

A Sermon.

By the REV. THOMAS ADAMS, One of the Puritan Divines.

“He hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God
for a sweet-smelling savour” – Ephesians 5:2.

(Continued from March 1921.)

WHOM? Himself. – This is the third circumstance; the gift, Himself.

Not an angel; for an angel cannot sufficiently mediate between an immortal nature offended and a mortal nature corrupted. The glorious angels are blessed, but finite and limited, and therefore unable for this expiation. They cannot be so sensibly “touched with the feeling of our infirmities” (Hebrews 4:15), as He that was, in our own nature, in all points tempted like as we are, sin only excepted.

Not saints, for they have no more oil than will serve their own lamps; they have enough for themselves, not of themselves, all of Christ, but none to spare. Fools cry, Give us of your oil; they answer, “Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you; but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves” (Matthew 25:9). They could not propitiate for sin, that were themselves guilty of sin, and by nature liable to condemnation. Wretched idolaters, that thrust this honour on them against their wills; how would they abhor such sacrilegious glory!

Not the riches of this world; “We were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold” (1 Peter 1:18). Were the riches of the old world brought together to the riches of the new world; were all the mineral veins of the earth emptied of their purest metals, this pay would not be current with God. It will cost more to redeem souls. “They that trust in their wealth, and boast in the multitude of their riches, yet cannot by any means redeem their brother, nor give to God a ransom for him” (Psalm 49:6,7). The servant cannot redeem the Lord. God made a man master of these things; he is then more precious than his slaves.

“Not the blood of bulls or goats” (Hebrews 9). Alas! those legal sacrifices were but dumb shows of this tragedy, the mere figures of this oblation, mystically presenting to their faith that “Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.” This Lamb was prefigured in the sacrifices of the law, and now presented in the sacraments of the Gospel, slain indeed from the beginning of the world, who had power to profit us before He had a human being Himself. None of these would serve.

Whom gave He then? Himself, who was both God and man; that so participating of both natures, our mortality and God’s immortality, He might be a perfect mediator (Augustine Confes. lib. x. cap. 43). “He came between mortal men and immortal God, mortal with men, and just with God.” As man He suffered; as God He satisfied; as God and man He saved. He gave Himself, wholly and only.

1. All Himself, His whole person, soul and body, godhead and manhood. Though the Deity could not suffer, yet in regard of the personal union of these two natures in one Christ, His very passion is attributed in some sort to the Godhead. So Acts 20:28, it is called the “blood of God;” and 1 Corinthians 2:8, “The Lord of glory” is said to “be crucified.” The school’s distinction here makes all plain. He gave all Christ, though not all of Christ; as God alone, He would not, as man alone, He could not, make this satisfaction for us. The Deity is impassible; yet was it impossible, without this Deity, for the great work of our salvation to be wrought. If any ask, how the manhood could suffer without violence to the Godhead, being united in one person, let him understand it by a familiar comparison. The sunbeams shine on a tree, the axe cuts down this tree, yet can it not hurt the beams of the sun. So the Godhead still remains unharmed, though the axe of death did for a while fell down the manhood. His

body suffered both sorrow and the sword; His soul sorrow, not the sword (literally); His deity neither sorrow nor the sword. The Godhead was in the person pained, yet not in the pain.

2. Himself only, and that without a Partner and without a Comforter.

1. Without a partner that might share either His glory or our thanks, of both which He is justly jealous (Ambrose). The suffering of Christ needs no help. Upon good cause, therefore, we abhor that doctrine of the papists, that our offences are expiated by the passions of the saints. No, not the blessed Virgin hath performed any part of our justification, paid any farthing of our debts. But thus sings the choir of Rome: "Holy Virgin, Dorothea, enrich us with thy virtue, create in us new hearts!" Wherein there is pretty rhyme, pretty reason, but great blasphemy; as if the Virgin Dorothea were able to create a new heart within us. No, "but the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). His blood, and His only. O blessed Saviour, every drop of Thy blood is able to redeem a believing world. What, then, need we the help of men? How is Christ a perfect Saviour if any act of our redemption be left to the performance of saint or angel? No, our souls must die, if the blood of Jesus cannot save them. And whatsoever witty error may dispute for the merits of saints, the distressed conscience cries, "Christ, and none but Christ." They may sit at tables and discourse, enter the schools and argue, get up into the pulpits and preach that the works of good men is the Church's treasure, given by indulgence, and can give indulgence, and that they will do the soul good. But lie we upon our deathbeds, panting for breath, driven to the push, tossed with tumultuous waves of afflictions, anguished with sorrow of spirit, then we sing another song – Christ, and Christ alone – Jesus, and only Jesus; mercy, mercy, pardon, comfort, for our Saviour's sake! "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

2. Without a Comforter. He was so far from having a sharer in His passion, that He had none in compassion, that (at least) might anyways ease His sorrows. It is but a poor comfort of calamity, pity; yet even that was wanting. "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?" (Lamentations 1:12). Is it so sore a sorrow to Christ, and is it nothing to you? a matter not worth your regard, your pity? Man naturally desires and expects, if he cannot be delivered, ease; yet to be pitied. "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me" (Job 19:21). Christ might make that request of Job, but in vain; there was none to comfort Him, none to pity Him. It is yet a little mixture of refreshing if others be touched with a sense of our misery; that in their hearts they wish us well, and would give us ease if they could; but Christ hath in His sorest pangs not so much as a comforter. The martyrs have fought valiantly under the banner of Christ, because He was with them to comfort them. But when Himself suffers, no relief is permitted. The most grievous torments find some mitigation in the supply of friends and comforters. Christ after His monomachy or single combat with the devil in the desert, had angels to attend Him. In His agony in the garden, an angel was sent to comfort Him. But when He came to the main act of our redemption, not an angel must be seen. None of those glorious spirits may look through the windows of heaven, to give Him any ease. And if they would have relieved Him, they could not. Who can lift up where the Lord will cast down? What chirurgeon can heal the bones which the Lord hath broken? But His mother, and other friends, stand by, seeing, sighing, weeping. Alas! what do those tears but increase His sorrow? Might He not justly say with Paul, "What mean ye to weep, and to break mine heart?" (Acts 21:13). Of whom then shall He expect comfort? Of His apostles? Alas! they betake them to their heels. Fear of their own danger drowns their compassion of His misery. He might say with Job, "Miserable comforters are ye all." Of whom, then? The Jews are His enemies, and vie in unmercifulness with devils. There is no other refuge but His Father. No, even His Father is angry; and He who once said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17), is now

incensed. He hides His face from Him, and lays His hand heavy upon Him, and buffets Him with anguish. Thus alone He suffers. He gave Himself, and only Himself, for our redemption.

To WHOM? To God; and that is the fourth circumstance. To whom should He offer this sacrifice of expiation but to Him that was offended? And that is God. "Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight" (Psalm 51:4). "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight" (Luke 15:21). All sins are committed against Him: His justice is displeased, and must be satisfied. To God; for God is angry with what, and whom? with sin and us, and us for sin. In His just anger He must smite; but whom? In Christ was no sin. Now shall God do like Annas or Ananias? "If I have spoken evil," saith Christ "bear witness of the evil, but if well, why smitest thou me?" (John 18:23). So Paul to Ananias, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall; for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?" (Acts 23:3). So Abraham pleads to God, "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" (Genesis 18:25). Especially right to His Son, and to that Son which glorified Him on earth, and whom He hath now glorified in heaven? We must fetch the answer from Daniel's prophecy, "The Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself" (Daniel 9:26). Not for Himself? For whom, then? For solution hereof we must step to the fifth point, and there we shall find: –

FOR WHOM? For us. He took upon Him our person, He became surety for us; and lo! now the course of justice may proceed against Him! He that will become a surety, and take on him the debt, must be content to pay it. Hence that innocent lamb must be made a sacrifice; "and he that knew no sin in himself, must be made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). Seven times in three verses doth the prophet Isaiah inculcate this: *We, ours, us* (Isaiah 53:4,5,6). We were all sick, grievously sick; every sin was a mortal disease. "He healeth our infirmities," saith the prophet; He was our physician, a great physician. The whole world was sick to death, and therefore needed a powerful physician. So was He; and took a strange course for our cure, which was not by giving us physic, but by taking our physic for us. Other patients drink the prescribed potion; but our Physician drank the potion Himself, and so recovered us.

FOR US. – Ambrose said (De Fid. ad Grat. lib. ii. cap. 3), "He suffered for me, that had no cause to suffer for himself." "O Lord Jesus, thou sufferest not thine own, but my wounds." So monstrous were our sins, that the hand of the everlasting justice was ready to strike us with a fatal and final blow. Christ in His own person steps between the stroke and us, and bore that a while that would have sunk us for ever. (Aug. de doct. Christ. lib. i. cap. 14), "We abused the immortality we had, to our death; Christ used the mortality he had, to our life." He loved us; and such as us, that were His utter enemies. Here then was love without limitation, beyond imitation. Unspeakable mercy, says Bernard, that the King of eternal glory should yield Himself to be crucified (Ser. de quadruplici debito), for so poor a wretch, yea, a worm; and that not a loving worm, not a living worm; for we both hated Him and His, and were dead in sins and trespasses.

Yea, for all us, indefinitely; none excepted that will apprehend it faithfully. The mixture of Moses' perfume is thus sweetly allegorized. God commands him to put in so much frankincense as galbanum, and so much galbanum as frankincense (Exodus 30:34). Christ's sacrifice was so sweetly tempered: as much blood was shed for the peasant in the field as for the prince in the court. The offer of salvation is general: "whosoever among you feareth God, and worketh righteousness, to him is the word of this salvation sent." As there is no exemption of the greatest from misery, so no exemption of the least from mercy. He that will not believe and amend shall be condemned, be he never so rich; he that doth, be he never so poor, shall be saved.

This one point of the crucifix, “*for us,*” requires more punctual meditation. Whatsoever we leave unsaid, we must not huddle up this. For indeed this brings the text home to us, even into our consciences, and speaks effectually to us all: to me that speak, and to you that hear, with that prophet’s application, “*Thou art the man.*” We are they for whose cause our blessed Saviour was crucified. For us, He endured those grievous pangs; for us, that we might never taste them. Therefore say we with that father (Aug. de sancta virg. cap. 55): “Let Him be fixed wholly in our hearts, who was wholly for us fastened to the cross.”

We shall consider the uses we are to make of this by the ends for which Christ performed this. It serves to save, move, and mortify us.

1. To save us. This was His purpose and performance: all He did, all He suffered, was to redeem us. “By his stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5). By His sweat we refreshed; by His sorrows we rejoiced; by His death we are saved. For even that day, which was to Him the heaviest day that ever man bore, was to us “the accepted time, the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2). The day was evil in respect of our sins and His sufferings; but eventually, in regard of what He paid and what He purchased, a good day, the best day, a day of joy and jubilation.

But if this salvation be wrought for us, it must be applied to us, yea, to every one of us. For that some receive more profit by His passion than others, is not His fault that did undergo it, but theirs that do not undertake it; to apply it to their own consciences. We must not only believe this text in gross; but let every one take a handful out of this sheaf, and put it into His own bosom. So turning this “*for us*” into “*for me.*” As Paul, “I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). Blessed faith, that into the plural, *us*, puts in the singular soul, *me*. “He gave Himself for me.” Every one is a rebel, guilty and convicted by the supreme law; death waits to arrest us, and damnation to receive us. What should we do but pray, beseech, cry, weep, till we can get our pardon sealed in the blood of Jesus Christ, and every one find a sure testimony in his own soul that Christ gave Himself for me.

2. This should move us. Was all this done for us, and shall we not be stirred? “Have ye no regard? Is it nothing to you that I suffer such sorrow as was never suffered?” (Lamentations 1:12). All His agony, His cries, and tears, and groans, and pangs, were for us; shall He thus grieve for us, and shall we not grieve for ourselves? For ourselves, I say; not so much for Him. Let His passion move us to compassion, not of His sufferings (alas! our pity can do Him no good), but of our sins which caused them. “Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children” (Luke 23:28). For ourselves; not for His pains that are past, but for our own that should have been, and (except our faith sets Him in our stead) shall be. Shall He weep to us, for us, and shall we not mourn? Shall He drink so deeply to us in this cup of sorrow, and shall we not pledge Him? Doth the wrath of God make the Son of God shriek out, and shall not the servants for whom He suffered tremble? (Hieron. in Math.). Every creature seems to suffer with Christ; sun, earth, rocks, sepulchres. Only man suffers nothing, for whom Christ suffered all. Doth His passion tear the veil, rend the stones, cleave the rocks, shake the earth, open the graves; and are our hearts more hard than those insensible creatures that they cannot be penetrated? Doth heaven and earth, sun and elements, suffer with Him, and is it nothing to us? We, wretched men that we are, that were the principals in this murder of Christ: whereas Judas, Caiaphas, Pilate, soldiers, Jews, were all but accessories and instrumental causes. We may seek to shift it from ourselves, and drive this heinous fact upon the Jews; but the executioner doth not properly kill the man. Sin, our sins, were the murderers. Of us He suffered, and for us He suffered: unite these in your thoughts, and tell me if His passion hath not cause to move us.

And yet so obdurate are our hearts that we cannot endure one hour’s discourse of this great business. Christ was many hours in dying for us; we cannot sit one hour to hear of it. O

that we should find fault with heat or cold in hearkening to these heavenly mysteries, when He endured for us such a heat, such a sweat, such agony, that through His flesh and skin He sweat drops of blood. Doth He weep tears of gore-blood for us, and cannot we weep tears of water for ourselves? Alas! how would we die for Him, as He died for us, when we are weary of hearing what He did for us?

3. This should mortify us. Christ delivered Himself to death for our sins, that He might deliver us from death and our sins. He came not only to destroy the devil, but to “destroy the works of the devil” (1 John 3:8). Neither doth He take only from sin (Romans 8:1) the power to condemn us, but also (Romans 6:6,12) the power to rule and reign in us. So that Christ’s death, as it answers the justice of God for our misdeeds, so it must kill in us the will of misdoing. Christ in all parts suffered, that we in all parts might be mortified. His sufferings were so abundant that men cannot know their number, nor angels their nature, neither men nor angels their measure. His passion found an end, our thoughts cannot. He suffered at all times, in all places, in all senses, in all members, in body and soul also – all for us.

(Continued in June 1921)

[May 1921]

Notes of a Sermon.

By the REV. D. MACFARLANE, Dingwall.
Preached on Sabbath, 25th February, 1917.

“Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light. Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire,

and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand: ye shall lie down in sorrow” – Isaiah 50:10,11.

In the fourth verse of this chapter, the Messiah, who is the Lord Jesus Christ, is the speaker, and He says: “The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.” In our text He goes in search of this man that is weary to speak comfort to Him: “Who is among you that is weary, and needs comfort?” There were many others, but Christ enquires for a certain person – a person that is in great need – that He should speak a word in season to him. Christ gives a description of the man enquired for, as to his character and present condition. In speaking from the text, we shall consider: –

- I. – The character of this man;
- II. – His condition; and
- III. – The counsel that the Messiah gives him.

I. – His character.

1. He feareth the Lord. The Lord’s people are characterised in Scripture as fearing the Lord. It was said of Job that he was a man that “feared God and eschewed evil.” There are two kinds of fearing God. There is, first, a slavish fear such as the devils and unconverted men have. This fear came into the soul of man by sin, and causes men to flee from God for fear of punishment. When Adam sinned, he tried to flee from God, and to hide himself among the trees of the garden, and this fear is natural to all his posterity. They fear the presence of God, and would desire that He did not exist. This fear is at the root of atheism – atheists deny the existence of God, for fear of punishment. This is not the fear that is spoken of in our text, but the fear that is implanted in the souls of those who are born again.

(1) It is a filial fear, the fear that children ought to have towards their parents. They fear their parents, not as enemies, but as those near and dear to them whom they love. This fear is not in any but in God’s children.

(2) It is a reverential fear. They fear the Lord with reverence. God is great and glorious, and is to be “greatly feared in the assembly of the saints” (Psalm 89:7). We are to serve Him with reverence and godly fear. This fear is among the saints in heaven; they reverence God and fear Him. This fear, instead of driving men away from God, draws them to Him, and causes them to seek His gracious presence, with desire to enjoy his fellowship, as in the case of Job, who said: “O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat” (Job 23:3). We ought to examine ourselves as to whether we bear this mark which makes us to seek after the Lord, as Mary at the grave sought the Lord. She saw a glorious angel, but she still wept till she saw the Lord Himself.

(3) Third, it is an obediential fear and leads to new obedience, as dutiful children obey their parents, not from fear of punishment but from love. They fear to offend their parents, whom they love. This is true of God’s children, and is a mark of love, as Christ says, “If ye love me, keep my commandments.”

(4) It is a holy fear, and causeth its subjects to forsake sin and to walk in the way of holiness.

2. The man enquired for “obeyeth the voice of his servant.” The servant here is Christ. He not only hears the Voice, but obeys it. Christ speaks in His works of providence, and in His Word which we have in the Bible. Many hear His voice in the Bible who don’t obey it. There is a great deal of disobedience to Christ’s voice in this age, so that there is cause to ask, “Who hath believed our report?”

II. – His condition. Christ describes the man in question as in darkness – not the darkness of the natural state, but another kind of darkness to which the Lord’s people are liable during their time in the world. To be in darkness is not pleasant. In a dark night one is afraid to go out of doors, lest he stumble and fall. It is pleasant to see the light. God’s people would like to have the light always, and although the natural light is useful in its own place, some would prefer daylight always.

This man may be in darkness as to his saving interest in Christ. This is a darkness that tries him severely, and causes much trouble and anxiety to him, although it is no trouble to the unconverted. If you are a true believer you may be often in this darkness, although the rest of the Lord’s people have no doubt about your interest in Christ. There was a godly man in Strathdearn who was often in darkness in this respect, though the Lord’s people who knew him had no doubt but he was a true Christian. There was a godly catechist in the parish, who repeatedly visited him, and found that he was in much doubt about his case. The name of the man was William Grant, who lived in a district called Slochd. On one occasion, when the catechist visited him, William said to the catechist: “There is a passage of Scripture often on my mind which I do not understand, that passage is where David says, ‘All men are liars.’” The catechist replied: “I understand that passage quite well. When I visit William Grant, he says to me that he is not a true Christian, but when I ask the Lord’s people, ‘Is William Grant a true Christian?’ they answer, ‘We wonder very much that you would ask us such a question. We never doubted the fact that he is a true Christian.’ And when I go to the surrounding parishes, and ask the same question of the Lord’s people in these places, they return the same answer, but when I come to William Grant himself, and tell him of this, he will say, ‘All these men are liars.’” Are you in this darkness, and saying: “O that I knew that Christ was mine, and that I were His”? We are exhorted to examine ourselves as to whether we are in the faith, and as to whether Christ be in us. The Lord’s people examine themselves daily on this and other points pertaining to their everlasting peace. It is awful to go to eternity on a peradventure.

He may also be in darkness as to his duty. Some duties are clear, and there is no room for doubt. It is the duty of all to obey God, and to walk in the ways of His commandments. It is their duty to adhere faithfully to the doctrines of God’s Word. The duty is so plain that it need not be made a matter of prayer as to what one ought to do. There were times when many forsook the truth, and some of these made it a matter of prayer to know the path of duty, but the path of duty was so clear in the light of God’s Word, that it was not really necessary to pray for light as to what they ought to have done.

He may be in darkness as to God’s dealings with him in providence. Jacob said: “All these things are against me,” when, in reality, they were all for him. He may be in darkness as to whether he ought to profess the Lord publicly or not. On Communion occasions some are in this darkness. Have you ever been in darkness as to your duty to profess the Lord publicly? He is in darkness when the Lord hides His face from him, as David was, when he said: “Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled” (Psalm 30:7).

He may be in darkness also as to what will become of the Lord’s cause in his day, as to whether it shall become very low, or be revived and prosper. He is not in darkness as to the issue, for Christ’s kingdom must come, and Satan’s kingdom must be destroyed. “He must increase, but I must decrease.” When the Lord sent Moses to bring the people of Israel out of Egypt, He assured him that he would be successful in his undertaking, and that they would worship Him on this mount.

We need not be in doubt as to the issue of the Lord’s cause in the world. It shall prosper, so that the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the face of the sea, when idolatry and every system of error shall be utterly destroyed. Dr. Wylie, writing on the seventh vial, says much on this subject, and holds that Romanism,

Mahommedanism, and Hinduism, and other false systems are even now on the wane. These systems have led their dupes to atheism, as the French were led at the time of the Revolution in 1789. The destruction of these false systems shall be brought to pass when the last drop of the seventh vial is poured out. Then a happy time shall succeed. Although we do not expect to see it, we rejoice that there is such a time coming.

The man in question, though in darkness, does not sit at ease in it. He is walking in darkness; he is not sitting in it. He is labouring to get out of the darkness into the light. He sometimes walks a long distance in darkness before deliverance comes. He is in darkness, and has no light; he has no comfort, and is in misery. However long you may be in darkness, it is your duty to seek out of it, and to labour diligently for that end. Those that never saw the light feel satisfied with their condition in darkness, and delight in doing the works of darkness.

III. – The counsel that Christ gives him.

(1) The first thing in the counsel is, “Let him trust in the name of the Lord.” The name of the Lord means not only the Lord Himself personally, but His titles by which He reveals Himself in the Scriptures as the God of salvation, who loved His people from all eternity, and continues to do so for ever. His name is in the Word of the Gospel. The Apostle Paul, writing to the Church, commits believers to God, and to the Word of His grace. You may commit yourself to the same Word. There are many precious promises given in that Word, but you say, “I will wait till God’s Word comes to me with power and comfort in the hand of the Holy Spirit.” But, I say to you, when the Word of the Lord does not come to you, go you to the Word, and be not like the Quakers. It is your duty to read and search the Scriptures for all that you need. You will find your case in the Word of the Lord, and also the remedy. There is not a case in which you may be, but you will find in the book of Psalms. Trust in the name of the Lord, as revealed in His Word. Many found comfort from reading the Scriptures. Many go to other books for comfort and pleasure, but the Lord’s people will go to the Bible. You may be in darkness on Sabbath morning, and you come to church praying that Christ will speak a word in season to you.

(2) The second thing in the counsel is, “Let him stay himself upon his God.” When you are in darkness, without any light or comfort, with no good feeling within you, Christ advises you to cast yourself upon your God, as Job did, when he said, “Though He shall slay me, yet will I trust in Him.” Say, as Peter and others said, “To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.” This is the word of comfort Christ speaks to him that is weary. The tongue of the learned has been given to Him as the Mediator, that He should know how to speak a word in season. It is a word in season, and “a word in season, how good it is”! We may try to speak a word of comfort to the Lord’s people in trouble, but we may err in not knowing *how* to do it; but Christ knows to speak the very word that is needed, and He knows also *how* to do it. Not knowing how to do it, we may aggravate the sorrow and misery of those whom we seek to comfort; but as Christ knows how to do it, the word He speaks brings light and comfort to His people.

While Christ speaks comfort to His own people, He omits not to speak a word to those who deceive themselves. In the following and last verse of this chapter He speaks to those who walk in the light of the sparks they kindle themselves. “Behold all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.” The light they have is only sparks, which give light for a very short time, and then they are in darkness. Such was the light which those had to whom Christ said: “If the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness”? And such is the light of many professing Christians at the present time, who substitute the word of man for the Word of God. Their

light is short lived, and their end shall be quite different from that of the man to whom the Lord speaks a word in season. Instead of being brought out of darkness, they shall not only sit but lie down in sorrow, and they shall have of Christ's hand as a punishment for the choice they have made of their own inventions, and for refusing to be led by Christ, who is the light of the world. "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). Education is widespread in our day, yet there is great ignorance of spiritual things among the people, more so than in former times, when many could neither read nor write. Much of the education that is given in the public schools tends to leave the scholars in ignorance of God's Word, and although they are told that they are going to heaven at death, they shall find at the end that they were sadly deceived; instead of going to heaven, they are going to hell.

Reading the words of the text, we may learn how Christ cares for His people, knows their sorrows, and comforts them in the time of need. He would have them to be of good cheer, as He said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but, be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Before He left the world, we find Him comforting His disciples; saying, "Let not your heart be troubled." And now that He is glorified in heaven with the Father, with the glory which He had with Him before the world was, He has the same care of His people on earth, and ministers comfort to them, through the word of the Gospel, according to their need. Therefore, in the midst of all their trials and sorrows, He says in His Word, "I will not leave you comfortless." Let them then trust in the name of the Lord, and stay themselves upon their God. Amen.

[May 1921]

A Sermon.

By the REV. THOMAS ADAMS, One of the Puritan Divines.

"He hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God
for a sweet-smelling savour" – Ephesians 5:2.

(Continued from May 1921.)

1. *At all times.* In His childhood by poverty and Herod; in the strength of His days by the powers of earth, by the powers of hell, yea, even by the powers of heaven. In the day He lacks meat, in the night a pillow. Even that holy time of the great passover is destined for His dying. When they should kill the paschal lamb in thankfulness, they slay the Lamb of God in wickedness. They admire the shadow, yet condemn the substance. All for us; that all times

might yield us comfort. So the apostle sweetly, “He died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him” (1 Thessalonians 5:10).

2. *In all places.* In the cradle by that fox; in the streets by revilers; in the mountain by those that would have thrown Him down headlong; in the temple by them that “took up stones to cast at Him” (John 8:59). In the high priest’s hall by buffeters, in the garden by betrayers; by the way, laden with His cross. Lastly, in Calvary, a vile and stinking place, among the bones of malefactors crucified. Still all for us, that in all places the mercy of God might protect us.

3. *In all senses.* For His taste, lo! it is afflicted with gall and vinegar – a bitter draught for a dying man! His touch felt more; the nails driven into His hands and feet; places most sensible of pain; being the most sinewy parts of the body. His ears are full of the blasphemous contumelies which the savage multitude belched out against Him. Not Him, but Barabbas, they cry to Pilate; preferring a murderer before a Saviour. Will you read the speeches objectual to His hearing? (See Matthew 27:29,39,42,49). In all, consider their blasphemy, His patience. For His eyes, whither can He turn them without spectacles of sorrow. The despite of His enemies on the one side, shewing their extremest malice; the weeping and lamenting of His mother on the other side, whose tears might wound His heart. If any sense were less afflicted, it was His smelling; and yet the putrified bones of Calvary could be no pleasing savour.

Thus suffered all His senses. That taste that should be delighted with the wine of the vineyard, that “goeth down sweetly” (Song 7:9), is fed with vinegar. He looks for good grapes, behold “sour grapes” (Isaiah 5:4); He expects wine; He receives vinegar. That smell that should be refreshed with the odoriferous scent of the “beds of spices” (Song 6:2), the piety of His saints, is filled with the stench of iniquities. Those hands that sway the sceptre of the heavens, are fain to carry the reed of reproach, and endure the nails of death. Those eyes that were as a flame of fire” (Revelation 1:14), in respect of which the very sun was darkness, must behold the afflicting objects of shame and tyranny. Those ears, which to delight the high choristers of heaven sing their sweetest notes, must be wearied with the taunts and scoffs of blasphemy.

And all this for us; not only to satisfy those sins which our senses have committed, but to mortify those senses, and preserve them from those sins. That our eyes may be no more full of adulteries, nor throw covetous looks on the goods of our brethren. That our ears may no more give so wide admission and welcome entrance to lewd reports, the incantations of Satan. That sin in all our senses might be done to death; the poison exhausted, the sense purified.

4. *In all members.* Look on that blessed body, conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of a pure virgin; it is all over scourged, martyred, tortured, mangled. What place can you find free? To begin at his head; that head which the angels reverence, is crowned with thorns. That face, which is “fairer than the sons of men” (Psalm 45:2), must be odiously spit on by the filthy Jews. His hands that made the heavens are extended and fastened to a cross. The feet which tread upon the necks of His and our enemies, feel the like smart. And the mouth must be buffeted which “spake as never man spake” (John 7:46).

Still all this for us. His head bled for the wicked imaginations of our heads. His face was besmeared with spittle, because we had spit impudent blasphemies against heaven. His lips were afflicted, that our lips might henceforth yield savoury speeches. His feet did bleed, that our feet might not be swift to shed blood. All His members suffered for the sins of all our members, and that our members might be no more servants to sin, but “servants to righteousness unto holiness” (Romans 6:19). “He would be polluted with their spittle, that he might wash us; he would be blindfolded, that he might take the vail of ignorance from our

eyes. He suffered the head to be wounded, that he might renew health to all the body” (Jerome).

Six times we read that Christ shed His blood:

1. When he was circumcised; at eight days old His blood was spilt.
2. In His agony in the garden, where He sweat drops of blood.
3. In His scourging, when the merciless tormentors fetched blood from His holy sides.
4. When He was crowned with thorns; those sharp prickles raked and harrowed His blessed head, and drew forth blood.
5. In His crucifying, when His hands and feet were pierced, blood gushed out.
6. Lastly, after His death, “one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water” (John 19:34).

All His members bled, to shew that He bled for all His members. Not one drop of this blood was shed for Himself, all for us; for his enemies, persecutors, crucifiers, ourselves. But what shall become of us, if all this cannot mortify us? “How shall we live with Christ, if with Christ we be not dead?” (Romans 6:8). Dead indeed unto sin, but living unto righteousness. As Elisha revived the Shunamite’s child: “He lay upon it; put his mouth upon the child’s mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands, and stretched himself upon the child, and the flesh of the child waxed warm” (2 Kings 4:34). So the Lord Jesus, to recover us that were dead in our sins and trespasses, spreads and applies His whole passion to us; lays His mouth of blessing upon our mouth of blasphemy; His eyes of holiness upon our eyes of lust; His hands of mercy upon our hands of cruelty; and stretcheth His gracious self upon our wretched selves, till we begin to wax warm, to get life, and the Holy Spirit returns into us.

5. In His *soul*. All this was but the outside of His passion: “Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour” (John 12:27). The pain of the body is but the body of pain; the very soul of sorrow is the sorrow of the soul. All the outward afflictions were but gentle prickings in regard of that His soul suffered. “The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?” (Proverbs 18:14). He had a heart within that suffered unseen, unknown anguish. This pain drew those *strong cries*, those bitter *tears* (Hebrews 5:7). He had often sent forth the cries of compassion; of passion and complaint not till now. He had wept the tears of pity, the tears of love, but never before the tears of anguish. When the Son of God thus cries, thus weeps, here is more than the body distressed; the soul is agonized.

Still all this *for us*. His soul was in our souls’ stead; what would they have felt, if they had been in the stead of His? All for us; to satisfaction, to emendation. For thy drunkenness and pouring down strong drinks, He drunk vinegar. For thy intemperate gluttony, He fasted. For thy sloth, He did exercise Himself to continual pains. Thou sleepest secure, thy Saviour is then waking, watching, praying. Thy arms are inured to lustful embracings; He for this embraceth the rough cross. Thou deckest thyself with proud habiliments, He is humble and lowly for it. Thou ridest in pomp, He journeys on foot. Thou wallowest on thy down beds, thy Saviour hath not a pillow. Thou surfeitest, and He sweats it out, a bloody sweat. Thou fillest and swellest thyself with a pleurisy of wickedness. Behold incision is made in the Head for thee; thy Saviour bleeds to death. Now judge whether this point (for us) hath not derived a near application of this text to our own consciences. Since then Christ did all this for thee and me; pray then with Augustine: “Lord give me a heart to desire thee, desiring to seek thee, seeking to find thee, finding to love thee, loving, no more to offend thee.”

There are two main parts of this Crucifix yet to handle. I must only name them, being sorry that it is still my hap to trouble you with prolixity of speech.

6. The next is the *Manner: an offering and sacrifice*. His whole life was an *offering*, His death a *sacrifice*. He gave Himself often for us an eucharistical oblation, once an expiatory sacrifice. In the former He did for us all that we should do; in the latter He suffered for us all that we should suffer. “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree” (1 Peter 2:24). Some of the Hebrews have affirmed, that in the fire which consumed the legal sacrifices, there always appeared the face of a lion (Paul. Tagius, cap. 4). Which mystery they thus resolve, that the Lion of Judah should one day give Himself for us, a perfect expiatory sacrifice. Thus, “once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself” (Hebrews 9:26).

7. The last point is the *Effect: Of a sweet smelling savour*. Here is the fruit and efficacy of all. Never was the Lord pleased with sinful man till now. Were He never so angry, here is a pacification, a sweet savour. If the whole world were quintessenced into one perfume, it could not yield so fragrant a smell. We are all of ourselves dead and stinking carcasses. The pure nostrils of the Most Holy cannot endure us: behold the perfume that sweetens us, the redeeming blood of the Lord Jesus. This so fills Him with a delightful scent, that He will not smell our noisome wickedness.

Let me leave you with this comfort in your bosoms. How unsavoury soever our own sins have made us, yet if our hand of faith lay hold on this Saviour’s censer, God will scent none of our corruptions; but we shall smell sweetly in His nostrils. Bernard for all. “O dear Jesus, we should die, and thou payest it, we have offended, and thou art punished.” A mercy without example, a favour without merit, a love without measure. Therefore I conclude my sermon, as we all shut up our prayers, with this one clause, Through our Lord Jesus Christ. O Father of mercy, accept our sacrifice of prayer and praise, for His sacrifice of pain and merit, even for our Lord Jesus Christ’s sake! To whom, with the Father and blessed Spirit, be all glory, for ever. Amen.

[June 1921]

A Sermon.

By the REV. GEORGE HUTCHESON, M.A., of Edinburgh and Irvine (1674).

(Part I of Fourteenth Sermon of Series on Psalm 130.)

“But there is forgiveness with thee” – Psalm 130:4.

I did in the forenoon put a close to the third and main head of doctrine that is contained and included in this high and great privilege of the remission of sins, and that is to clear what this forgiveness is, and wherein the nature of it consists. And what ye heard upon it in the morning amounts to this – that pardon in the court of heaven is a distinct thing from the intimation of that pardon in the court of conscience; and therefore they that are running to the fountain and laying hold upon the promise of pardon, they must not conceive that they are not pardoned because they cannot feel by any sensible manifestation that they are pardoned. And the last thing I was upon was, that however pardon passed by God is irrevocable, it is a deed

and sentence that is never revoked; once be pardoned of sin and it is eternally pardoned. And consequently the child of God that hath been at Christ the remedy with any sin, he must not conceive that every sin that troubles him, especially upon his falling in new guilt, is unpardoned; yet they that know how much they are in free grace's debt for pardon should walk tenderly, that they open not these unripe graves upon themselves, which will be much bitterness to them, especially when new guilt is made a prospect wherethrough to read old guilt, though it be pardoned.

I proceed to the fourth head to be spoken to in this purpose, and that is the time when God pardoneth sin in His people. The text hath a ground for this also, for the psalmist finds it a fit time to strick in for pardoning mercy, and by faith to close with this, "There is forgiveness with thee." When he is abased with the sight and sense of sin, when he finds sin such a debt, such a burden, "That if God mark iniquity, none can stand," he finds it then time, I say, to strick in for pardon. But that I may speak a little more distinctly to this – which, when I have done with, there will remain only the right method of application of pardon to be spoken to that will bring me on in the text and to the practical use of all this doctrine – I shall speak briefly to these three questions on it: –

1. Whether sin be pardoned from all eternity, or when Christ paid satisfaction to justice on the cross, as the Antinomians say?

2. Supposing that sin is pardoned, not from eternity but in time, the next question will be, whether all sins be forgiven at once to the justified and pardoned man – whether in justification and upon a man's closing with Christ, all sins, not only sins, past and present, but sins to come are actually pardoned?

3. If sins be pardoned in time, how is it said (Acts 3:19,20) to be done at the day of judgment: "Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord," etc?

For the first of these questions the Antinomians make justification and the pardon of sin an imminent act in God (as they call it) and they will have it past from all eternity, and they assert that all the elect are actually pardoned from eternity, and the lowest that any of them comes is, that they will have all the elect pardoned when Christ upon the cross finished the satisfaction to justice for their sins; and all that a believer gets when he comes to Christ, and closes with Christ for righteousness and life, is not an actual pardon, but the intimation and declaration of his pardon, even as when a pardoned rebel who hath a pardon in his pocket, is brought in before the king and prays for pardon, and the king intimates the pardon which he hath already got, unto him. To clear it according to scripture and so to lead you to something practical in this, ye shall take up pardon in four steps.

1. We grant that from all eternity God decreed to pardon the sins of all the elect, and in this respect we shall not decline to say that all the elect are justified and pardoned in God's decree, to whom "Known are all his works from the beginning of the world," Acts 15:18. Yet we must add that that will not prove *actual* pardon to the elect from eternity, for all the elect are saved as well as pardoned in God's decree; and yet they are not *actually* saved till they be glorified. There is only a decree concerning their pardon to be in due time past on gospel terms, and actual pardon is a transient act and changes the state of the person.

2. As pardon to the elect is decreed from all eternity, so it is purchased by Christ at His death, for then, Colossians 2:14, "He blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." He then blotted out our libel and dittay (bill of accusations). How? By paying a price for that pardon, that in due time, and in the use of means, was to be actually conferred; and in this sense we shall let it pass that the elect were justified in Christ, their head. At His death He took up that song, Isaiah 50:8, "He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me?" that

we might sing it after him, Romans 8:34, "It is God that insisteth, who is he that condemneth?"

3. But there is a third step of the pardon of sin, that is, that pardon that is decreed by God from eternity and purchased by Christ at his death, it is recorded by way of a past sentence and tendered in the word of the gospel to be embraced by sinners in due order, in the use of the means. A sentence of pardon is past and pronounced in the word of the gospel that needs no more to make it effectual to the sinner but his closing with Christ and getting in his name in the due use of the means.

4. But yet we must add a fourth step when pardon is decreed, when Christ has purchased pardon, and the sentence of pardon is past and pronounced in the Word; yet no man is actually pardoned till he come unto Christ; till he be actually penitent and a believer, he is not actually pardoned. And when he is an actual penitent and has closed with Christ for pardon of sin, righteousness and life, he may then look back with comfort on God's decree of election, on Christ's purchase of pardon, on his being on God's heart when pardon is holden out in the Word; but actually pardoned he is not, till he himself come to Christ and be a believer on Him.

Many things would fall in to be spoken to for clearing of this; some whereof will come in when we come to the resolution of the next question. I shall here offer three words for clearing and confirming this truth.

1. That all the elect before conversion are in a state of wrath even as others (Ephesians 2:3). The elect before they be quickened are children of wrath, not in their own sense only, as the Antinomians say, but really even as others, and consequently they were not pardoned nor reconciled before they were quickened more than the pagans, children of wrath.

2. It is clear from the tenor of the Scriptures that they are not, nor cannot be, justified and pardoned till they be in Christ, the second Adam, not in a decree, or judicially, as represented by Christ, but actually by faith, for we are justified by faith (Romans 5:1). And consequently, by faith we are pardoned, which is a branch of justification. Now men are in Christ by faith, not from eternity, but in time, and on that account (Romans 16:7) Paul tells of some of his kinsmen that were in Christ before him, and consequently were not actually pardoned till they were in Him by faith.

3. In the pattern of prayer, Matthew 6, we are bidden pray daily, "Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors." The Antinomians say, when we are bidden pray for forgiveness, that it is for the intimation of pardon; but that gloss may be easily wiped off, if we consider that we are to pray for forgiveness, as we forgive others. Now we forgive others by a real passing from the wrong they have done us, and not by the intimation of pardon only. And further, it may be cleared from that same similitude that Antinomians bring of a rebel or malefactor that hath gotten a pardon from his prince. It is true, after he hath gotten his pardon, when he comes before his prince he may seek the intimation of his pardon; but he were a fool if, as oft as he came in his prince's presence, he should seek the intimation of his pardon; and consequently it is not the intimation of pardon that is to be sought daily in that petition, but actual pardon. Thus ye see that sin is not actually pardoned from eternity. This might warn us in our practice to take a right look of the decrees of God. Profane mockers begin there to cast off all fear of God, and if (say they) it be decreed in heaven they will get it; and if not, they will want it. Others that are more tender are ready to question if they be decreed for life, and if Christ stood in their room, and if they have interest in His death. But these are not thy first questions, but rather if thou hast need of Him, if that which thou misters (needest) be held out in the promise, and thou needest never speir (question) thy interest so long as thou hast a necessity to prove it. Till thou begin there, a comfortable look of God's decree and purpose about thee, thou will never get.

But I proceed to the second question, whether all sins of the justified be forgiven at once. The expressions of some orthodox divines run this way – that justification being an indivisible instantaneous act, all the sins of the justified, past, present, and to come, are pardoned in that first act of justification, and all that we get afterward is a renewed sense of our justification and a renewed extract of our discharge, when by new guilt it is darkened and subdued so as we cannot read it. In the clearing of this a general truth is to be granted, that when a man is once justified, no sin that he falls in after justification shall eventually condemn him; for if we consider partly the sure decree of God that He will save His own elect whom He hath decreed to save; partly the purchase of Christ that He will lose none that are given to Him; and partly the sure state of the justified man, that as it is, Romans 8:30, “Whom he justifies, them he also glorifies”; we may assert when once a man is justified he shall never be condemned, though he fall in new sins after justification. But this we say not upon that account, because these sins are pardoned, but because the elect justified man shall undoubtedly repent and get pardon, and these are the terms on which we say that no sin the justified man falls in shall eventually condemn him. But more particularly, in speaking of justification and pardon of sin, ye shall in the taking of it up go along with me in these four or five steps.

1. A justified man closing with Christ by faith, his person is reconciled and received in favour with God. And that is the first great step or benefit the justified person hath that the man with Abraham becomes a friend of God from an enemy. And upon this results that distinction that is to be made betwixt a man’s state and his condition. The unrenewed man, both his state and condition are cursed, but the justified, as to his state is blessed, but his condition may alter as the moon upon his hand.

2. In justification, not only is the justified man’s person taken in favour with God, but all his sins, past and present, all the debts wherewith he can be charged in that day when he closes with Christ, are blotted out and pardoned, no more to be remembered. And his pardon is this, when he grips by faith to Christ, and through Christ, to the promise of pardon holden forth in the Gospel, his pardon is a pronounced sentence in the Word, and all his crimes and transgressions are then done away.

3. And because a justified man is not a perfect man, but falling daily in new escapes, whereby he contracts new guilt and pollution, therefore a justified man, beside the reconciliation of his person and the pardon of his sins he is under for the time, he hath a right to that open “Fountain opened for the house of David for sin and for uncleanness Zechariah 23:1. He hath a right to go to the fountain as an open fountain to wash, upon his repentance daily, as he contracts pollution, and that’s another privilege the justified man hath, that he hath a fountain to go to upon his repentance, and wash and be clean.

[Continued August 1921]

[July 1921]

A Sermon.

By the REV. GEORGE HUTCHESON, M.A., of Edinburgh and Irvine (1674).
(Part 2 of Fourteenth Sermon of Series on Psalm 130.)

“But there is forgiveness with thee” – Psalm 130:4.

4. And this is another benefit that results on justification, that not only hath the justified man a right to the fountain, but a promise of repentance, to fit and qualify him to go to the open fountain, and make use of it for cleansing (Zechariah 12:9,10), that God will pour upon him the spirit of grace and supplication, and cause him to look unto Him whom he hath pierced by his sins, and mourn. He hath Christ an exalted prince and saviour to give him repentance and remission of sin. And that is another privilege of the justified man, that not only is he in favour with God and hath a right to pardon, but a right to the promise of repentance, that he may have access to the open fountain of pardon.

5. Yet we must add, that his sins to come are not actually pardoned till he actually come to the fountain and wash. It's true (as the learned speak) justification is an indivisible instantaneous act without succession (as they call it) as to the state of the justified man's person, but yet as to the pardon of daily sins, as it is said in the Confession of Faith, chapter ii. section 5, “God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified;” it's a

continued act, a frequently repeated act, as the justified man falls in new sins, humbles himself and confesses, begs pardon and renews his faith and repentance.

And to clear that it is so, I shall adduce two or three arguments briefly, which will also prove that sins are not forgiven from eternity; and passing that argument, Matthew 6:12, where, because we are daily sinning, we are bidden seek daily pardon and forgiveness, as we forgive others, ye shall consider these three things to make it out, that sins to come are not actually pardoned in justification.

1. Consider that sin must be committed and be a crime before it be pardoned. Common sense says that before a pardon be, there must be a crime, and consequently sins to come are not pardoned, they not being as yet crimes. Hence when the Scripture speaks of pardon of sins, it speaks of these sins as committed, Ezekiel 18:22, "All his transgressions that he hath done shall not be mentioned": and Jeremiah 33:8, "And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me, and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me." Nay, the very names given to the pardon of sin, as when it is called, the blotting out of sin, the putting of it out of His sight, the casting of it in the depth of the sea, the remembering of it no more, etc., all these and the like import an existence and being of sin, to be antecedent to the pardon of sin. What need is there of a pardon to that which is not a crime, is not existent, hath not a being? Nay, there is no prince nor supreme authority in the world that will give pardon at that rate; it's fair enough if the delinquent get pardon when he hath committed a crime, and consequently, God pardons no sins, till they be committed, to justified persons.

2. A second argument that inclines me to think that all sins are not pardoned in justification is this, that there is no pardon of sin, but upon confession of sin, 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." There is no pardon of sin promised, but upon repentance, Acts 5:31, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a saviour, for to give (first) repentance to Israel, and (then) remission of sins. Where God gives remission He gives first repentance. Now confession of sin and repentance for a sin hath no place where sin hath not a being; confession of sin and repentance for sin presupposes the being of sin, and the sinners reflecting on it and repenting of it.

3. And a third consideration or argument is, that when sins are actually pardoned, a man may rejoice, exult, and boast in God, upon the account of pardon. O how may the pardoned sinner exceedingly rejoice in God! But who dare say that a justified person, while reeking in his sin (to speak so) before he hath confessed it and repented for it, can, or dare, rejoice in God?

Shall he, while he is wallowing in his abominations, rejoice in God? That were abominable doctrine, and yet he might in that case rejoice, if these abominations were pardoned before they were committed. Nay more, it would confound all distinction to be put betwixt unrepented and repented guilt; if a man's sins were pardoned before they were committed, his pardon would be as sure as if he had repented, by their doctrine. Therefore I conclude that sin cannot be actually pardoned before it be committed, repented, and Christ fled unto for pardon. [It is but right to state, in view of Mr. Hutcheson's views, that many of the best and most cautious of the Reformed divines hold that all sins, past, present, and future, are forgiven in justification.]

And this hath a practical use (which I but touch upon because the great practical use of all is but coming). That justified folk that are at peace with God, as to the state of their persons, should not think light of their daily slips into faults. Thou art lying under thy daily failings, as a debt, till thou go to the open fountain and wash. It is true (as I said before) no sins thouallest in shall eventually condemn thee, but thou art a guilty person so long as thou liest under unrepented guilt. Therefore look to it, and let your faith of pardon be seen in your tenderness under new guilt. O that the Gospel would take you off the law's hand, and press

you to this tenderness, that love to Christ, and the love of Christ might incite you in your actings, and when ye fall in sin, to run to the remedy, in the exercise of faith and repentance.

And to encourage you to this, another word results on this, that ye may help yourselves to repent for particular failings, ye should hold a fast grip of your reconciled state. Remember what I said in the morning, that new guilt makes not void former pardon; so I say now, that new guilt makes not void your reconciled state; ye may go to God, not as an enemy to his prince, but as a faulty child to his father for pardon; access ye have to the open fountain, ye coming humbled for sin, and making use of Christ for renewed pardon. And if ye do not improve this privilege, it will be a terrible ingredient in your dittay (bill of accusation) when God comes to deal with your conscience.

3. The third question is, how can pardon be said to be past within time, seeing (Acts 3:19,20) it is said, "Our sins are to be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord?" There will then be a blotting out and discharge of sins once for all, a discharge openly declared, accompanied with all the consequences of the discharge. Sins pardoned here, will then be openly declared to be pardoned, I find not only among the schoolmen, but our reformed divines, a question agitated, whether our sins will be ripped up in the day of judgment. A question needlessly stated; but what will not curiosity meddle with? But whether sins will be then ripped up to let it be seen what sort of persons He glorifies, or covered, certainly their sins shall not then put them to shame who are pardoned. Though they should everlastingly remember them, they shall also sing in the remembrance of pardon; and though they should be ripped up, yet not to their shame and confusion. The consolation of pardoning mercy, and all the effects of it, and the love of Christ will make them look upon their mercies, as upon the occasion of their being made everlastingly happy with Him. But the time being ended, I shall go no further. God bless His word to you, for Christ's sake.

[August 1921]

Notes of a Sermon.

By the REV. D. MACFARLANE, Dingwall.

"And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" – Hebrews 3:5,6.

In the first chapter the Apostle, for various reasons, tells that God spoke to the fathers by the prophets, that His first way of speaking to men on earth was by the prophets to the fathers, and what has he in view in telling them this? The great prophet, Jesus Christ, was now come, and there was an end to prophecy and prophets. God of old spoke to men on earth through the prophets, through many prophets, and at various times, but now He speaks in these last times to us by Jesus Christ, the only prophet in New Testament times. Under the Old Testament there was a prophet of the Lord here and there, and when anyone came with a difficulty, he would enquire where was a prophet; but now since Jesus Christ came as the great prophet, you do not hear any person saying, "Where is the prophet?" When the Spirit of God sends forth to places the word to awaken sinners, they shall then enquire after the one prophet, and if any enquire after a prophet now, the only answer that can be given them by the messengers of Christ is – "Here is the only prophet, Jesus Christ." The same may be said as to His priesthood, but I am not going to speak of that, but now to show that Christ was more glorious than all the prophets who spoke to men before He came into the world. You

will see that the Apostle now, as the Jews thought a great deal of these prophets, and of that dispensation, begins to make a comparison between Christ and three parties; and

first, he compares Him with God the Father, and he tells them that He is equal with the Father: "He is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person." He is the very same in nature as God. The

second party compared with Christ is angels, and then he shows that God said several things to Christ that He never said to angels: "To which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee." God speaks of them as worshippers of the Son. God alone, and not angels, is the object of worship, and it is said, "Let all the angels of God worship Him."

Third, he compares Him with men. Angels were in some way employed by the Lord in the Old Testament dispensation. God deals with us in these last times through His Son, and when comparing Him with men, he mentions the greatest man they had in the Old Testament – Moses. The Jews thought much of Moses. They thought him the greatest man. "We know that God spake to Moses, but as to this fellow." The Jews thought that Moses was the greatest man, and he was really the greatest man, in the Old Testament Church. Was not Abraham, the father of the faithful, greater? No. We believe that Abraham was great, but Moses was greater in respect of his official capacity. We shall see this, as we proceed. Abraham was a great man, but Moses was greater. Moses was the mediator, the typical mediator of the Old Covenant, and when we consider this – that Moses was entrusted with the building of the Old Testament Church, his building of the tabernacle, and, as an instrument in the hand of God, of instituting all the services of the tabernacle. This was not given to Abraham to do, great as he was, and in this respect we may truly say that Moses was the greatest man that was in the Old Testament Church. When Paul saw that the Jews thought that he was the greatest man, he brings him forward, and now he says about Moses, "Moses was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over His own house; whose house are we."

We shall endeavour to say something on the following three points: –

I. – The house spoken of.

II. – Moses' relation to this house.

III. – Christ's relation to it. Moses was a servant; Christ was the Son over His own house.

I. – What is this house? This house means the Church of God. We have been reading and singing what the psalmist said of this house: –

"One thing I of the Lord desir'd
And will seek to obtain,
That all days of my life I may
Within God's house remain" – Psalm 27:4.

And he speaks in another place: "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." So that the Church is called the house of God, and this is what is meant here, "for Moses was verily faithful in all His house." The Church sometimes means believers, "the Church of God," and at other times it means the Church as to its outward organisation or the means of grace which God has set up on earth. It is in this latter sense we are to speak of it, and not as meaning believers, for Moses is said here to be a servant in the Church, and this means that he was a servant in the tabernacle, the place of worship. We have no account of a church where all the congregation met to worship Him, till the tabernacle was set up by Moses. There was no congregation such as we have now. How did God's people then worship Him? They did not meet as congregations, they worshipped as families. Each head of a family was a minister or a priest. We read of Abraham building an

altar to the Lord wherever he went. This was the case till they were brought out of Egypt. At the passover there was a lamb for every family, and when the family was small two families might join together for the lamb. They were to be seen in families, not in large congregations, as we are now. It was when the Lord took them out of Egypt, and when He gave the law on Mount Sinai, that we see all the families of Israel met together, and there was a place of worship or church set up, and the first place of worship was the tabernacle.

There is the Church under the Old Testament, and the Church under the New. As to the former, we may refer you to the giving of the Law – the moral law and the ceremonial law. Everything was given by the Lord to Moses on Mount Sinai, and the law of the sacrifice was given to him also. There were many things in the worship of God then that we have not now. In the New Testament Church we have, as the means of grace, three things, instead of many things which the Old Testament Church had. We have only a few. There is simplicity, and there is a worship of God in spirit and in truth. The outward means which Christ set up in His Church are the Word, the two Sacraments of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper and prayer. These are the means of grace which Christ set up in His Church. Wherever these are there are the means which Christ set up in His house. "Moses was verily faithful as a servant, but Christ as a son over his own house." "Where two or three are gathered together," Christ says, "there am I." It is said of Moses that he was a servant in the house. Moses was a servant in the house, but the house was not his. Moses was a servant in the house, but Christ is a Son over His own house.

II. – Moses' relation to this house. You will see that the Apostle has something in view when he mentions this to the Jews – when he mentions the difference between Moses and Christ – the relation in which Moses stood to the house, and the relation in which Christ stood to it. Moses was a servant, and he was a servant employed by God in the erection of the tabernacle; but the house was not his own. Not only that he was a servant, but he was a faithful servant in the house of God. It is a great honour to be a servant. Paul says, in speaking of this, "I thank Jesus Christ, my Lord, who counted me faithful in putting me into the ministry." Abraham was great, Moses was greater. Abraham served God in his own family, Moses served God in the visible Church. The psalmist says: "God loves the gates of Zion, more than the dwellings of Jacob." It is a great honour and duty to serve God in the family; but it is a greater honour to serve God publicly in His Church. This is not what the world thinks of the servants of Christ. They count them the offscouring of all things. The world despises the servants of Christ. To be a servant in the house of God speaks the highest position on this side of heaven. Truly, of all who have been engaged in God's service, eternity will be required for the servants of Christ to see the wonder – the wonder it was that God ever called them to serve Him in His Church. Moses was a servant. Peter speaks of this in his epistle – "Peter, a servant of Jesus Christ," and "an apostle of Jesus Christ." Those who are called to be servants of Jesus Christ, as Moses was, their service will never cease. They are only learning to serve God on earth. They are only apprentices. All their services are a beginning. Even with those who have been engaged for scores of years, it is but a beginning. The servants need to be comforted more than any. They need to be encouraged, notwithstanding their failures. It is only a beginning, and it is a beginning by the grace of God. Paul says: "I thank our Lord, Jesus Christ, who hath enabled me for that He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry," and he speaks of Moses to show that he was inferior to Christ, yet he speaks of him as a great man. He was a servant, but then he was a faithful servant. He was faithful not in some things, but in all the house of God. Paul speaks under the inspiration of God's spirit. Moses was faithful from first to last. He did not say that Moses was in himself perfect, but he was perfect in his work as a servant.

How was his faithfulness shown? It was shown in the building of the tabernacle, and it was shown in this in two ways. God gave him a pattern according to which he was to build

the tabernacle. Just as when a man is to build a house he gets a plan, and he gives it to the servant, and says: "Build it according to this." Moses was faithful in that he omitted nothing in the erection of the tabernacle which the plan required. He left nothing out, not the least thing that the plan required. His faithfulness was seen in this, that he added nothing to the plan, and if you read the last chapter of Exodus you will find it often said: "As the Lord commanded Moses." This is the testimony of the Holy Spirit to Moses, the servant of God. "See, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee on the mount." Now, say that when Moses was building the tabernacle, he had many servants and men employed in building it. Say that a man came round one day when Moses was building the tabernacle, and said: "You might have left out this thing and that, and you might have improved on the plan." Moses would say: "I am not the Lord of the tabernacle at all, I am a servant." Say a man had a servant. The man went from home one day, and a stranger looked at the house, and came and said: "You better pull down that part of the house. Make this change and that change." What would he say: "Do you not know that I am a servant in this house, and no changes are commanded by the master."

The Apostle has something in view when he says that Moses was a servant, and a faithful servant. Moses was faithful as a servant, and only as a servant. He was faithful, not only that he built the tabernacle according to the pattern; but had to do with the service that was to be conducted in it, and with the men that were to be employed in the service of the tabernacle. Who were to be the servants? If one was to come round and say: "Who are to be the servants in this house"? He would say: "I don't know, I am only a servant, and as a servant it is entrusted to me, and I am to employ the servants that God mentions," and He mentions them: "Go and anoint Aaron and his sons." He did not go to anoint any other but Aaron and his sons. How much of the faithfulness of this man of God is shown here! He will not pour the anointing oil on the head of any but those whom God commanded him to anoint. His faithfulness is seen in this, that he anoints those whom the Lord commands him to employ. His faithfulness is also seen in that he will not allow any beast to be sacrificed but what the Lord commands. The very beasts are ordered – lambs and rams, and other creatures. If you read Exodus and Leviticus you will see doves and other creatures mentioned. There was another matter also, namely, how the service of God's house was to be conducted, and if he saw that it was not conducted according to the rule that God gave him, he was not to allow that. Moses showed his faithfulness in rebuking Aaron sharply when he came down from the mount. He was faithful in the tabernacle, in the choice of beasts and every other thing pertaining to the service. He went always by the rule in everything, by the plan and pattern showed him on the mount. Aaron, though a great man, was not faithful, like Moses, in all the house of God.

In the New Testament Church there are servants like Moses. God has a church now, and there are servants in it, and there is a service to be conducted in God's house; and it is required of servants now that they will be, as Moses, faithful in God's house. There are many who profess to be servants of God now, and they think they can add members to it as they please, and they say, "We have no pattern now," But, yes; the pattern we have is the example of Jesus Christ and His apostles, and everything in regard to servants and service must be conformed to God's word. Nothing must be introduced unless we have a command. Some say they have a pattern, but the pattern Moses had he received it from God; but there is a pattern which men devise for themselves. What is it? If a thing is not forbidden, they say it is allowable. That is the pattern of unfaithful servants. Even the prophets had a pattern: "Thus saith the Lord." What men do we find appointed by Jesus Christ? Does He authorise the Church to accept all worldly, unconverted men? As sure as He asked Moses to anoint Aaron as a man of God, so surely is the same rule to be followed now. No one is to be employed but those who are born again, and not only so, but called to be ministers of Jesus Christ. We do

not mean to say that these must be apostles now. That came to an end. These were to be employed that God might give a revelation through them, but when that revelation was completed, their work came to an end. No one can stand up now and say, "I am an apostle."

With regard to the services, where can we find in the service of Christ and His apostles an organ in the Church? Oh! no. There was no such thing, and there are many things in the service of the Church now which cannot belong to the pattern of Christ's Church. They were to do all things whatsoever He commanded them – not what wicked men say. That is the rule we ought to remember, and, as we are God's servants, we ought to see that it is done according to God's word. Moses was a servant. What is the character of many who profess Christ now? It might be said, this minister and that minister is an unfaithful servant, for he brought into the service of God things which God did not command. If an angel from heaven were to go from church to church in many places, what would he say, so to speak, on going back to his Master? – "It is very unlike Moses, for instead of the Psalms of David, inspired by the Holy Spirit, there is a hymn book composed by uninspired men." I can tell from my knowledge of the churches that many ministers and congregations are far from being faithful. It may be said: "What business have you to speak thus?" What business have I to preach the Gospel? Aaron might say to Moses: "What business had you with me"? Moses says: "I cannot be a faithful servant if I pass by your transgression." Ah! there is a different character, which may be given to many who profess to be servants in the Church now.

Before we leave the second head in relation to the house – Christ says, "The servant abideth not in the house for ever." It was to the Jews the Apostle wrote this epistle. "The servant abideth not in the house for ever." Moses left the house, and you know when a servant leaves that his service ceases. Moses left the house: is it that he left the Church? I mean more than Moses personally. Moses and the ritual that God gave him has no place in the Church now. The servant is away. When did he leave? Not till the Master dismissed him with a blessing. Moses left the house, but I do not speak of the time. He died when the Master of the house came to pull down the house and to build another on the same foundation. See what the Apostle has in view. The Jews were not at all willing that the house should be taken down, but Paul says: "Moses was a servant only," and when the anointed, Jesus Christ came, He pulled it down. When the Lord of the house came He commanded the old house, having answered the end for which it was built, to be taken down. Paul says Moses had no right to break down anything that God commanded him to set up under the Old Testament, but when the Master of the house came you see that He abolished the ceremonial law, and He had a right to do this. Moses was the servant, but Christ was the Son, and had a right over His own house. Here it is that the Apostle speaks to the Jews that old things were to pass away, and that all things were to be made new, when Christ Himself came. When He is about to come, and before He came, He says: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast Thou opened – burnt offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me. I delight to do Thy will, O my God" (Psalm 40).

See then what Paul preaches in this epistle. He preaches that the service of Moses ceased, that he left the house, that he gave place to the Son, when He is the Son over His own house.

III. – Christ's relation to the house is that He is the Son. God speaks to us by and in His Son. The servant now can be dismissed, and a faithful servant he was. We are sure, as we have said, that He dismissed him with a blessing, and that He rewarded him with a crown of glory.

Jesus Christ is a Son over His own house. He pulled down the Old Testament Church. He built a new house, the New Testament Church, and He built it on the same foundation. He Himself was the foundation of the Old Testament Church. I do not speak of two Churches that was typified in the sacrifice. He laid the foundation of the New Testament Church in His

own blood, and now, as the house belongs to Himself, it belongs to Him to say what is to be in the house. There are societies formed which have as their aim to make the service to please themselves. This ignores the right the Son has in His own house. These societies are unchristian, and Moses would not take upon himself to do such a thing. The Son has come, and He is Lord over His own house.

The Son, as Mediator, was appointed over His own house, and Paul tells us that, as Moses was faithful, the Son, who was appointed by the Father, is faithful also. Oh! could we expect anything of the Son but this? Moses was a valuable man, but still he was only a servant. There was no defect in the work God pointed out to him. As an evidence that it was perfect it lasted the time appointed, and God was satisfied with it. God showed satisfaction with the work of Moses for many centuries, till Jesus Christ, the Son, came. The Son, as Lord of the house, is faithful. God, the Father, entrusted everything to Jesus Christ. Then the word of Jesus Christ is the rule by which everything in the Church is to be regulated. To the law and to the testimony. And what is its message? "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

[September 1921]

A Sermon.

By the REV. MALCOLM GILLIES,
Preached at Vancouver, B.C., Canada, 27th March, 1921.

"And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife. And Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife. And it came to pass, as she came unto him, that she moved him to ask of her father a field; and she lighted off her ass; and Caleb said unto her, What wouldest thou? Who answered, Give me a blessing; for thou hast given me a south land; give me also springs of water. And he gave her the upper springs, and the nether springs" – Joshua 15:16-19.

You find Caleb's beginning, as far as the Bible is concerned, in the 14th chapter; in Kadesh-barnea he was elected to be one of the spies that would go across to Canaan and spy out the land. Caleb and Joshua came back from that expedition, and they alone, of the twelve spies, gave such a report as encouraged Moses and the people. The ten spies from the other ten tribes brought back an unfavourable report – the cities were too well fortified, the nations in the land of Canaan were too strong, and it was useless for the Israelites to invade Canaan. But Caleb and Joshua were of a different mind and different spirit, and they said, "that is all true." There are fortified cities in the land, and the nations that make up the inhabitants of the land are all warlike tribes, many giants among them; but, notwithstanding, our God is able to fulfil His promise, and, if the Lord loves us, He will bring us into the land. Therefore, because Caleb and Joshua were men of faith and acted and spoke "according to the faith that was once and for all delivered unto the saints," God blessed Caleb and Joshua, and said that they, of all that came out of the land of Egypt, would enter the Promised Land. They were about forty years when they came out of Egypt and when they were sent to spy out the land.

Now, you find that after the land was somewhat settled, Caleb came to Joshua and asked for Hebron and the mountains that were connected with Hebron. In asking this as his inheritance, he tells us wonderful things of himself. He says that he was that day eighty-five years old, but that he was just as strong and youthful that day as the day Moses sent him to

spy out the land of Canaan, and he says, "Give me Hebron, the sons of the giants dwell there, and if the Lord will be with me I will drive out the giants, old as I am." He was as willing to go to the battles of the Lord at eighty-five as at forty. He was a courageous man, and that is something we should learn from Caleb. When difficulties come in our way, when the sons of the Amalekites stand before us, when there are fortified cities and many difficulties, and we are getting weak and feeling despondent, well, we will be the better of having a little of the spirit of Caleb, who is ready to go to fight the giants when eighty-five; and he did go, and he overthrew the enemy, because the Lord was with him. Even so will it be to the end of time. The Lord never promised any person that he would not meet with difficulties, and He does not promise His own cause and His own Church that they will not meet with many difficulties. Yea, the history of the Church in every age and generation is a history of unsurmountable difficulties. It is a history of contention against overwhelming odds, and in spite of that the Church will conquer through faith and trust in God.

Caleb got his wish. He got Hebron, and he went up to Kirjath-arba, the capital city of that part of the land of Canaan, and he made short work of the giants. Then there was another city in the same district called Kirjath-sepher, and Caleb was just as ready and just as able to go against Kirjath-sepher as against Kirjath-arba; but Caleb had a favourite nephew, who was Othniel, and because he had Othniel in view, and because he would put honour on Othniel, Caleb issued a proclamation, "He that smiteth Kirjath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife." Othniel was very willing to risk his life in order to do the will of Caleb, and to win such a treasure as the treasure that was set before him, and so Othniel, the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, went up against Kirjath-sepher and took it, and he got the reward that was promised.

Now, dear friends, you must not think that I am going to dwell on these things to-night. I am just speaking on the historical side a little, to show how the Lord's people, in other days, met with the trials that were set before them – how they went forward in the strength of God and overcame all these difficulties. I am bringing out the literal side in order to show that nothing is impossible where there is simple trust in God, zeal for God's glory, and the advancement of the kingdom of Christ in the world.

There is, however, a spiritual side to these deeds of history, for "all scripture is given by inspiration of God," and the story of Caleb, Othniel, and Achsah is given by the Spirit of God, not only for the lessons that may be drawn from it practically and literally, but because of the lessons that may be drawn from it spiritually, the lessons of the gospel. We can preach the gospel of Jesus Christ as clearly from the story of Caleb, Othniel, and Achsah as we can from any part in the New Testament. We can use this by way of illustration, and we can say, just as Caleb did, even so did the Lord; just as Othniel did, even so did Jesus Christ; just as Achsah was, even so is the Church of God and the people of God united to the Redeemer. As Achsah sought the blessings of the springs and the fountains of waters, and got the upper springs and the nether springs, even so do God's people seek the blessings of the redemption that is to be found only in Jesus Christ.

Now, in order to speak a little by way of applying this gospel truth, we shall notice,

in the *first* place, three persons set before us – we have Caleb and Othniel and Achsah; and

in the *second* place, we have a covenant and its fulfilment – the covenant that was set forth by Caleb and fulfilled by Othniel; and

in the *last* place, we have a petition and its fulfilment – the petition that Achsah set before Caleb and how Caleb fulfilled the petition; even so the Lord fulfils the desires of those that fear Him.

I. Well, we have seen in this piece of sacred history three persons brought before us. We have Caleb and then Othniel and Achsah, and Caleb here is the prime mover. Everything is in his hand, and he would give an opportunity to Othniel to place honour on him. We have Achsah brought before us as the reward that was given to Othniel when he would fulfil certain conditions. Now, dear friends, when we consider the gospel of the grace of God – that scheme of redemption by which God saves man – we shall notice that there are three persons, especially, brought before us in the gospel. We have, in the first place, God the Father as Head of all things, as the absolute Head, set before us as the defender of divine attributes, as the contriver of the purpose of redemption, as the giver of a Saviour and the giver of a church to Christ. We have in the gospel the doctrine set forth concerning God, in the person of the Father, that He is the fountain from whom salvation flows.

In the second place, we have Christ set before us in the gospel, and Othniel is a sweet type of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Scriptures say that the spirit of the Lord was upon Othniel, and that is not said of any of the early Judges, but it is said about Othniel, and what a sweet type Othniel is of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Redeemer and Saviour – Othniel the Lion of God; and, friends, Christ is both the Lamb of God and the Lion of God. He is the Lamb of God towards His people and towards the Father as He that makes atonement. He is the Lion of God against the enemies of God, against the enemies of His Church. He is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and those that do not know Christ as the Lamb of God they will know Him as the Lion. They will know Him as He that will utterly destroy all His enemies.

Othniel is a type of Christ. Christ is the very centre of the gospel. It has pleased the Father, even that all fullness should dwell in the Son, and that He should be the fountain of salvation; that He should be the Saviour in all things to His people, and that His people should be able to approach Him, and that they should be in Him as members of His mystical body. Christ is the very centre, the very foundation of the gospel.

Then we have in the gospel the Church of God set before us, the Church which Christ loved; as it says, “Christ loved the church, and he gave himself for it.” Achsah, an ornament, is a type of the Church. Ah! dear friends, that is not how the Church is in herself – that the sinner is as he is in himself. She is by no means an ornament, an Achsah, but, as the Apostle puts it, “we were all children of wrath, even as others.” We were sinners; we deserve the wrath and curse as others. Far from being an Achsah to Othniel, “we were altogether as an unclean thing, and all our own righteousnesses were as filthy rags.” But what is the Lord’s purpose in redemption? His purpose is to take sinners of Adam’s race, who have been ruined and spoilt and undone through sin, to present them without spot before His throne above. The promise says, “Thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hands of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hands of thy God.” The sinner, ruined as he is by nature, in thought, word, and deed, that sinner, saved by grace, will be an Achsah to God through all eternity – an ornament, a diadem in the hand of God.

Just as we have set before us here Caleb and Othniel and Achsah, we have in the gospel God the Father revealed as the head of the scheme of redemption, God the Son in our nature as a Saviour, and likewise the Church that is to be the portion of Christ for ever and ever; that is, to be the spouse of Christ, to be with Him through all eternity.

II. Now, I come, in the second place, to consider the covenant and its fulfilment. Now this covenant was in connection with the capture of Kirjath-sepher. Caleb said, “He that smiteth Kirjath-sepher and taketh it, then to him will I give Achsah” as his portion. Kirjath-sepher is the City of Books, and Othniel, if he was to have Achsah, would have to go up to the city of Kirjath-sepher and take it.

Now, dear friends, that brings before us the Covenant of Grace, for this is the very nature of that covenant which was before God from eternity. The theme of the Covenant of Grace was that the Son of God, in our nature, would perform a work, and by performing that work

He would save His Church; He would save His people from their sins. He would bring them to heaven. He would be a glorious Redeemer. This was the nature of the Covenant of Grace.

Now, there are many ways in which we can speak about Christ in connection with the gospel of redemption, and the way He fulfilled the Covenant, but, for the present, I illustrate it by Kirjath-sepher, the City of Books. The Covenant of Grace was of that nature. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, would fulfil the contents of two books before He could save His people. He had to go to a spiritual Kirjath-sepher and take it if He is to be the Saviour of poor sinners of Adam's race, and the first book that He had to fulfil was the book of the law. We have in the Bible the book of the law summarily comprehended in the ten commandments, and expounded from Genesis to Revelation. The law of God is the whole Bible. Now, Christ had to fulfil the law, the law which man had broken. It was given to man in the Garden of Eden, but man broke that law. He did not love the law, his God, and his neighbour. He did not obtain life from the law, but death. But now the Covenant of Grace was of this nature. From all eternity the second Adam, who was also the last Adam, the Lord from heaven, was set up, and it was propounded to Him, speaking after the manner of men, that He should come down to this world and do the work that the first Adam failed to do, and which the whole race of mankind have failed to do, namely, that He would begin at the first commandment in the law, and obey the whole law right through completely without deviation of any kind. This was set before the Son of God in our nature. He had to obey the law. He had to go up to Kirjath-sepher, the City of Books; He had to approach the law of which He was the giver, and He had to fulfil that law and He had to obey it in His person. In thought and in word and in action He had to obey the law that we trampled under foot. The Son of God came from heaven to obey it, and not only the law as to direct obedience, but the law as to penalty.

There was a penalty attached to the law that man had now incurred, and the Covenant of Grace set before the Othniel of the everlasting covenant. "Not only must thou obey every command in the law, but thou must die the death that is due for sin. Thou must die, the just for the unjust." Christ, speaking reverently, could not be a Saviour of sinners, He could never espouse the Church to Himself (you could never be united to Christ) if Christ had not come and fulfilled the law by dying on Calvary's Cross, in your room and stead, and if you are married to Christ, you are married to One that died for you in obeying the law. The law you did never obey, and oh! how you should love Him, how you should follow Him, and how you should obey a husband who died for you.

Well, now, Christ had to go up to this Kirjath-sepher, the Kirjath-sepher of the law of God, and He had to take it. He had to overcome it in this sense in fulfilling it to the very letter, and in dying the death that was written in the law that the Son must die, or else he could never have His Achsah, He could never have His Church nor a single one of His people.

But there was another book that the Othniel of the new covenant had to fulfil, and that was the Book of the Prophets. He had to go up to this Kirjath-sepher also – Kirjath-sepher of the Book of the Prophets, of the Book of the Old Testament Scriptures, and He had to place Himself in every condition, in every position, and under every trial that is mentioned from the first promise in the Garden of Eden down to the curse that is written in the Book of Malachi. Ah, dear friends, how does the Old Testament end? Well, the last word in the Old Testament is "curse" – "Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." There was no way of salvation, but that Christ had to fulfil all the promises of the Old Testament. Scriptures from the Garden of Eden to the curse in Malachi; He had to be the seed and the stone, and He had to be the Shepherd. He had to be all that was said about the Messiah: the man of sorrows, pierced in His hands and feet, and He would have to ask for a drink on the cross; He would have to be born of a virgin in Bethlehem.

The Old Testament is full of Christ and what He must be when He would come in order to take away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Moses began to speak of Him, and he said: the seed is coming, and He is to hate the devil and his works; and then the Scriptures run on from that, right through, telling what the Christ would be – how He would, and where He would be. How He would be humbled and spat upon and crucified and laid in a grave, and how He would work miracles. He would do good, and be put to death for doing good.

The Old Testament Scriptures speak of His birth, manhood, and ministry, and how He was treated, betrayed and condemned, and nailed to the cross, and laid in a sepulchre. The Old Testament speaks of all these things, and how in the everlasting covenant it was ordained that the Son of God, in our nature, as the Saviour of lost people, would come and fulfil every clause written in the Old Testament Scriptures. There is a lot of Old Testament Scriptures that is not fulfilled yet concerning the second personal coming of Christ. They will be fulfilled as sure as the Scriptures in connection with His first coming were fulfilled. He had to go up to this Kirjath-sepher, the City of Books of the Prophets of the Old Testament Scriptures, and He had to take the city and fulfil every one of these promises. As He says Himself: “And truly the son of man goeth, as it was determined.” This is what He was doing the thirty-three years of His life in this world. He was taking the city of Kirjath-sepher, and He was walking according to the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Now, what did the covenant say? The covenant said when He would do this, He would not be without His Achsah. Just as sure as it was true about Othniel (when he went up with his weapons of war and took the city of Kirjath-sepher, then he could come to Caleb and claim his bride; Caleb did not deny him), even so it is with the Lord of Glory, Jesus Christ. He did fulfil the terms of the Covenant of Grace; He cried out on the Cross, “it is finished,” and He went up to the right hand of the Majesty on High. He claimed His Achsah, His Church – “thou hast received gifts for men even for the rebellious.” He fulfilled every condition, and now He sits as King upon His throne. He sits on the right hand of power, and the Father says: “Ask of me and for heritage the heathen I’ll make thine” – Thou hast fulfilled the terms of the Covenant; Thou hast wrought out redemption, a perfect and a glorious salvation; now ask for Thine Achsah, Thy Church.

Ah! dear friend, won’t you pray to Christ to-night that He would ask the Father even to give you to Him, for the Father says to the Son on the right hand, “Ask of Me, my Son, thou art the Othniel of the New Testament; Thou didst fulfil all conditions. Thou didst shed Thy precious blood, which came up as a sweet smelling odour before the throne. Now ask of Me, and I will give you one here and one there until the Church, completed and made perfect, will be Thine to all eternity.” Ask of Him now, dear friend!

Christ had a right to the Church by gift, and now, when He fulfilled the terms of the Covenant of Grace, He had a right to the Church by purchase. He had bought His people, the Church of God which He purchased with His own blood. But now, in the day of mercy, He comes to have them by another right, the right of their consent. The right which Christ exercises over them in the day when that saying is fulfilled, “A willing people in thy day of power shall come to thee, in holy beauties from morn’s womb thy youth like dew shall be,” and, dear friend, when the sinner of Adam’s race sees the beauty of Christ, His glory, His preciousness as a Redeemer and Saviour, when he is brought to see the love with which He loved sinners, when the sinner is brought to see his need of Christ, when he is brought to be willing to embrace Christ as his own personal Saviour, then Christ, the Othniel of the New Testament, gets His Achsah. Christ gets that which belongs to Himself. As Dr. Kennedy used to say of that verse in the 45th Psalm, “O daughter, hearken and regard, and do thine ear incline; likewise forget thy father’s house, and people that are thine,” that this was the marriage sermon the Spirit of God preached when he united a soul to Christ, and would it not be good for you and for me to-night if we would listen to Christ?

What does Othniel say to his Achsah? Oh, He is saying this “You are a lost, hell-deserving sinner, and there is nothing that you in yourself can do that will save you; but now I came to this world, and I obeyed and I suffered and I died, in the room and stead of sinners, in order that they might be saved. Will you not give yourself to me? “Christ says this now, and this is what wins the hearts of His people in this world, when the Spirit of God opens their eyes to see themselves and to see what Christ has done for them. The question is this: – Wilt thou go with Christ – to depend upon Him alone as a Redeemer and Saviour? Are you willing that He should be your prophet to teach you, your priest to cleanse you, your king to rule over you? Will you go through a wilderness journey with Christ? Rebecca, many a day when she was in the desert, did not know where she was going, and when she would reach, but she followed the man. Christ says to the soul, “Soul, will you follow me through this world? I will lead you to the celestial mountains. I am leading to that place where your sun will no more go down. I am leading to that land of pure delight where you will see my face and stand evermore in my presence.” Wilt thou go with Him?

Now Christ is getting His Achsah, His people. There are thousands upon thousands that belong to the Church of Christ now round about His throne as spirits, and He is continually gathering them. They shall come from north, south, east, and west, and they shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom. Will you be there? You will be there if you will close in with the Lord Jesus. You will never be there if you shut your heart to Him, and now Christ has come to us just as Othniel came to Caleb after he captured the city of Kirjathsepher. Othniel would come and say to Caleb, “I have done what you demanded. I have fulfilled the conditions given me.” Christ comes to us in the everlasting gospel, and He says, “I am He that has fulfilled all conditions; I have made an end of sin, finished transgressions. I have brought in everlasting righteousness; give yourself to Me, believe on Me.” “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,” and the Father will give everyone of His people to Him. Christ will not be without His church, but, until she is gathered to Him, the Lord sends His word to men, as rational creatures. We must come to find Him, and when we do we will say, “Oh, it is all of grace.” It is not our seeking that caused us to find Christ; no, it is by grace alone. In this manner the covenant will have its fulfilment.

Othniel fulfilled the covenant; he had his Achsah. Christ has fulfilled all the requirements of the Covenant of Grace; He will have His people. Do you belong to Him? Did you ever see how precious He is and embrace Him as He is freely offered in the gospel? Like the old Puritan divine who was teaching a Sabbath school class one day. He had a lot of little boys and girls in his class, and he asked the question, “What is effectual calling?” They answered, “Effectual calling is the work of God’s Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, renewing our wills, He doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ as He is freely offered to us in the Gospel.” Now, said the divine, is there any little boy or girl in my class to-day that can apply these words to himself or herself? One boy got up, and he said, weeping: “Effectual calling is the work of God’s Spirit whereby He convinces me of my sin and misery; enlightening my mind in the knowledge of Christ, renewing my will, He doth persuade and enable me to embrace Jesus Christ as He is freely offered to me in the gospel,” and what blessedness that little boy had who could speak like that right from his heart. This is the experience of God’s people, and truly such are united to the Lord Jesus – are joined to Him in a union that will never be broken.

III. But now, in the last place, the petition and its fulfilment. Achsah came to Caleb and said, “Give me a blessing. Give me also springs of water, and he gave her the upper and the nether springs.” Here was Achsah coming to Caleb, and she does not now come to Caleb immediately; she says to Othniel, “Now, Othniel, you go to my father Caleb and ask for a

field, and ask for springs of water.” Othniel was now her husband, and she would never go in her own name. If Christ and you have made a match of it, if you are united to the Lord Jesus for eternity, you will never come before God in your own name, but, through Him as your Mediator, your Husband and your Head. She came to Caleb through Othniel, and if Christ is precious to us, and if we know Him as a Redeemer, we do not go to God the Father in our own name, but through our Head, through Christ the Mediator and Saviour. “No one cometh to the Father but by me.”

But now she began to ask, and said, “Give me a field,” and when she got that she said, “give me springs of water,” when he gave her a south land. What is the south land that the heavenly Father gives to the soul that loves Jesus and that takes to Christ as his Redeemer and Saviour? He gives him the south land of grace with all spiritual blessings necessary for this life. He gives him a south land, a warm land, not a land of cold and ice. Oh! the spiritual colds and frosts and ice that lie on us, but if we got “life from the dead” we would want the south land. We would desire that the love of Christ would be warm in our heart, and that there would be a union between our soul and the Redeemer.

But then he gave her also a field. What is the field that God gives unto those to whom Christ is made precious? The field of the means of grace. The scriptures of truth are the field where they receive their nourishment and their sustenance – the pure word of God. But she wanted springs of water, and he gave her the upper springs and the nether springs, and though we would have a field, unless the field is watered there will be no fruit; and though we would have the word of God, or the means of grace in this world, unless the “dew from on high” will come down we shall have no benefit. We need the pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, or else we will get nothing for our souls in the Scriptures.

But he gave her the upper springs and the nether springs. I just mention one or two points in connection with these. God gives to His people in this world the upper springs of spiritual blessings – that which they need for their soul, that which they need to sustain spiritual life, and which enables them to go in the way of obedience. He gave them the nether springs of temporal blessings. The upper and the nether – “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.” He will give to those that wait upon Him spiritual refreshment and encouragement and joy in a way that they themselves shall experience and know. They have times when they will drink out of His fulness in a way in which their cup will be running over, and when they will not have that, He will give them the nether springs. He will sustain them by His own grace in a mysterious hidden manner, in spite of their inability to lay hold on the truth that they are being upheld by Him.

The Christian is never altogether without a supply of grace. Sometimes he is in a way conscious of it. The Lord supports His own in a mysterious way at other times. Bunyan, in the *Pilgrim’s Progress*, compares the believer’s condition to a fire on which a man is pouring water, but which he cannot put out. The reason of this is that there is One behind the fire pouring oil on it and keeping it alive, in spite of all the man will do. That is the way the Christian in this world often times is. It seems as if this man is endeavouring to destroy grace – drown everything that belongs to Christ, but Christ is behind them vigorously supporting them. He will give them nether springs in time, and the upper springs in eternity. He gives to His people upper springs and the nether springs of all their needs. He will give the same to you if you will seek the Lord Jesus and find Him. Everything you need here, and everything you can hold up there. In heaven the Christian’s vessel is running over. You will get down here as much as you need, and up there as much as you can hold, and surely that ought to be enough.

Now, dear friend, when you go home to-night you should say to the Lord, “Wilt thou take me as thine Achsah? Wilt thou not unite me to thyself in an everlasting covenant?”

[October 1921]

Notes of a Sermon.

Preached by the late REV. DR. GEORGE MACKAY in the Free North Church,
Inverness, on Sabbath, 19th April, 1885.

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again
with the yoke of bondage” – Galatians 5:1.

There are three points chiefly to be considered from this passage we have under consideration.

The *first* point to be considered is the liberty or freedom that is here spoken of.

Second – The source of this freedom and liberty, and some considerations implied in it, and also the author of this freedom.

Thirdly – The exhortation that is given here, and some things implied in it, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.”

These three points take up the whole of the verse. You will notice the spiritual import of this freedom.

This freedom implies, *in the first place*, deliverance and freedom from sin. Now, sin is put before us under various aspects in the Scriptures. It is put before us under the aspect of the power and love of sin. This freedom also implies a deliverance from the guilt of sin. Guilt is that which exposes us to punishment. By sinning against God we become guilty sinners, and are thus exposed to His wrath. Oh, my friends, we can never come to God until we see ourselves to be sinners. The Spirit of God must show you the vileness of your sins. I must add this to it also, that we can never be delivered from sin until we love our Saviour more than sin. The love of sin is broken if the Spirit of God is within you.

This freedom also implies a deliverance from the curse of the law. Adam broke the covenant of God, and fell under the curse – “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” We are under this curse until we are delivered, and this can only be done by Christ. He came to fulfil the law, He suffered the Just for the unjust that He might bring us to God; and this is the only way we can be delivered from the curse; hence, my friends, we cannot be saved by the law, because we cannot do it. Yet there is a tendency to perform all this by our own works, and to make our own way of salvation without the righteousness of Christ.

The freedom here spoken of implies freedom of the will from the bondage of sin. “Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power.” “Be not conformed to the things of this world,” etc. You will also observe that the freedom here spoken of implies in it that the sinner is to seek those things that are above. There are so many things in the world to draw us away

from Christ, but there is nothing in the present world able fully to satisfy the desires of the flesh. Take as much of the world as you can, but it will not satisfy you. There is nothing here to satisfy the animal spirit. Satan can tempt the people of God, but cannot overcome them, because he is not so strong as Christ – they shall be more than conquerors through Him that loved them. They are delivered by the freedom spoken of here. God shall trample Satan under their feet. I was going to say on this point that the people of God are delivered from the sting of death by the power of God, but I cannot just now go into that part of the subject. When I die I die in Christ. “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But, thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” “He shall be called Jesus, because He saves His people from their sins.”

In the *second* place, we were to consider the source and author of this freedom, and, in the first place, let us notice Christ as the author of this freedom and liberty – “Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” There are various points of Scripture to be taken up on this. You will remember that there was a covenant made between God the Father and God the Son; this covenant was made from all eternity, and by it provision was made for men. We cannot form an adequate estimate of this. He made a covenant with His chosen One, and laid help on One that is mighty to save. He made a covenant with Him, and became bound, as the surety of His people, and sealed the covenant with His death and blood. He undertook the place of perishing sinners, and saved them from going down to the pit. His Spirit was poured out on Him without measure. He came into the world and assumed our nature, a body as I have, yet without sin – a true body and a reasonable soul. Although He was the Eternal God He dwelt upon this earth thirty-three years, and although Lord of Heaven He descended to take our guilt upon Him. He suffered the Just for the unjust that He might bring us to God. The source of this freedom and liberty here spoken of also implies the Spirit of redemption. What a glorious subject! The Three Persons in the Glorious Trinity, employed in our salvation. What wonder of wonders that the Son of God should come and lay down His precious life a ransom for many! Now the blessings in connection with this liberty: “Of His fulness have we all received, and grace for grace.” There is more fulness of the Spirit under the New Testament Dispensation, and I admit that the Spirit under the Old Dispensation was not given to them in such measure as under the New Testament. He rose from the grave on the third day, and shortly after this the Spirit was poured forth in great measure; the great work of redemption was finished, and He ascended up on high leading captivity captive.

In the *third* place, the exhortation: “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” What does this mean? This is an exhortation to be steadfast and immovable. In the first place I notice it implies danger. “Stand fast therefore.” It evidently implies that we are inclined to be unsteadfast or in danger of losing our liberty or freedom. The people of God go on from strength to strength until they arrive at the promised land; hence it implies that we must be steadfast. This freedom is precious; let no one take away your liberty because Christ shed His blood that it might be yours. Let us remember that our freedom in this country is great; let us take care we don’t lose it. I am afraid this generation is inclined to depart from its glorious privileges.

[November 1921]

Notes of a Sermon.

Preached by the late REV. DR. GEORGE MACKAY
in the Free North Church, Inverness.

“Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure:
for if ye do these things, ye shall never fail” – 2 Peter 1:10.

Let us make a few, observations on the following points: –

First – The exhortations the Apostle gives us, and the duty here imposed upon us. There are just a few things under this head to which I would like to turn your attention. The duty to give all diligence to make our calling and election sure. This work, my friends, is a very important work which the Apostle sets before us, and we should study well the duty. It is not less than that which affects our salvation through eternity, and we should make strict enquiry whether it is heaven or hell in the end. If an eternity of happiness or woe, depend upon it, it is certainly an important and imperative duty. Let me press this upon you – the duty described is a necessary duty, and it is an absolute necessity to perform it. We must leave this world ere long, and we must be in heaven or hell, either where the spirits of just men are made perfect, or in hell with the devil and his angels. The duty set before us here describes a work which is very difficult. It is very difficult to perform this work, and while the devil, the world, and the flesh are alive, we must fight the good fight of faith, and, depend upon it, religion is not such an easy thing, as so many fancy. My friends, Satan is the god of this world, and his servants will do his work, for he has only to say go and he goeth, and do and he doeth it. While the breath is in you, the flesh wars against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. Let us notice before we leave this point that it is a constant duty. It is not by fits and starts, as some imagine, but it is a constant work in which the true Christian must be engaged while he is in this world, for it is he that endureth until the end that will be saved. We must see that our calling is from God, and hence we must again and again be enquiring whether we are in the election of grace, and make this sure. We are to make all diligence to make our calling and election sure, and I am afraid there are thousands who deceive themselves upon this important point. They take for granted that they are chosen of God, and hence they go on, going down to the eternal world without having an interest in Christ. They are deceived, and we should be on our guard.

In the *second* place, under this head, let us notice how this duty is to be performed. I notice, in the first place, that it is not a duty that you can perform with carelessness and indifference. There are some in the world that think nothing of religion; they have no doubt or difficulty; they are living under an awful curse. The first thing I would notice here is that the command is that we ought to give all diligence to make our calling and election sure, and an important duty surely requires diligence; preparation for eternity is a hard work. You can do nothing in the world without diligence. If you are a student you must be diligent, and if a merchant you must be diligent before you can be rich. Diligence evidently implies in it the

use of all the lawful means which God appointed in His word. We must be diligent in prayer. We must diligently use all the means God has appointed, and if we neglect this we cannot be diligent. We must refrain from all sinful propensities; we must cultivate the graces of the spirit; we must be diligent in regard to all these, bringing into exercise the graces of the Spirit; all diligence must be given to the graces which God communicates to us, and hence surely this is an important duty. The question comes to be: "Are you diligent in prayer; how often do you pray in the day? Twice in the day – morning and evening?" Be diligent in prayer, and if you be diligent you must be constant at prayer, like Joshua keeping up Moses' hands, not the literal hand of prayer which some people have, for it requires the Spirit in the performance of this duty. We must also exercise diligence in listening to the word. We must pay special attention to the word of God when we read and study it. Seek and strive to know what is the mind of the Spirit in the word you read. Giving all diligence implies that we must use all the powers of the mind; the understanding must be opened to see what God says; the affections must be raised to things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. We must also have all the diligence of the soul engaged.

In the *third* place, under this head, the duty that is enforced upon us. What does it imply to be diligent, and what is it in regard to which we must be diligent? Your Bibles say, "Make your calling and election sure" There are two kinds of calls; there is the call I give you to come to Christ, but I cannot make you come to Christ; none can come to the Son except the Father draws him. We must be born again, and this call evidently implies in it all that is necessary for salvation, and what we need for salvation through Jesus, the only name given under heaven, whereby we can be saved. There cannot be an effectual call without the Spirit and the word. Man cannot do it. We can preach the Gospel and give the call, but it is the Spirit that calls effectually. You will notice this calling springs from your election by God, who purposed from all eternity to make provision for the human race. These are secrets we do not know, and we should not try to pry into them, but we should try to make our election sure.

In the second place, let us see the things which are necessary in order to make this calling and election sure. There is an evidence that it can be made sure. If you go back a few verses and refer to them you will find, "And beside this giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity; for if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." I only purpose to make a few observations as I find them set down here.

In regard to faith, it is written: "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." You will notice that diligence follows true faith, for where there is faith there must be works – faith without works is dead. In regard to knowledge, we must have a knowledge of Christ, knowledge of the way of salvation; but I notice again in regard to this knowledge there must be added to it temperance. We must be temperate in our knowledge. In regard to patience, we must be patient in trouble. It is hard when our friends are removed and when our earthly possessions are taken away, to say, like Job: "The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." We must exercise patience in regard to these things if we have the mind of Christ in us. We must exercise godliness and brotherly kindness. If I rebuke sin this is love – "Whom the Lord loveth he correcteth" – and if He chastens us it is in love, for it is for our good. In regard to charity, let us see that it is of the right kind. It is not charity to indulge in sin or to have a love for sin.

Let us notice, briefly, in the last place, the motive that is implied, "for if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ." This is the motive that is here implied. We must be

seeking perfection for these things. Are we seeking perfection? This is a question to be answered by those who hear me.

[December 1921]

The Plant of Renown.

A sermon by the REV. RALPH ERSKINE.

“And I will raise up for them a plant of renown” – Ezekiel 34:29.

If we cast our eyes back upon the foregoing part of this chapter we shall find a very melancholy scene casting up; we shall find the flock and heritage of God scattered, robbed, and peeled by the civil and ecclesiastical rulers that were in being in that day – a day much like to the day wherein we live; the ruin of the Church of Christ in all ages and periods of the world has been owing to combinations betwixt corrupt churchmen and corrupt statesmen, and so you will find it. In the preceding part of this chapter there is a high charge brought in against the Shepherds of Israel, and a terrible and awful threatening denounced by the great and chief shepherd against them for the bad treatment that the flock of Christ had met with in their hands. However the sheep of Christ may be fleeced and scattered and spoiled, yet the Lord looks on them, and many great and precious promises are made for their encouragement in that evil day; you may read them at your leisure, for I must not stay upon them just now. But among all the rest of the promises that are made Christ is the chief; Christ is the To-look of the Church, whatever trouble she be in. In the 7th chapter of Isaiah the Church had a trembling heart; God’s Israel was shaken as ever you saw the leaves of the wood shaken by the wind by reason of two kings combining against them. Well, the Lord tells them, “A Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and call his name IMMANUEL.” But might not the Church say, “What is that to us? What encouragement doth this afford in the present distress? Why, the Messiah is to come of the tribe of Judah and the family of David, and therefore that tribe and family must be preserved in order to the accomplishment of that promise.” Whatever distance of time, suppose hundreds or thousands of years may intervene before the actual coming of the Messiah, yet the promise of His coming, as it is the ground of your faith for eternal salvation, so it is a security for the present that the enemy shall not prevail to the total ruin of Judah and the royal family of David. In all the distresses of the Church Christ is always presented to her, in the promise, as the object of her faith and the ground of her consolation; and accordingly, “They looked to him,” in the promise, “and were lightened; and their faces were not ashamed.” He is here promised under the notion of God’s Servant; and, in the words of the text, He is promised as a Renowned Plant that was to rise in the fulness of time. And, blessed be God, He has sprung up, and is in heaven already, and has overtopped all His enemies, and all His enemies shall be His footstool.

First, Here, then, you have a comfortable promise of the Messiah, where, again, you may notice the Promiser, “I, I will raise up,” etc. It is a great *I*, indeed; it is JEHOVAH in the person of the FATHER. It was He that, in a peculiar manner, sent Him; “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. In the fulness of time he sent forth his son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons”. God promised to send Him, and accordingly He has actually fulfilled His promise.

Secondly, We may notice the blessing promised, and that is a Plant of Renown. Christ gets a great many metaphorical names and descriptions in Scripture: – Sometimes He is

called a Rose, sometimes He is called a Sun, and sometimes He is called a Door; sometimes He is called the Tree of Life; sometimes He is called one thing and sometimes another; and He is content to be called any thing to make Himself known to us; and here He is called a Plant, and a Renowned Plant; but more of this afterwards.

Thirdly, We have the production of this Plant, “I will raise him up.” Hell will endeavour to keep Him down; the Devil and his angels will endeavour to smother Him when He sets His head above ground. So we find Satan sends Herod, and Herod sends the Bloody Dragoons to murder Him when He came into the world. But let hell do its utmost, as it hath done in all ages, and is doing this day, to smother that Plant, up it will be; “I will raise him up, and therefore he shall prosper.”

Fourthly, We may notice here, for whom, or for what end, for whose use and benefit it is: “I will raise up for them a Plant of Renown.” Who these are you will see by casting your eye on the former part of this chapter; it is for the Lord’s flock, His oppressed heritage, that are borne down by wicked rulers, civil and ecclesiastic: “I will raise up for them a Plant of Renown, and he will be their deliverer.”

The doctrine that naturally arises from this first clause of the verse is in short this: “That Christ is a Plant of Renown, of God’s raising up, for the benefit and advantage of His people, or for their comfort and relief in all their distresses; He is a Renowned Plant of God’s raising up.”

Now, in discoursing this doctrine, if time and strength would allow, I might,

- first*, premise a few things concerning this blessed Plant;
- secondly*, I might enquire why He is called a Plant of Renown?
- thirdly*, speak a little to the raising up of this Plant;
- fourthly*, for whom is He raised up;
- fifthly*, for what end; and then,
- lastly*, apply.

As to the first of these, namely, *first*, to premise a few things concerning this blessed Plant: –

First, I would have you to know what is here attributed and ascribed to Christ. It is not to be understood absolutely of Him as God, but officially as He is Mediator and Redeemer. Considering Him absolutely as God, this cannot be properly said of Him, that He was raised up; for He is God co-equal and co-essential with the Father. But, viewing Him as Mediator, He is a Plant, as it were, of God’s training. You will see from the context all that is said of Christ has a respect to Him as a Mediator, that He was to be God’s Servant to do His work. In that consideration He is here called a Plant, and a *Plant of Renown*. Hence, Zacharias, when speaking of Him, has a phrase much to the same purpose, “He hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David.”

Secondly, another thing I would have you to remark is, that this Plant is but small and little in the eyes of a blind world. He was little looked upon when He sprung up in His Incarnation; and when He was here in a state of humiliation men looked upon him “as a root sprung up out of a dry ground; they saw no comeliness in him why he should be desired.” And to this day, though He be in a state of exaltation at the right hand of God, yet He is little thought of, and looked upon by the generality of mankind and the hearers of the gospel, *He is despised and rejected of men*.

Thirdly, another thing I would have you to remark is, that however contemptible this Plant of Renown is in the eyes of a blind world; yet He is the tallest Plant in all God’s Lebanon; there is not the like of Him in it. “He is fairer than the children of men,” and “He is as the apple tree among the trees of the wood.” If ever you saw Him you will be ready to say

so too, and with David, “Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon the earth that I desire besides thee.”

Fourthly, another thing I remark is, that this blessed Plant of Renown, He was cut down in His death, and sprung up gloriously in His resurrection; the sword of divine justice hewed down this Plant upon Mount Calvary, but within three days He sprung up again more glorious and more beautiful and amiable than ever; and “He was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by his resurrection from the dead.”

Lastly, I would have you to remark, that all the little plants in the garden are ingrafted in this Plant of Renown: “I am the Vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: For without me ye can do nothing – I am a green fir tree, from me is thy fruit found.” If you be not ingrafted firs, in this Plant, you will never grow; and all the trees that are not planted in Him they are all but weeds. There is a time coming when all the weeds will be plucked up, and therefore take heed that you be ingrafted in Him by a faith of God’s operation. So much for the first thing I proposed.

The *second* thing was to show that He is a *Renowned* Plant. He is renowned in heaven and He is renowned on earth, and will be so, “*For his name shall endure for ever*” (Psalm 72:17). O He is renowned!

For what, say you, is He renowned? I might here enter upon a very large field; I shall only tell you:–

1. That He is renowned in His Person. There was never the like of Him! The two natures, God and Man, are joined together in one in Him. Did you ever see that? If you have not seen that, you have not seen the mystery of godliness. He is the most renowned person in heaven; but He is IMMANUEL, *God manifested in the flesh*.

2. Then He is renowned for His pedigree. *Who can declare His generation?* Considering Him as God, His eternal generation from the Father cannot be told. We can tell you He is the only begotten of the Father, but we cannot tell you the manner of His generation; it is a secret that God has drawn a veil upon, and it is dangerous to venture into a search for it; and they that have attempted it have commonly been bogged into Arian, Arminian, and Sabellian errors. Considering Him as man, He is sprung of an ancient race of kings, a famous catalogue of them you read of in first of Matthew. – And who can declare His generation even as man? For He was born of a Virgin, and conceived by the overshadowing power of the Highest.

3. Then He is renowned for His name. – “He hath a name above every name that can be named, whether in this world or that which is to come.”

4. He is renowned for His wisdom. – For “All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in him.”

5. He is renowned for His power. – For He is not only the Wisdom of God, but the Power of God. He is “the Man of God’s right hand, even the Son of Man, whom he hath made strong for himself.”

6. He is renowned for His veracity and fidelity. For “Faithfulness is the girdle of his loins.” Have you got a word from Him? Depend upon it, it is a sicker [sure] word, it does not fail: The word of the Lord endureth for ever, when heaven and earth shall pass away.

7. He is renowned for His righteousness. For “He hath brought in an everlasting righteousness, whereby the law is magnified and made honourable,” and by the imputation of which the guilty transgressors are acquitted: “He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” That is His name, The Lord of Righteousness.

8. He is renowned for His fulness. – For “All the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in him.” He is full of grace and truth; full of all created and uncreated excellencies.

9. He is renowned for His love. – What but love brought Him out of the bosom of the Father to this lower world? What but love made Him lay down His life for His people?

10. He is renowned for His liberality. He has a full hand and a free heart, as we used to say; He gives without money, and He invites all to come and share of his fulness.

11. He is renowned for His constancy. He is “Jesus Christ, the same to-day, yesterday and for ever.” The best of men will fail us when we trust them; they will run like splinters into our hands when we lean upon them. But, sirs, you will find Christ always the same, to-day, yesterday and for ever.

12. And then He is renowned for His authority and dominion. It is great, and extends far and wide, whether in heaven above, or in the earth beneath. And His dominion reaches “from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.” And all the kings of the earth are but His vassals.

Thus, I say, Christ in every respect is renowned.

But here, to keep by the phraseology of the text, He is a renowned *Plant*. Wherein is He renowned?

First, I say He is renowned for His antiquity: “I was set, up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was,” etc. All the plants in the higher and lower gardens of God they are but just as yesterday in comparison of Him. Angels and archangels and the greatest Seraphims are but of yesterday in comparison of this Plant. He is renowned for His antiquity, for He is “The Ancient of days and the Everlasting Father” (Isaiah 9).

[January; continued in February 1922]

I had occasion not long ago to enter upon these words, but had not time to go far into the import of them. After I had traced the connection of the words a little, I took them up in the few following particulars: –

1. We have here a great blessing promised unto the Church, and that is none other than Christ, under the notion of a Prince, and a *Plant of Renown*.

2. We have the Party by whom this promise is made in the pronoun *I*: I JEHOVAH, the Eternal God, *I will raise up for them a Plant of Renown*.

3. We have the way how this Plant of Renown is raised; And I will raise him up. I that am the great Husbandman of the vineyard, I will raise up for them. Then,

4. I noticed the persons to whom the promise is made, I will raise up for them; that is for His Church, for His people that are brought into a very low condition, as you will see by reading the preceding part of the chapter. The flock of Christ were scattered by the shepherds of Israel; they were torn, they were devoured, and under manifold trials; well, what will the Lord do for His flock in that condition? He says, I will raise up for them a Plant of Renown, and they shall hunger no more.

The observation is much the same with the words themselves, namely, “that our Lord Jesus Christ is a Plant of Renown of His Father’s upbringing:” I will raise up for them a Plant of Renown. In prosecution of this doctrine I proposed to observe the order and method following: –

First, to premise a few things concerning this blessed Plant.

Secondly, to shew that indeed He is a *Plant of Renown*. And then,

Thirdly, to speak a little concerning the raising up of this Plant.

Fourthly, for whom He is raised up.

Fifthly, for what good or for what benefit and advantage He is raised up.

Lastly, to apply the whole.

As to the *first*, I spoke to it, and premised a few things concerning this blessed Plant; therefore I shall not stay to resume what was said on that head. I likewise entered upon the

second, and shewed that Christ is a Plant of Renown in several respects: I mentioned eleven or twelve particulars wherein Christ is renowned, but I shall not resume these neither; I shall only tell you a few things wherein this blessed Plant is renowned.

1. In the first place, this blessed Plant is renowned for His antiquity. There are many other plants in God's garden, as angels, seraphims, cherubims, saints militant and triumphant, they are all but as of yesterday in comparison to Him, for He was set up before ever the earth was. You will see that one name of this Plant of Renown is The Everlasting Father, or "The Father of Eternity," as it may be rendered.

2. As He is renowned for His antiquity, so for His beauty; He is the most beautiful Plant in all the garden of God; "I am the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the valleys. He is the apple-tree among the trees of the wood. He is renowned, I say, for His beauty and His glory, for the glory of God is in Him. Is there any glory in His eternal Father? Why, that glory shines in our Immanuel, in the very brightness of it, Hebrews 1:3, "He is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person." Now, sirs, if ever your eyes were opened by the Spirit of God to take up the glory of this Plant, His glory has just dazzled your very eyes! You that never saw any glory in Him, you never saw Him to this very day. Pray that the light of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, may yet shine into your hearts. It would make a heartsome sacrament if this Plant were displayed in His glory among us. Sirs, have you come to see Him in His glory? O give God no rest till He make a discovery of Himself to your souls.

3. He is renowned for His verdure, for His perpetual greenness. Other plants are fading; you and I are fading; "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field." He is a Tree ever green; He never fades, summer nor winter, and shall be ever a green Plant to the saints as it were to eternity! When millions of ages, yea, myriads of ages, are past in heaven, He will be as fresh and green to the believer as when he first saw Him, or the first moment the saint entered glory; therefore it is that the songs of the redeemed in glory are always new, and throughout eternity will be new, because they will constantly see matter of a new song, and the more they see they will wonder the more at Him throughout eternity.

4. Again, this Plant is renowned not only for His verdure, but for His virtue. We read, in Revelation chapter 22 'That the leaves of the tree of life were for the healing of the nations.' That Tree of Life is the very same with this Plant of Renown; the leaves of this Plant are for the healing of the nations, and we that are ministers are come this day to scatter the leaves of this Tree of Life, of this Plant of Renown; try if you can get a leaf of it applied and set home upon your souls. Depend upon it, there is virtue in every word of His. Sirs, mingle faith with a word, and you will find that it will have the same efficacy with you as it had with the poor woman with the bloody issue, that was healed with the touch of His garment, who had spent all her living on doctors. O see if you can find Him! I assure you He is here; He is behind the door of every man's heart: "Behold I stand (says He) at the door and knock! If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and sup with him, and he with me." And O let Him in! There is virtue in Him for curing you all, though there were ten thousand millions of you more than there are; there is virtue in Him for healing every one of you.

5. This blessed Plant is not only renowned for His virtue, but likewise for His fertility. He is not a barren Plant; He would not be renowned if He were barren. He brings forth all manner of fruit every month, yea, I may add, every day, every moment. You read in Revelation 22 of the Tree of Life that brings forth twelve manner of fruits every month; that is to say, He brings forth all fruit that is necessary for a poor soul: whatever thy soul stands in need of is to be found in Him; see then and gather, see if you can gather some of it. There is the fruit of His incarnation; there is the fruit of His death; there is the fruit of His resurrection; there is the fruit of His ascension; there is the fruit of His intercession, and sitting at the right hand of God; there is the fruit of His prophetic office; there is the fruit of His priestly office;

there is the fruit of His kingly office; there is the fruit of His appearing within the veil; there is the fruit of what He did without the veil and without the camp. O what fruit is here! Here is wisdom for fools; here is justification for the condemned soul; here is sanctification for the polluted soul and clothing for the naked, riches for the poor, bread for the hungry, drink for the thirsty. All manner of fruit is here, and we are trying, sirs, to shake the Tree of Life among you; and blessed be God, they may be gathered. O sirs! they are dropping among you. O gather, gather, for salvation is in every word that drops from Him; for His words are the words of eternal life.

6. But in the place this blessed Plant is renowned for His scent and pleasant savour. O sirs! there is such a blessed savour in this Plant of Renown as has cast a perfume through all the Paradise above! He has cast a perfume through the church militant, which in Isaiah 5 is called God's vineyard. O sirs! do you find any thing of the scent of this Plant? I can tell you, if ever you have been made to know Him, it will be so: "because of the savour of thy good ointment, thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee." The believer finds a scent about Him; he draws a savour from Him. What is the design of us ministers but to cast abroad His scent, and it is by this we win souls; and they that cast out and drop the Plant of Renown out of their sermons, no wonder their sermons stink, and they shall stink to eternity that throw Christ out of their sermons. The great business of ministers is to cast forth the scent of Christ to the people. I shall read you a word to this purpose in 2 Corinthians 2:14-16, "Now, thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ." The apostle triumphs in Him, and all other honest ministers will triumph in Him too, and all Christians that know Him triumph in Him. "And maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savour in Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one we are the savour of death unto death, and to the other the savour of life unto life; and who is sufficient for these things?" Who is able to tell the sweet savour that is in Him?

7. Again, this blessed Plant in my text is not only renowned for His savour, but likewise for His shadow, Song 1:3. "I sat down under his shadow with great delight;" the shadow of the Plant of Renown. You are all sitting there or standing, but are you sitting under the Plant of Renown? Jonah's gourd did him service against the scorching heat of the sun, that was like to take away his life; but alas! that soon failed him, for God sent a worm and smote it that it withered; and the worm of death will soon smite and wither you and me. O get in under the shadow of this Plant of Renown, and ye are secured against death and vindictive wrath for ever. Get in under His shadow, the shadow of His intercession, the shadow of His power, the shadow of His providence, the shadow of His faithfulness. O sit under His shadow, and you will find shelter there against all deadly; whatever blasts come, you will find safety there. Would you be shadowed from the king of terrors? Death is a terror to many. O if you be shadowed against the awful terrors of death and God's vengeance, get in under this shadow and you are safe.

8. This Plant is renowned for His stature. He is a high Plant, He is a tall Plant: you see the heavens above you, but they are but creeping things in comparison of Him, for this glorious Plant is *the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity*. You can never see His height; your eye will look high, and your thought will reach higher, but neither your eye nor thought will reach unto Him; He is taller than all the cedars in the Lebanon of God. "Eye hath not seen, nor hath ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man," to think of the height and glory of this Plant of Renown!

Lastly, this Plant is renowned not only for His stature, but for His extent also; He is a broad Plant; He was planted in the first promise in Paradise; He spread through the Old Testament Church; He came the length of filling the land of Judea; and at length this Plant has spread itself among us. And O that I could open the leaves of this Plant to take you in; He

is a broad Plant, He will serve you all. We read of the Tree of Life being on every side of the river: there is a great river betwixt us and heaven, and that is death, and we are all running into this river of death. As one well observes on the place, this Tree is in the middle of the river; He is on this side of time, and He is on that side of time. Now, this Plant is on both sides of the river; though you were going to the wastes of America you will find Him there as well as here, if you have but the art of improving Him. And this Plant will spread Himself through all kingdoms, "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." He will not only fill the earth, but the whole heavens throughout eternity! O but He is a broad Plant, that will extend Himself both to heaven and earth! And this shall serve for the *second* thing proposed, namely, to show that this Plant is indeed a most Renowned Plant.

The *third* thing I proposed in the prosecution of this doctrine was concerning the raising or upbringing of this Plant. You see it is no other than the great God that raised up this Plant. I find the great Jehovah glorying in His skill and wisdom in the raising up of this Plant for the use of the Church. In Psalm 89:19 says the Lord, "I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people; I have raised up David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him." Here he glories in it that He had raised up this glorious Plant of Renown.

I will tell you a few things with reference to the raising up of this blessed Plant.

1. He was raised up in the counsel of God's peace from eternity. The Trinity sat in council anent the upbringing of Him; "The counsel of peace was between them both," Zechariah 6:13. The Father and the Son agreed upon it that in the fulness of time the Son should come into the world.

2. He was raised up in the first promise to Adam and Eve. Till this Plant was discovered to them they were like to run distracted. And indeed, sirs, if Christless sinners saw where they were, and the wrath of God that is hanging over their heads, they would be ready to run distracted till a revelation of Christ was made to them. All the promises, all the prophecies, all the types, and all the doctrines of the Old Testament, they were the gradual springings of this Plant.

3. But it was under ground until His actual manifestation in the flesh, when, in the fulness of time, He appeared: "When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman under the law.

4. This Plant was raised up even in His death and resurrection, by which He was declared to be the Son of God with power, by the spirit of holiness.

And, *lastly*, this Plant of Renown will be raised up in the songs the redeemed through endless eternity. Thus you see Christ is a Plant of Renown, and what way He is raised up.

The next thing I proposed was, for whom is it that this Plant is raised up? O! may some poor thing say, Was He ever raised up for me? I tell you, sirs, He was never raised up for the fallen angels; "For he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham." Our nature was highly honoured at first, but it soon sunk below the beast that perisheth; but the second Adam took our nature upon him, and raised it to a higher dignity than the very angels; for to which of the angels did this honour appertain to be united to the eternal Son of God? So that, I say, this Plant of Renown is raised up for mankind-sinners, not for angel-kind sinners; and every mankind-sinner that hears tell of Him, they should lay claim to Him, as in Isaiah 9:6, "To us a Son is given, to us this Child is born; and the government shall be upon his shoulders. And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." To us He is given, unto us He is born.

I thought to have gone through what I designed on this subject, but time will not allow.
The Lord bless His word.
[January and February 1922]

Sermon.

Preached by REV. D. MACFARLANE on Sabbath, 28th April, 1918.

“Because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth;
therefore do the virgins love thee” – Song of Solomon 1:3.

This book of the Song of Solomon is concerning Christ and His Church. Sometimes we find Christ speaking to His Church or of her. At other times the Church speaks to Him or of Him. In our text it is the Church that speaks, and she speaks to Himself indicating her nearness to Him. In speaking of what she says we have to notice four things: –

- I. – The name of Christ.
- II. – His name compared to ointment.
- III. – His name compared to ointment poured forth; and
- IV. – The effect all this has on His people.

According to this arrangement, we shall notice –

I. – *His name, by which we understand several; things.*

(1) It means Himself personally.

1. When you mention the name of a man you mean that man personally. In like manner the Church means Christ Himself personally when she mentions His name.

2. His attributes and title. With regard to His attributes, He is a “Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable; in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.”

3. Anything by which He makes Himself known as the Creator without whom nothing was made that was made (John 1:3).

(2) As the great Ruler of providence who sits upon the circle of the earth, without whose providence a sparrow shall not fall to the ground.

(3) As Mediator between God and man, He has a name given Him by the Father “which is above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come” (Ephesians 1:21). He is called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). His name revealed in the word of the gospel is magnified above all His other names. “Thou hast, magnified thy word above all thy name” (Psalm 138:2). We might enlarge in mentioning more examples of His name given in the Scriptures, but let those given suffice.

II. – *His name compared to ointment.*

(1) His name is compared to ointment because He is the Anointed One. “Thy holy child Jesus whom thou hast anointed” (Acts 4:27). The Father anointed Him by the Holy Spirit. “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me because the Lord hath anointed me” (Isaiah 61:1).

(2) Because a fulness of grace dwells in Him. Oil is an emblem of grace, as it is spoken of in the parable of the ten virgins. The wise virgins had oil in their lamps – that is, they had grace in their heart, although it was not in exercise while they slept. All the grace believers receive dwells in Christ as the fountain out of whose fulness they all receive. “For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell” (Colossians 1:19).

(3) He is compared to ointment because of His preciousness. We read in Scripture of very precious ointment. Christ is precious to His people. “Unto you, therefore, who believe He is precious” (1 Peter 2:7). There are ointments which have a healing efficacy. The name of Jesus has a healing efficacy. Thomas was sick for eight days at least, but when Jesus revealed Himself to him he was healed, and exclaimed, “My Lord and my God.” His name has a healing efficacy on His own people, and, more than that, it has the efficacy of quickening those who are dead in trespasses and sins.

(4) His name has a moistening effect on His people when they feel themselves dry, hard, and rusty. The people who drive in machines oil the wheels. If they do not do so, they will not run as they would wish. The wheels get stiff and rusty, and the slow movement they make is with a disagreeable noise. So it is with the Lord’s people. If they have to preach or pray they find that their speaking is disagreeable to themselves and to their hearers, but when

Christ comes to them the wheels of their soul are oiled, their heart is enlarged, and they run with ease and comfort in the way of His commandments. If they have to pray they find it difficult to express their thoughts in words till their souls are anointed with the unction from on high through His name. Some pray like a machine that can be worked always, but the Lord's people are not so.

III. – *His name as ointment poured forth.*

Ointment kept in a corked bottle will do no good till the cork is removed and the ointment poured forth. Christ's name as the Saviour was hid from men and angels in God's purpose, till it pleased Him to reveal His purpose of salvation. Christ's name was revealed –

(1) In the first promise given of Him in the garden of Eden to our first parents. This revelation of Christ's name was a sore blow to Satan, who thought that all the human race would be left to perish like the fallen angels.

(2) In the renewal of that promise from time to time till He came into the world at the end of four thousand years.

(3) His name was poured forth in His assuming human nature. He was God manifest in the flesh (1 Timothy 2:16). He took to Himself a true body and a reasonable soul.

(4) His name was poured forth in the bloody sacrifices of the Old testament as a type of His sacrifice.

(5) His name was poured forth in His death. He poured out His soul unto death, and He Himself says, "I am poured out like water. . . My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels" (Psalm 22:14). We are all subject to death; many are dying daily, but the death of Christ is the death of death. It extinguished the death of His people in eternity, which is the wages of sin.

(6) His name is poured into the souls of His people by the Holy Spirit in regeneration. Christ is formed in them (Galatians 4:19).

(7) The name of Christ is poured forth in the preaching of the gospel. Jesus Christ is the sum and substance of the gospel. He is the very soul of it. A gospel without Christ is like a dead body without a soul. In preaching the gospel the prophets of old preached Him. The apostles preached Him. "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake" (2 Corinthians 4:5). Not only that the prophets and apostles preached Christ, but all His ministering servants preach Him, and He shall be preached by such to the end of time. There is no true preaching without preaching Christ. To preach our own goodness, our good works, our own sufferings as the ground of salvation is not the gospel. Although many preachers have no better gospel to proclaim to their people than these things, yet the true gospel is good news from heaven. It is the joyful sound which brings true comfort to us in a world of sin and misery. It is the only remedy for all the evils that exist in the world. The preaching of the gospel "is a savour of life unto life to some and a savour of death unto death unto others." If it is not a savour of life unto life to you it must be a savour of death unto you. It must be either.

IV. – *The effect all this has on His people.*

They love Him. "Therefore do the virgins love thee." Note:

(1) on this head that His people are called virgins, which implies that they are pure. By nature they are as impure as others having no good thing dwelling in them. But being born again they have a new nature which is pure and cannot sin. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him, and cannot sin because he is born of God" (1 John 3:9). It is not the new nature that sins, but sin in them. "Now, if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me" (Romans 7:20). Note,

(2) that they love Him. They love Him as their best friend who manifested His love to them by dying for them. They love Him as a person whom they know. You will not love a

person of whom you are ignorant. They were once ignorant of Him, but now they know Him. "They beheld His glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father" (John 1:14). He is lovable in Himself, and "altogether lovely," as the Church says, and it is impossible to know Him without loving Him. But those who are ignorant of Him hate Him as the Jews who put Him to death did, and as they to this day do, and curse His name whenever they hear it mentioned. They are under the influence of the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, but His own people loved Him, not merely in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. They manifest their love to Him in several ways: –

(i.) In seeking His fellowship. If you love a fellow-creature you desire to have his company as often as possible. If you love Christ you desire to have communion with Him.

(ii.) They manifest their love to Him by mourning when He is absent. The hearts of the disciples were full of sorrow when Christ told them that He was to leave them. When Christ is absent they refuse to be comforted till He comes to them, as Jacob refused to be comforted by his son and daughter when Joseph was taken from him, as he thought, by death.

(iii.) They manifest their love to Him by serving Him and doing His will as dutiful children obey their parents because they love them.

(iv.) They love His people because they are His people. When they were in a state of nature they did not love God's people, but hated them, although some in that state respect the Lord's people for their good conduct, and this is true especially of those who are afterwards changed by the grace of God. If you have a warm side to the Lord's people it may be a forerunner of your being added to their number. There is natural love and spiritual love. Among men children of the same family love one another and manifest their love in doing everything in their power for the good of one another, as Jacob was comforted by his sons and daughters when Joseph was taken from him. When one member suffers all the other members suffer in sympathy with it. And when one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it (1 Corinthians 12:26).

(v.) They love His word. They love the Bible more than any other book; it is their constant companion and guide on their way to the Father's house in heaven. They meditate upon it day and night, and find good for their souls; while others love books written concerning worldly matters. If you love such books more than the Bible it is a mark that you are none of God's people, but if you love Christ you love His Word, law, and gospel from beginning to end.

(vi.) They love His cause in the world, and do all in their power to advance it. While others are indifferent as to whether it is prospering or declining while they are very diligent about their worldly concerns. They mourn when His cause is in a low condition, and they rejoice when it is revived, and when even one sinner is brought to repentance and added to the Church.

In conclusion, what think ye of the name of Christ in the several aspects of which we have spoken of it. Is He precious to you in His person, in His people, and in the revelation He has given of Himself in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments? Do you love Him and manifest your love in a way becoming the gospel, or is He still despised and rejected of you? What do you do for the coming of His kingdom in the world? These are questions you ought to consider in order to ascertain whether you are of the number of His people or still in a state of sin and misery. We leave these questions with you, in the hope that they may be blessed to you, which is our earnest desire.

[March 1922]

A Sermon “The Good Samaritan.”

By the LATE REV. JAMES S. SINCLAIR.
Preached in St. Jude's, Glasgow, 13th July, 1918.

“And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead” etc. – Luke 10:30-35.

You find that words were spoken by Jesus to a certain lawyer who stood up and tempted Him, saying, “Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” He referred this lawyer, in the first instance, to God's moral law. “What is written in the law? how readest thou?” and he answered quite correctly, for he replied with the sum of the Ten Commandments, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.” Jesus said to him, “Thou hast answered

right: this do, and thou shalt live.” Jesus, knowing that the man believed more in the law than in the gospel, referred him to the law, told him that, if he would keep the law perfectly, he would live. The man, however, knew in his own conscience that he was not a keeper of the law, that he did not keep the law very carefully as to the second table, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,” and he put the question to Jesus, “And who is my neighbour?” The Lord Jesus then related to him an incident by which He taught him who was his neighbour, by which He taught him what was the neighbourly thing to do. He spoke to him of an incident concerning a certain man who went down from Jerusalem, who fell among thieves, and was left half dead. Certain men passed by, a priest and a Levite, but they paid little or no attention to the poor man; they allowed him to lie in his blood. The only man who showed him the necessary attention was a Samaritan, who came where he was, and, when he saw him, had compassion on him, and did for him all that was necessary to save him from death, and in order to make him comfortable afterwards. Then Jesus, after He told this incident to the lawyer, asked him the question, “Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among thieves?” And he said, “He that shewed mercy on him.” Then said Jesus unto him, “Go, and do thou likewise.” Here we have the immediate lesson that was taught by Jesus to this lawyer who came testing Him with the question, “Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

I think, however, that this interesting incident, as related by Christ, is susceptible of certain spiritual interpretations and applications. We may find in it a picture of ourselves in our wretched and ruined condition, and we may find the good Samaritan to be the Lord Jesus Christ, who comes to the place where sinners are and binds up their wounds, and gives them to experience something of the height and the depth and length and breadth of His salvation. It is from this point of view, then, that we desire to consider this narrative as here recorded, and we shall notice: –

1. The man who fell among thieves.
2. The priest and the Levite, and the treatment which they gave him.
3. The Samaritan brought under review.
4. The gracious attention which the Samaritan gave, and the provision that he made for the welfare of the man who fell among the thieves.
5. In the last place, let us make some practical applications.

1. In the first place, let us observe the case of the man that fell among thieves, and I observe, first, the journey upon which he was. We are told he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. Jerusalem was the place where God was worshipped. There was His temple, there He was accustomed to manifest Himself to those who waited upon Him. This man had for a season turned his back on Jerusalem; he was on his way to Jericho. Jericho was a city with a peculiar history. We find in the book of Joshua that, when Jericho was destroyed, a curse was pronounced upon the man who would dare to build the walls of Jericho again. This man, going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, may be taken as the case of man at the beginning. He turned his back on God, and he went in the direction of the city of the curse and of destruction. And the first man fell among thieves when he departed from his Maker. He fell into the hands of the great thief, who is the devil. Satan promised to him that he would gain much by yielding to his suggestions, by doing the thing that he tempted him to do. That is the way with the devil still. He promises sinners great things if they will listen to his voice, if they will obey his evil suggestions; he professes to show the way to happiness, and then lands the poor sinner at last in the bottomless pit. The first man encountered this terrible thief, and fell under his temptation. He fell also into the hands of Sin. Sin took possession of his own breast; he became a sinner, a transgressor of God’s commands. Sin, my friends, is the destroyer of the immortal soul. Again, he fell into the hands of another thief, and that is the

World. He preferred to eat of the forbidden tree rather than obey God's command, and thus he laid himself open to the seductions of the world. We have as a race thus fallen among thieves who are seeking our eternal destruction.

Still, further, we are told concerning this poor man that the thieves stripped him of his raiment, and that was what the thieves did to our first parents when they yielded to their evil suggestions – they stripped them of their original innocence and righteousness. God made man in His own image: He clothed him with garments of purity and righteousness, but those thieves stripped him of these precious garments. They also inflicted grievous wounds upon the immortal soul, such wounds as would issue in eternal destruction if divine mercy prevented not. The thieves in the narrative left the man half dead. Well, my friends, there is a sense, and a very important sense, in which the world, and the flesh, and the devil have left us – not half dead, but wholly dead, dead in trespasses and sins. Still it is possible for sinners to come under the power of a second death. There is a possibility of recovery from the spiritual death that has taken possession of us as a consequence of falling among thieves, and this man, being left half dead, may be regarded as a suitable figure of our case.

2. I pass on now, in the second place, to observe the priest and the Levite who came the way, and who passed by on the other side. There is no doubt but Jesus is here speaking forcibly concerning certain parties who were then in the Jewish church, and although they were in office they did not understand the real spirit of the office they sustained. They had no real regard for the welfare of the souls of men; in fact, they did not seem to have much regard even for their temporal interests. They were simply concerned about their own carnal self-interest. He speaks of a certain priest coming down that way, then He speaks of a Levite. We may take the priest to represent the moralist – the man who has nothing but outward morality, though he may make a high profession. Such a man does not understand the case of poor, guilty, fallen creatures, and does not enter sympathetically into their necessities. He has no real love for his own soul or for the souls of others. He comes the way, but he looks coldly upon the poor man perishing in his blood, and he passes by on the other side. There may be also a deeper lesson here taught. The priest may be taken to represent the law as a covenant of works. The law as a covenant of works has no provision for the rescue of perishing sinners, has no provision for the forgiveness of sinners. The Jews were very much attached to the law; they imagined that the doctrine of “Do, and thou shalt live” would save their souls for eternity; and the Jew in that respect is not dead even in gospel lands. That is the doctrine that is very widely taught in our time and generation – salvation by human works, salvation by morality, salvation by outward righteousness. Ah! vain is such a hope. The law has no provision for the salvation of guilty, perishing sinners.

Then the other man who came and passed by was the Levite, and we may take him to represent the ceremonialist. We are told that he came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. The Jews made much of the ceremonial law, and thought that, if they would attend to its ceremonies, they would, therefore, be saved. Well, Jesus represents the Levite here as taking a look at the man, and there is no doubt that the ceremonial law takes a look at sinners. Although it showed forth the way in which sinners may be saved, of itself it did not make any provision for our souls' salvation. It takes a view of us, but it cannot meet our whole need. Ah! no; the legalist and the ceremonialist have nothing wherewith to save a guilty sinner from eternal death. They pass by on the other side and leave the sinner to perish.

3. I observe now, in the third place, the Samaritan. “But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him he had compassion on him,” It is very remarkable, my friends, that the Lord Jesus describes the man who did the gracious part of a neighbour to the one who fell among thieves as a Samaritan. Christ Himself was spoken of as a Samaritan. “He is a Samaritan: He hath a devil.” His enemies could not get opprobrious

enough epithets to cast at Him. Well, He says it was the Samaritan who came to the help of this poor man, and oh! my friends, this wonderful Samaritan still lives. He died and He rose again, and ascended on high, but He hath not forsaken the world altogether. He still goes forth in His word, in His gospel, with a view to save sinners from going down into the pit. He is still pursuing His gracious journeys among the fallen children of men. We do not see His goings perhaps in the measure that have been seen in days gone by, but He still lives. "The Lord liveth," said the Psalmist, "Blessed be the Rock of my salvation." The Son of God, Jesus Christ, is the good Samaritan, who comes exactly where we are. We are sinners that have been stripped of all our raiment by thieves, sinners that have been wounded even unto death, sinners ready to perish, and it is to such that the Son of God speaks in the Gospel.

4. Then we are told that when the good Samaritan came and saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him and bound up his wounds. This compassion was in the Samaritan already, and compassion was in the heart of the Son of God from all eternity, but when He looks upon poor souls ready to perish His compassion is drawn forth. In the exercise of compassion he went to the man and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The Lord Jesus carries with Him the oil and the wine of gospel relief and gospel consolation. With Him is the residue of the Spirit: with Him is the consolation of forgiveness, of acceptance, of cleansing. The Lord Jesus has an infinite fountain of consolation in Himself that He is able and willing to communicate unto needy souls. Oil is used in Scripture to symbolise the Spirit of God in His enlightening and comforting influence, and Christ, as the Mediator of the new covenant, administers this divine consolation. He also carries with Him the wine of gospel comforts that symbolises the precious blood of atonement that cleanses from all sin. Oh! my friends, if we have been brought low, and if we have been made sensible of our sinful and perishing condition, we stand in need of these precious things which Christ has provided. Christ binds up the wounds of sinners by the promises of His own word. These give strength, these give encouragement unto the sinner who is ready to give up all hope, ready to perish in the far country. He bound up his wounds, and when he has so far met that man's case, we are informed that he set him on his own beast – he provided means whereby he would be conveyed to some place of refuge. Now, we say that this may be taken to refer to His word. The word of Christ, the word of God, is that which can carry you if you have been rescued by the power of God's grace from a perishing condition. He has provided a substantial source of help in His own precious, living word. He is able to sustain you and carry you through all the ups and down of life until the end of the day. He set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn. This inn may be to represent a gospel church. This is the inn where souls are fed and nourished under the gospel, but it is to be feared that there are not too many such in the times in which we live, not too many gospel churches where poor sinners may be fed as to their immortal souls. It would seem as if in our time there was a famine in more senses than one – a famine not only of bread, but of the word of the Lord. Ah! but Christ, the good Samaritan, will bring people to the place where their souls will be fed and nourished. It is very remarkable sometimes how people whom the Lord has met with, perhaps outside the ordinary means of grace, are brought in His providence to a place where the truth, as it is in Jesus, is taught and proclaimed. He will take care of His people, and He will see to it that they have the necessary provision, the necessary nourishment, for their immortal souls on the way to eternity. The good Samaritan kept very near to the poor man for the first night after he was rescued. We are told that on the morrow, when he departed, he took out two pence and gave them to the host. My friends, the Lord is usually very nigh to a soul when He first rescues him from the grip of the destroyers, when He first gives him to taste the sweetness of pardoning mercy and redeeming love, when He first fills him with the oil of joy instead of mourning. He gets into close fellowship with that soul. But the Samaritan did not always

continue in such nearness. We are told he went away on the morrow, and so Christ has His own ways and His own times with those whom He calls effectually by His grace. He gives His own people at the beginning earnest of eternal happiness, He gives them the place of the child, dandling them, as it were, on the knees, drawing them near to Himself in the embrace of His everlasting love. He holds pleasant communion and fellowship with them, then He departs. However, we see that, although the good Samaritan departed, he did not leave the man without a helper. He left him in charge of the host of this inn, and who are we to understand by the host? Well, there are two views that one might take of the host from a spiritual standpoint. Who is the principal host of the gospel church? It is the Holy Ghost, it is the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of the living God, and, my friends, if we have not that host, we are poor indeed, for without His presence and power we shall have nothing but dry formality. The gospel ministers may also be described as the host. It is their duty to care for the spiritual needs of those who come under their hands. The Samaritan left the poor man under the charge of the host, and he took out two pence. He made provision for his necessities. My friends, it is the glorious Samaritan of the new covenant, the Mediator between God and man, who has all the means we all stand in need of. "It pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell." We may say about the two pence that one penny is providence for the body, and the other penny grace for the soul. He made complete provision for man's need. Of course, a penny in those days was of much more value than it is to-day, and two pence would go a good distance then. However that may be, the spiritual meaning bears out that the Samaritan gave to the host all that was necessary for the support and comfort of the man, and promises that when He would come again he would repay anything more that was spent on him. Oh! my friends, that is what Christ does for those whom He saves. He undertakes to supply all their needs out of His own unsearchable riches.

5. Now, then, let me endeavour to make some more particular application of what is brought before us in this incident. You, my friends, who are still far from God and righteousness, see in the case of this poor man a picture of your own guilty and fallen condition. You have fallen among thieves, whether you believe it or not. The world and the flesh and the devil are thieves, and they will carry your soul away to eternal destruction if you are not rescued, if you are not saved by Christ. The sooner you come to recognise how you are and where you stand the better. People in our time have such a superficial view of the condition of man as a sinner before God. You would hardly think that there was such a thing as sin in the world or a devil in hell. Oh! what a dreadful delusion. "If the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness."

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