Joshua - Commentaries by Unknown Author

Christian Friend: Volume 2, Caleb

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“We are saved by hope;” but hope is divine certainty, because it is connected with the purpose of God. All His own counsel is before God, and it shall stand. He has measured the difficulties in the way of its accomplishment by the resources of His own grace, His own wisdom, and His own strength. Neither the frailty of the creature, nor the power of the adversary, shall prevent the blessing of those who are “the called according to the purpose of God. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son.” It is this result of the purpose of God which is the object of the hope of the Christian. It is not the hope of forgiveness of sins, neither the hope of righteousness, nor the hope of eternal life, properly; for the hope of which the apostle speaks is based on these wondrous blessings, which are already secured by the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing short of these blessings can result from the work of the Holy Ghost, at one and the same time communicating life to the soul, and presenting Jesus to it as the object of faith. If there be uncertainty of hope, it is because the soul is not really reposing on Christ Himself and His perfect work. Whenever this is the case (and how common it is, alas! we too well know), the thing hoped for is the ascertainment of forgiveness of sins and righteousness, instead of pardon and righteousness being the groundwork of hope. But real, scriptural hope—being the expectation of that, in manifestation, which is already known in the consciousness of the soul by faith, yea, and enjoyed, too, by the Spirit—is necessarily connected with patience. “Hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” When Christ shall appear, not only will the saints appear with Him in glory, but their longings for the full enjoyment, without any hindrance, of that which is theirs already shall be fully realized.

But notwithstanding the certainty and blessedness of our hope, it has pleased our Gad, who knows the cravings of that life which is communicated by the Holy Ghost, and flows from union with our risen and glorified Head, to make provision for the sustainment and encouragement of our souls by giving to us the Holy Ghost as the earnest of the inheritance. He is not the earnest so much in the way of leading our souls from what we do taste now to what we may expect to taste when we are in glory; but it is rather in the way of the divine certainty of those things which God has prepared for them that love Him that He now gives the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. The light in which we regard the truth of the earnest of the Spirit will make a great difference as to the stability of our souls. This relation of the Holy Ghost to us is distinct from those spiritual instincts which He Himself has communicated. Being given as the earnest, in consequence of the certainty of the determinate counsel of God in bringing those whom He has called to glory, He is at once the Spirit of revelation to show to us the things which are freely given to us of God, and the Spirit of communion, so as to enjoy all that which He thus shows us; but at the same time He is Himself the earnest, which never could have been given, save as the witness of accomplished redemption, and because of the certainty of future glory. It is thus that so many blessings, which, as to actual manifestation and real unhindered enjoyment, are yet future, are spoken of most truly as present. This blessed truth might be largely illustrated. In one sense, we wait for our blessings; in another, we have them already. The manifestation of our sonship is yet future; but we wait not to be sons. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be [rather, what we shall be hath not yet been manifested]: but we know that, when He shall appear [be manifested], we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.” But Christ has already manifested Himself to us, “although He be not manifested to the world. So again, He is gone to prepare mansions for us in the Father’s house, and we expect that He will come again, and receive us unto Himself; that where He is, there we may be also.” This is the characteristic hope of the church; but mark “the earnest” resulting from this certain hope: “If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode [mansion] with him.” Most blessed earnest: the Father and the Son, now in the unity of the Spirit, making their mansion with us! We are sons, waiting for the adoption. Strange language! yet how real. We wait for the adoption—to wit, the redemption of the body—because to be in a glorified body, like Christ Himself, with Christ in heaven, is the proper suited place for the sons of God. But because of this, being born of God now, we are sons, and God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba, Father.” Observe, the Spirit is not given to make us sons, but because we are sons; and although not actually in our native home, yet God enables us to speak, and think, and act as His sons, although we are as unknown to the world as Jesus Christ Himself was while He was in the world.

We need faith, for “we walk by faith;” we need hope, “for we are saved by hope;” but we need also the Holy Ghost Himself as the present earnest of our inheritance, lest we faint and grow weary by the way. Grace and glory are two consecutive links in the golden chain of God; but, for the most part to us, there is practically an interval filled up by painful experience on our part, and yet such experience as causes us to learn grace now, “manifold grace,” in a manner we could hardly learn it in glory, just as assuredly we shall learn it in glory, even “the riches of grace,” after a manner inconceivable by us at present. The joyous triumphant song of Israel on the banks of the Red Sea, witnessing the grace and power of God in their deliverance from Egypt, stopped not short of their immediate introduction into Canaan. The Holy Ghost who indited that song could not celebrate the unbelief of Israel, but the grace, power, and faithfulness of God. “Thou in Thy mercy hast led forth the people which Thou hast redeemed: Thou hast guided them in Thy strength unto Thy holy habitation. The people shall hear and be afraid: sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina. Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away.” There was no reason why deliverance out of Egypt should not have been introduction into Canaan; the grace and power which had effected the one was pledged for the accomplishment of the other, and could alone effect it. But how different is the actual experience of God’s people, whether typically redeemed as Israel, or really as the church, from the truth of God, which either may celebrate. Israel trembled before those whom they mentioned in their song as melting away before them. And the whole wilderness history intervenes between deliverance from Egypt and introduction into Canaan. And we ourselves also often tremble before already conquered enemies, triumphing by faith the moment we bring in God as manifested in Christ, but often dropping the notes of triumph for murmurs or fears, because the heart is not really occupied with the things freely given to us of God.

It is truly refreshing, in the sorrowful history of Israel in the wilderness, to find such a one as Caleb. He is not one of the great public actors as Moses, Aaron, or Joshua. One of the “heads of the children of Israel,” of the honored tribe of Judah, he was going the weary round of the

wilderness with his brethren, but assuredly with lighter heart and firmer step than they; and in this respect he so blessedly illustrates what the earnest of the Spirit is, and at the same time is a type of that class of “unknown,” “yet well known,” Christians who, apart from murmuring and strife, are steadily wending their way to that rest, of which the Lord Himself has spoken to them. Historically, Caleb presents to us a feature which we find not in Moses himself. He had known Egypt for the first forty years of his life, he had trodden Canaan forty days, he had gone through the wilderness, and had passed over Jordan into the possession of Canaan, and was still full of manly vigor and courage. He was one of those who, through faith, had obtained promises, and was not satisfied till he was in actual possession.

“On the first day of the second month, in the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt,” Moses and Aaron number Israel in the wilderness of Sinai, “every male by their polls, from twenty years old and upward, all that are able to go forth to war in Israel.” (Num. 1:1-4) Again, “after the plague,” in which twenty-four thousand perished in the matter of Baal-peor, Moses and Eleazer the priest number Israel in the plains of Moab, by Jordan, near Jericho; “but among these there was not a man of them whom Moses and Aaron the priest numbered, when they numbered the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai. For the Lord had said of them, They shall surely die in the wilderness. And there was not left a man of them, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.” (Num. 26:1,4,64,65)

While this verified the Word of God, we may still ask, What hindered Caleb and Joshua from being worn out by the trial of the wilderness, which had worn out all their generation! Let Caleb himself answer. “Then the children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that the Lord said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadesh-barnea. Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadeshbarnea to espy out the land; and I brought him word again as it was in mine heart. Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I wholly followed the Lord my God. And now, behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, as He said, these forty and five years, even since the Lord spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in. Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: if so be the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the Lord said.” (Josh. 14:6-12)

“I brought him word again as it was in mine heart.” Caleb owned that it was a pleasant land which the Lord gave to the children of Israel, and his heart was set upon it. He could discern the difference between that land and Egypt; between the land which was cultivated with all the appliance of human skill, “watered with the foot,” and “a land of hills and valleys, which drinketh water of the rain of heaven: a land which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.” His treasure was in the land, and there his heart was. Others esteemed Egypt preferable to the wilderness, when their hearts were discouraged from going up to possess Canaan, on account of the difficulties in the way; but Caleb esteemed Canaan, with all the difficulty of entering into it, as far more precious than Egypt with present ease, but with present bondage also. Canaan was in his heart all the time he traversed the wilderness. He had tasted the fruit of Canaan; his eyes had beholden it; and he had not the report of others as to the land, but his own “feet had trodden it.” It was this which made him tread the wilderness with such elastic steps. Besides this, he had the sure word of the Lord’s promise to support him. He knew the certain end unto which his wanderings, in company with others, must lead. As they encamped or broke up, at the commandment of the Lord, he could either “rest in his tent,” or traverse the wilderness with the land in his heart, and say, after every weary march or lengthened encampment. The wilderness time is far spent; the day of again seeing the land is at hand. As his contemporaries wasted away, how solemn must have been the admonition to his soul against the sin of unbelief; how forcibly must the rapid passing away of that evil generation have brought these words to his remembrance— “Because all those men which have seen My glory, and My miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted Me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; surely they shall not see the land which I sware unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked Me see it: but My servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed Me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it.” “God hath given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.” This was the comfort, strength, and establishment of apostles, as well as of common Christians. Christ Himself, to whom the Spirit ever bears witness, is thus not only the object of faith, but the object of desire also. It is as the object of desire that He is known now in earnest by the Spirit. Experimentally, He is never known by the soul in all His own attractive loveliness until He be received as “all our salvation.” The selfish heart of man cannot bear to contemplate such perfection, condemnatory of itself, until that lawful, selfish craving is answered, “What must I do to be saved?” by, “Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved.” We can only study Him by knowing Him as the Savior. But when He is so known, what graciousness do we find in His own word— “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.” He comes now into the heart by the Spirit: blessed earnest indeed of His coming for us, to be with Him where He is. It is thus, too, that the apostle speaks to us: “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ be in you.” Well indeed says another: “Whom not having seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.” If the Spirit of God shows to us the things which are freely given to us of God, He shows them not as in the distant future, but being Himself the earnest of the inheritance, He now glorifies Jesus, taking of His things and showing them unto us, and showing them as ours now in Him, so that we can taste and handle our own blessings. We too are solemnly warned as to the evil of unbelief in finding many an object to which we have fondly clung passing away, so that bitter disappointment would ensue were it not that by the Spirit we more fully realized, and were led more deeply to taste, the unfailing blessings which are ours in Christ.

“Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I wholly followed the Lord my God.” It is no presumption in any of us to answer to the testimony of God to our own souls. So did Caleb; for the Lord said, “But My servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed Me fully.” Caleb had searched the land, following the Lord his God there, when the Lord Himself was his guide and defense, and no enemy could set upon him. He had seen that the land “was exceeding good;” but he reckoned on the good pleasure of the Lord in His people. “If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land, and give it us.” The soul of Caleb rested entirely on the grace and power of God, which had caused them to triumph at the Red Sea, and had kept the spies in searching the land. The same grace and power could alone lead them into possession of the land. On this, and this alone, he reckoned. Only let his soul recognize where the Lord was, and he could see victory. But the very same principle of fully following the Lord, which made him encourage the people to go up, would hinder him from the attempt, after that the Lord had said, “Tomorrow turn again the way of the Red Sea;” for the Lord had no delight in the people. Where the Lord was there was both grace and power; and Caleb had to learn that grace and power for forty years in the wilderness on which he had so early reckoned, and which eventually put him in actual possession of the very part of the land which he had trodden with his feet. He fully followed the Lord through the wilderness, and knew Him there as his guardian and guide whom he

had known as a mighty deliverer out of Egypt, and who had introduced him into Canaan, and enabled him to see and search the land and know its fruits.

The Spirit of God is presented to us in direct contrast with the spirit of the world. “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.” The spirit of the world is one of restless activity and inquiry, either to find out something new, or to invent some remedy against the multiform misery of man. It may take either a speculative or a practical turn, but it never discovers the satisfactory remedy. “Behold, is it not of the Lord of hosts that the people shall labor in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity?” The spirit of the world is ever advancing, but never reaching its end; leading ever to that which is coming, but never yet has come. The Spirit which is of God is the very opposite. The Holy Ghost produces in the saint “the spirit of a sound mind.” He leads the soul backward to the past, and forward to the future. He steadies the soul by leading it to repose on the already accomplished work of Christ on the cross; and from thence He animates the soul, by leading it into the glorious prospect set before it—a prospect not of some yet undiscovered panacea for man’s misery that is found in the past in the cross of Christ, neither of a vague and ignorant futurity, but that “hidden wisdom of God, concerning things which God has prepared before the foundation of the world to our glory, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, but which God hath revealed to us by His Spirit.” The Holy Ghost is the Spirit of truth, and can never have a higher subject of testimony than He has at present—the sufferings of Christ and the glory which is to follow. He cannot reveal to us higher blessings than He reveals at present; and He Himself is the present earnest in the heart of the believer, because those blessings are so certain, and already secured in Christ. If Caleb needed to have his heart occupied with Canaan to cheer his spirit in the wilderness, we not only need the earnest of the Spirit for the same purpose, but also to keep us from the seductive power of the spirit of the world. And this He does by showing to us the things freely given to us of God as so high and blessed that they have not even been conceived by the daring boldness of man’s heart. As the earnest, He leads the soul to long to see Christ as He is, and to be like Him, and thus, too, leads in the path of fully following the Lord. To be ever with the Lord is the blessing in prospect; but to have Him ever with us now is the consequent earnest. “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.” How is this made good by the abiding presence of the Holy Ghost, the other Comforter. Oh that with purpose of heart we might cleave unto the Lord, and say in the midst of sorrowful experience, “The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.”

“And now, behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, as He said.” The Holy Spirit, as the earnest, is the Spirit “of promise;” not only as being Himself the “promise of the Father,” but substantiating promises to the soul. As Caleb saw his contemporaries die off day by day, how much he needed the encouragement of the specific promise of the Lord— “The Lord hath kept me alive, as He said.” The Holy Ghost is the quickener, He is the earnest, and He is also the Holy Spirit of promise, thus giving special value to the Word, to the Scriptures, bringing it to remembrance, and applying a familiar text with unknown power, because such a promise or such a scripture exactly suits the circumstances of our need. “As He said.” How important is this. Subjection of mind to the authority of Scripture no less distinguishes the guidance of the Holy Spirit from the spirit of the world than it distinguishes real spirituality from cloudy mysticism. The Scripture becomes of increasing value in proportion as the spirit of the age advances. As applied by the Spirit of truth, it gives the consciousness of certainty when the spirit of the world, in the freedom of inquiry, is leading into general skepticism. The result of these two conflicting spirits—the spirit of the world and the Spirit which is of God—is, that the one will lead to set the stability of created things against the promise of Christ coming; the other, to throw the soul more entirely on His promise. (2 Peter 3) But the soul needs now establishment and encouragement, and the Holy Ghost, as the earnest, gives such a reality to the promises of God in Scripture, that the soul is enabled to set, “As He says,” against all appearances of things or opinions of men.

“As my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in.” All the weary round of forty years of toil in the wilderness had not unpaired the strength of Caleb. He had sung that wondrous note— “The Lord is my strength.” He had acted on that strength when He searched the land, and was ready, at the prime of manhood, to go up and possess the land; and now, at fourscore and five years, he finds his strength the same. “The Lord was his strength. And what is the Holy Ghost to us in one aspect as the earnest but “the Spirit of power.” In the strictest sense, the power which acts towards us and in us is always the same. But it is only known by faith; even “the exceeding greatness of the power of God answering to that which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead.” If we attempt the smallest difficulty without regard to this power, we are foiled; but if the greatest obstacle presents itself, through faith in the Lord our strength we prevail. Hence the word, “Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.” The Spirit witnesses to us of the triumph of Christ; but His indwelling in us is a fruit of that triumph. The Lord has triumphed for us, and He also triumphs in us. We celebrate already our victory. Through Him who loved us as more than conquerors God “is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.” But that power is now actually manifested in strengthening the saints with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness. The characteristic form of power now is endurance. It is by patient continuance in well-doing that we seek for glory, honor, and immortality. The spirit of the world is that of impatience with delay, and desire of grasping some supposed present blessing; but the Spirit which is of God, being Himself the earnest of a certain inheritance, becomes especially the Spirit of power in enabling us patiently to wait for what is ours already. It is thus that, although “the outer man may decay, the inner is renewed day by day.” The Holy Ghost keeps the eye looking on invisible realities, making them, as it were, more palpable day by day. Each day brought Caleb nearer to Canaan, which was “in his heart.” Blessed indeed to see an aged disciple in whom the cravings of the mind for novelty have passed away, who has gone through, it may be, also the ordeal of worldly fascination, who has found his progress very checkered indeed, disappointment succeeding disappointment, desire dropping off after desire, yet all tending to one thing, to make him know the value of one blessed object, even Jesus. “I have written unto you, fathers,” says the apostle, “because ye have known Him that was from the beginning.” What conscious strength there is in thus having a single object, hardly ever practically attained, but through a process of unlearning. But that single object is the one object whom the Spirit of truth has been continually witnessing to in our souls as the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end, the great end and center of the eternal counsels of the Godhead. This is the strength of old age. In the never-ceasing conflict, when the buoyancy of natural powers ceases, the warfare is carried on by a deeper sense of the power that worketh in us. Faith lives when the natural faculties are impaired. The soul of the aged disciple is true to Jesus where the powers of memory and recognition fail. He that “has borne from the belly, and carried from the womb,” says, “And even to your old age I am He; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you.” By the presence of the Holy Ghost the Father and Son abide now in the soul of the believer; by the presence of the Holy Ghost believers can say, “Our conversation is in heaven.” And thus “those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; to show that the Lord is upright.” It is when the flesh is thoroughly crushed that we have strength with God and prevail. And thus, even as Caleb, the

believer goes from strength to strength, mortifying the deeds of the body through the Spirit, at the same time that the abiding presence of the Spirit is the sure witness of the righteous judgment of God passed on the flesh in the cross of Christ, and the Spirit of revelation of heavenly and eternal realities, and of present communion with Him.

“If so be the Lord be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the Lord said.” There is no doubt or uncertainty in this “if so be.” It was only reckoning on the Lord’s faithfulness to His promise, and on His ability to perform it, at the same time implying that this was his only ground of confidence. But with what confirmed confidence could he reckon on the Lord being with him, whose presence had been with him when he searched the land, and whose presence had been with him while traversing the wilderness: And is it not so with the believer now? Quickened by the Spirit when dead in trespasses and sins, he has known the same Spirit as revealing Jesus to his soul as the salvation of God. He knows the same Spirit as the abiding Comforter; glorifying Jesus, taking of His things and showing them unto the soul. He knows, by the presence of the same Comforter, that God hath called him unto His own kingdom and glory; and that same Spirit now shows to the soul what is the hope of God’s calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints. Well may we use the words of one of old, and say, If there were any darkness or uncertainty as to the future, surely the Holy Ghost would not now “have showed us all these things, nor would He as at this time have told us such things as these.”

The Springing Well: Volume 5 (1902), Our Bible Lesson Column

Golden Text.— “Moses My servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.”

—Josh. 1:2. Read Josh. 1:11

God’s Encouragement of Joshua.

1, 2. “The Lord spake unto Joshua, the son of Nun, Moses’ minister.” The Lord hath spoken. Note the thrilling words in Isa. 1:2, “Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord hath spoken.” Compare Deut. 32:1; Ps. 50:1; Heb. 1:1, 2. Reiterating the assurance that He had given the land to Israel, He bids Joshua, as their leader, to arise and cross over Jordan. God is their leader, Joshua His servant.

3, 4· “Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.”—And again He defines the boundary, as in Gen. 15:18. The purposes of God are, like Himself, eternal.

5· “As I was with Moses so I will be with thee. I will not fail thee nor forsake thee.” Joshua had seen, as Moses’ minister, some of the Lords dealings with him, and he would doubtless feel that this gracious assurance covered all he could possibly need or desire. Unto all Israel and to Joshua Moses had given very similar words of encouragement (Deut. 31:6-8), but now God Himself speaks to His servant Joshua as He had previously spoken to him by Moses.

6, 7. “Only be thou strong and very courageous.” See this command repeated in each of these verses, with the assurance that what God had sworn to do He would accomplish through Joshua. So there was nothing for Joshua to do but to believe and go obediently forward.

8. “This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night.” The first two Psalms—which form a preface to the whole book of Psalms, or, rather, to the five books of Psalms—begin with “Blessed is the man” and end with “Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.”

9· “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.” The assurance that God sends us and that He is with us covers everything. It is the greatest that mortals can have. It was God’s encouragement to Moses, and now to Joshua, and later to Gideon and to Jeremiah. If we believe His words, we shall neither be afraid nor dismayed nor discouraged.

10, 11. “Within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan to go in to possess the land which the Lord your God giveth you to possess it.” Thus Joshua commanded the officers of the people, for he believed God. The land was theirs as a free gift from God, but they had to enter into it and appropriate it. Jordan was before them to be crossed, and the walled cities and the giants were still there. But there are no difficulties to God or to those who, like Joshua and Caleb, see God only. In our own case, as believers in Jesus Christ. redeemed by His blood, it is our privilege to appropriate His promises and by faith in Him live lives of victory over self and sin to His glory. May the encouraging words of our lesson come home to each of us in the power of the Spirit.

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The Evangelist: Volume 2 (1868), None but God.

Joshua 1:12, 13.

An Extract.

“I HAVE just been thinking of the words of Job 10:12, 13,” Thou hast granted me life and favor, and thy visitation has preserved my spirit. And these things halt thou hid in thine heart: I know that this is with thee.” I don’t know that I ever noticed the last of these verses before; but it strikes me as being beautiful and comforting. The first is clear enough. Whether it be life natural or life eternal, it is a grant or gift of God. Both are to the Christian. Dim his eye may be with tears, he may be down very far under oppression or perplexity, not knowing his way out of the difficulties that surround him, but God is over all, and he turns to God; that is his relief.” Thou hast granted me life and favor, and thy visitation has preserved my spirit.” It may be looking back over the past. There is plenty to be thankful for in that. But God is looked at. The soul is so distressed from below that none but God can ease it; and I believe the Lord does work that. He knows that none but Himself can
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satisfy the heart, and He won't let it rest away from Himself; so it looks up under the pressure and speaks to Him; looks at His doings; looks into His thoughts. This is a wonderful thing, but in Christ I know the thoughts of God.

"He shows His thoughts, how kind they are." I get a look at God manifest in the flesh, and I know He is up there, far above all that can hurt me. I have comfort in the thought that He cannot be reached by any of these arrows. And won't He care for me! What preserves my spirit? What revives my soul? What keeps me from sinking under the many trials of the way? His love, His favor, the manifestation of it that I get when all turns against me, when my head goes down, down, and the billows seem to be rolling over me. 'On the side of their oppressors there was power,' wrote one; 'but they (the oppressed) had no comforter.' (Ecclesiastes 4:1.) This is not so in Christ, blessed be His name; true though it be oftentimes in the world. The believer sees His thoughts; that is, as the Spirit reveals them; and faith boldly enters upon them. "I know that this is with thee," he says. What? Life and favor, preservation of the spirit: hid in the heart of God. He is love, then, after all, says the soul. Yes; He is love; and love to me. Ah, this is blessed, this is relief indeed, to know what God is, to know what He is in Jesus. This is to behold the Lamb; to sit down under His shadow with great delight; to find His fruit sweet unto the taste; and in the Lamb to see the expression of God's thoughts—God's thoughts from eternity. He works according to a purpose. "I shall make you like my Son. He trod a path of sorrow; now He is in glory. Faint you not. You shall be like Him; you shall be with Him where He is."

THE Holy Ghost has "sealed" those who believe on Christ crucified and risen, because redemption is accomplished; He is "the earnest" because the inheritance is sure.

To Every Man His Work, Personal Growth

OS 1:8{

far end of

The following suggestions of a practical character may be helpful.

1. Keep your heart open. Cultivate love for souls. Dwell much on God's love, which gave up everything for sinners to be saved and blessed according to His purpose. You will soon learn to give up leisure time, and your best, to be in line with His heart. Think of the Lord Jesus and His sufferings to save them, and you will learn to suffer hardships and fatigue to win souls for Him. Think of their past history, their present need, and the awful future of the unbelieving. These things should move us more, as well as the fact of God's love and grace. Think how the Lord Jesus, knowing though He did all God's purposes, yet wept unfeignedly when sinners rejected His testimony. And if you think of them, you will pray for them; and we learn to love those for whom we pray.

Keep your eyes open. Do not be afraid to illustrate your addresses from Nature, or Nature's objects, nor hesitate to use in moderation instances of conversion, which you are prepared to substantiate. Despite the objection of some, we cannot improve on the Master's way of doing service, and who can read the gospels without remarking that He illustrated His addresses from the common objects of every-day life? He employed facts from natural history, episodes in domestic life, transactions between masters and servants, and even occurrences in the political world (kings and subjects) along with providential circumstance, such as accidents, etc., to give point to His words. Even the very weather served Him again and again.

Keep your note-book open. Some spend more time than others in this matter. In your private readings or meditations you will often pick up useful material. Use a note-book for yourself, as well as for your work. Often a train of thought will occur to you in a chapter of a book of the Bible; jot it down and pass on. Sometimes an illustration of a truth will flash into your mind jot it down. Now and then a point or two for a gospel address will take shape as you watch and pray-jot it down. Or you may hear a pithy remark, or a stirring subject, from the lips of some other saint seeking to serve the Lord jot it down. Do not scruple to make a note of it, nor, if led of the Lord, to preach from it yourself with your own words and your own illustrations. As your note-books multiply, copy any worthy items into your study Bible. It is exceedingly refreshing sometimes to go over these old memoranda, recalling what God has shown us in bygone times.

Keep your purse open. It is wonderful what an interest we take in the Lord's work, and that part of it He has set us in, when it costs us something. The rich man pay £5a night for a big hall to preach in. You can perhaps only afford a shilling a week for a cottage for your work. He may send books to all parts of the world in the Master's service. It is as much as some can do to scrape together a few pence now and then for tracts. He may give his houses rent free to the needy, and clothe with warm covering the naked, and frequently feed the hungry; with others it is a severe push to give half-a-crown in the Master's name to some deserving soul. But whether the more or the less, there is great sweetness and profit in doing that which costs us something, and God loves a cheerful giver. What grace it is that makes us givers in a world like this.

We may have stiff work; but the plowshare furrows well, and our service is to put the seed in. Perhaps we, perhaps others, may reap; it makes little difference which, as all the wheat is to go into the Master's garner.

Bible Witness and Review: Volume 1, City of Refuge

Joshua. 20:6.-The true application of the type is, I believe, not to departed spirits, but to the Jews, who are providentially kept of God, but kept withal out of their inheritance, until the close of the High-priesthood which Christ is now exercising in heaven. He will then come out and bless the people of Israel, to whom the glory of the Lord shall appear. They knew not what they did when they smote and killed the Prince of Life. In the city of refuge they remain till the close of Christ's (heavenly) priesthood, after which they are to return to the land of their possession. See Num. 35:25,28.

The Springing Well: Volume 5 (1902), Our Bible Lesson Column

Golden Text.— “And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served, that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Antorites in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”—Josh. 24:15. Read Josh. 24:14-25.

Joshua’s Memorable Decision

14-15. “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” Joshua, having lived a hundred and ten years, and being conscious that the time had come for him to go the way of all the earth, gathered the tribes of Israel and reminded them that not one thing had failed of all the good things which the Lord had spoken concerning them (chapters 24:29: 23:14). He called for the elders, the heads of tribes, the judges and officers to present themselves before God at Shechem, and there he rehearsed unto them the story of God’s dealings with them and entreated them to fear the Lord and serve Him in sincerity and truth, telling them that whatever they might decide he was determined that he and his house would serve the Lord, and all the people said—

16-18. “God forbid that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods. We also will serve the Lord, for He is our God.” They certainly had every reason to serve Him only and truly, for, as they said, He had brought their fathers out of the bondage of Egypt and preserved them and brought them to that land: and Joshua had just reminded them that the Lord had given them a land for which they did not labor, cities which they had not built, and vineyards and oliveyards which they had not planted (verse 13).

19-21. “And the people said unto Joshua, Nay: but we will serve the Lord.” Joshua, in reply to their assurance that they would serve the Lord, reminds them that they must be sincere, for the Lord is both holy and jealous. Holy is the only word that is used of God three times in one verse, and that only in two places (Isa. 6:3: Rev. 4:8). He, being holy, requires a holy people (Lev 19:2: 1 Pet. 1:15-16).

22-24. “The Lord our God will we serve, and His voice will we obey.” Hearing their firm protestation of a great determination to serve the Lord, Joshua further tells them that in taking this stand they must understand that they are taking a stand against themselves, and they must turn with their whole heart to God by putting away all strange gods from among them.

25. “So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day.” This verse and also verse I says that it was done at Shechem, and as Shechem was a city of refuge (20:7) and signifies “shoulder,” it is all suggestive of this—that we must find in the Lord our constant refuge from self and sin, and in our conscious weakness dwell between His shoulders and let the government of all our affairs and of ourselves also be upon His shoulder (Ps. 46:7-11: Deut. 33:12: Isa. 9:6-7).

Bible Herald: 1878, Passage of the Jordan, The

Joshua 3-5

The people are now to enter the promised land; but how enter it? For Jordan with its flood at the highest, lay as a barrier before the people of God guarding the territory of those that oppose their hopes. Now Jordan represents death, but death looked at rather as the end of human life, and the token of the enemy’s power, than as the fruit and testimony of the just judgment of God.

The passage of the Red Sea was also death: but the people were there, as participating (in type) in the death and resurrection of Jesus accomplishing their redemption, and setting them free forever from Egypt, their house of bondage—that is, from every claim of Satan. It was then that the people entered upon their pilgrimage in the wilderness. Redemption, complete salvation, purchased by the precious blood of Christ, introduces the Christian into this pilgrimage. With God, he only passes through the world as a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; still this pilgrimage is but the life down here, although it is the life of the redeemed.

1. THE HEAVENLY LIFE. There is the heavenly life, the warfare in the heavenly places, which goes on at the same time. When I say at the same time, I do not mean at the same instant, but during the same period of our natural life on the earth. It is one thing to pass through this world faithfully, or unfaithfully, in OUR daily circumstances, under the influence of a better hope; it is another tiling to be waging a spiritual warfare for the enjoyment of the promises, and of heavenly privileges, as men already dead and risen, as being absolutely not of the world. Both these things are true of the Christian life. Now, it is as dead and risen again in Christ that we are in spiritual conflict; to make war in Canaan we must have crossed the Jordan. It is, then, death and resurrection in Christ, looked at in their spiritual power not as to their efficacy for the justification of a sinner, but as their realization for his life in the heavenly places, into which Christ has entered.

A comparison between Philippians 3 and Colossians 2 and 3 shows how death and resurrection are bound up with the true character of the circumcision of Christ. In Philippians 3 the return of Christ is introduced as completing the work by the resurrection of the body. In both passages the heavenly life is spoken of as a present thing; but there is entire separation, even down here, between the pilgrimage and this heavenly life, although the latter has a powerful influence on the character of our pilgrim life. This influence was perfect and entire in the case of the Lord Jesus; but His life in connection with men, although the ever-perfect expression of the effect of His life of heavenly communion, was evidently distinct from it. The joy of the heavenly life entirely set aside all the motives of the lower life; and leading to the sufferings of His earthly life, in connection with men, produced a life of perfect patience before God. In Him all was sinless; but His joys were elsewhere.

Thus, also, with the Christian; there is nothing in common between these two lives. Nature has no part whatever in that above; in that below there are things which belong to nature and the world, not in the bad sense of the word “world,” but considered as creation. Nothing of this enters into the life of Canaan. Christ alone could pass through death, and exhaust its strength, in being in it as shedding the blood of the everlasting covenant; and He alone could rise again from death, according to the power of the life that was in Him, “for in him was life.” He has opened this way; He has converted death into a power that destroys this flesh which shackles us, and a deliverance from that in us that gives advantage to the enemy with whom we have to fight, being thenceforward brought into Canaan. Therefore the apostle says, “All things are yours, whether life or death.” Now, every true Christian is dead and risen in Christ: the knowing and realizing it is another thing; but the

word of God sets Christian privilege before us according to its real power in Christ.

2. THE ARK. The ark of the Lord passed over before the people, who were to leave the space of two thousand cubits between it and them, “that they might know the way by which they must go; for they had not passed this way before.” Who, indeed, had passed through death, to rise above its power, until Christ, the true Ark of the Covenant, had opened this way? Man, whether innocent or sinful, could do nothing here. This way was alike unknown to both, as was also the heavenly life that follows. This life is altogether beyond Jordan; the scenes of spiritual conflict do not belong to man in his life below. No wilderness experience, be it ever so faithful, has anything to do with it, although the grapes of Canaan may cheer the pilgrims by the way. But Christ has destroyed all the power of the enemy and the token of his dominion. It is now but the witness of the power of Jesus. It is indeed death; but, as we have said, it is the death of that which fetters us.

3. LORD OF ALL THE EARTH. I will add some brief remarks. “Lord of all the earth” is the title Joshua repeats, as that which God had here taken; for it is in testimony to this great truth that God had planted Israel in Canaan. Hereafter He will establish in power, according to His counsels, that which had been put into the hands of Israel, that they might keep it according to their responsibility. This last principle is the key to the whole history of the Bible, as to man, Israel, the law, and all it has to do with. All is first trusted to man, who ever fails, and then God accomplishes it in blessing and power.

Thus this chapter supplies us with very clear indications of that which God has promised to accomplish in the last dais, when He will indeed show Himself to be “Lord of all the earth” in Israel brought back to grace by His mighty power. And we must attend to this testimony of the purpose of God in establishing Israel in their land. Harvest time will come, and the strength of the enemy will overflow its banks; but we, as Christians are already on the other side. The strength of the enemy passed all bounds in the death of Jesus; and we do not say now, “Lord of all the earth,” but “All power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth.”

4. VICTORY CERTAIN. Let us remark, also, how God encourages His people. They must combat; the sole of the foot must tread on every part of the promised land to possess it; and it must be in conflict that the power of the enemy and entire dependence upon God are realized. But while fighting boldly for Him, He would have—as know that victory is certain. The spies said to Joshua, “truly the Lord hath delivered, into our hands all the land, for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us.” This is what we know and prove by the testimony of the Holy Ghost, so different from that of the flesh, as brought by the ten who came back with Caleb and Joshua.

5. THE MEMORIAL. But if we are introduced into a life which is on the other side of death, by the power of the Spirit of God, as being dead and risen in Christ, there must be the remembrance of that death which is on this side of it, of the ruin of man, as he now is, and of the fallen creation to which he belongs. Twelve men, one out of each tribe, were to bring stones from the midst of Jordan, from the place where the priests’ feet stood firm with the Ark, while all Israel passed over on dry ground. The Holy Ghost brings with Him—so to speak—the touching memorial of the death of Jesus, by the mighty power of which He has turned all the effect of the enemy’s strength into life and deliverance. Death comes with us from the grave of Jesus: no longer now as death, it is become life unto us. This memorial was to be set up at Gilgal. The meaning of this circumstance will be considered in the next chapter; we will only dwell here on the memorial itself. The twelve stones, for the twelve tribes, represented the tribes of God as a whole. This number is the symbol of perfection in human agency, in connection here as elsewhere, with Christ, as in the case of the showbread.

Here also the Spirit sets us—Christians—in a more advanced position. There were twelve loaves of the showbread, and we form but one in our life of union by the Holy Ghost with Christ our Head, which is the life we speak of here. Now, it is His death that is recalled to us, in the memorial left us by the loving-kindness of our Lord., who condescends to value our remembrance of his love. I only speak here of this memorial as the sign of that which should be always a reality. We eat His flesh, we drink His life given for us. Being one now in the power for our union with Christ risen, dead to the world and to sin, it is from the bottom of the river into which He went to make it the way of life—heavenly life—for us, that we bring back the precious memorial of His love, and of the place in which He fulfilled His work. It is a broken body which we eat, a poured out blood which we drink; and this is the reason why blood was entirely prohibited to Israel after the flesh; for how can death be drunk by those who are mortal? but we drink it because the death of Christ is our life, and it is in realizing the death of that which is mortal that we live with Him. The remembrance of Jordan, of death when Christ was in it, is the remembrance of that power, which secured our salvation in the last stronghold of him who had the power of death. It is the remembrance of that love which went down into death, in order that, as to us, it should lose all its power; except that of doing us good, and being a witness unto us of infinite and unchangeable love.

6. GILGAL. The power of resurrection—life takes all strength from Satan: “He who is born of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.” In our earthly life, the flesh being in us, we are exposed to the power of the enemy; and the creature has no strength against him, even though it should not be drawn away into actual sin. But if death is become our shelter, causing us to die unto all that would give Satan an advantage over us, what can he do? Can he tempt one who is dead, or overcome one who, having died, is alive again? But if this be true, it is also necessary to realize it practically. “Ye are dead... Mortify therefore,” (Col. 3) This is what Gilgal means.

7. CIRCUMCISION. The matter in hand was not yet the taking of cities, the realization of God’s magnificent promises. Self must first of all be mortified. Before conquering Midian, Gideon must cast down the altar that was in his own house. The wilderness is not the place where circumcision is carried out, even though we may have been faithful there. Circumcision is the application of the Spirit’s power to the mortification of the flesh in him who has fellowship with the death and resurrection of Jesus. Therefore Paul says, (Phil. 3) “We are the circumcision.” As to an outwardly moral life, Paul had that before. Had he now added true piety to his religion of forms, the true fear of God to his good works? It was far more than that. Christ had taken the place of all in him—first of all as to righteousness, which is the groundwork; but, further, the apostle says, “That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, being made conformable unto his death, if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection from the dead.” Therefore it is in “pressing towards the mark” that he waits for the coming of Jesus to accomplish this resurrection as to his body. In the Epistle to the Colossians, chapter 2, he speaks to us of the circumcision of Christ. Is it only that he has ceased to sin? (the certain effect indeed of this work of God.) No; for in describing this work, he adds, “Being buried with him in baptism, wherein also we are risen with him, through faith of the operation of God who hath raised him from the dead.” The consequences of this heavenly life are found in chapter 3 verse 1, which is in immediate connection with the verse just quoted. Here also the work is crowned by the manifestation of the saints with Jesus when He shall appear in glory.

8. MORTIFY THEREFORE. Our Gilgal is in the 5th verse. “Mortify therefore.” We see that it is founded on grace. It rests on the power of that which is already true to faith. “Ye are dead.... Mortify therefore.” This being the standing, it is realized. “Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead,” said the apostle (Rom. 6) when speaking on the same subject. This is the practical power of the type of the stones brought from Jordan. They are a symbol of our union with Christ who was dead. Raised up together with Him, we can say that we were dead with Him, He has been once dead for sin: God has quickened us together with Him. All that He did was for us. Associated with Him in life, united to Him by the Spirit, I appropriate to myself, or rather God ascribes to me, all that He has done, as though it had happened to myself. He is dead to sin, in Him I am dead to sin. Therefore I can “mortify;” which I could not do as being still in the flesh. Where was the nature, the life, to do it in? Now, circumcision being the practical application of that of which we have been speaking, we remember the death of Christ, and the mortification of our members on the earth is accomplished through grace in the consciousness of grace. Otherwise it would only be the effort of a soul under the law, and in that case there would be a bad conscience and no strength. This is what sincere monks attempted; but their efforts were not made in the power of grace, of Christ and His strength. If there was sincerity, there was also the deepest spiritual misery. In order to die, there must be life: and if we have life, we have already died in Him who died for us. The stones set up in Gilgal were taken out of the midst of Jordan, and Jordan was already crossed before Israel was circumcised. The memorial of grace, and of death as the witness to us of a love which wrought out our salvation, by taking up our sins in grace, stood in the place where mortification was to be effected. Christ dying for sins, in perfect love, in unfailing efficacy, is our strength in dying unto sin. In every circumstance, then, we must remember that we are dead, and say to ourselves, If through grace I am dead, what have I to do with sin, which supposes me to be alive? Christ is in this death, in the beauty and in the power of His grace; it is deliverance itself. As to growth, the apostle says, “I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.”

9. THE REPROACH OF EGYPT ROLLED AWAY. Thus, in being dead, and only thus, will the reproach of Egypt be taken away. Every mark of the world is a reproach to him who is heavenly. It is only the heavenly man, who has died with Christ, that disentangles himself from all that is of Egypt. The life of the flesh always cleaves to Egypt; but the principle of worldliness is uprooted in him who is dead and risen with Christ, and living a heavenly life. There is in the life of a man a necessary link with the world as God sees it, that is, corrupt and sinful; with a dead man there is no such link. The life of a risen man is not of this world; it has no connection with it. He who possesses this life may pass through the world and do many things that others do. He eats, works, suffers; but as to his life and his object, he is not of the world, even as Christ was not of the world. Christ risen and ascended up on high, is his life. He subdues his flesh-he mortifies it-for in point of fact he is down here, but he does not live in it. The camp was always at Gilgal. The people—the army of the Lord—returned thither, after their victories and their conquests. If we do not do the same, we shall be feeble, the flesh will betray us; we shall fall before the enemy in the hour of conflict, even though it may be honestly entered into in the service of God. It is at Gilgal the monument of the stones from Jordan is set up; for if the consciousness of being dead with Christ is necessary to enable us to mortify the flesh, it is through this mortification that we attain to the knowledge of what is to be thus dead. We do not realize the inward communion, (I am not speaking now of justification,) the sweet and divine enjoyment of the death of Jesus for us, if the flesh is unmortified. It is impossible. But if we return to Gilgal, to the blessed mortification of our own flesh, we find there all the sweetness, (and it is infinite,) all the powerful efficacy of this communion with the death of Jesus—with the love manifested in it. “Always bearing about in the body,” says the apostle, “the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal body.” Thus we do not remain in Jordan; but there remains in the heart all the preciousness of this glorious work, a work which the angels desire to look into, which is for us, and which Christ in his love appropriates to us. We find Him with us at Gilgal-a place of no outward show or victory to attract the eyes of men, but where He, who is the source of all victory, is found in the power and communion which enables us to overcome.

10. THE TWELVE STONES IN JORDAN. But there were also twelve stones set up in the midst of Jordan; and, indeed, if we apply the power of the death of Christ to mortify the flesh, the heart—exercised in, and fully enjoying heavenly things—loves to turn again to Jordan, to the place where Jesus went down in the power of life and obedience, and to gaze upon that Ark of the Covenant, which stood there, and stayed those impetuous waters till all the people had passed over. One loves, now that He is risen, while viewing the power of death in all its extent, to behold Jesus there who went down into it; but who destroyed its power for us. In the overflowing of the nations, Christ will be the security and the salvation of Israel; but He has been our security and our salvation with respect to much more terrible enemies. The heart loves to stand on the banks of that river—already crossed—and to realize, while studying what Jesus was, the work and the wondrous love of Him who went down into it alone, until all was accomplished. But in one sense we were there. The twelve stones show that the people had to do with this work, although the ark was there alone when the waters were to be restrained. In the Psalms we can especially there contemplate the Lord, now that we are in peace on the other side the stream. Oh, if the Church knew how to seat herself there, and there meditate on Jesus! In doctrine, the Psalms set forth also the connection between the death of Jesus and the residue of Israel passing through the waters of tribulation in the last days.

Behold, then, the people out of Egypt and in Canaan, according to the faithfulness of God’s promise; not only redeemed out of Egypt, but brought into Canaan; the reproach of Egypt being rolled away, and the people of God having taken their place at Gilgal—the true circumcision of heart of which we have spoken.

Bible Treasury: Volume 1, Overflow of the Banks of the Jordan

The passage in Josh. 3:15, referred to in a proposed query in which it is said, that “Jordan overflows all its banks all the time of harvest,” is a mistranslation. The Hebrew word male, rendered in our authorized version, “overflows,” has no such meaning; but signifies fills, and ought to have been so translated— “Jordan fills all its banks,” &c. That is, it runs with its banks brim-full during that season of the year; which is in accordance with its present state, as observed by travelers.

Young Christian: Volume 19, 1929, Reproach of Egypt Rolled Away, The

“Now all these things happened unto them (Israel) for types: and are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come.” (1 Cor. 10:11).

The book of Exodus begins with Israel in bondage under Pharaoh King of Egypt. God’s purpose is unfolded in chapter 6:6-8.

“I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will bring you in unto the land.”

Their slavery pictures the slavery of men who are trying with great anxiety to deliver themselves from the power of sin (Rom. 7:7-25).

Being quickened, they desire the good, but the evil in them is stronger. They have not yet seen that the Lord Jesus on the cross finished the work, and satisfied God about the question of sin and sins.

The lamb in Exodus 12 typifies Christ the Lamb of God, who in the end of the age of law, was offered up as a sacrifice for sin. He offered Himself, through the eternal Spirit to God (Heb. 9:14). He was the Lamb without blemish and without spot (1 Peter 1:9), foreordained before the foundation of the world.

How simple the type! The man took a little bunch of hyssop and sprinkled the blood on the side posts, and on the lintel of the door, and God said, “When I see the blood I will pass over you.” They fed on the lamb roast with fire inside the house. The blood marked them out as Jehovah’s people.

The little bunch of hyssop was the man saying, “I am nothing. It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul.” (Lev. 17:11).

The houses of all who sprinkled the blood were protected from the judgment of the slaying of the first-born.

That was not all; they started their journey out of Egypt that night. There was no singing; they left in haste, and Jehovah came down in a pillar of cloud, between them and the Egyptians who followed them, so that they could not come near them; and the Israelites could not go back even if they wished to.

At Pi-hahiroth (the opening of liberty) there was another miracle. The Lord divided the Red Sea. “By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.” Thus the Lord saved Israel. They saw the Egyptians dead on the sea shore, and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and His servant Moses. Then they sang,

“The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation: He is my God, and I will prepare Him an habitation.” Afterward they took upon themselves to keep His law. But it was mixed with mercy in the Tabernacle God ordered them to build, His habitation in their midst.

In Leviticus the Lord speaks out of the Tabernacle, and ordered everything suitable to His presence among them.

In Numbers we have their journeying and camping, and there we have their failures, and the Lord’s faithful provision despite all their murmurings. The glory cloud and the trumpets guided them (chaps. 9 and 10). The living priest maintained them by sacrifice (ch. 17). The red heifer burnt to ashes, which was kept to cleanse their defilements (ch. 19). The wicked prophet Balaam was compelled to tell

God’s purposes of blessing which could not be altered.

Deuteronomy rehearses the Lord’s dealings with them, and gives instructions to them for when they were to be in the Land. Moses could not bring them in, the law could not do it. But Joshua (the Saviour) is charged to bring them in, and that is what the book of Joshua gives us.

It begins with the Lord charging Joshua to bring them in to their inheritance. It is not a place for rest and peace, for the enemies of God possess it. These must be met and overcome in the strength of the Lord, and this lesson must be taught them before they are in a condition to fight His battles. The whole land is given them, but they must claim it (1:3). There is every encouragement to Joshua to obedience and victory in chapter 1. The two spies bring encouraging news to Joshua (2:24), and Rahab receives the promise of deliverance for all her relatives by faith.

In chapters 3 and 4 is another type of the death of Christ, and our death with Him. The Ark borne by the priests, goes down into the bed of the river. The water is cut off; on the one side it rose up on a heap, on the other, the bed of the river went dry, and the people passed over two thousand cubits away from the Ark.

Twelve men, one of each tribe, took a stone out of the bed of the river, and they put the twelve stones in Gilgal (4:20). Then Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan where the feet of the priests, which carried the Ark, stood; and when the priests brought the Ark unto the dry land, the waters flowed down as before. It was full up to the top of its banks at that time of year (3:15).

Here we see the death of Christ to sin, and so our death with Him. Our old man is gone under the waters of the Jordan, and the twelve stones at Gilgal are the memorial of Christ’s death.

Exodus 12. We are sheltered from judgment by the atoning blood (14, 15); we are saved and brought to God, and all our sins are forever gone. Here we are now seen as dead with Christ, buried with Christ, and risen with Christ (Col. 2:11, 12). We must believe it.

Then comes in circumcision, and that is applying death, the death of Christ, to ourselves. We have put off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; we are now to mortify our members which are upon the earth (Col. 3:8).

In the Red Sea we had Christ’s death for us. That took us out of Egypt, and from under the power of the enemy. In the Jordan, we are dead, with Christ, so we are entering into the land, but before we begin the conflict with the enemy, we must realize that the flesh profiteth nothing. Naturally speaking, this circumcision unfitted them for fighting for a time. Nature’s strength is not to be used in fighting God’s battles.

Gilgal is the place of self-judgment; it rolls away the reproach of Egypt. They are now to go in the strength of the Lord. We go on with our wilderness journey, and for that we have armor (also 1 Thess. 5:8), with faith, love and hope, more or less active in us as we seek faithfulness; but this is a spiritual warfare for the enjoyment of the promises, and of heavenly privileges, as men already dead and risen, refusing Satan’s power, as those not of the world, though in it still.

We need to put on the armor of Ephesians 6:10-18 to be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Circumcision is therefore the putting into the practical effect, which the stones put in the river, taught us—that we are dead with Christ; and those on the banks at Gilgal, that we have a new life as risen with Him. We are to reckon ourselves dead unto sin. “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth.” We are to camp there, and from there to fight God’s battles.

They fed on the Passover there also. The remembrance of the Lord in His death, is ever precious; and the manna, and the old corn of the land all have their place. The manna is our wilderness food still. Here it ceases the next day; for in our heavenly life, we feed upon the glorified Christ. As another writes,

“We feed on heavenly things, on Christ humbled and dying, indeed as a sweet remembrance, but as Christ living as the present power of life and grace. We feed on the remembrance of Christ on the cross; this is the passover. But we keep the feast with a Christ who is the center of heavenly things, and feed upon them all (Col. 3:1, 2). It is the old corn of the land into which we have entered, for He belongs to heaven.In this heavenly warfare, we, as they, need to learn that our blessed Lord is our Captain and Guide. In the taking of Jericho, nothing was left to themselves; the orders were given for march and for action, and the Lord gave them the victory.

“The almighty power of God is with the church with its warfare. But His infinite holiness is there also, and He will not make good His power in their conflicts, if His holiness is compromised by the defilement, the negligence, the heedless levity, of His people; or by their failure in those feelings and affections, which become the presence of God, for it is God Himself who is there.”

Bible Witness and Review: Volume 1, Our Conflict

Josh. 5:9.-With the Epistles to the Colossians and the Ephesians before us, I am of opinion that the wars of Israel have their answer in our wrestling with the powers of darkness; that the gradual acquisition of their land corresponds with our setting our affections on the things above, where Christ sitteth; and that we too have our circumcision, first in Christ, in whom the flesh has met its doom; and, secondly, in the practical way of mortifying our members which are upon the earth, etc. To neglect these cross-lights of the Old and New Testaments is to despise, unwittingly, the means of heavenly wisdom.

THE WORLD'S JUDGE.

Acts 17:30.-It is evident that the point of which St. Paul avails himself in order to reach the conscience of the Athenians is their own confessed ignorance of God (verse 23). " The times of this ignorance God winked at." But now St. Paul was declaring to them the God whom they knew not. The true God shines out in the death and resurrection of Christ. Not to receive what is proclaimed therein is to reject the counsel of God against oneself. Heathenism was essentially wrong; at the best it represented God as an hard master, as one (if one) who needed all that man could muster, instead of allowing Him the blessed place of the Giver, which even creation and providence proved Him to be, and much more redemption.

Accordingly, as the full light of God is shining the world over like the sun, and the sound of the Gospel is published in all the earth (in principle I mean), man is without excuse. For his case is not merely, like Israel's, failure under legal requirement, but the despisal of the full and free grace of God, who is now commanding all men everywhere to repent, to turn from their idols and their self-righteousness, from themselves in short to Him, and what He has demonstrated Himself to be in Christ towards the worst of sinners. To refuse is not merely to lose His everlasting mercy, it is also to brave His righteous judgment of this habitable world, for Christ is by Him ordained to judge it (and not only the dead raised before the great white throne), of which His resurrection is the proof. The world slew Him and God raised Him up, the sure proof that it is morally judged already, as it actually will be when. Christ comes in the clouds of heaven. Up to Christ's first advent, and especially His resurrection, the Gentiles lay hid, as it were, as to public relations with God. Salvation was of the Jews. Christ's resurrection is a groundwork for faith unto all, Gentile as well as Jew, for death cuts all specialties in the flesh. Hence the special call to repent ever since; always obligatory, repentance is now urgent. So as to the day for judging the habitable world: the preached resurrection of Christ, who is about to judge it, puts men under fresh responsibility.

Food for the Flock: Volume 9, Qualification

OS 5:10-12{GILGAL follows immediately the crossing of Jordan, the antitype of which is in Eph. 1 By the power of God we were brought over when Christ rose from the dead. Then we all went up with Him. We do not know it perhaps. Born princes, as I have said, are sometimes a long time before they find out what they are. So we are sometimes a long time before we find out that in God's mind we were over when Christ rose.

After Jordan comes Gilgal. First I will notice the difference between Gilgal and Marah. Marah is in Ex. 15:23. Marah is when you enter the wilderness; Gilgal when you enter Canaan, which is typically the heavenly places. One is in the wilderness and the other in heaven. All turns upon this. Marah is drinking death, the bitter water of the Red Sea. Christ has gone through death for us, and cleared us of everything; we take our place in the wilderness, and now comes suffering in the flesh, clearly not suffering for sin, for Christ has cleared all that away. It is important to understand the difference between Marah and Gilgal. Every Christian knows something of Marah. He could not be a Christian without it.

In 1 Peter 4 we read: " As Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin." That is Marah. The cross is the tree thrown into the waters, and they are sweet because the cross is there. This is the antitype of the passage in Exodus: " Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind." For instance, I go into a room, and see something is on the table that I would like to appropriate, but it is not mine, and I do not. I walk out of the room instead. Well, I have ceased from sin. It would be sin to like it, and I did not take it. I suffered in the flesh; I ceased from sin. It was not that there was no sin in me, but I have ceased from it: I have drunk the bitter water made sweet through Christ's death.

Let me however say this: the wilderness to me is a very different thing from what it was to Israel. To them there was nothing in it to allure them. They could only have tempting things before them by thinking of Egypt. But there are plenty of things around me to tempt me, because I am in the same place,' and perhaps doing the same business as before I was converted. Egypt to me yesterday is the wilderness to-day. Yesterday I had the world with its order and rule to depend upon; to-day I have nothing to depend upon for a single moment but God.

I will illustrate the difference. There is a man selling apples at the corner of the street, and some ruffianly man comes and overturns his stall. What does he do? He calls a policeman. That is Egypt. But now he is converted, and he is no longer in Egypt, but in the wilderness, and selling his apples at the corner of the street as before; and the same wicked man comes and knocks down his stall again. Well, what does he do now? Does he call the policeman? No, he commits it to his Father; he says, I must bring in death upon the flesh now instead of gratifying it.

Now this is very different from Israel. In Egypt they could have the leeks and the onions and the garlic, but not in the wilderness; while I have them all around me. Therefore Peter says, " Abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul." And it is important to understand this difference. You are perhaps a person of unblemished character, but that does not give you immunity from suffering; you do suffer, but it is from the open attacks of Satan, not the covert ones; that is, you suffer from Amalek, the enemy of the wilderness. Amalek came out and fought against Israel in the wilderness. He is not the enemy of Canaan.

Romans does not take you out of the wilderness. There we read, " we through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body."

In Hebrews we are running on to heaven, but not there yet, nor do we get to the ground where we can stand for Christ. It is not that you are not on ground where you can be a real Christian, conduct yourself rightly, and resist evil, but then it is another thing altogether when we come to Canaan. So in the history of Israel. There was Pharaoh the enemy in Egypt, Amalek in the wilderness, Balaam when they left the wilderness. It was after the wars with Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og the king of Bashan, that Balaam appeared. Balaam's object was to draw them into association with the world. Then comes Jordan, and now I am a dead man: man is gone, and I am on the other side. Balaam could not do me any harm in the land; I am dead there through Christ.

We have come now to another ground, and the only ground where we stand for Christ. If you ask, What is the difference between the wilderness and Canaan? I reply, In the wilderness Christ supports me in my circumstances, but in Canaan I stand in His circumstances. Nothing can be clearer. We cannot now know Christ on earth. As the apostle says: " Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." Now we are in heaven, and our first lesson is that we are united to Him there, and like a faithful spouse, bound to represent that blessed One to whom we are united; in the place where He is not. That is the thing we are called to, and every true heart says, That is the very thing I would like.

The result is that though I am in the circumstances of the wilderness, I am above them. I will illustrate this simply. Here is a poor woman with many children, struggling on, and the Lord helping her, and she thanking the Lord every day for His mercies to her, and for His care; her heart bounding with delight in the prospect of the eternal rest that is coming; and while thus traveling on through the wilderness, one of her benefactors comes in one day, and proposes something of a worldly nature to her, something of a worldly advantage. But she replies, No, I cannot accept that. She is thus above her circumstances, she is standing for Christ now. But what is the result? That benefactor has become opposed -perhaps bitterly opposed to her. But she is unmoved. She says, I will stand for my Lord. I am getting through the wilderness because He stands for me, but now I stand for Him. Through Him I am across death, and on the other side, risen with Him.

Now I turn to Col. 3 to explain Gilgal. The Colossians were intelligent and nice Christians. This is clear from what the apostle, says, " We give thanks to God... since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love ye have to all the saints." In chapter 3 he says: If ye then be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above where Christ sitteth."

I do not think we have, properly speaking, the old corn of the land here; there may be allusion to it lower down in the chapter, in " the peace of Christ to which we are called in one body." That is the corporate thing; but here it is individual. I am risen with Christ; but in Eph. 1 am not only over Jordan, but I learn what will fit me for Christ here. I do not get that in Colossians at all. It is what we get in Ephesians. There the almighty power of God carries me over; there is not a word about me; not even my conversion. It does not touch my side at all, except as to my state, dead in sins; it is God's side. Well, now comes, " If ye then be risen with Christ.... Set your affections on things above."

There are only two places for blessing, earth and heaven. Often a person may not be worldly, but he is earthly; then he is not heavenly. " Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth, for ye are dead." You do not get that in Romans. There it is, " Reckon yourselves dead." Here man is gone altogether; this man is the practical difficulty in the way of acting for Christ; you 'mist not bring in this man at all.

" The weapons of our warfare are not carnal"-that is, not merely evil, but fleshly.

Now we come to Gilgal, and I will now try to explain what it is. " Ye are dead," says the apostle; then " mortify your members which are upon the earth." It is not merely bringing death upon a thing as it arises, but now the whole thing is rolled off; the reproach of Egypt is rolled away; that is Gilgal. It is not only that you are dead, but you roll off the reproach of Egypt. I not only put off the bad things, but I put off the flesh, the whole thing. I have entirely done with that man: It is a most wonderful thing to you, if you really know it practically.

See what a practical difference there is between Marah and Gilgal. In Marah you do not allow the working of the flesh; and you must continue that in all your christian course, not allowing the flesh to work. But in Gilgal it is more; the whole thing is rolled off. Put off all these-" anger, wrath, malice," Sic. A person carefully educated perhaps would not have these, but he has others. Well, all must be put off, and this on the ground that you are dead with Christ. I am not to have one bit of what belonged to the old man. I am disencumbered of-the whole thing now, and I am occupying new ground.

You may say it is very difficult to understand it. In one sense it is difficult, and you never can understand it in a natural way. Our meetings are often spoiled by trying to bring out natural sentiment; nothing of human sentiment can help a Christian; God does not want man's mind.

If you ask, How am I to know the difference between a natural sentiment and a spiritual thought? Why, in this way. You will find a human, sentiment is exciting in its character; a natural thought or sentiment elates you, while a spiritual thought gives you the impression of the greatness of it. You are subdued with the greatness of it. A human sentiment, on the' contrary, excites you just as in a revival meeting. But there is sure to be depression after it. Whereas the effect of the mighty power of God in the word has the result of making me long to be

alone, that I may know the virtue of what my ear has listened to, and my heart has rested on. That is a very different effect.

Still I can understand the difficulty; we are but poor creatures, and have all been affected more or less by beautiful sentiments, and we know the exhilarating, effects they have had on us; but we also know that they do not last. It is " like the crackling of thorns under a pot." But the divine has a subduing effect, and yet it lay's hold of you; and it shews the blessedness of divine teaching. Still we know how difficult it is to keep clear of it. For instance, suppose a meeting in a low state, and some one gives out a hymn of an exciting character to raise the tone of it. There may be a thrill, for a moment, but it is soon over. It is mere excitement. There is no excitement in the divine circle. There is a sense of the divine; a sense that the blessed Lord claims me; it is not the expulsive power of a new affection, but of a new Person. It is a very blessed thing, but I am not a bit elated by it; on the contrary, I am sensible of the weight, of the blessedness of it. In one sense it puts me out in order to take possession.

At Gilgal I am a new man. I am entirely apart from the activities of the natural man, amiable or not; Christ is all. There must be nothing of myself-no human activities at all. Of course there is the vessel still. The vessel is the body, and the body is the Lord's and He can use it. But Christ is everything. This is a very practical thing, and I love the subject; because I believe if the soul gets hold of the difference between Marah and Gilgal, it gets a wonderful lift. I often think what a relief it would have been to me had I known it sooner. I have got rid of the old thing, and now I am coming on to learn what suits Christ.

But you may say, Still the old thing comes back again, and what are we to do with it? John 13 just answers that. In Col. 3 you get standing, in John 13, state. The Lord there says, I will wash your feet, for " if I wash thee not thou hast no part with me." I have gone into heaven, and I cannot have you there with me unless you are clean, for nothing that defileth can enter there. It is not merely forgiveness;- it is removal of defilement. Not forgiveness only, but I am washed-washed and wiped; that there may be no sense of defilement. You cannot be in heaven with the sense of defilement? Peter was very devoted, and had great love for the Lord; but he was not in communion, for if you are in communion there will be no reserve between you and the Lord.

In Hebrews you get into the holiest, but there you feel the perfect One has had to be " rent " to let you, the imperfect one in. But supposing I fail now. Here John 13:8 comes in. The Lord says, I will wash your feet so that there may not be a shadow of reserve on your heart touching that thing in which you failed. The action, perhaps, may be rapid or slow; you will generally find that it is in proportion to the depth of the offense; the deeper the offense, the slower generally the recovery. In Num. 19 we have the ashes of the red heifer, and the running water-the Spirit-for applying them. The ashes are the token that judgment has been here. Has been, not, is; it could not be ashes if it were here now. Ashes are the token of accomplished judgment. And what does it bring to your soul? The knowledge that Christ has borne the judgment of God for that bit of self-gratification in which you indulged. It had disturbed your communion. Would that we were more sensitive as to this!

But let me add one thing: You cannot disturb communion unless you first have it. You may have affection for Christ, and yet may never have joined Him in the new place where He is, and therefore you have not communion with Him. It would have broken the disciples' hearts not to have joined Him where He was going; He had so won their hearts that separation from Him would have been unbearable. They would have said like Ruth, " Entreat me not to leave thee." But I have not to say this, for He tells me He wants me to be with Him, blessed be His name! And yet how loth we are to get into the new place! How contented to have " no part with Him," although not a shadow of sin is left; in the eye of God the root, the whole thing, is judged in the cross. It is not that I am forgiven; that which I deserved He bore, and I am clear, but it is only in the new place that I can " have part " with Him.

I have said so much upon Gilgal because of its importance; it is just this: the old man is left outside. When a man is enlisted, he is brought to the barracks, and once within the gates, he leaves behind all the old things which as a civilian; belonged to him; he is turned into a new kind of person, he drops the dress, and walk, and the tastes he had in former times, and he is brought within the barrack gates, in order to be fitted for the king's army. That is what Gilgal is; we are brought inside the gates.

Let us see then, what the Barracks are. First of all, we are in the new place; the old thing is gone in the death of Christ; it is all left behind., We are dead with Him, and now raised up and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ. I am not going to have, in this new place where I am, any of that which I had before.

How is this effected practically? We get an instance in Paul, when he says, " Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." It is not the question whether it is good or bad. People draw distinctions and talk of what is good. What does Paul say of it in Philippians? " But what things were gain tome, those I counted loss for Christ." He not merely gave up his sins, but he gave up his righteousnesses too. He was glad to give them up for the righteousness in Christ. He says, I would be found "not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Not my sins, but "my own righteousness;" what was "gain to me;" all that was gain to me as a man; it is gone, and I come out on a new principle, to do everything in the name of Christ. Thus I am qualified.

You do not get Ephesian walk in Colossians. You get a good deal of what is very nice; but the saint is going- on to, and looking to be prepared for, the walk which you get in Ephesians. Do you say, This is too high for us. The fact is, we have all missed the mind of God, we have been calling low things by high names, assuming Ephesian walk where there is no Ephesian walk at all.

You may be on your way to heaven, as in Hebrews; that is the wilderness walk, but Ephesian walk is standing for Christ here; above my circumstances for Christ, like Stephen. Or like the woman I have already spoken of, not only beautiful in her wilderness character, working her way through it, but when the test comes, proved to be superior to her circumstances, and able to stand for Christ. She got the power for it, by going up to the Christ's place. If Stephen had not gone up, he could not have acted here in the power of Christ. That is the power Paul speaks of when he says," That the power of Christ may rest upon me." I get it by going up; it is mine, but if I do not go up, I have not got it. Hence it is, " Hereby shall ye know that the living God is among you, and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites."

Well, now, we are inside the barrack gates, and the first thing we come to inside is the passover. Here the recruit is to be fitted for service for the Lord, and the first great qualification is, to learn what the love of Christ is in bringing me there.

Do you say, Could I not learn that on earth? No, you could not learn it in the same way. On earth you are surrounded with all the hindrances, like a man at his daily business. It is not in the press of business that he learns what a happy home he has. It is when he comes home, and sits in the circle of his family, that his heart deepens in the sense of his happy home, and what a highly favored man he is to have such

circumstances. This was not the thing before him in the pressure of business; it is not there that he can enjoy' the love of his home. Well, now, when do I enjoy Christ's love? When do I learn His heart? When I am there in the scene of unspeakable delight, with the sense " There is not a cloud above, not a spot within." What occupies me there? I dwell on the love that brought me there, and the manner of that love too. There is nobody who knows anything of the heart but can affirm that it is so. When you are at ease in your Circumstances, you enjoy the love of anybody most. Suppose you think of a parent's love to his child; it is when he is in happy circumstances he will have the greatest sense of it. When the child is ill, he is full of interest and anxiety about it, and sympathizes with it to the utmost degree; but, I ask, When does he enjoy that child most? when it is ill? No, when it 'recovers-when it is quite well. And so God says, " He will rest in his love." When? When all is over; when all the work is known; He will then "joy over you with singing." Because there will then be nothing to hinder the heart from going fully out. Thus it is in the passover, in the land, that we get the deepest sense of the love of Christ.

Now turn to Ex. 12 Here we' have the passover in Egypt. I want you to see, the difference between the passover in Egypt and the passover in Canaan. I often adduce this to shew what a difference a place can effect. It is the same feast, and yet they are quite different. There were no bitter herbs in Canaan; in Egypt there were.

The passover in Egypt is, typically, what Paul went through in the three days after his conversion; he was feeding on the death of Christ; tasting in his soul the, sense of what Christ passed through when He bore the judgment due to him. In this passover I am sheltered by the blood, and feeding on the sacrifice. That was what Paul went through in those three days: he learned what Christ went through to set him without a cloud in the brightest glory.

How often at the Lord's table we hear only of our sins having been put away. Well, that ' is the passover in Egypt. The Lord's supper is to call Christ to your remembrance, not your benefits. You cannot lose your benefits; but it is when you are most in the enjoyment of the benefits, that you most dwell on the Benefactor who brought you into the benefits.

At the passover in Canaan we are on heavenly ground. It is like Deut. 26 I am brought up to the place; I am put on a new level; not on the level of Adam, but on the level of Christ. What am I thinking about now? I am thinking of the love of His heart in bringing me to this wonderful position, and calling me to remember what He did for me, and to sit at His table in remembrance of Him. Nowhere should we get such a sense of the love of Christ as at the Lord's supper, when we see how that love led Him to go through death for us. Paul could say, His work has cleared away everything, and now I can, go up alongside of Him. I know what He went through for me, and now I want to be where He is; and I believe, beloved friends, the more deeply I get acquainted with that realm of glory where He is, the more my heart will revert to what that blessed One went through to bring me to that blessed position. See what they do when they are there with Him in the Revelation: "And when those living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth forever and ever, the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power." And again, "for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation." Crowns are not pieces of metal; they are the sense that I have reached the summit, and that there I can fall down before Him and say, I owe all this to Thy death. Hence you get in Ephesians, " That ye may know the love of Christ' that passeth knowledge." That can be only known by a person in heaven; I am there, and I am remembering how I got there. He went down to death for me, and "greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." "But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"-sinners, mark! not friends. And the further I go on, and the more I know of the place where that love has brought me, the greater will be the sense I have of it.

My knowledge of His love grows the way in which a tree grows, higher and deeper; the higher the tree grows, the bigger the trunk becomes, so that the trunk is always the thickest part of the tree. And so the first acquaintance I have had with the love of Christ always has the largest and deepest place in my soul. That is what He did for me, and that is first love. The farther you advance, the more that deepens. Look at a tree; which part is the thickest? That which grew first. Thus the first thing I was acquainted with as a believer was the love which led Christ to go, down to death for me. Can I get any lesson now better fitted to qualify me than that? No. Well, what shall I do? I will stand for Him here. It is love for Him that makes me stand for Him. I am made a soldier in a moment. I say, you have touched my object, and I am sensitive to a degree. It is not a question of who has done it, but that you have touched Christ. I sometimes illustrate it by showing how a hen acts with her brood. She is one of the most timid of animals, but let a dog approach her brood; she is a soldier in a moment, and no dog will face her. She is transformed in a moment, by simple affection, into the most valiant of beings for the object of her affection; if you ever saw it, you would never forget it. Thus if I have a heart for Christ, I must stand for Him, and I cannot do anything unbecoming His name. I could not do a thing that would in any way compromise Him.

The second thing we find after Gilgal, inside the barrack gate is, that the manna ceased, and they ate the old corn of the land. I am not going to say much on that, though it is a subject of much interest. The old corn was not till Christ " sat down." It began when the Holy Ghost came down uniting us to Christ, and thus connecting us with the old corn of the land; but we have manna all the way up. This is the comfort for a person who touches manna at all. As a poor sinner he has had the pardon of his sins, and he feeds on Christ's death, and now he has the manna all the way; and this is true of every believer.

The old corn of the land is another thing; it is not what Christ was upon the earth, but what He is in glory. Would you not like to feed on Him thus? Would you not like to know what He is now? I feel humbled when I think how little I know of what Christ is at this moment. If I did, I should be sure to do the right thing in the place where I am.

The simple exposition of the two is this. Manna is what He was; the old corn of the land is what He is. Surely every true heart that has known what He was, must long to know Him as He is. Thus the apostle speaks in Philippians, " That I may know him "-that is, as He is -" and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." That I may know Him where He is, and then come down here to suffer for Him. You may say, this is vastly beyond us. Well, if you admit that, it is humbling, and you cannot boast. A child may say, I have finished that book; but, the teacher says, you have not got to the end yet; you have to learn much more. So we: we often think we have learned all, when we are only at the beginning. In one way there is nothing actually new to learn, because what we have to learn is what we already possess. We have to grow in it, and to learn on, and if we do not, we are not enjoying it.

Any person who knows anything about history, knows that many of those who were born princes, were a long time before they found out what it was to be princes; and often called themselves princes before they knew what it meant. I often think that is the way with us. We talk of our

position and of being here for Christ-like an army in review. Where do you get the right idea of it? I must learn it in His presence where He is. That is the only way to learn it. And you come out having fed on the old corn of the land, your heart impressed with a fresh sense of His love, and of His power also. You must know union before you can have power, and you can only know it in the place where He is.

To stand for Christ is what we are called to do; and thus it is that we are prepared and qualified for it.

(J. B. S.)

Food for the Flock: Volume 9, Conflict

OS 5:13-15{OS 6:1-16{HERE we have a type of the heavenly warfare, and it is important for us to understand, because the child of God is never out of warfare. If you look along the Erie you will see this is the case. There is Pharaoh in Egypt; Amalek in the wilderness; Balaam when you leave the wilderness; and in the land there is the greatest force of the enemy, the seven nations arrayed against the heavenly position.

In the world, Satan is against even a poor sinner. For the apostle says, "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world Hath blinded the mind of them which believe not." Pharaoh overcome, you get into the wilderness and find Marah; you drink death, you are sustained by Christ in that place. But then Amalek comes out to fight-to intimidate you-to dispute the fact that you are to take this position. Here you will find two things: one, the intercession of Christ to support you; and the other, if I may use a familiar expression, you show fight. Joshua took men and went out to fight Amalek; and at the same time intercession was the real help.

Let me give you an illustration. The Lord said to Peter: " Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." There was intercession; not for his salvation-he was saved: it was that his faith might not fail. But was Peter ready for the fight? On the contrary, he trusted himself to the high priest's house, and was pleased when there, to find a fire. But the devil was there too: They did not see the devil, but he was there to prevent Peter from being a dependent man. That was not the heavenly battle. Satan seeks by all these snares to keep us from the place of dependence, which is the wilderness.

Now go on to Num. 21 There the people are outside the wilderness; and here you find a great many believers now, really established in grace, knowing what God has done for them and in them, having life in Christ, and the Holy Ghost in them, as in John 3 and iv. The brazen serpent was on the very edge of the wilderness; the people are outside, as to state, and thinking perhaps that all will be plain sailing now, when Sihon king of the Amorites comes against them, and they fight him, and the Lord delivers them. That was a battle, but it was not a heavenly battle. They are now out, of the wilderness and going on to Canaan, and they have this desperate battle on the way. Like a man in Hebrews; he is going on to heaven, but not there yet. A saint soon discovers if he is going to heaven; but there is such a thing as being in heaven and going on to it at the same time. " Ye have not yet resisted unto blood," the apostle says; "striving against sin." That was death-martyrdom; and I have no doubt at all that many devoted men of God, have had their battles this side Jordan. They suffer greatly, but they seek a religious position here; like the two and a half tribes, who wanted a place to settle in on this side of Jordan.

What we discover practically in this is, that we are not to acquire in these battles; though we conquer in the place, we are not to occupy the place. On the other hand, when I come to heavenly battles, all I gain is my possession-my right. To illustrate my meaning, Luther was backed up by the Elector of Saxony, and as a result he had a status here. But that is all wrong. If you establish a religious system in the world you are all wrong. You must not acquire possession where you win the battle, unless it is on the other side of Jordan.

Consequent upon these great battles, another terrible foe arises; that terrible foe is Balaam, and many a strong man has fallen down through him. What is Balaam? Balaam is acting on the susceptibility of your nature. You are invited out to some social party, and you accept it because it suits you naturally, and you are led away. Most of the unsuited marriages result from Balaam. If your natural predilections lead you into a circle, or class of society, where those predilections are gratified, that is the snare of Balaam. I dread the word "social," for I know what a host of mischief lies under that word. First, people are invited out, and that brings them into worldly associations with their attendant follies. Look at children, where do they pick up the notions many of them have? At school, from their companions. It is surprising what things people learn in company with others. If you were across Jordan, a dead man, you would not be invited out, for a dead man would have no interest in the things here. If I have taken the place of being dead, I have got greater happiness on that side Jordan than I can possibly have on this. That is the point. It is not assuming anything, but the things here have no interest' for me.

I am sure I am addressing those who, if invited to partake in some kind of amusement, would find it no amusement at all, and why? Because they have higher pleasures. Like the queen of Sheba, it is the better things which enable me to surrender the things here. It is of no use denouncing them. I have done it myself, but I 'have found it was useless. You may relieve your conscience, but you will free no one from them in that way. Let them get the better things, and the others will drop off like dead leaves. Just as with a child. If you want to take a dangerous thing out of his hand, offer him something bright. That is the superior thing, the eclipsing power. I have said to myself before now, " That is a thing I can never give up;" but it dropped off when I got the better thing, and I did not feel it because I had heavenly joys. Just as in the case of a certain shrub, the old leaf does not fall off until the new one is formed. It is what I call the expulsive power of a new Person. It is not a thing now, but a Person. A person contains much more than any amount of things can contain. There is great variety about a person. And there is endless variety in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. If we knew Him better, and studied Him more, we should be constantly making fresh discoveries of His worth every day.

We come up, then, into the land, and here is the proper christian conflict, which is really to bring out the heavenly Christ on earth. Do you say, I am not up to that battle? I was never in it, it is quite beyond me? Well, I say, are you set for it, or, would you like only to look at it? A good many people like to see reviews, as they set forth the idea of a battle, and I aril afraid that is too much the way in which the warfare in Ephesians is read; it is only a review to many, not the real conflict.

Well, what is the conflict for? It is to be a heavenly man; we have a heavenly country. Israel contended for the 'land. The crusaders are to me a very interesting people, because they risked their lives in order to get the holy land out of the hands' of the heathen and the Saracen; they died for it, and their wars were called " the holy wars." The idea was good, but it was carried out wrongly. The idea was to get space for Christ upon this earth. What would be the right thing then? The right thing is to get moral space for Christ. They fought to get Palestine for Christ.

Our conflict is to stand here as heavenly men for a heavenly Christ.

It is not Christ in humiliation we are to present, but the heavenly Christ.. What does Paul say? " Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." It is the Man in the glory we are to present. It is the corn of the land I am to feed on. Therefore we go to the battle. If I take the antitype, I am to be " strong in the Lord and in the power of his might." That is the corn of the land. I am-to set forth a heavenly man in every circle and relationship here. In the practice of Peter's epistles you get 'nothing about the family, -nor in Romans. Why is this? Because there you are not high enough. You are there a delivered sinner on the earth. In Ephesians you are a heavenly man, so you can come down to the lowest point. It is the height at which you are that enables you to come down, and with the power that belongs to that exalted position. He has passed into the heavens, and not merely into them, but He is higher than the heavens. Hence everything is to be done according to this position. That is the wonderful character of Ephesian practice.

Nothing can be plainer than that the conflict is to bring out a heavenly man, in the several circles in which you are found on earth. I count seven circles in the Ephesians; but no matter how many there are, read Eph. 4 and 5 and you will find there is not a single thing, there that could be carried out but in heavenly power.

Paul says, " That I may know him," that is as He is now. And I ask, would. You not like to know Him as He is now? Do you think it would content a devoted wife or child, to be able to say, I: knew my husband or my father ten years ago, but. I do not know him now? Why, we never heard of such a thing. Yet that is really the way some, think of Christ. They know Him as the Savior who died here, but they do not know Him as He is now-the glorified Man.

But you ask, who is up to it? I go with you there. I know how little I am up to it; but I cannot shrink from what God has called me to; I cannot shrink from Phil. 3 " That I may know him, and the power of his—resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings." Again, "I count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." That was not salvation;' Paul had that. True, He is my Savior, but the grace of God is so large that it would lead you on from that, to know Him as the Head of His body, the church; and when you come to know Him as your Head, oh, what happiness!

And now what you are called upon to do is to display that One upon earth, and therefore there is conflict. Satan urged man to the climax of wickedness-to put that blessed One upon the cross. Man's first sin was to turn his back upon God; for his second, there is no cloak; he turned God's Son out of the earth. I think people are not sensible enough of this. They do not walk about with the sense of it upon them. They admit the first, but not the second. And now what God has done is this; in His wondrous grace, He says: I have chosen you before the foundation of the world that you should be holy, and without blame before me in love. You are members of the body of Christ, and I want you to display Him here upon the earth. What is all the teaching for? What is the point aimed at in ministry? " Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature and fullness of Christ." That is not something hereafter. Speaking to the gifts, Paul says, you are to work on in order to reach this. You answer you will never get people to it. Well, do not stop working on to it. That is the end of all teaching; and if the end of teaching, it is also the end of warfare.

You find in Ephesians 6.: " And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel." That is, not the gospel merely, but the mystery of the gospel. What Paul wanted really, was to give out this truth: Christ, the heavenly Christ; that is the conflict. To me it is affectingly interesting. Do not you see, that when Satan had brought man to the climax of wickedness, to refuse God's Son on this earth, and God had raised Him up to His own right hand, God brought out, that Christ's body was here; and we' members of it, now belonging to the place where He is, are to be the expression of Him down here in the very place where He was refused. Do not you see that all the force of the enemy must be directed against that? Well, that is the conflict.

But God has His object, and He, will support His own in maintaining it. And I am sure it is a great comfort to us to know it is 'God's object to maintain for Christ here, and if I know that, I need not fear any opposition. I say it is no matter who opposes: I have God's object before me, not my own will. But there will be bitter opposition. Yes, what is God's object has always been opposed by Satan. Open your Bibles anywhere you like, and you will find it so. You will find that what is God's object at the moment, is what is most opposed; nothing is more striking. When God sent His Son into the world; who opposed Him most? Why, the Pharisees. Those pious men who stood up for the keeping of the law in its strictest sense; those before whom other men bowed down because of their piety; these were the men who opposed Christ. The Pharisees opposed Him when here, and the Sadducees when He had left the world.

Who would have thought that those who were the sticklers for the law, the strictest and the straitest as to religion, the Jews, should be the ones to oppose the Lord! so much so that when the Lord cures a man on the sabbath day, they declare He is not fit to stay here. Can you understand the inveterate unrelenting character of the opposition against what God's heart is set upon? Paul was left alone; all men forsook him; but the Lord stood by him. And Paul was not a bit baffled. Read what he says to Timothy in his second epistle to him.. He wrote that epistle after being thus forsaken, and you will see he is not discouraged. On the contrary, he tells Timothy to `commit the things which he had heard to faithful men who should be able to teach others also."

Well, this is the conflict, and if you get into it, you may have tough battles to fight while standing for the Lord, or moving on as a heavenly man, for Satan is a relentless foe. If we read Peter or Hebrews, we see that saints there written to had the devil to contend with, but not as here; it was-as " a roaring lion." The desperate character of Satan's opposition in heavenly places is that it is invisible.

Turn now to the chapter before us. The first thing we need is a great power: we are to be " strong in the Lord and in the power of his might." This word is borrowed from Eph. 1. It is the " exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe." Now I have got it, and I am to be strong in it. " There stood a man with a drawn sword in his hand, and Joshua went unto him and said unto him, Art thou for us or for our enemies? And he said, Nay, but as captain of the host of the Loki am I now come." Joshua is not going to battle by himself. Here One appears to him, who comes to encourage him.

Here is the captain of the host—with a drawn sword in his hand. This is the type of the Holy Ghost. " When the Comforter is come.. he shall testify of me." That is the object of our conflict. This passage refers to Christ in the glory, not when on earth. When He went up to heaven the Holy. Ghost would testify of Him on the earth. What I am dwelling on now is not the conflict, but the support we have in it. The Holy Ghost is come down here, to be with us, in order to maintain Christ's here. How wonderful this is! But the church has failed as a witness, and why? I will tell you. The church very soon joined affinity with the world, and the Holy Ghost would not help it in coalition with the world. He is against

this world, for it has rejected Christ. The Holy Ghost is here to maintain the interests of Christ. Of late the truth has been recovered that the Holy Ghost is here for this purpose. And I press on you, beloved friends, that in Christ's service we are to be independent of the world. If the world aid me in preaching the gospel, I should not accept it. Would you? I say, I cannot have it, for I have a greater power, which is against the world.

Well, that is what I start with. I start with this great power that will not co-operate with the world. You might as well expect fire to co-operate with water, as to expect the Holy Ghost to co-operate with the world. The Holy Ghost is here branding the world with sin; how then could He co-operate with it? He convicts the world of sin like a criminal in the dock. The criminal may not own it, but he is nevertheless convicted. I do not want to read the newspaper to know how wicked the world is. What tells me how wicked the world is, is that the Holy Ghost is here. That is enough. His presence here declares the sin of the world. Because Christ has been rejected, the Holy Ghost is here maintaining for Him. So that I see the whole world is a moral desert. I feel that we have lost the sense of this, and that the real cause of all the breakdown is, that the church has lost dependence on the Holy Ghost, that wonderful power with which it started.

In John 15 the Lord tells us how the world hated Him, and that it would hate us. We may feel, Why should the world hate us? It is a bitter thing when we are trying to do them good, to bring to them the highest kind of benevolence-the riches of Christ-that they should hate us. What is the reason? It is because Satan would not have Him. You cannot account for the enmity unless you understand that the devil's hatred to Christ is at the bottom of it.

Well, what a, wonderful thing it is for Joshua to be able to say, I am not going to war in my own strength! As a great general comes out with his commissariat, his ammunition and his reserves, so Joshua comes out, he is not going to war at his own charges.

So we may say we have the power: "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might." Our attitude is, we are not going to give in. We are to be like what is called in war, " the forlorn hope." That gives us the idea, though it is an unhappy name. The forlorn hope is a number of men who venture to make a breach in the fortress, even if it cost them their lives. They take their lives in their hands in order to succeed, and so they are called a forlorn hope. There is no hope for them at all unless they succeed, but they generally do succeed. In our case I do not like the title, but that is really our place; we venture as it were to make the breach, but it is with sure confidence, because we have a power not our own; we know the opposition we are going to meet, still we go cheerfully forward; and we succeed.

Now I turn to what is against us; that is in chapter 9 in type. I have already said how very important it is we should know Paul's doctrine, for if we do not, we cannot understand the type; and the value of the type is, that in your practice you must never be below it. You may say you are not up to the antitype, but the anti-type alone can explain the type, because it is spiritual. The antitype of Jericho is wicked spirits in heavenly places, (Eph. 6) It is not a city. The type is a city, and the idea of a city is a concentration of everything found in this world. Exeter would not be a city, if it had not a cathedral in it. Liverpool was not a city some time since because of this. It did not comprise within itself every organization. When speaking of some countries we speak of the city. We talk of Paris as representing France, because the city is the concentration of the country. So it is here; Jericho is the type of this opposition-this organized resistance. The thing they saw before them was a city walled up; no probability of getting possession. The conflict with us is to represent Christ here; and the force against us is typified by this city; and you cannot, beloved friends, have too great an idea of the character of the opposition that there is against you.

A good general never underrates his foe; and one great cause of failure with us is, that we do not properly estimate the world's opposition. I believe it is a great thing when the soul has the sense of the inveterate character of the opposition to Christ. It is a wonderful help, because it keeps you so on your' guard. You read of battles, and generally, in a case of failure, you will find that the general underrated his foe. I say, do not underrate the world's opposition. I always find that the man who has most of Christ is the one who has the keenest apprehension of Satan. I do not mean common fear, but that he foresees the danger. " We are not ignorant," the apostle says; " of his devices." It is his wiles we have to contend with; and that is the dangerous character of it. If I see a man coming to knock me down I see what he is about. But now it is Satan's wiles; like the spring-guns in former days; a person walking along on the grass touched a secret, hidden spring, and the gun turned round and shot him. That is like the desperate character of the warfare 1 have to contend with. He is an invisible foe; he does not show his face. He is a desperate foe, who knows everything about me, and knows how to touch me in the very point where I am weakest, and it is my weak point he works on, but he does it with his wiles. That is the kind of foe I have to deal with, and his great object is to prevent me from being a representation of Christ.

You may preach justification by faith; that will be tolerated to a great extent; but if you teach about the body of Christ, you are sure to be opposed. Mind, I do not say, do not do it; but if you do, I promise you you will be at war. If a Christian would have an easy path, let him have nothing to do with the church at all. That is what I have heard. If you would have a smooth and easy path, have nothing to do with the church. You may preach the gospel, and have easy times comparatively; but if the church is your interest, you will have many a sorrow.

Now having dwelt on these two things-the power for us and the power against us-I trust you will, beloved friends, work it out like the Israel of that day.

We will now go on to the characteristics of the warrior. There are two; and you get them both in the type and in the antitype. In Joshua the first was the armed men; and the second, the trumpeters. So in Eph. 6 we find armor and prayer: armor for Satan and prayer for God. Armor against Satan alone succeeds. Prayer is, I am always depending on God, never independent of Him. Independence is when a man does a thing for God of his own will. Uzzah was independent when he put his hand to the ark. Who told him to do that? You say he did it for God. But it was contrary to the word of God. He was independent. Independency is a worse sin than what is called carnality. The latter is a disgrace to you, but in the former case you have attempted to do something for God, called it by a fine name perhaps, and did the very thing that God did not want you to do.

I will now just touch on the armor. I am not going through it, although it is very interesting, and Satan wants to spoil it if he can. First, be girt about with truth; next the breastplate of righteousness; be honest and upright. But that is not all. You may have these, and now, Satan may say, I will work you up and make you lose your temper if can. Now you have spoiled it all, you have lost your temper. Your feet should have been shod with the preparation of the gospel], of peace We have often witnessed this.

Beloved friends, it is sad to a degree, that the..man who may be most right is often most intemperate, because he is so indignant with wrong. But " the wrath of man worketh not the praise of God." You may be indignant, but not on your own account. You get chafed with evil, and then

you lose your temper because there is a point not armed; you are not " shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Then there is the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit. There are several different parts in the armor, and none are aggressive, but all protective excepting the last. The last is " the sword of the Spirit, which, is the word of God."

We find an interesting thing in Peter: a woman can win her husband without the word; that is, by the effect of the word upon herself. Even that would not be aggressive; it would be what she is through the word. I would press on you the importance of having the armor on. There is nothing perhaps in which we fail so much, even in our families, as in being without the armor.. There is no place where we are found out so quickly as in our own families, because they know our weak points well. The great thing is to be armed. If invulnerable, I am invincible.

Take an illustration. If I were a child, or a wife in a worldly family, I would be in complete subjection to the father or husband. That is, I would surrender my liberty to any extent, but my conscience to no extent. If he said, You are not to go out of this house any Sunday, I could say, Very well, you shall be implicitly obeyed; but if he said, You must go to such-and-such a place on the Lord's day-one which would compromise my allegiance to Christ, I reply, No, that involves my conscience, and that is for God; that you cannot govern. You can have the right over me to any extent, but over my conscience, never. I could not go there. You can surrender your liberty to any extent, but your conscience to no extent. For instance: you should never join in their amusements. You lose power the moment that you do. I know it is not easy, it goes against the grain, I have learned that, even in talking in the train; I used to do it, but I never do it now, I sit in silence. They may think me a stupid sort of man, but I cannot help that. By-and-by I get my opportunity, and I can have my say for Christ. But you must thus keep armed; if drawn away, you cannot present the gospel to your company. There will be no ring-in it; no divine power.

If you are a child in a worldly family, do not join in their social gatherings; but be ready to carry a message, do anything you can for them, be the most ready to serve in the house-the man-of-all-work if you like. Your place up there above is a divine, heavenly one, and yet, you are to be down here in the character of Christ, really meeting them in all their requirements.

That is the way the Lord was here. He never went anywhere to please Himself, but to do -others a service. I am speaking now of the heavenly walk; that is beyond the wilderness walk. The difference between the heavenly walk here, and the walk in the wilderness, is that, in the heavenly, you are always superior to your circumstances.

My former illustration of the poor woman whose benefactor became her enemy through her faithfulness will apply here. You could not Account for the enmity, unless you saw that it was against Christ; and the more distinctly she is for Christ, the more distinct is the opposition. You cannot account for it in any other way.

The second characteristic is the habit of dependence upon God, and there, as in Ephesians, the climax is reached. "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me."

One thing more I must say is, that the greatest thing to mark you is patience. We all know how we 'need this when we are opposed. When there is great opposition, then is the time we especially need patience, and here, too often, we fail. Patience is a wonderful thing. We see it here. For seven days they went round the city, and it must have been a very irksome thing for them; not a shout is heard till the seventh day. What a wonderful sense they must have had of the word of God and dependence upon Him! Like a child in a worldly family, they were depending on God. They go round the city seven days, and on the last day seven times. Patience, wonderful patience. Nothing keeps a man in confidence in God like patience. We see nothing like this in our day. I believe we do not trust God enough. I believe the incident given in Samuel at the close of that period is an encouragement to us. God came in, in thunder, at the very close. Joshua was in the beginning. God brought out Samuel in the very close. And we have the same God. It is said, God thundered, and there was a great discomfiture.

I close with one remark on another scripture, and that is in Acts 16 Here we get an instance showing all the principles brought out, and I commend it to your attention. It was the first time Paul came into Europe, and I believe the Spirit of God sets forth here what was specially needful in Europe. In Europe the church first accepted the countenance of the world. But the Book of the Acts is a book of principles by which we have to travel every day. In Joshua we see the route we travel and the principles brought out.

Paul is called in a vision to go down into Macedonia to help them, and he goes, and does not meet a man, This was number one nonplus. Patience was needed. He expected a man, for a man appeared to him, not an angel. Then he goes to a place where women were accustomed to pray, and here he has to wait, and at length a woman, who did not belong to the place at all, but to Thyatira, her heart being opened, attended to the things Paul said, and being baptized with her household, she says to Paul, " If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there." There is nothing about a Macedonian yet; but he goes into her house and stays there; and Satan seeing him in this apparent dilemma, sends him one of his instruments, a woman possessing a spirit of divination, and she says, I will give you countenance. Accordingly she follows them about many days, and cried saying, " These men be the servants of the most high God who show unto us the way of salvation."

Look at the patience of Paul; for many days he bears this, but at length he will stand it no longer, and commands the spirit to come out of her. He refused to be countenanced by Satan, and what was the consequence? There was not a power in the place which was not down upon him, and the most striking and the most awful thing about it is, that the very Satan who a few hours ago was proclaiming him the servant of the most high God, is the one that now rouses the people to destroy him. The whole town is roused against him, populace, magistrates, lictors, police, to put Paul in prison, and Satan seems to win the day. Satan might have been exulting perhaps, but it was done in the most illegal way, to use no stronger term. It was the most unjust thing ever done to a man who had done no wrong to put him in prison, and then to make his feet fast in the stocks. But he did not lose his courage or energy. On the contrary, at midnight he is praying and giving thanks to God, quite as content as if he were at home. What would you have thought if you had passed by that prison? I often think if we had patience to walk about in simple confidence in God, how He would interfere for us and deliver us. What a wonderful thing to have that confidence! Little Paul knew, shut up in prison at the silent hour of midnight, when everything was quiet, how God would interfere for him. That a great earthquake would come and shake off all their chains, and throw every door open. The jailer who had retired to rest in his indifference, is at last awakened up, and springing in calls for a light, brings out his prisoners, and falling at their feet says, " What must I do to be saved?" I take it that he was the man Paul was sent for. He is the first man of Macedonia we read of. What a change,! How the populace must have felt next morning when they heard that Paul and Silas were the guests of the jailer!

I believe that even now if we really stood for the Lord, He would bring something remarkable out in the spot where we had stood for Him. I could tell you of spots where He did. God prepares a table for us in the wilderness in the presence of our enemies. Do not you think He gives us manifold more in this present world? I believe it most implicitly. Why do not we know it? We do not believe in it. We do not walk on in simple, blessed patience, waiting, in confidence in God. He will make a table for us in the presence of our enemies, and what a wonderful table was here! Why, the tables are turned completely. Why? Because they believed God; they knew He would support His own Object, and that He would stand by them as long as they stood in simple confidence in Him.

Well, I trust each one of our hearts will be moved into more faithfulness to Him. Some here are young; you have not entered the battlefield yet. Well, it is everything for a person's heart to be led out in simple affection for the Lord. If it is, he will soon be found in the conflict for Him, maintaining for' a heavenly Christ, in the very spot where He has been rejected.

(T. B. S.)

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