ our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory" (Col. 3:4). And, again, "The glory which thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are one: I in them, and thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved Me" (John 17:22-23).

Such, then, is the Church's high and holy position. She is one with Him who is cast out by this world, but who occupies the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. The Lord Jesus made Himself responsible for her on the cross, in order that she might share with Him His present rejection and His future glory. Would that all who form a part of such a highly privileged body were more impressed with a sense of what becomes them as to course and character down here! Assuredly, there should be a fuller and clearer response on the part of all the children of God, to that love wherewith He has loved them, to that salvation wherewith He has saved them, and to that dignity wherewith He has invested them. The walk of the Christian should ever be the natural result of realized privilege, and not the constrained result of legal vows and resolutions, the proper fruit of a position known and enjoyed by faith, and not the fruit of one's own efforts to reach a position by works of law. All true believers are a part of the bride of Christ. Hence they owe Him those affections which become that relation. The relationship is not obtained because of the affections, but the affections flow out of the relationship.

So let it be, O Lord, with all thy beloved and blood-bought people!

This section of our book abounds in the weightiest principles of divine truth-principles, which range themselves under the three following heads, namely, the power of Satan, the power of God, and the power of faith.

In the last verse of the previous chapter, we read, “And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river.” This was Satan’s power. The river was the place of death; and, by death, the enemy sought to frustrate the purpose of God. It has ever been thus. The serpent has, at all times, watched, with malignant eye, those instruments which God was about to use for His own gracious ends. Look at the case of Abel, in Genesis 4. What was that but the serpent watching God’s vessel and seeking to put it out of the way by death? Look at the case of Joseph, in Genesis 37. There you have the enemy seeking to put the man of God’s purpose in the place of death. Look at the case of “the seed royal,” in 2 Chronicles 22, the act of Herod, in Matthew 2, the death of Christ, in Matthew 27. In all these cases, you find the enemy seeking, by death, to interrupt the current of divine action.

But, blessed be God, there is something beyond death. The entire sphere of divine action, as connected with redemption, lies beyond the limits of death’s domain. When Satan has exhausted his power, then God begins to show Himself. The grave is the limit of Satan’s activity; but there it is that divine activity begins. This is a glorious truth. Satan has the power of death; but God is the God of the living; and He gives life beyond the reach and power of death — a life which Satan cannot touch. The heart finds sweet relief in such a truth as this, in the midst of a scene where death reigns. Faith can stand and look on at Satan putting forth the plenitude of his power. It can stay itself upon God’s mighty instrumentality of resurrection. It can take its stand at the grave which has just closed over a beloved object, and drink in, from the lips of Him who is “the resurrection and the life,” the elevating assurance of a glorious immortality. It knows that God is stronger than Satan, and it can, therefore, quietly wait for the full manifestation of that superior strength, and, in thus waiting, find its victory and its settled peace. We have a noble example of this power of faith in the opening verses of our chapter.

“And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi. And the woman conceived and bare a son; and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months. And when she could no longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river’s brink. And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him” (Ex. 2:1-4). Here we have a scene of touching interest, in whatever way we contemplate it. In point of fact, it was simply faith triumphing over the influences of nature and death, and leaving room for the God of resurrection to act in His own proper sphere and character. True, the enemy’s power is apparent, in the circumstance that the child had to be placed in such position — a position of death, in principle. And, moreover, a sword was piercing through the mother’s heart, in thus beholding her precious offspring laid, as it were, in death. Satan might act, and nature might weep; but the Quickener of the dead was behind the dark cloud, and faith beheld Him there, gilding heaven’s side of that cloud with His bright and life-giving beams. “By faith Moses when he was born was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king’s commandment” (Heb. 11:23).

Thus, this honored daughter of Levi teaches us a holy lesson. Her “ark of bulrushes, daubed with slime and pitch,” declares her confidence in the truth that there was a something which could keep out the waters of death, in the case of this “proper child,” as well as in the case of Noah, “the preacher of righteousness.” Are we to suppose, for a moment, that this “ark” was the invention of mere nature? Was it nature’s forethought that devised it, or nature’s ingenuity that constructed it? Was the babe placed in the ark at the suggestion of a mother’s heart, cherishing the fond but visionary hope of thereby saving her treasure from the ruthless hand of death? Were we to reply to the above inquiries in the affirmative, we should, I believe, lose the beauteous teaching of this entire scene. How could we ever suppose that the “ark” was devised by one who saw no other portion or destiny for her child but death by drowning? Impossible. We can only look upon that significant structure, as faith’s draft handed in at the treasury of the God of resurrection. It was devised by the hand of faith, as a vessel of mercy, to carry “a proper child” safely over death’s dark waters, into the place assigned him by the immutable purpose of the living God. When we behold this daughter of Levi bending over that “ark of bulrushes,” which her faith had constructed, and depositing therein her babe, we see her “walking in the steps of that faith of her father Abraham, which he had” “when he rose up from before his dead,” and purchased the cave of Macpelah from the sons of Heth (Gen. 23). We do not recognize in her the energy of mere nature, hanging over the object of its affections, about to fall into the iron grasp of the king of terrors. No; but we trace in her the energy of a faith which enabled her to stand, as a conqueror, at the margin of death’s cold flood, and behold the chosen servant of Jehovah in safety at the other side.

Yes, my reader, faith can take those bold and lofty flights into regions far removed from this land of death and wide-spread desolation. Its eagle gaze can pierce the gloomy clouds which gather around the tomb, and behold the God of resurrection displaying the results of His everlasting counsels, in the midst of a sphere which no arrow of death can reach. It can take its stand upon the top of the Rock of Ages, and listen, in holy triumph, while the surges of death are lashing its base.

And what, let me ask, was “the king’s commandment” to one who was in possession of this heaven-born principle? What weight had that commandment with one who could calmly stand beside her “ark of bulrushes” and look death straight in the face? The Holy Spirit replies, “they were not afraid of the king’s commandment.” The spirit that knows aught of communion with Him who quickens the dead, is not afraid of anything. Such an one can take up the triumphant language of 1 Corinthians 15 and say, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” He can give forth these words of triumph over a martyred Abel; over Joseph in the pit; over Moses in his ark of bulrushes; in the midst of “the seed royal,” slain by the hand of Athaliah; amid the babes of Bethlehem, murdered by the mandate of the cruel Herod; and far above all, he can utter them at the tomb of the Captain of our salvation.

Now, it may be, there are some who cannot trace the activities of faith, in the matter of the ark of bulrushes. Many may not be able to travel beyond the measure of Moses’ sister, when “she stood afar off, to wit, what would be done to him.” It is very evident that “his sister” was not up to “the measure of faith” possessed by “his mother.” No doubt, she possessed deep interest and true affection, such as we may trace in “Mary Magdalene and the other Mary sitting over against the sepulcher” (Matt. 27:61). But there was something far beyond either interest or affection in the maker of the “ark.” True, she did not “stand afar off to wit what would be done to” her child, and hence, what frequently happens, the dignity of faith might seem like indifference, on her part. It was not, however, indifference, but true elevation — the elevation of

faith. If natural affection did not cause her to linger near the scene of death, it was only because the power of faith was furnishing her with nobler work, in the presence of the God of resurrection. Her faith had cleared the stage for Him, and most gloriously did He show Himself thereon.

“And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river’s side; and when she saw the ark among the flags she sent her maid to fetch it. And when she had opened it she saw the child; and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrews’ children.” Here, then, the divine response begins to break, in sweetest accents, on the ear of faith. God was in all this. Rationalism, or skepticism, or infidelity, or atheism, may laugh at such an idea. And faith can laugh also; but the two kinds of laughter are very different. The former laughs, in cold contempt, at the thought of divine interference in the trifling affair of a royal maiden’s walk by the river’s side. The latter laughs, with real heart-felt gladness, at the thought that God is in everything. And, assuredly, if ever God was in anything, He was in this walk of Pharaoh’s daughter, though she knew it not.

The renewed mind enjoys one of its sweetest exercises, while tracing the divine footsteps in circumstances and events in which a thoughtless spirit sees only blind chance or rigid fate. The most trifling matter may, at times, turn out to be a most important link in a chain of events by which the Almighty God is helping forward the development of His grand designs. Look, for instance, at Esther 6:1, and what do you see? A heathen monarch, spending a restless night. No uncommon circumstance, we may suppose; and, yet, this very circumstance was a link in a great chain of providences at the end of which you find the marvelous deliverance of the oppressed seed of Israel.

Thus was it with the daughter of Pharaoh, in her walk by the river’s side. Little did she think that she was helping forward the purpose of “the Lord God of the Hebrews!” How little idea had she that the weeping babe, in that ark of bulrushes, was yet to be Jehovah’s instrument in shaking the land of Egypt to its very center! Yet so it was. The Lord can make the wrath of man to praise Him, and restrain the remainder. How plainly the truth of this appears in the following passage!

“Then said his sister to Pharaoh’s daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee? And Pharaoh’s daughter said unto her, Go. And the maid went and called the child’s mother. And Pharaoh’s daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages. And the woman took the child and nursed it. And the child grew and she brought him unto Pharaoh’s daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water” (Ex. 2:7-10). The beautiful faith of Moses’ mother here meets its full reward; Satan is confounded; and the marvelous wisdom of God is displayed. Who would have thought that the one who had said, “If it be a son, then ye shall kill him,” and, again, “every son that is born ye shall cast into the river,” should have in his court one of those very sons, and such “a son.” The devil was foiled by his own weapon, inasmuch as Pharaoh, whom he was using to frustrate the purpose of God, is used of God to nourish and bring up Moses, who was to be His instrument in confounding the power of Satan. Remarkable providence! Admirable wisdom! Truly, Jehovah is “wonderful in counsel and excellent in working.” May we learn to trust Him with more artless simplicity, and thus our path shall be more brilliant, and our testimony more effective.

Short Papers, Loops of Blue

(Exod. 26:4.)

In contemplating the structure of the tabernacle in the wilderness, we may observe what an important place was assigned to the “loops of blue.” By means of them and the “ taches of gold,” the curtains were joined together, and the manifested unity of the whole structure preserved. These loops and taches might seem to be very insignificant and unimportant; but, without them, there would have been no unity. The curtains, however beautiful in themselves, would have hung apart one from the other, and thus one grand feature of the manifestation would have been lost.

Now, looking at the tabernacle as a figure of Christ, as surely we may, we can easily trace the beauty and significance of those “ loops of blue and taches of gold.” They typified that perfect unity and consistency in the character and ways of “ the Man Christ Jesus” which were the result of His heavenly grace and divine energy. In the life of the blessed Lord Jesus, and in all the scenes and circumstances of that life, we not only see each distinct phase and feature perfect in itself, but also a perfect combination of all those phases and features, by the power of that which was heavenly and divine in Him. The curtains of the true Tabernacle were not only beautiful in themselves, but they were beautifully combined-exquisitely linked together by means of those “ loops of blue and taches of gold” which can oily be discerned and appreciated by those who are, in some measure, instructed in the holy mysteries of the sanctuary.

And let me add, that what is true of the Divine Living Word, is equally true of the divine written word. The spiritual student of holy scripture will readily discern the “ loops of blue and taches of gold.” This is only what we might expect. The Living Word is the divine embodiment of the written word; and the written word is the divine transcript of the Living Word. Hence, we may look for the same heavenly unity, the same divine consistency-the same rare and exquisite combination in both the one and the other. It would be, at once, pleasant and profitable to trace, in company with my reader, the various illustrations of the loops and taches, through the word of God; but to do this fully would demand a volume; whereas, at present, I have merely time and space for a brief suggestive fragment. I should, however, like to give an example or two from the written word which may perhaps lead him to study the subject for himself.

In 1 Cor. 16 we have a very lovely and a very practical illustration of our subject. At verse 13 the apostle says, “ Quit you like men, be strong.” Here we have one fine feature of the christian character-that manly strength which is so desirable. But this, if taken by itself, might easily degenerate into a rough, rude, high-handed way in dealing with others, the very opposite of what we find in our divine Exemplar. Hence the Spirit in the apostle forms a loop of blue, and by means of a golden tach, links on to this manly strength, another feature which is so needful, namely, charity. “ Let all your things be done with charity.” Most precious combination I Strength and charity. Charity and strength. If you untie this heavenly loop, you will either have a high, haughty, inconsiderate style, or a soft, pliable, enfeebled mode of acting which will sacrifice everything for peace and quietness.

Again, look at that noble definition of pure religion, given at the close of the second chapter of James. There the apostle uses the loop and tach in order to connect together the two phases of divine religion. “ To visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction” is looped with

unspotted separation from the world. In other words, active benevolence and personal holiness are inseparably linked together. Untie the loop, and what have you got? Either a sort of benevolence which can go hand in hand with the most intense spirit of worldliness; or a rigid pharisaic separation without a single generous emotion. It is only the presence of that which is heavenly and divine that can secure true unity and consistency of character. And, let it never be forgotten, that true Christianity is simply Christ reproduced, by the Holy Ghost, in the life of the Christian. Dry rules will never do; it must be Christ in all.

Short Papers, Two Altars, The

(Exod. 20:24-26.)

“ An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: hi all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.”

If aught could enhance the value, or add to the interest of this passage of scripture, it is the context in which it stands. To find such words at the close of Exod. 20 is something which must strike the thoughtful reader. In the opening of this chapter, we find God speaking from the top of Mount Sinai, and laying down the law as to man’s duty toward God and his duty toward his neighbor. This law is published amid thunderings, blackness, darkness, and tempest. “ Thou shalt do this;” and “ thou shalt not do that.” Such are the terms ha which God speaks from the top of the fiery mount. Thus is He compelled to erect around Himself, and around His rights, certain barriers, in order to keep man off. And, in the same way, has man to be kept from infringing the rights of his follow.

Thus much as to the opening of Exod. 20 There are no such words here as, “I will come unto thee.” Quito the reverse. The word was, “ Beware lest thou come unto me.” (See Exod. 19:12, 24.) It was impossible for man to get to God by way of law. The barriers that were placed around that palpable mount were insuperable to man. “ By works of law shall no man living be justified.” Under the law there is no possible way of access to God. “Keep off” is the stern utterance of the entire legal system—the expression of the very spirit and genius of the whole Mosaic economy. Nearness and liberty are unknown under the law, and cannot possibly be enjoyed by any one on legal ground.

Hence, then, we may safely say—and we say it with reverence—Jehovah was not at home on the top of mount Sinai. It was not natural to Him to surround Himself with harriers. He was, as it were, forced into the position, by the legality of the human heart. Israel had taken upon them to say, “ All that the Lord hath spoken we will do.” (Exod. 19:8.) It was this that caused Jehovah to place Himself at a distance in order that man might be tested, and the offense might abound. He bad just said to the people, “ Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself. Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine.”

To what “covenant” does He here refer? To the covenant made with Abraham—the covenant of grace. There was nothing of man’s doing in tins covenant. It set forth what God would do for Abraham and his seed—what He would give them, and what He would be to them. It was on the ground of this covenant that Jehovah could say to Israel, “I have brought you unto myself.” But the very moment that Israel undertook to say, “ All that the Lord hath spoken we will do,” we hear the command issued to “ set bounds about the mount,” that the people might be put at a distance.

However, as we have said, all this was not according to the loving heart of the God of Israel. It did not suit His nature and character to place Himself at a distance from His people. They had compelled Him to retire within the narrow enclosures of mount Sinai, and to surround Himself with clouds and darkness, thunderings, lightnings, and tempest. Man had undertaken to do, and he must be put to the test. “ The law entered that the offense might abound.” And again, “ By the law is the knowledge of sin.”

But it is not our intention, hi this short article, to dwell upon the subject of “the law.” We have merely referred to it in order to bring out the striking contrast between the opening and the close of Exod. 20 It would seem as though God were in haste to come down from the top of that dreadful mountain in order to meet man at “ an altar of earth”—the place of grace—the place where man’s doings are displaced by God’s. “ An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name, 1 will come auto thee, and I will bless thee.”

What a contrast! It is as though He had said to them, “ You cannot come to me, if I remain on the top of this mountain; but I will come unto you. If I remain here, I must curse you; but I will meet you at an altar of earth and bless you.” Blessed be His Name, He delights not in cursing; and hence He would not record His Name on Mount Sinai, the place of distance, and darkness, where He could not come unto His people and bless them.

How blessedly all this tells out what God is! This teaching about the altar is like a ray of divine light piercing through the gloom which surrounded Mount Sinai, and shining on the spot where God would record His Name, and where He could meet His people in all the fullness of blessing.

And let the reader note the character of the offerings referred to in verse 24. We have “ burnt offerings and peace offerings.” Not a word about sin offerings and trespass offerings. Why is this? Surely this is the very place in which we should expect to find these latter introduced. But no. We have the burnt offering—the type of Christ surrendering Himself, in life and in death, to do the will of God; and we have the peace offering—the type of Christ as the object on which the worshipper feeds in communion with God. And not a word about the sin offering or trespass offering. Why? Is it that these are not needed? Far be the thought! They He at the very foundation of that altar where God and the worshipper meet. The sin offering is the type of Christ bearing the judgment of God against sin. The trespass offering is the type of Christ bearing our sins in His own body on the tree. These, we repeat, form the foundation of all worship. But they are omitted in Exod. 20:24, because we have here the nature and character of the worship in which God delights—a worship in which the soul is occupied with Christ, in the very highest aspect of His Person and work; for this is what we have in the burnt offering, wherein Christ is seen making atonement, not merely according to our need, but according to the claims of God—not merely according to the measure of the hatefulness of sin, but according to the measure of the preciousness of Christ to the heart of God.

What a striking contrast, then, between the opening and closing hues of Exod. 20! What lessons are here for our hearts! What a rebuke to all our legal tendencies! We are all prone to be occupied with our doings, in some shape or form. Legality is natural to our hearts; and, let us remember, it was this that forced Jehovah—to speak after the manner of men—to take up the position hi which we find Him in Exod. 19 and xx. Abraham did not know God in such a position. It was not as a lawgiver that God revealed Himself to the father of the faithful; but as a God of grace, as a God of promise. There were no thunderings and lightnings, no blackness, darkness, and tempest, surrounding the Blessed One when He appeared unto Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees; nor yet when He partook of his hospitality in the plains of Mamre. It was ever God's delight to have His people near Him, enjoying the precious fruits of His grace, and not afar off, reaping the bitter fruits of their works. This latter was simply the result of man's legal utterance, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." Up to the fatal moment in the which these words were spoken, God had been speaking and acting in the same unqualified grace toward the seed of Abraham, as He had toward that favored patriarch himself. But when once Israel undertook to do, it was needful to put them thoroughly to the test; and this was done by the law.

But, it may be asked, was it not always God's purpose to give the law? Was it not necessary? Is it not designed to be the abiding rule of man's conduct—the statement of his duty to God and man—the divine summary and embodiment of his righteousness? To all this we reply, Most surely God knew from the beginning what He would do; and moreover, He, in His infinite wisdom, overruled man's legal folly, and made use of the law to raise the great question of righteousness, and prove whether it was possible for man to work out a righteousness which could be accepted. But what was the result? Did man ever get righteousness by keeping the ten commandments? Never. " By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight, for by law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. 3:20.) And again, " 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. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for the just shall live by faith." Gal. 3:10, 11.

What, then, was the object of the law? Why was it given? And what was its effect? " The law entered that the offense might abound." (Rom. 5:20.) "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions." (Gal. 3:19.) " The law worketh wrath." Rom. 4:15.

Thus scripture answers our three questions in the plainest possible manner; and not only so, hut it settles the entire law question in such a way as to remove every difficulty and every cloud from the mind that will only submit absolutely to the authority of the word.

However, when we sat down to pen this brief article, we had no thought whatever of entering on the domain of theology. It was merely our purpose to present to the heart and mind of the reader the striking lesson taught by the two altars in Exod. 20—the altar of earth and the altar of hewn stone. In the former, we have the very spirit of the dispensation of grace; in the latter, the spirit of the dispensation of law. God wanted man to he near Him; and therefore He would have an altar of earth. In other words, man was to approach God without any efforts or doings of his own. " If thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone [or, as the margin reads, " build them with hewing"]: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it. Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon."

Oh! that men would only consider these things! How little are they understood! Man will be doing. He will lift up his tool in the building of his altar; and the result is, pollution. He will ascend by steps; and the result is, discovered nakedness. Thus it is, and thus it must be, because man is a sinner, and his very best works can only issue in pollution and nakedness.

But one thing is certain, God does not record His Name in any place where man's doings are set up as the basis of worship. This truth shines with heavenly luster on every page of the sacred Volume; and it shines where we should least of all have expected to find it; namely, at the close of Exod. 20 It is something perfectly wonderful, amid the thunderings of Mount Sinai, to catch such heavenly accents as these, " In all places where I record my name / trill come unto thee, and / will bless thee." These are words of purest grace—words flowing from the very heart of God—words expressing the very nature and character of God. " I will come unto thee." Precious words! May they sink down into our hearts and there abide! May it be our aim and object ever to be found worshipping in that place where God records His Name, and where, instead of the nakedness and pollution which ever mark the efforts of man, we have the infinite preciousness of the grace of God, and the fullness and excellency of Christ in His Person and work!

Christian Truth: Volume 14, Ground of Peace, The

"When I see the blood, I will pass over you." Exod. 12:13.

It is most needful to be simple and clear as to what it is which constitutes the groundwork of peace. So many things are mixed up with the work of Christ, that souls are plunged in darkness and uncertainty as to their acceptance. They know that there is no other way of being saved but by the blood of Christ; but the devils know this, and it avails them naught. What is needed is to know that we are saved- absolutely, perfectly, eternally saved. There is no such thing as being partly saved and partly lost; partly justified and partly guilty; partly alive and partly dead; partly born of God and partly not. There are but two states, and we must be in either one or the other.

The Israelite was not partly sheltered by the blood and partly exposed to the sword of the destroyer. He knew he was safe. He did not hope so. He was not praying to be so. He was perfectly safe. Why? Because God had said, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." He simply rested on God's testimony about the shed blood. He "set to his seal" that God was true. He believed that God meant what He said, and that gave him peace.

If an Israelite had been asked as to his enjoyment of peace, what would he have said? Would he have said, "I know there is no other way of escape but the blood of the lamb, and I know that to be a divinely perfect way; and, moreover, I know that the blood has been shed and sprinkled on my doorpost; but somehow I do not feel quite comfortable. I am not quite sure that I am safe. I fear I do not value the blood as I ought, nor love the God of my fathers as I ought"? Would such have been his answer? Assuredly not. And yet hundreds of professing Christians speak thus when asked if they have peace. They put their thoughts about the blood in place of the blood itself, and thus, in result, make salvation as much dependent on themselves as if they were to be saved by works alone.

Now the Israelite was saved by blood alone, and not by his thoughts about it. His thoughts might be deep or they might be shallow; but, deep or shallow, they had nothing to do with his safety; he was not saved by his thoughts or feelings, but by the blood. God did not say, "When you see the blood, I will pass over you." No; but, "When I see." What gave an Israelite peace was the fact that Jehovah's eye rested on the blood. God saw it, and that was quite enough.

The application of this to the question of a sinner's peace is very plain. Christ's blood has been shed as a perfect atonement for sin, and God's testimony assures the believer that everything is settled on his behalf. All the claims of justice have been fully answered, and the full tide of redeeming love rolls down from the heart of God along the channels which the sacrifice of Christ has opened for it.

To this truth the Holy Ghost bears witness. He ever sets forth the fact of God's estimate of the blood of Christ. He points the sinner's eye to the accomplished work of the cross. He declares that all is done; that sin has been put far away and righteousness brought nigh-so nigh that it is to all them that believe. Believe what? Believe what God says because He says it, not because they feel it.

Now we are constantly prone to look at something in ourselves as necessary to form the ground of peace. We are apt to regard the work of the Spirit in us rather than the work of Christ for us, as the foundation of our peace. This is a mistake. We know the operations of the Spirit of God have their proper place in Christianity, but His work is never set forth as that on which our peace depends. The Holy Ghost did not make peace, but Christ did. The Holy Ghost is not said to be our peace, but Christ is. God did not send "preaching peace" by the Holy Ghost, but "by Jesus Christ" (compare Acts 10:36; Eph. 2:14, 17; Col. 1:20).

The Holy Ghost reveals Christ; He makes us (who are sheltered by the blood of Christ) to know, enjoy, and feed upon Christ. He bears witness to Christ takes of the things of Christ and shows them to us. He is the power of communion, the seal, the earnest, the unction. In short, His operations are essential. Yet, notwithstanding all this, the work of the Spirit is not the ground of peace. He is not our title, though He reveals our title, and enables us to enjoy it. He is the author of every right desire, every holy aspiration, every pure and heavenly affection, every divine experience; but His work in us and with us will not be complete until we have left this present scene and taken our place with Christ in glory. Not so the work of Christ for us. That is absolutely and eternally complete.

It is of the utmost importance to distinguish between the Spirit's work in us and Christ's work for us. Where they are confounded, one rarely finds settled peace as to the question of sin. The type of the passover illustrates the distinction very simply. The Israelite's peace was not founded on the unleavened bread or the bitter herbs, but upon the blood. Nor was it, by any means, a question of what he thought about

ill° blood, but what God thought about it. This gives immense relief and comfort to the heart. God has found a ransom, and He reveals that ransom to us sinners, in order that we may rest therein on the authority of His word and by the grace of His Spirit. And albeit our thoughts and feelings must ever fall far short of the infinite preciousness of that ransom, yet, inasmuch as God tells us that He is perfectly satisfied about our sins, we may be satisfied also. Our conscience may well find settled rest where God's holiness finds rest.

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