Psalms - Commentaries by George Cutting

Incidents and Illustrations of the Gospel: Sought and Brought, Liberty, Never.

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“The wicked shall be silent in darkness.”—1 Samuel 2:9.

“They shall never see light.”—Psalms 49:19.

IT is always a serious word, that word “never”; but when God is pleased to make use of it, how infinitely its importance is increased! Think of it, for example, in the text above quoted. It is the door that shuts the cheer of hope outside the heart forever, and shuts the blackness of despair within. When God says “NEVER,” it is a divine hand that both turns the bolt and keeps the key; and who can revoke His sentence?

NEVER. Is it not, then, a word well worth our serious thought? Pause, then, my reader, and consider its import. Just take your stand on the narrow dividing-line that separates this world from the next, that marks off time from a vast eternity, and con the word carefully. Never, NEVER!

You are, perhaps, aware that in this country there is one asylum under special Government control. It is known as the Breadmoor Asylum, and is devoted entirely to the detention of criminals who, as far as can be judged, have committed offenses while in an unsound state of mind.

A few years since one of the unhappy inmates of this asylum not only got restoration for his mind, but found for his soul a safe refuge in the Saviour’s love, a, sure resting-place in His precious finished work.

What a change all this wrought in him the reader may readily imagine. Still, there was one thing more his heart craved for. But, alas! he had, years before, taken life in a fit of madness, and this longed-for boon was denied him. It was liberty he craved—liberty from the grip of the law. “Oh, for liberty! oh, for liberty! The flowers in the garden are pretty enough, and I am allowed sometimes to see them; but, oh, they are prison flowers. The grass, too, is green enough, but it is prison grass.” “If I only knew,” he would sometimes say to his warder, himself also a converted man, “if I only knew that there would ever be a chance of liberty for me to stand once more under a free sky, I could patiently wait. But—” and here the inevitable would thrust itself before him. Who could not pity such a case?

But if his lot was pitiable because, though with the fairest flowers and brightest sunshine, he had no liberty, what must be the portion of the lost in hell? In chains of darkness, bound hand and foot forever; no light, no liberty, no love, no hope; never, NEVER!

But for you, my reader, it has not come to this yet. For you there is still the opportunity of repentance. “The true light now shineth.” The light of the gospel, revealing all that God is, is still within your reach, and from that light, thank God, you have no need to shrink. It just suits you, for in that light we read God’s love. Think of that sinful woman at Sychar’s well (John 4). The Saviour’s holiness did not repel her; her sinfulness curt not repel Him. No doubt she knew something of her own badness, but she knew nothing of God’s love. The Saviour who conversed with her knew both perfectly, and He had come, by His precious death on the cross, to remove the one and reveal the other.

Here, my reader, you will find both light and liberty. In the light of what God is you will have liberty to look calmly at all that you are, and this without a fear. You will see that it was the depth of your need as a ruined sinner that brought out the deeper depths of God’s love as a Saviour. For “God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8).

But to the careless reader we would cry aloud, “Yet a little while is the light with you.” “Repent and believe the gospel”; own your sinfulness; cast yourself on the merits of His precious blood. So shall you be made a happy “partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light” (Col. 1:12), and instead of looking up from the depth of eternal woe to the place of eternal rest, and sadly saying, Never you shall be able, even now to look down to the pit to which your sin once righteously exposed you, and say triumphantly, By the grace of God, by the blood of Christ, NEVER, NEVER!

Incidents and Illustrations of the Gospel: Sought and Brought, Trying to Believe.

SO many look at believing as some difficult task which they, on their part must perform, before God, on His part, can give them the longed-for blessing. After some special effort to accomplish this great work, they look in upon themselves to see if a right result has been produced, and in this way vainly try to get satisfaction. All this is self-occupation, from beginning to end. They try to produce something in their own feelings, by their own efforts to believe, and presume to be their own judge as to whether the thing arrived at is genuine or not. SELF! SELF! SELF! Then, usually, it is some sort of natural emotion that they expect; and, of course, it must be of a kind they have never felt before. But conversion is not a physical change in our feelings, it is a moral change, produced by the Spirit of God in our souls. When a man is indifferent about sin one day, and dreads it and longs for Christ the next, it is surely proof that a change has been effected. But it is a moral change. The conscience has been awakened by the light. The light has exposed what he is in view of what God is. Nothing will meet such inward cravings but the One who could meet, and has met, all God’s claims against us. It is by this means that the sinner realizes that he cannot do without Christ. Then it is he learns with joy that this blessed Saviour exchanged the adoration of angels in heavenly glory, for the shame and suffering of the cross, in order that He might secure such sinners as himself for His own and His Father’s joy forever. If the sinner’s awakened conscience cannot rest satisfied without the Saviour and His sin-atoning work, the Saviour’s love will not rest satisfied till that convicted sinner has received the longed-for blessing. It is the GOSPEL which brings this glad news to a guilty, self-condemned one, and it is important to see that it is this GOSPEL which he is called upon to believe. He is not commanded to believe that he is saved, but to repent and believe the

gospel, and it is only when he does thus believe that he gets the assurance that salvation is his. There are four great facts about the gospel, and any one of them ought to be a cure for trying to believe.1. Where it comes from—Heaven (1 Peter 1:12).2. Who sends it. —The blessed God (Acts 10:36; 1 Tim. 1:11).3. Who brings it. —The Holy Ghost (1 Peter 1:12).4. Whom it is about. —The Lord Jesus Christ.—His precious blood and heavenly exaltation (Rom. 1:3; 2 Cor. 4:4). What a message it is! It comes from a place where no lie and no liar can enter. It comes from a God who cannot lie—who hates lying. It is brought by the Spirit of Truth, and it is concerning Him who is the very embodiment of Truth itself. Yet a poor sinner will coolly say he will try to believe it!

You are bad enough, my reader, to deserve the judgment of God, and God has been good enough to send His beloved Son to bear that very judgment. This you are called upon to believe. Not that you are good, but that God is. Not that you are worthy, but that Christ is worthy. Not what you feel about yourself, but what God feels about Christ. “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief” (1 Tim. 1:15). May the Spirit of God direct the heart of every troubled reader away from his worthless self to the worthy Saviour.What think ye of such tidings?

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