

CHRISTMAS EVANS:  
*The Preacher of Wild Wales*

*HIS COUNTRY, HIS TIMES, AND HIS  
CONTEMPORARIES.*

BY THE REV.  
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'THE THRONE OF ELOQUENCE', 'WORLD OF PROVERB AND PARABLE',  
'THE WORLD OF ANECDOTE', 'ROBERT HALL', ETC.

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TO THE  
**REV. JOHN DAVIES,**  
*OF BRIGHTON.*

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**M**Y DEAR FRIEND, — I believe there is no man living to whom I could so appropriately inscribe an attempt to give some appreciation of the life and labours of Christmas Evans as yourself. Your revered father and he were taken on the same evening into Church fellowship in the old communion of Castell Hywel, and within a week of each other they preached their first sermons from the same desk; after this their ways diverged, Evans uniting himself with the Baptist Communion, your father joining the Independent; still, like two rivers flowing, and broadening, from neighbouring, but obscure springs in the heart of their native Plynymmon, cheerfully they ran their beautiful course, beneath the providential law of him who chooses our inheritance for us, and fixes the bounds of our habitations. They both served their generation in their own land well, before they fell on sleep. Your father was called 'the Silver Trumpet of Wales', and the name of Evans rolled like a far-resounding bell among its wild mountains. In their early Christian life they were associates; in their fame, while living, competent judges tell me they were equal; and I have brought them together again. In the memories I have sought to retain in this volume, I have attempted to give some idea of what old Wild Wales was when these two brothers in arms arose, and I have attempted to show what the singular institution of preaching effected for the old insulated land. But I am also glad to avail myself of the opportunity thus afforded me to express my sense of mingled admiration, and affection for yourself, and congratulation that the father, who left you an orphan so young, must rejoice, from that cloud of witnesses he so long since joined, to know

that you followed him in a successful and happy ministry; while I rejoice, that, unlike him, you have been permitted to enjoy the sunset in a serene and golden old age. May you long enjoy it.

My Dear Friend,

I am very affectionately

EDWIN PAXTON HOOD.

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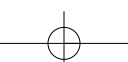
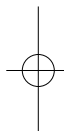
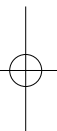
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## CHAPTER I

### *SOME GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF WELSH PREACHING*

Wales, the Country and the People — Individuality of the Welsh Pulpit — St David — The Religious Sense of the People — Association Meetings — Gryffyth of Caernarvon — Bardic Character of the Sermons — A Repetition of Sermons — Peculiarities of the Welsh Language — Its Singular Effects as Spoken — Its Vowels — Its Pictorial Character — The *Hwyl* — Welsh Scenery — Isolated Character of the Old Chapels — Plain Living and High Thinking — Ludicrous Incidents of Uncertain Service — Superstitions of Heathenism — Fondness of the People for Allegory — Haunted Wales — The Rev. John Jones and the Mysterious Horseman — Old Wild Wales — St David's — Kilgerran — Welsh Nomenclature — John Dyer — Old Customs.

WE propose, in the following pages, to give some account of Christmas Evans, the great Welsh preacher; believing that he had a style and manner of preaching which, to English minds and readers, will seem altogether his own, perhaps more admirable than imitable. But before we enter upon the delineation of his life, or attempt to unfold his style, or to represent his method as displayed in his sermons, it may be well to present some concise view of Welsh preaching and Welsh preachers in general, especially those of the last age; for as an

order of preaching it has possessed its own very distinctive peculiarities. Some readers may at first indeed inquire, 'Is not preaching very much the same everywhere, in all counties and in all countries? And Wales, which seems itself in its nearness now only like a district of England, and that district for the most part wild and but scantily peopled, — can there be anything so remarkable about its pulpit work as to make it either capable or worthy of any separate account of its singularities and idiosyncrasies?' To most English people Welsh preaching is a phase of

religious life entirely unknown: thousands of tourists visit the more conspicuous highways of Wales from year to year, its few places of public resort or more manifest beauty; but Wales is still, for the most part, unknown; its isolation is indeed somewhat disturbed now, its villages are no longer so insulated as of old, and the sounds of advancing life are breaking in upon its solitudes, yet, perhaps, its fairest scenes are still uninvaded. But if the country be unknown, still more unknown are the people, and of its singular preaching phenomena scarcely anything is known, or ever can be known by English people; yet it is not too much to say that, in that little land, during the last hundred years, amidst its wild glens and sombre mountain shadows, its villages retreating into desolate moorlands and winding vales, where seldom a traveller passes by, there have appeared such a succession and race of remarkable preachers as could be rivalled — in their own peculiar popular power over the hearts and minds of many thousands, for their eminence and variety — in no other country. Among

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these, Christmas Evans seems to us singularly representative; eminently Welsh, his attributes of power seem to be especially indicative of the characteristics of the Welsh mind, an order of mind as remarkably singular and individual, and worthy of study, as any national character in the great human family. But even before we mention these, it may be well to notice what were some of the reasons for the eminent influence and usefulness of Christmas Evans, and some of his extraordinary preaching comrades and contemporaries to whom we shall have occasion to refer.

Preaching is, in Wales, the great national characteristic; the Derby Day is not more truly a characteristic of England than the great gatherings and meetings of the Associations all grouped around some popular favourites. The dwellers among those mountains and upon those hill-sides have no concerts, no theatres, no means of stimulating or satisfying their curiosity. For we, who care little for preaching, to whom the whole sermon system is perhaps becoming more tedious, can form but little idea, and have but little sympathy with that form of religious society where the pulpit is the orchestra, the stage, and the platform, and where the charms of music, painting, and acting are looked for, and found in the preacher. We very likely would be disposed even to look with complacent pity upon such a state of society, — it has not yet

expired, — where the Bulwers, the Dickenses, the Thackerays, and Scotts are altogether unknown, — but where the peculiar forms of their genius — certainly without their peculiar education — display themselves

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in the pulpit. If our readers suppose, therefore, a large amount of ignorance, — well, upon such a subject, certainly, it is possible to enter easily upon the illimitable. Yet it is such an ignorance as that which developed itself in job, and in his companions, and in his age — an ignorance like that which we may conceive in Æschylus. In fact, in Wales, the gates of every man's being have been opened. It is possible to know much of the grammar, and the history, and the lexicography of things, and yet to be so utterly ignorant of *things* as never to have felt the sentiment of strangeness and of terror; and without having been informed about the names of things, it is possible to have been brought into the presence and power of *things* themselves. Thus, the ignorance of one man may be higher than the intelligence of another. There may be a large memory and a very narrow consciousness. On the contrary, there may be a large consciousness, while the forms it embraces may be uncertain and undefined in the misty twilight of the soul. This is much the state of many minds in Wales. It is the state of feeling, and of poetry, of subtle questionings, high religious musings, and raptures. This state has been aided by the secludedness of the country, and the exclusiveness of the language, — not less than by the rugged force and masculine majesty and strength of the language; — a language full of angles and sharp goads, admirably fitted for the masters of assemblies, admirably fitted to move like a wind over the soul, rousing and soothing, stirring into storm, and lulling into rest. Something in it makes an orator almost ludicrous when he attempts

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to convey himself in another language, but very powerful and impressive in that. It is a speaking and living language, a language without any shallows, a language which seems to compel the necessity of thought before using it. Our language is fast becoming serviceable for all that large part of the human family who speak without thinking. To this state the Welsh can never come. That unaccommodating tongue only moves with a soul behind it.

Thus, it is not the first reason, but it is not unimportant to remember, that, until very recently, the pulpit in Wales has been the only means of

popular excitement, instruction, or even of entertainment; until very recently the Welsh, like the ancient Hebrews, have dwelt among their own people, they have possessed no popular fictions, no published poems, no published emanations either of metaphysics or natural science; immured in their own language, as they were, less than a century since, among their own mountains, their language proved a barrier to the importation of many works accessible to almost all the other languages of Europe. It may be said that religion, as represented through the men of the pulpit, has made Wales what she is. When the first men of the pulpit, Howell Harris, Daniel Rowlands, and others, arose, they found their country lying under a night of spiritual darkness, and they effected an amazing reformation; but then they had no competitive influences to interfere with their progress, or none beyond that rough, rude sensuality, that barbarism of character, which everywhere sets itself in an attitude of hostility to spiritual

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truth and to elevated holiness; there were no theatres or race courses, there was no possibility that the minds of the multitudes should be occupied by the intellectual casuistries of a later day; Wales possessed no Universities or Colleges, and very few Schools; on the other hand, there were some characteristics of the national mind very favourable to the impulse these men gave, and the impressions they produced. So it has happened that the Welsh preacher has been elevated into an importance, reminding us of the Welsh tradition concerning St David, the patron saint of Wales, regarding whom it is said, that, while preaching in the year 520, in Cardigan, against the Pelagian heresy, such was the force of his argument, and the eloquence of his oratory, that the very ground on which he stood rose beneath his feet and elevated itself into a hillock; and there, in after ages, a church was erected upon the spot to which awful tradition pointed as the marvellous pulpit of the patron saint.

Three-fourths of any amount of power which either or any of these first preachers, or their successors, have obtained over their countrymen, and countrywomen, arises from the fact that the Welsh possess, in an eminent degree, what we call a Religious Nature; they are very open to Wonder; they have a most keen and curious propensity to inquire into the hidden causes of things, not mere material causes, but Spiritual causes, what we call Metaphysics; the Unseen Universe is to them as to all of us a mystery, but it is a mystery over which they cannot but brood;

when education is lacking, this realising of the unseen is apt to give rise to

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superstitious feelings, and superstitions still loiter and linger among the glens, the churchyards, and old castles and ruins of Wales, although the spread of Christian truth has divested them of much of their ancient extravagance; when, therefore, the earnest voice of their native speech became the vehicle for unfolding the higher doctrines of the Christian life, the sufferings of the Redeemer and their relation to eternal laws and human conditions, probably a people was never found whose ears were more open, or whose hearts were more ready to receive, and to be stirred to their utmost depths. Thus Religion — Evangelical Religion — became the very life of the land of Wales.

‘There is not a heathen man, woman, or child in all the Principality,’ said a very eminent Welshman to us once, probably with some measure of exaggeration; ‘there are wicked men, and women,’ he continued, ‘unconverted men, and women, but there is not a man, woman, or child throughout Wales who does not know all about Jesus Christ, and why he came into the world, and what he came to do.’ Thus, within the memory of the writer of this volume, Religion was the one topic upon which you might talk intelligently anywhere in Wales: with the pitman in the coalmine, with the iron-smelter at the forge, with the farmer by his ingleside, with the labourer in his mountain shieling; and not merely on the first more elementary lessons of the catechism, but on the great bearings and infinite relations of religious things. Jonathan Edwards, and Williams of Rotherham, and Owen, and Bunyan, and Flavel, — these men and their works, and a few

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others like them, were well known; and, especially, the new aspects which the modified opinions of Andrew Fuller had introduced into religious thought; thus, you might often feel surprised when, sitting down in some lowly cottage, you found yourself suddenly caught, and carried along by its owner in a coil of metaphysical argument. This was the soil on which the Welsh preachers had to work, and cast abroad their seed.

No person can have heard anything of the Welsh religious life without having heard also of the immense annual gatherings, the Association meetings, a sort of great movable festival, annually held in Wales, to



which everything had to give place, and to which all the various tribes of the various Houses of the Lord came up. Their ordinary Sunday services were crowded, but, upon these great occasions, twenty or twenty-five thousand people would come together: and, to such congregations, their great men, their great preachers, such as those we are about to mention, addressed themselves — addressed themselves not to a mass ignorant and unintelligent, but all thoroughly informed in religious matters, and prepared to follow their preacher whithersoever his imagination or thought might lead him. The reader must not smile when we remind him that Wales was, — had been for ages, — the land of Bards; a love of poetry, poetry chanted or recited, had always been the Welshman's passion, and those great writers of our literature who best know what poetry is, have taught us that we are not to look upon those productions with contempt. For ages there had been held in Wales what has been called, and

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is still called the *Eisteddfod*, or *Cymreigyddion*, or the meeting of the Bards and Minstrels; they were, as Pennant has called them, British Olympics, where none but Bards of merit were suffered to rehearse their pieces, or Minstrels of skill to perform. These Association meetings were a kind of religious Eisteddfodd, where the great Welsh preacher was a kind of sacred Bard; he knew nothing of written sermons; he carried no notes nor writings with him to his pulpit or platform, but he made the law and doctrine of religious metaphysics march to the minstrelsy and music of speech; on the other hand, he did not indulge himself in casting about wild fire, all had been thoroughly prepared and rooted in his understanding; and then he went with his sermon, which was a kind of high song, to chant it over the hearts of the multitude. We shall have occasion to show, by many instances, from the lives of their greatest men, how their own hearts had been marvellously prepared.

There is a pleasant anecdote told of one of them, Gryffyth of Caernarvon, how he had to preach one night. Before preaching, staying at a farmhouse on the spot, he desired permission to retire before the service began; he remained in his room a considerable time; the congregation had assembled, still he did not come; there was no sign of his making his appearance. The good man of the house sent the servant to request him to come, as the people had been for some time assembled and waiting. Approaching the room she heard, what seemed to her to be

a conversation, going on between two persons, in a subdued tone of voice, and she caught from Mr

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Gryffyth the expression, 'I will not go unless *you* come with me.' She went back to her master, and said, I do not think Mr Gryffyth will come tonight; there is some one with him, and he is telling him that he will not come unless the other will come too; but I did not hear the other reply, so I think Mr Gryffyth will not come tonight.'

'Yes, yes,' said the farmer, '*he* will come, and I warrant the *other* will come too, if matters are as you say between them; but we had better begin singing and reading until the *two* do come.' And the story goes on to say that Mr Gryffyth did come, and the other One with him, for they had a very extraordinary meeting that night, and the whole neighbourhood was stirred by it and numbers were changed and converted. It was Williams of Wern who used to tell this pleasing anecdote; it is an anecdote of one man, but, so far as we have been able to see, it illustrates the way in which they all prepared themselves before they began to speak.

It must not be supposed from this that they imagined that prayer was to dispense with preparation; their great preachers studied hard and deeply, and Williams of Wern, one of the greatest of them all, says, 'In order to be a good preacher, usefulness must be the grand aim, usefulness must choose the text and divide it, usefulness must compose the sermon and sit at the helm during the delivery; if the introduction be not clear and pertinent it is evident the preacher does not know whither he is going, and if the inferences are of the same character, it is obvious he does not know where he has been. Unstudied sermons are not worth hearing or having;

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who would trust his life in the hands of a physician who had never thought of his profession? 'But these men never permitted the understanding to supersede emotion, and, when they met the people face to face, the greatest of them went prepared, warmed and kindled, and ready to warm and kindle.

Thus their sermons became a sort of inspired song, full of imagination — imagination very often, and usually, deriving its imagery from no far-off and recondite allusions, never losing itself in a flowery wilderness of expressions, but homely illustrations, ministered to by the things and

affairs of ordinary life, and, therefore, instantly preacher and people in emotion were one.

It is indeed true that many of their great preachers repeated the same sermon many times. Why not? So did Whitefield, so did Wesley, so have most eminent preachers done; but this need in no way interfere with — it did not interfere with — the felt necessity for unction on the part of the minister; and as to the people they liked to hear an old favourite again, or a sermon, which they had never heard although they had heard much about it. We believe it was to Christmas Evans a pert young preacher said, ‘Well, you have given us an old sermon again today.’

‘What then, my boy?’ said the Master of Assemblies; ‘had you a new one?’

‘Certainly,’ was the answer.

‘Well, but look you,’ said the unblushing old culprit, ‘I would not take a dozen new sermons like yours for this one old sermon of mine.’

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‘No, nor I,’ chimed in a gruff old deacon. ‘Oh yes, and look you, I should like to hear it again; but as for yours, I never heard it before, and I do not want to hear it again.’

But then the *Language!* Of course the language had a great deal to do with this preaching power, we do not mean generally, but particularly; on all hands the Welsh is acknowledged to be a wonderful language. A Welshman will tell you that there is no language like it on the face of the earth, but that is a testimony borne by many scholars who are not Welshmen; perhaps there is no other language which so instantly conveys a meaning and at the same time touches emotion to the quick. True, like the Welshman himself, it is bony, and strangers to its power laugh somewhat ignorantly at its never-ending succession of consonants. Somebody has said that the whole language is as if it were made up of such words as our word ‘*strength*,’ and if the reader will compare in his mind the effect of the word *power* as contrasted with the word *strength*, he will feel something of the force of the language, and its fitness for the purposes of impression; but still this conveys but a poor idea of its great attributes.

It is so *literal* that the competent hearer, or reader, instantly realises, from its words, things. Well do we remember sitting in Wales with a group of Welsh ministers and Welshmen round a pleasant tea-table; we were talking of the Welsh language, and one of our company, who had

perhaps done more than any one of his own country for popular Welsh literature, and was one of the order of eminent Welsh preachers of whom we are speaking, broke forth: 'Oh!' he

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said, 'you English people cannot see all the things in your Bible that a Welshman can see; now your word "*blessed*," it seems a very dear sweet thing to an Englishman and to a Welshman, but a Welshman sees the *thing* in the word, "*Gwyn ei fyd*," that is, "*a white world — white*," literally, white their world; so a Welshman would see there is a "*white world*" for the pure in heart, a "*white world*" for the poor in spirit, a "*white world*" for them who are reviled and persecuted for righteousness' sake; and when you read, "*Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity*," the Welshman reads his Bible and sees there is a "*white world*" for such a one, that is, all sin wiped out, the place quite clean, to begin again.'

This is not all. We are not intending to devote any considerable space to a vindication of the Welsh language, but, when we speak of it with reference to the effects it produces as the vehicle of Oratory, it is necessary to remark that, so far from being, — as many have supposed who have only looked at it in its strange combination of letters on a page, perhaps unable to read it, and never having heard it spoken, — so far from being harsh and rugged, coarse or guttural, it probably yields to no language in delicious softness, in melting sweetness; in this it has been likened to the Italian language by those who have been best able to judge. Lord Lytton, in his *Letters from Wales*, says, that when he first passed some of the Welsh hills, and heard the harp and the beautiful female peasants accompanying it with their melodious voices, he could not help indulging in the idea that he had descended the Alps, and was

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enjoying the harmonious pleasures of the Italian Paradise. And as we have already said, there has long prevailed an idea that the Welsh language is a multitude of consonants; but indeed the reverse is the case; the learned Eliezer Williams says, in his *Historical Anecdotes of the Welsh Language*, 'The alphabet itself demonstrates that the charge of a multiplicity of consonants is fallacious, since, whether the number of letters be reckoned twenty-two or twenty-four, seven are vowels; there remain therefore a more inconsiderable number than most of the European languages are obliged to admit ... *Y* and *w* are considered as

vowels, and sounded as such; *w* is pronounced like *o u* in French in the word *oui*.’ To persons ignorant of the language, how strange is the appearance, and how erroneous the idea of the sound to be conveyed by *dd, ll, ch*, but indeed all these are indications of the softening of the letter; in a word, the impressions entertained of the harshness of the language are altogether erroneous.

The supposition that the Welsh language is made up of consonants is more especially singular from the fact that it possesses, says a writer in the *Quarterly Review*, what perhaps no other nation has, — a poem of eight lines in which there is not a single consonant. These verses are very old, dating from the seventeenth century; — of course the reader will remember that the Welsh language has seven vowels, both *w* and *y* being considered and sounded as such. This epigram or poem is on the Spider, and originally stood thus,

O’i wiw wŷy i weu e â; — o’i iau Ei wyau a wea,  
E wywa ei wê aua, A’i weau yw ieuau ia.

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To this, the great Gronwy Owen added a kind of counter change of vowels, and the translation has been given as follows:—

From out its womb it weaves with care  
Its web beneath the roof;  
Its wintry web it spreadeth there —  
Wires of ice its woof.

And doth it weave against the wall  
Thin ropes of ice on high?  
And must its little liver all  
The wondrous stuff supply?

A singular illustration of the vowel power in a language ignorantly supposed to possess no vowels.

And these remarks are not at all unnecessary, for they illustrate to the reader, unacquainted with the language, the way in which it becomes such a means of immediate emotion; its words start before the eye like pictures, but are conveyed to the mind like music; and yet the bony character of the language, to which we have referred before, adds to the picture dramatic action and living strength. What a language, then, is this for a competent orator to play upon, — a man with an imaginative

mind, and a fervid and fiery soul! Then is brought into play that element of Welsh preaching, without knowing and apprehending which there would be no possibility of understanding the secret of its great power; it is the *'hywl'*. When the Welsh preacher speaks in his best mood, and with great unction, the highest compliment that can be paid him, the loftiest commendation that can be given, is, that he had the *'hwyl'*. *'Hwyl'* is the Welsh word for the canvas of a ship; and probably the derivation of the meaning

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is, from the canvas or sails of a ship filled with a breeze: the word for breeze, *awel*, is like it, and is used to denote a similar effect. Some years since, when the most eminent Welsh preacher we have recently seen in England, at an ordination service, was addressing his nephew in a crowded church in the neighbourhood of London, he said, 'And, my dear boy, remember you are a Welshman don't try to speak English, and don't try to speak like the English.' A great many of his hearers wondered what the good man could mean; but both he and his nephew, and several others of the initiated, very well knew. He meant, speak your words with an *accent*, and an accent formed from a soul giving life and meaning to an expression. This, we know, is what the singer does, — this is what the musician tries to do. All words are not the same words in their meaning; the Welsh preacher seeks to play upon them as keys; the words themselves help him to do so. Literally, they are full of meaning; verbally, he attempts to pronounce that meaning; hence, as he rises in feeling he rises in variety of intonation, and his words sway to and fro, up and down, — bass, minor, and soprano all play their part, a series of intonings. In English, this very frequently sounds monotonous, sometimes even affected; in Welsh, the soul of the man is said to have caught the *hwyl*, — that is, he is in full sail, he has feeling and fire: the people catch it too. A Welsh writer, describing this, quotes the words of Jean Paul Richter: 'Pictures during music are seen into more deeply and warmly by spectators; nay, many masters have in creating them acknowledged help from music.' Great Welsh

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preaching, is very often a kind of wild, irregular chant, a jubilant refrain, recurring again and again. The people catch the power of it; shouts rise — prayers! *'Bendigedig'* ('blessed', or synonymous with our 'Bless the Lord!') Amen! *'Diolch byth!*' and other expressions, rise, and roll

over the multitude; they, too, have caught the *hwyl*. It is singular that, with us, the only circumstances and scenes in which such manifestations can take place, are purely secular, or on the occasions of great public meetings. The Welshman very much estimates the greatness of a preacher by his power to move men; but it does not follow, that this power shall be associated with great apparent bodily action. The words of John Elias and Williams of Wern consumed like flames, and divided like swords; but they were men of immense self-possession, and apparently very quiet. It has always been the aim of the greater Welsh preachers to find out such 'acceptable' — that is, fitting and piercing — words, so that the words alone shall have the effect of action.

But, in any account of Welsh preaching, the place ought never to be forgotten — the scenery. We have said, the country is losing, now, many of its old characteristics of solitude and isolation; the railways are running along at the foot of the tall mountains, and spots, which we knew thirty years since as hamlets and villages, have now grown into large towns. It has often been the case, that populations born and reared amidst remote mountain solitudes, have possessed strong religious susceptibilities. The Welshman's chapel was very frequently reared in the midst of an unpeopled district, likely to provoke wonder in

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the mind of the passing stranger, as to whence it could derive its congregation. The building was erected there because it was favourable to a confluence of neighbourhoods. Take a region near to the spot where Christmas Evans was born, — a wild, mountainous tract of country, lying between the counties Brecon and Cardigan; for long miles, in every direction, there are no human habitations, — only, perhaps, here and there, in a deep dingle, some lone house, the residence of a sheep farmer, with three or four cultivated fields in its immediate neighbourhood; and at some distance, on the slopes of the mountain, an occasional shepherd's hut. It is a scene of the wildest magnificence. The traveller, as he passes along, discerns nothing but a sea of mountains, rugged and precipitous bluffs, and precipices innumerable; here the grand and sportive streams, the Irvon, the Towy, and the Dothia, spring from their rocky channels, and tumble along, rushing and gurgling with deafening roar; here, as you pass along, you encounter more than one or two 'wolves' leaps'; — dark caverns are there, from whence these brotherly rivers rush into each other's embrace. These regions, when we were in the habit of crossing

them, many years since,— and we often crossed them,— we very naturally regarded as the Highlands, the sequestered mountain retreats, of Wales; this was Twm Shon Catty's, the Welsh Rob Roy's, country; for let Scotland boast as she will

Wales has had a thief as good,  
She has her own Rob Roy.

And wonderfully romantic is the story of this same

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Welsh gentleman, and predatory chieftain. Here you find, to this day, his cave, from whence the bold and humorous outlaw was wont to spring forth, to spread terror and rapine over the whole region. It is thirty years since we passed through these desolations; they are probably much the same now as they were then; let the traveller shout as he will as he passes along, it is not from any human being, it is only from the wild rock, or screaming bird, he will have a reply.

Now, what do our readers think of a large and commodious chapel in the midst of a wild region like this? But one there is, in the very heart of the wilderness. Up to this place the worshippers come, on Sabbath mornings, from distances varying from two to eight miles. It is a Calvinistic-Methodist chapel; and the Rev. William Williams, in his interesting little historical sketch of Welsh Calvinistic-Methodism, tells how he preached in this building, several years since, when the chapel was crowded with worshippers; and in the yard adjoining, between fifty and sixty ponies, which had borne the worshippers to the place, with or without vehicles, were waiting the time for the return journey. This building had its birth from a congregation gathered first in one of the farm houses in these inaccessible wilds, in 1847. It seems strange to think how far people will travel to Divine Service when they have no such service near their own doors. We were struck with this, a short time since, in Norway; we found our way to a little village church, and there, on a spot where was next to no population, we found the Lutheran church crowded; and outside, a large square space thronged

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with carioles, ancient old shandydan landaus, carts, and every kind of conveyance, — horses and ponies stabled in the sheds all round; and we learned that many of the congregation had travelled in this way, beside



the numbers who had walked, twelve, sixteen, eighteen miles to the service.

And thus, also, in Wales, many were the long and weary miles usually traversed, and through every variety of weather; and it seemed to be usually thought that the service, or services, repaid all the toil. And there was very little, externally, to aid the imagination, or to charm the taste, either in the building itself, or in the ritual adopted; — all was of the plainest and most severe order. The building, no doubt, was little more than a shelter from the weather; generally, perhaps, huge and capacious, — that was necessary, — but it was quite unadorned; the minister had nothing in the way of robes or attire to aid the impressions of reverence; there was no organ, usually no instrument of any description, — although if an entire stranger to the language had entered, and heard the long, low, plaintive wail of almost any of their hymns, — most of them seeming to express a kind of dirge-like feeling of an exiled, conquered, and trampled people, a tone with its often-renewed refrain, its long-drawn minor, now sobbing into grief, occasionally swelling into triumph, — he might have found the notes of an organ were not needed to compel the unexpected tear. An exiled, conquered, and trampled people, — that expresses a great deal of truth. Wales has wrongs quite as bitter as any which Ireland ever knew; — the very cause of the existence of most of her chapels arose from the fact

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that, in many of her parish churches, not a word of Welsh was spoken; and perhaps frequently their ministers could not speak the native language; — the very judges who dispensed justice from the Bench were usually English, and needed an interpreter, that they might be able to understand the case upon which they were to give a judgement. Wales has had very little for which to thank England, but her people have never been seditious. Pious, industrious people, with their simple amusements and weird superstitions, and blossoming out into their great religious revivals and reformations, they have had to thank themselves, chiefly, for all the good which has unfolded itself upon their soil. These circumstances, however, have no doubt aided their peculiar and isolated religious life.

But, in those great assemblies, the Association meetings to which we have referred, many of the great preachers stood, with their vast congregations round them, in Nature's open Cathedral. Christmas Evans

preached many of his noblest sermons amidst the imposing ruins of Caerphilly, Pembroke, and Manobear Castles; or the preacher found himself with his audience on the slope of some sweet, gorse-covered hill, in the neighbourhood of tumbling torrents, which did not sing so loudly in their melody as to interfere with the sweet restfulness of the surrounding scene. Preachers and hearers were accustomed to plain living, — one of the most essential conditions of high thinking; neither of them knew anything of luxury; and when most of them spoke, the age of luxury, even with us, had not yet set in. Bread and milk, or oatmeal and milk, were the favourite diet of all, in those days; even tea was all

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but unknown, and the potato almost their nearest approach to a dainty dish. They lived on good terms with Nature, with whom we have been quarrelling now for some years past; and thus they were prepared to receive such lessons as Nature might give, to aid and illustrate the deeper lessons of Divine Grace.

Of course, there was considerable uncertainty about the services, — excepting those more imposing and important occasions; and this gave, very frequently, a tone of the ludicrous to their announcement of the services. Thus, if a stranger asked what time the service would commence, it would often have been quite impossible to get any information; and failures, says Mr DM Evans, were so frequent, that the announcement was often made with perfect gravity, ‘ — — will be here next Sunday, if he comes.’ Mr Evans continues, that he well knew a deacon who claimed the prerogative to make announcements to the congregation, but who every week was guilty of such blunders, that he was implored to resign the honour to some other brother; to which he indignantly replied, that it was his crown, and was he not told in Scripture, ‘Hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown’? Often, when the preacher appeared, he showed himself in the pulpit almost out of breath, sometimes in sad disarray, sometimes apparently as if smothered with wrappers and top-coats and by his panting and puffing, as someone said, ‘seeming to show that God Almighty had asked him to preach the Gospel, but had given him no time for it.’

In a word, it is impossible, knowing Wales as we

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know it in our own day, to form any very distinct idea of the country as it was when these great preachers arose; and, when the tides of a new

spiritual life rolled over the Principality, the singular relics of even heathenish superstition were loitering still among the secluded valleys and mountains of the land. No doubt, the proclamation of the Gospel, and the elevated faith which its great truths bring in its train, broke the fascination, the charm, and power of many of these; but they lingered even until within the last forty or fifty years, — indeed, the superstition of the Sin-Eater\* is said to linger even now in the secluded vale of Cwm-Aman, in Caermarthenshire. The meaning of this most singular institution of superstition was, that when a person died, the friends sent for the Sin-Eater of the district, who, on his arrival, placed a plate of salt and bread on the breast of the deceased person; he then uttered an incantation over the bread, after which, he proceeded to eat it, — thereby eating the sins of the dead person; this done, he received a fee of two-and-sixpence, — which, we suppose, was much more than many a preacher received for a long and painful service. Having received this, he vanished as swiftly as possible, all the friends and relatives of the departed aiding his exit with blows and kicks, and other indications of their faith in the service he had rendered. A hundred years since, and through the ages beyond that time, we suppose this curious superstition was everywhere prevalent.

Another odd custom was the manner in which public opinion expressed itself on account of any domestic or social delinquency. A large crowd assembled

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\* Dr Thomas Rees, in a letter to the Editor of the *Dysgedydd*, Rev. Herber Evans, says, 'That although bred and born within ten miles of Cwm-Aman, he had never heard of this ridiculous superstition.'

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before the house of the delinquent, one of whom was dressed up in what seemed to be a horse's head; the crowd then burst forth into strong vituperative abuse, accompanying the execrations with the rough music of old kettles, marrow-bones, and cleavers; finally, the effigy of the sinner was burnt before the house, and the sacred wrath of the multitude appeased. The majesty of outraged opinion being vindicated, they dispersed.

Some superstitions were of a more gentle character; the fairies, or 'little men in green', as they were popularly called, continued to hold their tenantry of Wales long after they had departed from England; and even Glamorganshire, one of the counties nearest to England, — its roads forming the most considerable highway through Wales, — was, perhaps,

the county where they lingered last; certainly not many years have passed by since, in the Vale of Neath, in the same county, there would have been a fear in taking some secluded pathway in the night, lest the 'little people' should be offended by the intrusion upon their haunts.

With all these singular observances and superstitions, there was yet a kind of Christian faith prevalent among the people, but buried beneath dark ignorance and social folly. At Christmas time, at night, it was usual to illuminate all the churches in the villages. And upon the New Year's morning, children came waking the dawning, knocking at the doors, — usually obtaining admittance, — when they proceeded to sprinkle the furniture with water, singing as they did so the following words, which we quote on account of their quaint, sweet, old-world simplicity:

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Here we bring new water from the well so clear,  
 For to worship God with this happy new year.  
 Sing levy dew, sing levy dew, the water and the wine,  
 With seven bright gold wires and bugles that do shine.  
 Sing reign of fair maid, with gold upon her toe,  
 Open you the west door, and turn the old year go.  
 Sing reign of fair maid, with gold upon her chin,  
 Open you the east door, and let the new year in.

It is admitted on all hands that the dissolution of the mists of darkness and superstition is owing to the people usually called Dissenters; the Church of the Establishment — and this is said in no spirit of unkindness — did very little to humanise or soften the rugged character, or to put to flight the debasing habits of the people. Of course, there are high and honourable exceptions; but while many clergymen devoted themselves, with great enthusiasm, to the perpetuation of the singular lore, the wild bardic songs, the triads, or the strange fables and mythic histories of the country, we can call to mind the names of but very few who attempted to improve, or to ameliorate, the social condition. So that the preachers, and the vast gatherings of the people by whom the preachers were surrounded, when the rays of knowledge were shed abroad, and devotion fired, were not so much the result of any antagonism to the Established Church, — *that* came afterwards; they were a necessity created by the painful exigencies of the country.

The remarks on the superstitions of Wales are not at all irrelevant to the more general observations on Welsh preaching; they are so essentially

inwoven with the type of character, and nationality. The Welsh appears to be intimately related to the

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Breton; the languages assimilate, — so also do the folk-lore of the people; and the traditions and fanciful fables which have been woven from the grasses of the field, the leaves of the forest, and the clouds of the heavens, would have furnished Christmas Evans with allegoric texts which he might have expanded into sermons. It is not possible to doubt that these form one branch, from the great Celtic stem, of the human family. And not only are they alike in language and tradition, but also in the melancholy religiousness, in the metaphysical brooding over natural causes, and in the absence of any genuine humour, except in some grim or gloomy and grotesque utterance. The stories, the heroes, and the heroines, are very much the same; historic memory in both looks back to a fantastic fairyland, and presents those fantastic pictures of cities and castles strangely submerged beneath the sea, and romantic shadows and spectral forms of wonderful kings and queens, such as we meet in the *Mabinogi* of Taliesin, in the Fairy Queen of Spenser, and in the *Idylls* of our Laureate. Thus, all that could stir wonder, excite the imagination and the fancy, and describe the nearness of the supernatural to the natural, would become very charming to a Welshman's ears; and we instantly have suggested to us one of the sources of the power and popularity of Christmas Evans with his countrymen.

Even the spread and prevalence of Christian knowledge have scarcely disenchanted Wales of its superstitions. Few persons who know anything at all of the country, however slight such knowledge may be, are unaware of this characteristic of the

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people. This remark was, no doubt, far more applicable even twenty-five years since than now. The writer of this volume has listened to the stories of many who believed that they had seen the *Can-wyll-y-corph* — corpse-candles — wending their way from houses, more or less remote, to the churchyard. Mr Borrow, also, in his *Wild Wales*, tells us how he conversed with people in his travels who believed that they had seen the corpse-candles. But a hundred years ago, this was a universal object of faith; as was also the belief in coffins and burial trains seen wending their way, in the dead of night, to the churchyard. Omens and predictions abounded everywhere, while singular legends

and traditions in many districts hung also round church bells. And yet with all this the same writer, remarking on Welsh character, says, 'What a difference between a Welshman and an Englishman of the lower class!' He had just been conversing with a miller's man, — a working labourer in the lowliest walk of life; and found him conversant with the old poets, and the old traditions of the country, and quite interested in them; and he says, 'What would a Suffolk miller's man have said, if I had repeated to him verses out of Beowulf or even Chaucer, and had asked him about the residence of Skelton?' We must bear this in mind as we attempt to estimate the character with which the preacher had to deal. Haunted houses were numerous. A lonely old place, very distinct to the writer's knowledge, had hung round it some wild traditions not unlike 'Blind Willie's Story' in *Redgauntlet*. No doubt, now, all these things have, to a considerable extent, disappeared, — although there are wild

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nooks, far wilder than any we have in England, where the faith in the old superstitions lingers. In the great preaching days, those men who shook the hearts of the thousands of their listeners, as they dealt with unseen terrors, believed themselves to be — as it was believed of them that they were — covered with the shadow of an Unseen Hand, and surrounded by the guardianship of the old Hebrew prophet — 'chariots of fire, and horses of fire;' they believed themselves to be the care of a special Providence; and some of the stories then current would only move the contempt of that modern intelligence which has, at any rate, laid all the ghosts.

It is not within the province of this volume to recapitulate and classify Welsh superstitions; they were, and probably, in many neighbourhoods, are still, very various: we must satisfy our readers with a slight illustration. Perhaps some may object to the retailing such stories, for instance, as the following. The apology for its insertion, then, must be, that it is one of a number tending to illustrate that sense which the old Welsh mind had, of its residence upon the borders of, and relation to, the Invisible World. The Rev. John Jones, of Holywell, in Flintshire, was one of the most renowned ministers in the Principality; he was a man of extraordinary zeal and fervour as a preacher, and his life and character were, in unblemished reputation, equal to his gifts and zeal. He used to recite, with peculiar solemnity, a story of a mysterious horseman, by whom he believed he had been delivered from a position of extreme

danger, when he was travelling, alone, from Bala, in Merionethshire, to Machynlleth,

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in the county of Montgomery. He travelled on horseback through a wild, desolate country, at that time almost uninhabited; he had performed nearly half his journey, when, as he was emerging from a wood, he says, 'I observed coming towards me a man on foot. By his appearance, judging from the sickle which he carried sheathed in straw over his shoulder, he was doubtless a reaper in search of employment. As he drew near, I recognised a man whom I had seen at the door of the village inn at Llanwhellyn, where I had stopped to bait my horse. On our meeting, he touched his hat, and asked if I could tell him the time of day. I pulled out my watch for the purpose, — noticing, at the same time, the peculiar look which the man cast at its heavy silver case. Nothing else, however, occurred to excite any suspicion on my part; so, wishing him a good afternoon, I continued my journey.' We must condense Mr Jones's narration, feeling that the story loses much of its graphic strength in so doing. He pursued his way down a hill, and, at some distance farther on, noticed something moving on the other side of a large hedge; he soon discovered it to be a man, running in a stooping position. He watched the figure with curiosity, which grew into something like fear as he recognised the reaper with whom he had spoken a short time before, and that, as he moved on, he was engaged in tearing the straw band from his sickle. The man hurried on, and Mr Jones saw him conceal himself behind a thicker part of the hedge, within a few yards of the road, and near where a gate crossed the park. Mr Jones says he did not doubt, then, that he intended to attack and,

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perhaps, murder him for the sake of the watch, and whatever money he might have about him. He looked round: no other person was in sight, — no house near; he was hemmed in by rocky banks and high hedges on either side.

'I could not turn back,' he says, 'my business was of the utmost importance to the cause for which I was journeying.' He could not urge his horse with speed, for the gate was not open through which he had to pass; he felt that he was weak and unarmed, and had no chance against a powerful man with a dangerous weapon in his hand. 'In despair,' he says, 'rather than in a spirit of humble trust and confidence, I bowed my

head, and offered up a silent prayer. At this juncture, my horse, growing impatient of delay, started off. I clutched the reins, which I had let fall on his neck, — when, happening to turn my eyes, I saw, to my utter astonishment, that I was no longer alone: there, by my side, I beheld a horseman, in a dark dress, mounted on a white steed. In intense amazement, I gazed upon him. Where could he have come from? He appeared as suddenly as if he had sprung from the earth; he must have been riding behind, and have overtaken me, — and yet I had not heard the slightest sound. It was mysterious, inexplicable; but joy overcame my feelings of wonder, and I began at once to address my companion. I asked him if he had seen any one; and then described to him what had taken place, and how relieved I felt by his sudden appearance. He made no reply, and, on looking at his face, he seemed paying but slight attention to my words, but continued intently gazing in the direction of the

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gate, — now about a quarter of a mile ahead. I followed his gaze, and saw the reaper emerge from his concealment, and run across a field to our left, resheathing his sickle as he hurried along. He had evidently seen that I was no longer alone, and had relinquished his intended attempt.’

Mr Jones sought to enter into conversation with his mysterious companion, but he gave him no word in reply. He says he ‘was hurt at his companion’s mysterious silence;’ only once did he hear his voice. Having watched the figure of the reaper disappear over the brow of a neighbouring hill, he turned to the stranger, and said, “Can it for a moment be doubted that my prayer was heard, and that you were sent for my deliverance by the Lord?” Then it was that I thought I heard the horseman speak, and that he uttered the single word, “Amen!” Not another word did he give utterance to, though I spoke to him both in English and Welsh. We were now approaching the gate, which I hastened to open; and having done so, I waited at the side of the road for him to pass through, — but he came not. I turned my head to look; the mysterious horseman was gone; he was not to be seen; he had disappeared as mysteriously as he had come. What could have become of him? He could not have gone through the gate, nor have made his horse leap the high hedges, which on both sides shut in the road. Where was he? had I been dreaming? was it an apparition, a spectre, which had been



riding by my side for the last ten minutes? — was it but a creature of my imagination? I tried hard to convince myself that this was the case; but why had the

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reaper resheathed his murderous-looking sickle and fled? And then, a feeling of profound awe began to creep over my soul. I remembered the singular way of his first appearance, — his long silence, and the single word to which he had given utterance after I had mentioned the name of the Lord; the single occasion on which I had done so. What could I, then, believe, but that my prayer had been heard, and that help had been given me at a time of great danger? I dismounted, and throwing myself on my knees, I offered up my thankfulness to him who had heard my cry. I then mounted my horse, and continued my journey; but through the long years that have elapsed since that memorable summer's day. I have never for a moment wavered in my belief, that in the mysterious horseman I had a special interference of Providence, by which I was delivered from a position of extreme danger.'

Now, however our readers may account for such incidents, the only purpose in introducing such a story here, is to say that it gives a fair illustration of that peculiar cast of ideal imagination which pervaded the Welsh mind, and influenced at once the impressions both of preachers and hearers.

There is, perhaps, no other spot on our British soil where 'the old order' has so suddenly 'changed' as in Wales: the breaking open the mountains for mining purposes has led to the thronging of dense populations on spots which were, only a few years since, unbroken solitudes. Ruins, which the sentimental idler never visited, wrecks of castles and abbeys crumbling into dust, isolated places through which we passed thirty years since, which seemed as

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though they never could be invaded by the railway whistle, or scarcely reached by the penny postman, now lie on the great highway of the train. It is not saying too much to affirm that there is no spot in Europe where the traveller is so constantly brought into the neighbourhood of old magnificence, the relics of vanished cities.

The wonder grows as to what was the state of ancient society in Wales. An eminent traveller says: 'In England our ancestors have left us, dispersed in various places, splendid remains of their greatness; but in

Wales you cannot travel ten miles without coming upon some vestige of antiquity which in another country you would go fifty to trace out.' It is of such spots that a Welsh poet, Dyer, says:—

The pilgrim oft,  
At dead of night, 'mid his orisons hears,  
Aghast, the voice of Time disparting towers,  
Tumbling all precipitate, all down-dashed,  
Rattling around, loud thundering to the moon.

What an illustration of this is St David's! — a little miserable village, with the magnificent remains of its great palace, and the indications of its once splendid cathedral; itself now a kind of suffragan, it once numbered seven suffragans within its metropolitan pale — Worcester, Hereford, Llandaff, Bangor, St Asaph, Llanbadarn, and Margam. The mitre now dimly beaming at almost the lowest step of the ecclesiastical ladder, once shone with so proud a lustre as to attract the loftiest ecclesiastics. St David's numbers one saint, three lord-treasurers, one lord privy-seal, one chancellor of Oxford, one chancellor

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of England, and, in Farrar, one illustrious martyr.

Travel through the country, and similar reflections will meet you in every direction. You step a little off the high-road, and — as, for instance, in Kilgerran — you come to the traditional King Arthur's castle, the far-famed Welsh Tintagel, of which Warton sings,—

Stately the feast, and high the cheer,  
Girt with many an armèd peer,  
And canopied with golden pall,  
Amid Kilgerran's castle hall;  
Illumining the vaulted roof,  
A thousand torches flamed aloof;  
The storied tapestry was hung,  
With minstrelsy the arches rung,  
Of harps that with reflected light  
From the proud gallery glittered bright.

Or, in the neighbourhood of the magnificent coast of Pembrokeshire, the wondrous little chapel of St Govan's, the hermitage of the hundred steps; and those splendid wrecks of castles, Manopear, the home of Giraldus Cambrensis, and the graceful and almost interminable recesses of Carew. A traveller may plunge about among innumerable villages

bearing the names of saints for whom he will look in vain in the Romish calendar, — St Athan's, St Siebald's, St Dubric's, St Dogmael's, St Ishmael's, and crowds besides. All such places are girdled round with traditions and legends known to Welsh archæologists — the very nomenclature of Wales involving poetry and historical romance, and often deep tragedy. The names of the villages have a whisper of fabulous

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and traditional times, and are like the half-effaced hieroglyphs upon an old Egyptian tomb. There is the *Fynnon Waedog* (Bloody Well), the *Pald of Gwaye* (the Hollow of Woe), the *Maen Achwynfan*, (the Stone of Lamentation and Weeping), the *Leysan Gwaed Gwyr* (the Plant of the Blood of Man), *Merthyr Tydfil* is the Martyred Tydfil. Villages and fields with names like these, remind us of the Hebrew names of places, really significant of some buried tragedy, long holding its place in the heart, and terror of the neighbourhood.

In a land-locked solitude like that of Nevern, Cardiganshire, — where, by-the-bye, we might loiter some time to recite some anecdotes of its admirable clergyman and great preacher, one of the Griffiths, — the wanderer, after a piece of agreeable wildness, comes to a village, enchanting for its beauty, lying on the brink of a charming river, with indications of a decayed importance; the venerable yew-trees of its churchyard shadowing over a singular — we may venture to speak of it as a piece of inexplicable — Runic antiquity, in a stone of a quadrangular form, about two feet broad, eighteen inches thick, and thirteen feet high, with a cross at the top. Few countries can boast, like Wales, the charm of places in wildest and most delicious scenery, with all that can stir an artist's, poet's, or antiquarian's sensibility. What a neighbourhood is Llandilo! — the home of the really great poet, John Dyer, the author of 'Grongar Hill,' a delicious spot in this neighbourhood. Here, too, is Golden Grove, the retreat of our own Jeremy Taylor; and here, in his days of exile, many of the matchless sermons of him who has

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been called, by some, 'the English Chrysostom,' and, by others, the 'Milton of the English pulpit,' were preached. We made a pilgrimage there ourselves some few years since, urged by love to the memory of Jeremy Taylor. We found the old church gone, and in its place a new one, — the taste of which did not particularly impress us; and we inquired for

Taylor's pulpit, and were told it had been chopped up for fire-wood! Then we inquired for a path through the fields, which for a hundred and fifty years had been called 'Taylor's Walk,' where the great bishop was wont to meditate, — and found it had been delivered over to the plough. We hope we may be forgiven if we say, that we hurried in disgust from a village which, in spite of its new noble mansion, had lost to us its chief charm. But this neighbourhood, with its Dynevor Castle and its charming river, the Towey, and all the scenery described by the exquisite Welsh poet, in whose verse beauty and sublimity equally reign, compels us to feel that if he somewhat pardonably overcoloured, by his own associations, the lovely shrine of his birth, he only naturally described the country through which these preachers wandered, when he says, —

Ever charming, ever new,  
 When will the landscape tire the view!  
 The fountain's fall, the river's flow,  
 The woody valleys, warm and low;  
 The windy summit, wild and high,  
 Roughly rushing on the sky!  
 The pleasant seat, the ruin'd tow'r,  
 The naked rock, the shady bow'r;  
 The town and village, dome and farm,

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Each give to each a double charm,  
 As pearls upon an Ethiop's arm.

The manners of the people, a few years since, were as singular and primeval as their country in all the villages there were singular usages. The 'biddings' to their weddings, — which have, perhaps, yielded to advanced good taste, — had a sweeter relief in other customs, at weddings and funerals, tending to civilise, and refine. Throughout Glamorganshire, especially, and not many years since, it was the universal custom, when young unmarried persons died, to strew the way to the grave with sweet flowers and evergreens. Mr Malkin, in his interesting work on South Wales, published now seventy years since, says: 'There is in the world an unfeeling kind of false philosophy, which will treat such customs as I mention with ridicule; but what can be more affecting than to see all the youth of both sexes in a village, and in every village through which the corpse passes, dressed in their best apparel, and

strewing with sweet-scented flowers the ways along which one of their beloved neighbours was carried to his, or her last home?’ No doubt such customs are very much changed, but they were prevalent during that period to which most of those preachers whose manners we have mentioned belonged.

Such pathetic usages, indicating a simple state of society, are commonly associated, as we have seen, with others of a rougher kind and character. The Welsh preachers were the pioneers of civilisation — although advanced society might still think much had to be done in the amelioration of the national manners. They probably touched a few practices which were really in themselves simple and affecting, but they

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swept away many superstitions, quite destroyed many rude and degrading practices, and introduced many usages, which, while they were in conformity with the national instincts of the people (such as preaching and singing, and assembling themselves together in large companies), tended to refine and elevate the mind and heart.

Such were the circumstances, and such the scenery, in which the great Welsh preachers arose.

We have not thought of those Welsh preachers who have made themselves especially known in England. Many have, from time to time, settled as pastors with us, who have deserved a large amount of our esteem and honour, blending in their minds high reverence, the tender sensitiveness of a poetic imagination, with the instinct of philosophic inquisitiveness — even shading off into an order of scepticism, — but all united to a strong and impressive eloquence. These attributes seem all essentially to adhere in the character of the cultured Welsh preacher. Caleb Morris finely illustrates all this; perhaps he was no whit inferior, in the build and architecture of his mind, to Horace Bushnell, whom he greatly resembled; but, unlike Bushnell, he never committed any of his soliloquies of thought, or feeling to the press. The present writer possesses volumes of his reported sermons which have never seen the light.

And what a Welshman was Rowland Williams! Who can read his life without feeling the spirit of devotion, however languid, inflamed and fired? And how, in spite of all the heresies attributed to him, and, growing up in the midst of the sacred ardours of

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his character, we find illustrated the wonder of the curious and searching eye, united to the warmth of the tender and revering heart! — attributes, we repeat, which seemed to mingle in very inferior types of Welsh preachers, as well as in the more eminent, and which, as they kindle into a passion in the man's nature who desires to instruct his fellowmen, combine to make preaching, if they be absent, an infamy, a pastime, a day labour, or a handicraft, an art or a science; or, by their presence, constitute it a virtue and a mighty power over human souls. Eminently these men seem to hear a voice saying, *'The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream! What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord.'*

## CHAPTER 2

### *EARLY LIFE, UNTIL HIS ENTRANCE INTO THE MINISTRY*

Birth and Early Hardships — Early Church Fellowship — Beginning to Learn — Loses an Eye — A Singular Dream — Beginning to Preach — His First Sermon — Is Baptised — A New Church Fellowship — The Rev. Timothy Thomas — Anecdotes — A Long Season of Spiritual Depression — Is ordained as Home Missionary to Lleyn — Commencement of Success as a Preacher — Remarks on Success — Marries — Great Sermon at Velinvole — A Personal Reminiscence of Welsh Preaching.

CHRISTMAS EVANS is not the first, in point of time, in the remarkable procession of those men whose names we might mention, and of whom we shall find occasion in this volume to speak, as the great Welsh preachers. And there may be some dispute as to whether he was the first in point of eminence; but he is certainly the one of the four whose name is something more than a tradition. John Elias, Williams of Wern, and Davies of Swansea, have left behind them little beside the legendary rumour of their immense and pattheic power. This is true, especially, of David Davies of Swansea; and yet, Dr Rees, his successor, and a very competent authority, says 'In some respects he was superior to all his distinguished contemporaries.'

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But the name of Christmas Evans is, perhaps, the most extensively known of any, — just as the name of Bunyan has a far more extensive intimacy than the equally honourable names of Barrow and Butler; and there is a similar reason for this. Christmas Evans, in the pulpit, more nearly approached the great Dreamer than any pulpit master of whom we have heard; many of his sermons appear to have been long-sustained parables, and pictures alive with allegorical delineation of human character.

CHRISTMAS EVANS was born at a place called Esgairwen (Ysgarwen), in the parish of Llandysul, in Cardiganshire; he was born on Christmas Day — and hence his Christian name — in 1766. His parents, Samuel and Johanna Evans, were in the poorest circumstances; his father was a shoemaker, and although this profession has included such a number of men remarkable for their genius and high attainments, it has never found the masters of the craft greatly remarkable for the possession of gold or gear. His mother, by her maiden name Lewis, came from a respectable family of freeholders in the parish; but the father of Christmas died when he was a child, — and these were hard days of poverty, almost destitution, for the poor struggling widow and her family, — so her brother, James Lewis, of Bwlchog, in the parish of Llanfihangel-ar-Arth, took little Christmas home to his farm, engaging to feed and clothe him for such labour on the farm as the poor boy might be able to perform. Here he stayed six years, — six miserable years; his uncle was a hard, cruel man, a selfish drunkard. Christmas used to

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say of him, in after years, ‘It would be difficult to find a more unconscionable man than James Lewis in the whole course of a wicked world.’ During these, which ought to have been the most valuable years of his life, no care was taken of his heart, his mind, or his morals; in fact, he had neither a friend nor a home. At the age of seventeen he could not read a word, he was surrounded by the worst of examples, and he became the subject of a number of serious accidents, through which he narrowly escaped with his life. Once he was stabbed in a quarrel, once he was nearly drowned, and with difficulty recovered; once he fell from a high tree with an open knife in his hand, and once a horse ran away with him, passing at full speed through a low and narrow passage. There is an erroneous impression that, in those days, he was a great boxer, and that he lost his eye in a fight; the truth is quite different; he was not a boxer, and never fought a battle in his life. He lost his eye after his conversion, when he and some other young men were attempting the work of mutual help, in making up for lost time, by evening meetings, for various works of instruction; a number of his former companions waylaid him at night, beat him unmercifully, and one struck him with a stick over the eye. In after years, when some one was jesting before Robert Hall at Welsh preachers, upon his mentioning Christmas Evans, the jester said, ‘And he only has one eye!’ ‘Yes, sir,’ he answered, ‘but that’s



a piercer; an eye, sir, that could light an army through a wilderness in a dark night.' So that in his sightless eye, Christmas Evans, like the one-eyed

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Spiridion, the noble witness in the Nicean Council, really 'bore in his body a mark of the Lord Jesus.' But we are anticipating.

At about seventeen years of age, he left his bad uncle and his more servile employments; still continuing the occupation of a farming lad, he went to Glanclettwr; afterwards he lived at Penyralltfawr, at Gwenawlt, and then at Castellhywel. Thus the days of his youth passed; he looks like a poor, neglected, and forsaken lad. Of books he knew nothing, — he had no men of intelligence around him with whom to converse, and his condition in life doomed him to association with all that was low and brutal. And yet, strange as it may seem, as his friend and earliest biographer, Mr Rhys Stephen, has testified, even then, as in the instance of the rugged young Samson, 'the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times.' It is not credible that, however crushed down beneath the weight of such abject circumstances, the boy could have been exactly what the other boys and men round him were; restless feelings, and birth-throes of emotion and thought, make themselves known in most of us before they assume a shape in consciousness: it is natural that it should have been so with him. With a life of seriousness, which resulted in Church membership, and which appears to have taken place when he was about seventeen years of age, commenced his life of mental improvement, the first humble beginnings of intellectual effort. It is singular that the Church with which he first united, at Llwynrhydowain, originally Presbyterian, and of considerable importance in the early history of Welsh Nonconformity, approached very nearly, when Evans

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united with it, to Unitarianism. Its pastor was the Rev. David Davies; he was an Arian, an eminent bard, a scholar, an admirable and excellent man, who has left behind him a very honourable reputation. Such a man as Mr Davies was, he would be likely to be interested in the intelligent and intellectual state of the youth of his Church and congregation. The slight accounts we possess of the avidity with which Christmas Evans and his companions commenced their 'pursuit of knowledge under difficulties,' is very animating and pleasing; they combined together with the desire to obtain the earliest and most necessary means of mental

acquisitiveness, such as reading and writing, a desire for the acquisition of religious knowledge, and what may be spoken of as some of the higher branches of study. But we will employ Christmas Evans's own words:

'During a revival which took place in the Church under the care of Mr David Davies, many young people united themselves with that people, and I amongst them. What became of the major part of these young converts, I have never known; but I hope God's grace followed them as it did me, the meanest of the whole. One of the fruits of this awakening was the desire for religious knowledge that fell upon us. Scarcely one person out of ten could, at this time, and in those neighbourhoods, read at all, even in the language of the country. We bought Bibles and candles, and were accustomed to meet together in the evening, in the barn of Penyralltfawr; and thus, in about one month, I was able to read the Bible in my mother tongue. I was vastly delighted with so much learning. This, however,

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did not satisfy me, but I borrowed books, and learnt a little English. Mr Davies, my pastor, understood that I thirsted for knowledge, and took me to his school, where I stayed for six months. Here I went through the Latin Grammar; but so low were my circumstances that I could stay there no longer.'

To preach, as we all know, has often been an object of ambition with young converts, and the novices in the vestibule of knowledge of the spiritual life; such an ambition seems very early to have stirred in the heart of young Christmas. We have already mentioned how it was that he so cruelly lost the use of an eye; it illustrates the singular brutality of the time and neighbourhood; an inoffensive lad, simply because he renounced the society of profane drunkards, and was laudably busying himself with the affairs of a higher life, was set upon in the darkness of the night by six young ruffians, unmercifully beaten with sticks, and the sight of an eye destroyed. It was the night after this calamity that he had a dream; and the dream of the night reveals the bent of his day dreams. He dreamt that the Day of Judgement was come, that he saw the world in a blaze; with great confidence he called out, 'Jesus, save me!' And he thought he saw the Lord turn towards him and say, 'It was thy intention to preach the Gospel, but it is now too late, for the Day of Judgement is come.' But this vision of the night clung to him when he awoke;

perhaps he feared that the loss of the eye would interfere with his acceptance as a minister. Certainly the dream had an influence on his future career, — so had many other dreams. It was always his belief that he had received

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some of his most important impressions from dreams: nothing, apparently, no amount of reason or argument, could persuade him to the contrary. To preach the Gospel became an ardent desire now with this passionately imaginative and earnest youth; but there were serious hindrances in the way. There appears to have been a kind of law in the Church with which he was connected at Llwynrhydowain, that no member of the Church should be permitted to preach until he had passed through a college course. It is very remarkable that two of the greatest preachers who have adorned the pulpit of Wales should have been admitted into Church fellowship together on the same evening, — David Davies, afterwards of Swansea, whose name we have already mentioned, and Christmas Evans. It was always the regret and complaint of their first pastor, that the Church law to which we have referred, deprived his Church of the two most eminent men it had ever produced. There were, no doubt, other reasons; but it is singular, now, to notice the parallelism of the gifted pair, for they also preached their first sermon, within a week of each other, in the same cottage. Cottage preaching was then of much more importance than it now seems to our ecclesiastical and æsthetic apprehensions; and the congregations which assembled in those old Welsh cottages were such as to try the mental and spiritual strength of a young preacher. How Davies acquitted himself, and how he ran his course, we may notice by-and-bye; our present concern is with Christmas Evans. Perhaps our readers will not entertain a depreciating opinion of the youth, when they hear him very candidly confess that the sub

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stance of his first sermon was taken from Beveridge's *Theaurus Theologicus*, a book borrowed, probably, from his pastor. But a Mr Davies, who must have been a reading man although a farmer, heard it, was very much impressed by it, but went home and found it; so that the poor boy's reputation as a preacher seemed gone. 'Still,' said the good man, 'I have some hope of the son of Samuel the shoemaker, because the prayer was as good as the sermon.' But perhaps he would not have thought so

hopefully of the young man had he then known, what Christmas afterwards confessed, that the prayer, too, was very greatly committed to memory from a collection of prayers by a well-known clergyman, Griffith Jones of Llanddowror.

Such was the first public effort of this distinguished preacher; like the first effort of his great English contemporary, Robert Hall, we suppose it would be regarded as a failure. Meantime, we have to notice that the spiritual life of the youth was going on; he began to be dissatisfied with the frame of theologic sentiment of the Church to which he belonged. He heard preachers who introduced him to the more grand, scriptural, and evangelical views of Christian truth. The men of that time did not play at preaching; the celebrated David Morris, father of the yet more celebrated Ebenezer Morris; the great Peter Williams, Jones of Llangan, Thomas Davies of Neath, — such men as these appear to have kindled in his mind loftier views of the person and the work of Christ. Also, a man named Amos, who had been a member of the same Church with Christmas Evans, had left that communion,

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and joined that of the Baptists. A close study of the Word of God led Christmas also to a change of convictions as to the meaning and importance of the rite of baptism. A similar change of theologic opinion was passing through the mind of his young friend and fellow-member, David Davies, who finally united himself with the Independent communion. Christmas Evans says, 'I applied to the Baptist Church at Aberduar, where I was in due time received; I was then about twenty years and six months old. I was baptised by the Rev. Timothy Thomas.'

As the names of successive persons and pastors pass before our eyes, and appear in these pages, it is at once affecting, humbling, and elevating, to think of men of whom our ears have scarcely ever heard, but who, in their day, were men 'of whom the world was not worthy,' and whose 'record is now on high.' Such a man, beyond all question, was this Timothy Thomas, the son of an eminent father, the brother of men who, if not as eminent as himself, were yet worthy of the noble relationship. He was a Welsh gentleman, lived on a farm, an extended lease of which he held, and which enabled him to preach and fulfil the work of a pastor without any monetary reward. He appears to have devoted himself, his time, his energy, and his property to the work of the ministry. His farm was a splendid one in the vale of the Teifi. Mr Rhys Stephen, who knew

him, speaks of his gallant bearing, his ingenuous spirit, and of his princely magnanimity; he would ride thirty or forty miles on a Saturday, through the remote wilds of Caermarthenshire and Cardiganshire, to be ready for the services on the Sunday. His

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gentlemanly bearing overcame and beat down mobs which sometimes assembled for the purpose of insulting and assailing him. Mr Stephen mentions one singular instance, when Mr Thomas was expected to administer the ordinance of baptism, and, as was not unusual in those days, in the natural baptistry of the river. A mob had assembled together for the purpose of insulting and annoying the service, the missiles of offence in their hands; when, suddenly, a well-dressed gentleman, mounted on a noble horse, rode over the village bridge; he hastily alighted, gave his bridle to a bystander, walked briskly into the middle of the little flock; the inimical members of the mob set him down for a magistrate at the least, and expected that he would give the word to disperse; but instead of doing so, he took the nearest candidate by the hand, and walked himself down into the stream, booted and spurred as he was. Before the mob had done gaping, he had done this part of his work; after this, however, he stood upon the brink of the stream, still in his wet attire, and preached one of his ardent sermons. He certainly conciliated the homage of the opposing forces, and left them under the impression that the ‘dippers,’ as the Baptists were generally called, had certainly one gentleman among them. We do not know how our Baptist brethren would like to submit to this kind of service, but it certainly seems to resemble more closely the baptism of Enon, near to Salem, and that of the Ethiopian prince by Philip, than some we have seen.

The anecdotes of this Timothy Thomas are too good and too numerous to be entirely passed by. Once he was preaching in the enchanting neighbourhood

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near Llandeilo, to which we referred in the first chapter — the neighbourhood of Grongar Hill, and Golden Grove; the neighbourhood of Dyer, Steele, and Jeremy Taylor. It was a still Sabbath morning in the summer, and in that lovely spot immense crowds were gathered to hear him. He had administered baptism, and preached, without interruption, when someone came up to him and told him, with startled fear and trepidation, that the clergyman, — the rector, — on his way to the

church, had been detained, utterly unable to pass through the crowd, through the greater part of the service. Instantly, with admirable tact and catholicity, he exclaimed: 'I understand that the respected clergyman of the parish has been listening patiently to me for the last hour; let us all go to the church and return the compliment by hearing him.' The church, and the churchyard as well, were instantly crowded; the clergyman was delighted with the catholic spirit displayed by the Baptist minister, and of course not a word further was said about the trespass which had been committed.

Timothy Thomas was a noble specimen of what has been called the 'muscular Christian;' he had great courage. Once, when travelling with his wife, and set upon by four ruffians, he instantly, with his single stick, felled two, but broke his stick in the very act of conquest. Immediately he flew to a hedge and tore up a prodigious stake, and was again going forth to victory, when the scoundrels, having had enough of this bishop of the Church militant, took to flight and left him in undisputed possession of the field. A remarkable man this, — a sort of Welsh

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chieftain; a perfect gentleman, but half-farmer, half-preacher. In the order of Church discipline, a man was brought up before him, as the pastor, for having knocked down an Unitarian. 'Let us hear all about it,' said the pastor. 'To tell all the truth about it, sir,' said the culprit, 'I met Jack the miller at the sign of the Red Dragon, and there we had a single glass of ale together.' 'Stop a bit,' said the minister; 'I hope you paid for it.' 'I did, sir.' 'That is in your favour, Thomas,' said the pastor; 'I cannot bear those people who go about tipping at other people's expense. Go on, Thomas.' 'Well, sir, after a little while we began quietly talking about religion, and about the work of Jesus Christ. Jack said that he was only a man, and then he went on to say shocking things, things that it was beyond the power of flesh and blood to bear.' 'I daresay,' said the pastor; 'but what did he say?' 'He actually said, sir, that the blood of Christ had no more power in it than the blood of a beast. I could not stand that any more, so I knocked him down.' 'Well, brother,' said the minister, 'I cannot say that you did the right thing, but I quite believe that I should have done so too. Go, and sin no more.'

But with all these marks of a strong character, the lines of Timothy Thomas's faith were clear and firm.

Such was the man who received Christmas Evans into the Church of which he became so bright and shining an ornament. This noble man survived until his eighty-sixth year; he died at Cardigan, in 1840. He was asked, sometimes, how many he had baptised

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during his lifetime, and he would reply, brusquely, 'About two thousand;' at other times, he would be more particular, and say, 'I have baptised at least two thousand persons. Yes,' he would add tenderly, 'and thirty of them have become ministers of the Gospel; and it was I who baptised Christmas Evans,' — sometimes adding naively, 'I did it right, too, — according to the apostolic practice, you know.'

Thus we are brought to the interesting and important turning-point in the life of Christmas Evans. He had united himself with the Baptist communion. Our readers will clearly perceive, that he was a young man who could not be hidden, and it was soon discovered that the work of the ministry was to be his destination. As to his internal state, upon which a ministerial character must always depend, these early years of his religious life were times and seasons of great spiritual depression. Such frames of feeling depend, perhaps, not less, or more, upon certain aspects of religious truth, than they do upon the peculiarities of temperament; a nervous imagination is very exhausting, and brings the physical frame very low; moreover, exalted ideas, and ideals, produce very depressing appreciations of self. He thought himself a mass of ignorance and sin; he desired to preach, but he thought that such words as his must be useless to his hearers: then, as to the method of preaching, he was greatly troubled. He thought by committing his sermons to memory he forfeited the gift of the Holy Spirit; so he says he changed his method, took a text without any premeditation, and preached what occurred to him at the time; 'but,' he continues, 'if it was bad before, it was worse now; so I

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thought God would have nothing to do with me as a preacher.'

The young man was humbled; he entered every pulpit with dread; he thought that he was such an one that his mere appearance in the pulpit would be quite sufficient to becloud the hearts of his hearers, and to intercept the light from heaven. Then it seems he had no close friend to whom he could talk; he was afraid lest, if he laid bare the secrets of his heart, he should seem to be only a hypocrite; so he had to wrap up the

bitter secrets of his soul in his own heart, and drink of his bitter cup alone. Is this experience singular? Is not this the way in which all truly great, and original preachers have been made? — Luther, Bunyan, Dr Payson, Robert Hall, — how many beside? Such men have attained high scholarships, and fellowships, in the great university of human nature; like Peter, pierced to the heart themselves, they have ‘pricked’ the hearts, the consciences, of the thousands who have heard them. Thus, more than from the lore of classical literatures, they have had given to them ‘the tongue of the learned,’ which has enabled them to speak ‘a word in season to those who were wearied;’ thus, ‘converted’ themselves, they have been able to ‘strengthen their brethren.’

Evans passed through a painful experience the young man was feeling his way. He was unconscious of the powers within him, although they were struggling for expression; and so, through his humility and lowly conceptions of himself, he was passing on to future eminence and usefulness.

Lleyn was the first place where he appears to

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have felt his feet. Lleyn at that time had not even the dignity of being a village; it is a little inland hamlet out of Caernarvon Bay; Nevin is its principal village; perhaps if the reader should seek out Lleyn, even upon a tolerable map of Caernarvonshire, he will have a difficulty in finding it. It seems to have been a hamlet of the promontory, on a grand coast, surrounded by magnificent hills, or overhanging mountains; we have never visited it, but those who have done so speak of it as possessing the charms of peculiar wildness: on the one side, precipitous ravines, shut in by the sea; on the other, walls of dark mountains, — forming the most complete picture of isolation possible to imagine. Here is said to be the last resting-place of Vortigern, who fled hither to escape the rage of his subjects, excited by his inviting the Saxons to Britain. A curious tradition holds that the mountains are magnetic, and masters of vessels are said to be careful not to approach too near the coast, fearing the effect upon their compasses; this is believed to be the effect of a strong undercurrent setting in all along the coast, dangerous to vessels, and apt to lead them out of their course. Such was Lleyn, the first field of labour on which this melancholy and brooding youth was to exercise his ministry.

Evans had attended the Baptist Association at Maesyberllan in Brecknockshire, in 1790; he was persuaded there to enter upon the



ministry in this very obscure district, and he was ordained as a missionary to work among the humble Churches in that vicinity. It does not appear that, in his own neighbourhood, he had as yet attained to any re

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putation for peculiar power, or that there were any apparent auguries and prognostications of his future usefulness. It is curious to notice, almost so soon as he began his work in this his first distinct field of labour, he appears like a man new made; for this seems to have been the place where the burden of which Bunyan speaks, rolled from this Christian's back; here a new life of faith began to glow in him, and he knew something of what it is to have the 'oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise instead of the spirit of heaviness.' A little success is very encouraging; depreciation is frequently the parent of depression; success is often a fine old strengthening wine; and how often we have had occasion to admire men who have wrought on at life's tasks bravely and cheerfully, although success never came and sat down by their side, to cheer and encourage them; one sometimes wonders what they would have done had their efforts and words received the garland and the crown. Well, perhaps not so much; these things are more wisely ordered than we know. Only this also may be remarked, that, perhaps, the highest order of mind and heart can do almost as well without success as with it, — will behave beautifully if success should come, will behave no less beautifully even if success should never come.

At Lleyn, Christmas Evans tasted the first prelibations of a successful ministry; a wondrous power attended his preaching, numbers were gathered into the Church. 'I could scarcely believe,' he says, 'the testimony of the people who came before the Church as candidates for membership, that they were converted through my ministry; yet I was obliged to

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believe, though it was marvellous in my eyes. This made me thankful to God, and increased my confidence in prayer; a delightful gale descended upon me as from the hill of the New Jerusalem, and I felt the three great things of the kingdom of heaven, righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost!' Indeed, very unusual powers seemed to attend him. He says, 'I frequently preached out of doors at nightfall,' and the singing, and the praising seem to have touched him very

tenderly; he frequently found his congregations bathed in tears and weeping profusely. Preaching was now to him, as he testifies, a very great pleasure, — and no wonder; quite a remarkable revival of religious feeling woke up wherever he went. When he first entered Lleyn, the religious life was very cold and feeble; quite wonderful was the change.

After a time, exhausted with his work in these villages, he accepted an invitation to visit the more remote parts of South Wales. When ministers, like Christmas Evans, are enfeebled in health, they recreate themselves by preaching; the young man was enfeebled, but he started off on his preaching tour; he could not obtain a horse, so he walked the whole way, preaching in every village or town through which he passed. Very frequently large numbers of the same congregation would follow after him the next day, and attend the services fifteen or twenty times, although many miles apart. So he went through the counties of Cardigan, Pembroke, Caernarvon, Glamorgan, Monmouth, and Brecknock, stopping and holding services at the innumerable villages lying on his way. The fame that a wonderful man of God

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had appeared spread through South Wales on the wings of the wind, and an appointment for Christmas Evans to preach was sufficient to attract thousands to the place. While he yet continued at Lleyn as itinerant missionary, in that short time he had acquired perhaps a greater popularity than any other preacher of that day in Wales.

We have not said that, during the first years of his residence at Lleyn, he married Catherine Jones, a young lady a member of his own Church, — a pious girl, and regarded as in every way suitable for his companion. It will be seen that, so far from diminishing, it seemed rather to increase his ardour; he frequently preached five times during the Sabbath, and walked twenty miles; his heart appeared to be full of love, he spoke as in the strains of a seraph. No wonder that such labour and incessant excitement told upon his health, it was feared even that he might sink into consumption; but surely it was a singular cure suggested for such a disease, to start off on the preaching tour we have described.

At last, however, in an unexpected moment, he became great. It was at one of those wonderful gatherings, an Association meeting, held at Velinvoel, in the immediate neighbourhood of Llanelli. A great concourse of people were assembled in the open air. There was some hitch in the arrangements. Two great men were expected, but still some

one or other was wanted to break the ice — to prepare the way. On so short a notice, notwithstanding the abundant preaching power, no one was found willing to take the vacant place. Christmas Evans was there, walking about on the edge of the

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crowd — a tall, bony, haggard young man, uncouth, and ill-dressed. The master of the ceremonies for the occasion, the pastor of the district, was in an agony of perplexity to find his man, — one who, if not equal to the mightiest, would yet be sufficient for the occasion. In his despair, he went to our old friend, Timothy Thomas; but he, declining for himself, said abruptly, ‘Why not ask that one-eyed lad from the North? I hear that he preaches quite wonderfully.’ So the pastor went to him. He instantly consented. Many who were there afterwards expressed the surprise they felt at the communication going on between the pastor and the odd-looking youth. ‘Surely,’ they said, ‘he can never ask that absurdity to preach!’ They felt that an egregious mistake was being committed; and some went away to refresh themselves, and others to rest beneath the hedges around, until the great men should come; and others, who stayed, comforted themselves with the assurance that the ‘one-eyed lad’ would have the good sense to be very short. But, for the young preacher, while he was musing, the fire was burning; he was now, for the first time, to front one of those grand Welsh audiences, the sacred *Eisteddfod* of which we have spoken, and to be the preacher of an occasion, which, through all his life after, was to be his constant work. Henceforth there was to be, perhaps, not an Association meeting of his denomination, of which he was not to be the most attractive preacher, the most longed-for and brilliant star.

He took a grand text: ‘And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked

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works, yet now hath he reconciled, in the body of his flesh, through death, to present you holy, and unblamable, and unreprouable in his sight.’ Old men used to describe afterwards how he justified their first fears by his stiff, awkward movements; but the organ was, in those first moments, building, and soon it began to play. He showed himself a master of the instrument of speech. Closer and closer the audience began to gather near him. They got up, and came in from the hedges. The crowd grew more and more dense with eager listeners; the sermon became alive with

dramatic representation. The throng of preachers present confessed that they were dazzled with the brilliance of the language, and the imagery, falling from the lips of this altogether unknown and unexpected young prophet. Presently, beneath some appalling stroke of words, numbers started to their feet; and in the pauses — if pauses were permitted in the paragraphs — the question went, ‘Who is this? who have we here?’ His words went rocking to and fro; he had caught the *‘Iwyl,’* — he had also caught the people in it; he went swelling along at full sail. The people began to cry, *‘Gogoniant!’* (Glory!) *‘Bendigedig!’* (Blessed!) The excitement was at its highest when, amidst the weeping, and rejoicing of the mighty multitude, the preacher came to an end. Drawn together from all parts of Wales to the meeting, when they went their separate ways home they carried the memory of ‘the one-eyed lad’ with them.

Christmas Evans was, from that moment, one of the most famous preachers in the Principality. Lord

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Byron tells us how he woke up one morning and found himself famous. In those days, a new great Welsh preacher was quite as famous a birth in the little country of Wales as the most famous reputation could be in the literary world of England.

We can conceive it all; for, about thirty-five years since, we were spectators of some such scene. It was far in the depths of the dark mountains beyond Abersychan, that we were led to a large Welsh service; but it was in a great chapel, and it was on a winter’s night. The place was dimly lit with candles. There were, we remember, three preachers. But whilst the first were pursuing their way, or the occasional hymns were being chanted, our companion said to us, ‘But I want you to hear that little humpbacked man, behind there; he will come next.’ We could scarcely see the little hump-backed man, but what we saw of him did not predispose our minds to any very favourable impressions, or prophecies of great effects. In due time he came forward. Even as soon as he presented himself, however, there was an evident expectation. The people began more certainly to settle themselves; to crane their necks forward; to smile their loving smile, as upon a well-known friend, who would not disappoint them; and to utter their sighs and grunts of satisfaction. He was as uncouth a piece of humanity as we have ever seen, the little hump-backed man, thin and bony. His iron-grey hair fell over his forehead with no picturesque effect, nor did his eyes seem to give any

indication of fire; and there was a shuffling and shambling in his gait, giving no sign of the grace of the orator. But, gradually, as he moved along, and

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before he had moved far, the whole of that audience was subject to his spell of speech. His hair was thrown back from his forehead; his features were lighted up. Hump-backed! You neither saw it, nor thought of it. His wiry movement seemed informed by dignity and grandeur. First, there came forth audible gaspings, and grunts of approval and pleasure. His very accent, whether you knew his language or not, compelled tears to start to the eyes. Forth came those devout gushings of speech we have mentioned, which, in Wales, are the acclamations which greet a preacher; and, like Christmas Evans with the close of his first grand sermon, the little hump-backed man sat down, victorious over all personal deformity, amidst the weeping and rejoicing of the people. We have always thought of that circumstance as a wonderful illustration of the power of the mind over the body.

Christmas returned to Lleyn, but not to remain there long. The period of his ministry in that neighbourhood was about two years, and during that time the religious spirit of the neighbourhood had been deeply stirred. It is most likely that the immediate cause which led to his removal may be traced to the natural feeling that he was fitted for a much more obvious and extended field of labour. Lleyn was a kind of mission station, its churches were small, they had long been disorganised, and it was not likely that, even if they woke at once into newness of life, they could attain to ideas of liberality and Church order, on which the growth and advance and perpetuity of the Churches could alone be founded; and then it was very likely discovered that the man

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labouring among them would be demanded for labours very far afield; it is awkward when the gifts of a man make him eminently acceptable to shine and move as an evangelist, and yet he is expected to fill the place, and be as steady in pastoral relations as a pole star!

## CHAPTER 3

### *THE MINISTRY IN THE ISLAND OF ANGLESEY*

Journey to Anglesey — Cildwrn Chapel, and Life in the Cildwrn Cottage — Poverty — Forcing his Way to Knowledge — Anecdote, 'I am the Book' — A Dream — The Sandemanian Controversy — Jones of Ramoth — 'Altogether Wrong' — The Work in Peril — Thomas Jones of Rhydwylym — Christmas's Restoration to Spiritual Health — Extracts from Personal Reflections — Singular Covenant with God — Renewed Success — The Great Sermon of the Churchyard World — Scenery of its Probable Delivery — Outline of the Sermon — Remarks on the Allegorical Style — Outlines of Another Remarkable Sermon, 'The Hind of the Morning' — Great Preaching but Plain Preaching — Hardships of the Welsh Preacher.

**I**N 1792 Christmas Evans left Lleyn. He speaks of a providential intimation conveyed to him from the Island of Anglesey; the providential intimation was a call to serve all the Churches of his order in that island for seventeen pounds a year! and for the twenty years during which he performed this service, he never asked for more. He was twenty-six years of age when he set forth, on his birthday, Christmas Day, for his new and enlarged world of work. He travelled like an Apostle, — and surely he travelled in an apostolic spirit, — he was unencumbered with this world's goods. It was a very rough day of frost and snow,

The way was long, the wind was cold.

He travelled on horseback, with his wife behind him and he arrived on the evening of the same day at Llangefni. On his arrival in Anglesey he found ten small Baptist Societies, lukewarm and faint; what amount of life there was in them was spent in the distraction of theological

controversy, which just then appeared to rage, strong and high, among the Baptists in North Wales. He was the only minister amongst those Churches, and he had not a brother minister to aid him within a hundred and fifty miles; but he commenced his labours in real earnest, and one of his first movements was to appoint a day of fasting and prayer in all the preaching places; he soon had the satisfaction to find a great revival, and it may with truth be said 'the pleasure of the Lord prospered in his hand.'

Llangefni appears to have been the spot in Anglesey where Christmas found his home. Llangefni is a respectable town now; when the preaching apostle arrived there, near a hundred years since, its few scattered houses did not even rise to the dignity of a village. Cildwrn Chapel was here the place of his ministrations, and here stood the little cottage where Christmas and his wife passed their plain and simple days. Chapel and cottage stood upon a bleak and exposed piece of ground. The cottage has been reconstructed since those days, but upon the site of the queer and quaint old manse stands now a far more commodious chapel-keeper's house. As in the Bedford vestry they show you still the chair in which John Bunyan sat, so here they show a venerable old chair, Christmas Evans's chair, in the old Cildwrn cottage; it is deeply and curiously

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marked by the cuttings of his pocket-knife, made when he was indulging in those reveries and daydreams in the which he lived abstracted from everything around him.

The glimpses of life we obtain from this old Cildwrn cottage do not incline us to speak in terms of very high eulogy of the Voluntary principle, as developed in Anglesey in that day; from the description, it must have been a very poor shanty, or windy shieling; it is really almost incredible to think of such a man in such a home. The stable for the horse or pony was a part of the establishment, or but very slightly separated from it; the furniture was very poor and scanty: a bed will sometimes compensate for the deprivations and toils of the day when the wearied limbs are stretched upon it, but Christmas Evans could not, as James Montgomery has it, 'Stretch the tired limbs, and lay the head, upon his own delightful bed; 'for, one of his biographers says, the article on which the inmates, for some time after their settlement, rested at night, could be designated a bed only by courtesy; some of the boards having

given way, a few stone slabs did some necessary service. The door by which the preacher and his wife entered the cottage was rotted away, and the economical congregation saved the expense of a new door by nailing a tin plate across the bottom; the roof was so low that the master of the house, when he stood up, had to exercise more than his usual forethought and precaution.

Here, then, was the study, the furnace, forge, and anvil whence were wrought out those noble ideas, images, words, which made Christmas Evans a

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household name throughout the entire Principality. Here he, and his Catherine, passed their days in a life of perfect naturalness — somewhat too natural, thinks the reader — and elevated piety. Which of us, who write, or read these pages, will dare to visit them with the indignity of our pity? Small as his means were, he looks very happy, with his pleasant, bright, affectionate, helpful and useful wife; he grew in the love and honour of the people; and to his great pulpit eminence, and his simple daily life, have been applied, not unnaturally, the fine words of Wordsworth —

So did he travel on life's common way  
In cheerful lowliness; and yet his heart  
The mightiest duties on itself did lay.

And there was a period in Wordsworth's life, before place, and fame, and prosperity came to him, when the little cottage near the Wishing Gate, in Grasmere, was not many steps above that of the Cildwrn cottage of Christmas Evans. The dear man did not care about his poverty, — he appears never either to have attempted to conceal it, nor to grumble at it; and one of his biographers applies to him the pleasant words of Jean Paul Richter, 'The pain of poverty was to him only as the piercing of a maiden's ear, and jewels were hung in the wound.'

It was, no doubt, a very rough life, but he appears to have attained to the high degree of the Apostle, — 'having food and raiment, let us be therewith content;' and he was caught up, and absorbed in his work: sermons, and material for sermons, were always preparing in his mind; he lived to preach, to



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exercise that bardic power of his. That poor room was the study; he had no separate room to which to retire, where, in solitude, he could stir, or stride the steeds of thought or passion.

During those years, in that poor Cildwrn room, he mastered some ways of scholarship, the mention of which may, perhaps, surprise some of our readers. He made himself a fair Hebraist; no wonder at that, he must have found the language, to him, a very congenial tongue; we take it that, anyhow, the average Welshman will much more readily grapple with the difficulties of Hebrew than the average Englishman. Then he became so good a Grecian, that once, in a bookseller's shop, upon his making some remarks on Homer in the presence of a clergyman, a University man, which drew forth expressions of contempt, Christmas put on his classical panoply, and so addressed himself to the shallow scholar, that he was compelled, by the pressure of engagements, to beat a surprisingly quick retreat.

Very likely the slender accoutrements of his library would create a sneer upon the lips of most of the scholars of the modern pulpit: his lexicons did not rise above Parkhurst, — and *we* will be bold to express gratitude to that forgotten and disregarded old scholar, too; Owen supplied him with the bones of theological thought, the framework of his systematic theology; and whatever readers may think of his taste, Dr Gill largely drew upon his admiration and sympathy, in the method of his exposition. But, when all was said and done, he was the Vulcan himself, who wrought the splendid fancies of the Achilles' shield, — say, rather, of the shield of Faith;

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he did not disdain books, but books with him were few, and his mind, experience, and observation were large.

A little while ago, we heard a good story. A London minister of considerable notoriety, never in any danger of being charged with a too lowly estimate of himself, or his powers, was called to preach an anniversary sermon, on a week evening, some distance from London. Arrived at the house of the brother minister, for whom he had undertaken the service, before it commenced, he requested to be shown into the study, in which he might spend some little time in preparation: the minister went up with him.

‘So!’ said the London Doctor, as he entered, and gazed around, this is the place where all the mischief is done; this is your furnace, this is the spot from whence the glowing thoughts, and sparks emanate!’

‘Yes,’ said his host, ‘I come up here to think, and prepare, and be quiet; one cannot study so well in the family.’

The Doctor strode up and down the room, glancing round the walls, lined with such few books as the modest means of a humble minister might be supposed to procure.

‘Ah!’ said the Doctor, ‘and these are the books, the alimentary canals which absorb the pabulum from whence you reinvigorate the stores of thought, and rekindle refrigerated feeling.’

‘Yes, Doctor,’ said the good man, ‘these are my books; I have not got many, you see, for I am not a rich London minister, but only a poor country pastor you have a large library, Doctor?’

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The great man stood still; he threw a half-indignant and half-benignant glance upon his humble brother, and he said, ‘I have no library, I do not want books, I am *the* Book!’

Christmas Evans, so far as he could command the means, — but they were very few, — was a voracious reader; and most of the things he read were welded into material for the imagination; but much more truly might he have said, than the awful London dignitary and Doctor, ‘I have no books, I am the book.’ His modesty would have prevented him from ever saying the last; but it was nevertheless eminently and especially true, he *was* the book. There was a good deal in him of the self-contained, self-evolving character; and it is significant of this, that, while probably he knew little, or nothing, of our great English classical essayists, John Foster and his *Essays* were especially beloved by him; far asunder as were their spheres, and widely different their more obvious and manifested life, there was much exceedingly alike in the structure of their mental characters.

We have already alluded to the dream-life of Christmas Evans; we should say, that if dreams come from the multitude of business, the daily occupation, the ordinary life he lived was well calculated to foster in him the life of dreams. Here is one, — a strange piece, which shows the mind in which he lived:— ‘I found myself at the gate of hell, and, standing at the threshold, I saw an opening, beneath which was a vast sea of fire, in wave-like motion. Looking at it, I said, “What infinite virtue

there must have been in the blood of Christ to have quenched, for his people, these awful flames!" Overcome

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with the feeling, I knelt down by the walls of hell, saying, "Thanks be unto thee, O great and blessed Saviour, that thou hast dried up this terrible sea of fire!" Whereupon Christ addressed me: "Come this way, and I will show you how it was done." Looking back, I beheld that the whole sea had disappeared. Jesus passed over the place, and said: "Come, follow me." By this time, I was within what I thought were the gates of hell, where there were many cells, out of which it was impossible to escape. I found myself within one of these, and anxious to make my way out. Still I felt wonderfully calm, as I had only just been conversing with Jesus, and because he had gone before me, although I had now lost sight of him. I got hold of something, with which I struck the corner of the place in which I stood, saying, "In the name of Jesus, open!" and it instantly gave way; so I did with all the enclosures, until I made my way out into the open field. Whom should I see there but brethren, none of whom, however, I knew, except a good old deacon, and their work was to attend to a nursery of trees; I joined them, and laid hold of a tree, saying, "In the name of Jesus, be thou plucked up by the root!" And it came up as if it had been a rush. Hence I went forth, as I fancied, to work miracles, saying, "Now I know how the Apostles wrought miracles in the name of Christ!"

It was during the earlier period of Christmas Evans's ministry at Anglesey, that a great irruption took place in the island, and, indeed, throughout the Principality; and the Sandemanian controversy shook the Churches, and especially the Baptist Churches,

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almost beyond all credibility, and certainly beyond what would have been a possibility, but for the singular power of the chief leader, John Richard Jones, of Ramoth. Christmas Evans himself fell for some time beneath the power of Sandemanian notions. Our readers, perhaps, know enough of this peculiar form of faith and practice, to be aware that the worst thing that can be said of it is, that it is a religious ice-plant, religion in an ice-house, — a form chiefly remarkable for its rigid ritualistic conservation of what are regarded as the primitive forms of apostolic times, conjoined to a separation from, and a severe and cynical reprobation of, all other Christian sects.

Christmas Evans says of himself at this period: 'The Sandemanian heresy affected me so far as to quench the spirit of prayer for the conversion of sinners, and it induced in my mind a greater regard for the smaller things of the kingdom of heaven, than for the greater. I lost the strength which clothed my mind with zeal, confidence, and earnestness in the pulpit for the conversion of souls to Christ. My heart retrograded, in a manner, and I could not realise the testimony of a good conscience. Sabbath nights, after having been in the day exposing and vilifying, with all bitterness, the errors that prevailed, my conscience felt as if displeased, and reproached me that I had lost nearness to, and walking with, God. It would intimate that something exceedingly precious was now wanting in me; I would reply, that I was acting in obedience to the Word; but it continued to accuse me of the want of some precious article. I had been robbed, to a

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great degree, of the spirit of prayer, and of the spirit of preaching!

And the man who headed and gave effect to this Sandemanian movement, which was regarded as a mighty reform movement, was Jones of Ramoth. No doubt a real and genuine character enough, a magnificent orator, a master of bitter wit, and vigorous declamation. That is a keen saying with which Richard Hooker commences his *Ecclesiastical Polity*: 'He that goeth about to persuade a multitude, that they are not so well governed as they ought to be, shall never want attentive and favourable hearers; because they know the manifold defects whereunto every kind of regiment is subject; but the secret lets and difficulties, which in public proceedings are innumerable and inevitable, they have not ordinarily the judgement to consider.' This seems to have been the work, and this the effect, of John Richard Jones: very much the sum and substance of his preaching grew to be a morbid horror of the entire religious world, and a supreme contempt — one of his memorialists says, a superb contempt — for all preachers except himself, especially for all itinerant preachers. In fact, Ramoth Jones's influence in Anglesey might well be described in George MacDonald's song, 'The Woesome Carl':—

Ye're a' wrang, and a' wrang,  
 And a'thegither a' wrang;  
 There's no a man about the toon  
 But's a'thegither a' wrang.

The minister wasna fit to pray,  
 And let alane to preach;  
 He nowther had the gift o' grace,  
 Nor yet the gift o' speech.

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He mind't him o'Balaam's ass,  
 Wi' a differ ye may ken:  
 The Lord he opened the ass's mou',  
 The minister opened's ain.

Ye're a' wrang, and a' wrang,  
 And a'thegither a' wrang;  
 There's no a man about the toon  
 But's a'thegither a' wrang.

Compared with the slender following of the Sandemanian schism now, — for we believe it has but six congregations in the whole United Kingdom, — it seems strange to know that it laid so wonderful a hold upon the island of Anglesey. It did, however; and that it did was evidently owing to the strong man whose name we have mentioned. He was a self-formed man, but he was a man, if not of large scholarship, of full acquaintance with Latin, Greek, and Hebrew; he was a skilful musician; he understood the English language well, but of the Welsh he was a great master. But his intelligence, we should think, was dry and hard; his sentiments were couched in bitter sarcasm 'If,' said he, 'every Bible in the world were consumed, and every word of Scripture erased from my memory, I need be at no loss how to live a religious life, according to the will of God, for I should simply have to proceed in all respects in a way perfectly contrary to the popular religionists of this age, and then I could not possibly be wrong.' He was very arrogant and authoritative in tone and manner, supercilious himself, and expecting the subordination of others. He was so bitter and narrow, that one naturally supposes that some injustice had embittered him. Some of

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his words have a noble ring. But he encouraged a spirit far other than a charitable one wherever his word extended; and it has been not unnaturally said, that the spread of this Sandemanian narrowness in Anglesey, realised something of the old Scotch absurdity of having two Churches in the same cottage, consisting of Janet in one apartment, and

Sandy in the other; or of that other famed Scottish Church, which had dwindled down to two members, old Dame Christie, and Donald, but which seemed at last likely to dwindle yet farther into one, as Christie said she had 'sair doubts o' Donald.'

The work of Christmas Evans, so far successful, seemed likely to be undone; all the Churches seemed inoculated by these new and narrow notions, and Christmas Evans himself appears, as we have seen, to have been not altogether unscathed. There is something so plausible in this purism of pride; and many such a creed of pessimism is the outgrowth of indifference born, and nurtured, upon decaying faith, — a faith which, perhaps, as in the instance of Ramoth Jones and his Sandemanian teachers, continued true to Christ, so far as that is compatible with utter indifference to humanity at large, and an utter separation from the larger view of the Communion of Saints.

There was, however, a grand man, who stood firm while ministers and Churches around him were reeling, Thomas Jones, of Glyn Ceiriog, in Denbighshire; he is said to have been the one and only minister, at all known to the public, who remained in his own denomination firm, and, successfully in his own spirit, withstood, and even conquered, in this

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storm of new opinion. And this Thomas Jones did not stand like an insensible stone or rock, but like a living oak, braving the blasts of veering opinion. Most men think in crowds, — which is only to say they are the victims of thoughtless plausibilities. This Thomas Jones appears to have known what he believed; he was eminent for his politeness, and greatly deferential in his bearing; but with all this, his courtesy was the courtesy of the branch which bows, but retains its place. He was a man of marvellous memory, and Christmas Evans used to say of him, that wherever Thomas Jones was, no Concordance would be necessary. He was a great master in the study of Edwards *On the Freedom of the Will*, and his method of reading the book was characteristic; he would first seize a proposition, then close the book, and close his eyes, and turn the proposition round and round that it might be undisturbed by anything inside the treatise, or outside of it, and in this way he would proceed with the rigorous demonstration. He was a calm and dignified knight in the tournament of discussion; and, before his lance, more vehement but less trained thinkers and theologians went down.

Thus it was that he preached a great Association sermon at Llangefni, in 1802, which dealt the Sandemanian schism a fatal blow; the captivity beneath the spell of the influence of Ramoth Jones was broken, and turned as streams in the south. While the sermon was being preached, Christmas Evans said, 'This Thomas Jones is a monster of a man! 'Then the great revival sprang up, — the ice reign was over; but shortly after, he was called away

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to Rhydwylym, in Caermarthenshire. Young as he was, when John Elias heard of his departure, he said, 'The light of the north is removed.' He died full of years, full of honours, full of love; closing a life, says one, of quiet beauty, which perhaps has never been surpassed, at Rhydwylym, in 1850.

This irruption of Sandemanian thought, as we have said and seen, affected the spiritual life and earnest usefulness of Christmas Evans. It is well we should place this passing flower upon the memory of Jones of Rhydwylym, for he, it seems, broke the spell and dissolved the enchantment, and bade, in the heart of Christmas Evans, the imprisoned waters once more to flow forth warm, and rejoicing, in the life and enthusiasm of love. May we not say, in passing, that some such spell, if not beneath the same denomination of opinion, holds many hearts in bondage among the Churches in our time?

The joy which Christmas Evans felt in his deliverance, realises something of the warm words of the poet of the *Messiah*:—

The swain in barren deserts, with surprise  
Sees lilies spring, and sudden verdure rise;  
And starts, amidst the thirsty wilds, to hear  
New falls of water murmuring in his ear.

'I was weary,' he says, referring to this period, 'of a cold heart towards Christ, and his sacrifice, and the work of his Spirit — of a cold heart in the pulpit, in secret prayer, and in the study. For fifteen years previously, I had felt my heart burning within, as if going to Emmaus with Jesus. On a day ever to be remembered by me, as I was going

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from Dolgellau to Machynlleth, and climbing up towards Cadair Idris, I considered it to be incumbent upon me to pray, however hard I felt in my heart, and however worldly the frame of my spirit was. Having begun

in the name of Jesus, I soon felt, as it were, the fetters loosening, and the old hardness of heart softening, and, as I thought, mountains of frost and snow dissolving and melting within me. This engendered confidence in my soul in the promise of the Holy Ghost. I felt my whole mind relieved from some great bondage; tears flowed copiously, and I was constrained to cry out for the gracious visits of God, by restoring to my soul the joys of his salvation; and that he would visit the Churches in Anglesey that were under my care. I embraced in my supplications all the Churches of the saints, and nearly all the ministers in the Principality by their names. This struggle lasted for three hours; it rose again and again, like one wave after another, or a high flowing tide, driven by a strong wind, until my nature became faint by weeping and crying. Thus I resigned myself to Christ, body and soul, gifts and labours — all my life — every day, and every hour that remained for me; and all my cares I committed to Christ. The road was mountainous and lonely, and I was wholly alone, and suffered no interruption in my wrestlings with God.

‘From this time, I was made to expect the goodness of God to Churches, and to myself. Thus the Lord delivered me and the people of Anglesey from being carried away by the flood of Sandemanianism. In the first religious meetings after

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this, I felt as if I had been removed from the cold and sterile regions of spiritual frost, into the verdant fields of Divine promises. The former striving with God in prayer, and the longing anxiety for the conversion of sinners, which I had experienced at Lëyn, were now restored. I had a hold of the promises of God. The result was, when I returned home, the first thing that arrested my attention was, that the Spirit was working also in the brethren in Anglesey, inducing in them a spirit of prayer, especially in two of the deacons, who were particularly importunate that God would visit us in mercy, and render the Word of his grace effectual amongst us for the conversion of sinners.’

And to about this time belongs a most interesting article, preserved among his papers, ‘a solemn covenant with God,’ made, he says, ‘under a deep sense of the evil of his own heart, and in dependence upon the infinite grace and merit of the Redeemer.’ It is a fine illustration of the spirit and faith of the man in his lonely communions among the mountains.



## COVENANT WITH GOD.

I. I give my soul and body unto thee, Jesus, the true God, and everlasting life; deliver me from sin, and from eternal death, and bring me into life everlasting. Amen. — C. E.

II. I call the day, the sun, the earth, the trees, the stones, the bed, the table, and the books, to witness that I come unto thee, Redeemer of sinners, that I may obtain rest for my soul from the thunders of guilt and the dread of eternity. Amen. — C. E.

III. I do, through confidence in thy power, earnestly entreat thee to take the work into thine own hand, and

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give me a circumcised heart, that I may love thee; and create in me a right spirit, that I may seek thy glory. Grant me that principle which thou wilt own in the day of judgement, that I may not then assume pale-facedness, and find myself a hypocrite. Grant me this, for the sake of thy most precious blood. Amen — C. E.

IV. I entreat thee, Jesus, the Son of God, in power grant me, for the sake of thy agonising death, a covenant interest in thy blood which cleanseth; in thy righteousness, which justifieth; and in thy redemption, which delivereth. I entreat an interest in thy blood, for thy *blood's* sake, and a part in thee, for thy Name's sake, which thou hast given among men. Amen. — C. E.

V. O Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, take, for the sake of thy cruel death, my time, and strength, and the gifts and talents I possess; which, with a full purpose of heart, I consecrate to thy glory in the building up of thy Church in the world, for thou art worthy of the hearts and talents of all men. Amen. — C. E.

VI. I desire thee, my great High Priest, to confirm, by thy power from thy High Court, my usefulness as a preacher, and my piety as a Christian, as two gardens nigh to each other; that sin may not have place in my heart to becloud my confidence in thy righteousness, and that I may not be left to any foolish act that may occasion my gifts to wither, and I be rendered useless before my life ends. Keep thy gracious eye upon me, and watch over me, O my Lord, and my God forever! Amen. — C. E.

VII. I give myself in a particular manner to thee, O Jesus Christ the Saviour, to be preserved from the falls into which many stumble, that thy name (in thy cause) may not be blasphemed or wounded, that my peace

may not be injured, that thy people may not be grieved, and that thine enemies may not be hardened. Amen — C. E.

VIII. I come unto thee, beseeching thee to be in

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covenant with me in my ministry. As thou didst prosper Bunyan, Vavasor Powell, Howell Harris, Rowlands, and Whitefield, O do thou prosper me. Whatsoever things are opposed to my prosperity, remove them out of the way. Work in me everything approved of God for the attainment of this. Give me a heart 'sick of love' to Thyself, and to the souls of men. Grant that I may experience the power of thy Word before I deliver it, as Moses felt the power of his own rod, before he saw it on the land and waters of Egypt. Grant this, for the sake of thine infinitely precious blood, O Jesus, my hope, and my all in all. Amen — C. E.

IX. Search me now, and lead me into plain paths of judgement. Let me discover in this life what I am before thee, that I may not find myself of another character when I am shown in the light of the immortal world, and open my eyes in all the brightness of eternity. Wash me in thy redeeming blood. Amen — C. E.

X. Grant me strength to depend upon thee for food and raiment, and to make known my requests. O let thy care be over me as a covenant-privilege betwixt thee and myself, and not like a general care to feed the ravens that perish, and clothe the lily that is cast into the oven; but let thy care be over me as one of thy family, as one of thine unworthy brethren. Amen — C.E.

XI. Grant, O Jesus, and take upon thyself the preparing of me for death, for thou art God; there is no need but for thee to speak the word. If possible, thy will be done; leave me not long in affliction, nor to die suddenly, without bidding adieu to my brethren, and let me die in their sight, after a short illness. Let all things be ordered against the day of removing from one world to another, that there be no confusion nor disorder, but a quiet discharge in peace. O grant me this, for the sake of thine agony in the garden. Amen.C.E.

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XII. Grant, O blessed Lord, that nothing may grow and be matured in me to occasion thee to cast me off from the service of the sanctuary, like the sons of Eli; and for the sake of thine unbounded merit, let not my days be longer than my usefulness. O let me not be like lumber in a

house in the end of my days, in the way of others to work. Amen — C.E.

XIII. I beseech thee, O Redeemer, to present these my supplications before the Father; and oh, inscribe them in thy Book with thine own immortal pen, while I am writing them with my mortal hand in my book on earth. According to the depths of thy merit, thine undiminished grace, and thy compassion, and thy manner unto thy people, O attach thy Name in thine Upper Court to these unworthy petitions; and set thine Amen to them, as I do on my part of the covenant. Amen — CHRISTMAS EVANS, *Llangefni, Anglesey, 10 April 18*—.

Is not this an amazing document? It is of this time that he further writes:—‘I felt a sweet peace and tranquillity of soul, like unto a poor man that had been brought under the protection of the Royal Family, and had an annual settlement for life made upon him; and from whose dwelling painful dread of poverty and want had been for ever banished away.’ We have heard of God-intoxicated men; and what language can more appropriately describe a covenant-engagement so elevated, so astonishing, and sublime?

Now, apparently strengthened as by a new spirit, with ‘might in the inner man,’ he laboured with renewed energy and zeal; and new and singular blessings descended upon his labours. In two years, his ten preaching places in Anglesey were increased

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to twenty, and six hundred converts were added to the Church under his own immediate care. It seemed as if the wilderness and the solitary place were glad for him, and the desert rejoiced and blossomed as the rose.

Probably, Christmas Evans’s name had been scarcely announced, or read, in England, until his great Graveyard Sermon was introduced to a company of friends, by the then celebrated preacher, Dr Raffles, of Liverpool. As the story has been related, some persons present had affected contempt for Welsh preaching. ‘Listen to me,’ said Raffles, ‘and I will give to you a specimen of Welsh eloquence.’ Upon those present, the effect was, we suppose, electrical. He was requested to put it in print; and so the sermon became very extensively known, and has been regarded, by many, as the preacher’s most astonishing piece.

To what exact period of Evans's history it is to be assigned cannot be very well ascertained, but it is probably nearly sixty years since Raffles first recited it; so that it belongs, beyond a doubt, to the early Anglesey days. It was, most likely, prepared as a great bardic or dramatic chant for some vast Association meeting, and was, no doubt, repeated several times, for it became very famous. It mingles something of the life of an old Mystery Play, or Ober-Ammergau performance; but as to any adequate rendering of it, we apprehend that to be quite impossible. Raffles was a rhetorician, and famous as his version became, the good Doctor knew little or nothing of Welsh, nor was the order of his mind likely very accurately to render either the Welsh

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picture or the Welsh accent. His periods were too rounded, the language too fine, and the pictures too highly coloured.

It was about the same time that, far away from Anglesey, among the remote, unheard-of German mountains of Baireuth, a dreamer of a very different kind was visited by some such vision of the world, regarded as a great churchyard. Jean Paul Richter's churchyard, visited by the dead Christ, was written in Siebinckas, for the purpose of presenting the misty, starless, cheerless, and spectral outlook of the French atheism, which was then spreading out, noxious and baleful, over Europe.

Very different were the two men, their spheres, and their avocations; overwhelming, solemn, and impressive as is the vision of Jean Paul, it certainly would have said little to a vast Welsh congregation among the dark hills. Christmas Evans's piece is dramatic; his power of impersonation and colloquy in the pulpit was very great; and the reader has to conceive all this, while on these colder pages the scenes and the conversations go on. It appears to have been first preached in a small dell among the mountains of Carnarvonshire. The spot was exquisitely romantic; it was a summer's season, the grass was in its rich green, brooks were purling round, and the spot hemmed in by jagged crags and the cliffs of tall mountains; a beautiful spot, but an Englishman spoke of it as 'beauty sleeping on the lap of terror.'

A preliminary service, of course, went on, — hymns, the sounding of the slow, plaintive minor melody from thousands of tongues, rising and loitering, and

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lingering among the neighbouring acclivities, before they finally fade off into silence; then there is reading, and prayer, singing again, and a short sermon before Christmas Evans comes. He has not attained to the full height of his great national fame as yet; he is before the people, however, 'the one-eyed man of Anglesey,' — the designation by which he was to be known for many years to come. He stands six feet high, his face very expressive, but very calm and quiet; but a great fire was burning within the man. He gave out some verses of a well-known Welsh hymn, and while it was being sung took out a small phial from his waistcoat-pocket, wetting the tips of his fingers and drawing them over his blind eye; it was laudanum, used to deaden the excruciating pain which upon some occasions possessed him.

He gave out his text from Romans 5:15: 'If through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.' Naturally, he does not begin at once, but spends a little time, in clearly-enunciated words, in announcing two things, — the universal depravity and sinfulness of men, and the sighing after propitiation. *Mene! Tekel!* he says, is written on every human heart; wanting, wanting, is inscribed on heathen fanes and altars, on the laws, customs, and institutions of every nation, and on the universal consciousness of mankind; and bloody sacrifices among pagan nations show the handwriting of remorse upon the conscience, — a sense of guilt, and a dread of punishment, and a fear which hath torment.

As he goes on the people draw nearer, become

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more intense in their earnest listening; they are rising from their seats, their temporary forms. Some are in carriages; there is a lady leaning on her husband's shoulder, he still sitting, she with outstretched neck gazing with obviously strange emotion at the preacher; some of the people are beginning to weep. There is an old evangelical clergyman who has always preached the Gospel, although laughed at by his squire, and quite unknown by his Bishop; he is rejoicing with a great joy to hear his old loved truths set forth in such a manner; he is weeping profusely.

Christmas Evans, meantime, is pursuing his way, lost in his theme. Now his eye lights up, says one who knew him, like a brilliantly-flashing star, his clear forehead expands, his form dilates in majestic dignity; and

all that has gone before will be lost in the white-heat passion with which he prepares to sing of Paradise lost, and Paradise regained. One of his Welsh critics says: 'All the stores of his energy, and the resources of his voice, which was one of great compass, depth, and sweetness, seemed reserved for the closing portions of the picture, when he represented the routed and battered hosts of evil retreating from the cross, where they anticipated a triumph, and met a signal, and irretrievable overthrow.' Thus prepared, he presented to his hearers the picture of

THE WORLD AS A GRAVEYARD.

Methinks [exclaimed the impassioned preacher] I find myself standing upon the summit of one of the highest of the everlasting hills, permitted from thence to take a

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survey of the whole earth; and all before me I see a wide and far-spread burial-ground, a graveyard, over which lie scattered the countless multitudes of the wretched and perishing children of Adam! The ground is full of hollows, the yawning caverns of death; and over the whole scene broods a thick cloud of darkness: no light from above shines upon it, there is no ray of sun or moon, there is no beam, even of a little candle, seen through all its borders. It is walled all around, but it has gates, large and massive, ten thousand times stronger than all the gates of brass forged among men; they are one and all safely locked, — the hand of Divine Law has locked them; and so firmly secured are the strong bolts, that all the created powers even of the heavenly world, were they to labour to all eternity, could not drive so much as one of them back. How hopeless is the wretchedness to which the race is doomed! into what irrecoverable depths of ruin has sin plunged the people who sit there in darkness, and in the shadow of death, while there, by the brazen gates, stands the inflexible guard, brandishing the flaming sword of undeviating Law!

But see! In the cool of the day, there is one descending from the eternal hills in the distance: it is Mercy! the radiant form of Mercy, seated in the chariot of Divine Promise. She comes through the worlds of the universe; she pauses here to mark the imprisoned and grave-like aspect of our once fair world; her eye affected her heart as she beheld the misery, and heard the cry of despair, borne upon the four winds of heaven; she could not pass by, nor pass on; she wept over the melancholy scene, and she said, 'Oh that I might enter! I would bind up their wounds, I would relieve their sorrows, I would

save their souls!' An embassy of angels, commissioned from Heaven to some other world, paused at the sight; and Heaven forgave that pause. They saw Mercy standing by the gate, and they cried, 'Mercy, canst thou not enter? Canst thou look upon that world and not pity? Canst thou pity and not

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relieve?' And Mercy, in tears, replied, 'I can see, and I can pity, but I cannot relieve.' 'Why dost thou not enter?' inquired the heavenly host. 'Oh,' said Mercy, 'Law has barred the gate against me, and I must not, and I cannot unbar it.' And Law stood there watching the gate, and the angels asked of him, 'Why wilt thou not suffer Mercy to enter?' And he said, 'No one can enter here and live;' and the thunder of his voice outspoke the wailings within. Then again I heard Mercy cry, 'Is there no entrance for me into this field of death? may I not visit these caverns of the grave; and seek, if it may be, to raise some at least of these children of destruction, and bring them to the light of day? Open, justice, Open! drive back these iron bolts, and let me in, that I may proclaim the jubilee of redemption to the children of the dust!' And then I heard justice reply, 'Mercy! surely thou lovest justice too well to wish to burst these gates by force of arm, and thus to obtain entrance by lawless violence. I cannot open the door: I am not angry with these unhappy, I have no delight in their death, or in hearing their cries, as they lie upon the burning hearth of the great fire, kindled by the wrath of God, in the land that is lower than the grave. But without *shedding of blood there is no remission.*'

So Mercy expanded her wings, splendid beyond the brightness of the morning when its rays are seen shooting over mountains of pearl, — and Mercy renewed her flight amongst the unfallen worlds; she re-ascended into the mid air, but could not proceed far, because she could not forget the sad sight of the Graveyard-World, the melancholy prison. She returned to her native throne in the Heaven of heavens; it was a glorious high throne, unshaken and untarnished by the fallen fate of man and angels. Even there she could not forget what she had witnessed, and wept over, and she weighed the woes of the sad world against the doom of eternal Law; she could not forget the prison and the graveyard, and she re-descended with a more rapid and radiant

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flight, and she stood again by the gate, but again was denied admission. And the two stood there together, Justice and Mercy; and justice dropped his brandishing sword while they held converse together; and while they talked, there was silence in heaven.

'Is there then no admission on any terms whatever?' she said. 'Ah, yes,' said Justice; 'but then they are terms which no created being can fulfil. I demand atoning death for the Eternal life of those who lie in this Graveyard; I demand Divine life for their ransom.' And while they were talking, behold there stood by them a third Form, fairer than the children of men, radiant with the glory of heaven. He cast a look upon the graveyard. And he said to Mercy, 'Accept the terms.' 'Where is the security?' said Justice. 'Here,' said Mercy, pointing to the radiant Stranger, 'is my bond. Four thousand years from hence, demand its payment on Calvary. To redeem men,' said Mercy, 'I will be incarnate in the Son of God, I will be the Lamb slain for the life of this Graveyard World.'

The bond was accepted, and Mercy entered the graveyard leaning on the arm of justice. She spoke to the prisoners. Centuries rolled by. So went on the gathering of the first-fruits in the field of redemption. Still ages passed away, and at last the clock of prophecy struck the fulness of time. The bond, which had been committed to patriarchs and prophets, had to be redeemed; a long series of rites and ceremonies, sacrifices and oblations, had been instituted to perpetuate the memory of that solemn deed.

At the close of the four thousandth year, when Daniel's seventy weeks were accomplished, justice and Mercy appeared on the hill of Calvary; angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, principalities and powers, left their thrones and mansions of glory, and bent over the battlements of heaven, gazing in mute amazement and breathless suspense upon the solemn scene. At the foot of Calvary's bill was beheld the Son of God. 'Lo, I come,' he said;

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in the bond it is written of me.' He appeared without the gates of Jerusalem, crowned with thorns, and followed by the weeping Church. It was with him the hour and the power of darkness; above him were all the vials of Divine wrath, and the thunders of the eternal Law; round him were all the powers of darkness, — the monsters of the pit, huge, fierce and relentless, were there; the lions as a great army, gnashing their teeth ready to tear him in pieces; the unicorns, a countless host, were rushing onwards to thrust him through; and there were the bulls of Bashan roaring terribly; the dragons of the pit unfolding themselves, and shooting out their stings; and dogs, many, all round the mountain.

And he passed through this dense array, an unresisting victim led as a lamb to the slaughter. He took the bond from the hand of Justice, and, as he was nailed to the cross, he nailed it to the cross; and all the hosts of hell, though invisible to man, had formed a ring around it. The rocks rent, the sun shrank



from the scene, as Justice lifted his right hand to the throne, exclaiming, 'Fires of heaven, descend and consume this sacrifice!' The fires of heaven, animated with living spirit, answered the call, 'We come! we come! and, when we have consumed that victim, we will burn the world.' They burst, blazed, devoured; the blood of the victim was fast dropping; the hosts of hell were shouting, until the humanity of Emmanuel gave up the ghost. The fire went on burning until the ninth hour of the day, but when it touched the Deity of the Son of God it expired; Justice dropped the fiery sword at the foot of the cross; and the Law joined with the prophets in witnessing to the righteousness which is by faith in the Son of God, for all had heard the dying Redeemer exclaim, 'It is finished!' The weeping Church heard it, and lifting up her head cried too, 'It is finished!' Attending angels hovering near heard it, and, winging their flight, they sang, 'It is finished!' The powers of darkness heard the acclamations of the universe, and hurried away from the scene in death-like

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feebleness. He triumphed over them openly. The graves of the old Burial-ground have been thrown open, and gales of life have blown over the valley of dry bones, and an exceeding great army has already been sealed to our God as among the living in Zion; for so the Bond was paid and eternal redemption secured.

This was certainly singular preaching; it reads like a leaf or two from Klopstock. We may believe that the enjoyment with which it was heard was rich and great, but we suppose that the taste of our time would regard it as almost intolerable. Still, there are left among us some who can enjoy the *Pilgrim's Progress*, and the *Fairy Queen*, and we do not see how, in the presence of those pieces, a very arrogant exception can be taken to this extraordinary sermon.

A more serious objection, perhaps, will be taken to the nomenclature, the symbolic language in which the preacher expressed his theology. It literally represented the theology of Wales at the time when it was delivered; the theology was stern and awful; the features of God were those of a stern and inflexible judge; nature presented few relieving lights, and man was not regarded as pleasant to look upon. Let the reader remember all this, and perhaps he will be more tolerant to the stern outline of this allegory; it is pleasant, now, to know that we have changed all that, and that everywhere, and all around us, God, and nature, and man are presented in rose-hued lights, and all conditions of being are

washed by rosy and pacific seas; we see nothing stern or awful now, either in nature or in grace, in natural or

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in supernatural things; justice has become gentlemanly, and Law, instead of being stern and terrible, is bland, and graceful, and beautiful as a woman's smile!

In Christmas Evans's day, it was not quite so. As to objections to the mode of preaching, as in contrast with that style which adopts only the sustained argument, and the rhetorical climax and relation, we have already said that Christmas must be tried by quite another standard; we have already said that he was a bard among preachers, and belonged to a nation of bards. It was a kind of primeval song, addressed to people of primeval instincts; but, whatever its merits or demerits may be, it fairly represents the man and his preaching. It does not, indeed, reflect the style of the modern mind; but, there are many writers, and readers at present, who are carrying us back to the mediæval times, and the monastic preachers of those ages, and among them we find innumerable pieces of the same order of sustained allegory which we have just quoted from Christmas Evans. What is it but to say, that the simple mind is charmed with pictures, — it must have them; and such sermons as abound in them, have power over it?

We believe we have rendered this singular passage with such fairness that the reader may be enabled to form some idea of its splendour. When it was repeated to Robert Hall, he pronounced it one of the finest allegories in the language. When Christmas Evans was on a visit to Dr Raffles, the Doctor recited to him his own version, and, apparently with some amazement, said, 'Did you actually say all

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that? Oh, yes,' said Christmas, 'I did say all that, but I could never have put it into such English.' And this we are greatly disposed to regard as impairing the bold grandeur and strength of the piece; any rendering of it into English must, as it seems to us, add to its prettiness, and therefore divest it of its power.

Probably to the same period of the preacher's history belongs another sermon, which has always seemed to us a piece of undoubted greatness. It is upon the same subject, the Crucifixion of Christ. We should think that its delivery would, at any time, from such lips as his, produce equally

pathetic emotions. The allegory is not so sustained, but it is still full of allegorical allusions derived from Scriptural expression.

THE HIND OF THE MORNING.

It is generally admitted that the twenty-second Psalm has particular reference to Christ. This is evident from his own appropriation of the first verse upon the cross: 'My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?' The title of that Psalm is '*Aijeleth Shahar*,' which signifies 'A Hart, or the Hind of the Morning.' The striking metaphors which it contains are descriptive of Messiah's peculiar sufferings. He is the Hart, or the Hind of the Morning, hunted by the Black Prince, with his hell-hounds — by Satan, and all his allies. The 'dogs,' the 'lions,' the 'unicorns,' and the 'strong bulls of Bashan,' with their devouring teeth, and their terrible horns, pursued him from Bethlehem to Calvary. They beset him in the manger, gnashed upon him in the garden, and well-nigh tore him to pieces upon the cross. And still they persecute him in his cause, and in the persons and interests of his people.

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The faith of the Church anticipated the coming of Christ, 'like a roe or a young hart,' with the dawn of the day promised in Eden; and we hear her exclaiming in the Canticles — 'The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh, leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills!' She heard him announce his advent in the promise, 'Lo, I come to do thy will, O God!' and with prophetic eye, saw him leaping from the mountains of eternity to the mountains of time, and skipping from hill to hill throughout the land of Palestine, going about doing good. In the various types and shadows of the law, she beheld him 'standing by the wall, looking forth at the windows, showing himself through the lattice;' and then she sang — 'Until the day break and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like the roe or the young hart upon the mountains of Bether!' Bloody sacrifices revealed him to her view, going down to the 'vineyards of red wine;' whence she traced him to the meadows of Gospel ordinances, where 'He feedeth among the lilies' — to 'the gardens of cucumbers,' and 'the beds of spices;' and then she sang to him again — 'Make haste' — or, flee away — 'my beloved! be thou like the roe or the young hart among the mountains of spices.'

Thus she longed to see him, first 'on the mountain of Bether,' and then 'on the mountain of spices.' On both mountains she saw him eighteen hundred years ago, and on both she may still trace the footsteps of his majesty, and

his mercy. The former, he hath tracked with his own blood, and his path upon the latter is redolent of frankincense and myrrh.

Bether signifies division. This is the craggy mountain of Calvary; whither the 'Hind of the Morning' fled, followed by all the wild beasts of the forest, and the bloodhounds of hell; summoned to the pursuit, and urged on, by the prince of perdition; till the victim, in his agony, sweat great drops of blood — where he was terribly crushed

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between the cliffs, and dreadfully mangled by sharp and ragged rocks — where he was seized by Death, the great Bloodhound of the bottomless pit — whence he leaped the precipice, without breaking a bone; and sunk in the dead sea, sunk to its utmost depth, and saw no corruption.

Behold the 'Hind of the Morning' on that dreadful mountain! It is the place of skulls, where Death holds his carnival in companionship with worms, and hell laughs in the face of heaven. Dark storms are gathering there — convolving clouds, charged with no common wrath. Terrors set themselves in battle-array before the Son of God; and tempests burst upon him which might sweep all mankind in a moment to eternal ruin. Hark! hear ye not the subterranean thunder? Feel ye not the tremor of the mountain? It is the shock of Satan's artillery, playing upon the Captain of our Salvation. It is the explosion of the magazine of vengeance. Lo, the earth is quaking, the rocks are rending, the graves are opening, the dead are rising, and all nature stands aghast at the conflict of Divine mercy with the powers of darkness. One dread convulsion more, one cry of desperate agony, and Jesus dies — an arrow has entered into his heart. Now leap the lions, roaring, upon their prey; and the bulls of Bashan are bellowing; and the dogs of perdition are barking; and the unicorns toss their horns on high; and the devil, dancing with exultant joy, clanks his iron chains, and thrusts up his fettered hands in defiance towards the face of Jehovah!

Go a little farther upon the mountain, and you come to 'a new tomb hewn out of the rock.' There lies a dead body. It is the body of Jesus. His disciples have laid it down in sorrow, and returned, weeping, to the city. Mary's heart is broken, Peter's zeal is quenched in tears, and John would fain lie down and die in his Master's grave. The sepulchre is closed up, and sealed, and a Roman sentry placed at its entrance. On the morning of the third day, while it is yet dark, two or three women come to anoint the

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body. They are debating about the great stone at the mouth of the cave. 'Who shall roll it away?' says one of them. 'Pity we did not bring Peter, or

John with us.' But, arriving, they find the stone already rolled away, and one sitting upon it, whose countenance is like lightning, and whose garments are white as the light. The steel-clad, iron-hearted soldiers lie around him, like men slain in battle, having swooned with terror. He speaks: 'Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here; he is risen; he is gone forth from this cave victoriously.'

It is even so! For there are the shroud, and the napkin, and the heavenly watchers; and when he awoke, and cast off his grave-clothes, the earthquake was felt in the city, and jarred the gates of hell. 'The Hind of the Morning' is up earlier than any of his pursuers, 'leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills.' He is seen first with Mary at the tomb; then with the disciples in Jerusalem; then with two of them on the way to Emmaus; then going before his brethren into Galilee; and, finally, leaping upon the top of Olivet to the hills of Paradise; fleeing away to 'the mountain of spices,' where he shall never more be hunted by the Black Prince and his hounds.

Christ is perfect master of gravitation, and all the laws of nature are obedient to his will. Once he walked upon the water, as if it were marble beneath his feet; and now, as he stands blessing his people, the glorious Form, so recently nailed to the cross, and still more recently cold in the grave, begins to ascend like 'the living creature' in Ezekiel's vision, 'lifted up from the earth,' till nearly out of sight; when 'the chariots of God, even thousands of angels,' receive him, and haste to the celestial city, waking the thrones of eternity with this jubilant chorus — 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates! and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors! and the King of glory shall come in!'

Christ might have rode in a chariot of fire all the way

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from Bethlehem to Calvary; but he preferred riding in a chariot of mercy, whose lining was crimson, and whose ornament the malefactor's cross. How rapidly rolled his wheels over the hills and the plains of Palestine, gathering up everywhere the children of affliction, and scattering blessings like the beams of the morning! Now we find him in Cana of Galilee, turning water into wine; then treading the waves of the sea, and hushing the roar of the tempest; then delivering the demoniac of Gadara from the fury of a legion of fiends; then healing the nobleman's son at Capernaum; raising the daughter of Jairus, and the young man of Nain; writing upon the grave of Bethany, 'I am the resurrection and the life;' curing the invalid at the pool of Bethesda; feeding the five thousand in the wilderness; preaching to the woman by Jacob's well, acquitting the adulteress, and shaming her accusers; and exercising everywhere, in all his travels, the three offices of Physician, Prophet, and Saviour, as he drove on towards the place of skulls.

Now we see the chariot surrounded with enemies — Herod, and Pilate, and Caiaphas, and the Roman soldiers, and the populace of Jerusalem, and thousands of Jews who have come up to keep the Passover, led on by Judas and the devil. See how they rage and curse, as if they would tear him from his chariot of mercy! But Jesus maintains his seat, and holds fast the reins, and drives right on through the angry crowd, without shooting an arrow, or lifting a spear upon his foes. For in that chariot the King must ride to Calvary — Calvary must be consecrated to mercy for ever. He sees the cross planted upon the brow of the hill, and hastens forward to embrace it. No sacrifice shall be offered to justice on this day, but the one sacrifice which reconciles heaven and earth. None of these children of Belial shall suffer today. The bribed witnesses, and clamorous murderers, shall be spared — the smiters, the scourgers, the spitters, the thorn-plaiters, the nail drivers,

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the head-shakers — for Jesus pleads on their behalf: 'Father, forgive them! they know not what they do. They are ignorant of thy grace and truth. They are not aware of whom they are crucifying. Oh, spare them! Let Death know that he shall have enough to do with *me* today! 'Let him open all his batteries upon *me!* My bosom is bare to the stroke. *I* will gather all the lances of hell in *my* heart!'

Still the chariot rushes on, and 'fiery darts' are thick and fast, like a shower of meteors, on Messiah's head, till he is covered with wounds, and the blood flows down his garments, and leaves a crimson track behind him. As he passes, he casts at the dying malefactor a glance of benignity, and throws him a passport into Paradise, written with his own blood; stretches forth his sceptre, and touches the prison-door of death, and many of the prisoners came forth, and the tyrant shall never regain his dominion over them; rides triumphant over thrones and principalities, and crushes beneath his wheels the last enemy himself, and leaves the memorial of his march engraven on the rocks of Golgotha!

Christ is everywhere in the Scriptures spoken of as a Blessing; and whether we contemplate his advent, his ministry, his miracles, his agony, his crucifixion, his interment, his resurrection, or his ascension, we may truly say, 'All his paths drop fatness.' All his travels were on the road of mercy; and trees are growing up in his footsteps, whose fruit is delicious food, and 'whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.' He walketh upon the south winds, causing propitious gales to blow upon the wilderness till songs of joy awake in the solitary place, and the desert blossoms as the rose.

If we will consider what the prophets wrote of the Messiah, in connection with the evangelical history, we shall be satisfied that none like him, either

before or since, ever entered our world, or departed from it. Both God and man — at once the Father of eternity and the Son of time, he filled the universe, while he was embodied upon

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earth, and ruled the celestial principalities and powers, while he wandered, a persecuted stranger, in Judea. 'No man,' saith he, 'hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man who is in heaven.'

Heaven was no strange place to Jesus. He talks of the mansions in his Father's house as familiarly as one of the royal family would talk of Windsor Castle where he was born; and saith to his disciples, 'I go to prepare a place for you; that where I am there ye may be also.' The glory into which he entered was his own glory — the glory which he had with the Father before the world was. He had an original and supreme right to the celestial mansions. and he acquired a new and additional claim by his office as Mediator. Having suffered for our sins, he 'ought to enter into his glory.' He ought, because he is 'God, blessed for ever;' he ought, because he is the representative of his redeemed people. He has taken possession of the kingdom in our behalf, and left on record for our encouragement this cheering promise, 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne; even as I also have overcome, and am set down with my Father in his throne.'

The departure of God from Eden, and the departure of Christ from the earth, were two of the sublimest events that ever occurred, and fraught with immense consequences to our race. When Jehovah went out from Eden, he left a curse upon the place for man's sake, and drove out man before him into an accursed earth. But when Jesus descended from Olivet, he lifted the curse with him, and left a blessing behind him — sowed the world with the seed of eternal blessings; 'and instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle-tree and it shall be to the Lord for a name, and an everlasting sign, that shall not be cut off.' He ascended to intercede for sinners, and reopen Paradise to his people;

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and when he shall come the second time, according to the promise, with all his holy angels, then shall we be 'caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.'

'The Lord is gone up with a shout!' and has taken our redeemed nature with him. He is the Head of the Church, and is the representative at the right hand of the Father. 'He hath ascended on high; he hath led captivity

captive; he hath received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that God may dwell among them.' 'Him hath God exalted, with his own right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins.' This is the Father's recognition of his Beloved Son,' and significant acceptance of his sacrifice. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in the earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.'

The evidence of our Lord's ascension is ample. He ascended in the presence of many witnesses, who stood gazing after him till a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, two angels appeared to them, and talked with them of what they had seen. Soon afterward, on the day of Pentecost, he fulfilled, in a remarkable manner, the promise which he had made to his people: 'If I go away I will send you another Comforter, who shall abide with you for ever.' Stephen, the first of his disciples that glorified the Master by martyrdom, testified to his murderers, 'Lo, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God!' And John, the 'beloved disciple,' while an exile 'in Patmos, for the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ,' beheld him 'in the midst of the throne, as a Lamb that had been slain!' These are the evidences

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that our Lord is in heaven; these are our consolations in the house of our pilgrimage.

The Apostle speaks of the *necessity* of this event, 'Whom the heaven *must* receive.'

Divine necessity is a golden chain reaching from eternity to eternity, and encircling all the events of time. It consists of many links all hanging upon each other; and not one of them can be broken without destroying the support of the whole. The first link is in God, 'before the world was;' and the last is in heaven, when the world shall be no more. Christ is its Alpha, and Omega, and Christ constitutes all its intervenient links. Christ in the bosom of the Father, receiving the promise of eternal life, before the foundation of the world, is the beginning; Christ in his sacrificial blood, atoning for our sins, and pardoning and sanctifying all them that believe, is the middle; and Christ in heaven, pleading the merit of his vicarious sufferings, making intercession for the transgressors, drawing all men unto himself, presenting the prayers of his people, and preparing their mansions, is the end.



There is a necessity in all that Christ has done as our Mediator, in all that he is doing on our behalf, and all that he has engaged to do — the necessity of Divine love manifested, of Divine mercy exercised, of Divine purposes accomplished, of Divine covenants fulfilled, of Divine faithfulness maintained, of Divine justice satisfied, of Divine holiness vindicated, and of Divine power displayed. Christ felt this necessity while he tabernacled among us, often declared it to his disciples, and acknowledged it to the Father in the agony in the Garden.

Behold him wrestling in prayer, with strong crying and tears: 'Father, save me from this hour! If it be possible, let this cup pass from me!' Now the Father reads to him his covenant engagement, which he signed and sealed with his own hand before the foundation of the world. The glorious Sufferer replies, 'Thy will be done! For this

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cause came I unto this hour. I will drink the cup which thou hast mingled, and not a dreg of any of its ingredients shall be left for my people. I will pass through the approaching dreadful night, under the hidings of thy countenance, bearing away the curse from my beloved. Henceforth repentance is hidden from my eyes!' Now, on his knees, he reads the covenant engagements of the Father, and adds, 'I have glorified thee on the earth. I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. Now glorify thou me, according to thy promise, with thine own Self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. Father, I will also that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory. Thine they were, and thou hast given them to me, on condition of my pouring out my soul unto death. Thou hast promised them, through my righteousness and meritorious sacrifice, the kingdom of heaven, which I now claim on their behalf. Father, glorify my people, with him whom thou lovedst before the foundation of the world!'

This intercession of Christ for his saints, begun on earth, is continued in heaven. This is our confidence and joy in our journey through the wilderness. We know that our Joshua has gone over into the land of our inheritance, where he is preparing the place of our habitation for Israel; for it is his will that all whom he has redeemed should be with him for ever!

And there is a text which speaks of the period when the great purposes of our Lord's ascension shall be fully accomplished: 'Until the times of the restitution of all things.'

The period here mentioned is 'the dispensation of the fulness of time,' when 'the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in,' and 'the dispersed of Judah' shall

be restored, and Christ shall 'gather together in himself all things in heaven and in earth,' overthrow his enemies, establish his everlasting kingdom, deliver the groaning creation from its bondage, glorify his people with himself, imprison the

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devil with his angels in the bottomless pit, and punish with banishment from his presence them that obey not the Gospel.

To this glorious consummation, the great travail of redemption, and all the events of time, are only preparatory. It was promised in Eden, and the promise was renewed and enlarged to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. It was described in gorgeous oriental imagery by Isaiah, and 'the sweet Psalmist of Israel;' and 'spoken of by all the Prophets, since the world began.' Christ came into the world to prepare the way for his future triumph — to lay on Calvary the 'chief corner-stone' of a temple, which shall be completed at the end of time, and endure through all eternity. He began the great restitution. He redeemed his people with a price, and gave them a pledge of redemption by power. He made an end of sin, abolished the Levitical priesthood, and swallowed up all the types and shadows in himself he sent home the beasts, overthrew the altars, and quenched the holy fire; and, upon the sanctifying altar of his own divinity, offered his own sinless humanity, which was consumed by fire from heaven. He removed the seat of government from Mount Zion, in Jerusalem, to Mount Zion above, where he sits — 'a Priest upon his throne,' drawing heaven and earth together, and establishing 'the covenant of peace between them both.'

Blessed be God! we can now go to Jesus, the Mediator; passing by millions of angels, and all 'the spirits of just men made perfect; 'till we 'come to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel.' And we look for that blessed day, when 'this gospel of the kingdom' shall be universally prevalent; 'and all shall know the Lord, from the least even to the greatest;' when there shall be a 'new heaven, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness;' when both the political, and the moral aspects of our world shall be changed; and a happier state of things shall exist than has ever been known before, — when

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the pestilence, the famine, and the sword shall cease to destroy, and 'the saints of the Most High shall possess the kingdom' in 'quietness, and assurance for ever.' Then cometh the end, when Emmanuel 'shall destroy in this mountain the veil of the covering cast over all people, and swallow up death in victory!'

Such sermons as we have quoted surely convey a living and distinct idea of the kind of power which made the man remarkable. It is, from every aspect, very unlike the preaching to which we are now accustomed, and which, therefore, finds general favour with us; it is dogmatic in the last degree; nothing in it is tentative, or hypothetical, yet the dogmatism is not that of a schoolman, or a casuist; it is the dogmatism of burning conviction, of a profound and unquestioning faith in the veracity of New Testament truth, and the corresponding light and illustration from the Old. In these sermons, and others we shall place before our readers, there is nothing pretty, no nice metaphysical or critical analysis, no attempt to carve giants' heads on cherry-stones. He realised his office as a preacher, not as one set apart to minister to intellectual luxury, or vanity, but to stand, announcing eternal truth. The people to whom he spoke were not *dilettantic*, he was no *dilettante*. We can quite conceive, — and therefore these remarks, that the greater number even of the more eminent men in our modern pulpit will regard the style of Christmas Evans with contempt. We are only setting it forth in these pages. Evidently it told marvellously on the Principality; it 'searched Jerusalem with candles;' those who despise it had better settle the question with Christmas Evans himself, and show

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the superiority of their method by their larger ministerial usefulness.

The worth and value of great preaching and great sermons must depend upon the measure to which they represent the preacher's own familiarity with the truths he touches, and proclaims. The history of the mind of Christmas Evans is, from this point of view, very interesting. We can only get at it from the papers found after his death; but they reveal the story of the life, walk, and triumph of faith in his mind and heart. He kept no journal; but still we have the record of his communions with God amongst the mountains, — acts of consecration to God quite remarkable, which he had thought it well to commit to paper, that he might remind himself of the engagements he had made. It was after some such season that he said to a brother minister, 'Brother, the doctrine, the confidence, and strength I feel will make people dance with joy in some parts of Wales;' and then, as the tears came into his eyes whilst he was speaking, he said again, 'Yes, brother!'

Little idea can be formed of the Welsh preacher from the life of the minister in England. The congregations, we have seen, lay wide, and

scattered far apart. Often, in Wales ourselves, we have met the minister pursuing his way on his horse, or pony, to his next 'publication;' very often, his Bible in his hand, reading it as he slowly jogged along. So Christmas Evans passed his life, constantly, either on foot or on horseback, urging his way; sometimes through a country frowning as if smitten by a blow of desolation, and at others, laughing in loveliness and

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beauty; sometimes through the hot summer, when the burning beams poured from the craggy mountains; sometimes in winter, through the snow and rain and coldest inclemency, to fulfil his engagements. For the greater part of his life his income was never more than thirty pounds a year, and for the first part only about from ten to seventeen. It looks a wretched sum; but we may remember that Luther's income was never much more; and, probably, what seems to us a miserable little income, was very much further removed from want, and even poverty, than in other, less primitive, circumstances is often an income of hundreds. Certainly, Christmas Evans was never in want; always, not only comfortable, but able even to spare, from his limited means, subscriptions to some of the great societies of the day.

## CHAPTER 4

### *THE MINISTRY IN ANGLESEY (CONTINUED)*

Christmas Evans as a Bishop over many Churches — As a Moderator in Public Meetings — Chapel-building and all its Difficulties to Christmas Evans — Extensive Travelling for Chapel-debts — Especially in South Wales — the Cildwrn Cottage again — A Mysterious Life of Poverty but of Hospitality — Catherine's Troubles — Story of a Hat — Wayfaring — Insatiability for Sermons in the Welsh — The Scenery of a Great Sermon — The Demoniac of Gadara — A Remarkable Illustration of the Varied Method of the Preacher — A Series of Illustrations of his Power of Allegoric Painting — The Four Methods of Preaching — The Seeking of the Young Child — Satan walking in Dry Places — Christmas Evans in Another Light — Lengthy Letter to a Young Minister — Contributions to Magazines — To be accursed from Christ — Dark Days of Persecution — Threatened with Law for a Chapel Debt — Darker Days — Loss of his Wife — Other Troubles — Determines to leave Anglesey.

**T**HE few glimpses we are able to obtain of the life and ministry in Anglesey, assure us of the supreme influence obtained by Christmas Evans, as was natural, over all the Churches of his order throughout that region. And in a small way, in a circle far removed from the noise of ideas, and the crowds and agitations of the great world, incessant activity was imposed upon him, — so many Societies under his care, so many meeting-houses to be erected,

and funds to be procured for their erection, so many cases of Church discipline, so many co-pastors appointed, and set apart to work with him — who, however, were men mostly in business, had their own domestic affairs to manage, and for all the help they could give, needed helping

and guidance; who had to receive instructions from him as to what they were to do, and whither they were to go, — so that, in fact, he was here, in Anglesey, a pastor of pastors, a bishop, if ever any pastor deserved that designation; an overseer of many Churches, and of many ministers. And hence, as a matter of course, in all ministerial meetings, and other smaller gatherings, he was usually at once not merely the nominal president, but the presiding spirit.

Rhys Stephen suggests a good many ludicrous aspects to the monthly meetings, and other such gatherings; indeed, they were of a very primitive description, and illustrative of what we should call a very rude, and unconventional state of society. Order was maintained, apparently, very much after the patriarchal or patristic fashion. All the preachers he called by their Christian names, and he would certainly have wondered what stranger happened to be in the place had any one addressed him as Mr Evans; ‘Christmas Evans,’ before his face and behind his back, was the name by which he was known not only throughout all Anglesey, but, by-and-by, throughout the entire Principality.

Affectionate familiarity sometimes pays the penalty in diminished reverence, and in a subtraction from the respect due to a higher gift or superior position. Christmas appears to have been equal to this

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dilemma, and to have sustained with great natural dignity the post of Moderator, without surrendering his claim upon the affection of his colleagues. In such a meeting, some humble brother would rise to speak a second time, and, perhaps, not very pointedly, to the question; then the Moderator in the pulpit, gathering up his brows, would suddenly cut across the speaker with, ‘William, my boy, you have spoken before: have done with it;’ or, ‘Richard, *bach*, you have forgotten the question before the meeting: hold your tongue.’

On one occasion, a minister from South Wales, although a native of Anglesey, happening to be present, and rising evidently with the intention of speaking, Christmas, who suffered no intrusion from the south into their northern organisations, instantly nipped the flowers of oratory by crying out, ‘Sit down, David, sit down.’

Such instances as these must seem very strange, even *outré*, to our temper, taste, and ideas of public meetings; but they furnish a very distinct idea of time, place, and circumstances, and give a not altogether unbeautiful picture of a state of society when, if politeness and culture

had not attained their present eminence, there was a good deal of light and sweetness, however offensive it might seem to our intellectual Rimmels and Edisons.

Perhaps in every truly great and apostolic preacher, the preaching power, although before men the most conspicuous, is really the smallest part of the preacher's labour, and presents the fewest claims for homage and honour. We have very little, and know very little, of the Apostle Paul's sermons and

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great orations, mighty as they unquestionably were; he lives to us most in his letters, in his life, and its many martyrdoms. Ah, we fancy, if Christmas Evans had but to preach, to stay at home and minister to his one congregation, what a serene and quiet life it would have been, and how happy in the humble obscurity of his Cildwrn cottage!

But all his life in Anglesey seems to have been worried with chapel-debts. Chapels rose, — it was necessary that they should rise; people in scattered villages thronged to hear the Word; many hundreds appear to have crowded into Church fellowship, chapels had to be multiplied and enlarged; but, so far as we are able to read his biography, Christmas appears to have been the only person on whom was laid the burden of paying for them. Certainly he had no money: his wealth was in his eloquence, and his fame; and the island of Anglesey appears to have been by no means indisposed to lay these under contribution. A chapel had to be raised, and Christmas Evans was the name upon which the money was very cheerfully lent for its erection; but by-and-by the interest pressed, or the debt had to be paid: what could be done then? He must go forth into the south, and beg from richer Churches, and from brethren who, with none of his gifts of genius or of holiness, occupied the higher places in the sanctuary.

Our heart is very much melted while we read of all the toils he accomplished in this way. Where were his sermons composed? Not so much in his lowly cottage home as in the long, lonely, toilsome travels on his horse through wild and unfrequented

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regions, where, throughout the long day's journey, he perhaps, sometimes, never met a traveller on the solitary road. For many years, it is said, he went twice from his northern bishopric to the south, once to the great Association, wherever that might be, and where, of course, he

was expected as the chief and most attractive star, but once also with some chapel case, a journey which always had to be undertaken in the winter, and which was always a painful journey. Let us think of him with affection as we see him wending on, he and his friendly horse, through wild snows, and rains, and bleak storms of mountain wind.

Scarcely do we need to say he had a highly nervous temperament. The dear man had a very capricious appetite, but who ever thought of that? He was thrown upon himself; but the testimony is that he was a man utterly regardless of his own health, ridiculously inattentive to his dress, and to all his travelling arrangements. These journeys with his chapel case would usually take some six weeks, or two months. It was no dainty tour in a railway train, with first-class travelling expenses paid for the best carriage, or the best hotel.

A man who was something like Christmas Evans, though still at an infinite remove from him in the grandeur of his genius, a great preacher, William Dawson — Billy Dawson, as he is still familiarly called — used to say, that in the course of his ministry he found himself in places where he was sometimes treated like a bishop, and sometimes like an apostle; sometimes a great man would receive, and make a great dinner for him, and invite celebrities to meet him, and give him the best entertainment, the best

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room in a large, well-furnished house, where a warm fire shed a glow over the apartment, and where he slept on a bed of down, — and this was what he called being entertained like a bishop; but in other places he would be received in a very humble home, coarse fare on the table, a mug of ale, a piece of oatmeal cake, perhaps a slice of meat, a poor, unfurnished chamber, a coarse bed, a cold room, — and this was what he called being entertained like an apostle.

We may be very sure that the apostolic entertainment was that which usually awaited Christmas Evans at the close of his long day's journey. Not to be looked upon with contempt either, — hearty and free; and, perhaps, the conversation in the intervals between the puff of the pipe was what we should rather relish, than the more timorous and equable flow of speech in the finer mansion. This is certain, however, that the entertainment of Christmas Evans, in most of his excursions, would be of the coarsest kind.



And this was far from the worst of his afflictions there were, in that day, persons of an order of character, unknown to our happier, more Christian, and enlightened times, — pert and conceited brethren, unworthy to unloose the latchet of the great man's shoes, but who fancied themselves far above him, from their leading a town life, and being pastors over wealthier Churches. Well, they have gone, and we are not writing their lives, for they never had a life to write, only they were often annoying flies which teased the poor traveller on his way. On most of these he took his revenge, by fastening upon them some *sobriquet*,

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which he fetched out of that imaginative store-house of his, — from the closets of compound epithet; these often stuck like a burr to the coat of the character, and proved to be perhaps the best passport to its owner's notoriety through the Principality. Further than this, we need not suppose they troubled the great man much; uncomplainingly he went on, for he loved his Master, and he loved his work. He only remembered that a certain sum must be found by such a day to pay off a certain portion of a chapel-debt; he had to meet the emergency, and he could only meet it by obtaining help from his brethren.

In this way he travelled from North to South Wales forty times; he preached always once every day in the week, and twice on the Lord's Day. Of course, the congregations everywhere welcomed him the collections usually would be but very small ministers and officers, more usually, as far as was possible, somewhat resented these calls, as too frequent and irregular. He preached one of his own glorious sermons, and then — does it not seem shocking to us to know, that he usually stood at the door, as it were, hat in hand, to receive such contributions as the friends might give to him? And he did this for many years, until, at last, his frequent indisposition, in consequence of this severity of service, compelled him to ask some friend to take his place at the door; but in doing this he always apologised for his delegation of service to another, lest it should seem that he had treated with inattention and disrespect those who had contributed to him of their love and kindness.

And so a number of the Welsh Baptist chapels, in

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Anglesey and North Wales, rose. There was frequently a loud outcry among the ministers of the south, that he came too often; and certainly it was only the marvellous attractions of the preacher which saved him

from the indignity of a refusal. His reply was always ready: 'What can I do? the people crowd to hear us; it is our duty to accommodate them as well as we can; all we have we give; to you much is given, you can give much; it is more blessed to give than receive,' etc., etc. Then sometimes came more plaintive words; and so he won his way into the pulpit, and, once there, it was not difficult to win his way to the people's hearts. It was what we suppose may be called the age of chapel cases. How many of our chapels in England have been erected by the humiliating travels of poor ministers?

Christmas Evans was saved from one greater indignity yet, the encountering the proud rich man, insolent, haughty, and arrogant. It is not a beautiful chapter in the history of voluntaryism. In the course of these excursions, he usually succeeded in accomplishing the purpose for which he set forth probably the contributions were generally very small but then, on many occasions, the preacher had so succeeded in putting himself on good terms with all his hearers that most of them gave something.

It is said that on one occasion not a single person passed by without contributing something: surely a most unusual circumstance, but it was the result of a manœuvre. It was in an obscure district, just then especially remarkable for sheep-stealing; indeed, it was quite notorious. The preacher was aware of this circumstance, and, when he stood up in the immense

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crowd to urge the people to liberality, he spoke of this crime of the neighbourhood; he supposed that amidst that large multitude it was impossible but that some of those sheep-stealers would be present: he addressed them solemnly, and implored them, if present, not to give anything to the collection about to be made. It was indeed a feat rather worthy of Rowland Hill than illustrative of Christmas Evans, but so it was; those who had no money upon them borrowed from those who had, and it is said that, upon that occasion, not a single person permitted himself to pass out without a contribution.

The good man, however, often felt that a burden was laid upon him, which scarcely belonged to the work to which he regarded himself as especially set apart. Perhaps he might have paraphrased the words of the Apostle, and said, 'The Lord sent me not to attend to the affairs of your chapel-debts, but to preach the gospel.' There is not only pathos, but

truth in the following words; he says, 'I humbly think that no missionaries in India, or any other country, have had to bear such a burden as I have borne, because of chapel-debts, and *they* have not had besides to provide for their own support, as I have had to do through all my life in Anglesey; London committees have cared for *them*, while I, for many years, received but seventeen pounds per annum. for all my services. The other preachers were young, and inexperienced, and the members threw all the responsibility upon me, as children do upon a father; my anxiety often moved me in the depths of the night to cry out unto God to preserve his cause from shame. God's promises to sustain his cause in the world greatly

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comforted me. I would search for the Divine promises to this effect, and plead them in prayer, until I felt as confident as if every farthing had been paid. I laboured hard to institute weekly penny offerings, but was not very successful; and after every effort there remained large sums unpaid in connection with some of the chapels which had been built without my consent.'

Poor Christmas! As we read of him he excites our wonder.

Passing rich with forty pounds a year

looks like positive wealth as compared with the emoluments of our poor preacher; and yet the record is that he was given to hospitality, and he contributed his sovereign, and half-sovereign, not only occasionally, but annually, where his richer neighbours satisfied their consciences with far inferior bequests. How did the man do it? He had not married a rich wife, and he did not, as many of his brethren, eke out his income by some farm, or secular pursuit; a very common, and a very necessary thing to do, we should say, in Wales.

But, no doubt, Catherine had much to do with his unburdened life of domestic quiet; perhaps, — it does not appear, but it seems probable — she had some little money of her own; she had what to her husband was incomparably more valuable, a clear practical mind, rich in faith, but a calm, quiet, household faith. Lonely indeed her life must often have been in the solitary cottage, into which, assuredly, nothing in the shape of a luxury ever intruded itself. It has been called, by a Welshman, a curious anomaly

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in Welsh life, the insatiable appetite for sermons, and the singular, even marvellous, disregard for the temporal comforts of the preacher. Christmas, it seems to us, was able to bear much very unrepiningly, but sometimes his righteous soul was vexed. Upon one occasion, when, after preaching from home, he not only received less for his expenses than he naturally expected, but even less than an ordinary itinerant fee, an old dame remarked to him, 'Well, Christmas, *bach*, you have given us a wonderful sermon, and I hope you will be paid at the resurrection,' 'Yes, yes, *shan fach*,' said the preacher, 'no doubt of that, but what am I to do till I get there? And there's the old white mare that carries me, what will she do? for her there will be no resurrection.'

Decidedly the Welsh of that day seemed to think that it was essential to the preservation of the purity of the Gospel that their ministers should be kept low. Mr DM Evans, in his *Life of Christmas Evans*, gives us the anecdote of a worthy and popular minister of this time, who was in the receipt of exactly twenty pounds a year; he received an invitation from another Church, offering him three pounds ten a month. This miserable lover of filthy lucre, like another Demas, was tempted by the dazzling offer, and intimated his serious intention of accepting 'the call'. There was a great commotion in the neighbourhood, where the poor man was exceedingly beloved; many of his people remonstrated with him on the sad exhibition he was giving of a guilty love of money; and, after much consideration, the leading deacon was appointed as a deputation to wait upon him, and to inform him, that

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rather than suffer the loss of his removal on account of money considerations, they had agreed to advance his salary to twenty guineas, or twenty-one pounds! Overcome by such an expression of his people's attachment, says Mr Evans, he repented of his incontinent love of money, and stayed.

A strange part-glimpse all this seems to give of Welsh clerical life, not calculated either to kindle, or to keep in a minister's mind, the essential sense of self-respect. The brothers of La Trappe, St Francis and his preaching friars, do not seem to us a more humiliated tribe than Christmas and his itinerating 'little *brethren* of the poor.' We suppose that sometimes a farmer would send a cheese, and another a few pounds of butter, and another a flitch of bacon; and, perhaps, occasionally, in the

course of his travels, — we do not know of any such instances, we only suppose it possible, and probable, — some rich man, after an eloquent sermon, would graciously patronise the illustrious preacher, by pressing a real golden sovereign into the apostle's hand.

One wonders how clothes were provided. William Huntingdon's *Bank of Faith* seems to us, in comparison with that of Christmas Evans, like the faith of a man who wakes every morning to the sense of the possession of a million sterling at his banker's, — in comparison with his faith, who rises sensible that, from day to day, he has to live as on the assurance, and confidence of a child.

Certainly, Wales did not contain at that time a more unselfish, and divinely thoughtless creature than this Christmas Evans; and then he had no children. A man without children, without a child, can afford to

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be more careless and indifferent to the world's gold and gear. The coat, no doubt, often got very shabby, and the mothers of Israel in Anglesey, let us hope, sometimes gathered together, and thought of pleasant surprises in the way of improving the personal appearance of their pastor; but indeed the man was ridiculous in his disregard to all the circumstances of dress and adornment. Once, when he was about to set forth on a preaching tour, Catherine had found her mind greatly exercised concerning her husband's hat and, with some difficulty, she had succeeded in equipping that noble head of his with a new one. But upon the journey there came a time when his horse needed to drink; at last he came to a clear, and pleasant pond, or brook, but he was at a loss for a pail; now what was to be done? Happy thought, equal to any of those of Mr Barnard! he took the hat from off his head, and filled it with water for poor old Lemon. When he returned home, Catherine was amazed at the deterioration of the headgear, and he related to her the story. A man like this would not be likely to be greatly troubled by any defections in personal adornment.

Wordsworth has chanted, in well-remembered lines, the name and fame of him, whom he designates, for his life of probity, purity, and poverty, — united in the pastoral office, in his mountain chapel in Westmoreland, — Wonderful Robert Walker. Far be it from us to attempt to detract from the well-won honours of the holy Westmoreland pastor; but, assuredly, as we think of Christmas Evans, he too seems to us even

far more wonderful; for there was laid upon him, not merely the thought for his own pulpit and his own

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family, but the care of all the Churches in his neighbourhood.

And so the end is, that during these years we have to follow him through mountain villages, in which the silence and desolation greet him, like that he might have found in old Castile, or La Mancha, — through spots where ruined old castles and monasteries were turned into barns, and hay and straw stowed away within walls, once devoted either to gorgeous festivity or idolatry, — through wild and beautiful scenes; narrow glen and ravine, down which mountain torrents roared and foamed, — through wild mountain gorges, far, in his day, from the noise and traffic of towns, — although in such spots Mr Borrow found the dark hills strangely ablaze with furnaces, seeming to that strange traveller, so he said, queerly enough, ‘like a Sabbath in hell, and devils proceeding to afternoon worship,’ — past simple, and unadorned, and spireless churches, hallowed by the prayers of many generations; and through churchyards in which rests the dust of the venerable dead. We can see him coming to the lonely Methodist chapel, rising like a Shiloh, bearing the ark, like a lighthouse among the high hills—strolling into a solitary cottage as he passes, and finding some ancient woman, in her comfortable kitchen, over her Welsh Bible, and concordance, neither an unpleasant nor an unusual sight; — never happier, we will be bold to say, than when, keeping his own company, he traverses and travels these lone and solitary roads and mountain by-paths, not only through the long day, but far into the night, sometimes by the bright clear moonlight, among the mountains, and sometimes through the ‘villain mists,’

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their large sheets rolling up the mountain sides, bushes and trees seen indistinctly like goblins and elves, till —

In every hollow dingle stood,  
Of wry-mouth fiends a wrathful brood.

So we think of him pressing on his way; no doubt often drenched to the skin, although uninjured in body; sometimes through scenes novel and grand, where the mountain looks sad with some ruin on its brow, as beneath Cader Idris (the chair or throne of Idris), where the meditative wanderer might conceive he saw some old king, unfortunate

and melancholy, but a king still, with the look of a king, and the ancestral crown on his forehead.

We may be sure he came where corpse-candles glittered, unquenched by nineteenth-century ideas, along the road; for those travelling times were much nearer to the days of Twm ór Nant, who, when he kept turnpike, was constantly troubled by hearses, and mourning coaches, and funeral processions on foot passing through his gate. Through lonely places and alder swamps, where nothing would be heard but the murmuring of waters, and the wind rushing down the gullies, — sometimes falling in with a pious and sympathetic traveller, a lonely creature, ‘Sorry to say, Good-bye, thank you for your conversation; I haven’t heard such a treat of talk for many a weary day.’ Often, passing through scenes where the sweet voice of village bells mingled with the low rush of the river; and sometimes where the rocks rolled back the echoes like a pack of dogs sweeping down the hills. ‘Hark to the dogs!’ exclaimed a companion to Mr Borrow once. ‘This pass is called

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*Nant yr ieuanc gwn*, the pass of the young dogs; because, when one shouts, it answers with a noise resembling the crying of hounds.’

What honour was paid to the name and memory of the earnest-hearted and intrepid Felix Neff, the pastor of the Higher Alps; but does not the reader, familiar with the life of that holy man, perceive much resemblance in the work, the endurance, and the scenery of the toil, to that of Christmas Evans? May he not be called the pastor of our English Engadine?

All such lives have their grand compensations; doubtless this man had his, and *great* compensations too; perhaps, among the minor ones, we may mention his ardent reception at the great Association gatherings. At these his name created great expectations; there he met crowds of brethren and friends, from the remote parts of the Principality, by whom he was at once honoured and loved. We may conceive such an occasion; the ‘one-eyed man of Anglesey’ has now been for many years at the very height of his popularity; his name is now the greatest in his denomination; this will be one of his great occasions, and his coming has been expected for many weeks. No expectation hanging upon the appearance of Jenny Lind, or Christine Nielson, or Sims Reeves, on some great musical festivity, can reach, in our imagination, the expectations of these poor, simple villagers as they think of the delight

they will experience in listening to their wonderful and well-loved prophet.

So, along all the roads, there presses an untiring crowd, showing that something unusual is going on

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somewhere. The roads are all picturesque and lively with all sorts of people, on foot, on horseback, in old farm carts, and even in carriages; all wending their way to the largest and most central chapel of the neighbourhood. It is the chief service. It is a Sabbath evening; the congregation is wedged together in the spacious house of God; it becomes almost insupportable, but the Welsh like it. The service has not commenced, and a cry is already raised that it had better be held in an adjoining field; but it is said this would be inconvenient. The doors, the windows, are all thrown open; and so the time goes on, and the hour for the commencement of the service arrives. All eyes are strained as the door opens beneath the pulpit, and the minister of the congregation comes in, and makes his way, as well as he can, for himself and his friend, the great preacher — there he is! that tall, commanding figure, — that is he, the ‘one-eyed man of Anglesey.’

A murmur of joy, whisperings of glad congratulation, which almost want to burst into acclamations, pass over the multitude. And the service commences with prayer, singing, reading a chapter, and a short sermon, — a very short one, only twenty minutes. There are crowds of preachers sitting beneath the pulpit, but they, and all, have come to hear the mighty minstrel — and the moment is here. A few more verses of a hymn, during which there is no little commotion, in order that there may be none by-and-bye, those who have been long standing changing places with those who had been sitting. There, he is up! he is before the people! And in

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some such circumstances he seems to have first sung that wonderful song or sermon,

#### THE DEMONIAK OF GADARA

The text he announced was — *‘Jesus said unto him, Go home unto thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.’*



The introduction was very simple and brief; but, before long, the preacher broke loose from all relations of mere comment and explanation, and seemed to revel in dramatic scenery, and pictorial imagination, and, as was so usual with him in such descriptions, increasing, heightening, and intensifying the picture, by making each picture, each scene, to live even in the kind of enchantment of a present demoniacal possession. He began by describing the demoniac as a castle garrisoned with a legion of fiends, towards which the great Conqueror was approaching over the Sea of Tiberias, the winds hushing at his word, the sea growing calm at his bidding. Already he had acquired among the devils a terrible fame, and his name shook the garrison of the entire man, and the infernal legion within, with confusion and horror.

I imagine [he said] that this demoniac was not only an object of pity, but he was really a terror to the country. So terrific was his appearance, so dreadful and hideous his screams, so formidable, frightful, and horrid his wild career, that all the women in that region were so much alarmed that none of them dared go to market, lest he should leap upon them like a panther on his prey.

And what made him still more terrible was the place of

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his abode. It was not in a city, where some attention might be paid to order and decorum (though he would sometimes ramble into the city, as in this case). It was not in a town, or village, or any house whatever, where assistance might be obtained in case of necessity; but it was among the tombs, and in the wilderness — not far, however, from the turnpike road. No one could tell but that he might leap at them, like a wild beast, and scare them to death. The gloominess of the place made it more awful and solemn. It was among the tombs — where, in the opinion of some, all witches, corpse-candles, and hobgoblins abide.

One day, however, Mary was determined that no such nuisance should be suffered in the country of the Gadarenes. The man must be clothed, though he was mad and crazy. And if he should at any future time strip himself, tie up his clothes in a bundle, throw them into the river, and tell them to go to see Abraham, he must be tied and taken care of. Well, this was all right; no sooner said than done. But, so soon as the fellow was bound, although even in chains and fetters, Samson-like he broke the bands asunder, and could not be tamed.

By this time, the devil became offended with the Gadarenes, and, in a pout, he took the demoniac away, and drove him into the wilderness. He thought the Gadarenes had no business to interfere, and meddle with his property; for he had possession of the man. And he knew that 'a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.' It is probable that he wanted to send him home; for there was no knowing what might happen now-a-days. But there was too much matter about him to send him as he was; therefore, he thought the best plan would be to persuade him to commit suicide by cutting his throat. But here Satan was at a non-plus — his rope was too short. He could not turn executioner himself, as that would not have answered the design he has in view, when he wants people to commit suicide; for the act would have been his own sin, and not the man's.

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The poor demoniac, therefore, must go about to hunt for a sharp stone, or anything that he could get. He might have been in search of such an article, when he returned from the wilderness into the city, whence he came, when he met the Son of God.

Jesus commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. And when he saw Jesus he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, 'What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not.'

Here is the devil's confession of faith. The devils believe and tremble, while men make a mock of sin, and sport on the brink of eternal ruin. To many of the human race, Christ appears as a root out of dry ground. They see in him neither form nor comeliness, and there is no beauty in him that they should desire him. Some said he was the carpenter's son, and would not believe in him; others said he had a devil, and that it was through Beelzebub, the chief of the devils, that he cast out devils: some cried out, 'Let him be crucified;' and others said, 'Let his blood be on us and on our children.' As the Jews would not have him to reign over them, so many, who call themselves Christians, say that he is a mere man; as such, he has no right to rule over their consciences, and demand their obedience, adoration, and praise. But the devils know better — they say, Jesus is the Son of God most high.

Many of the children of the devil, whose work they do, differ very widely from their father in their sentiments respecting the person of Christ.

Jesus commanded the legion of unclean spirits to come out of the man. They knew that out they must go. But they were like Irishmen — very unwilling to return to their own country. They would rather go into hogs'

skins than to their own country And he suffered them to go into the herd of swine. Methinks that one of the men who fed the hogs, kept a better look out than the rest of them

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and said, 'What ails the hogs? Look sharp there, boys — keep them in — make good use of your whips! Why don't you run? Why, I declare, one of them has gone over the cliff! There, there, Morgan, goes another! Drive them back, Tom.' Never was there such a running, and whipping, and hallooing; but down go the hogs, before they are aware of it.

One of them said, 'They are all gone!'

'No, sure not all gone into the sea!'

'Yes, every one of them, the *black hog* and all. They are all drowned! the devil is in them! What shall we do now? What can we say to the owners?'

'What can we say?' said another; 'we must tell the truth — that is all about it. We did our best — all that was in our power. What could any man do more?'

So they went their way to the city, to tell the masters what had happened.

'John, where are you going?' exclaimed one of the masters.

'Sir, did you know the demoniac that was among the tombs there?'

'Demoniac among the tombs! Where did you leave the hogs?'

'That madman, sir — '

'Madman! Why do you come home without the hogs?'

'That wild and furious man, sir, that mistress was afraid of so much — '

'Why, John, I ask you a plain and simple question — why don't you answer me? Where are the hogs?'

'That man who was possessed with the devils, sir — '

'Why, sure enough, you are crazy! You look wild! Tell me your story, if you can, let it be what it may.'

'Jesus Christ, sir, has cast the unclean spirits out of the demoniac; they are gone into the swine; and they are all drowned in the sea; for I saw the tail of the last one!'

The Gadarenes went out to see what was done, and

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finding that it was even so, they were afraid, and besought Jesus to depart from them.

How awful must be the condition of those men who love the things of this world more than Jesus Christ.

The man out of whom the unclean spirits were cast, besought Jesus that he might be with him. But he told him to return to his own house, and show how great things God had done unto him. And he went his way, and published, throughout the whole city of Decapolis, how great things Jesus had done unto him. The act of Jesus casting so many devils out of him, was sufficient to persuade him that Jesus was God as well as man.

I imagine I see him going through the city, crying — ‘Oh yes! Oh yes! Oh yes! please to take notice of me, the demoniac among the tombs. I am the man who was a terror to the people of this place — that wild man, who would wear no clothes, and that no man could bind. Here am I now, in my right mind. Jesus Christ, the Friend of sinners, had compassion on me. He remembered me when I was in my low estate — when there was no eye to pity, and no hand to save. He cast out the devils and redeemed my soul from destruction.’

Most wonderful must have been the surprise of the people, to hear such proclamation. The ladies running to the windows, the shoemakers throwing their lasts one way, and their awls another, running out to meet him and to converse with him, that they might be positive that there was no imposition, and found it to be a fact that could not be contradicted. ‘Oh, the wonder of all wonders! Never was there such a thing,’ must, I think, have been the general conversation.

And while they were talking, and everybody having something to say, homeward goes the man. As soon as he comes in sight of the house, I imagine I see one of the children running in, and crying, ‘Oh, mother! father is coming — he will kill us all!’

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‘Children, come all into the house,’ says the mother. ‘Let us fasten the doors. I think there is no sorrow like my sorrow!’ says the broken-hearted woman. ‘Are all the windows fastened, children?’

‘Yes, mother.’

‘Mary, my dear, come from the window — don’t be standing there.’

‘Why, mother, I can hardly believe it is father! That man is well dressed.’

‘Oh yes, my dear children, it is your own father. I knew him by his walk, the moment I saw him.’

Another child stepping to the window, says, ‘Why, mother, I never saw father coming home as he comes today. He walks on the footpath, and turns round the corner of the fence. He used to come towards the house as straight as a line, over fences, ditches, and hedges; and I never saw him walk as slowly as he does now.’

In a few moments, however, he arrives at the door of the house, to the great terror and consternation of all the inmates. He gently tries the door, and finds no admittance. He pauses a moment, steps towards the window, and says in a low, firm, and melodious voice, ‘My dear wife, if you will let me in, there is no danger. I will not hurt you. I bring you glad tidings of great joy.’ The door is reluctantly opened, as it were between joy and fear. Having deliberately seated himself, he says: ‘I am come to show you what great things God has done for me. He loved me with an everlasting love. He redeemed me from the curse of the law, and the threatenings of vindictive justice. He saved me from the power and dominion of sin. He cast the devils out of my heart, and made that heart, which was a den of thieves, the temple of the Holy Spirit. I cannot tell you how much I love my Saviour. Jesus Christ is the foundation of my hope, the object of my faith, and the centre of my affections. I can venture my immortal soul upon him. He is my best friend. He is altogether

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lovely — he chief among ten thousand. He is my wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. There is enough in him to make a poor sinner rich, and a miserable sinner happy. His flesh and blood is my food, — his righteousness my wedding garment, and his blood is efficacious to cleanse me from all my sins. Through him I can obtain eternal life; for he is the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his Person: in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. He deserves my highest esteem, and my warmest gratitude. Unto him who loved me with an eternal love, and washed me in his own blood, unto him be the glory, dominion, and power, for ever and ever! For he has rescued my soul from hell. He plucked me as a brand from the burning. He took me out of the miry clay, and out of a horrible pit. He set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings, and put in my mouth a new song of praise, and glory to him! Glory to him for ever! Glory to God in the highest! Glory to God for ever and ever! Let the whole earth praise him! Yea, let all the people praise him!’ How sweet was all this, the transporting joy of his wife!

It is beyond the power of the strongest imagination to conceive the joy and gladness of this family. The joy of seafaring men delivered from shipwreck; the joy of a man delivered from a burning house; the joy of not being found guilty at a criminal bar; the joy of receiving pardon to a condemned malefactor; the joy of freedom to a prisoner of war, is nothing in comparison to the joy of him who is delivered from going down to the pit of eternal destruction. For it is a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

The effect of this sermon is described as overwhelmingly wonderful. The first portion, in which he

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pictured the mysterious and terrible being, the wild demoniac, something of a wild beast, and something of a fiend, made the people shudder. Then, shifting his scene, the catastrophe of the swine, the flight of the affrighted herdsmen, the report to the master, and the effect of the miracle on the populace, was rendered with such dramatic effect, the preacher even laughing himself, as he painted the rushing swine, hurrying down the steep place into the lake, especially the 'black hog,' and all, — for they all understood the point of that allusion, — that beneath the grim grotesqueness of the scene, laughter ran over the whole multitude. But the pathos of the family scene! Mary embracing her restored husband; and the restored maniac's experience, and hymn of praise. The place became a perfect Bochim; they wept like mourners at a funeral. Shouts of prayer and praise mingled together. One who heard that wonderful sermon says, that, at last, the people seemed like the inhabitants of a city which had been shaken by an earthquake, that, in their escape, rushed into the streets, falling upon the earth screaming, and calling upon God!

This sermon has never been printed; indeed, it is obvious that it never could be prepared for the press. It defies all criticism; and the few outlines we have attempted to present are quite inadequate to reproduce it. All who heard it understood, that it was a picture of a lunatic, and demon-haunted world; and it was beneath the impression of this, that passionate cries, universal, thankful, penitent murmurs rose; whilst amidst loud 'Amens!' and sobs, and tears, some petitions ascended: 'O Lord, who didst walk

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on the sea, that thou mightest meet the Gadarene, cast out some demons from our midst tonight.'

Although the demoniac of Gadara is not, in the strict sense of the word, an allegory, yet it is allegoric throughout; a fine piece of shadowy painting, in which unconverted, and converted men, and women might realise something of their own personal history, and the means by which they would 'come to themselves.'

And, no doubt, the chief charm, and most original characteristic of the preacher, was his power of sustained allegory; some incident, even some passing expression in Scripture, some prophetic figure of speech, was turned round and round by him, beaten out, or suggested a series of cartoon paintings, until it became like a chapter from the *Pilgrim's Progress*. It has seemed to us, that his translators have been singularly unfortunate in rendering these excursions of his fancy into English; our most vivid impressions of them have been derived from those who had heard them, in all their freshness, from the preacher's own wonderful lips. We will attempt to transfer one or two of these allegories to our pages. It must have been effective to have heard him describe the necessity of Divine life, spiritual power, to raise a soul from spiritual death. This may be called

#### THE FOUR METHODS OF PREACHING

He beheld [he said] such a one as Lazarus lying in the cave, locked in the sleep of death; now how shall he be raised? how shall he be brought back to life? Who will roll away for us the stone from this sepulchre? First came one, who went down to the cave with blankets, and salt, to

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rub with the fomentations of duty, to appeal to the will, to say to the sleeping man, that he could if he would; chafing and rubbing the cold and inert limbs, he thinks to call back the vital warmth; and then retiring, and standing some distance apart, he says to the other spectators, 'Do you not see him stir? Are there no signs of life? Is he not moving?' No, he lies very still, there is no motion. How could it be otherwise? how could a sense of moral duty be felt by the man there? — *for the man was dead!*

The first man gave up in despair. And then came the second. 'I thought you would never do it,' he said; 'but if you look at me, you will see a thing. No,' he said, 'your treatment has been too gentle.' And he went down into the cave with a scourge. Said he, 'The man only wants severe treatment to be brought back to life. I warrant me I will make him feel,' he said. And he laid on in quick succession the fervid blows, the sharp threatenings of law and

judgement, and future danger and doom; and then he retired to some distance. 'Is he not waking?' he said. 'Do you not see the corpse stir?' No! A corpse he was before the man began to lay on his lashes, and a corpse he continued still; — *for the man was dead!*

'Ah,' said another, advancing, 'but I have wonderful power. You, with your rubbing, and your smiting, what can you do? but I have it, for I have two things.' And he advanced, and he fixed an electric battery, and disposed it so that it touched the dead man, and then, from a flute which he held, he drew forth such sweet sounds that they charmed the ears which were listening; and whether it was the battery, or whether it was the music, so it was, that effect seemed to be produced. 'Behold,' said he, 'what the refinements of education and cultivation will do!' And, indeed, so it was, for the hair of the dead man seemed to rise, and his eye-balls seemed to start and dilate; and see! he rises, starts up, and takes a stride down the cave. Ah, but it is all over; it was nothing but the electricity in the battery; and he sank

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back again flat on the floor of the cave; — *for the man was dead!*

And then, when all were filled with despair, there came One, and stood by the entrance of the cave; but he was the Lord and Giver of life, and standing there, he said, 'Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon this slain one, that he may live. Christ hath given thee life. Awake, thou that sleepest.' And the man arose; he shook off his grave-clothes; what he needed had come to him now — *life!* Life is the only cure for death. Not the prescriptions of duty, not the threats of punishment and damnation, not the arts and the refinements of education, but new, spiritual, Divine *life*.

The same manner appears in the way in which he traces the story of a soul seeking Christ, under the idea of the Wise Men following the leading star in

#### SEEKING THE YOUNG CHILD.

We have remarked before that the preacher's descriptions of Oriental travel were always Welsh, and this could not arise so much from ignorance, for he was fairly well read in the geography, and, perhaps, even in the topography, of the Holy Land; but he was quite aware that Oriental description would be altogether incomprehensible to the great multitude of his auditors. He described, therefore, the Wise Men, not as we, perhaps, see them, on their camels, solemnly pacing the vast sandy desert, whose sands reflected the glow of the silvery star. They passed



on their way through scenes, and villages, which might be recognised by the hearers, anxiously enquiring for the young Child. Turnpikes, if unknown in Palestine, our readers will, perhaps, remember as one of the

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great nuisances of even a very short journey in Wales in Christmas's day.

The wise men came up to the gate, — it was closed; they spoke to the keeper, inquiring, 'Do you know anything of the Child?'

The gatekeeper came to the door, saying, in answer to the question, 'You have threepence to pay for each of the asses.'

They explained, 'We did not know there was anything to pay; here is the money; but tell us, do you know anything of the young Child?'

No, the keeper did not even know what they meant. For they know nothing on the world's great highway of the Child sent for the redemption of man. But he said, 'You go on a little farther, and you will come to a blacksmith's shop; he has all the news, he knows everything, and he will be sure to be able to tell you all you want to know.'

So they paced along the road, following the star, till they came to the blacksmith's shop; and it was very full, and the blacksmith was very busy, but they spoke out loudly to him, and said, 'Where is the young Child?'

'Now,' said the blacksmith, 'it is of no use shouting that way; you must wait, you see I am busy; your asses cannot be shod for a couple of hours.'

'Oh, you mistake us,' said the wise men; 'we do not want our asses shod, but we want you to tell us, you, who know everything hereabouts, where shall we find the young Child.'

'I do not know,' said the blacksmith. For the world, in its bustle and trade, knows nothing, and cares nothing about the holy Child Jesus. 'But look you,' he said, 'go on, and you will come to the inn, the great public-house; everybody from the village goes there, they know all the news there.'

And so, with heavy hearts, they still pursued their way

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till they came to the inn; at the door, still resting on their asses, they inquired if any one knew of the Child, the wonderful Child.

But the landlord said, 'Be quick! Evan, John, where are you? bring out the ale — the porter — for these gentlemen.'

'No,' they said, 'we are too anxious to refresh ourselves but tell us, hereabouts has been born the wonderful Child; he is the desire of all the nations; look there, we have seen his Star, we want to worship him. Do you know?'

'Not I,' said the landlord. For pleasure knows nothing of him through whom the secrets of all hearts are revealed. 'Plenty of children born hereabouts,' said the landlord; 'but I know nothing of him whom you seek.' And he thought them a little mad, and was, moreover, a little cross because they would not dismount and go into the inn. 'However,' he said, 'there is an old Rabbi lives in a lane hard by here; I think I have heard him say something about a Child that should be born, whose name should be called Wonderful. See, there is the way, you will find the old man.'

So again they went on their way; and they stopped before the house of the old Rabbi, and knocked, and the door was opened; and here they left their asses by the gate, and entered in; and they found the old Rabbi seated with his Hebrew books, and chronicles about him, and he was strangely attired with mitre and vestment. And now, they thought, they would be sure to learn, and that their journey might be at an end. And they told him of the Star, and that the young Child was born who should be King of the Jews, and they were come to worship him.

'Ah, yes,' he said, 'He is coming, and you shall see him, but not now. You shall behold him, but not nigh. See, it is written here — a Star shall rise out of Jacob. And when he comes it will be here he will show himself. Go back, and when he comes I will send word and let you

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know.' For even religious people, and Churches, cannot always guide seekers after God to him whom to know is life eternal.

But they were not satisfied, and they said, 'No, no, we cannot return; he is born, he is here!'

'There has been a great mistake made,' said the Rabbi; 'there have been some who have said that he is born, but it is not so.'

'But who has said it?' they inquired.

And then he told them of another priestly man, who lived near to the river hard by; and to him they went, and inquired for the young Child.

'Yes, yes,' he said, when they pointed him to the Star, 'yes, through the tender mercies of our God, the Dayspring from on high hath visited us; to

give light to them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death; to guide our steps into the way of peace.'

And so he guided them to the manger, and the Star rested and stood over the place where the young Child was, while they offered their gifts of gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

Sometimes the preacher, in another version which we have seen, appears to have varied the last guide, and to have brought the wise men, by a singular, and perfectly inadmissible anachronism, to the man in the camel's hair by the river's brink, who said, 'Behold, the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world!'

But one of the most effective of these sustained allegories, was founded on the text which speaks of the evil 'spirit walking through dry places, seeking rest, and finding none.' We believe we were first indebted for it, to the old dame who entertained us nearly forty years since in the Caerphilly Cottage.

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SATAN WALKING IN DRY PLACES.

The preacher appears to have been desirous of teaching the beautiful truth, that a mind preoccupied, and inhabited by Divine thoughts, cannot entertain an evil visitor, but is compelled to betake himself to flight, by the strong expulsive power of Divine affections. He commenced, by describing Satan as a vast and wicked, although invisible spirit, — somehow, as Milton might have described him; and the preacher was not unacquainted with the grand imagery of the *Paradise Lost*, in which the poet describes the Evil One, when he tempts, with wandering feet, the dark, unbottomed, infinite abyss, and, through the palpable obscure, seeks to find out his uncouth way. Christmas described him, as spreading his airy flight on indefatigable wings, determined to insinuate himself, through the avenues of sense, to some poor soul, and lure it to destruction. And, with this end flying through the air, and seeking for a dwelling-place, he found himself moving over one of those wide Welsh moors, the preacher so well knew, and had so often travelled; and his fiery, although invisible glance, espied a young lad, in the bloom of his days, and the strength of his powers, sitting on the box of his cart, driving on his way to the quarries for slate or lime.

'There he is,' said Satan 'his veins are full of blood, his bones are full of marrow. I will cast my sparks into his bosom, and set all his passions on fire; I will lead him on, and he shall rob his master, and lose his place, and find another, and rob again, and do worse; and lie shall go on from worse to worse, and then his soul shall sink, never to rise again, into the lake of fire.' But just then, as he was

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about to dart a fiery temptation into the heart of the youth, the evil one heard him sing,

Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,  
Pilgrim through this barren land  
I am weak, but thou art mighty,  
Hold me by thy powerful hand;  
Strong deliverer,  
Be thou still my Strength and Shield.

'Oh, but this is a dry place,' said the fiery dragon as he fled away.

But I saw him pass on [said the preacher] hovering, like a hawk or a vulture, in the air, and casting about for a suitable place where he might nestle his black wings; when, at the edge of the moor, he came to a lovely valley; the hills rose round it, it was a beautiful, still, meadow-like spot, watered by a lovely stream; and there, beneath the caves of a little cottage, he saw a girl, some eighteen years of age, a flower among the flowers: she was knitting, or sewing at the cottage door. Said Satan, 'She will do for me; I will whisper the evil thought in her heart, and she shall turn it over, and over again, until she learns to love it; and then the evil thought shall be an evil deed; and then she shall be obliged to leave her village, and go to the great town, and she shall live a life of evil, all astray from the paths of my Almighty Enemy. Oh, I will make her mine, and then, by-and-bye, I will cast her over the precipices, and she shall sink, sink into the furnace of divine wrath.' And so he hastened to approach, and dart into the mind of the maiden; but while he was approaching, all the hills and crags seemed to break out into singing, as her sweet voice rose, high and clear, chanting out the words,

Jesus, lover of my soul,  
Let me to thy bosom fly,  
While the nearer waters roll,  
While the tempest still is high.

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Other refuge have I none,  
 Hangs my helpless soul on thee;  
 Leave, ah, leave me not alone,  
 Still support, and comfort me.

‘This is a very dry place, too,’ said the dragon, as he fled away.

And so he passed from the valley among the hills, but with hot rage. ‘I will have a place to dwell in!’ he said; ‘I will somehow leap over the fences, and the hedges, of the purpose, and covenant, and grace of God. I do not seem to have succeeded with the young, I will try the old;’ for passing down the village street, he saw an old woman; she, too, was sitting at the door of her cot, and spinning on her little wheel. ‘Ah!’ said Satan, ‘it will be good to lay hold of her grey hairs, and make her taste of the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone.’ And he descended on the caves of the cot; but as he approached near, he heard the trembling, quavering voice of the aged woman murmuring to herself lowly, ‘For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee.’ And the words hurt the evil one, as well as disappointed him; they wounded him as he fled away, saying, ‘Another dry place!’

Ah, poor Devil! [exclaimed the preacher] and he usually so very successful! but he was quite unsuccessful that day. And, now, it was night, and he was scudding about, like a bird of prey, upon his black wings, and pouring forth his screams of rage. But he passed through another little Welsh village, the white cottages gleaming out in the white moonlight on the sloping hillside. And there was a cottage, and in the upper room there was a faint light trembling, and ‘Oh,’ said the Devil to himself, ‘Devil, thou hast been a very foolish Devil today, and there, in that room, where the lamplight is, old Williams is slowly, surely

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wasting away. Over eighty, or I am mistaken; not much mind left; and he has borne the burden and heat of the day, as they call it. Thanks to me, he has had a hard time of it; he has had very few mercies to be thankful for; he has not found serving God, I think, a very profitable business. Come, cheer up, Devil, it will be a grand thing if thou canst get him to doubt a bit, and then to despair a bit, and then to curse God, and die; that will make up for this day’s losses.’

Then he entered the room; there was the old man lying on the poor bed, and his long, thin, wasted hands and fingers lying on the coverlid; his eyes closed, the long silvery hair falling over the pillow. Now, Satan, make haste, or it will be too late; the hour is coming, there is even a stir in every room in the house: they seem to know that the old man is passing. But as Satan himself moved before the bed, to dart into the mind of the old man, the patriarch rose in bed, stretched forth his hands, and pinned his enemy to the wall, as he exclaimed, 'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me; thou preparest a table before me, in *the presence of mine enemy*; thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over; goodness and mercy, all the days of my life, dwell in the house of my God for ever.' Oh, *that* was a fearfully dry place! The old man sank back, it was all over; those words beat Satan down to the bottom of his own bottomless pit, glad to escape from such confusion and shame, and exclaiming, 'I will return to the place from whence I came, for this is too dry for me.'

This will, no doubt, be thought, by many, to be strange preaching; many would even affect to despise it, — perhaps would even regard it as a high compliment were we to say, they would feel exceedingly

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puzzled even if, by way of a change, they were called upon to use it. It appears, however, to have been a style exceedingly fascinating to the Welsh mind of that day; it told, it stirred up suggestions, awakened thoughts, and reclaimed and converted character; and we need not, therefore, stay to attempt any vindication of it.

We have inserted these very characteristic illustrations here, because they appear to have belonged to the Anglesey period. Such, then, was the teaching, the preaching, the truth, which, while it was his own truth, and sustained his own mind, gave to him such power, at once, amongst the Churches to which he immediately administered, and made him the object of such attraction, when visiting distant neighbourhoods.

It might have been thought — it has usually been the case, in the instances of other men — that such excursions as those we have described, would have interfered with the great success of his work in the ministry as a preacher, and with his efficiency as a pastor. That they did not, substantially, is clear from many evidences. There can be no doubt that his sermons were no off-hand productions; there was a careful, rigid, and patiently conscientious weighing of their material. All those which we possess, abundantly show this; and he entered with all

his heart, and mind, and strength into the work of preaching; but he never had an easy sphere; and yet, would his sermons have been greater had he been placed where the circle of his labour would have been narrower, and the means of his support more ready, and sufficient, and ample? Most likely not; but he weighed the entire work of the ministry in a manner which

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seems to us, sometimes, more like the sound thoughtfulness, and consideration of the theological Principal of a college, than a popular, or itinerant preacher. As an illustration of this, we may insert the following, very lengthy, but admirable letter to a young minister, written, we believe, some time nearer the close of his career than that we have just depicted:

DEAR BROTHER, — 1. Consider, in the first place, the great importance, to a preacher, of a blameless life. You must, like Timothy, 'flee youthful lusts,' as you would escape from beasts of prey; for there are kinds of beasts, living in the wilderness of man's corruption, that will charm, by means of their beautiful colours, those that walk among their haunts; there is no safety but by keeping from them, and adhering to such as live by faith, and watch, and pray. It will be well for you, while you travel through the coppice of youth, to keep from all appearance of evil. May you have grace to pass through the coppice of forbidden trees, without cutting your name into the bark of one of them, or you may be upbraided, at critical times, by those who may wish to prove that you are not better than themselves; even the iota, inserted by your hand, may be produced after many years.

2. I remember the words of Luther, that *reading, prayer, and temptation* are necessary to strengthen, and to purify the talents of a minister. Read, to extend your general knowledge, especially as to the plan of redemption, according to the Scriptures, in all its parts, from the election to the glorification; that you may, like a spiritual watchmaker, know all the relative cog-wheels, and be able to open them in the pulpit, and to connect them all by faith, hope, and charity, that they may occupy their own places, and exhibit their true results on the dial-plate; thus proving yourself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly

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dividing the word of truth. Be not like that thrasher, who presumptuously took his watch to pieces in the barn, and could not put it together again, but was obliged to carry it home in his handkerchief. The messengers of God, described in the book of Revelations, are full of eyes behind, and

before. You must use prayer to fetch strength out of Christ, like the homer to carry home the manna in, or the water-pot of the woman of Samaria. Without the prayer of faith, the preacher will have 'nothing to draw with,' from the well that is deep, — even *the deep things of God*. Temptation is requisite, to prove the nature of the metal of the preacher's character, and doctrine, — 'approved of God.' The piece of gold, in every true minister's ministry, must be tried in some furnace, prepared by Divine Providence. He must, therefore, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil his ministry, endure hardness, and affliction, and thus prove himself a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

3. Avail yourself, in the morning of your days, of every opportunity to acquire knowledge useful for the ministry. Let it be your constant aim, to turn every stream and rivulet of knowledge in the right direction, to facilitate the work of the ministry, for the good of souls, and the glory of God; as the bee, in all her excursions amongst the flowers of the gardens, and the hedges, gathers honey to enrich the hive, as the common treasury of the industrious race. Always have a book to read, instead of indulging in vain conversations. Strive to learn English, as you cannot have academical training. Learn your own mother-tongue well. Learn to write a good hand by frequent practice. Avoid vain conversation, instead of growth in knowledge. Remember this, that you cannot commit some loved sin in private, and perform the work of the ministry, in public, with facility and acceptance. For a preacher to fall into sin, be it a secret one, and to live in it, is as fatal, ultimately, as the cutting of Samson's hair. Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus against all corruption.

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4. With regard to the composition of your sermons: first, let the matter be evangelical. The doctrine of the Gospel is a mould from heaven, and not changed. It puts its own impress and shape on the professor that is melted into it, so that his justification, sanctification, and all his salvation, flow from the merits of Christ; and all through God's grace, and not of ourselves. The gospel, as a glass, should be kept clean and clear in the pulpit, that the hearers may see the glory of Christ, and be changed to the same image. Every duty is to be urged by evangelical motives. 'Let us have grace,' etc.

Hereby we can serve God in all the duties of the kingdom of heaven. The whole is summed up in living by faith, which worketh by love, to him that died for us, and rose again for our justification. Secondly, let your divisions be natural to the text. Take care that your interpretation accord with the contexts. Two or three general heads; avoid many. Four or five remarks you may make on each head; see that they are fairly in the truth of the text.



Thirdly, I am not inclined to make inferences, or applications, from the whole. When the preacher has expended his strength, or ingenuity, in endeavouring to impress, and apply the truth to the minds of his hearers, application seems to me to be doing again what has been effected already. The blacksmith does not put the horse-shoe in the fire, after he has nailed it to the hoof; and the cook does not spread the cloth again, when dinner is over. Fourthly, beware of long sermons, as well as long prayers. When there is but one preacher, he should not preach for more than an hour; when there are two, both should not be more than an hour and a half, that the worship may close within two hours; whenever this time is passed, coolness and fatigue ensue. To put three ministers to preach (in one meeting) is a modern corruption, and likely to make some progress in Wales; while the English, generally, have but one sermon in one service. They excel us herein; for

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we do not read that, on the day of Pentecost, Peter, James, and John, preached after each other; but Peter, 'one of the twelve,' delivered that successful sermon. When we lose sight of the Scriptures, and common sense, we are driven to extremes, though it be with the kindly purpose of respecting strange ministers, by putting them to preach.

5. Attend, also, my young brother, to your outward appearance in the pulpit. Beware of a proud, haughty appearance, with wandering eyes, and unfeeling countenance, so that the people utterly fail to see the man of God in you. We must, in order hereunto, have something like unto Moses, when he had been on the mount with God, that will indicate seriousness, love to souls, a spirit of prayer, zeal for Christ, and longing for the salvation of men; like unto those who have felt the fear of perdition ourselves, and the infinite value of salvation by God's grace; and that we wrestle with God in order to be useful to souls. These things must be imprinted on our appearance and deportment, having transformed us, in some measure, to a heavenly form and habit. Our outward conversation should be consistent herewith, or men will despise us as hypocrites, without the fear of God.

6. Avoid, my dear brother, all foolish bodily gestures.

7. We now come to the part of the subject upon which you are most anxious to have my thoughts: that refers to *the delivery of your sermons*. It is difficult to put general rules of rhetoric into execution. After reading all that has been said by Blair, Williams, Fuller, and the Archbishop of Cambray (Fenelon), who have spoken at length of Cicero and Demosthenes, it is easy, by endeavouring to follow them, to lose the spirit of the work, and thus, by seeking the form, to forfeit the life. Preach the gospel of the grace of God

intelligibly, affectionately, and without shame — all the contents of the great box, from predestination to glorification. It was the closing, and concealing, of this box that occasioned the opening of the venomous Mohammedan

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box, as well as that of Popery, together with all the vain legality that is to be found among Protestants, established and dissenting. It may be said, that they seek justification; but it is by the deeds of the law. The locking up, and the losing, of the doctrine of grace, through the merits of Christ, utterly destroyed the Jewish Church; for it was in the chest, which they locked up by their false interpolations of Scripture, that the 'things which belong to their peace' were contained; 'but now,' says the Redeemer, 'they are concealed from their eyes;' shut up under unbelief. 'The things that pertain to their peace' belong also to our peace, as Gentiles. The Deity of Christ, etc.; Redemption, etc. Excuse this digression, for the river of God's throne moved me along.

We were upon the best mode of delivering sermons for edification. It is not easy to reduce the rules of prudence into practice. I have seen some men, of the highest powers, who understood Greek better than their mother-tongue, attempting to preach according to rule, and to them the pulpit was like unto Gilboa; they neither affected themselves, nor their hearers. The difficulty was, the bringing of their regulations into natural practice. I saw one of those men, the most eminent for learning and genius, who found the right way, under the influence of a mighty fervency that descended upon him in the pulpit, so that his voice became utterly different from what it used to be, and his tongue at liberty, as though something was cut that had hitherto restrained his tongue, and affections, from natural exercise.

Here you have the sum, and substance, and mystery of all rules:— 1. Let the preacher influence himself; let him reach his own heart, if he would reach the hearts of others; if he would have others feel, he must feel himself. Dry shouting (or vociferation) will not do this. The shout of a man who does not himself feel the effect of what he says, hardens, instead of softening; locks, instead of opening the

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heart. 2. The elevation, and fire of the voice must accord with the fervency of the matter in the heart. A person said to me once, 'Mr Evans, you have not studied Dr Blair's *Rhetoric*.' That man, with his rules, was always as dry as Gilboa. 'Why do you say so,' replied I, 'when you just now saw hundreds weeping under the sermon? That could not be, had I not first of all been

influenced myself, which, you know, is the substance, and mystery, of all rules for speaking.' Wherever there is effect, there is life; and rules, without life, have no power. Now, brother, follow the natural course of affection, and voice. Raise not the voice while the heart is dry; but let the heart and affections shout first; let it commence within. Take this comparison:— Go to the blacksmith's shop; he first puts the piece of iron in the fire, and there is no sound of striking the anvil; he collects together the coals for heat; then he tells the boy, 'Blow!' while he masterfully manages the shovel, adjusting the coals, and asking sundry questions. He calmly looks at the fire heating the iron, and does not yet take hold of the hammer, nor order his assistants to use the sledge; but at length, seeing that the iron has attained the proper malleability, he takes it out, covered with sparkling fire, puts it on the anvil, handles the hammer, and orders his workman to take the larger one, and fashions it according to his pleasure; and so on, all day long. Here, observe, he does not beat the iron in order to make it hot, for without first heating it, the beating process is in vain. Equally vain is the hammer of vociferation, unless the matter is brought home with warmth into our hearts. We have often sought to produce effect, and to influence our hearers, much as though the smith merely put the iron in fire, and barely warmed it; it is contrary to the nature of things to use the hammer while the material is not duly tempered. Thus I have frequently, brother, found myself in preaching. You have, above, the mystery of all effective speaking, in Parliament, at the bar, and in the pulpit; remembering the difference

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in the subjects, and the sources of heat. In the pulpit, we speak of the deep things of God; and we are to pray for, and to expect warmth from the Divine Spirit. You complain that you cannot get your voice into a manageable key, and yet to speak with liveliness and power. Many, with a bad voice, well-governed, have become powerful speakers; while others, with a good voice, have, in consequence of not mastering a natural key, and not being able to move themselves, been most ineffective speakers. I would direct you to fix your voice at its natural pitch, which you may easily do; you may then, with facility, raise and lower it according to the subject in hand. If you commence in too high a key, you cannot keep it up long. First, you cannot modulate it as the occasion may require; and you fall into an unpliant, tedious monotony, and all natural cadence, and emphasis is lost. Without attuning the voice into the natural key, effective oratory is impossible. Secondly, remember, not to speak in your throat, or nostrils. If the former, you must soon become hoarse, and harsh loudness follows; the glory and vivacity are then departed, and instead of facility and cheerfulness, you have the roarings of death — the breath failing, with forced screams,

and harsh whisperings. Thirdly, raise your voice to the roof of your mouth; do not close your teeth against it, neither imprison it in the nostrils, but open your mouth naturally, and keep your voice within your lips, where it will find room enough to play its high, and its low intonations, to discourse its flats, and sharps, to utter its joys, and sorrows. When you thus have your voice under control, instead of you being under its control, dragging you about in all disorder, you will find it your servant, running upon your errands, up and down, all through the camp, alternating in energy, and pliability, to the end of the sermon; and not becoming cold and weak, scarcely bearing you through, like Bucephalus, Alexander the Great's horse, which, mortally wounded, just brought his master out of the battle, and then expired. Fourthly,

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remember, not to press too much upon your breath, when you have attained the natural use of it, by using very long sentences, without pausing at proper places, which (pauses) will add to the effect, as well as preserve the voice; so that you will be, like the smith, ready to strike the duly-tempered metal, prepared to give the suitable emphasis at the end of the paragraph. Let the matter raise the voice, do not attempt by the voice to elevate the subject. Fifthly, use words easily understood, that the people's affections may not cool, while the mind is sent to a dictionary, to understand your terms. The great work, the exploit of a minister, is to win the heart to believe in Christ, and to love him. Sixthly, bear in mind, also, the necessity of keeping the voice free, without (affected) restraint; give every syllable, and every letter, its full and proper sound. (It is one of the peculiarities and excellences of the Welsh language, and proves its Eastern origin.) No letter has to complain that it is (condemned to be) mute, and neglected, and has no utterance. In English, many letters have this complaint; but in Welsh, every letter, even as the knights at the round table of King Arthur, has, without preference, its own appropriate and complete sound. Seventhly, remember, also, to enunciate clearly the last syllable in every Welsh word; that will cause your most distant hearer to understand you; while, without this, much of what you say must be inevitably lost. Eighthly, in order to all this, carefully attend to the manner of the best, and ablest preachers, and imitate, not their weaknesses, but their excellences. You will observe, that some heavenly ornament, and power from on high, are visible in many ministers when under the Divine irradiation, which you cannot approach to by merely imitating their artistic excellence, without resembling them in the spiritual taste, fervency, and zeal which Christ and his Spirit 'work in them.' This will cause, not only your being like unto them in gratefulness of action, and

propriety of elocution, but will also induce prayer for the anointing from the Holy

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One, which worketh mightily in the inward man. This is the mystery of all effective preaching. We must be endowed with power from on high: here is the grand inward secret. Without this, we (often) perceive that it is impossible, with all academic advantages, to make good preachers of young men from any college, in the Church of England, or among the dissenters, in the English or the Welsh language. A young preacher must have the mystery of being 'constrained' by 'the love of Christ'; 'the gift of God' must be kindled in him; and he alone, by the Spirit, can sustain that gift by the Holy Spirit. 'Who is sufficient for these things?' May the Lord give you, brother, a good understanding in all things; and preserve in you the heavenly gift by the Holy Ghost! may it be rekindled where it is, and contributed where it is not! Without it, we can do nothing for the glory of God, or the good of souls.

Affectionately,

CHRISTMAS EVANS.

Sometimes Mr Evans occupied such slight leisure as he could command, by a contribution to the *Seren Gomer*, an extensively-circulating magazine of the Principality. Several of these papers are interesting; we select one, illustrating the bent of the writer's mind; it was published January 1821, — 'An inquiry into the meaning of the singular language of the Apostle, his wish

TO BE ACCURSED FROM CHRIST.

'For I could wish that I were accursed (anathema) from Christ for my brethren,' etc. (Romans 9:3). Many things, most incredible to me, have been said in exposition of this passage; and principally, I think, from not observing that the word 'anathema' is used in two senses, — the one good, and the other bad. Barclay analyses into four acceptations;

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and, according to the first, it signifies that which is devoted, or set apart, to God, in a good sense. According to Parkhurst, it signifies, in Luke 21:5, a consecrated gift, set apart for the temple of God, and to his service alone. The word translated gifts is *anathemasi*. In the second book of Maccabees, 9:8, the word denotes a consecrated gift. The word in the LXX., according

to Parkhurst, is synonymous with the Hebrew word *CHEREM*, and signifies, generally, that which is entirely separated from its former condition, and use. If so, why should we not understand Paul, in the text, as expressing his ardent desire that he should be separated, *a devoted thing*, for the conversion of his brethren according to the flesh? Having gone thus far in explanation, we offer the following interpretation: 'For I could wish that I were *anathema*, or a gift, in my labours as an apostle, and a preacher of the Gospel, from Christ, for the spiritual benefit of my brethren according to the flesh, principally, instead of being an apostle to the Gentiles, as I am appointed; theirs is the adoption, etc.; and I could also wish that I, also, as an apostle, were an especial gift of Christ for their distinctive service.' If this be correct, there is no necessity for changing the tense of the verb from the present to the perfect, and reading, 'I could wish,' as 'I have wished;' while it saves us from putting in the Apostle's mouth a wish entirely opposed to the 'new creation,' to the plan of Divine grace, and to the glory of God; for it is certain that it is quite in opposition to all this, for a man to desire to live in sin, and to be accursed for ever, — and that cannot for a moment be predicated of the Apostle of the Gentiles. I humbly ask some learned correspondent, whether there is anything in the original text with which this exposition will not harmonise.

CHRISTMAS EVANS.

This letter led to some unsympathetic criticism, and reply. Christmas Evans wrote a vindication of

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his former views, which may be not uninteresting to our readers, as illustrating a phase of his intellectual character. It appeared in the *Seren Gomer* for 1822:

MR GOMER, — If you please, publish the following, in defence of my former letter on Romans 9:3, and in reply to your correspondent, *Pen Tafar*.

It is admitted, on all hands, that the words in the question express the highest degree of love to the Jews. Let us, now, put the different expositions before the reader, and then let him judge which of them contains the greatest harmony and fitness; *ie*, first, to express love to the Jews; second, the best adapted to bring about their salvation; third, the most consistent with supreme love to Christ; and fourth, within the confines of sinlessness.

I. Many learned men set forth the Apostle as having formed this desire when he was an enemy to Christ. This they maintain by tracing the word *anathema* throughout the Greek Scriptures, and the Hebrew word *cherem*, of which it is the synonym. *Anathema*, they say, always signifies 'without an

exception,' a separation, or devotement of a beast, a city, or something else, to irredeemable destruction (Leviticus 27:29). The devoted thing was not to be redeemed, but certainly to be put to death (Galatians 1:9). 'Let him be *accursed*,' says Paul of the angel that would preach another gospel. 'If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be *anathema maranatha*,' 'accursed when the Lord cometh.' But who *can* believe that this is the meaning of the word in the passage before us? I say, with Dr Gill, 'This never can be the signification.' What probability is there that Paul would swear, calling Jesus Christ to witness, to his ancient enmity against him? This was notorious enough throughout the whole country. No asseveration was necessary to prove *Paul's Persecuting spirit*.

Again, how could that which he formerly had been,

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prove, he now having denied himself, his old persecuting spirit, and, being deeply ashamed on the account, prove his present love to the Jews? How did his former love to Satan prove his present love to the Jews?

2. Others say that it is Paul's wish as a Christian, whatever *anathema* means. I believe it is his desire as a Christian; otherwise I see not how it could be an instance of his love to his brethren according to the flesh. Several authors maintain that Paul was willing, *for the sake of saving his nation, to part with his interest in Christ, and to perish for ever*. Peter Williams and Matthew Henry give this interpretation. But, seriously, how can a person persuade himself to believe this? Would not the Apostle, in this case, love his nation more than Christ, and be accordingly unworthy of Christ? This is opposed to a principle of our nature, which never can desire its own destruction; to the principle of grace, which loves Christ above all things on earth, and in heaven. Such a desire would make Paul a devil.

3. Others suppose that Paul here speaks inconsiderately, in a kind of ecstasy, carried away by a stream of affection to his people. Who can believe this without giving up Paul's inspiration, even when he solemnly appeals to Christ?

4. Another notion is, that the Apostle was willing, and desirous to be excommunicated from the Church of Christ upon earth, and to be deprived of its ordinances. How can this, again, be considered as consistent with love to Christ, and his Church? What tendency could his leaving the Church have to induce the Jews to enter it? This is contrary to the whole course of the Divine command, and promises: God will give his people an everlasting home, and place in his house.

5. Some say, it is an *hyperbole*. To confirm this, Exodus 32:32 is quoted as a case in point: '*Blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book, which thou hast written.*' This is not the book of eternal life, but the book of the dispensation,

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in which Moses was leader, and mediator. '*I would,*' he says, '*give up my office.*' God rejected the request: 'Lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken to thee.' It was not for Israel, nor a condition of forgiveness to them, but for himself, that Moses said, 'Blot my name out of thy book.' All this gives but little assistance to understand the Apostle. The two spiritual men do not stand on the same ground. Moses seeks the obliteration of his name, unless Israel was pardoned. Paul seeks a work, and an office, in order to the forgiveness of his nation.

6. Further, it is supposed to be proper to modify — to soften — the meaning of the word *anathema*, as signifying, sometimes, anything devoted to God, and that never could, afterwards, be appropriated to any other service; and here, to understand it in that softened sense, signifying that Paul was willing for the Redeemer to make him a devoted thing — a martyr for the truth, for the good of the Jewish nation. This is substantially the opinion of Thomas Charles, and Dr Gill. Christmas Evans's theory is erected on this ground — the modified sense of the word; thus, 'I could wish myself entirely set apart, by Christ, to the service of my people, for their spiritual good; I should have been glad, had I my choice, to have been an Apostle, separated to them alone, and not to the Gentiles, with my dwelling, and labours, amongst them, and to die a martyr for the truth, even the most horrible death that could be devised, if Christ had appointed me hereto.' If 'PT' says this is a new interpretation of Christmas Evans's, the answer is, No, but a legitimate extension of a former one; for he did not intend, nor did his words import, the separation of martyrdom, or the most anathematised sufferings, from Paul for his kinsmen according to the flesh.

7. Is it not plain, and does not 'PT' see, that this view is superior to the former five, and that it takes in, and is an improving addition to the latter of the five, as to its fitness to express the Apostle's great love to his people, without

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destroying his love to Christ, as well as to bring about the salvation of the Jews by proper means? How could the death of the Apostle contribute to the conversion of the Jews, unless he died as *an apostate of the circumcision?*

It appears to have been towards the close of the Anglesey period, that he was thrown into a panic of fear, by a threat of a legal prosecution, on



account of some chapel debts, for which, of course, he was regarded as responsible. 'They talk,' he said, 'of casting me into a court of law, where I have never been, and I hope I shall never go; but I will cast them, first, into the court of Jesus Christ.' We have seen that he was in the habit of putting on paper his prayers, and communions with God. It was a time of severe trial to him. He says, 'I knew there was no ground of action, but, still, I was much disturbed, being, at the time, sixty years of age, and having, very recently, buried my wife.' He continues, 'I received the letter at a monthly meeting, at one of the contests with spiritual wickedness in high places. On my return home, I had fellowship with God, during the whole journey of ten miles, and, arriving at my own house, I went upstairs to my own chamber, and poured forth my heart before the Redeemer, who has in his hands all authority, and power.' And the following seem to be the pathetic words in which he indulged:

O blessed Lord! in thy merit I confide, and trust to be heard. Lord, some of my brethren have run wild; and forgetting their duty, and obligations to their father in the Gospel, they threaten me with the law of the land. Weaken, I beseech thee, their designs in this, as thou didst wither the arm of Jeroboam; and soften them, as thou didst soften

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the mind of Esau, and disarmed him of his warlike temper against thy servant Jacob, after the wrestling at Penueel. So disarm them, for I do not know the length of Satan's chain in this case, and in this unbrotherly attack. But thou canst shorten the chain as short as it may please thee. Lord, I anticipate them in point of law. They think of casting thine unworthy servant into the little courts here below; but I cast my cause into the High Court, in which thou, gracious Jesus, art the High Chancellor. Receive thou the cause of thine unworthy servant, and send him a writ, or a notice, immediately — sending into their conscience, and summoning them to consider what they are doing. Oh, frighten them with a summons from thy court, until they come, and bow in contrition at thy feet; and take from their hands every revengeful weapon, and make them deliver up every gun of scandal, and every sword of bitter words, and every spear of slanderous expressions, and surrender them all at thy cross. Forgive them all their faults, and clothe them with white robes, and give them oil for their heads, and the organ, and the harp of ten strings, to sing, for the trampling of Satan under our feet by the God of peace.

I went up once [he says] and was about ten minutes in prayer; I felt some confidence that Jesus heard. I went up again with a tender heart; I could not

refrain from weeping with the joy of hope that the Lord was drawing near to me. After the seventh struggle I came down, fully believing that the Redeemer had taken my cause into his hands, and that he would arrange, and manage for me. My countenance was cheerful, as I came down the last time, like Naaman, having washed himself seven times in the Jordan; or Bunyan's Pilgrim, having cast his burden at the foot of the cross, into the grave of Jesus. I well remember the place — the little house adjoining the meeting-house, at Cildwrn, where I then resided — in which this struggle took place; I can call it Penuel. No weapon

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intended against me prospered, and I had peace, at once, to my mind, and in my (temporal) condition. I have frequently prayed for those who would injure me, that they might be blessed, even as I have been blessed. I know not what would have become of me, had it not been for these furnaces in which I have been tried, and in which the spirit of prayer has been excited, and exercised in me.

It is scarcely necessary to add, that the threat was never executed, nor did poor Christmas, apparently, hear anything further of the matter; but we have seen how great was the trouble, and agitation it caused him, while the fear was upon him. It is very affecting to find that this great, this saintly, and earnest minister, had upon his heart, and mind, the burden of all the chapel-debts connected with his denomination in Anglesey, while he was minister there.

It might have been thought that the ministerial course of Christmas Evans would close in Anglesey, where he had laboured so long, and so effectually. He was, now about sixty years of age, but there was little light just now, in the evening-time of his life; indeed, clouds of trouble were thickening around him. It often seems that trouble, in the ministerial life, comes exactly at that moment when the life is least able to stand, with strength, against it; and, certainly, in the life of Christmas Evans, sorrows gathered, and multiplied at the close.

Chief among these must be mentioned, beyond any doubt, the death of the beloved companion of all the Anglesey life, his good wife, Catherine; she left him in 1823. She was eminently, and admirably fitted to be the wife of such a man as Christmas. Somewhat younger than her husband, she supplied

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many attributes of character, to him most helpful; she was not an enthusiast, but she was a Christian, with real, deep, and devout

convictions. We have no lengthy accounts of her; but little side-lights, a kind of casemented window, reveal a character at once affectionate, beautiful, and strong.

We have seen that their home was the region of self-denial, and her husband long remembered, and used to tell, how 'if there happened to be on our table one thing better than the other, she would, modestly, but cheerfully and earnestly, resist all importunity to partake of it until she ascertained that there was enough for both.' What a little candle such a sentence as this is, but what a light it sheds over the whole room! She did not pretend to be her husband; he filled his larger sphere, and she, in all her manifold, gentle ways, sought to give him rest. Surely she adds another name to the long catalogue of good wives. She reminds us of Lavater's wife, and some little incidents in that Cildwrn cottage call up memories from the manse of St Peter's Church, and the shadows of the old Lindenhof of Zurich, where probably life did not put on a gayer apparel, or present more lavish and luxurious possibilities, than in the poor parsonage of Anglesey.

It is incredible, almost, to read what the good Catherine did, poor — to our thinking, miserable — as was the income of her husband. Her hand was most generous; how she did it, what committee of ways and means she called together, in her thoughtful mind, we do not know, — only, that she, constantly, found some food to give to poor children, and needy

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people; unblest by children of her own, she employed her fingers in making clothes for the poor members, and families, of the Church. There was always help for the poor hungry labourer passing her cottage; the house was always open for the itinerant minister travelling on his way to some 'publication,' and she was always ready to minister to his necessities with her own kind hands. Her husband often thought that the glance she gave upon a text shed light upon it. She never had robust health, but she accompanied her husband on several of his longer journeys through the greater part of Wales, — ah, and some of them in the winter, through storms of rain, and snow, and hail, along dangerous roads too, across difficult ferries; and she was uniformly cheerful! What an invaluable creature, what a blessed companion! A keener observer of character, probably, from what we can gather, than her husband; a sharper eye, in general, to detect the subterfuges of selfishness and conceit.

One mighty trial she had before she died; she had, in some way, been deeply wounded, grievously injured, and hurt, and she found it hard to forgive; she agonised, and prayed, and struggled; and before she was called to eternity, she was able to feel that she had forgiven, and buried the memory of the injuries in the love and compassion of the Redeemer. Her husband had to give her up, and at a time, perhaps, when he needed her most. The illness was long, but great strength was given to her, and at last the release came. There was mourning in the Cildwrn cottage. The last night of her life she repeated a beautiful, and comfortable Welsh hymn, and then,

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ejaculating three times, 'Lord Jesus, have mercy upon me!' she breathed forth her quiet, affectionate, and hopeful spirit, into her Saviour's hands, and left her husband all alone, to bear the burden of her departure, and other griefs, and troubles which were crowding upon him.

Other troubles, — for, in what way we need not attempt too curiously to inquire, — the pastorate gave to the poor old pastor little, or no peace. There were strong Diotrephesian troubles agitating the great preacher's life. The Churches, too, which Christmas Evans had raised, and to which, by his earnest eloquence, and active, organising mind, he had given existence, grew restive, and self-willed beneath his guidance, refusing his advice with reference to ministers he suggested, and inviting others, whose appointment he thought unwise.

Poor Christmas! Did he ever ask himself, in these moments, when he thought of his lost Catherine, and felt the waves of trouble rising up, and beating all round him, — did he ever ask himself whether the game was worth the candle? whether he was a mere plaything in life, whom that arch old player, Death, had outplayed, and defeated? Did it ever seem to him that it was all a vanity, ending in vexation of spirit? The life most beloved had burnt out, the building he had spent long years to erect, seemed only to be furnished for discomfort, and distraction.

Did he begin to think that the wine of life was only turning into acrid vinegar, by-and-by to end with the long sleeping-draught? Of life's good things, in the worldling's sense of good, he had tasted few; most clearly he had never desired them. He

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had never the opportunity, nor had he ever desired to be like a Nebuchadnezzar, roaming the world like a beast, and pasturing at a

dinner-table, as upon a sort of meadow-land of the stomach, sinking the soul to the cattle of the field; but he might have expected that his Church, and Churches, would be a joy, a rest, a pleasant meadow-land to him. The body was certainly crumbling to decay: would the ideas also prove like frescoes, which could be washed out by tears, or removed, and leave the soul only a desolate habitation, waiting for its doom of dust?

We do not suppose that, amidst his depressing griefs, these desolating beliefs, or unbeliefs, had any mastery over him. What did the men who tormented him know of those mighty springs of comfort, which came from those covenants he had made with God, amidst the lonely solitudes of his journeyings among the wild Welsh hills? He had not built his home, or his hopes, on the faithfulness of men, or the vitality of Churches; the roots of his faith, as they had struck downward, were now to bear fruit upward.

There was a fine healthfulness in his spirit. There is nothing in his life to lead one to think that he had ever been much intoxicated by the fame which had attended him; he appears to have been always beneath the control of the great truths in which he believed, and it was not the seductive charms of popularity for which he cared, but the power of those truths to bring light, conviction, and rest, to human souls. All his sermons look that way; all that we know of his preaching, and experience, turns in that direction.

Rose-leaves are said to act as an emetic, and have

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much the same effect on the constitution as senna-leaves. It is so with those sweet things which fame offers to the imagination; the conserves of its fragrance, by-and-by, become sickening. So, the robust nature of our fine old friend had to rise over grief, and disappointment, and unfriendliness, and diaconal dictation and impertinence. Only one thing he remembered. He appears to have been sustained, even as Edward Irving was, in his conviction that the truth of his message, the lamp of the ministry which he carried, gave to him a right, and a prerogative which he was not to relinquish; he had proved himself, he had proved the Spirit of God to be in him of a truth. He was not a wrangler, not disposed to maintain debates as to his rights; nor was he disposed to yield to caprice, faction, and turbulence; and so, he began to think of

retiring, old as he was, from the field, the fragrance of which had proclaimed that the Lord had blessed him there.

Christmas Evans, as he draws near to the close of his work in Anglesey, only illustrates what many a far greater, and many a lesser man than he, have alike illustrated. There is a fine word among the many fine words of that great, although eccentric teacher, John Ruskin:—‘It is one of the appointed conditions of the labour of man, that in proportion to the time between the seed-sowing and the harvest, is the fulness of the fruit; and that generally, therefore, the further off we place our aim, and the less we desire to be the witnesses of what we have laboured for, the more wide and rich will be the measure of our success.’ This was, no doubt, the consolation of Christmas; but as we look upon him, a friendly

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voice reminds us, that, as he leaves Anglesey, he realises very much of Robert Browning’s soliloquy of the martyred patriot:—

Thus I entered, and thus I go!  
In triumphs people have dropped down dead.  
Paid by the world, — what dost thou owe  
Me? God might question; now, instead,  
’Tis God shall repay! I am safer so.

So the candlestick was removed out of its place in Anglesey, and Anglesey soon, but too late, regretted the removal. Christmas Evans, however, seems to illustrate a truth, which may be announced almost as a general law, from the time of the Saviour and his Apostles down to our own, that those who have wrought most unselfishly, and serviceably for the cause of God, and the well-being of man, had to receive their payment in themselves, and in the life to come. In proportion to the greatness of their work was the smallness of their remuneration here.

If we refer to the painful circumstances in connection with the close of the ministry of Christmas Evans at Anglesey, it is, especially, to notice how his faith survived the shock of surrounding trouble. He himself writes:

Nothing could preserve me in cheerfulness and confidence under these afflictions, but the assurance of the faithfulness of Christ; I felt assured that I had much work yet to do, and that my ministry would be instrumental in bringing many sinners to God. This arose from my trust in God, and in the spirit of prayer that possessed me; I frequently arose above all my sorrows.

And again he writes:

As soon as I went into

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the pulpit during this period, I forgot my troubles, and found my mountain strong; I was blessed with such heavenly unction, and longed so intensely for the salvation of men, and I felt the truth like a hammer in power, and the doctrine distilling like the honey-comb, and like unto the rarest wine, that I became most anxious that the ministers of the county should unite with me to plead the promise, 'If any two of you agree touching anything,' etc. Everything now conspired to induce my departure from the island: the unyielding spirit of those who had oppressed, and traduced me; and my own most courageous state of mind, fully believing that there was yet more work for me to do in the harvest of the Son of Man, my earnest prayers for Divine guidance, during one whole year, and the visions of my head at night, in my bed — all worked together towards this result.

Few things we know of are more sad than this story.

It was an affecting sight, [says Mr William Morgan, quoted by Mr Rhys Stephen in his Memoir] to see the aged man, who had laboured so long, and with such happy effects, leaving the sphere of his exertions under these circumstances; having laboured so much to pay for their meeting-houses, having performed so many journeys to South Wales for their benefit, having served them so diligently in the island, and passed through so many dangers; now some of the people withheld their contributions, to avenge themselves on their own father in the Gospel; others, while professing to be friends, did little more; while he, like David, was obliged to leave his city, not knowing whether he should ever return

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to see the ark of God, and his tabernacle in Anglesey again. Whatever misunderstanding there was between Mr Evans, and some of his brethren, it is clear that his counsels ought to have been received with due acknowledgement of his age, and experience, and that his reputation should have been energetically vindicated. I am of opinion, I am quite convinced, that more strenuous exertions should have been made to defend his character, and to bear him, in the arms of love, through the archers, and not to have permitted him to fall in the street without an advocate.

The whole aim of Mr Evans's life, as far as we have been able to read it, was to get good from heaven, in order that he might do good on earth. Clearly, he never worked with any hope of a great earthly reward for any personal worthiness; perhaps there arose a sense that he had always been unjustly remunerated, that burdens had been laid upon him he

ought not to have been called upon to bear; and now the sense of injustice sought, as is so frequently the case, to vindicate itself by ingratitude. It seems so perpetually true, in the sad record of the story of human nature, that it is those who have injured us who seek yet further to hurt us.



## CHAPTER 5

### *CONTEMPRORARIES IN THE WELSH PULPIT — WILLIAMS OF WERN*

The Great Welsh Preachers unknown in England — The Family of the Williamses — Williams of Pantycelyn — Peter Williams — Evan Williams — Dr Williams — Williams of Wern — The immense Power of his Graphic Language — Reading and Thinking — Instances of his Power of Luminous Illustration — Early Piety — A Young Preacher — A Welsh Gilboa — Admiration of, and Likeness to, Jacob Abbot — Axiomatic Style — Illustrations of Humour — The Devils — Fondness for Natural Imagery — Fondness of Solitude — Affecting Anecdotes of Dying Hours — His Daughter — His Preaching characterised — The Power of the Refrain in the Musician and the Preacher, ‘Unto us a Child is born.’

WE pause here for a short time, in our review of the career, and character, and pulpit power of Christmas Evans, to notice some of those eminent men, who exercised, in his day, an influence over the Welsh mind. We will then notice some of those preachers, of even the wilder Wales, who preceded these men. So little is known of many of them in England, and yet their character, and labours, are so essentially and excellently instructive, that we feel this work, to those who are interested, to be not one of supererogation. The men, their country, the people among whom they moved, their work in it, the singular faith in, and love for preaching, for the

Words these men had to utter, — they must seem, to us, remarkable, and memorable. In this time of ours, when preaching, and all faith in preaching, is so rapidly dying out, that it may be regarded, now, as one of the chief qualifications of a candidate for the pulpit, that he cannot preach a sermon, but can ‘go to those who sell, and buy for

himself' — this study of what was effected by a living voice, with a real live soul behind it, must seem, as a matter of mere history, noteworthy. And first among those who charmed the Welsh ear, in the time of Christmas Evans, we mention Williams of Wern.

It is not without reason, that many eminent Welshmen can only be known, and really designated after the place of their birth, or the chief scene of their labours. The family of the Williamses, for instance, in Wales, is a very large one — even the eminent Williamses; and William Williams would not make the matter any clearer; for, always with tenderest love ought to be pronounced the name of that other William Williams, or, as he is called, Williams of Pantycelyn — the obscure, but not forgotten, Watts of Wales. His hymns have been sung over the face of the whole earth, and long before missionary societies had been dreamed of, he wrote, in his remote Welsh village,

O'er the gloomy hills of darkness;

and he has cheered, and comforted many a Zion's pilgrim by his sweet song,

Guide me, O thou great Jehovah!

He was born in 1717, and died in 1791. This

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sweet and sacred singer ought to receive more than this passing allusion. Little is known of him in England; and it is curious that Mr Christopher's volume on *Hymn Writers and their Hymns* neither mentions his hymns, nor his name.

A writer in the *Quarterly Review*, evidently not very favourable to that denomination of religious sentiment which Williams represented, has spoken of the 'unmixed pleasure' his name and character awakens: 'He was a man in whom singular purity of sentiment added grace to a truly original genius.' 'His direction to other composers was, never to attempt to compose a hymn until they feel their souls near heaven. His precept, and his practice, in this respect, have been compared to those of Fra Angelico.' Would that some competent Welsh pen would render for us, into English, more of these notes of the sweet singer of Pantycelyn.

William Williams came from the neighbourhood of Llandovery, the parish of Pritchard of the 'Welshman's Candle;' he was, as his hymns would indicate, well educated; he studied for, and entered upon the medical profession; but, converted beneath the preaching of Howell

Harris, in Talgarth churchyard, he turned from medicine to the work of the ministry. He was a member of the Established Church; he sought, and received ordination, and deacon's orders, but, upon application for priest's orders, he was refused. He then united himself with the Calvinistic Methodists, but still continued to labour with the great Daniel Rowlands, at Llangeitho. His sermons were, like his hymns, often sublime, always abounding in notes of sweetness. During the forty

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three years of his ministry, it is said, he travelled about 2,230 miles a year, making in all 95,890 miles! He wrote extensively, also, in prose. There is a handsome edition of his works in the Welsh language, and an English edition of some of his hymns. Among the most beautiful, our readers will remember —

Jesus, lead us with thy power  
Safe into the promised rest.

This was William Williams of Pantycelyn.

Then, there was Peter Williams, a famous name in the Principality, and of about the same period as Williams of Pantycelyn. No man of his time did so much to cultivate religious literature in Wales. He was a great preacher, and an exemplary man; when a minister within the Church of England, he was persecuted for his opinions, and practices; and, when he left that communion, he suffered even a more bitter persecution from his Methodist brethren. His life, and his preaching, appear to have been full of romantic incidents.

Then there was Evan Williams, who is spoken of as a seraphic man, and whose life appears to justify the distinctive designation, although he died at the age of twenty-nine, very greatly in consequence of ill-usage received in persecution.

Then, in England, we are better acquainted with Daniel Williams, the founder of what is called Dr Williams's Library; and who, in addition to this magnificent bequest, left sums of money to Wales for schools, endowments of ministers, annual grants of Bibles, and religious books, and for widows of ministers; by which Wales has received since, and

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receives now, the sum of about £700 a year. His ministry, however, was in London, at Hand Alley, Bishopsgate Street, nearly two hundred

years since. His works are contained in six octavo volumes; but he scarcely falls beneath the intention of these pages.

Besides these, there are many others; so that, as we said above, the name of Williams represents, not only a large family, but a family remarkable for Christian usefulness in Wales. But, in this catalogue of eminent preachers, Williams of Wern, among those of his name, is singularly eminent. He had that power, to which we have referred, of using his language in such a manner, that people, in a very awful way, realised the scenes he described. Dr Rees mentions of him, that when preaching on the resurrection of the dead, from the window of Ynysgan Chapel, Merthyr Tydfil, he so riveted the attention of the vast multitude, who were on the burying-ground before him, that when he reached the climax, all the crowd moved together in terror, imagining that the graves under their feet were bursting open, and the dead rising. Yet Williams was a singularly quiet preacher; these effects were wrought by the power of that language, so wonderfully fitted to work on the emotions of a very imaginative people, and which he knew how to play upon so well.

This great preacher had quite as remarkable an individuality as either of the eminent men, whose characters we may attempt faintly to portray. Christmas Evans, we have seen, led his hearers along through really dramatic, and pictorial representations. Davies was called the 'Silver Trumpet' of Wales; his voice was an instrument of overwhelming compass,

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and sweetness. Elias was a man of severe, and passionate eloquence, — all the more terrible, because held in the restraint of a perfect, and commanding will. Williams differed from all three; nor must it, for a moment, be said that he 'attained not to the first three.' His eminence was equal to theirs, and, in his own walk, he was quite as highly esteemed; but his department of power was completely different. Perhaps, he was less the vehicle of vehement passion than either Elias, or Davies; and it was altogether apart from his purpose to use the amazing imagery of Christmas Evans. His mind was built up of compacted thought; his images were not personifications, but analogies. So far as we are able to form a conception of him, his mind appears to have moved in a pathway of self-evidencing light.

Thus, if we were to speak of these four men as constituting a quartet in the harmony of the great Welsh pulpit, we should give to John Elias

the place of the deep bass; to Davies, the rich and melting soprano; to Christmas Evans the tenor; reserving, for Williams of Wern, the place of the alto. His teaching was eminently self-evolved. None of the great Welsh preachers dealt much with pen, and paper. They wrought out their sermons on horseback, or whilst moving from place to place. With Williams it was especially so. Two ministers called upon him in 1830. One of them was something of a bookworm, and he asked him if he had read a certain book which had just been published. Williams said he had not. 'Have you,' continued his friend, 'seen so-and-so?' naming another work. 'No, I have not.' And, presently, a third was

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mentioned, and the answer was still in the negative. 'I'll tell you what,' said Mr Williams, 'you read too much; you do not think sufficiently. My plan in preparing sermons is to examine the connection of a passage, extract its principle, and think it over in my own mind. I never look at a Commentary, except when completely beaten.'

It has often been said that, in the very proportion in which eloquence is effective, and commanding in delivery, in the degree in which it is effective as *heard*, it is impossible to be *read*; and, with some measure of exception, this is, no doubt, true. Williams, certainly, is an illustration of this general principle; yet he was, perhaps, one of the most luminous of speakers; only, this alone, without accompanying passion, does not make the orator. Take the following as an illustration of his manner. On ejaculatory prayer:

Ejaculatory prayer is the Christian's breath; the secret path to his hiding-place; his express to heaven in circumstances of difficulty, and peril; it is the tuner of all his religious feelings; it is his sling, and stone, with which he slays the enemy, ere he is aware of it; it is the hiding of his strength; and, of every religious performance, it is the most convenient. Ejaculatory prayer is like the rope of a belfry; the bell is in one room, and the handle, or the end of the rope which sets it a-ringing, in another. Perhaps the bell may not be heard in the apartment where the rope is, but it is heard in its own apartment. Moses laid hold of the rope, and pulled it hard, on the shore of the Red Sea; and though no one heard, or knew anything of it, in the lower

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chamber, the bell rang loudly in the upper one, till the whole place was moved, and the Lord said, Wherefore criest thou unto me?

This is luminous preaching. Unfortunately, as with others, we have very little — scarcely anything, indeed — left of Williams's pulpit talk.

William Williams was born in the year 1781, at Cwm-y-swn-ganol, in Merionethshire. There his parents occupied a farm, and were much respected. It seems, to us, an odd thing that their name was not Williams, but Probert, or Ap-Robert. He received his name of Williams from the singular practice, then prevalent in many parts of Wales, of converting, with the aid of the letter S, the Christian name of the father into the surname of the son. His father, although an orderly attendant upon Divine Worship, never made a public profession of religion; but his mother was a very pious, and exemplary member of the Calvinistic Methodist connexion.

The decisive hour of real religious conviction came to the youth when he was very young — only about thirteen years of age. Impressions deep, and permanent, were made on his mind, and heart, and at fifteen he was received into Church fellowship; but he suffered greatly from diffidence. Although it was expected of him, he could not pray either in the family, or in public, because, as he used to say, he would then be required, by all his acquaintance, to conduct himself like a perfect saint. But one night, when all the family, with the exception of his mother, and himself, had retired to rest, she engaged in prayer with him, and then said, 'Now,

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Will, dear, do you pray,' and he did so; and from this moment dated the commencement of his courage, and confidence.

It was in his twenty-second year that he entered Wrexham Academy. He was a thorough Welshman — a monoglot. He made some progress in the acquisition of English, and Greek; but he could never speak English fluently, and was advanced in life before he knew a word of it; and he used to say, 'When I violate English, I am like a child that breaks a window; I do not go back to mend it, but I run away, hoping I shall not be seen.' As linguists, most of his fellow-students outshone him; in the pulpit, from his very first efforts, he not only outshone them all, but it was soon seen that he was to transcend most of the teachers, and speakers of his time.

Perhaps his example will not commend itself to some of our modern writers, as to preparation for the ministry; for when he was recommended to continue longer under tuition, he said, 'No — no; for if so, the harvest will be over while I am sharpening my sickle.' Young as

he was, he took a singular view of the leadings of Providence, which, however, eminently marks the character of the man. He received a most unanimous invitation from a large, and influential Church at Horeb, in Cardiganshire, and was just about accepting the invitation, when the smaller, and, in comparison, quite insignificant sphere of Wern was put before him, with such commendations of the importance of the work as commanded his regards. He declined Horeb, and accepted Wern.

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His field of labour appears to have comprehended a cluster of villages, such as Llangollen, Rhuabon, and Rhosllanerchrugog; and in this region the greater number of his days were passed, excepting that brief period, towards the close of his life, when he became the minister of the great Welsh tabernacle in Cross Hall Street, Liverpool. But he left Wales with a heavy heart, amidst the pretty distinctly expressed dissatisfaction of the people of the Principality, who, however, still insisted on giving him his designation of Williams of Wern. Nor was he away from them long. His old Church continued unsettled, and after three years' ministry in Liverpool, he returned to Wern, to close his active, and useful life.

His pastorate consisted, really, of three places — Wern, Rhos, and Harwood. It was a singular circumstance, that whilst large crowds thronged round him at the first two places, and while his name was becoming as a sharp arrow through the whole Principality, he made little impression on Harwood. He used to say that Harwood had been of greater service to him than he had been to it; for it was 'the thorn in the flesh, lest he should be exalted above measure;' and if he ever felt disposed to be lifted up when he saw the crowds gathering round him at other places, he had only to go over to, or think about Harwood, and this became an effectual check to the feelings of self-inflation, in which he might have been tempted to indulge. It was so, whilst other places, Churches, and congregations, 'waited for him as for the rain, and opened their mouths wide as for the latter rain;'

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whilst upon other fields his 'doctrine distilled as the dew,' his stubborn Harwood appears to have been a kind of Welsh Gilboa, upon which no dew fell.

He was claimed as a kind of public property, and Churches at a distance seemed to think they had a right to his services, frequently very much to the irritation of his own people, to whom he might have given

the consolation he once administered to a brother minister: 'I understand that your people complain a good deal because you so often leave them. Well, let us be thankful that the reverse is not the case; for our own people might have tired of us, and be pleased to hear strangers, and preferred our absence, regarding us as "a vessel wherein is no pleasure".' Unfortunately, in such cases, congregations do not take the matter as philosophically as the old Scotswoman, who, when she met a neighbouring clergyman one Sabbath morning, wending his way to her own kirk, expressed her surprise at meeting him there, and then. He explained that it was an exchange of services. 'Eh, then,' said the old woman, 'your people will be having a grand treat the day.'

Something of the nature of Williams's mind, and his method of ministration, may be gathered from his exceeding admiration of Jacob Abbot, and especially his work, *The Corner Stone*. 'Oh! what a pity,' he said, 'that we cannot preach as this man writes.' But, so far as we have been able to judge from the scanty means we possess, he did preach very much after the manner of Jacob Abbot's writings. His words appear, first, to have been full of strong, seminal principles, and these were soon made

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clear in the light of very apt illustrations. Truly it has been said, that, first, the harper seizes his harp, and lays his hand firmly upon it, before he sweeps the strings. In an eminent manner, Williams gave to his people the sense, as soon as he commenced, that a subject was upon his heart, and mind; and he had a firm grasp of it, and from his creative mind each successive stroke was some fine, apt, happy evolution.

Illustration was his *forte*, but of a very different order from that of Christmas Evans; for instance, illustrating the contests of Christian creeds, and sects with each other, 'I remember,' he said, 'talking with a marine, who gave to me a good deal of his history. He told me the most terrible engagement he had ever been in, was one between the ship to which he belonged, and another English vessel, when, on meeting in the night, they mistook each other for a French man-of-war. Many persons were wounded, some slain; both vessels sustained serious damage from the firing, and, when the day broke, great was their surprise to find the English flag hoisted from the masts of both vessels, and that, through mistake, they had been fighting all night against their own countrymen. It was of no avail, now, that they wept together: the mischief was done. Christians,' said the preacher, 'often commit the same error in this



present world. One denomination mistakes another for an enemy; it is night, and they cannot see to recognise each other. What will be their surprise when they see each other in the light of another world! when they meet in heaven, after having shot at each other through the mists of the present

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state! How will they salute each other, when better known, and understood, after having wounded one another in the night! But they should wait till the dawn breaks, at any rate, that they may not be in danger, through any mistake, of shooting at their friends.'

The Welsh language is, as we suppose our readers well know, especially rich in compact, proverbial, axiomatic expressions. The Welsh triads are an illustration of this. The same power often appears in the pulpit. The latter, and more recent, languages are unfavourable to the expression of proverbs. Williams we should suppose to have been one of the most favourable exemplifications of this power. General tradition in Wales gives him this kind of eminence — poem, and proverb united in his sentences. We have not been able to obtain many instances of this; and we fear it must be admitted, that our language only in a clumsy way translates the pithy quaintness of the Welsh, such as the following: 'The door of heaven shuts from below, not from above. "Your iniquities have separated, saith the Lord."' 'Of all the birds,' he once said, 'the dove is the most easily alarmed, and put to flight, at hearing a shot fired. Remember,' he continued, 'that the Holy Ghost is compared to a dove; and if you begin to shoot at each other, the heavenly Dove will take wing, and instantly leave you. The Holy Spirit is one of love, and peace, not of tumult, and confusion. He cannot live amongst the smoke, and noise of fired shots: if you would grieve the Holy Spirit, and compel him to retire, you have only to commence firing at one another, and he will instantly

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depart.' 'The mind of man is like a mill, which will grind whatever you put into it, whether it be husk or wheat. The devil is very eager to have his turn at this mill, and to employ it for grinding the husk of vain thoughts. Keep the wheat of the Word in the mind; "keep thy heart with all diligence."'

Some of his words seem very odd, although he was a most grave, and serious man. Thus; 'Our prayers often resemble the mischievous tricks of

town-children, who knock at their neighbours' houses, and then run away; we often knock at Heaven's door, and then run off into the spirit of the world: instead of waiting for entrance, and answer, we act as if we were afraid of having our prayers answered.' Again: 'There are three devils which injure, and ravage our Churches, and congregations, — the singing devil, the pew-letting devil, and the Church officers' appointment devil: they are of the worst kind of devils, and this kind goeth not out but by prayer, and fasting.' 'The old ministers,' he used to say, 'were not much better preachers than we are, and, in many respects, they were inferior to us; but they had a success attendant upon their ministry that can now seldom be seen. They prayed more than we do. It was on his knees that Jacob became a prince; and if we would become princes, we must be more upon our knees. We should be successful as our fathers, could we be brought to the same spirit, and frame of mind.'

But Williams is like Elias in this; we have had none of his sermons rendered into English, and, therefore, the descriptions we have are rather tantalising.

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Mr Parry, the Congregational minister of Llandudno, a man well fitted to judge — himself one of the most distinguished living poets in the Welsh language, and who has carried many prizes from the Eisteddfodd — says of him: 'I shall never forget his eloquence. It poured forth like a swollen torrent. I cannot help referring to a sermon he preached at an annual Association at Llanerchmedd, Anglesey. The meeting was, as usual, held in the open air. The weather was very sultry; the congregation seemed drowsy. His manner, before preaching, showed considerable restlessness, and when he came to the desk, he looked rather wild. It was evident his spirit was on fire, and his mind charged brimful with ideas. He read his text in a quick, bold tone; "But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly." He poured forth such a flood of eloquent description, that he completely enchanted our feelings, and made us imagine we felt the field move under our feet. He himself thought this occasion one of the most remarkable in his life; for I spoke to him about the sermon years after. I believe it served to raise our Churches throughout the whole land.'

He was a more extensive reader than any of his brethren in the ministry; a keen observer, too, in the departments of natural history, and natural philosophy. It was, indeed, much like his own method, and it

illustrated the reason of his great admiration for Jacob Abbot's 'Corner Stone,' when he very prettily says, 'The blessed Redeemer was very fond of his Father's works.' He used to say, 'If we understood nature better,

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it would help us to understand the Bible better. The kingdom of nature, and the kingdom of grace, are very like each other. There is a striking resemblance between the natural principles of the one, and the moral principles of the other.' He entered with a kind of joy into the sublime moods of nature; was fond of watching the play of the lightning, and listening to the voice of the thunder. 'Jesus,' he used to say, 'loved to look at the lily, and to listen to the birds; to speak upon the mysteries of the seed, and to draw forth principles from these things. It was no part of his plan to expound the laws of nature, although he understood them more perfectly than any one else; but he employed nature as a book of reference, to explain the great principles of the plan of salvation.'

A clergyman writes of him, that 'his appearance when preaching was very remarkable, and singularly beautiful. When standing in a great crowd, every soul seemed agitated to its centre, and cheeks streaming with tears. It is but justice that every one should have his likeness taken when he appears to the greatest advantage; and so Williams. His picture, on such an occasion, would be an honour to the country which reared him, a treasure to the thousands who heard him, and a name to the painter.' The likeness is before us now, and in the firm, composed thoughtfulness, a kind of sad, far outlook in the eyes, and the lips which seem to wait to tremble into emotion — we think we can well realise, from the inanimate engraving, what life must have been in the speech of this extraordinary man. His mind was cast in a sweetly meditative mould. He was

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fond of retreating by himself among the trees, and walking beneath their shadows, as they formed a canopy over his head. He said of one such place, 'I think I must love that spot through all eternity, for I have felt a degree of heaven there!'

And thus he died. He had lost his wife some time before. It is very affecting to read the account of himself, and his daughter, dying together in different rooms of the same house. As he said to her, one day, 'We appear to be running, with contending footsteps, to be first at the goal.' They spent much time in talking together, with unruffled composure, of

death, and heaven, and being 'absent from the body, and present with the Lord.' Every morning, as soon as he was up, found him by the bedside of his daughter.

Once he said to her, 'Well, Eliza, how are you this morning?

'Very weak, father.'

'Ah!' said he, 'we are both on the racecourse. Which of us do you think will get to the end first?'

'Oh, I shall, father. I think you must have more work to do yet.'

'No,' he said; 'I think my work is nearly over.'

'It may be so, father; but, still, I think I shall be the first to go.'

'Perhaps,' he said, 'it is best it should be so, for I am more able to bear the blow. But,' he continued, 'do you long to see the end of the journey?'

'Oh, from my heart!' she replied.

'But why?'

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'Because I shall see so many of my old friends, and my mother; and, above all, I shall see Jesus.'

'Ah, well, then,' he said, 'tell them I am coming! tell them I am coming!'

She died first. Her last words were, 'Peace! peace!' He followed her shortly after — on the 17th of March, 1840, in the fifty-ninth year of his age.

Amongst the great preachers of Wales, not one seems to have won more upon the tender love of those who knew him. Dr Raffles said of him, 'What he was as a preacher, I can only gather from the effects he produced on those who understood the language in which he spoke, but I can truly say, that every occasion on which I saw him only served to impress me more with the ardour of his piety, and the kindness of his heart. He was one of the loveliest characters it has been my lot to meet.'

High strains of thought, rendered into the sweet variety, melting tenderness, and the grand strength of the language of Wales, seem to have been the characteristics of the preaching of Williams of Wern; tender, and terrible, sweetness alternating with strength. We have already said how much Welsh preaching derived, in its greatest men, from the power of varying accent; the reader may conceive it himself if ever listening to that wonderful chorus in Handel's *Messiah*, which Herder, the great German, called truly the Christian Epos; but the chorus to which we refer, is that singular piece of varying pictorial power, 'Unto

us a Child is born,' repeated, again and again, in sweet whispered accents, playing upon the thought;

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the shepherds having kept watch over their flocks by night in the fields, and having heard the revelation voices of the angels say it — 'For unto us a Child is born;' and then rolls in the grand thunder, 'And his name shall be called Wonderful;' and then, you return back to the sweet silvery accents, 'For unto us a Child is born;' and the thought is, that the Wise Men are there offering their gifts; and then roll in, again, the grand, overwhelming words, 'And his name shall be called Wonderful;' and yet again that for which we waited, the tender, silvery whisperings, 'Unto us a Child is born;' until it seems as if flocks, and herds, and fields, shepherds, and wise men, all united with the family of Jesus, beneath the song-singing through the heavens in the clear starry night, 'Unto us a Child is born, and his name shall be called Wonderful.' Those who have listened to this chorus, may form some idea of the way in which a great Welsh preacher — and Williams of Wern as a special illustration — would run his thought, and its corresponding expression, up and down, through various tones of feeling, and with every one awoken, on some varying accent, a fresh interpretation, and expression. Perhaps, the nearest approach we have heard, in England, to the peculiar gifts of this preacher, has been in the happiest moods of the beloved, and greatly honoured Thomas Jones, once minister of Bedford Chapel, London.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONTEMPORARIES — JOHN ELIAS

Fire and Smoke — Elias's Pure Flame — Notes in the Pulpit — Carrying Fire in Paper — Elias's Power in Apostrophe — Anecdote of the Flax-dresser — A Singular First Appearance in the Pulpit — A Rough Time in Wales — The Burning of the Ravens' Nests — A Hideous Custom put down — The Great Fair of Rhuddlan — The Ten Cannon of Sinai — Action in Oratory — The Tremendous Character of his Preaching — Lives in an Atmosphere of Prayer — Singular Dispersion on a Racecourse — A Remarkable Sermon, Shall the Prey be taken from the Mighty? — Anecdote of a Noble Earl — Death and Funeral.

WE have already implied that Welsh preaching has had many varieties, and very various influences too. Even the very excitements produced by these famous men, whose names we are recording, varied considerably; but one characteristic certainly seemed to attend them — the influence was real, and very undoubted. When Rowland Hill was in Wales, and witnessed some of the strong agitations resulting from great sermons, he said, he 'liked the fire, but he did not like the smoke.' It was, like so many of the sayings of the excellent old humorist, prettily, and wittily said. But it may, also, be remarked, that it is, usually, impossible to have real fire without smoke; and it has further been well said, that the stories of the results of such preaching make

us feel that, could we only get the fire, we need not object to a little of the smoke.

We are introducing to our readers, now, in John Elias, one who, certainly, does not seem to have surrounded the clear flames of his eloquence with unnatural excitement. If the effects of his oratory seem to rival all that we have heard of the astonishing power of George Whitefield, the material of his sermons, the severity of their tone of

thought, and the fearfulness of their remorseless logic, remind us of Jonathan Edwards. He had read extensively, especially in theology; and, it has been truly said, his mind was a storehouse, large, lofty, and rich. Like his great coadjutors, he prepared for the pulpit with amazing care, and patience, but apparently never verbally — only seeing his ideas clearly, and revolving them over and over until, like fuel in the furnace, they flamed. He tells us how, having done his part, by earnest, and patient study, he trusted to God to give to his prepared mind its fitting expression, and speech. Of course, like the rest, he disclaimed all paper in the pulpit. An eminent brother minister, Thomas Jones, of Denbigh, was coming to London to preach what was considered the great annual sermon of the London Missionary Society, at Surrey Chapel. In his own country, Mr Jones preached always extempore; but, being in company with Matthew Wilkes, and John Elias, he inquired of old Matthew whether, for such an occasion, he did not think that he had better write his sermon.

‘Well, for such an occasion,’ said Matthew, ‘perhaps it would be better to write your discourse; but, at any rate, let us have plenty of fire in it.’

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‘But,’ said John Elias, ‘he cannot carry fire in paper!’

‘Never mind,’ said Matthew; ‘paper will do very well to light the fire with!’

Mr Wilkes’ witty rejoinder seems to give the entire value to notes, and writing in the pulpit; but, no doubt, Elias expressed his conviction, and the conviction of all these men, that you cannot carry fire in paper. But we have before said that it was by no means wild-fire. One of the great poets of Wales imagined a conversation going on between the soul and the body of Elias, before they both went up together in the pulpit, when the soul said to the body, ‘Now, you must be a sacrifice for an hour. You must bear all my fire, and endure all my exertion, however intense it may be.’ And another writer says of him that, while some preachers remind us of Pharaoh’s chariots, that drove heavily, Elias reminded us, rather, of that text, ‘He maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.’

Whatever is to be said of the peculiarities of other great Welsh preachers, it seems to be admitted, on all hands, that John Elias was the Demosthenes of the group. Let no reader smile, however high his regard for the classic orator. The stories told of the effects of the preaching of

John Elias, greatly resemble those of the great Grecian orator, who, at the close of his tremendous orations, found the people utterly oblivious to all the beauty, and strength of his discourses — utterly indisposed to admire, or criticise, but only conducted to that point of vehement indignation, and passionate action, which had been, all

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along, the purpose of the speaker, exclaiming, ‘Let us march against Philip!’

If profound passionate conviction, persuasion altogether insensible of anything besides its own emotions, be the chief attribute of the gifted orator, John Elias must stand, we will not say matchless, but, from all that we have heard of him, unsurpassed. We have no means of testing this by any published sermons; scraps and fragments we have, and traditions of the man, and his soul-piercing eloquence, float about over Wales; but we apprehend it was an order of eloquence which would not submit itself to either penmanship, or paper, either to the reporter, or the printing-press.

How extravagant some things seem when quietly read, unaccompanied by the passion, and excitement which the preacher has either apprehended, or produced! The reader remembers very well — for who does not? — Whitefield’s vehement apostrophe, ‘Stop, Gabriel!’ Who could deliberately write it down to utter it? and what an affectation of emotion it seems to read it! But that was not the effect produced on David Hume, who heard it; and we may be very sure that man, — the most acute, profound, cold philosopher, and correct writer, had no friendly feelings either to Whitefield or Gabriel — to the message which the preacher had to give, or the angel to carry. A quiet, ordinary, domestic state of feeling scarcely knows how to make allowances for an inflamed orator, his whole nature heaving beneath the passion produced by some great, and subduing vision, an audience in his hands, as a river of water, prepared to move whithersoever he will. Thus Elias, when

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he was handling some weighty subject, would suddenly say, ‘Stop! silence!’ (*Disymwth! Gosteg!*) ‘What are they saying in Heaven on the subject?’ His hearers testify that, in such moments, he almost brought them within the precincts of the glory. The effect was thrilling. And,



dealing with alarming truths, he would exclaim, 'Stop! silence! What do they say in hell on this subject?'

The man who can do these things must be no hearsay man, or such questionable excursions of speech would be likely to provoke laughter, and contempt, rather than overwhelming awe. The effect of this preacher was unutterable. It is said that upon such occasions, had the people heard these things from the invisible world, as he expatiated on the things most likely to be uttered, either in Heaven or hell, upon the subject, they could scarcely have been more alarmed.

His biographer, Mr Morgan, Vicar of Syston, in Leicestershire, tells how he heard him preaching once to a crowd in the open air, on 'the Last Day,' representing the wicked as 'tares gathered into bundles,' and cast into the everlasting burnings. There was a certain flax-dresser, who, in a daring and audacious way, chose to go on with his work in an open room opposite to where Elias was preaching from the platform; but, as the preacher grew more and more earnest, and the flames more flashing, the terrible fire more and more intense in its vehemence, the man was obliged to leave his work, and run into a yard behind his house, to get out of the reach of the cruel flames, and the awful peals of the thunder of the preacher's subduing voice. 'But the awful

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language of that Elias followed me there also,' said the panic-stricken sinner.

There was a preacher of Caernarvon, one Richardson, a preacher of peculiar tenderness, and sweetness, who made his hearers weep beneath the lovely message he generally carried. On one occasion, while Elias was pouring forth his vehement, and dreadful words, painting the next world in very living, and fearful colours, his audience all panic-stricken, and carried along as if they were on the confines of the darkness, and the gates opening to receive them, a man, in the agony of his excitement, cried out, 'Oh, I wish I could hear Mr Richardson, of Caernarvon, just for five minutes!' No anecdote could better illustrate the peculiar gifts, and powers of both men.

John Elias was a native of Caernarvonshire. His parents were people in very humble circumstances, but greatly respected. His paternal grandfather lived with them. He was a member of the Church of England. His influence over the mind of Elias appears to have been especially good; and it is, perhaps, owing to this influence that, although

he became a minister, and the eminent pride of the Calvinistic Methodist body, he, throughout his life, retained a strong affection for the services, and even the institution, of the Church of England. Through his grandfather, he acquired, what was not usual in that day, the rudiments of education very early, and as a young child, could read very well and impressively. Thus, when quite a child, they went together to hear some well-known Methodist preacher. The time for the service had long passed, and the preacher did not arrive. The old gentleman became impatient,

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and said to his little grandson, 'It's a pity the people should be idling like this; go up into the pulpit, John, and read a chapter to them;' and, suiting the action to the word, he pushed the child up into the pulpit, and shut the door after him. With much diffidence, he began to read portions of the Sermon on the Mount, until, venturing to withdraw his eye from the Bible, and look aside, lo! to his great dismay, there was the preacher quietly waiting outside the pulpit door. He gently closed the book, and slipped down the pulpit stairs. This was his first appearance in the pulpit. Little could any one dream that, in after years, he was to be so eminent a master in it.

But he was only twenty years of age when he began to preach, indeed; and it is said that, from the first, people saw that a prophet of God had risen amongst them. There was a popular preacher, with a very Welsh name, David Cadwalladr, who went to hear him; and, after the sermon, he said, 'God help that lad to speak the truth, for he'll make the people believe, — he'll make the people believe whatever he says!' From the first, John Elias appears to have been singularly like his two namesakes, John the Baptist, and Elias the prophet. He had in him a very tender nature; but he was a severe man, and he had a very severe theology. He believed that sin held, in itself, very tremendous, and fearful consequences, and he dealt with sin, and sinners, in a very daring, and even dreadful manner.

He appeared in a rough time, when there were, in the neighbourhood, rough, cruel, and revolting customs. Thus, on Whitsunday in each year, a great concourse

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of people used to assemble together to burn the ravens' nests. These birds bred in a high and precipitous rock, called *Y gadair* (that is, 'the

chair'). The birds were supposed to prey on young poultry, etc., and the people thought it necessary to destroy them; but they always did so on the Sabbath, and it became quite a wild festival occasion; and the manner of their destruction was most savage, and revolting. The nests were beyond their reach; but they suspended a fiery fagot by a chain. This was let down to set the nests on fire; and the young birds were roasted alive. At every blaze which was seen below, triumphant shouts rose from the brutal crowd, rending the air. When the savages had put the birds to death, they usually turned on each other; and the day's amusement closed in fights, wounds, bruises, and broken bones. One of the first of Elias's achievements was the daring feat of invading this savage assembly, by proclaiming, in their very midst, the wrath of God against unrighteousness, and Sabbath-breaking. Perhaps, to us, the idea of preaching in such a scene seems like the attempting to still a storm by the waving of a feather; but we may also feel that here was a scene in which that terrible eloquence, which was a chief power of Elias, was well bestowed. Certainly, it appears chiefly due to Elias that the hideous custom was put down, and put to an end for ever.

It was no recreative play, no rippling out of mild, meditative, innocent young sermons, these first efforts of young Elias. For instance, there was a great fair which was wont to be held at Rhuddlan, in Denbighshire. It was always held on the Lord's Day.

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Thither, into the midst of the fair, went the young man. He took his stand on the steps of the New Inn, the noise and business of the fair going on all around him. His friends had earnestly tried to dissuade, and entreated him not to venture into the midst of so wild, and dangerous a scene. Farmers were there, to hire labourers; crowds of rough labourers were there. It was the great market-day for scythes, and reaping-hooks. In the booths all round him were the sounds of harps, and fiddles; it was a wild scene of dissipation. There stood the solemn young man, thoughtful, grave, and compassionate. Of course, he commenced with a very solemn prayer; praying so that almost every order of person on the ground felt himself arrested, and brought, in a solemn way, before God. Singular effects, it is said, seemed to follow the prayer itself. Then he took for his text the fourth commandment; but he said he had come to open upon them 'the whole ten cannon of Sinai.' The effects could hardly have been more tremendous had the congregation really stood at

the foot of the mountain that 'might not be touched.' In any case, Elias was an awful preacher; and we may be sure that upon this occasion he did not keep his terrors in reserve.

One man, who had just purchased a sickle, was so alarmed at the tremendous denunciations against Sabbath-breakers, that he imagined that the arm which held the sickle was paralysed; he let it fall on the ground. He could not take his eye from the preacher; and he feared to stoop to pick it up with the other hand, lest that should be paralysed also. It ought, also, to be said this man became an entirely

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changed character, and lived, to an advanced age, a consistent Christian. The great crowd was panic-stricken. The fair was never after held on the Lord's Day. Some person said to Elias, afterwards, that the fair was an old custom, and it would recover itself, notwithstanding his extraordinary sermon. Elias, in his dreadful manner, replied, 'If any one will give the least encouragement to the revival of that fair, he will be accursed before the Holy Trinity, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost!' A dreadfully earnest sort of man this. We are not vindicating his speeches, only giving an account of them.

Mr Jones, the Rector of Nevern, one of the most eminent of the Welsh bards, says, 'For one to throw his arms about, is not action; to make this, or that gesture, is not action. Action is seen in the eye, in the curling of the lip, in the frowning of the nose in every muscle of the speaker.' Mentioning these remarks to Dr Pugh, when speaking of Elias, he said he 'never saw an orator that could be compared to him. Every muscle was in action, and every movement that he made was not only graceful, but it spoke. As an orator,' said Dr Pugh, 'I considered him fully equal to Demosthenes!'

It was tremendous preaching. It met the state of society — the needs of the times. What is there in a sermon? — what is there in preaching? some have flippantly inquired. We have seen that the preaching of Elias effected social revolutions; it destroyed bad customs, and improved manners. He lived in this work; it consumed him. Those who knew him, applied to him the words of Scripture: 'The

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zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.' In estimating him, and his work, it ought never to be forgotten, that, as has always been the case with such men, he lived in a life of wondrous prayerfulness, and spiritual

elevation. He was called to preach a great Association sermon at Pwllheli. In the whole neighbourhood the state of religion was very low, and distressingly discouraging to pious minds; and it had been so for many years. Elias felt that his visit must be an occasion with him. It may almost be said of that day, that 'Elias prayed, and the heavens gave rain.' He went. He took his text, 'Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered!' It was an astonishing time. While the preacher drove along with his tremendous power, multitudes of the people fell to the ground. Calm stood the man, his words rushing from him like flames of fire. There were added to the Churches of that immediate neighbourhood, Mr Elias's clerical biographer tells us, in consequence of the powerful impetus of that sermon, two thousand five hundred members.

The good man lived in an atmosphere of prayer. The stories which gather about such men, sometimes seem to partake of the nature of exaggerations; but, on the other hand, it ought to be recollected that all anecdotes and popular impressions arise from some well-known characteristic to which they are the correspondents. There was a poor woman, a neighbour's wife. She was very ill, and her case pressed very much upon the mind of Elias in family prayer. But one morning he said to his wife, 'I have somehow missed Elizabeth in my prayer this morning; I think she cannot be alive.' The words had

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scarcely passed from his lips when the husband was at the door, to tell him of his wife's departure.

There is a singular circumstance mentioned of some horse-races, a great disturbance to the best interests of the neighbourhood; on the day of the great race, Elias's spirit was very much moved, and he prayed most passionately and earnestly that the Lord would do something to put a stop to them. His prayer was so remarkable, that someone said, 'Ahab must prepare his chariot, and get away.' The sky became so dark shortly after, that the gas was lighted in some of the shops of the town. At eleven o'clock the rain began to pour in torrents, and continued until five o'clock in the afternoon of the next day. The multitudes on the race-ground dispersed in half-an-hour, and did not reassemble that year; and what seemed more remarkable was, that the rainfall was confined to that vicinity. It is our duty to mention these things. An adequate impression could not be conveyed of the place this man held in popular estimation without them. And his eminence as a preacher was

astonishing; wherever he went, whatever day of the week, or whatever hour of the day, no matter what the time or the season, business was laid aside, shops were closed, and the crowds gathered to hear him. Sometimes, when it was arranged for him to preach in a chapel, and more convenient that he should do so, a window was taken out, and there he stood, preaching to the crowded place within, and, at the same time, to the multitudes gathered outside. Mr Morgan, late vicar of Christ Church, in Bradford, gives an account of one of these sermons. There was a great panorama

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exhibiting at the same time. Elias took the idea of moving succession — the panorama of all the miracles wrought by Christ. It is easy to see how, from such lips, a succession of wonderful pictures would pass before the eye, of living miracles of Divine working, — a panorama of wonderful cures. Mr Morgan says, ‘I was very ill at the time, but that striking sermon animated me, and I have often stirred the cold English with the account of it.’

We have said that no sermons are preserved; Elias himself regretted, in his advanced life, that some, which had been of a peculiar interest to him, had gone from him. Fragments there are, but they are from the lips of hearers. Many of these fragments still present, in a very impressive manner, his rousing, and piercing, and singularly original style; his peculiar mode of dealing at will, for his purposes of illustration, with the things of earth, heaven, and hell.

Take one illustration, from the text, ‘*Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive be delivered?*’ ‘Satan!’ he exclaimed, ‘what do you say? Shall the prey be taken from the mighty?’ ‘No, never. I will increase the darkness of their minds; I will harden more the hardness of their hearts; I will make more powerful the lusts in their souls; I will increase the strength of their chains; I will bind them hand and foot, and make my chains stronger; the captives shall never be delivered. Ministers! I despise ministers! Puny efforts theirs!’ “*Gabriel!*” exclaimed the preacher, “messenger of the Most High God shall the prey be taken from the mighty?” “Ah! I do not know. I have been

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hovering over this assembly. They have been hearing the Word of God. I did expect to see some chains broken, some prisoners set free; but the opportunity is nearly over; the multitudes are just upon the point of

separating; there are no signs of any being converted. I go back from this to the heavenly world, but I have no messages to carry to make joy in the presence of the angels.” There were crowds of preachers present. Elias turned to them. “What think you? You are *ministers* of the living God. Shall the prey be taken from the mighty?” “Ah! who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? We have laboured in vain, and spent our strength for nought; and it seems the Lord’s arm is not stretched out. Oh, there seems very little hope of the captives being delivered!” “*Zion!* Church of Christ! answer me, Shall the prey be taken from the mighty? What do you say?” And Zion said, “My God hath forgotten me; I am left alone, and am childless. And my enemies say, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after.” Oh, I am afraid the prey will not be taken from the mighty — the captive will not be delivered. *Praying Christians*, what do you think? “O Lord, thou knowest. High is thy hand, and strong is thy right hand. Oh that thou wouldst rend the heavens, and come down! Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee. According to the greatness of thy power, preserve thou them that are appointed to die. I am nearly wearying in praying, and yet I have a hope that the year of jubilee is at hand.” Then, at this point, Elias assumed another, higher, and his most serious

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manner, as if about to speak to the Almighty; and, in quite another tone, he said, ‘What is the mind of the Lord respecting these captives? Shall the prey be taken from the mighty?’ Then he exclaimed, “Thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered.” Ah!’ he exclaimed, ‘there is no doubt about the wind and will of the Lord — no room for doubt, and hesitation. “The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads.”’

This is the fragment of a sermon preached when Elias was about thirty years of age. Of course it can give but a very slender idea, but perhaps it shows something of the manner of the master. His imagination was very brilliant, but more chastened, and subdued, than that of many. His eloquence, like all of the highest order, was simple, and he trusted rather to a fitting word, than to a large furniture of speech. It is said that, to his friends, every sermon appeared to be a complete masterpiece of elocution, a nicely-compacted, and well-fitted oration.

Among the great Welsh preachers, David Davies, and Williams of Wern were, like Rowlands of Llangeitho, comparatively fixtures. Of course, they appeared on great Association occasions. But John Elias, and Christmas Evans itinerated far, and wide. Unlike as they were in the build of their minds, and the character of their eloquence, they had a great, and mutual, regard, and affection for each other; and it is told how, when either preached, the other was

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seen with anxious interest drinking in, with the crowd, the words of his famous brother. Theirs are, no doubt, the two darling names most known to the religious national heart of Wales. To John Elias it is impossible to render such a mede of justice, or to give of his powers even so comprehensive a picture, as is attempted, even in this volume, of Christmas Evans.

Something like an illustration of the man may be gathered from an anecdote of the formation of one of the first Bible Societies in North Wales. It was a very great occasion. A noble Earl, the Lord Lieutenant of the county, was to take the chair; but when he heard that John Elias was expected to be the principal speaker, he very earnestly implored that he might be kept back, as 'a ranter, a Methodist, and a Dissenter, who could do no good to the meeting.' The position of Elias was such that, upon such an occasion, no one could have dared to do that; so the noble Lord introduced him, but with certain hints that 'brevity, and seriousness would be desirable.' The idea of recommending seriousness to John Elias, certainly, seems a very needless commendation; but when Elias spoke, — partly in English, and partly in Welsh, — especially when, in stirring Welsh, he referred to the constitution of England, and the repose of the country, as illustrating the value of the Bible to society, and some other such remarks, — of course with all the orator's piercing grandeur of expression, — the chairman, seeing the inflamed state of the people, and himself not well knowing what was said, would have the words translated to him. He was so carried away by the dignified bearing of the great orator,

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that he would have a special introduction to him at the close of the meeting. A day or two after, a special messenger came to invite him to visit, and spend some time at the house of the Earl. This, however, was respectfully declined, for reasons, no doubt, satisfactory to Elias, and



which would satisfy the peer also, that the preacher had no desire to use his great popularity for his own personal influence, and aggrandisement.

After a life of eminent usefulness, he died, in 1841, at the age of sixty-eight. His funeral was a mighty procession, of about ten thousand persons. They had to travel, a distance of some miles, to the beautiful little churchyard of Llanfaes, a secluded, and peaceful spot, — a scene of natural romance, and beauty, the site of an old Franciscan monastery, about fourteen miles from Llangefni, the village where Elias died. The day of the funeral was, throughout the whole district, as still as a Sabbath. As it passed by Beaumaris, the procession saw the flags of the vessels in the port lowered half-mast high; and as they passed through Beaumaris town, and Bangor city, all the shops were closed, and all the blinds drawn before the windows. Every kind of denomination, including the Church of England, joined in marks of respect, and justified, more distinctly than could always be done, the propriety of the text of the funeral oration: 'Know ye not that a prince and a great man has fallen?' Of him it might truly be said, *'Behold I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument, having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills like chaff.'*

## CHAPTER 7

### *CONTEMPORARIES — DAVIES OF SWANSEA*

Traditions of his Extraordinary Eloquence — Childhood — Unites in Church Fellowship with Christmas Evans, and with him preaches his First Sermon — The Church of Castell Hywel — Settles in the Ministry at Frefach — The Anonymous Preacher — Settles in Swansea — Swansea a Hundred Years Since — Mr Davies reforms the Neighbourhood — Anecdotes of the Power of his Personal Character — How he Dealt with some Young Offenders — Anecdote of a Captain — The Gentle Character of his Eloquence — The Human Voice a Great Organ — The Power of the 'Vox Humana' Stop — A Great Hymn Writer — His Last Sermon.

WE shall, in the next chapter, mention several names of men, mightily influential as Welsh preachers in their own country, and to most English readers utterly unknown. Perhaps the most conspicuous of these lesser known men is, however, David Davies, of Swansea. Dr Thomas Rees, in every sense a thoroughly competent authority, speaks of him as one of the most powerful pulpit orators in his own, or any other, age; and he quotes the words of a well-known Welsh writer, a minister, who says of David Davies: 'In his best days, he was one of the chief of the great Welsh preachers.' This writer continues: 'I may be deemed too partial to my own denomination in making such an observation. What, it may be

asked, shall be thought of John Elias, Christmas Evans, and others? In point of flowing eloquence, Davies was superior to every one of them, although, with regard to his matter, and the energy, and deep feeling with which he treated his subjects, Elias, in his best days, excelled him.' As to this question of feeling, however, the writer of these pages was talking, some time since, with Dr Rees himself, about this same David

Davies, when the Doctor said: 'What the old people tell you about him is wonderful. It was in his voice — he could not help himself; without any effort, five minutes after he began to speak, the whole congregation would be bathed in tears.'

This great, and admirable man was born in the obscure little village of Llangeler, in Carmarthenshire, in June, 1763. His parents, although respectable, not being in affluent circumstances, could give him very few advantages of education. Thus it happened that, eminent as he became as a preacher, as one of the most effective hymn-writers in his language, and as a Biblical commentator, he was entirely a self-made man. However, as is so often the case in such instances, his earnest eagerness in the acquisition of knowledge was manifest when he was yet very young; and he was under the influence of very strong religious impressions at a very early age.

Even when he was quite a child, he would always stand up, and gravely ask a blessing on his meals; and it is said that there was something so impressive, and grave, in the manner of the child, that some careless frequenters of the house always took off their hats, and behaved with grave decorum until the short prayer was ended. His parents were not

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religious persons, and, therefore, it is yet more remarkable that one day, while he was still in his earliest years, his father heard him fervently in prayer for them behind a hedge. It is not wonderful to learn that he was greatly affected by it. It does not seem that this depth of religious life accompanied him all the way through his boyhood, and his youth; but a very early marriage — in most instances, so grave, and fatal a mistake — would appear to have been the occasion of the restoration of his religious convictions. He was but twenty when he married Jane Evans, a respectable, and lovely young woman of his own neighbourhood; and now his religious life began in real earnest.

It is surely very remarkable, as we have already seen, that he, and Christmas Evans were admitted into Church fellowship on the same evening, — the Church to which we have already referred, — beneath the pastorate of the eminent scholar, and bard, David Davies, of Castell Hywel. The singularity did not stop here. Christmas Evans, and the young Davies, preached their first sermon in the same little cottage, in the parish of Llangeler, within a week of each other. The two youths were destined to be the most eminent lights of their different

denominations, in their own country, in that age; but neither of them continued long in connection with the Church at Castell Hywel; and as they joined at the same time, so about the same time they left.

David Davies, their pastor, was a great man, and an eminent preacher, but he was an Arian, and the Church members were chiefly of the same school of thought; and the convictions of both youths were

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altogether of too deep, and matured an order, to be satisfied by the Arian view of the person, and work of Christ. Moreover, they both, by the advice of friends, were looking to the work of the Ministry, for which they must have early shown their fitness; and, as we have noticed in the case of Christmas Evans, there was a rule in the Church at Castell Hywel, that no one should be permitted to preach who had not received an academical training.

This, in addition to their dissatisfaction with services devoted chiefly to the frigid statements of speculative points of doctrine, or the illustration of worldly politics, soon operated to move the young men into other fields. Evans, as we know, united himself with the Baptists; Davies found a congenial ministration at Pencadair, under the direction of a noted evangelical teacher of those parts, the Rev. William Perkins. There his deepest religious convictions became informed, and strengthened. Davies was always a man of emotion; it was his great strength when he became a preacher; and his biographer very pleasingly states the relation of his after-work to this moment of his life, when he says that, 'Beneath the teaching of Mr Perkins, a delightful change came over his feelings; he could now see, in the revealed testimony concerning the work finished by our Divine Surety, and Redeemer, enough to give confidence of approach "into the holiest," to every one who believes the report of it, as made known to all alike in the Scriptures. We may justly say, "Blessed are their eyes who see" this; who see that God is now "reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing unto men their trespasses." They,

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indeed, see the heavens opened, and the angels of God ascending, and descending upon the Son of Man. They see that fulfilled which was set forth of old in vision to Jacob, the restoration of intercourse between earth and heaven through a mediator; and, in the discovery of it, they

walk joyfully in the way of peace, and in the gracious presence of their reconciled Father.'

It was after this period that the first sermon was preached, in the cottage to which we have alluded. 'The humble beginning of both Davies, and Evans, naturally reminds us,' says Davies's biographer, 'of the progress of an oak from the acorn to the full-grown tree, or that of a streamlet issuing from an obscure valley among the mountains, and swelling, by degrees, into a broad, and majestic river.' David Davies soon became well known in his neighbourhood as a mighty evangelist. Having grounded his own convictions, and even then possessed of a copious eloquence, it is not wonderful to read that dead Churches rose into newness of life, and became, in the course of time, flourishing societies. He was ordained as a co-pastor with the Rev. John Lewis, at Trefach. The chapel became too small, and a new one was built, which received the name of Saron. He became a blessing to Neuaddlwyd, and Gwernogle; his words ran, like flames of fire, through the whole district. It is said that his active spirit, and fervent style of preaching, gave a new tone to the ministry of the Independents throughout the whole Principality. Hearers, who have been unaccustomed to the penetrating, the quietly passionate emotionalness of the great Welsh preachers, can scarcely form an

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idea of the way in which their at once happy, and invincible words would set a congregation on fire.

The beloved, and revered William Rees, of Liverpool, in his memoir of his father, gives an illustration of this, in connection with a sermon preached by Mr Davies; and it furnishes a striking proof of the force of his eloquence. The elder Rees speaks of one meeting in particular, which he attended at Denbigh, at the annual gathering of the Independents. A minister from South Wales preached at the service with unusual power, and eloquence. Among the auditors, there was a venerable man, named William Lewis, who possessed a voice loud, and clear as a trumpet, and who was, at that time, a celebrated preacher among the Calvinistic Methodists. The southern minister, in full sail, with the power of the '*hwy!*' strong upon him, and the whole congregation, of course, in full sympathy, all breathless, and waiting for the next word, came to a point in his sermon where he repeated, says Mr Rees, in his most pathetic

tones, the verse of a hymn, which can only be very poorly conveyed in translation:—

Streams from the rock, and bread from heaven,  
Were, by their God, to Israel given;  
While Sinai's terrors blazed around,  
And thunders shook the solid ground,  
No harm befell his people there,  
Sustained with all a Father's care,  
Perversely sinful though they were.

The drift of the passage was to show that the believer in Christ is just as safe amidst terrors from within, and without. The sentiment touched the electric chord in the hearts of the multitude. Old

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William Lewis could bear it no longer. Up he started, unable to conceal his feelings. 'Oh, yes! oh, yes!' he exclaimed; 'blessed be his name! God supported his people amidst all the terrors of Sinai, sinful, and rebellious though they were. That was the most dreadful spot in which men could ever be placed; yet, even there, God preserved his people unharmed. Oh, yes! and there he sustained me, too, a poor, helpless sinner, once exposed to the doom of his law, and trembling before him!' No sooner had the old man uttered these words, than a flame seemed instantaneously to spread through the whole congregation, which broke forth into exclamations of joy, and praise. But the preacher, who had kindled this wonderful fire, and who could do such things! For some time, Mr Rees was unable to find out who it was; and it was the younger Rees, long the venerable minister in Liverpool, who discovered afterwards, from one of his father's old companions, that it was David Davies, from the south, he who came to be called, in his more mature years, 'The great Revivalist of Swansea.'

For, after labouring until the year 1802 in the more obscure regions we have mentioned, where, however, his congregations were immense, and his influence great over the whole Principality, he was invited by the Churches of Mynyddbach, and Sketty — in fact, parts of Swansea — to become their pastor; and on this spot his life received its consummation, and crown.

When Mr Davies entered the town, it was a remarkably wicked spot; the colliers were more like barbarians than the inhabitants of a civilised country.

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Gangs of drunken ruffians prowled through its streets, and the suburbs in different directions, ready to assault, and ill-treat any persons who ventured near them. They were accustomed to attack the houses as they passed, throwing stones at the doors, and windows, and could scarcely open their mouths without uttering the most horrid oaths, and blasphemies. It seems almost strange, to our apprehensions now, that the presence of a preacher should effect a change in a neighbourhood; yet nothing is more certain, than the fact that immense social reformations were effected by ministers of the Gospel, both in England, and in Wales.

Mr Davies had not long entered Swansea before the whole neighbourhood underwent a speedy, and remarkable change. He had a very full, and magnificent voice; a voice of amazing compass, flexibility, and tenderness; a voice with which, according to all accounts, he could do anything — which could roll out a kind of musical thunder in the open air, over great multitudes, or sink to the softest intonations, and whispers, for small cottage congregations. It was well calculated to arrest a rude multitude. And so it came about that Mynyddbach became as celebrated for the work of David Davies, as the far-famed Llangeitho for the great work, and reformation of David Rowlands. The people poured in from the country round to hear him. Then, although very tender, and genial, his manner was so solemn, and he had so intense a power of realising, to others, the deep, and weighty truths he taught, that he became a terror to evil-doers.

It is mentioned that numbers of butchers from

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the neighbourhood of Cwmamman, and Llangenie, were in the habit of attending Swansea market on Saturdays. Some of them, after selling the meat which they had brought, were accustomed to frequent the public-houses, and to remain there drinking, and carousing until the Sunday morning. It is a well-known, and amusing circumstance, that, in the course of a little time, when proceeding homewards on their ponies, if they caught a glimpse of Mr Davies coming in an opposite direction, they hastily turned round, and trotted off, until they could find a bystreet, or lane, to avoid his reproving glances, or warnings, which had the twofold advantage of pertinency and serious wit, conveyed in tones sufficiently stentorian to reach their ears. And there was a man, proverbially notorious for his profane swearing, who plied a ferry-boat

between Swansea, and Foxhole; whenever he perceived Mr Davies approaching, he took care to give a caution to any who might be using improper expressions: 'Don't swear, Mr Davies is coming!'

And there is another story, which shows what manner of man this Davies was. One Saturday night, a band of drunken young men, and boys, threw a quantity of stones against his door, according to their usual mode of dealing with other houses. While they were busy at their work of mischief, he suddenly opened the door, rushed out, and secured two or three of the culprits, who were compelled to give him the names of all their companions. He then told them that he should expect every one of them to be at his house on a day which he mentioned. Accordingly, the whole party came at the appointed

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hour, but attended by their mothers, who were exceedingly afraid lest the offending lads should be sent to prison in a body. Instead of threatening to take them before the magistrates, Mr Davies told them to kneel down with him; and having offered up an earnest prayer, and affectionately warned them of the consequences of their evil ways, he dismissed them, requesting, however, that they would all attend at Ebenezer Chapel on the following Sunday. They were, of course, glad to comply with his terms, and to be let off so easily. In after years, several of them became members of his Church, and maintained through life a consistent Christian profession. 'And one of them,' said Dr Rees, when writing the story of his great predecessor, 'is an old grey-headed disciple, still living.'

Such anecdotes as these show how far the character of the man aided, and sustained the mighty power of the minister. Our old friend, the venerable William Davies, of Fishguard, says: 'I well remember Mr Davies of Swansea's repeated preaching tours through Pembrokeshire, and can never forget the emotions, and deep feelings which his matchless eloquence produced on his crowded congregations everywhere; he had a penetrating mind, a lively imagination, and a clear, distinctive utterance; he had a remarkable command of his voice, with such a flow of eloquence, and in the most melodious intonations, that his enraptured audience would almost leap for joy!'

Instances are not wanting, either in the ancient, or modern history of the pulpit, of large audiences rising from their seats, and standing as if all spellbound,



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while the preacher was pursuing his theme, and, to the close of his discourse, subdued beneath the deepening impression, and rolling flow of words. Perhaps the reader, also, will remember, if he have ever been aware of such scenes, that it is not so much glowing splendour of expression, or the weight of original ideas, still less vehement action, which achieves these results, as a certain marvellous, and melodious fitness of words, even in the representation of common things.

But to return to Mr Davies. Davies of Fishguard, aforementioned, gives an illustration of his preaching: 'The captain of a vessel was a member of my Church at Fishguard, but he always attended Ebenezer, when his vessel was lying at Swansea. One day, he asked another captain, "Will you go with me next Sunday, to hear Mr Davies? I am sure he will make you weep." "Make *me* weep?" said the other, with a loud oath. "Ah! there's not a preacher in this world can make *me* weep." However, he promised to go. They took their seats in the front of the gallery. The irreligious captain, for a while, stared in the preacher's face, with a defiant air, as if determined to disregard what he might say; but when the master of the assembly began to grow warm, the rough sailor hung down his head, and before long, he was weeping like a child.' Here was an illustration of the great power of this man to move, and influence the affections.

As compared with other great Welsh preachers, Davies must be spoken of as, in an eminent manner, a singer, a prophet of song, and the swell, and cadences of his voice were like the many voices,

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which blend to make up one complete concert. He was not only a master of the deep bass notes, but he had a rich soprano kind of power, too; for we read that 'when he raised his voice to a higher pitch than ordinary, it increased in melody, and power, and its effects were thrilling in the extreme; there were no jarring notes — all was the music of eloquence throughout.' This must not be thought wonderful — it is natural; all men cannot be thus, nor all preachers, however good, and great. There are a few noble organs in the world. The organ itself, however considered, is a wonderful instrument, but there are some built with such extraordinary art that they are capable of producing transcendent effects beyond most other instruments. Davies, the preacher, was one of these amazing organs, in a human frame; but the

power of melody was still within his own soul, and it was the wonderful score which he was able to read, and which he compelled his voice to follow, which yet produced these amazing effects.

Surely, it is not more wonderful, that the human voice should have its great, and extraordinary exceptions, than that most wonderful piece of mechanism and art, an organ. We have the organs of Berne, Haarlem, and the Sistine Chapel — such are great exceptions in those powers which art exercises over the kingdom of sound; their building, their architecture, has made them singular, and set them apart as great instruments. But even in these, who does not remember the power of the *vox humana* stop? We apprehend that few who have heard it in the organs of Berne, or Fribourg, will sympathise with Dr Burney's irreverent,

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and ridiculous condemnation of it, in his *History of Music*, as the 'cracked voice of an old woman of ninety, or Punch singing through a comb.' Far from this, the hearer waits with intense anxiety, almost goes to hear this note, and realises in it, what has been said so truly, that music, as it murmurs through the ear, is the nurse of the soul. But all organs have not the *vox humana* stop, nor all preachers either. The human voice, like the organ, is a mighty instrument, but it is the soul which informs the instrument with this singular power, so that within its breast all the passions seem to reign in turn. Singular, that we have thought so much of the great organs of the Continent, and have listened with such intensity to the great singers, and have failed to apply the reflection that the greatest preachers must be, in some measure, a combination of both.

Davies was one of those preachers, without whose presence the annual gatherings, in which the Welsh especially delighted, would have been incomplete. On such occasions, he was usually the last of the preachers — the one waited for. As the service proceeded, it naturally happened that some weariness fell over the assembly; numbers of people might be seen in different parts, sitting, or reclining, on the grass; but as soon as David Davies appeared on the platform, there was a gathering in of all the people, pressing forward from all parts of the field, eager to catch every word which fell from the lips of the speaker. When a great singer appears at a concert, who of all the audience would lose a single bar of the melody? He gave out his own hymn in a voice

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that reached, without effort, to the utmost limits of the assembled multitude, though he spoke in a quiet, natural tone, without any exertion. He read his text deliberately, but in accents sufficiently loud to be heard with ease by ten thousand people. What is any great singer, without distinctness of enunciation? And distinct enunciation has always been one of the strong points of the great Welsh preachers. Hence, from this reason, he was always impressive, and he seldom preached without using some Scriptural story, which he made to live, through his accent, in the hearts of the people; illustrative similes, and not too many of them; striking thoughts, beneath the pressure of which his manner became more and more impressive, until, at each period, his hearers were overpoweringly affected. Every account of him speaks of his wonderfully impressive voice; and all this gained additional force from his dignified bearing, and appearance, which took captive, and carried away, not only more refined intelligences, but even coarsest natures, while the preacher never approached, for a moment, the verge of vulgarity. Contemporary preachers bore testimony that when the skilful singer had closed his strain, the people could not leave the spot, but remained for a long time after, weeping, and praising.

We have said, already, that Mr Davies was one of the Welsh hymn-writers; eighty of his hymns are said to be among the best in the Welsh language. He was a strong man, of robust constitution, but, it may be said, he died young; before he had reached his fiftieth year, his excessive labours had told visibly on his health, and for many months before his death, he was

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strongly impressed with the idea that the time of his departure was at hand. He died in the year 1816. The first Sabbath of that year, he preached a very impressive sermon, from the text, 'Thus saith the Lord, This year thou shalt die.'

His last sermon was preached about three weeks before he died, when he also administered the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and gave the right hand of fellowship to thirteen persons, on their admission into the Church. He spoke only a few words during the service, and in those, in faltering accents, told his people he did not expect to be seen amongst them any more. And, indeed, there was every indication, by his weakness, that his words would be fulfilled. Every cheek was bedewed with tears.

The hearts of many were ready to burst with grief; for this man's affections were so great, that he produced, naturally, that grief which we feel when the holders of our great affections seem to be parted from us.

He went home from this meeting to die. The struggle was not long protracted. On the morning of 26th December 1816, he breathed his last. On the day of the funeral, a large concourse, from the town, and neighbourhood, followed his remains to the grave. These lie in a vault, which now occupies a space in the centre of the new chapel, reared on the site of that in which he ministered so affectionately; and over the pulpit, a chaste, and beautiful mural marble tablet memorialises, and very conspicuously bears the name of David Davies. Of him, also, it might be said: *'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.'*

## CHAPTER 8

### *THE PREACHERS OF WILD WALES*

Rees Pritchard, and ‘The Welshman’s Candle’—A Singular Conversion—The Intoxicated Goat—The Vicar’s Memory—‘God’s better than All’—Howell Harris—Daniel Rowlands at Llangeitho—Philip Pugh—The Obscure Nonconformist—Llangeitho—Charles of Bala—His Various Works of Christian Usefulness—The Ancient Preachers of Wild Wales characterised—Thomas Rhys Davies—Impressive Paragraphs from his Sermons—Evan Jones, an Intimate Friend of Christmas Evans—Shenkin of Penhydd—A Singular Mode of Illustrating a Subject—Is the Light in the Eye?—Ebenezer Morris—High Integrity—Homage of Magistrates paid to his Worth—‘Beneath’—Ebenezer Morris at Wotton-under-Edge—His Father, David Morris—Rough-and-ready Preachers—Thomas Hughes—Catechised by a Vicar—Catching the Congregation by Guile—Sammy Breeze—A Singular Sermon in Bristol in the Old Time—A Cloud of Forgotten Worthies—Dr William Richards—His Definition of Doctrine—Davies of Castell Hywel, the Pastor of Christmas Evans, and of Davies of Swansea—Some Account of Welsh Preaching in Wild Wales, in Relation to the Welsh Proverbs, Ancient Triads, Metaphysics, and Poetry—Remarks on the Welsh Language and the Welsh Mind—Its Secluded and Clannish Character.

**A**MONGST the characteristic names of Wales, remarkable in that department to which we shall devote this chapter, whoever may be passed by, the name of Rees Pritchard, the ancient Vicar of Llandovery, ought not to go unmentioned. We

suppose no book, ever published in Wales, has met the acceptance and circulation of *Canwyll-y-Cymry*, or *The Welshman’s Candle*. Since the day of its publication, it has gone through perfectly countless editions; and

there was a time, not long since, when there was scarcely a family in Wales, of any intelligence, which did not possess a copy.

Its author was born in the parish of which he became the vicar, so far back as 1575. He was educated at Oxford. His early life was more remarkable for dissipation of every kind, than for any pursuits compatible with his sacred profession. He was, especially, an inveterate drunkard; the worst of his parishioners were scandalised by his example, and said, 'Bad as we may be, we are not half so bad as the parson!' The story of his conversion is known to many, who are not acquainted with his life, and work, and the eminence to which he attained; and it certainly illustrates how very strange have been some of the means of man's salvation, and how foolish things have confounded the wise. As George Borrow says in his *Wild Wales*, in his account of Pritchard, 'God, however, who is aware of what every man is capable, had reserved Rees Pritchard for great, and noble things, and brought about his conversion in a very remarkable manner.'

He was in the habit of spending much of his time in the public-house, from which he was, usually, trundled home in a wheelbarrow, in a state of utter insensibility. The people of the house had a large he-goat, which went in, and out, and mingled with the guests. One day, Pritchard called the goat to him, and offered it some ale, and the creature, so far

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from refusing it, drank it greedily, and soon after fell down in a state of intoxication, and lay quivering, to the great delight of Pritchard, and his companions, who, however, were horrified at this conduct in one, who was appointed to be their example, and teacher. Shortly after, as usual, Pritchard himself was trundled home, utterly intoxicated. He was at home, and ill, the whole of the next day; but on the day following, he went down to the public-house, and called for his pipe, and tankard. The goat came into the room, and again he held the tankard to the creature's mouth; but it turned away its head in disgust, hurried away, and would come near him no more. This startled the man. 'My God! he said, 'is this poor dumb creature wiser than I?' He pursued, in his mind, the train of feeling awakened by conscience; he shrank, with disgust, from himself. 'But, thank God! 'he said, 'I am yet alive, and it is not too late to mend. The goat has taught me a lesson; I will become a new man.' Smashing his pipe, he left his tankard untasted, and hastened home. He, indeed, commenced a new career. He became, and continued for thirty years, a

great, and effective preacher; 'preaching,' says Mr Borrow, 'the inestimable efficacy of Christ's blood-shedding.'

Those poetical pieces which he wrote at intervals, and which are called *The Welshman's Candle*, appear only to have been gathered into a volume, and published, after his death. The room in which he lived, and wrote, appears to be still standing; and Mr Borrow says: 'Of all the old houses in Llandovery, the old Vicarage is, by far, the most worthy of attention, irrespective of the wonderful monument

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of God's providence, and grace, who once inhabited it;' and the old vicar's memory is as fresh in Llandovery, today, as ever it was. While Mr Borrow was looking at the house, a respectable-looking farmer came up, and was about to pass; 'but observing me,' he says, 'and how I was employed, he stopped, and looked now at me, and now at the antique house. Presently he said, "A fine old place, sir, is it not? But do you know who lived there?" Wishing to know what the man would say, provided he thought I was ignorant as to the ancient inmate, I turned a face of inquiry upon him, whereupon he advanced towards me, two or three steps, and placing his face so close to mine, that his nose nearly touched my cheek, he said, in a kind of piercing whisper, "*The Vicar!*" then drawing his face back, he looked me full in the eyes, as if to observe the effect of his intelligence, gave me two or three nods, as if to say, "He did indeed," and departed. *The Vicar* of Llandovery had then been dead nearly two hundred years. Truly the man in whom piety, and genius, are blended, is immortal upon earth!' *The Welshman's Candle* is a set of homely, and very rememberable verses, putting us, as far as we are able to judge, in mind of our Thomas Tusser.

Mr Borrow gives us a very pleasant taste in the following literal, vigorous translation, which we may presume to be his own:—

G O D ' S B E T T E R T H A N A L L .

God's better than heaven, or aught therein;  
 Than the earth, or aught we there can win;  
 Better than the world, or its wealth to me —  
 God's better than all that is, or can be.

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Better than father, than mother, than nurse;  
 Better than riches, oft proving a curse;  
 Better than Martha, or Mary even —  
 Better, by far, is the God of heaven.

If God for thy portion thou hast ta'en,  
 There's Christ to support thee in every pain;  
 The world to respect thee thou wilt gain;  
 To fear thee, the fiend, and all his train.

Of the best of portions, thou choice didst make,  
 When thou the high God to thyself didst take;  
 A portion, which none from thy grasp can rend,  
 Whilst the sun, and the moon on their course shall wend.

When the sun grows dark, and the moon turns red;  
 When the stars shall drop, and millions dread;  
 When the earth shall vanish, with its pomp, in fire,  
 Thy portion shall still remain entire.

Then let not thy heart, though distressed, complain;  
 A hold on thy portion firm maintain.  
 Thou didst choose the best portion, again I say;  
 Resign it not till thy dying day!

But the age of preachers in Wales, to which the following pages will more immediately refer, commences with those two great men, who were indeed the Whitefield, and the Wesley of Wales — Howell Harris of Trevecca, and Daniel Rowlands of Llangeitho. It is remarkable that these two men, born to be such inestimable, and priceless blessings to their country, were born within a year of each other — Harris at Trevecca, in 1714, Rowlands at Pantybeidy, in Cardiganshire, in 1713. As to Harris, he is spoken of as the most successful preacher that ever ascended a pulpit, or platform in Wales; and yet nothing is more certain, than that he neither aimed to preach, nor will his sermons, so far as any

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knowledge can be obtained of them, stand the test of any kind of criticism. This only is certain, their unquestioned, and greatly pre-eminent usefulness.



He did not deliver composed sermons, but unpremeditated addresses, on sin, and its tremendous consequences; on death, and the judgement, and the world to come. It is said, 'His words fell like balls of fire, on the careless, and impenitent multitudes.' Himself destined for a clergyman of the Church of England, an Oxford man, and with a fair promise of success in the Church — since before he left Oxford, he had a benefice offered him — he repeatedly applied, in vain, for ordination. Throughout his life, he continued ardently attached to the services of the Church of England.

It was, unhappily, from that Church, in Wales, he encountered his most vehement opposition, and cruel persecution. He, however, roused the whole country, — within the Church of England, and without, — from its state of apathy, and impiety; while we quite agree with his biographer, who says: 'Any attempt to account philosophically for the remarkable effects which everywhere attended the preaching of Howell Harris, would be nothing better than an irreverent trifling with a solemn subject. All that can be said, with propriety, is, that he was an extraordinary instrument, raised by Providence, at an extraordinary time, to accomplish an extraordinary work.'

But Llangeitho, and its vicar, seem to demand a more lengthened notice, as coming more distinctly within the region of the palpable, and apprehensible. Daniel Rowlands was a clergyman, and the son of a clergyman. At twenty-two years of age, he was

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appointed perpetual curate, or incumbent, of the united parishes of Nantcwnlle and Llangeitho, at a salary of ten pounds a year. He never received any higher preferment in the Church on earth, although so eminent a blessing to his country. He must have been some such man as our William Grimshaw, of Haworth. When he entered upon his curacy, he was quite an unconverted young man, given to occasional fits of intoxication, and in the summer he left his pulpit, to take his part, with his parishioners, in the sports, and games in the neighbouring fields, or on the village green.

But, in the immediate neighbourhood of his own hamlet, ministered a good and consistent Nonconformist, Philip Pugh, a learned, lovable, and lowly man; and; in the smaller round of his sphere, a successful preacher. Daniel Rowlands appears to have been converted under a sermon of the eminent Rev. Griffith Jones of Llanddowror, at

Llanddewibrefi; but it was to Philip Pugh that he was led for that instruction, and influence, which instrumentally helped to develop his character. It would seem that Rowlands was a man bound to be in earnest; but conversion set on fire a new genius in the man. He developed, hitherto undiscovered, great preaching power, and his church became crowded. Still, for the first five years of his new course of life, he did not know that more glorious and beautiful Gospel which he preached through all the years following.

He was a tremendous alarmist; the dangers of sin, and the terrors of the eternal judgements, were his topics; and his hearers shrank, and recoiled, while

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they were fascinated to listen. Again, the venerable Nonconformist stepped in; Philip Pugh pointed out his defect. ‘My dear sir,’ said he, ‘preach the Gospel — preach the Gospel to the people. Give them the balm of Gilead; show the blood of Christ; apply it to their spiritual wounds; show the necessity of faith in a crucified Redeemer.’ ‘I am afraid,’ said Rowlands, ‘that I have not all that faith myself, in its full vigour, and exercise.’ ‘Preach on it,’ said Mr Pugh; ‘preach on it, until you feel it in that way, — it will come. If you go on preaching in the way you have been doing, you will kill half the people in the country. You thunder out the curses of the law, and preach in such a terrific manner, that nobody can stand before you. Preach the Gospel!’ And again the young clergyman followed the advice of his patriarchal friend, and unnumbered thousands in Wales had occasion, through long following years, to bless God for it.

Does not the reader call up a very beautiful picture of these two, in that old and obscure Welsh hamlet, nearly a hundred and fifty years since? — the conversation of such an one as Paul, the aged, with his young son, Timothy; and if anything were needed to increase our sense of admiration of the young clergyman, it would be that he did not disdain to receive lessons from old age, and an old age covered with the indignities attaching to an outlawed Nonconformist. In Wales, there were very many men like Philip Pugh; we may incidentally mention the names of several in the course of these pages — names well worthy of the commendation in Johnson’s perfect lines;

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Their virtues walked their narrow round,

Nor made a pause, nor left a void;  
 And sure the Eternal Master found  
 Their single talent well employed.

And still they fill affection's eye,  
 Obscurely wise, and coarsely kind;  
 And let not arrogance deny  
 Its praise to merit unrefined.

Then there opened a great career before Rowlands, and Llangeitho became as a shrine in evangelical Wales. He received invitations to preach in every neighbourhood of the Principality; many churches were opened to him, and where they were not, he took freely, and cheerfully, to the chapels, or the fields. His words, and accents were of that marvellous kind we have identified with Welsh preaching. Later on, and in other times, people said, he found his successor in Davies of Swansea; and the highest honour they could give to Swansea, in Davies's day, was that 'it was another Llangeitho.'

Rowlands had the power of the thunder, and the dew; he pressed an extraordinary vitality into words, which had often been heard before, so that once, while reading the Church Service, in his own church, he gave such a dreadful tenderness to the words, 'By thine agony, and bloody sweat!' that the service was almost stopped, and the people broke forth into a passion of feeling. Christmas Evans says: 'While Rowlands was preaching, the fashion of his countenance became altered; his voice became as if inspired; the worldly, dead, and careless spirit was cast out by his presence. The people, as it were, drew near to the cloud, towards Christ, and Moses,

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and Elijah. Eternity, with its realities, rushed upon their vision. These mighty influences were felt, more or less, for fifty years. Thousands gathered at Llangeitho for communion every month, and they came there from every county in Wales.'

Such power there is in human words when divinely wielded; such was the spiritual power of Daniel Rowlands. Well does one writer say, the story of Llangeitho, well written, would read like a chapter in religious romance. It is very doubtful whether we have the record of any other man who drew such numbers to the immediate circle of his ministry, as Rowlands. He did not itinerate so largely as most of the great Welsh preachers. In an obscure spot in the interior of Cardiganshire, in an age

of bad roads, and in a neighbourhood where the roads were especially bad, he addressed his immense concourses of people. His monthly communion was sometimes attended by as many as three thousand communicants, of whom, often, many were clergymen. Upwards of a hundred ministers ascribe to him the means of their conversion. Thus, in his day, it was a place of pilgrimages; and even now, there are not a few who turn aside, to stand, with wonder, upon the spot where Rowlands exercised his marvellous ministry.

The four great Welsh preachers, Christmas Evans, John Elias, Williams of Wern, and Davies of Swansea, on whose pulpit powers, and method, we have more distinctly dilated, may be styled the tetrarchs of the pulpit of Wild Wales of these later times. Their eminence was single, and singular. Their immense powers unquestioned: rivals, never, apparently, by

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their own selection, the great Welsh religious mind only rivalled them with each other. After them it might be said, 'Great was the company of preachers,' — great, not merely in number, carrying also influence, and usefulness of another kind; perhaps even superior to those honoured names.

How, for instance, can we do sufficient honour to the labours of CHARLES OF BALA? This truly apostolic man was born at Llanfihangel, in 1755. While yet a boy, he managed to introduce family worship into his father's house; but it was in his eighteenth year that he heard the great Daniel Rowlands preach, and he says: 'From that day I found a new heaven, and a new earth, to enjoy; the change experienced by a blind man, on receiving his sight, is not greater than that which I felt on that day.' In his twentieth year he went to Oxford, and received Deacon's orders, and was appointed to a curacy in Somersetshire; he took his degree at his University, but he could never obtain priest's orders; in every instance objection was made to what was called his Methodism.

The doors of the Establishment were thus closed against him, and he was compelled to cast in his lot with the Welsh Methodists, in 1785. Before this, he had preached for Daniel Rowlands in his far-famed church at Llangeitho, and the great old patriarch simply uttered a prophecy about him when he said, 'Mr Charles is the gift of God to North Wales.' He was an eminent preacher, but it was rather in other ways that he became illustrious, in the great religious labours of his

country. Moving about to preach, from place to place, his heart became painfully impressed, and distressed, by the

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great ignorance of the people everywhere, and that such multitudes were unable to read the Word of God; so he determined on the establishment of schools upon a singular principle.

It was two or three years before he commenced his more settled labours in Wales, that Robert Raikes had originated the Sunday-school idea in Gloucester. Thomas Charles was the first to seize upon the idea, and introduce it into his own country. Charles had an organising, and administrative, mind; he fixed upon innumerable places, where he settled schoolmasters, for periods of from six to nine, and twelve months, to teach the people to read, giving them the initial elements, and rudiments, of education, and then removing these masters to another locality.

So he filled the country with schools — Sabbath, and night-schools. He visited the schools himself, periodically, catechising the children publicly; and in the course of his lifetime, he had the satisfaction of seeing the aspect of things entirely changed. He used no figure of speech, when, towards the close of his life, he said, ‘The desert blossoms as the rose, and the dry land has become streams of water.’ To these purposes of his heart he was able to devote whatever money he received from the work of the ministry; he testifies affectionately that ‘the wants of my own family were provided for by the industry of my dear wife;’ and he received some help by donations from England. He found, everywhere, a dearth of Bibles, and it is curious to read that, although the Church of England would not receive him as one of her ministers, when his work became established, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge made

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him, after considerable reluctance, a grant of no less than ten thousand Welsh Bibles. After this, he went to London, for the purpose of establishing a Society to supply Wales with the Holy Scriptures. It was at a meeting of the Religious Tract Society, which was called together for that purpose, that it was resolved to establish the British and Foreign Bible Society; and before that society had been established ten years, it had supplied Wales with a hundred thousand copies of the Word of God.

Other men were great preachers, but Thomas Charles was, in the truest sense of the word, a bishop, an overseer, — travelling far, and wide,

preaching, catechising, administrating, placing and removing labourers. All his works, and words, his inward, and his outward life, show the active, high-toned saintliness, and enthusiastic holiness, of the man. There is, perhaps, no other to whom Wales is so largely indebted for the giving direction, organisation, and usefulness to all religious labour, as to him. His modesty transcended his gifts, and his activity. John Campbell, of Kingsland, himself noted in all the great, and good works of that time, relates that at a meeting, at Lady Anne Erskine's, at which Mr Charles was requested to state the circumstances which had made little Bala a kind of spiritual metropolis of the Principality of Wales, 'he spoke for about an hour, and never once mentioned himself, although he was the chief instrument, and actor, in the whole movements which had made the place so eminent.'

This good man, John Campbell, afterwards wrote to Mr Charles's biographer: 'I never was at Bala

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but once, which was not long after his removal to the regions of immortality; and such was my veneration for his character, and labours, that, in approaching it, I felt as if I was about coming in sight of Sinai, or Jerusalem, or treading on classical ground. The events of his life, I believe, are viewed with more interest by the glorified than the battles of Actium, or Waterloo.'

But, as a preacher, he was unlike those men, whose words moved upon the wheels of thunder, and who seemed to deal with the lightnings of imagination, and eloquence. As we read his words, they seem to flow with refreshing sweetness. He was waited for, and followed everywhere, but his utterances had nothing of the startling powers we have seen; we should think he preached, rather, to those who knew, by experience, what it is to grow in grace. There is a glowing light of holiness about his words — a deep, sweet, experimental reality. Of course, being a Welshman, his thoughts were pithily expressed. They were a sort of spiritual proverbs, in which he turned over, again and again, some idea, until it became like the triads of his country's literature; and dilating upon an idea, the various aspects of it became like distinct facets, setting forth some pleasant ray.

Such was Thomas Charles. Wales lost him at the age of sixty — a short life, if we number it by years; a long life, if we consider all he

accomplished in it; and, to this day, his name is one of the most revered throughout the Principality.

It is impossible to do the justice even of mentioning the names of many of those men, who 'served

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their generation' so well, 'according to the will of God, and then fell asleep.' And it is as necessary, as it is interesting, to notice how the various men, moved by the Spirit of God, found him leading, and guiding them in the path of labour, their instincts chose.

In the history of preaching, we believe there is no more curious chapter than this, of these strange preachers in Wales. They have an idiosyncrasy as entirely, and peculiarly, their own, as is that of the country in which they carried on their ministrations. The preaching friars of the times we call the dark, or middle ages, are very remarkable, from the occasional glimpses we are able to obtain of them. Very remarkable the band of men, evoked by the rise of Methodism in England, — those who spread out all over the land, treading the paths indicated by the voice, and finger of Whitefield, or Wesley. Very entertaining are the stories of the preachers of the backwoods of America, the sappers, and miners, who cleared a way for the planting of the Word among the wild forests of the Far West.

These Welsh preachers were unlike any of them, — they had a character altogether their own. A great many of them were men of eminent genius, glowing with feeling, and fancy; never having known college training, or culture, they were very often men who had, somehow, attained a singular variety of knowledge, lore, and learning, which, perhaps, would be despised as unscientific, and unclassified, by the schools, but which was not the less curious, and, to the Celtic mind, enchanting.

They all lived, and fared hard; all their thoughts,

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and fancies were high. If they marched before us now, the nineteenth century would, very likely, regard them as a set of very rough tykes. Perhaps the nineteenth century would regard Elijah, Amos, and Nahum, and sundry other equally respectable persons, in much the same manner. Rude, and rough in gait, and attire, the rudeness, and the roughness would, perhaps, be forgotten by us, if we could interpret the torrent, and the wail of their speech, and be, for a short time, beneath the power of

the visions, of which they were the rapt seers, and unveilers. We wonder that no enthusiastic Welshman has used an English pen to portray the lives, and portraits of a number of these Welsh worthies; to us, several of them — notably, John Elias, and Christmas Evans — seem to realise the idea of the Ancient Mariner, —

I pass like night from land to land,  
I have strange power of speech;  
The moment that his face I see,  
I know the man that must hear me —  
To him my tale I teach.

For instance, how many people in England ever heard the name of THOMAS RHYS DAVIES, an extraordinary man? And he left an extraordinary diary behind him, for he seems to have been a very methodical man; and his diary shows that he preached during his lifetime at least 13,145 times, and this diary contains a distinct record of the time, place, and text; and it is said that there is scarcely a river, brook, or tarn, from Conway to Llansanan, from Llanrwst to Newbridge, from the sea at Llandudno, to the waters of the Berwyn mountains, in whose waves he had not baptised.

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In fact, he was, perhaps, in his own particular, and peculiar line, second to none of the great Welsh preachers; only, it is said that his power was inexplicable, and yet that it stood the severest tests of popularity. His sermons are said to have been exceedingly simple, and very rememberable; they sprang out of a rare personal charm; he was himself; but, perhaps, if he resembled one of his great brethren, it would be Williams of Wern. His style was sharp, pointed, axiomatic, but antithetic, never prodigal of words, his sermons were short; but he was able to avail himself of any passing circumstance in the congregation, and to turn it to good account. Once, when a congregation seemed to be even more than usually disposed to cough, he said, ‘Cough away, my friends, it will not disturb me in the least; it will rather help me than not, for if you are coughing, I shall be sure that you are awake.’

He had that rare gift in the preacher, perfect self-possession, the grand preliminary to mastery over a congregation, an entire mastery over himself. All great Welsh preachers, however they may sometimes dilate, and expand truths into great paintings, and prolonged descriptions, excel



in the pithy, and proverb-uttering power; but Thomas Rhys Davies was remarkable in this. Here are a few illustrations —

‘Ignorance is the devil’s college.’

‘There are only three passages in the Bible which declare what God is, although there are thousands which speak about him. God is a Spirit, God is Light, and God is Love.’

‘Pharaoh fought ten great battles with God, and did not gain one.’

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‘The way through the Red Sea was safe enough for Israel, but not for Pharaoh; he had no business to go that way, it was a private road, that God had opened up for his own family.’

‘Let the oldest believer remember that Satan is older.’

‘Christ is the Bishop, not of titles, but of souls.’

‘Moses was learned, but slow of speech; it was well that he was so, or, perhaps, he would not have found time to write the law. Aaron had the gift of speech, and it does not appear that he had any other gift.’

‘If you have no pleasure in your religion, make haste to change it.’

‘Judas is much blamed for betraying Christ for three pounds; many, in our day, betray him a hundred times for three pence.’

‘Pharaoh commanded that Moses should be drowned; in after days, Pharaoh was paid back in his own coin.’

‘Many have a brother’s face, but Christ has a brother’s heart.’

Such was Thomas Rhys Davies; like Christmas Evans, journeying from North through South Wales, he was taken ill in the same house in which Christmas Evans died. Conscious of his approaching death, he begged that he might die in the same bed; this was not possible, but he was buried in the same grave.

Then there was EVAN JONES; he had been a *protégé* of Christmas Evans; Christmas Evans appears to have brought him forward, giving his verdict on his suitability as to the ministry. Christmas

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Evans was able to appreciate the young man, for he seems to have possessed really brilliant powers; in his country, and in his land’s language, he attained to the distinction of a bard; and it is said that his poetry rose to an elevation of wild, and daring grandeur. As a preacher, he does not appear to have studied to be popular, or to seek to adapt his sermons to the multitude; he probably moved through cloudy grandeurs, from whence, however, he sometimes descended, with an odd quaintness,

which, if always surprising, was sometimes reprehensible. Once, he was expatiating, glowingly, on the felicities of the heavenly state, in that tone, and strain which most preachers love, occasionally, to indulge, and which most hearers certainly, occasionally, enjoy; he was giving many descriptive delineations of heavenly blessedness, and incidentally said, 'There they neither marry, nor are given in marriage.' There was sitting beneath him a fervent brother, who, probably, not knowing what he said, sounded forth a hearty 'Amen!' Evan heard it, looked the man full in the face, and said, 'Ah, you've had enough of it, have you?'

This man was, perhaps, in his later years, the most intimate friend of Christmas Evans. Christmas poured his brilliant imagination, couched in his grand, although informal, rhetoric over the multitudes; Evan Jones frequently soared into fields whither, only here and there, an eye could follow his flight; but when the two friends were alone, their spirits could mingle pleasantly, for their minds were cast very much in the same mould; and when Christmas Evans died, it was this friend who published in

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Welsh one of the most graceful tributes to his memory.

In the history of the preaching, and preachers of a hundred years since, we meet, of course, with many instances of men, who possessed considerable power, but allied with much illiterate roughness; still, the power made itself very manifest — a power of illustrating truth, and making it clearly apprehended. Such a preacher must SHENKIN OF PENHYDD have been, rough, and rude farmer as he was, blending, as was not at all uncommon then, and even in our own far more recent knowledge, the occupations of a farmer, and the ordained minister. Shenkin has left a very living reputation behind him; indeed, from some of the accounts we have read of him, we should regard him as quite a type of the rude, yet very effective, Welsh orator.

Whatever the Welsh preacher had to say, however abstract, it had to be committed to an illustration, to make it palpable, and plain. In those early times, a very large room, or barn, in which were several hundreds of people, would, perhaps, have only one solitary candle, feebly glimmering over the gloom. It was in such circumstances, or such a scene, that Shenkin was once preaching on Christ as the Light of the world. In the course of his sermon, he came to show that the world was not its own light, and announced to his hearers what, perhaps, might

startle some of them, that 'light was not in the eye.' It seemed as if he had no sooner said this, than he felt it to be a matter that required illustration. As he warmed with his subject, going round, and round to make his meaning plain, but all the time seeming to

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fear that he was not doing much towards it with his rustic congregation, he suddenly turned to the solitary candle, and blew it out, leaving his congregation in utter darkness. 'There,' he exclaimed, triumphantly, to his invisible congregation, 'what do you say to that? Is the light in the eye?' This, of course, settled the matter in the minds of the most obtuse; but it was still a serious matter to have to relight, in a lonely little chapel, an extinguished candle.

He was a singular creature, this Shenkin. Not many Welsh preachers have a greater variety of odd stories told than he, of his doings, and sayings. He had a very downright, and straightforward method of speech. Thus, he would say, 'There are many who complain that they can scarcely remember anything they hear. Have done with your lying!' he exclaimed. 'I'll be bound to say you remember well what you sold your old white horse for at Llandaff fair three years ago. Six or seven pounds, was it? Certainly that has not escaped your memory. You can remember anything but the Gospel.' And many of his images were much more of the rough-and-ready, than of the classical, order. 'Humility,' he once said, 'is as beautiful an ornament as a cow's tail; but it grows, like the cow's tail, downwards.'

Wales was covered with men like this. Every district possessed them, and many of them have found their memorial in some little volume, although, in most instances, they only survive in the breath of popular remembrance, and tradition.

One of the mightiest of these sons of thunder, who has left behind him a name, and fame, scarcely

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inferior to the great ones on whom we have more lengthily dwelt, was EBENEZER MORRIS. He was a fine, free, cheerful spirit; his character sparkled with every Christian virtue, — a man of rare gifts, and grace. With a severe sense of what was just in the relations of life, and what constituted the principles of a strong theology, keeping his unblemished course beneath the dominion of a peaceful conscience, he enjoyed, more than many, the social fireside chat, with congenial friends. Although a

pastor, and a preacher of wide fame, he was also a farmer; for he was one of an order of men, of whom it has been said, that good people were so impressed with the privilege conferred by preaching the gospel, that their hearers were careful not to deprive them of the full enjoyment of it, by remunerating their labours too abundantly.

Ebenezer Morris held a farm, and the farmer seems to have been worthy of the preacher. A story is told of him that, wanting to buy a cow, and going down to the fair, he found one for sale which he thought would suit him, and he bought it at the price named by its owner. Some days after, Mr Morris found that the price of cattle had gone up considerably, and meeting the previous owner of the cow, he said, 'Look here, I find you gave me too great a bargain the other day; the cow is worth more than I purchased her for, — here is another guinea; now I think we shall be about right.'

There are several stories told, in the life of this good, and great man, showing that he could not take an unfair advantage, that he was above everything mean, unfair, and selfish, and that guineas, and farms

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weighed nothing with him in the balance against righteousness, and truth. His influence over his whole country was immense; so much so, that a magistrate addressed him once in public, saying, 'We are under great obligations to you, Mr Morris, for keeping the country in order, and preserving peace among the people; you are worth more than any dozen of us.' On one occasion he was subpoenaed, to attend before a court of justice, to give evidence in a disputed case. As the book was handed to him, that he might take the oath, the presiding magistrate said, 'No! no! take it away; there is no necessity that Mr Morris should swear at all; his word is enough.'

His appearance in preaching, his entire presence, is described as most majestic, and commanding: his voice was very loud, and it is said, a word from his mouth would roll over the people like a mighty wave. 'Look at that window,' said an aged deacon, in North Wales, to a minister, who had come to preach at the chapel to which the former belonged, 'look at that window! It was there that Ebenezer Morris stood, when he preached his great sermon from the words, "The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath," and when we all turned pale while we were listening to him.' 'Ah!' said the minister, 'do you remember any portion of that sermon?' 'Remember!' said the old

deacon; 'remember, my good man? I should think I do, and shall remember for ever. Why, there was no flesh here that could stand before it!' 'What did he say?' said the minister. 'Say! my good man,' replied the deacon; 'say?'

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Why, he was saying, "Beneath, beneath, beneath! Oh, my people, hell is beneath, beneath, *beneath!*" until it seemed as if the end of the world had come upon us all in the chapel, and outside!

When Theophilus Jones was selected as Rowland Hill's co-pastor at Wooton-under-Edge, Ebenezer Morris came to preach on his induction. In that place, the audience was not likely to be a very sleepy one, but this preacher roused them beyond their usual mark, and strange stories are told of the sermon, while old Rowland sat behind the preacher, ejaculating the whole of the time; and many times after, when Mr Hill found the people heavy, and inattentive, he was in the habit of saying, 'We must have the fat minister from Wales here, to rouse you up again!' We know his likeness very well, and can almost realise his grand, solemn manner, in his black velvet cap, which made him look like a bishop, and gave much more impressiveness to his aspect, than any mitre could have done.

This Ebenezer Morris was the son of a man eminent in his own day, David Morris, of whom it was said, that he scarcely ever preached a sermon which was not the means of the conversion of men, and in his evangelistic tours he usually preached two, or three times a day. There is a sermon, still spoken of, preached at Rippont Bridge, Anglesey. The idea came to him whilst he was preaching, that many of the people before him might surely be lost, and he burst forth into a loud dolorous wail, every line of his countenance in sympathy with his agonising cry, in Welsh, which no translation can

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render, 'O bobl y gollod fawr! y gollod fawr!' The English is, 'O ye people of the great loss! the great loss!' It seems slight enough to us, but it is said that the people not only moved before his words, like reeds in a storm, but to this day they speak in Anglesey of David Morris's sermon of 'The Great Loss.'

The great authority for the most interesting stories of the religious life in Wales, is the *History of Welsh Methodism*, by the late Rev. John Hughes, of Liverpool; unfortunately, we believe it only exists in Welsh,

in three volumes, amounting to nearly two thousand pages; but *Welsh Calvinistic Methodism; a Historical Sketch*, by the Rev. William Williams, appears to be principally a very entertaining digest, and condensation, of many of the most noticeable particulars from the larger work. There have certainly appeared, from time to time, many most interesting, and faithful men in the ministry of the Gospel in Wales, quite beyond the possibility of distinct mention; some of them were very poor, and lowly in life, and circumstances. Such was THOMAS HUGHES. He is described as a man of small talent, and slender knowledge, but of great holiness, and with an intense faith that many of his neighbours were in a very bad condition, and that it was his duty to try to speak words to them, whereby they might be saved. He used to stand under the old walls of Conway, and numbers gathered around him to listen; until at last he excited the anger of the vicar, who caused him to be arrested, and brought into his presence, when the following conversation took place:—

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*Vicar.* ‘You ought to be a learned man, to go about, and to be able to answer deep questions.’

*Hughes.* ‘What questions, sir?’

*Vicar.* ‘Here they are — those which were asked me by the Lord Bishop. Let’s see whether you will be able to answer them. Where was St Paul born?’

*Hughes.* ‘In Tarsus.’

*Vicar.* ‘Hem! I see that you know something about it. Well, can you tell me who took charge of the Virgin Mary after our blessed Redeemer was crucified?’

*Hughes.* ‘John.’

*Vicar.* ‘Well, once again. Who wrote the Book of Revelation? Answer that if you can.’

*Hughes.* ‘John the Apostle.’

*Vicar.* ‘Ho! you seem to know a good deal, after all.’

*Hughes.* ‘Perhaps, sir, you will allow me to ask you one or two questions?’

*Vicar.* ‘Oh yes; only they must be religious questions.’

*Hughes.* ‘What is holiness? and how can a sinner be justified before God?’

*Vicar.* 'Ho! we have no business to bother ourselves with such things, and you have no business to put such questions to a man in my position; go out of my sight, this minute.' And to the men who had brought him, 'Take care that you do not bring such people into my presence any more.'

Hughes was a simple, earnest, believing man, with a good deal of Welsh cuteness. After this interview with the vicar, he was permitted to pursue his exhortations

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at Conway in peace. But there is a place between Conway, and Llandudno, called Towyn Ferry; it was a very ignorant little nook, and the people were steeped in unbelief, and sin; thither Hughes determined to go, but his person was not known there. The news, however, was circulated abroad, that there was to be a sermon, and religious service. When he arrived, he found things did not appear very pleasant; there were heaps of stones prepared for the preacher's reception, when he should make his appearance, or commence his work. Hughes had nothing clerical in his manner, or garb, any more than any one in the crowd, and no one suspected him to be the man, as he threw himself down on the grass, and entered familiarly into conversation with the people about him. After a time, when their patience began to fail, he stood up, and said, 'Well, lads, there is no sign of any one coming; perhaps the man has heard that you are going to stone him; let one of us get up, and stand on that heap of stones, and talk, and the rest sing. Won't that be first-rate?'

'Capital,' said a bully, who seemed to be the recognised leader of the crowd. 'You go on the heap, and preach to us.'

'Very well,' said Hughes, 'I'm willing to try; but mind you, I shall make some blunders, so you must be civil, and not laugh at me.'

'I'll make 'em civil,' said the bully. 'Look here, lads, whoever laughs, I'll put one of these stones into his head!'

'Stop you!' said Hughes; 'the first thing we have to do, is to pray, isn't it?'

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'Ay, ay!' said the bully, 'and I'll be clerk. I'll stand before you, and you shall use my shoulder for the pulpit.'

So prayer was offered, short, and simple, but in real earnest; and at its close, a good many favourable words were uttered. Some volunteered

the remark that, 'It was every bit as good as a parson.' Hughes proceeded to give out a text, but the bully shouted, —

'Hold on, you fool! we've got to sing first.' 'Ay, ay!' said Hughes, 'I forgot that.'

So they sang a Welsh hymn, after a fashion, and then came the text, and the sermon, which was short, and simple too, listened to very attentively; and the singular part of the story is, that the bully, and clerk, left the ground with the preacher, quieted, and changed, and subsequently he became a converted man. The regeneration of Wales, through its villages, and lone remote districts, is full of anecdotes like this, — stories of persecution, and the faithful earnestness of simple men, who felt in them a strong desire to do good, and fulfilled their desire, becoming humble, but real blessings to their neighbourhoods.

Only in a history of the Welsh pulpit — and that would be a volume of no slight dimensions — would it be possible to recapitulate the names of the men who exercised, in their day, considerable influence over the scattered thousands of the Principality. They constitute a very varied race, and were characterised by freshness, and reality, taking, of course, the peculiar mental complexion of the preacher: some calm, and still, but waving about their words like quiet lightnings; some vehement, overwhelming

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passionate; some remarkable for their daring excursions of imagination; some abounding in wit, and humour. One of the most remarkable of these last, one who ought not to go unmentioned in such an enumeration, was SAMUEL BREEZE. This was the man who first introduced 'The Churchyard World' to Dr Raffles, — of whom it was said, that if you heard one of his sermons, you heard three preachers, so various were not only the methods of his sermons, but even the tone of his voice. He is said to have produced extraordinary effects. Christmas Evans said of him, that 'his eyes were like a flame of fire, and his voice like a martial strain, calling men to arms.'

The writer of this volume, in a work on the *Vocation of the Preacher*, mentions a curious instance, which he gives from the unpublished reminiscences of a dear departed friend — the Rev. John Pyer, late of Devonport — who was present when the incident happened, in Bristol, perhaps nearly eighty years since. Sammy Breeze, as he was familiarly called by the multitudes who delighted in his ministry, came,



periodically, from the mountains of Cardiganshire, or the neighbourhood of Aberystwyth, to Bristol, where he spoke with more than tolerable efficiency in English. Mr Pyer, then a youth, was in the chapel, when, as was not unusual, two ministers, Sammy Breeze and another, were to preach. The other took the first place, a young man with some tints of academical training, and some of the livid lights of a then only incipient rationalism in his mind. He took for his text, 'He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth

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not shall be damned;' but he condoned the heavy condemnation, and, in an affected manner, shaded off the darkness of the doom of unbelief, very much in the style of the preacher in Cowper's satire, who never mentioned hell to ears polite. The young man, also, grew sentimental, and 'begged pardon' of an audience, rather more polite than usual, for the sad statement made in the text. 'But, indeed,' said he, 'he that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not — indeed, I regret to say, I beg your pardon for uttering the terrible truth, but, indeed, he shall be sentenced to a place which here I dare not mention.'

Then rose Sammy Breeze. He began: 'I shall take the same text, tonight, which you have just heard. Our young friend has been fery fine tonight, he has told you some fery polite things. I am not fery fine, and I am not polite, but I will preach a little bit of truth to you, which is this: "He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned," and *I begs no pardons.*' He continued, 'I do look round on this chapel, and I do see people all fery learned and in-tel-lect-u-al. You do read books, and you do study studies, and fery likely you do think that you can mend God's Book, and are fery sure you can mend me. You have great — what you call thoughts, and poetries; but I will tell you one little word, and you must not try to mend that; but if you do, it will be all the same; it is this, look you "He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned," and *I begs no pardons.* And then I do look round your chapel, and I do see you are a foine people,

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well-dressed people, well-to-do people. I do see that you are fery rich, and you have got your moneys, and are getting fery proud; but I tell you, it does not matter at all; for I must tell you the truth, and the truth is, "He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned," and *I begs no pardons.* And now,' continued the preacher, if you

will say to me, "What do you mean by talking to us in this way? Who are you, sir?" And now I will tell you. I am Sammy Preeze. I have come from the mountains of Cardiganshire, on my Master's business, and his message I must deliver. If you will never hear me again, I shall not matter much, but while you shall hear me, you shall hear me, and this is his word in me, and in me to you: "He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned," *and I begs no pardons.*'

It was a strange scene; but as he went on, in quaint, but terribly earnest strain, anger passed into awe, and mute astonishment into rapt attention. No one, who heard the words, could ever again hear them unheeded, nor think lightly of the doom of the unbelieving. The anecdote is worth being laid to heart, in these days, when there is too often a reserve in declaring the whole counsel of God.

After service, in the vestry, the deacons were in great anger with the blunt preacher; and one, a well-known religious man in Bristol, exclaimed, 'Mr Breeze, you have strangely forgotten yourself tonight, sir. We did not expect that you would have behaved in this way. We have always been very glad to see you in our pulpit, but your sermon

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tonight, sir, has been most insolent, shameful!' He wound up a pretty sharp condemnation by saying, 'In short, I don't understand you!'

'Ho! ho!' exclaimed Sammy. 'You say you do not understand me? Eh! look you then, I will tell you; I do understand you! Up in our mountains, we have one man there, we do call him exciseman; he comes along to our shops and stores, and says, "What have you here? Anything contraband here?" And if it is all right, the good man says, "Step in, Mr Exciseman, come in, look you." He is all fair, open, and above-board. But if he has anything secreted there, he does draw back surprised, and he makes a fine face, and says, "Sir, I do not understand you." Now, you do tell me that you don't understand me, but I do understand you, gentlemen, I do; and I do fear you have something contraband here; and I will say good-night to you; but I must tell you one little word; that is: "He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned," *and I begs no pardons.*'

But, with these simple illustrations, we have not exhausted the number of noticeable names. In connection with every name as it occurs, some interesting anecdote meets the memory. There was Robert Lloyd, the shoemaker, and Thomas the turner, and Robert Roberts, of whom, from

the stories before us, we do not find it difficult to believe, that he had the power to describe things in such a vivid, and graphic manner, as to make his hearers feel as if the scenes were passing before their eyes. Then there were David Evans of Aberayron, and Ebenezer Richard of Tregaron, and William Morris of St

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David's, whose every sermon was said to be a string of sparkling gems; John Jones of Talysarn, and his brother, David Jones; John Hughes; the seraphic Henry Rees, and Thomas Philips, and many another name, concerning whom an illustration might be furnished, of their powers of wit, wisdom, or eloquence. England, itself, has been indebted, in many a circle, to eminent Welsh preachers, who have stimulated thought, created the sphere of holy usefulness, moved over the minds of cultivated members with the freshness of a mountain wind, or a mountain stream. It would be invidious to mention their names — many are yet living; and some, who have not long quitted the Church on earth, have still left behind them the fragrance of loved, and honoured names, and exalted, and earnest labours.

Few of our readers, we may suppose, can be unacquainted with the name, and memory of 'The Man of Ross,' so famous through the verses of Pope. Ross is a well-known little town in Monmouthshire, on the banks of the Wye, on the borders of Wales. There, in the parish church, in the pew in which John Kyrle, the Man of Ross, sat, more than a hundred years since, a curious sight may be seen: two elm-trees rise, and spread out their arms, and flourish within the church; especially during the spring, and summer months, they form a singular adornment to the sacred edifice. The tradition is, that they are suckers from a tree planted by the 'Man of Ross,' outside the church; but it was cut down by a certain rector, because it excluded the light; the consequence was that they forced their way inside, where they had continued to grow, and

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flourish. As we have looked upon the singular sight of those trees, in the Man of Ross's pew, we have often thought of those who, in Wales, planted in the house of the Lord, flourish in sacred, and sainted memories, in the courts of our God. Although all that was mortal of them has passed away, they still bring forth fruit, and flourish in the grateful recollections of the country, they were permitted to bless, and adorn.

Yes, it is very singular to think of many of these men of Wild Wales. Even those who were counted heretical, were more than extraordinary men; they were, perhaps, men who, in our day, would seem rather remarkable for their orthodoxy of sentiment. Rhys Stephen, in an extended note in his *Memoirs of Christmas Evans*, refers to the influence of discussions, in the Principality, raised by the Rev. WILLIAM RICHARDS, LL.D. A large portion of the ministerial life of this distinguished man, was passed in England; he was educated for the ministry at the Baptist Academy in Bristol, for some time co-pastor with Dr Ash, author of the Dictionary, and then became the minister of the Baptist Church at Lynn, in Norfolk, where he remained for twenty years. He always continued, however, in every sense of the word, a Welshman, and, notwithstanding his English pastorates, his residences in Wales were frequent and long.

He was born at Pen-hydd, in Pembrokeshire, in 1749. He published a Welsh-English dictionary, and his services to Welsh literature were eminent. But he was regarded as a heretic; his temperament, singular as it seems in a Welshman, was almost

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purely philosophic, and neither imaginative, nor emotional; he disliked the great annual religious gatherings of his countrymen, and called them fairs, and the preachers, upon these occasions, he sometimes described in epithets, which were not complimentary. Naturally, his brethren paid him back; they called him a heretic, — which is also an exceedingly convenient, and not unusual method of revenge. Dr Richards's influence, however, in Wales, at the beginning of this century, appears to have been very great; the charges against him, he does not appear to have been very mindful to disprove, and it is exceedingly likely that a different, or more guarded mode of expression, was the height of his offending. Who can fathom, or delineate, all the fine shades and divergencies of the Arian controversy? — men whose perfect soundness, in evangelical doctrine, was utterly undisputed, talked with Dr Richards, and said, that they could not discover that he held opinions different from their own. In a letter, dated 7 December 1804, when grave charges had been urged against him, and all the religious mischiefs throughout the Principality ascribed to him, he writes as follows, to a friend:

I think I may safely say, that no great change, of any kind, has taken place in my sentiments since I knew you. You must know, surely, that I did not use to be an *Athanasian*, or even a *Waterlandian*. Such views of the Deity always appeared to me too *Tritheistical*. I have been used to think, and do so still,

that there is a particular meaning in such words as these of the Apostle's, 'To us there is but one God, the Father;' but I never could say, or think,

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with the Socinians, that Jesus Christ is no more than a man, like ourselves. I believe, indeed, that he is a Man; but I, also, believe that he is 'Emmanuel, God with us' — that he is 'the form of God' — 'the image of the invisible God' — an object of Divine worship, so that we should 'honour the Son as we honour the Father' — 'that all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in him bodily,' or substantially. In short, I believe everything of the dignity, and glory of Christ's character, that does not *divide* the Deity, or land in *Tritheism*.

Again, to another correspondent: 'I believe, also, in the doctrine of the atonement, or sacrifice, of Christ, in the virtue of his blood, and in the prevalence of his mediation.'

Something of the same order of man, so far as sentiment, and knowledge are indications, but possessed of more wit, imagination, and emotion, was DAVIES, of CASTELL HYWEL, the first pastor of Christmas Evans, and of Daniel Davies, of Swansea. He was, in his day, a man of many-sided reputation, but of suspicious doctrinal relations. He was so eminent a classical scholar, and so many of the Welsh clergy had received their education from him, that when Dr Horsley was appointed Bishop of St David's, he expressed, in his usual passionate manner, his irritation that the most distinguished tutor in South Wales was a Nonconformist, and gave out that he would not ordain any of Mr Davies's pupils. Davies was a great bard; and Welshmen who know both languages, say that his translation of Gray's *Elegy* is, in force, and pathos, superior to the original. This will scarcely seem strange, if the deep pathos of the

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Welsh language be taken into account. His epitaph on Dr Priestley — satirising, of course, the materialism of Priestley — illustrates, at once, his humour, and versification:

Here lies at rest, in oaken chest,  
Together packed most nicely,  
The bones, and brains, flesh, blood, and veins,  
And *soul* of Dr Priestley!

As an illustration of his readiness of wit, a story is told, how one of the most noted of the Welsh bards one day met him, while the rain was streaming down upon him. Umbrellas, probably, were scarce. He was

covered with layers of straw, fastened round with ropes of the same material; in fact, thatched all over. To him his brother bard exclaimed

Oh, bard and teacher, famed afar,  
Such sight I never saw!  
It ill becomes a house like yours  
To have a roof of straw.

To which Davies instantly replied:

The rain is falling fast, my friend;  
You know not what you say,  
A roof of straw, methinks, doth well  
Beseem a wall of clay.

Such was Christmas Evans's first 'guide, philosopher, and friend.'

And if we refer to certain characteristics of the Welsh language, which make it eminently fine furniture for preaching-power, to these may be added, what we have not so particularly dwelt on, but which does follow, as a part of the same remark — the singular

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proverbial power of the Welsh language. In reading great Welsh sermons, and listening to Welsh preachers, we have often felt how much the spirit of their own triads, and the manner of old Catwg the Wise, and other such sententious bards, falls into their modern method. Welsh proverbs are the delightful recreations of the archæologists of the old Welsh language. Here, while we write these lines, we have piles of these proverbial utterances before us; short, compact sayings, wherever they come from, but which have been repeated on, from generation to generation. The Bardic triads, for instance, relating to language, selected by Mr Owen Pugh, — how admirable they are for any preacher! They may stand as the characteristics of their most eminent men.

'The three indispensables of language — purity, copiousness, and aptness; the three supports of language—order, strength, and harmony; the three uses of language — to relate, to describe, to excite; the correct qualities of language, — correct construction, correct etymology, and correct pronunciation; three marks of the purity of language — the intelligible, the pleasurable, the credible; three things that constitute just description — just selection of words, just construction of language, and just comparison; three things appertaining to just selection — the best language, the best order, and the best object.' It must be admitted, we

think, that, in these old triads, there is much of the compact wisdom of a primeval people, with whom books were few, and thoughts were fresh, and constant. There seemed to be a singular propensity, in the old mind of Wales, to

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throw everything into the form of a trinity of expression, or to bind up words, as far as possible, in short, sententious utterances. Catwg's *Essay on Metaphysics* is a very brief, and concise one, but it illustrates that rapid running-up-the-ladder kind of style, which has always been the delight of the Welsh poet or teacher.

In every person there is a soul. In every soul there is intelligence. In every intelligence there is thought. In every thought there is either good, or evil. In every evil there is death; in every good there is life. In every life there is God; and there is no God but he than whom there can be none better. There is nothing that cannot have its better, save the best of all. There is no best of all except love. There is no love but God. God is love!

Illustrations of this kind fill volumes. It is not for us here to say how much of the admirable, or the imitable there may be in the method. It was the method of the old Welsh mind; it was the method into which many of the best preachers fell, not because they, perhaps, knew so much of the words of the bards, as because it represented the mind of the race. Take a few of the Welsh proverbs.

'He that is intent upon going, will do no good before he departs.'  
 'Every one has his neighbour for a mirror.'  
 'The water is shallowest where it bubbles.'  
 'A lie is the quickest traveller.'  
 'Fame outlives riches.'  
 'He that is unlucky at sea, will be unlucky on land.'  
 'There is always time for meat, and for prayer.'

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'He mows the meadow with shears!'  
 'Calumny comes from envy.'  
 'Every bird loves its own voice!'  
 'The life of a man is not at the disposal of his enemy.'  
 'He that loves the young, must love their sports.'  
 'Prudence is unmarried without patience.'  
 'He that is the head, should become the bridge.'  
 'Three things come unawares upon a man: sleep, sin, and old age.'

But it is not only that this sententious characteristic of the Welsh language makes it a vehicle for the transparent expression of sentiment; even our translations cannot altogether disguise the pathetic tones of the language, and bursts of feeling. The following verse of an old Welsh prayer, which, a *Quarterly Reviewer* tells us, used to form, with the Creed and Ten Commandments, part of the peasant's daily devotion, illustrates this:—

'Mother, O mother! tell me, art thou weeping?  
The infant Saviour asked, on Mary's breast.  
'Child of th' Eternal, nay; I am but sleeping,  
Though vexed by many a thought of dark unrest.'  
'Say, at what vision is thy courage failing?  
'I see a crown of thorns, and bitter pain;  
And thee, dread Child, upon the cross of wailing,  
All heaven aghast, at rude mankind's disdain.'

It is singular that Mr Borrow found, on an old tombstone, an epitaph, which most of our readers will remember, as very like that famous one Sir Walter Scott gives us, from an old tomb, in a note to 'The Lay of the Last Minstrel.' The following is a translation:—

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Thou earth, from earth, reflect, with anxious mind;  
That earth to earth must quickly be consigned;  
And earth in earth must lie entranced, enthralled;  
Till earth from earth to judgement shall be called.

The following lines also struck Mr Borrow as remarkably beautiful, of which he gives us this translation. They are an inscription in a garden:—

In a garden the first of our race was deceived;  
In a garden the promise of grace was received;  
In a garden was Jesus betrayed to his doom;  
In a garden his body was laid in the tomb.

Such verses are very illustrative of the alliterative character of the Welsh mind.

But Wales, in its way — and no classical reader must smile at the assertion — was once quite as much the land of song as Italy. Among the amusements of the people was the singing of 'Pennilion,' a sort of epigrammatic poem, and of an improvisatorial character, testing the readiness of rural wit. With this exercise there came to be associated, in



later days, a sort of rude mystery, or comedy, performed in very much the same manner as the old monkish mysteries of the dark ages. These furnished an opportunity for satirising any of the unpopular characters of the village, or the Principality. Such mental characteristics, showing that there was a living mind in the country, must be remembered, when we attempt to estimate the power which extraordinary preachers soon attained, over the minds of their countrymen. Then, no doubt, although there might be exceptions, and a Welshman prove that he could be as stupid as anybody else, in general there was a keen love,

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and admiration of nature. The names of places show this. Mr Borrow illustrates both characters in an anecdote. He met an old man, and his son, at the foot of the great mountain, called Tap-Nyth-yr Eryri.

‘Does not that mean,’ said Mr Borrow, ‘the top nest of the eagles?’

‘Ha!’ said the old man, ‘I see you understand Welsh.’

‘A little. Are there eagles there now?’

‘Oh, no! no eagle now; eagle left Tap-Nyth.’

‘Is that young man your son?’ said Mr Borrow, after a little pause.

‘Yes, he my son.’

‘Has he any English?’

‘No, he no English, but he plenty of Welsh; that is, if he see reason.’ He spoke to the young man, in Welsh, asking him if he had ever been up to the Tap-Nyth; but he made no answer.

‘He no care for your question,’ said the old man; ‘ask him price of pig.’

‘I asked the young fellow the price of hogs,’ says Mr Borrow, ‘whereupon his face brightened up, and he not only answered my question, but told me that he had a fat hog to sell.’

‘Ha, ha!’ said the old man, ‘he plenty of Welsh now, for he see reason; to other question he no Welsh at all, no more than English, for he see no reason. What business he on Tap-Nyth, with eagle? His business down below in sty with pig. Ah! he look lump, but he no fool. Know more about pig than you, or I, or anyone, ’twixt here and Machynlleth.’

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It has been said, that the inhabitants of a mountainous country cannot be insensible to religion, and whether, or not this is universally true, it is, certainly, true of Wales. The magnificent scenery seems to create a pensive awe upon the spirit. Often the pedestrian, passing along a piece of unsuggestive road, suddenly finds that the stupendous mountains have

sloped down, to valleys of the wildest, and most picturesque beauty, valley opening into valley, in some instances; in others, as in the vale of Glamorgan, stretching along, for many miles, in plenteous fruitfulness, and beauty, illuminated by some river like the Tivy, the Towy, or the Lugg, some of these rivers sparkling, and flashing with the glittering *gleisiad*, as an old Welsh song sings it —

*Glan yw'r gleisiad yn y llyn,*  
Full fair the *gleisiad* in the flood  
Which sparkles 'neath the summer's sun.

The *gleisiad* is the salmon. We have dwelt on the word here, for the purpose of calling the reader's attention to its beautiful expressiveness. It seems to convey the whole idea of the fish — its silvery splendour, gleaming, and glancing through the lynn.

It seems rather in the nature of the Welsh mind, to take instantly a pensive, and sombre idea of things. A traveller, walking beneath a fine row of elms, expressed his admiration of them to a Welsh companion. 'Ay, sir,' said the man; 'they'll make fine chests for the dead!' It was very nationally characteristic, and hence, perhaps, it is that the owl (the *dylluan*) among birds, has received some of the most famous traditions of the Welsh language. Mr

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Borrow thought there was no cry so wild, as the cry of the *dylluan* — 'unlike any other sound in nature,' he says, 'a cry, which no combination of letters can give the slightest idea of;' and, surely, that Welsh name far better realises it, than the *tu whit tu whoo* of our Shakespeare.

Certainly, it is not in a page, or two, that we can give anything like an adequate idea of that compacted poetry, which meets us in Wales, whether we think of the varied scenery of the country, of the nervous, and descriptive language, or of its race of people, so imaginative, and speculative.

It ought to be mentioned, also, as quite as distinctly characteristic, that there is an intense clannishness prevalent throughout the Principality. Communication between the people has no doubt somewhat modified this; but, usually, an Englishman resident in Wales, and especially in the more sequestered regions, has seldom found himself in very comfortable circumstances. The Welsh have a suspicion that there are precious secrets in their land, and language, of which the English are desirous to avail themselves. And, perhaps, there is some extenuation in the recollection

that we, as their conquerors, have seldom given them reason to think well of us.

## CHAPTER 9

### *CHRISTMAS EVANS CONTINUED — HIS MINISTRY AT CAERPHILLY*

Caerphilly and its Associations — ‘Christmas Evans is come!’ — A Housekeeper — His Characteristic Second Marriage — A Great Sermon, The Trial of the Witnesses — The Tall Soldier — Extracts from Sermons — The Bible a Stone with Seven Eyes — ‘Their Works do Follow them’ — A Second Covenant with God — Friends at Cardiff — JP Davies — Reads Pye Smith’s *Scripture Testimony to the Messiah* — Beattie on Truth — The Edwards Family — Requested to Publish a Volume of Sermons, and his Serious Thoughts upon the Subject.

**I**T was in the year 1826 that Christmas Evans, now sixty-two years of age, left Anglesey, accepting an invitation to the Baptist Church at Tonyvelin, in Caerphilly. His ministry at Anglesey had been long, affectionate, and very successful; but, dear as Anglesey was to him, he had to leave it, and he left it, as we have seen, under circumstances not honourable to the neighbouring ministers, or the churches of which he had been the patriarchal pastor. Little doubt can there be, that even he suffered from the jealousy of inferior minds, and characters; so old as he was, so venerable, and such a household name as his had become, throughout all Wales, it might have been thought that he would not have been permitted to

depart. He left the dust of his beloved wife, the long companion of his Cildwrn cottage, behind him, and commenced his tedious journey to his new home. He had about two hundred miles to travel, and the travelling was not easy; travelling in Wales was altogether unrelated to the more comfortable, and commodious modes of conveyance in England, even in that day; and now he would have to cross a dangerous ferry, and now to mount a rugged, and toilsome hill, to wind slowly along by the foot of some gigantic mountain, to wend through a long, winding valley, or

across an extensive plain. As the old man passed along, he says he experienced great tenderness of mind, and the presence of Christ by his side. A long, solitary journey! he says, he was enabled to entrust the care of his ministry to Jesus Christ, with the confidence that he would deliver him from all his afflictions; he says, 'I again made a covenant with God which I never wrote.'

Caerphilly would seem a very singular spot in which to settle one of the most remarkable men, if not the most remarkable, in the pulpit of his country, and his time, — beyond all question, the most distinguished in his own denomination, there, and then. Even now, probably, very few of our readers have ever heard of Caerphilly; it is nearly forty years since the writer of the present pages was there, and there, in a Welsh cottage, heard from the lips of an old Welsh dame the most graphic outlines he has ever heard, or read, of some of the sermons of Christmas Evans. Since that day, we suppose Caerphilly may have grown nearer to the dignity of a little town, sharing some of the honours which have so lavishly

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fallen upon its great, and prosperous neighbour, Cardiff.

Caerphilly, however insignificant, as it lies in its mountain valley, a poor little village when Christmas Evans was there, has its own eminent claims to renown: tradition says — and, in this instance, tradition is, probably, correct — that it was once the seat of a large town. There, certainly, still stands the vast ruins of Caerphilly Castle, once the largest in all Great Britain next to Windsor, and still the most extensive ruin; here was the retreat of the ill-fated Edward II; here was that great siege, during which the king escaped in the depth of a dark, and stormy night, in the disguise of a Welsh peasant, flying to the parish of Llangonoyd, twenty miles to the west, where he hired himself at a farm, which, it is said, is still pointed out, or the spot where once it stood, the site made memorable, through all these ages, by so singular a circumstance. This was the siege in which that grand, and massive tower was rent, and which still so singularly leans, and hangs there, — the leaning tower of Caerphilly, as wonderful an object as the leaning tower of Pisa, a wonder in Wales which few have visited.

After this period, it was occupied by Glendower gradually, however, it became only famous for the rapacity of its lords, the Spencers, who plundered their vassals, and the inhabitants of the region in general, so that from this circumstance arose a Welsh proverb, 'It is gone to

Caerphilly,' — signifying, says Malkin, that a thing is irrecoverably lost, and used on occasions when an Englishman, not very nice, and select in his language, would say, 'It is gone to the

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devil.' Gloomy ideas were associated for long ages with Caerphilly, as the seat of horror, and rapacity; it had an awful tower for prisoners, its ruinous walls were of wondrous thickness, and it was set amidst desolate marshes.

And this was the spot to which Christmas Evans was consigned for some of the closing years of his life; but, perhaps, our readers can have no idea of the immense excitement his transit thither caused to the good people of the village, and its neighbourhood. Our readers will remember, what we have already said, that a small village by no means implied a small congregation. His arrival at Caerphilly was looked upon as an event in the history of the region round about; for until he was actually there, it was believed that his heart would fail him at last, and that he would never be able to leave Anglesey.

It is said that all denominations, and all conditions of people, caught up, and propagated the report, 'CHRISTMAS EVANS IS COME!' '*Are you sure of it?*' 'YES, quite sure of it; he preached at Caerphilly last Sunday! I know a friend who was there.' These poor scattered villagers, how foolish, to us, seems their enthusiasm, and frantic joy, because they had their country's great preaching bard in their midst; almost as foolish as those insane Florentines, who burst into tears and acclamations as they greeted one of the great pictures of Cimabue, and reverently thronged round it in a kind of triumphal procession. What makes it more remarkable, is that they should love a man as poor, as he was old. If they could revere him as, wearied and dusty, he came along after his tedious two hundred miles' journey, spent,

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and exhausted, what an affluence of affection they would have poured forth had he rode into Caerphilly, as the old satirist has it, in a coach, and six!

Well, he was settled in the chapel-house, and a housekeeper was provided for him. In domestic matters, however, he did not seem to get on very well. North, and South Wales appeared different to him, and he said to a friend, he must get a servant from the north. It was suggested to him, that he might do better than that, that he had better marry again,

and the name of an excellent woman was mentioned, who would have been probably not unwilling; and she had wealth, so that he might have bettered his entire worldly circumstances by the alliance, and have made himself pleasantly independent of churches, and deacons, and county associations; and when it was first suggested to him, he seemed to think for a moment, and then broke out into a cheerful laugh. 'Ho! ho!' he said 'I tell you, brother, it is my firm opinion that I am never to have any property in the soil of this world, until I have a grave;' and he would talk no more on the subject, but he took a good brother minister of the neighbourhood into his counsel, Mr Davies, of Argoed, and he persuaded him to take his horse, and to go for him to Anglesey, and to bring back with him the old, and faithful servant of himself, and his departed wife, Mary Evans; and, in a short time, he married her, and she paid him every tribute of untiring, and devoted affection, to the last moment of his life. A really foolish man, you see, this Christmas Evans, and, as many no doubt said, old as he was, he might have done so much better for himself. It

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is not uninteresting to notice a circumstance, which Mr Rhys Stephen discovered, that Christmas Evans was married the second time in the same parish of Eglwysilian, in Glamorganshire, the church in which George Whitefield was married: the parish register contains both their names.

And what will our readers think, when they find that those who knew Christmas Evans, both at this, and previous periods of his history, declare that his preaching now surpassed that of any previous period? Certainly, his ministry was gloriously successful at Caerphilly. Caerphilly, the village in the valley, became like a city set upon a hill; every Sabbath, multitudes might be seen, wending their way across the surrounding hills, in all directions. The homes of the neighbourhood rang, and re-echoed with Christmas Evans's sermons; his morning sermon, especially, would be the subject of conversation, in hundreds of homes, many miles away, that evening. The old dame with whom we drank our cup of tea, in her pleasant cottage at Caerphilly, near forty years since, talked, with tears, of those old days. She said, 'We used to reckon things as they happened, by Christmas Evans's sermons; people used to say, "It must have happened then, because that was the time when Christmas

Evans preached 'The Wedding Ring,' or 'The Seven Eyes', or some other sermon which had been quite a book-mark in the memory."

No doubt, many grand sermons belong to the Caerphilly period: there is one which reads, to us, like an especial triumph; it was preached some time after he settled in the south; the subject was, 'God manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit.' The

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grand drama in this sermon was the examination of the evidences of Christ's resurrection:

THE TRIAL OF THE WITNESSES.

The enemies of Christ, after his death, applied for a military guard to watch at his tomb, and this application for a military guard was rested on the fact, that the 'impostor' had said, in his lifetime, that he would rise again on the third day. Without a doubt, had they found his body in the grave, when the time had transpired, they would have torn it from the sepulchre, exhibited it through the streets of Jerusalem, where Jesus had preached, where he had been despitefully used, and scourged; they would have shouted forth with triumph, 'This is the body of the impostor!' But he had left the grave, that morning, too early for them. The soldiers came back to the city, and they went to the leaders of the people who had employed them, and the leaders exclaimed, 'Here is the watch! What is the matter? What is that dread settled in their faces? Come in here, and we charge you to tell the truth.' 'You have no need to charge us, for the fright, the terror of it, is still upon us.' 'How? What has happened at the grave? Did his disciples come, and take him away?' 'They! no; but if they had, our spears would have sufficed for them.' 'Well, but how was it? What has taken place?' 'Well, see; while we were on the watch, and early, in the dawn of the morning, a great earthquake, like to that one that took place on Friday afternoon, *when he died*, and we all fell powerless to the ground; and we saw angels, bright, like the lightning; we were not able to bear the sight; we looked down at once; we endeavoured, again, to raise our eyes, and we beheld One coming out of the grave, but he passed by the first angel we saw, who now was sitting on the removed stone; but he who came out of the grave! we never saw one like unto him before, — truly he was like

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unto the Son of God.' 'What, then, became of the angel?' 'Oh, a legion of them came down, and one of them, very fair, like a young man, entered the grave, and sat where the head of Jesus had lain; and, immediately, another,



also, very fair, and beautiful, sat where his feet had rested.' 'And did the angels say nothing to you?' 'No, but they looked with eyes of lightning,' 'Saw you not his friends, the women?' 'Oh, yes; they came there, but he had left the tomb before their arrival.' 'Talked the angels to the women?' 'Yes; they seemed to be of one family, and very well acquainted with one another.' 'Do you remember anything of the conversation?' 'Yes; they said, 'Fear you not! let the Pharisees, and Darkness fear today! You seek Jesus! He is not here, for he is risen indeed; he is alive, and lives for ever. He has gone before you to Galilee.' We heard one angel say, 'Come, see the place where the Lord lay.' Another angel spoke to a woman called Mary, and said, 'Why weepest *thou*, while thy Lord is risen indeed, and is alive, so near unto thee? *let his enemies weep today!*'" 'WHAT!' exclaimed the leader of those priests, and of the council, who had asked for the guard, — What! how say you? *Close that door!* You, *tall* soldier, approach: was it not you who pierced his side?' 'Yes, it was I; but all that these soldiers have said is all true; oh, alas! it is all true! He must have been the Son of God.' The Pharisees lost their cause, on the day of their appeal; they gave the soldiers money, to say that his disciples had stolen the body while they slept! *If they were asleep, how did they know in what manner he had left the grave?* They, however, suffered themselves to be suborned, and for money lied, and, to this hour, the kingdom of Satan hangs upon that lie!

This sermon produced a profound impression. We have said, to render the sermons of Christmas Evans in print, or by description, is impossible, — as impossible

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as to paint tones, and accents, or the varying expressions which pass over eye, and face, and lip. He was entreated to publish this sermon, but he could only write out something like an outline of it, and when it appeared in print, those who had been enraptured with it, in its delivery, declared that it was not the same sermon; so he was entreated to preach the sermon again. He made a humorous remark, on the strangeness of a man preaching his own printed sermon; still, he complied. His accomplished biographer, Rhys Stephen, heard it then, and says of it, 'While I have the faintest trace of memory, as to sermons I have heard, this must always be pre-eminent, and distinct; in its oratorical eminence, it stands alone, even among his great achievements. One of the most striking parts of the sermon, was in the examination of the Roman guard, the report of the soldiers to the authorities.' Mr Stephens continues, 'We heard them talk, had a clear perception of the difference of the tone, and more especially, when one of the chief priests, in an

anxious, agonising whisper, said, “*Shut the door!*” And then, “You, tall soldier, approach: was it not you who pierced his side?” “Yes, it was I.” When Christmas Evans simulated the chief priest, and singled out the tall soldier, and the conversation went on between the two, such a combined triumph of sanctified fancy, and perfect oratory, I never expect to witness again. We may, also, say, that it illustrates wherein, very greatly, lay the preacher’s power, — seizing some little circumstance, and, by its homeliness, or aptness, giving reality, and vivacity to the whole picture.

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It must be said, his are very great sermons; the present writer is almost disposed to be bold enough to describe them, as the grandest Gospel sermons of the last hundred years. Not one, or two, but several, are especially noble. One of these we have, already, given: the splendid embodiment, and personification of the twenty-second Psalm, *The Hind of the Morning*, from the singular, and most significant designation, or title of the Psalm itself.

Another sermon which, probably, belongs to this period is

THE BIBLE REGARDED AS A STONE WITH SEVEN EYES.

evidently from Zechariah 3:9, ‘*Upon one stone shall be seven eyes.*’

It was, in fact, a review of

*The Internal Evidences which prove the Gospel to be of God.*

God’s perfections are, in some sort, to be seen in all he has done, and in all he has spoken. He imprints some indication of his character, on everything that his hand forms, and that his mouth utters, so that there might be a sufficient difference between the work, and the speech of God, and those of man. The Bible is the Book of books, a book breathed out of heaven. It was easy enough for John to determine, when he saw the Lamb, with the seven horns, and the seven eyes, in the midst of the throne, that the Godhead was there, and that such a Lamb was not to be found amongst creatures. When one saw a stone, with seven eyes, before Zerubbabel, it was not difficult to conclude that it was a stone from some unusual mine. In looking at the page of the starry sky, the work of the fingers of the Everlasting Power is traced in the sun, and moon, and stars; all proclaim his name, and tell his glory. I am very

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thankful for books written by man, but it is God's book that sheds the light of the life everlasting on all other books. I cannot often read it, hear it, or reflect upon it, but I see —

1. *Eternity*, like a great fiery Eye, looking at me from the everlasting, and the infinite distance, unfolding mysteries, and opening before me the doors, windows, and chambers, in the (otherwise) unknown, and awful state! This Eye leads me to the source, and cause of all things, and places me in the presence, and sight of the Almighty, who has in him something that would destroy me for ever, and yet something that spares, and animates me; pressing me down, and at the same time, saying, 'Fear not;' something that melts me into penitence, and, at once, causes me to rejoice in the faith, inspiring me with the fear of joy; something that creates a wish in me, to conceal myself from him, and then a stronger wish, to stay, for ever, in the light of his countenance.

2. *Omniscience* looks at me, also, like a Divine Eye, out of every chapter, verse, doctrine, and ordinance of the Gospel, and searches me through and through. The attempt at concealment from it is utterly vain. To this Eye, darkness is as the light. It has descried, correctly, into the deepest abysses of my spirit; and it has truthfully drawn my likeness before I received God's grace; having received it; and the future is, also, transparent before it. There is something in the scanning of this Eye, that obliges me to confess, against myself, my sins unto the Lord; and to cry out for a new heart, and a right spirit; for the Author of the Book knows all.

3. When I yield to pensive reflections, under a sense of sin, and when I see the tops of dark mountains of disease, and trouble at the terrors of the grave, I see in the Bible *Infinite Goodness*, fairer than the Shekinah of old, looking at me, out of eternity; it is like the smile of the Eternal King, from his throne of mercy. Divine love, merits of Christ, riches of grace, they are all here, and they assure me, and I listen to the still, small voice, that follows in its train, until I

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feel myself lifted up, out of the cave of despair, by the dark mountain; and I stand on my feet, and I hope, and hear the proclamation of the great mystery — 'Behold, I come, as it is written in the roll of the Book. If I must die, I am willing to die; for I come to seek, and to save that which is lost.'

4. *Holiness, righteousness*, and purity look at me, out of the midst of the Book, like the fires of Sinai to Israel, or the I AM, out of the burning bush; causing me to fear, and tremble, while I am yet desirous of looking at the radiant

glory, because it is attempered with mercy. I take my shoes from off my feet, and approach on my knees, to see this great sight. I cannot live, in sin, in this presence, — still it does not slay me. The Eternal Power is here, and, with one hand, it conceals me, in the shadow of redeeming mercy, and, with the other, it points out the glory of the great, and wondrous truth, that God is, at once, a just God, and justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. Where thy glory rests, O my God, there let me have my abode!

5. I also see *Infnite might* radiating from the doctrine of the Book, like God's own Eye, having the energy of a sharp, two-edged sword. Without asking permission of me, it proves itself 'quick and powerful, and pierces even to the dividing asunder of the soul, and spirit, and of the joints, and marrow;' it opens the private recesses of my heart, and becomes a discerner, and judge of its thoughts, and intents. When Lord Rochester, the great wit, and unbeliever of his day, read Isaiah 53:5, 'He was wounded for our transgressions,' etc., Divine energies entered his spirit, and did so thoroughly pierce, and pervade it, that his infidelity died within him, and he gladly received the faith, and hope that are in Christ. The power of the Gospel visited Matthew, at the receipt of custom, the woman at the well of Samaria, the malefactor on the cross, the converts on the day of Pentecost, Paul by the way, and the jailer at Philippi; in them all was exerted this resistless might of grace, the '*Let*

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*there be*' of the original creation, which none can withstand.

6. When I am weak, and *distressed*, and *alone*, and none to receive my tale of sorrow, none to express a word of fellow-feeling, or of care for me, in the living oracles of the Gospel I see Divine wisdom, and loving-kindness, looking at me tenderly, compassionately, through the openings of my prison, and I feel that he, who dresses the lily of the field, and numbers the sparrows, is near me, numbering the hairs of my head, listening to my cries; and in all the treasure of grace, and power, that was able to say to the lost one, at the very door of the pit, 'Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise,' fearing no hindrances that might intervene, between Golgotha and heaven, he is the same gracious Redeemer, and Preserver to every one, that believes in his name. Who will teach me the way of wisdom? who will guide me to her dwelling-place? It was in the Gospel that wisdom came to reside near me, and here she teaches the most untoward, convinces the most hard-hearted, reforms the most licentious, and makes the simple wise unto salvation.

7. *I am sometimes filled with questions of anxious import.* Art thou from heaven, O Gospel? Thou hast caused me to hope: Art thou a rock? The reply: Dost

thou not see, in my face, the true character of God, and of the Eternal Power Incarnate? Dost thou not discern, in Jesus, the image of the invisible God, which, unlike the first Adam, the second Adam has preserved untarnished? and dost thou not feel, in looking at it, thyself gradually changed into the same image, even as by the Spirit of the Lord? In looking at God's image in the creature, the vision had no transforming power, but left 'the wise men' of the ancient world where it found them, destitute of true knowledge, and happiness, without hope, and without God in the world; but here the vision transforms into the glorious likeness of the sublime object, even Christ.

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*The character of God*, given in the Gospel, is complete, and perfect, worthy of the most blessed One, and there is no perfect portraiture given of him but in the Gospel. Mohammed's God is *unchaste*; Homer gave his Jupiter *revenge*; Voltaire deified *mockery*; Insurrection and War were the gods of Paine; — but the character of the God of the Gospel is awful in truth, and lovely in goodness. In Isaiah 6, the vision of the Divine glory caused the six-winged cherubs to conceal their faces; but in Revelation 4, the six-winged living things employ five wings to fly, and only one to veil their faces, while they are full of eyes behind, and before, looking forth unveiled. All the worshippers under the Gospel, look with open face — without a veil, and on an unveiled object.

We have here, evidently, only the rudiments of a sermon, but a very fine one, a very suggestive one. To most minds, the Bible has, probably, been, as Thomas Carlyle, or Jean Paul, would express it, 'an eyeless socket, without the eye.' Christmas Evans was expressing, in this very suggestive sermon, the thoughts of some men whose words, and works he had probably never met with as George Herbert says it —

In ev'ry thing  
Thy words do find me out.

'Beyond any other book,' says Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 'the Bible *finds* me;' while John Keble, in the 'Christian Year,' — probably written about the same time, when Christmas Evans was preparing his sermon, — was employing the very same image in some of his most impressive words:—

*Eye of God's Word!* where'er we turn,  
Ever upon us! thy keen gaze

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Can all the depths of sin discern,

Unravel every bosom's maze:

Who, that has felt thy glance of dread  
 Thrill through his heart's remotest cells,  
 About his path, about his bed,  
 Can doubt what Spirit in thee dwells?

In the following extract, we have a more sustained passage, very fresh, and noble:

THEIR WORKS DO FOLLOW THEM

In this world, every man receives according to his faith in the world to come, every man shall receive according to his works. 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.' Their works do not go *before* them, to divide the river of Jordan, and open the gates of heaven. This is done by their faith. But their works are left behind, as if done up in a packet, on this side of the river. John saw the great white throne, descending for judgement, the Son of man sitting thereon, and all nations gathered before him. He is dividing the righteous from the wicked, as the shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats. The wicked are set on the left hand — 'Depart from me, ye accursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!' But the righteous are placed on the right hand, to hear the joyful welcome — 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!' The books are opened, and Mercy presents the packets that were left on the other side of Jordan. They are all opened, and the books are read, wherein all their acts of benevolence are recorded. Justice examines the several packets, and answers — 'All right. Here they are. Thus it is written — "I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; I

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was naked, and ye clothed me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me!'" The righteous look upon each other, with wonder, and answer — 'Those packets must belong to others. We know nothing of all that. We recollect the wormwood and the gall. We recollect the strait gate, the narrow way, and the slough of despond. We recollect the heavy burden, that pressed so hard upon us, and how it fell from our shoulders, at the sight of the cross. We recollect the time, when the eyes of our minds were opened, to behold the evil of sin, the depravity of our hearts, and the excellency of our Redeemer. We recollect the time when our stubborn wills were subdued, in the day of his

power, so that we were enabled both to will, and to do, of his good pleasure. We recollect the time, when we obtained hope in the merit of Christ, and felt the efficacy of his blood, applied to our hearts by the Holy Spirit, And we shall never forget the time, when we first experienced the love of God, shed abroad in our hearts. Oh, how sweetly, and powerfully it constrained us to love him, his cause, and his ordinances! How we panted after communion, and fellowship with him, as the hart panteth after the water-brooks! All this, and a thousand other things, are as fresh in our memory as ever. But we recollect nothing of those bundles of good works. Where was it? Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and fed thee; or thirsty, and gave thee drink; or a stranger, and took thee in; or naked, and clothed thee? We have no more recollection, than the dead, of ever having visited thee in prison, or ministered to thee in sickness. Surely, those bundles cannot belong to us.' Mercy replies — 'Yes, verily, they belong to you; for your names are upon them; and, besides, they have not been out of my hands since you left them on the stormy banks of Jordan.' And the King answers — 'Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'

If the righteous do not know their own good works; if

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they do not recognise, in the sheaves which they reap at the resurrection, the seed which they have sown, in tears, on earth, — they, certainly, cannot make these things the foundation of their hopes of heaven. Christ is their sole dependence, for acceptance with God, in time, and in eternity. Christ, crucified, is the great object of their faith, and the centre of their affections; and, while their love to him prompts them to live soberly, and righteously, and godly, in this present evil world, they cordially exclaim, 'Not unto us, not unto us, but to thy name, O Lord, give glory.'

In leaving Anglesey behind him, the sufferings, and contradictions he had known there, did not quench his enthusiastic holiness, and fervent ardour. We are assured of this when we read his

#### SECOND COVENANT WITH GOD.

While returning from a place called Tongwynlâs, over Caerphilly Mountain, the spirit of prayer descended, very copiously, upon me. I wept for some hours, and heartily supplicated Jesus Christ, for the blessings here following. I found, at this time, a particular nearness to Christ, as if he were close by me, and my mind was filled with strong confidence that he attended to my

requests, for the sake of the merits of his own name. This decided me in favour of Cardiff.

I. Grant me the great favour of being led by thee, according to thy will — by the directions of thy providence, and Word, and this disposing of my own mind, by thy Spirit, for the sake of thine infinitely precious blood. Amen. — C. E.

II. Grant, if I am to leave Caerphilly, that the gale (of the Spirit's influence), and religious revival I had there, may follow me to Cardiff, for the sake of thy great name. Amen. — C. E.

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III. Grant thy blessing upon bitter things, to brighten, and quicken me, more and more, and not to depress, and make me more lifeless. Amen. — C. E.

IV. Suffer me not to be trodden under the proud feet of members, or deacons, for the sake of thy goodness. Amen. — C. E.

V. Grant me the invaluable favour of being, in thy hand, the means of calling sinners unto thyself, and of edifying thy saints, wherever thou wilt send me, for the sake of thy name. Amen. — C. E.

VI. If I am to stay at Caerphilly, give me some tokens, as to Gideon of old, by removing the things that discourage me, and are in the way of the prosperity of religion, in that church. Amen. — C. E.

VII. Grant, Lord of glory, and Head of thy Church, that the Ark of the cause which is thine, in Anglesey, and Caerphilly, may be sustained from falling into the hands of the Philistines. Do not reject it. Aid it speedily, and lift up the light of thy countenance upon it; and by thy Spirit, Word, and providence, so operate, as to carry things forward in the churches, and neighbourhoods, in such a manner as will produce changes in officers, and measures, that will accomplish a thorough improvement, in the great cause, for the establishment of which, in the world, thou hast died, — and by scattering those that delight in war, and closing the mouths of those that occasion confusion. Amen. — C. E.

VIII. Grant me way-tokens, by the time I begin my journey to Liverpool, and from thence to Anglesey, if it is thy will that I should go thither this year. Amen. — C. E.

IX. Oh, grant me succour, beneath the shadow of the sympathy that is in thee, towards them who are tempted, and the unbounded power there is in thee, to be the relief of such. Amen. — C. E.



X. Accept of my thanksgiving, a hundred millions of times, that thou hast not hitherto cast me from thine hand, as a

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darkened star, or a vessel in which there is no pleasure and suffer not my life to be extended beyond my usefulness. Thanks that thou hast not given me a prey to the teeth of any. Blessed be thy name. Amen. — C. E.

XI. For the sake of thine infinite merit, do not cast me, thy servant, under the feet of pride, and injustice, of worldly greatness, riches, and selfish oppression of any men, but hide me in the secret of thy tabernacle, from the strife of tongues. Amen. — C. E.

XII. Help me to wait silently, and patiently upon thee, for the fulfilment of these things, and not become enraged, angry, and speak unadvisedly with my lips, like Moses, the servant of the Lord. Sustain my heart from sinking, to wait for fresh strength from Zion. Amen. — C. E.

XIII. Help me to wait upon thee, for the necessaries of life; let thy mercy, and goodness follow me, while I live; and, as it hath pleased thee to honour me greatly, by the blessing thou hast vouchsafed upon the ministry through me, as an humble instrument, at Caerphilly, after the great storm had beaten upon me in Anglesey, like Job, grant that this honour may continue to follow me the remainder of my days, as thou didst unto thy servant Job. Amen. — C. E.

XIV. Let this covenant abide, like the covenant of salt, until I come to thee, in the world of eternal light. I entreat aid to resign myself to thee, and to thy will. I beseech thee, take my heart, and inscribe upon it a deep reverence of thyself, with an inscription, that time, and eternity cannot efface. Oh, let the remainder of my sermons be taken, by thee, from my lips; and those which I write, let them be unto thee for a praise. Unto thee I dedicate them. If there should be anything, in them, conducive to thy glory, and to the service of thy kingdom, do thou preserve it, and reveal it unto men; else, let it die, like the drops of a bucket in the midst of the scorching heat of Africa. Oh, grant that there may be a drop of that water, which thou, alone, canst impart, and which springs up to eternal life,

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running through all my sermons. In this covenant, which, probably, is the last that will be written between me and thee, on the earth, I commit myself, my wife, and the churches amongst whom I have preached, to the protection of thy grace, and the care of thy covenant. Amen. — C. E.

XV. Let this covenant continue, when I am in sickness, or in health, or in any other circumstance; for thou hast overcome the world, fulfilled the law, finished justifying righteousness, and hast swallowed up death, in victory, and all power, in heaven and earth, is in thy hand. For the sake of thy most precious blood, and perfect righteousness, note this covenant, with thine own blood, in the court of the memorials of forgiving mercy: attach unto it thy name, in which I believe; and here I, this day, set my unworthy name unto it, with my mortal hand. Amen. — CHRISTMAS EVANS. Dated Cardiff, 24th April 1829.

This document, found among his papers, after death, contains many affecting words, which give an insight to painful experiences, and sufferings. The standard set by Christmas Evans, was very high; his expectations from the Christian profession were such as to give, to his ideas of the pastoral office, perhaps somewhat of a stern aspect; nor can we forget that all his life had been passed in a very severe school. He was, perhaps, disposed to insist somewhat strenuously upon Church discipline. No doubt, his years at Caerphilly were among the happiest, and most unvexed in Church relations; his ministerial power, and success were very great; still, as the covenant we have just recited hints, there were probabilities of removal to Cardiff.

The appearance of Christmas Evans in Caerphilly was regarded, as we have seen, as something like an

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advent, and, to him, it was, for a short time, a haven of pleasant rest. There were some eminent ministers, men of considerable knowledge, and real power, residing in the neighbourhood, with whom he appears to have had most pleasant intercourse; among others, a Mr JP Davies, in his way a mighty theologian, and clear, and ready expositor; he was laid by, for some months, under medical care, at Caerphilly, but was able to attend the ministry of the old preacher every Sabbath, and became one of his most intimate friends; they met almost daily, and the younger man was astonished by the elder's insatiable thirst for knowledge, and equally astonished by the extensive, and varied stores of information he had accumulated, in his busy, and incessantly toilsome career. He acknowledged, afterwards, with delight, the variety of lights he had received, both as to the construction of a text, or the clearer definition of a principle, from his aged friend. As to the preaching, he said it gave him quite a new impression of the order of the preacher's mind: he expected flashes of eloquence, brilliant pictures, — of these he had long

heard, — but what astonished him, was the fullness, and variety of matter, Sabbath after Sabbath. Mr Davies only returned home to die; but he delighted his people, when he returned, by repeatedly describing the comfort, and light he had received, from the company of the matured, the aged, and noble man.

The society he enjoyed was, probably, more cultivated, small as was the village, than that by which he had been surrounded in Anglesey; from all the inhabitants, and from the neighbourhood, he received marks of great respect; it was, probably, felt, generally,

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that, by some singular turn of affairs, a great man, a national man, a man of the Principality, had settled in their midst. And he always after, and when he had left, remembered this brief period of his life with deep gratitude. He was more able to borrow books: here, for the first time, he read a work, which was regarded as a mighty book in that day, Dr Pye Smith's *Scripture Testimony to the Messiah*; he read it with intense eagerness, incorporating many of its valuable criticisms into his sermons, and, especially, making them the subjects of ordinary conversation. Rhys Stephen says, 'I remember listening to him with wonder, when, in conversation with Mr Saunders, of Merthyr, he gave the substance of Dr Pye Smith's criticism on John 17:3. And I distinctly remember, that when Mr Evans said, "Mr Saunders, you will observe that, on these grounds, the knowledge of Jesus Christ, here mentioned, is the same knowledge as that of the only true God, and that the knowledge of the former is as necessary to salvation, as the knowledge of the latter — indeed, they are one, and the same thing," "Yes, yes," was the reply; "capital, very excellent. I never heard that interpretation before." I was then a youth, and was not astonished by the interpretation, which, of course, was new to me, so much as by the admissions of the aged men that it was new to them.' At any rate, it illustrates the avidity with which this mind still pursued the rays of light, from book to book, from conversation to conversation.

On another occasion, he met a young minister at Llantrisant, and, after a meeting in the morning, he inquired of the young man what he was then reading;

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the reply was, that he was going slowly through Beattie on Truth a second time. Christmas Evans immediately replied, 'You must come to

see me before you return to Swansea, and give me the substance of Beattie: was he not the man that replied to David Hume, eh?' The young man said he had the book in his pocket, and that he would cheerfully give it him, but the print was very small. He, with still greater eagerness, said, 'I can manage that. I will take of it, with many thanks,' It was a pleasure to give it him, and he pocketed it with as much pleasure as ever a school-boy did the first prize, at the end of the session. In three days after, the young man called upon him, at his own house, and spent a couple of hours with him; but he says he could get no farther, in conversation, than upon Beattie, — he was thoroughly absorbed in the argument with Hume, and his school of scepticism, and unbelief. Yet he was now sixty-five years of age; his one eye was very weak, though seeing well enough, without a glass, at the proper distance; and he was, otherwise, full of bodily infirmities; but his love of reading was unabated, as was, also, his earnest curiosity to know what was passing on in the world of thought.

And among his friends, at this period, we notice some members of the Edwards family, — David Edwards, of Beaupre, or, as it is commonly pronounced, Bewper, in Glamorganshire; and Evan Edwards, of Caerphilly, the son, and grandson of one of the most remarkable men modern Wales has produced, William Edwards, in his day a mighty engineer. Until his time, the Rialto, in Venice, was esteemed the largest arch in

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Europe, but he threw an arch over the Taff forty-two feet wider, and thus, for a long time, it held its reputation of being the largest arch in the world. A wonderful man was William Edwards, entirely self-made, not only a great engineer, but a successful farmer, and an ordained Independent minister. He was wealthy, of course, but he insisted upon receiving a good income from his church, although he distributed every farthing among the poor of his own neighbourhood, and added, considerably, to the sum he distributed, from his own property. The successor to Mr Edwards, as the pastor of the Independent Church of Y-Groeswen, was the Rev. Griffith Hughes, a person of about the same age as Christmas Evans, also, although a polished gentleman, a self-taught man, a wit, a man of considerable reading, and information, and widely advanced in his religious opinions; although, professedly, a Calvinist, beyond the narrow, and technical Calvinism of his time, and even beyond

the Fullerism, or doctrines of Andrew Fuller, which had been charged on Christmas Evans, as a crime, by his enemies in Anglesey.

It was about this time that he was earnestly entreated to prepare a volume of sermons for publication, and it seemed to be in connection with this, and with some fears, and discouragements which still troubled his mind, that he made the following entry, discovered among his papers after his death:

Order things so, O Lord, that they may not prove a hindrance, and a discouragement to me, and an obstacle to the progress of thy cause. Thy power is infinite, and thy wisdom infallible. Stand between me, and all strife, that no

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evil effect may fall upon me. I flee under the shadow of thy wings to hide myself, as the chickens do under the wings of the hen. Let nothing corrupt, and extinguish my gifts, my zeal, my prosperity; let nothing hinder the Church.

I have been earnestly requested, by many of my brethren in the ministry, to prepare some of my sermons for the press. In Anglesey, I had no leisure for such work, although I once commenced it, and wrote out five for the purpose. I let the work rest for two years, at Caerphilly; but, here, my mind has been moved towards it anew; and now I come to thee, O Lord, who art the Head of the Church, and the chief Prophet and Teacher of the Church, to consult thee, whether I shall proceed with the work, or not. Is it a part of my duty, or a foolish device of my own? I beseech, for thy name's sake, thy gracious guidance herein. Permit me not to labour, with my weak eyesight, at a work that thou wilt not deign to bless, but that shall be buried in oblivion, — unless it may please thee (for thou hast the keys of the house of David), in thy providence, to prepare my way to publish the work, without danger to myself, of debt, and disgrace; and unless it may please thee, the great Shepherd of the sheep, to guide me, to give forth the true Gospel, not only without error, but with the savour, and unction that pervade the works of Bunyan, and the hymns of William Williams; and, also, may they prove for the edification of thy Church, and the conversion of sinners! If thou wilt condescend to take the work under thy care, help me to accomplish the design.

In reading the 91st Psalm, I perceive that he who dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty; and that is so safe a place, and so impenetrable a protection, that the arrow that flieth by day, and the pestilence that walketh in darkness, with the sting of

the serpent, the asp, and the viper, cannot hurt or injure him who hath made it his refuge. It is by faith, I hope, that I have gathered together all my jewels,

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and placed them under the shadow of safety that is in God. I have given my name anew to Christ, my body, my talents, my facility in preaching, — my name, and character as a man, a Christian, and as a preacher of the Gospel; my time, the remainder of my preaching services, my success, my wife, and all my friends, and helpers in the cause of the Lord, for whom I earnestly pray that they may be blessed in Anglesey, Caernarvonshire, Caerphilly, Cardiff, and all the churches in Wales, many of which have helped me in my day.

## CHAPTER 10

### CAERNARVON AND LAST DAYS

Leading a Forlorn Hope again — More Chapel Debts — A Present of a Gig — Jack, *bach!* — The One-eyed Man of Anglesey once more — The Old Man's Reflections in his Journal — Characteristic Letters on Church Discipline — Threescore Years and Twelve — Starts on his Last journey to liquidate a Chapel Debt — An Affecting Appeal to the Churches — Laid up at Tredegar — Conversations — In Swansea — This is my Last Sermon — Dying — Last Words — 'Good-bye! Drive on!'

THE last field of the great, good man's pastorate was Caernarvon; thither he removed when about sixty-seven years of age. It might be thought, that after such a hard, and exhausting life of travel, and toil, some plan might have been devised, by which his last days should be passed in restfulness, and peace; but it was not to be so: throughout his life, his had been uphill work, no path of roses, no easy way; and, indeed, we usually know that such spheres are reserved for men who can carry nothing with them but the weight of dignified dulness. Of every sphere, from his first settlement at Llyn, we read, that the cause was in a prostrate condition; and so, here, Christmas Evans appears to have been invited to take the charge of the Caernarvon church because it consisted of about thirty members, chiefly

of the lowest class, of course quarrelling, and disunited. The dissolution of the church was advised. There was a fairly respectable place of worship, but it was £800 in debt, apparently, to us, in these days, not a very large sum, but a sum of considerable importance in Wales, and especially in that day.

So the question was discussed at a ministerial association, and some brother minister present, delivered himself of a confirmatory dream he had had on the subject, and the matter was practically settled, when a young minister spoke up, in the conference, and said to the venerable

man, 'Yes, you had better go to Caernarvon: it is not likely your talents would suit, but you might do excellently well at Caernarvon.' The impudent speech astounded all the ministers present, except the unfortunate utterer of it. They knew not what to say. After a pause, the brethren all struck utterly dumb, Christmas Evans opened his one large eye upon his adviser, and, with some indignation, he said, 'Ay, where hast thou come from? How long is it since thou didst chip thy shell?' Well, it was the very word: no one else could have, in so summary a manner, crunched up the thin egg-shell of pretentious conceit.

There was a real desire, on the part of the trustees of Caernarvon, and of English friends in Liverpool, that he should return to the north; and some gentlemen facilitated his return by giving him a gig, so that he might travel at his ease, and in his own way. This was not a very great donation, but it added, materially, to his comfort: he was able to travel pleasantly, and conveniently with Mrs Evans.

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His horse, Jack, had been his companion for twenty years, but the pair were very fond of one another. Jack knew, from a distance, the tones of his master's voice; and Christmas, on their journeys, would hold long conversations with Jack. The horse opened his ears the moment his master began to speak, made a kind of neighing, when the rider said, as he often did, 'Jack, *bach*, we have only to cross one low mountain again, and there will be capital oats, excellent water, and a warm stable,' etc.

So he bade farewell to Cardiff in 1832, and upon the following Sunday, after his farewell there, he appears to have commenced his new ministry. It seems pathetic to us, to think of the old man, but we have no idea that he had any such pity, or sympathy for himself. Who can doubt, either, that he favoured, and hailed the opportunity of the return to the north? and Caernarvon, and Anglesey were almost one: he had but to cross the Menai Straits to be again in Anglesey — Anglesey, the scene of so many trials, and triumphs, where he had planted so many churches, sustained so many spiritual conflicts, and enjoyed, in his Cildwrn cottage, no doubt, years of much domestic happiness. It seems to us he ought never to have left Anglesey; but he regarded his exile to Caerphilly as a mission, that was to terminate, if success should crown it. And so he was back again in the old neighbourhood, and it appears, that the announcement of his return created universal delight, and joy, and strong excitement. He had been absent for about seven years, and the people, on account of his



advanced age, when leaving them, expected to see him bowed with infirmity, and

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his preaching power, they supposed, would rather affectingly remind them of what he had been.

Shortly after his entrance upon the work of Caernarvon, a public occasion presented itself for his appearance in Anglesey. The whole neighbourhood flocked out, to see the patriarch. As he appeared on the platform, or preaching-place, in the open-air, — for no chapel could have contained the multitude, — the people said, ‘Why, he does not seem at all older! he looks more like a man of forty-five, than sixty-five, or sixty-six.’ And his preaching was just the same, or, possibly, even richer, and greater: it was his own old self, their own old Christmas Evans; the same rich, and excursive fancy, the same energetic, and fiery delivery. The appearance of such a man, under such circumstances, — one who has worn well, borne the burden and heat of the day, and taken his part ‘on the high places of the field,’ — is a mighty awakening, and heart-healing time for old believers, who find their love to each other renewed in the rekindled love to the old pastor, and father in Christ. Old memories very tenderly touch reciprocating hearts. The old words, and the old voice, awaken old emotions, which now have become new. But, then, it is only a minister with a heart, who can touch this well-spring of feeling: starched respectability will not do it, eminent collegiate learning will not do it, rolling rhetorical periods will not do it. It is only the great hearts who can open these sluices of feeling, these fountains of emotion, in which the past, and the present mingle together, as the hearers drink refreshing streams from the fountains of recollection.

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While in Caernarvon, he penned in his journal the following pious reflections:

I have been thinking of the great goodness of the Lord unto me, throughout my unworthy ministry; and now, in my old age, I see the work prospering wonderfully in my hand, so that there is reason to think that I am, in some degree, a blessing to the Church, when I might have been a burden to it, or rather a curse, by which one might have been induced to wish me laid in the earth, that I might no longer prevent the progress of the work. Thanks be to God, that it is not so! though I deserve no better, yet I am in the land of mercy. This is unto me, according to the manner of God unto his people. My path in the valley, the dangers, and the precipices of destruction upon

which I have stood, rush into my thoughts, and also the sinking of many in death, and the downfall of others by immorality, and their burial in Kibroth-Hattaavah, the graves of inordinate desire; together with the withering, the feebleness, and the unfruitfulness of some, through the influence of a secret departure from God, and of walking in the hidden paths, that lead to apostasy.

And here we may most appropriately insert a very characteristic letter, which shows the exceedingly stringent ideas which Christmas Evans entertained with regard to Church membership, — strait ideas, which, we suppose, would be scarcely tolerable now:

LETTER TO A BROTHER MINISTER ON CHURCH DISCIPLINE

BELOVED BROTHER, — I write to you, 5th August 1836, in the seventieth year of my age, and in the fiftieth of my ministry, after conversing much with ministerial brethren,

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earnestly desiring to see our Associational Union brought into action, by representatives of the churches, with a view to promote a determination, —

1. To bear each other's burden more efficiently, in the denomination to which we belong, I lament the deficiency in this point, and ardently wish to see it effectually remedied.
2. To watch over and promote a holy conversation among all the members, and all the preachers, in a more efficient manner, to prevent persons of unbecoming conversation from obtaining privileges, in any church, when they have been excluded in another; for that would occasion blots, and blemishes to appear on the bright countenance of the ministry. The Associational Union, in which all the churches of the same faith, and order join, should be a defence of the independence of the churches, through their representatives: it should also operate as a sort of check upon independency, lest it should become opposed to the general good, and frustrate the co-operation of the whole body. *That they may all be one*, is the motto.

Respecting Church discipline. We cannot be certain that we are doing right, by administering the same punishment to all offenders, even for the same offence; for the general character weighs heavily, in the balance of discipline. Also, a distinction should be made between the seducer, and the seduced; and between being overcome, or falling into sin, and living habitually in sin, and following it, as a slave following his master. The denial of Peter, from weakness, and without previous deliberation, was very different from the betrayal of Judas, and his intentional selling of Christ. The different

characters of Saul, king of Israel, and that of David, required different treatment, in discipline, on account of their offences. The Lord's discipline upon Saul was that of a rod of iron, but upon David, the correcting rod of a Father, for his good, that he might be a partaker of his holiness.

There are two things, brother, which we ought to avoid

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in the exercise of discipline: 1, we should avoid too great severity on the one part; and, 2, too much leniency on the other part. Wisdom is necessary here to distinguish the different characters, — those who require severity, and those who claim tenderness: the two are to be found blended in the principle of evangelical discipline. A difference is to be made betwixt some, who may have been companions in the same crime; snatching some of them as brands from the burning. The ground of the distinction lies in the different amount of guilt, which subsists between the seducer, and seduced.

I have witnessed danger, and have sustained some harm myself, and seen harm done in churches, by exercising tenderness towards some persons, in the vain hope of their reformation. Receiving verbal testimony, or mere fluent acknowledgments, from their lips, without waiting for fruit, in action, also; some having been often accused; and as often turning to the refuges frequented by them. I never exercised tenderness towards such as these, without being repaid by them afterwards, if they had opportunity: Shimei-like, they would curse me, after I had shed the best oil of tenderness on their heads. There are some in the Christian Church like Jezebel; and there are some in our congregations like Joab, the son of Zeruiiah, that you can scarce discipline them without rending the kingdom, until they become ripe for judgement; for they hardly ever repent, more than did Joab and Shimei: they are ultimately suddenly broken, without any danger to the Church from their fall.

I perceive that the Scriptures make a difference between one that falls into sin, and one wallowing in it; between one overtaken by a party of marauders, and dragged into the camp, and made drunk at supper, and one, like Judas, going to the party, and being secretly one of them, having pistols as they had: such are hypocrites. I have many times been the advocate of the fallen, and in a variety of instances have observed this operating beneficially for the Church. Sometimes

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I have found those who had been spared upon their own verbal contrition, blessing God for his long forbearance of them, and also their spiritual

brethren, who had in a manner set their bones; as the Scripture hath it, 'Restore such an one in the spirit of meekness.'

We should be careful that discretion, and love, be in exercise, though in strife, and contention it be not always an easy matter to do this. When the beasts of dissension get loose from the caravan, Satan sometimes drives them through the streets of Zion, that they may enter the houses of the inhabitants; and like the lioness that escaped from the keepers at Shrewsbury, and attacked the foremost horse in the carriage, so contentions frequently attack the leaders, in order to stop the carriage of the ministry as it travels on, in the labours of the pulpit. In the midst of the noise of strife, the man of God must raise his voice to heaven for courage, and tenderness, so that the oil of Christ's love to the souls of men may be found in the oil-flagon of reproof, which is poured on the head; for if anger, and revenge enter in, they will drop, like the spider in Germany, into the pot, and that will prevent the salutary effect of the oil, because the poison of wrath is mixed with it. The righteousness of God cannot be fulfilled in this manner in the discipline. Oh, brother! who is sufficient for these things, without constant help from heaven? How awful is this place! This is the house of God, and the gate of heaven; and here is a ladder, by which we may climb up for help, and a school, in which we may learn how to conduct ourselves in the house of God.

You cannot but be conscious, brother, of the great difficulty there is not to speak unadvisedly with our lips, as did Moses, whilst drawing water for the rebellious Israelites. The rebellion of the people had embittered his spirit, so that his obduracy stood like a cloud between the people, and the tenderness of the Lord, when he was showing mercy upon them by giving them water. Moses

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upbraided their rebellion instead of showing mercy, as the dispensation of God now required; a dispensation which contained in it a secret intimation of the great mercy to be shown by the death of Christ on the cross. Their strife was the cause of embittering the spirit of Moses, yet he should have possessed his soul in patience.

There are two things, brother, which you should observe. First, you will be called upon to attend to causes of contention; and you will find persons so hardened, that you will not be able to obtain weapons, in all the armoury of God's Word, that will terrify them, and make them afraid of entering their old haunts. Such are persons without faith, and without the fear of God, and the love of Christ influencing their minds; and though you warn them of the consequences of their contentions, that they are likely to

deprive them of the privileges of the house of God, and thus forfeit the promised land, yet they stand unmoved, nothing terrified, for they value the flesh-pots of Egypt, and their livelihood there, more than the manna, and the land of promise. You cannot frighten them by speaking of the danger, and loss of the immunities of the Church below, or that above. Esau-like, they will sell their birthright, as Christian professors, for a mess of pottage. A man who has no money is not afraid to meet with robbers in the wood; but he who has gold to lose will be cautious, and watchful, lest he should be robbed of his property. On a night of great storm, when ships are broken to pieces, and sinking, a person who has no share in any of them will not tremble, or feel any concern on their account. Thus there are some men, concerning whom it is impossible to make them dread going out among the rapacious beasts of backslidings, and no storms can keep them in fear. Their spirit is one with the marauders, and they have no care, for they have nothing to lose in the tempests that blow upon the cause of the religion of Christ. These are the tares, or the children of the wicked one, in the Church.

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Secondly, for your own encouragement, brother, I remark that you will have to attend to the exercise of discipline, and to treat with persons that may be alarmed, and made to tremble at the Word of God, and not rush on presumptuously in their evil course. These are professors, who possess white garments, and the gold of faith, and eye-salve from the unction of the Holy One. These individuals are rich in faith. They are afraid of revolutions, and upsettings of the constitutional order of the new covenant, for they have funds invested in the stocks of God's kingdom. They are afraid that any storm, or rock of offence should come in the way of the Gospel ship, for their treasure is on board it, and they have an interest in it. They dread the thought of walking unwatchfully, and licentiously, lest they should be robbed of their riches, and forfeit the fellowship of God in prayer, lose the light of his countenance, and his peace in the means of grace, and lest they should be deprived of their confidence in the merits of Christ, and a good conscience. They have denied themselves, and have pulled out the right eye, lest they should not be acceptable before God. They dread harbouring in their bosoms the old guilt and former doubts. They are cautious not to give a night's lodging to such miscreants as anger, revenge, lust, and things which are of the earth; for they know that these are robbers, and if they have any indulgence they will steal away the *title-deeds* of assurance to the inheritance. They are well aware, also, that they will sustain the loss of a pure conscience, which has been purged by the blood of Christ, and which, as a golden chest, is a preserver of our confidence, immovable unto the end. It is possible, brother, to manage, and discipline such professors. They have something to

lose, consequently they will not flee from their refuge, lest they should be destroyed. *Keep that which thou hast.* David lost for a season the enjoyment of the above blessings; but he was cleansed with hyssop, had his spirit renewed, and his riches were restored to him by faith's

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view of the Messiah, for which he vowed to sing aloud for ever, and ever. He prayed, after this, to be delivered from presumptuous sins, lest he should be imprisoned a second time by a party so wicked, and detestable. May the spiritual gift be kindled in you, brother. Grace be with you, for ever, and ever.

Affectionately,

CHRISTMAS EVANS.

*Caernarvon, 5th August 1836.*

But it was hard work in Caernarvon. The debt upon the chapel was a perpetually-recurring trouble. We have said when he went there eight hundred pounds was the burden, and that the people were very poor. Of this eight hundred, four hundred seems to have been collected by a Mr John Edwards, who used, as his introduction, in asking for contributions, the specimen of Welsh eloquence to which we have referred (*The Graveyard World*); so that Christmas Evans may, really, be regarded as the liquidator of the debt to that extent. The time came when the whole remaining sum had to be paid. What could be done? Over seventy years of age, the old man started forth, on a tour through the south, to attempt to raise the sum. In April, 1838, when he had been four years in Caernarvon, he set off with his wife, and a young preacher, the Rev. John Hughes. Before he set out, he wrote a circular to his brethren, which was published in the *Welsh Magazine*. It is scarcely possible, we think, to read it, remembering who wrote it, and the circumstances under which it was written, without tears of feeling:

DEAR BRETHREN, — We have received notice to pay up

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three hundred pounds. The term of the lease of life has expired in my case, even threescore and ten years, and I am very much afflicted. I have purposed to sacrifice myself to this object, though I am afraid I shall die on the journey [he did die on his journey]; and I fear I shall not succeed in my errand for Christ. We have no source to which we can now repair, but our own denomination in Wales, and brethren, and friends of other

communities, that may sympathise with us. Oh, brethren, pray, with me, for protection on the journey — for strength, and health this *once*, on occasion of my bidding farewell to you all! pray for the light of the Lord's countenance upon me in preaching; pray for his own glory, and that his key may open the hearts of the people, to contribute towards his cause in its present exigency. Oh, help us, brethren! — when you see the old brother, after having been fifty-three years in the ministry, now, instead of being in the grave with his colleagues, or resting at home with three of them who are yet alive — brethren Lewis of Llanwenarth, Davies of Velin Voel, and Thomas of Aberduar, — when you see him coming, with the furrows of death in his countenance, the flowers of the grave on his head, and his whole constitution gradually dissolving; having laboured fifty years in the ministry in the Baptist denomination. He comes to you with hundreds of prayers, bubbling, as it were, from the fountain of his heart, and with a mixture of fear, and confidence. Oh, do not frown upon him! — he is afraid of your frowns. Smile upon him, by contributing to his cause, this once for all. If you frown upon me, ministers and deacons, by intimating an *irregular* case, I am afraid I shall sink into the grave before returning home. This is my last sacrifice for the Redeemer's cause.

Naturally, wherever he passed along, he was received by all the churches, and throughout every county, with more than cordiality — with great joy.

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He was very successful in raising money for the purpose which urged him forth from home: perhaps his popularity was never so great as now. Mr Cross, one of his biographers, says, that wherever he preached, the place was thronged at an early hour, and, frequently, multitudes remained outside, unable to obtain admittance. He reached Monmouthshire, and preached before the County Association; and it is said, that the sermon evinced all his vigour of intellect, and splendour of genius, and as perfect a command over the feelings of the great audience as ever. One of his great images here was his description of the Gospel, on the day of Pentecost, as a great electrical machine, Christ turning the handle, Peter placing the chain in contact with the people, and the Holy Ghost descending like a stream of ethereal fire, and melting the hearts of three thousand at once. His text was, 'By grace ye are saved.'

But the effort was too much for him, and he was laid up for a week at the house of Mr Thomas Griffith, a kind host, who, with his whole family, attempted, in every way, to minister to his comfort, and, with affectionate assiduity, sought to restore him. On the whole, he appears

to have been full of vivacity that week, and, during the intervals of pain, cheered, and charmed his friends. He had, one day, come downstairs, and Mr James, the son-in-law of his host, was helping him up again. He had only got a few steps, when he said buoyantly, 'Mr James, I dare say if I thought the French were behind me with their bayonets, I should be able to get upstairs without your help.' With the word he took his arm

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from Mr James's shoulder, and briskly ran up the flight of steps, laughing at his feat.

His conversation was, however, usually brightly religious. 'This is the Gospel,' he said once in the course of talk — 'This is the Gospel: "He that believeth shall be saved." Now, in order to the truth of this declaration, every believer must be saved. If, in the last day, the great enemy find one single soul not saved, who ever believed the Gospel, he would take that soul up, present that soul to the judge, and to the immense assembly, and say, "The Gospel is not true." He would take that lost believer through all the regions of pandemonium, and exhibit him in triumph to the devils, and the damned.' 'But,' said his host, 'that shall never be, Mr Evans.' 'No,' said he, planting the forefinger of his right hand on his knee, as was his wont, and exclaiming, in a tone of triumphant congratulation, '*Never! never! never!*'

Leaving the house of Mr Griffith, of Tredegar, he proceeded on his way, preaching at Caerphilly, Cardiff, Cowbridge, Bridgend, and Neath, and he reached Swansea on Saturday, 14th July. The next day, Sunday, he preached twice — preached like a seraph, says one of his memorialists: in the morning his subject was the Prodigal Son; the evening, 'I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ.' He was the guest of Daniel Davies, the pastor of the Welsh Baptist Church in the town, the blind preacher, as he was called, a man of great celebrity, and unquestioned power. He was to be the last host of his greater brother, or rather father, in the ministry. On the Monday evening, he went

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out to tea, with a friend who was always glad to greet him, Mr David Walters; and on the same evening he preached, in English, in Mount Pleasant Chapel: his text was, 'Beginning at Jerusalem.' He was very feeble, — perhaps we need scarcely wonder at that, after the two services of the day before. He always felt a difficulty when preaching in English,



and, upon this occasion, he seemed much tried; gleams, and flashes of his ordinary brilliancy there were, as in the following:

Beginning at Jerusalem! Why at Jerusalem? The Apostles were to begin there, because its inhabitants had been witness to the life, and death of Christ; there he had preached, wrought miracles, been crucified, and rose again. Here, on the very spot of his deepest degradation, he was also to be exalted: he had been crucified as a malefactor, he was now to be elevated in the same place as a King; here were accorded to him the first-fruits of his resurrection.

This was the strain of the sermon:—

‘At Jerusalem, Lord?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘Why, Lord, these are the men who crucified thee; we are not to preach it to *them*?’ ‘Yes, preach it to all.’ ‘To the man who plaited the crown of thorns, and placed it on thy Head?’ ‘Yes; tell him that from my degradation he may obtain a crown of glory.’ ‘Suppose we meet the very man that nailed thy hands and feet to the cross, the very man that pierced thy side, that spat in thy face?’ ‘Preach the Gospel to them all: tell them all that I am the Saviour; that all are welcome to participate in the blessings of my salvation; I am the same Lord over all, and rich unto all that call

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on me.’

Such were some of the most characteristic passages. As he was coming down the pulpit stairs, he said, loud enough to be heard by many present, ‘*This is my last sermon!*’

And it was even so. He was taken very ill during the night; the next day he was worse, the next day worse still, and then medical assistance was called in. But on the Thursday, he got up, and walked for some time in the garden. It seems doubtful whether he thought that his end was so near, although he had a dream, in one of the early evenings in the week, in which he seemed to come up to a great river, which he did not then cross, so that he scarcely thought his work or life might be over even yet.

But on Thursday night he was worse again, and on Friday morning, at two o’clock, he said to his friends, Mr Davies, Mr Hughes, and others round his bed, ‘I am leaving you. I have laboured in the sanctuary fifty-three years, and this is my comfort, that I have never laboured without blood in the basin,’ — the ruling power of imagination strong in him to the close, evidently meaning that he had never failed to preach Christ and him crucified. A few more remarks of the same character:

‘Preach Christ to the people, brethren. Look at me: in myself I am nothing but ruin, but in Christ I am heaven, and salvation.’ He repeated a verse from a favourite Welsh hymn, and then, as if he had done with earth, he waved his hand, and exclaimed, GOOD-BYE! DRIVE ON!’

It seems another instance of the labour of life pervading by its master-idea the hour of death. For

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how many years the ‘one-eyed man’ of Anglesey had gone to, and fro on his humble nag! As we have seen, lately his friends had given him a gig, that he might be more at ease in his Master’s service; still he had his old horse, companion of his many journeys. While he was dying, the old mountain days of travel came over his memory — ‘GOOD-BYE!’ said he. ‘DRIVE ON!’ He turned over, and seemed to sleep. He slept indeed. His friends tried to rouse him, but the angelic postman had obeyed the order, — the chariot had passed over the everlasting hills. So he died, 19th July 1838, in the seventy-third year of his age, and fifty-fourth of his ministry.

His funeral took place four days after his death, in the burying-ground attached to the Welsh Baptist Chapel, in Swansea. It is said there never was such a funeral in Swansea, such a concourse, and crowd of mourners, weeping their way to the grave, and following, as it had been their father. Fountains of sorrow were everywhere unsealed throughout the Principality, in Anglesey especially, where he had passed the greater portion of his life indeed, throughout the Principality, there was scarcely a pulpit, of the order to which he belonged, which was not draped in black; and it was evident that all felt ‘a prince and a great man had fallen in Israel.’

## CHAPTER II

### *SUMMARY OF GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CHRISTMAS EVANS, AS A MAN AND A PREACHER*

A Central Figure in the Religious Life of Wales — In a Singular Degree a Self-made Man — His Words on the Value of Industry — His Honest Simplicity — Power of Sarcasm Repressed — Affectionate Forgiveness — Great Faith, and Power in Prayer — A Passage in Dean Milman's 'Samor' — His Sermons a Kind of Silex Scintillans — Massive Preaching, but lightened by Beautiful Flowers — As an Orator — A Preacher in the Age of Faith — Seeing Great Truths — His Remarks on what was called 'Welsh Jumping' in Religious Services.

THE character of Christmas Evans, it will be seen, from all that has gone before, appears to us to be eminently interesting as the most distinct, to us the most central, and realisable figure, in the religious life of his country, and his times: he is the central figure in a group of remarkable men. We shall not discuss the question as to whether he was the greatest, — greatness is so relative a term; he appears, to us, certainly, from our point of view, the most representative Welsh preacher of his time, perhaps of any time: in him seemed embodied not merely the imaginative, but the fanciful, the parable-loving spirit of his department of the great Celtic family; with this, that ardent devotion, that supersensuous absorption,

which to our colder temperament looks like superstition.

One writer finely remarks of him, and with considerable truth, so far as his own country is concerned,

He is a connecting link between the beginning and the ending of the eighteenth century; he has the light, the talent, and the taste of the beginning, and has received every new light that has appeared since. He was enabled to accompany the career of religious knowledge in the morning,

and also to follow its rapid strides in the evening. In this he is unlike ever other preacher of the day: the morning and evening light of this wonderful century meet in him; he had strength to climb up to the top of Carmel in the morning, and remain there during the heat of the day, and see the consuming sacrifice, and the licking up of the water; his strength continued, by the hand of the Lord, so that he could descend from the mount in the evening, and run without fainting before the king's chariot to Jezreel.

On the whole, there is considerable truth in these words, although author and reader may alike take exception to some of them. The circumstances and situation of the life of this singular man have been set so clearly before the reader in these pages, that there can be no difficulty in apprehending the unpropitious and unfavourable atmosphere through which he was compelled to move. Few men can ever have more richly deserved the epithet of self-made: no systematic tuition could he ever have received; near to manhood before he even attempted to obtain, before he had even presented to him any inducements to attempt, the most rudimental elements of knowledge

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we cannot gather that he had any teachers, who assisted him with more than hints, or the loan of a grammar, a lexicon, or some volume he desired to read; there are no indications of any particular kindness, no friendly hands, no wicket, or gate of school, or college opened to him. And as with the commencement of his career, so with its course; his intercourse was, probably, mostly with men, and minds inferior to his own; books, we have seen, he had few, although he read, with avidity, wherever he could borrow; and as with his mental training, so with his spiritual experience, — it appears all to have gone on within himself, very much unrelieved, and unaided; he had to fight his own doubts, and to gather strength in the wrestling, and the conflict. And as he thus formed himself, without assistance, so, apparently without any human assistance, he continued to labour on, amidst the popular acclamations of fame. The absence of all, and every exhibition of gratitude, is peculiarly affecting. Altogether, this strikes us as a grand, self-sustained, and much-enduring life, always hard, and necessitous; but its lines are very indelible, written as with a pen of iron, and as with the point of a diamond. It is natural that, in his old age, he should speak thus to a young man of the

## VALUE OF INDUSTRY.

I am an old man, my dear boy, and you are just entering the ministry. Let me now, and here tell you one thing, and I commend it to your attention, and memory. All the ministers that I have ever known, who have fallen into disgrace, or into uselessness, *have been idle men*. I never am much afraid of a young minister, when I ascertain that

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he can, and does, *fairly sit down to his book*. There is Mr \_\_\_\_\_, of whom we were talking just now, a man of such unhappy temper, and who has loved, for many years, to meddle in all sorts of religious disputes and divisions. He would have, long ago, been utterly wrecked, had not his habits of industry saved him. He has stuck to his book, and that has kept him from many dishonours, which, had he been an idle man, must have, by this time, overwhelmed him. An idle man is in the way of every temptation; temptation has no need to seek him; *he is at the corner of the street, ready, and waiting for it*. In the case of a minister of the Gospel, this peril is multiplied by his position, his neglected duties, the temptations peculiar to his condition, and his own superior susceptibility. *Remember this — stick to your book.*

The foundations of the good man's character were laid in honest simplicity, real, and perfect sincerity; he was innocent, and unsuspecting as a child, and here, no doubt, lay the cause of many of his trials; his frank, and confiding disposition became the means by which his own peace was poisoned, when jealous men, malicious men, — and these sometimes Christian men, — took advantage of his simplicity. He once employed a person to sell a horse for him at a fair; after some time, Evans being there, he went out to see if the man was likely to succeed. He found that a bargain was going on for the horse and nearly completed.

'Is this your horse, Mr Evans?' said the purchaser.

'Certainly it is,' he replied.

'What is his age, sir?'

'Twenty-three years.'

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'But this man tells me he is only fifteen.'

'He is certainly twenty-three, for he has been with me these twenty years, and he was three years old when I bought him.'

'Is he safe-footed?'

‘Well, he is very far from that, and, indeed, that is the reason why I want to part with him; and he has never been put into harness since I bought him either.’

‘Please go into the house, Mr Evans, and stop there,’ said the man whom he had employed to make the sale: ‘I never shall dispose of the horse while you are present.’

But the dealer was, in this instance, mistaken, for the frank manner in which Mr Evans had answered the questions, and told the truth, induced the buyer to make the purchase, even at a very handsome price. But the anecdote got abroad, and it added to Mr Evans’s reputation, and good name; and even the mention of the story in these pages, after these long years have passed away, is more to his memory than the gold would have been to his pocket.

Like all such natures, however, he was not wanting in shrewdness, and we have seen that, when irritated, he could express himself in sharp sarcasm. He had this power, but, upon principle, he kept it under control. It was a saying of his, ‘It is better to keep sarcasms pocketed, if we cannot use them without wounding friends.’ Once, two ministers of different sects were disputing upon some altogether trifling, and most immaterial point of ecclesiastical discipline. One of them said, ‘What is your opinion, Mr Evans?’ and he said, ‘Today I saw two boys quarrelling

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over two snails: one of them insisted that his snail was the best, because it had horns; while the other as strenuously insisted that his was the best, because it had none. The boys were very angry, and vociferous, but the two snails were very good friends!’

He comes before us with all that strength of character which he unquestionably possessed, as a spirit most affectionate, and especially forgiving. An anecdote goes about of a controversy he had with a minister of another sect, who so far forgot himself as to indulge in language utterly inconsistent with all Christian courtesy. But a short time elapsed, when the minister was charged with a crime: had he been convicted, degradation from the ministry must have been the smallest part of his punishment, but his innocence was made manifest, and perfectly clear. Mr Evans always believed the charge to be false, and the attempt to prosecute to be unjust, and merely malicious. On the day when the trial came on he went, as was his wont, in all matters where he was deeply interested, into his own room, and fervently prayed that

his old foe might be sustained, and cleared. He was in company with several friends and brother ministers, when a minister entered the room, and said, 'Mr B\_\_\_\_\_ is fully acquitted.' Evans instantly fell on his knees, and with tears exclaimed, 'Thanks be unto thee, O Lord Jesus, for delivering one of thy servants from the mouth of the lions.' And he very soon joined his hearty congratulations with those of the other friends of the persecuted man.

It is certain the story of the Church recites very few instances of such an active life, so eminently

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devotional, and prayerful: we have seen this already illustrated in those remarkable covenants we have quoted. He had an old-fashioned faith in prayer. He was very likely never troubled much about the philosophy of it: his life passed in the practice of it. No Catholic monk or nun kept more regularly the hours, the matins, or the vigils than he. It appears, that for many years he was accustomed to retire for a short season, for prayer, three times during the day, and to rise at midnight, regularly, for the same purpose. He suffered much frequently from slander; he had disorders, and troubles in his churches; he had many afflictions, as we have seen, in life, and the frequent sense of poverty; but these all appeared to drive this great, good man to prayer, and his friends knew it, and felt it, and felt the serenity, and elevation of his character when in the social circle, even when it was also known that heavy trials were upon him. And one who appears to have known him applies to him, in such moments, the language of the Psalmist, 'All thy garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces.'

And, perhaps, in this connection, we may say, without being misunderstood, that the especial necessities of his life gave to it something of a cloistered, and monastic character. He was not immured in the cell, or the monastery, but how little can we realise the profound solitude of those long journeys, so constantly renewed, through the silence of the lonely hills, across the desolation of the uninhabited moor! An intensely nervous, and meditative nature, no possibility of the book then, no retreat, we can believe no desire to retreat from the infinite

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stretched above him, and even the infinite seeming to spread all around him. In so devout a nature, how calculated all this to foster devotion, until it became at once the support, as well as the passion, of the soul!

And these perpetual wanderings among the mountains must have been a fine spiritual education, an education deepening emotion in the soul, and at the same time kindling the mind in thoughtful imagery. He reminds us of Dean Milman's hero, also a pilgrim through Wales:—

His path is 'mid the Cambrian mountains wild;  
 The many fountains that well wandering down  
 Plinlimmon's huge round side their murmurs smooth  
 Float round him; Idris, that like warrior old  
 His batter'd and fantastic helmet rears,  
 Scattering the elements' wrath, frowns o'er his way,  
 A broad irregular duskiness. Aloof  
 Snowdon, the triple-headed giant, soars,  
 Clouds rolling half-way down his rugged sides.  
 Slow as he trod amid their dizzy heights,  
 Their silences and dimly mingling sounds,  
 Rushing of torrents, war of prison'd winds;  
 O'er all his wounded soul flow'd strength, and pride,  
 And hardihood; again his front soar'd up  
 To commerce with the skies, and frank and bold,  
 His majesty of step his rugged path  
 Imprinted. ...  
 ... Whence, ye mountains, whence  
 The spirit that within your secret caves  
 Holds kindred with man's soul?

Henry Vaughan delighted to call himself the Silurist, always proud of the country from whence he came: his was a different region of Wales from that which produced Christmas Evans. Henry Vaughan

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was the swan of the Usk; but the sermons of Evans, like the sacred poems of Vaughan, were a kind of *Silex Scintillans*, or sparks from the flint, sparks shot forth from the great mountains, and the overhanging stars, with both of which he held long communion: he had no opportunity for any other often in the course of his travel; they were as the streets of God, lighted with suns stretching across his way, in the green amphitheatre of day, and the blue amphitheatre of night.

And this was, no doubt, very greatly the secret of his preaching. It is not too strong a term to use, to say that, with all its brilliancy, its bardic, and poetic splendours, it was massive preaching. He usually laid the foundations of the edifice of a sermon, strong and secure in reason, and



in Scripture, securing the understanding, and the convictions of his hearers, before he sketched those splendid allegories, or gave those descriptive touches; before even he appealed to those feelings, when he led the whole congregation captive by the chains of his eloquence.

We have said before, that like most of the preachers of his country, he delighted also in the use of sharp, rememberable sayings. That is a striking expression when he says, speaking of death, to the believer in Christ, 'The crocodile of death shall be harnessed to the chariot of the daughter of Zion, to bring her home to her father's house.' Again, 'Our immortal souls, although in perishable bodies, are evidently originally birds of Paradise, and our faculties are the beautiful wings by which we understand, remember, fear, believe, love, hope, and delight in immortal, and eternal things.' That is very pretty

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when he says, 'Faith is the wedding-ring by which the poor daughter of the old Ammonite is married to the Prince of Peace: she is raised from poverty to opulence, from degradation to honour, not because of the intrinsic value of the ring, though it is a golden one, but on account of the union which it signifies, between her, and the beloved Prince.' Again, 'A cradle, a cross, and a grave, all of his Father's appointing, must Jesus have, in order to open a fountain of living water to the world.' Such sentences as these the reader will find strewn along all his sermons, and many such in those which we have quoted more at length.

But it must always be remembered that Christmas Evans was, in a pre-eminent degree, the orator. He had a presence; he was nearly six feet high, and finely-proportioned; his whole bearing was dignified, and majestic; he had but one eye, it is true, but we can believe the testimony which describes it as singularly penetrating, and even burning with a wonderful effect, when the strong inspiration of his eloquence was upon him. Then his voice was one of marvellous compass, and melody; like his sermons themselves, which were able to touch the hearts of mighty multitudes, so his voice was able to reach their ears.

When he heard Robert Hall, the marvellous enchantment of that still, small voice, a kind of soprano in its sweet, and cleaving clearness, so overwhelmed him, that he longed to preach in that tone, and key; but the voices of the men were fitted to their words, — Hall's to his own exquisitely-finished culture, and to the sustained, and elevated culture either of spirit, or intelligence of those whom he addressed;

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Evans's words we suppose rolled like the thunder of a mighty sea, with all its amplitude of many-voiced waves. Singers differ, and, no doubt, while we are able to admire the evangelical force, and fervour, and even the fine pictorial imagery of the sermons of Christmas Evans, it is something like looking at the painting on the glass, which may be very pretty, and exquisite, but in order really to see it, it should be in the camera, with the magnifying lens, and the burning lamp behind it. Alas! it is so with all reported and written eloquence: the figures, and the words are almost as cold as the paper upon which they are printed, as they pass before the eye; they need the inspiration of the burning genius, and that inspired by a Divine affection, or afflatus, in their utterance, to give them a real effect.

And in the case of Christmas Evans's sermons, this is not all: to us they are only translations, — translations from the difficult Welsh language, — translations without the wonderful atmospheric accent of the Welsh vowel; so that the very best translation of one of Christmas Evans's performances can only be the skeleton of a sermon. We may admire the structure, the architecture of the edifice, but we can form little idea of the words which were said to have set Wales on fire.

We recur to the expression we used a few sentences since. We are able to appreciate the massive character of these sermons: it is very true they are cyclopean, — they have about them a primæval rudeness; but then the cyclopean architecture, although primitive, is massive. Here are huge thoughts, hewn out of the primæval, but ever-abiding instincts of our

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nature, or, which is much the same thing, from the ancient, and granite flooring of the Divine Word. We must make this allowance for our preacher: he took up his testimony from the grand initial letters of Faith he knew something of the other side of thought the belief of his country, in his time, in the earlier days of his ministry, had been very much vexed by Sabellianism.

The age of systematic, and scientific doubt had not set in on the Principality; but he met the conscience of man as a conscience, as that which was a trouble, and a sorrow to the thoughtful mind, and where it was still untroubled, he sought to, alarm it, and awaken it to terror, and to fear; and he preached the life, and work of Christ as a legitimate satisfaction, and rest to the troubled conscience. This was, no doubt, the

great burden of his ministry; these are the subjects of all his sermons. He used the old words, the old nomenclature.

Since the day of Christmas Evans, theological language is so altered, that the theological lexicon of the eighteenth century would seem very poorly to represent theological ideas in this close of the nineteenth. But we have often thought, that, perhaps, could the men of that time be brought face to face with the men of this, it might be found that terms had rather enlarged their signification, than essentially altered their meaning, — this in many instances, of course, not in all. But it would often happen, could we but patiently analyse the meaning of theological terms, we should often find a brother where we had suspected an alien, and a friend where we had imagined a foe.

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Thus Christmas Evans dealt with great truths. He was a wise master-builder, and all the several parts of his sermons were related together in mutual dependence. The reader will notice that there was always symmetry in their construction: he obeys an order of thought; we feel that he speaks of that which, to the measure of the revelation given, and his entrance into the mind of the Spirit, he distinctly understands. A mind, which itself lives in the light, will, by its own sincerity, make the subject which it attempts to expound clear; and he had this faculty, eminently, of making abstruse truths shine out with luminous, and distinct beauty. This is always most noble when the mind of a preacher rises to the highest truths in the Christian scheme. A great deal of our preaching, in the present day, well deserves the name of pretty: how many men, whose volumes of sermons are upon our shelves, both in England, and America, seem as if their preachers had been students in the natural history of religion, gathering shells, pretty rose-tinted shells, or leaves, and insects for a theological museum! And a very pretty occupation, too, to call attention to the lily-work of the temple. But there are others, whose aim has been—

Rather to see great truths  
Than touch and handle little ones.

And, certainly, Christmas Evans was of that order who occupied the mind, and single eye, rather on the pathway of the planet beyond him, than in the study of the most exquisite shell on the sea-shore. Among religious students, and even among eminent

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preachers, there are some, who may be spoken of as Divine, and spiritual astronomers, — they study the laws of the celestial lights; and there are others, who may be called religious entomologists, — they find themselves at home amidst insectile prettinesses. Some minds are equal to the infinitely large, and the infinitely small, the remote not more than the near; but such instances are very rare.

The power of great truths overwhelms the man who feels them; this gives rise to that impassioned earnestness which enables a great speaker to storm, and take possession of the hearts of his hearers: the man, it has been truly said, was lost in his theme, and art, was swallowed up in excited feeling, like a whirlpool, bearing along the speaker, and his hearers with him, on the current of the strong discourse. The histories of the greatest orators, for instance, Massillon, Bossuet, and Robert Hall, — show how frequently it was the case, that the excited feelings of an audience manifested themselves by the audience starting from their seats, and, sometimes, by loud expressions of acclamation, or approbation. Some such scenes appear to have manifested themselves, even beneath Christmas Evans's ministry. Some such scenes as these led to the report of those excitements in Wales, which many of our readers have heard of as 'Welsh jumping'. Evans appears to have been disposed to vindicate from absurdity this phenomenon, — the term used to describe it was, no doubt, employed as a term of contempt. He says, —

Common preaching will not do to arouse sluggish districts from the heavy slumbers into which they have sunk;

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indeed, formal prayers, and lifeless sermons are like bulwarks raised against these things: five, or six stanzas will be sung as dry as Gilboa, instead of one, or two verses, like a new song full of God, of Christ, and the Spirit of grace, until the heart is attuned for worship. The burying grounds are kept in fine order in Glamorganshire, and green shrubs, and herbs grow on the graves; but all this is of little value, for the inhabitants of them are all dead. So, in every form of godliness, where its power is not felt, order without life is exceedingly worthless: you exhibit all the character of human nature, leaving every bud of the flower to open in the beams of the sun, except in Divine worship. On other occasions, you English appear to have as much fire in your affections as the Welsh have, if you are noticed. In a court of law, the most efficient advocate, such as Erskine, will give to you the greatest satisfaction; but you are contented with a preacher speaking so lifelessly, and

so low, that you can hardly understand a third part of what he says, and you will call this decency in the sanctuary. Tomorrow I shall see you answering fully to the human character in your own actions. When the speakers on the platform will be urging the claims of missions, you will then beat the boards, and manifest so much life, and cheerfulness that not one of you will be seen to take up a note-book, nor any other book, while the speaker shall be addressing you. A Welshman might suppose, by hearing your noise, that he had been silently conveyed to one of the meetings of the Welsh jumpers, with this difference, that you would perceive many more tears shed, and hear many more 'calves of the lips' offered up, in the rejoicing meetings of Wales; but you use your heels well on such occasions, and a little of your tongues; but if even in Wales, in certain places, — that is, places where the fervent gales are not enjoyed which fill persons with fear, and terror, and joy, in approaching the altar of God, — you may see, while hearing a sermon, one looking into his hymn-book, another into his note-book, and

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a third turning over the leaves of his Bible, as if he were going to study a sermon in the sanctuary, instead of attending to what is spoken by the preacher as the mouth of God.

He proceeds, at considerable length, in this strain, in a tone of apology which, while it is frank, and ingenuous, certainly seems to divest the excitement of the Welsh services of those objectionable features which, through a haze of ignorant prejudice, had very much misrepresented the character of such gatherings in England. It was, as Mr Evans shows, the stir, and excitement, the more stereotyped acclamation, of an English meeting manifesting itself in the devotional services of these wild mountain solitudes. He continues, —

It is an exceedingly easy matter for a minister to manage a congregation while Christian enjoyment keeps them near to God; they are diligent, and zealous, and ready for every good work; but it is very easy to offend this joyous spirit or give it what name you please, enthusiasm, religious madness, or Welsh jumping, — its English name, — and make it hide itself; a quarrel, and disagreement in the Church, will occasion it to withdraw immediately; indulging in sin, in word or deed, will soon put it to flight: it is like unto the angel formerly, who could not behold the sin of Israel without hiding himself, — so is the angel of the religious life of Wales, which proves him to be a holy angel, though he has the name of a Welsh jumper. My prayer is, that this angel be a guard upon every congregation, and that none should do anything to offend him. It is an exceedingly powerful assistant to accompany us through the wilderness, but the individual that has not felt

its happy influences has nothing to lose; hence he does not dread a dry meeting, and a hard prayer, for they are all the same to him; but the

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people of this enjoyment pray before prayer, and before hearing, that they may meet with God in them.

The seasons when these blessings are vouchsafed to the churches of Wales are to be noticed: it is generally at a time when the cause of religion is at a low ebb, all gone to slumber; this happy spirit of enjoyment in religion, like the angel of the pillar of fire, appears when there is distress, and everything at the worst; its approach to the congregation is like the glory of God returning to the temple of old; it creates a stir among the brethren; they have a new prayer, and a new spirit given them to worship God; this will lay hold of another; some new strength, and light will appear in the pulpit, until it will be imagined that the preacher's voice is altered, and that his spirit has become more evangelical, and that he preaches with a more excellent savour than usual; tenderness will descend upon the members, and it will be seen that Mr Wet-eyes, and Mr Amen, have taken their place among them; the heavenly gale will reach some of the old backsliders, and they are brought, with weeping, to seek their forfeited privilege; by this time the sound of Almighty God will be heard in the outer court, beginning to move the hearers like a mighty wind shaking the forest; and as the gale blows upon the outer court, upon the hearers, and the young people, and afterwards making its way through the outer court, to rouse the inner court, until a great concern is awakened for the state of the soul. And, see, how these powerful revivals evince their nature: they are certain, where they are strong, to bend the oaks of Bashan, men of strong, and sturdy minds, and haughty hearts; they bring all the ships of Tarshish, and the merchants of this world, in the harbour hearing; the power of the day of the Lord will raze all the walls of bigotry to the foundation; thoughts of eternal realities, and the spirit of worship, are by these blessings diffused abroad, and family worship is established in scores of families; the door of such a district, opened by the powers of the world to come, creates the channel where

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the living waters flow, and dead fish are made alive by its virtues.

So Christmas Evans vindicated the excitements of religious services in Wales from English aspersions.

## CHAPTER 12

### *SUMMARY OF GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CHRISTMAS EVANS AS A PREACHER*

Remarks renewed in Vindication of his Use of Parable in the Pulpit — His Sermons appear to be born of Solitude — His Imitators — His Probable Acquaintance with 'the Sleeping Bard' of Elis Wyn — A Dream — Illustrations — The Gospel Mould — Saul of Tarsus and his Seven Ships — The Misplaced Bone — The Man in the House of Steel — The Parable of the Church as an Ark among the Bulrushes of the Nile — The Handwriting — Death as an Inoculator — Time — The Timepiece — Parable of the Birds — Parable of the Vine-tree, the Thorn, the Bramble, and the Cedar — Illustrations of his more Sustained Style — The Resurrection of Christ — They drank of that Rock which followed them — The Impossibility of Adequate Translation — Closing Remarks on his Place and Claim to Affectionate Regard.

FROM the extracts we have already given, it will be seen that Christmas Evans excelled in the use of parable in the pulpit. Sometimes he wrought his mine like a very Bunyan, and we believe no published accounts of these sermons in Welsh, and certainly none that we have found translated into English, give any idea of his power. With what amazing effect some of his sermons would tell on the vast audiences which in these days gather together in London, and in our great towns! This method of instruction is now usually regarded as in

bad taste; it does not seem to be sanctioned by the great rulers, and masters of oratorical art. If a man could create a *Pilgrim's Progress*, and recite it, it would be found to be a very doubtful article by the rhetorical sanhedrim. Yet our Lord used this very method, and without using some such method — anecdote, or illustration — it is doubtful whether any strong hold can be obtained over the lower orders of mind. Our preacher

entered into the spirit of Scripture parable, and narrative. One of the most famous of his discourses is that on the Demoniac of Gadara, which we have already given in preceding pages. Some of our readers will be shocked to know that, in the course of some of his descriptions in it, he convulsed his audience with laughter in the commencement. Well, he need not be imitated there; but he held it sufficiently subdued before the close, and an alternation of tears, and raptures, not only testified to his powers, but to his skill in giving an allegorical reading of the narrative.

For the purpose of producing effect, — and we mean, by effect, visible results in crushed, and humbled hearts, and transformed lives, — it would be a curious thing to try, in England, the preaching of some of the great Welshman's sermons. What would be the effect upon any audience of that great picture of the Churchyard World, and the mighty controversy of Justice, and Mercy? Let it be admitted that there are some things in it, perhaps many, that it would not demand a severe taste to expel from the picture, but take it as the broad, bold painting of a man not highly educated, — indeed, highly educated men, as we have said, could not

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perform such things: a highly-educated man could never have written the *Pilgrim's Progress* — let it be remembered that it was delivered to men, perhaps, we should say, rather educated than instructed, men illiterate in all things *except* the Bible. We ourselves have, in some very large congregations, tried the preaching of one of the most famous of Evans's sermons, 'The Spirit walking in dry places, seeking rest, and finding none.'

Christmas Evans's preaching was by no means defective in the bone, and muscle of thought, and pulpit arrangement; but, no doubt, herein lay his great *forte*, and power, — he could paint soul-subduing pictures. They were not pieces of mere word-painting, they were bathed in emotion, they were penetrated by deep knowledge of the human heart. He went into the pulpit, mighty from lonely wrestlings with God in mountain travellings; he went among his fellow-men, his audiences, strong in his faith in the reality of those covenants with God, whose history, and character we have already presented to our readers.

There was much in his preaching of that order which is so mighty in speech, but which loses so much, or which seems to acquire such additional coarseness, when it is presented to the eye. Preachers now live



too much in the presence of published sermons, to be in the highest degree effective. He who thinks of the printing-press cannot abandon himself. He who uses his notes slavishly cannot abandon himself; and, without abandonment, that is, forgetfulness, what is oratory? what is action? what is passion? If we were asked what are the

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two greatest human aids to pulpit power, we should say, Self-possession and Self-abandonment; the two are perfectly compatible, and in the pulpit the one is never powerful without the other. Knowledge, Belief, Preparation, these give self-possession; and Earnestness, and Unconsciousness, these give self-abandonment. The first, without the last, may make a preacher like a stony pillar, covered with runes and hieroglyphics; and the last, without the first, may make a mere fanatic, with a torrent of speech, plunging lawlessly, and disgracefully abroad. The two, in combination in a noble man, and teacher, become sublime. Perhaps they reached their highest realisation, among us, in Robertson of Brighton. In another, and in a different department, and scarcely inferior order of mind, they were nobly realised in Christmas Evans.

Perhaps there never was a time when ministers were more afraid of their audiences than in this day; afraid of the big man, with his wealth, afraid of the highly-cultured young man with the speculative eyeglasses, who has finished his education in Germany; afraid lest there should be the slightest departure from the most perfect, and elegant taste. The fear of man has brought a snare into the pulpit, and it has paralysed the preacher. And in this highly-furnished, and cultivated time we have few instances of preachers who, in the pulpit, can either possess their souls, or abandon them to the truth, in the text they have to announce.

It must have been, one thinks, a grand thing to have heard Christmas Evans; the extracts from his journal, the story they tell of his devout, and rapt

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communions of soul with God, among the mountains, the bare, and solitary hills, reveal sufficiently how, in himself, the preacher was made. When he came into the pulpit, his soul was kindled, and inflamed by the live coals from the altar. Some men of his own country imitated him, of course. Imitations are always ludicrous, — some of these were especially so. There was, says one of his biographers, the shrug, the shake of the head, the hurried, undertoned exclamation, 'Bendigedig,' etc., etc., always

reminding us, by verifying it, of Dr Parr's description of the imitators of Johnson: 'They had the nodosities of the oak without its vigour, and the contortions of the sibil without her inspiration.'

It was not so with him: he had rare, highly spiritual, and gifted sympathies; but even in his very colloquies in the pulpit, there was a wing, and sweep of majesty. He preached often amidst scenes of wildness, and beauty, in romantic dells, or on mountain sides, and slopes, amidst the summer hush of crags, and brooks, all ministering, it may be thought, to the impression of the whole scene; or it was in rude, and unadorned mountain chapels, altogether alien from the æsthetics so charming to modern religious sensibilities; but he never lowered his tone, his language was always intelligible; but both it, and the imagery he employed, even when some circumstances gave to it a homely light, and play, always ascended; he knew the workings of the heart, and knew how to lay his finger impressively upon all its movements, and every kind of sympathy attested his power.

It is a great thing to bear men's spirits along

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through the sublime reaches, and avenues of thought, and emotion; and majesty, and sublimity seem to have been the common moods of his mind; never was his speech, or his pulpit, like a Gilboa, on which there was no dew. He gave it as his advice to a young preacher, 'Never raise the voice while the heart is dry; let the heart, and affections shout first, — let it commence within.' A man who could say, 'Hundreds of prayers bubble from the fountain of my mind,' — what sort of preacher was he likely to make? He 'mused, and the fire burned;' like the smith who blows upon the furnace, until the iron is red hot, and then strikes on the anvil till the sparks fly all round him, so he preached. His words, and thoughts became radiant with fire, and metaphor; they flew forth rich, bright, glowing, like some rich metal in ethereal flame. As we have said, it was the nature, and the habit of his mind, to embody, and impersonate; attributes, and qualities took the shape, and form of persons; he seemed to enter mystic abodes, and not to talk of things as a metaphysician, or a theologian, but as a spectator, or actor. The magnificences of nature crowded round him, bowing in homage, as he selected from them to adorn, or illustrate his theme; all things beautiful, and splendid, all things fresh, and young, all things old, and venerable. Reading his discourses, for instance, the *Hind of the Morning*, we are

astonished at the prodigality, and the unity of the imagination, the coherency with which the fancies range themselves, as gems, round some central truth, drinking, and reflecting its corruscations.

Astounded were the people who heard; it was

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minstrelsy even more than oratory; the truths were old and common, there was no fine discrimination, and subtle touch of expression, as in Williams, and there was no personal majesty, and dignity of sonorous swell of the pomp of words, as in John Elias; but it was more, — it was the wing of prophecy, and poetry, it was the rapture of the seer, or the bard; he called up image after image, grouped them, made them speak, and testify; laden by grand, and overwhelming feelings, he bore the people with him, through the valley of the shadow of death, or across the Delectable Mountains. There is a spell in thought, there is a spell in felicitous language; but when to these are added the vision which calls up sleeping terror, the imagination which makes living nature yet more alive, and brings the solemn, or the dreadful people of the Book of God to our home, and life of today, how terribly majestic the preacher becomes!

The sermons of Christmas Evans can only be known through the medium of translation. They, perhaps, do not suffer as most translations suffer; but the rendering, in English, is feeble in comparison with the at once nervous, bony, and muscular Welsh language. The sermons, however, clearly reveal the man; they reveal the fulness, and strength of his mind; they abound in instructive thoughts; their building, and structure is always good; and many of the passages, and even several of the sermons, might be taken as models for strong, and effective pulpit oratory. Like all the preachers of his day, and order of mind, and peculiarity of theological sentiment, and training, his usage of the imagery of Scripture was remarkably free; his use also of texts

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often was as significant, and suggestive as it was, certainly, original.

No doubt, for the appreciation of his purpose, and his power in its larger degree, he needed an audience well acquainted with Scripture, and sympathetic, in an eminent manner, with the mind of the preacher. There seem to have been periods, and moments when his mind soared aloft, into some of the highest fields of truth, and emotion. Yet his wing never seemed little, or petty in its flight. There was the firmness, and

strength of the beat of a noble eagle. Some eloquence sings, some sounds; in one we hear the voice of a bird hovering in the air, in the other we listen to the thunder of the plume: the eloquence of Christmas Evans was of the latter order.

We have remarked it before, — there is a singular parable-loving instinct in Wales. Its most popular traditional, and prose literature, is imbued with it; the ‘Mabinogion,’ the juvenile treasures of Welsh legend, corresponding to the Grimm of Germany, and the other great Teutonic and Norse legends, but wholly unlike them, prove this. But we are told that the most grand prose work in Wales, of modern date, and, at the same time, the most pre-eminently popular, is the *Sleeping Bard*, by Elis Wyn. He was a High Church clergyman, and wrote this extraordinary allegory at the commencement of the eighteenth century. Christmas Evans must have known it, have known it well. It portrays a series of visions, and if Mr Borrow’s testimony may be relied upon, they are thoroughly Dantesque. He says, ‘It is a singular mixture of the sublime, and the coarse, the

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terrible, and the ludicrous, of religion, and levity, and combines Milton, Bunyan, and Quevedo.’

This is immense praise. The Vision of the World, the first portion, leads the traveller down the streets of Pride, Pleasure, and Lucre; but in the distance is a cross street, little and mean, in comparison with the others, but clean, and neat, and on a higher foundation than the other streets; it runs upwards, towards the east; they sink downwards, towards the north — this is the street True Religion. This is very much in the style of Christmas Evans, and so also is the vision of Death, the vision of Perdition, and the vision of Hell. This singular poem appears to have been exceedingly popular in Wales when Christmas Evans was young.

But our preacher has often been called the Bunyan of Wales — the Bunyan of the pulpit. In some measure, the epithet does designate him; he was a great master of parabolic similitude, and comparison. This is a kind of preaching ever eminently popular with the multitude; it requires rather a redundancy of fancy, than imagination — perhaps a mind considerably disciplined, and educated would be unable to indulge in such exercises — a self-possession, balanced by ignorance of many of the canons of taste, or utterly oblivious, and careless of them; for this is a kind of teaching of which we hear very little. Now we have not one

preacher in England who would, perhaps, dare to use, or who could use well, the parabolic style. This was the especial power of Christmas Evans. He excelled in personification; he would seem frequently to have been mastered by this faculty. The abstraction of thought, the disembodied phantoms

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of another world, came clothed in form, and feature, and colour; at his bidding they came—

Ghostly shapes  
Met him at noontide; Fear, and trembling Hope,  
Silence, and Foresight; Death, the skeleton,  
And Time, the shadow.

Thus, he frequently astounded his congregations, not merely by pouring round his subject the varied hues of light, or space, but by giving to the eye defined shapes, and realisations. We do not wonder to hear him say, 'If I only entered the pulpit, I felt raised, as it were, to Paradise, above my afflictions, until I forgot my adversity; yea, I felt my mountain strong. I said to a brother once, "Brother, the doctrine, the confidence, and strength I feel, will make persons dance with joy in some parts of Wales." "Yea, brother," said he, with tears flowing from his eyes.' He was visited by remarkable dreams. Once, previous to a time of great refreshing, he dreamt:—

'He thought he was in the church at Caerphilly, and found many harps hanging round the pulpit, wrapped in coverings of green. "Then," said he, "I will take down the harps of heaven in this place." In removing the covering, he found the ark of the covenant, inscribed with the name of Jehovah. Then he cried, "Brethren, the Lord has come to us, according to his promise, and in answer to our prayers." In that very place, he shortly afterwards had the satisfaction of receiving one hundred and forty converts into the Church, as the fruit of his ministry.'

As we have said, nothing can well illustrate, on paper, the power of the orator's speech, but the following

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may serve, as, in some measure, illustrating his method:

## THE GOSPEL MOULD

I compare such preachers to a miner, who should go to the quarry where he raised the ore, and, taking his sledge in his hand, should endeavour to form bars of iron of the ore in its rough state, without a furnace to melt it, or a rolling mill to roll it out, or moulds to cast the metal, and conform the casts to their patterns. The Gospel is like a form, or mould, and sinners are to be melted, as it were, and cast into it. 'But ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you,' or into which you were delivered, as is the marginal reading, so that your hearts ran into the mould. Evangelical preachers have, in the name of Christ, a mould, or form to cast the minds of men into; as Solomon the vessels of the temple. The Sadducees and Pharisees had their forms, and legal preachers have their forms; but evangelical preachers should bring with them the 'form of sound words,' so that, if the hearers believe, or are melted into it, Christ may be formed in their hearts, — then they will be as born of the truth, and the image of the truth will appear in their sentiments, and experience, and in their conduct in the Church, in the family, and in the neighbourhood. Preachers without the mould are all those who do not preach all the points of the Gospel of the Grace of God.

We will now present several extracts, derived from a variety of sources, happily illustrating the general character of his sermons.

## SAUL OF TARSUS AND HIS SEVEN SHIPS

Saul of Tarsus was once a thriving merchant and an extensive ship-owner; he had seven vessels of his own, the

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names of which were — 1. Circumcised the Eighth Day; 2. Of the Stock of Israel; 3. Of the Tribe of Benjamin, 4. A Hebrew of the Hebrews; 5. As touching the Law, a Pharisee; 6. Concerning Zeal, persecuting the Church. The seventh was a man-of-war, with which he one day set out from the port of Jerusalem, well supplied with ammunition from the arsenal of the Chief Priest, with a view to destroy a small port at Damascus. He was wonderfully confident, and breathed out threatenings and slaughter. But he had not got far from port before the Gospel Ship, with Jesus Christ himself as Commander on board, hove in sight, and threw such a shell among the merchant's fleet that all his ships were instantly on fire. The commotion was tremendous, and there was such a volume of smoke that Paul could not see the sun at noon. While the ships were fast sinking, the Gospel Commander

mercifully gave orders that the perishing merchant should be taken on board. 'Saul, Saul, what has become of all thy ships?' 'They are all on fire.' 'What wilt thou do now?' 'Oh that I may be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God, by faith.'

#### THE MISPLACED BONE

Let every one keep his own place, that there be no schism in the body. There arose a fierce contention in the human body; every member sought another place than the one it found itself in, and was fitted for. After much controversy, it was agreed to refer the whole matter to one whose name was Solomon Wise-in-his-own-conceit. He was to arrange, and adjust the whole business, and to place every bone in its proper position. He received the appointment gladly, and was filled with joy, and confidence. He commenced with finding a place for himself. His proper post was the heel; but where do you think he found it? He must needs

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be the golden bowl in which the brains were deposited. The natural consequences followed. The coarse heel bone was not of the right quality, nor of the suitable dimensions to contain the brains, nor could the vessel intended for that purpose form a useful, or comely part of the foot. Disorder ensued in foot, head, face, legs, and arms. By the time Solomon Wise-in-his-own-conceit had reconstructed the body, it could neither walk, nor speak, nor smell, nor hear, nor see. The body was, moreover, filled with intolerable agony, and could find no rest, every bone crying for restoration to its own place, that is to say, every one but the heelbone; that was mightily pleased to be in the head, and to have the custody of the brains. Sin has introduced similar disorder amongst men, and even amongst professors of religion, and into congregations. 'Let every one keep his own place, that there be no schism in the body.' The body can do much, can bear heavy burdens, all its parts being in their own positions. Even so in the Church; much good can be done by every member keeping and filling his own place without high-mindedness.

#### THE MAN IN THE HOUSE OF STEEL

A man in a trance saw himself locked up in a house of steel, through the walls of which, as through walls of glass, he could see his enemies assailing him with swords, spears, and bayonets; but his life was safe, for his fortress

was locked within. So is the Christian secure amid the assaults of the world. His 'life is hid with Christ in God.'

The Psalmist prayed, 'When my heart is overwhelmed within me, lead me to the Rock that is higher than I.' Imagine a man seated on a lofty rock in the midst of the sea, where he has everything necessary for his support, shelter, safety, and comfort. The billows heave and break beneath him, and the hungry monsters of the deep wait to devour him; but he is on high, above the rage of the

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former, and the reach of the latter. Such is the security of faith.

But why need I mention the rock, and the steel house? for the peace that is in Christ is a tower ten thousand times stronger, and a refuge ten thousand times safer. Behold the disciples of Jesus exposed to famine, nakedness, peril, and sword — incarcerated in dungeons; thrown to wild beasts; consumed in the fire; sawn asunder; cruelly mocked, and scourged; driven from friends, and home, to wander among the mountains, and lodge in dens, and caves of the earth; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; sorrowful, but always rejoicing; cast down, but not destroyed; an ocean of peace within, which swallows up all their sufferings.

'Neither death,' with all its terrors; 'nor life,' with all its allurements; 'nor things present,' with all their pleasure, 'nor things to come,' with all their promise; 'nor height' of prosperity; 'nor depth' of adversity; 'nor angels' of evil; 'nor principalities' of darkness; 'shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.' 'God is our refuge, and strength; a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea — though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.' This is the language of strong faith in the peace of Christ. How is it with you amid such turmoil, and commotion? Is all peaceful within? Do you feel secure in the name of the Lord, as in a strong fortress, as in a city well supplied, and defended?

'There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most high. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved. God shall help her, and that right early.' 'Unto the upright, there ariseth light in the darkness.' The bright and morning star, shining upon their pathway, cheers them in their journey home to their Father's house. And when they



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come to pass over Jordan, the Sun of Righteousness shall have risen upon them, with healing in his wings. Already they see the tops of the mountains of immortality, gilded with his beams, beyond the valley of the shadow of death. Behold, yonder, old Simeon hoisting his sails, and saying, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.' Such is the peace of Jesus, sealed to all them that believe by the blood of his cross.

When we walk through the field of battle, slippery with blood, and strewn with the bodies of the slain — when we hear the shrieks, and the groans of the wounded, and the dying — when we see the country wasted, cities burned, houses pillaged, widows, and orphans wailing in the track of the victorious army, we cannot help exclaiming, 'Oh, what a blessing is peace!' When we are obliged to witness family turmoils, and strifes — when we see parents, and children, brothers, and sisters, masters, and servants, husbands, and wives, contending with each other like tigers — we retire as from a smoky house, and exclaim as we go, 'Oh, what a blessing is peace!' When duty calls us into that church, where envy, and malice prevail, and the spirit of harmony is supplanted by discord, and contention — when we see brethren, who ought to be bound together in love, full of pride, hatred, confusion, and every evil work — we quit the unhallowed scene with painful feelings of repulsion, repeating the exclamation, 'Oh, what a blessing is peace!'

But how much more precious in the case of the awakened sinner! See him standing, terror-stricken, before Sinai. Thunders roll above him — lightnings flash around him — the earth trembles beneath him, as if ready to open her mouth, and swallow him up. The sound of the trumpet rings through his soul, 'Guilty! guilty! guilty!' Pale and trembling, he looks eagerly around him, and sees nothing but revelations of wrath. Overwhelmed with fear, and dismay, he cries out — 'O wretched man that I am!'

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who shall deliver me! What shall I do?' A voice reaches his ear, penetrates his heart — 'Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!' He turns his eyes to Calvary. Wondrous vision! Emmanuel expiring upon the cross! the sinner's Substitute satisfying the demand of the law against the sinner! Now all his fears are hushed, and rivers of peace flow into his soul. This is the peace of Christ.

How precious is this peace, amid all the dark vicissitudes of life! How invaluable this jewel, through all the dangers of the wilderness! How

cheering to know that Jesus, who hath loved us even unto death, is the pilot of our perilous voyage; that he rules the winds, and the waves, and can hush them to silence at his will, and bring the frailest bark of faith to the desired haven! Trusting where he cannot trace his Master's footsteps, the disciple is joyful amid the darkest dispensations of Divine Providence; turning all his sorrows into songs, and all his tribulations into triumphs. 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee.'

THE PARABLE OF THE CHURCH AS AN ARK AMONG THE BULRUSHES OF  
THE NILE

I see an ark of bulrushes, daubed with slime, and pitch, placed on the banks of the Nile, which swarmed with fierce crocodiles. Pharaoh's daughter espies it, and sends her maidens to find out what there can be in it. Little Moses was there, with a face of miraculous beauty, to charm the princess of Egypt. She determined to adopt him as her son. Behold, a great wonder. On the brink of the river, where the three great crocodiles — the Devil, Sin, and Death — have devoured their millions, there lay those who it was seen, before the foundation of the world, would be adopted into the court of heaven. The Gospel comes forth like a royal princess, with pardon in her hand, and mercy in her

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eye; and hastening with her handmaidens, she glances at the thousands asleep in the perils of sin. They had favour in her sight, and she sent for her maidens, called Justification, and Sanctification, to train them for the inheritance of the saints.

THE HANDWRITING

When Adam sinned, there was issued against him the writ of death, written by the finger of God in the book of the moral law. Adam had heard it read before his fall, but in seeking to become a god, by eating of the fruit of the tree, had forgotten it. Now God read it in his conscience, and he was overwhelmed with fear. But the promise of a Redeemer having been given, Mercy arranged that sacrifices should be offered as a typical payment of the debt. When God appeared on Sinai, to enter into covenant with his people, he brought this writ in his hand, and the whole camp understood, from the requirements of the law, that they must perish; their lives had been forfeited.

Mercy devised that a bullock's blood should be shed, instead of the blood of man. The worshippers in the temple were bound to offer living sacrifices to God, that they might die in their stead, and be consumed. Manoah feared the flames of the sacrifice that was offered upon the rock; but his wife understood that, since the angel had ascended in the flame, in their stead, it was a favourable omen. Every worshipper, by offering other lives instead of their own on the altars of God, acknowledged that the 'handwriting' was in force against them, and their high priest had minutely to confess all their sins 'over' the victim. Yet, by all the blood that ever crimsoned Levi's robe, and the altars of God, no real atonement was made for sin, nor forgiveness procured for the smallest crime. All the sacrifices made a remembrance of sin, but were no means of pardon. More than two thousand years the question had been entertained, how to reconcile man with God. The 'handwriting' was real on Mount

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Ebal every year; meanwhile the debt was fast accumulating, and new bills were being constantly filed. The books were opened from time to time; but to meet the claims there was nothing brought to the altar but the blood of sacrifices, as a sort of draft in the name of Christ upon the Bank of Gold. When Heaven, and earth had grown weary of this fictitious or seeming, pardon of sin, I hear a voice exclaim: 'Away with sacrifices, and burnt-offerings: Heaven has no pleasure in them; a body has been prepared for me. Lo, I come to reconcile man with God by one sacrifice.' He came, 'leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills.' Calling at the office where the 'handwriting' lay, when only eight days old, he signed with his own blood an acknowledgement of the debt, saying: 'This is an earnest, and a pledge that my heart's blood shall be freely given.' The three-and-thirty years have expired; I see him in Gethsemane, with the priceless purse of gold which he had borne with him through the courts of Caiaphas and Pilate; but to them the image, and the superscription on the coin was a mystery. The Father, however, recognised them in the court of Sinai, where the 'handwriting' was that demanded the life of the whole world. The day following, 'the Virgin's Son' presented himself to pay the debt in liquid gold; and the treasure which he bore would have set free a myriad worlds. He passes along the streets of Jerusalem towards Sinai's office; the mercy-seat is removed to 'the place of skulls;' as he proceeds, he exclaims: 'I am come not to destroy, but to fulfil the law.' Send in, before the hour of three, each curse, and threat ever pronounced against my people. Bring in the first old bill against Adam as their head. I will redeem a countless host of infants today; their names shall be taken out of old Eden's accounts. Bring in the many transgressions which have been filed through

the ages, from Adam until now; include Peter's denial of me last night; but as to Judas, he is a son of perdition he has no part in me, having sold me

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for thirty pieces of silver. We have here an exhaustless crimson treasure, — enough to meet the demand; enough to fill every promise, and every prophecy with mercy; enough to make my beloved, and myself happy, and blest for ever! By three in the afternoon of that day, there was not a bill in all Eden, or Sinai, that had not been brought to the cross. And when all was settled, Christ bowed down his head, but cried with a loud voice: 'It is finished!' The gates of death, and hell trembled, and shook. 'The posts of the doors moved at the voice.' The great gulf between God, and his people was closed up. Sinai appeared with the offering, and grew still; the lightnings no longer flashed, and the thunder ceased to roar.

DEATH AS AN INOCULATOR.

Death may be conceived of as a gigantic inoculator. He carries about with him a monstrous box, filled with deadly matter, with which he has infected every child of Adam. The whole race of man is doomed by this law of death. But see! This old inoculator gets paid back in his own coin. The Son of Man, humbling himself to death, descends into the tomb, but rises immortal. He seized death in Joseph's grave. But, amazing spectacle! with the matter of his own immortality he inoculated mortality with death, whose lifeless corpse will be seen, on the resurrection morning, among the ruins of his people's graves; while they, with one voice, will rend the air as if eternity opened its mouth, exclaiming: 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?'

TIME.

Time, considered as a whole, is the age of the visible creation. It began with the fiat, 'Let there be light;' and it will end with the words: 'Come, ye blessed of my Father,' and 'Go, ye cursed.' Each river, and mountain,

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town, and city, hovel, and palace, every son, and daughter of Adam, must undergo the change, pass away, for whatever is seen is only for a time. The time of restoration, by the presence of the glory of Christ, will be the morning of judgement, and resurrection. That morning will be the last of time: then eternity begins. From that time, each man will dwell in his

everlasting home: the ungodly in a lake of fire, that will burn for ever; while the joy, and happiness of the blest will know no end.

Oh the fearfulness of the word *everlasting*, written over the door of the lake of fire! Oh the happiness it will create when read above the eternal kingdom!

Time is the age of the visible world; but eternity is the age of God. This limitless circle centres in him. The age of the visible world is divided into years, and days, according to the revolutions of the earth, and sun, — into weeks, in memory of the world's creation, and the resurrection of Christ, — into hours, minutes, seconds, and moments. These last can scarcely be distinguished, yet they are parts of the great body of time; but seven thousand years constitute no part of eternity. One day, and a thousand years, yea, millions of years, are alike, compared with the age of God, forming no part of the vast changeless circle that knows neither loss, nor gain. The age of time is winding up by minutes, days, and years: the age of God is one endless today; and such will be your age, and mine, when we have once passed the limits of time, beyond which Lazarus is blessed, and the rich man tormented. My brethren in the ministry, who in years gone by travelled with me from one Association to another, are today living in that great endless hour!

Time is an age of changes, revolutions, and reforms; but eternity is calm, stationary, and changeless. He who enters upon it an enemy to God, faithless, prayerless, unpardoned, and unregenerate, remains so for ever. Great changes take place in time, for which the new song in

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eternity will never cease. Natures have been changed, and enmity has been abolished. In time, the life covenant was broken, and man formed, and sealed his compact with hell. One, equal with God, died upon the cross, in the form of a servant, to destroy the works of the devil, and to unite man, and God in the bond of peace through his own blood. Time, and language would fail to recount what in time has been accomplished, involving changes from life, to death, and from death, to life. Here the pure have become defiled, and the guiltless condemned; and here, also, the sinner has been justified, the polluted cleansed, the poor enriched, the enemy reconciled, and the dead have been made alive, where one paradise has been lost, and a better regained. The new song from the midst of eternity sounds in our ears. Hear it! It has for its subjects one event that took place in eternity, and three that have transpired in time: 'Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings, and

priests unto God, and his Father: to him be glory, and dominion for ever, and ever. Amen.'

#### THE TIMEPIECE

You may move the hands on the dial-plate this way, and the other, and finger as you please the machinery within, but if there be no mainspring there your labour will be in vain. So the 'hands' of men's lives will not move, in holy obedience, at the touch of the law, unless the mainspring be supplied by God through the Gospel; then only will the whole life revolve on the pivot of the love of Christ, as upon an imperishable diamond. It is not difficult to get the timepiece to act well, if the internal machinery be in proper order; so, with a right spirit within, Lydia attends to the word, Matthew leaves 'the receipt of custom,' Saul of Tarsus prays; and the three thousand repent, believe, and turn unto the Lord.

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A gentleman's timepieces were once out of order, and they were examined, when it was found that in one of them the mainspring was injured; the glass which protected the dial-plate of the other was broken; while the machinery of the third had got damp, and rusty, although the parts were all there. So the lack of holiness, in some cases, arises from the want of heart to love God; another man has not the glass of watchfulness in his conduct; another has got rusty with backsliding from God, and the sense of guilt so clogs the wheels of his machinery, that they must be well brushed with rebuke, and correction, and oiled afresh with the Divine influence, before they will ever go well again,

The whole of a Christian's life is a reaching forward but he has to begin afresh, like the people of Israel in the wilderness; or, like a clock, he has constantly to recommence at the figure one, and go on to that of twelve, through all the years of his experience on earth. But after the resurrection, he will advance, body, and soul, to the figure of million of millions, never to begin again throughout eternity. The sun in that world will never rise, nor set, it will have neither east, nor west! How often has an invisible hand wound up thy religious spirit below, but there the weights will never come down again!

## PARABLE OF THE BIRDS

A gentleman kept in his palace a dove, a raven, and an eagle. There was but little congeniality, or friendship amongst them. The dove ate its own proper food, and lodged in the aviary. The raven fed on carrion, and sometimes would pick out the eyes of an innocent lamb, and had her nest in the branches of a tree. The eagle was a royal bird; it flew very high, and was of a savage nature; it would care nothing to eat half-a-dozen doves for its breakfast. It was considered the chief of all birds, because it could fly higher than all. All the doves feared its beak,

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its angry eyes, and sharp talons. When the gentleman threw corn in the yard for the dove, the raven would be engaged in eating a piece of flesh, a part of a lamb haply; and the eagle in carrying a child from the cradle to its eyrie. The dove is the evangelical, industrious, godly professor; the raven is the licentious, and unmanageable professor; and the eagle the high-minded, and self-complacent one. These characters are too often amongst us; there is no denomination in church, or meeting-house, without these three birds, if there be birds there at all. These birds, so unlike, so opposed, never can live together in peace. Let us pray, brethren, for union of spirit in the bond of peace.

## PARABLE OF THE VINE-TREE, THE THORN, THE BRAMBLE, AND THE CEDAR

The trees of Lebanon held a council to elect a king, on the death of their old sovereign, the Yew-tree. It was agreed to offer the sovereignty to the Cedar; at the same time, in the event of the Cedar's declining it, to the Vine-tree, and then to the Olive-tree. They all refused it. The Cedar said, 'I am high enough already.' The Vine said, 'I prefer giving forth my rich juice to gladden man's heart.' In like manner, the Olive was content with giving its fruit, and would receive no other honour. Recourse was then had to the Thorn. The Thorn gladly received the office saying to itself, 'I have nothing to lose but this white dress and a berry for pigs, while I have prickles enough to annoy the whole wood.' The Bramble rebelled against the Thorn, and a fire of pride, and envy was kindled, which, at length, wrapped the whole forest in one blaze. Two or three vain, and high-minded men have frequently broken up the peace of congregations; and, by striving for the mastery, have inflicted on the cause of religion incalculable injuries; when they have had no more fitness for rule than the white-thorn, or the prickly bramble.

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The following extract is of another order; it is more lengthy, and it is upon a theme which always drew forth the preacher's most exulting notes:—

THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD

Let us now consider the fact of our Lord's resurrection, and its bearing upon the great truths of our holy religion.

This most transcendent of miracles is sometimes attributed to the agency of the Father; who, as the Lawgiver, had arrested, and imprisoned in the grave the sinner's Surety, manifesting at once his benevolence, and his holiness; but by liberating the prisoner, proclaimed that the debt was cancelled, and the claims of the law satisfied. It is sometimes attributed to the Son himself; who had power both to lay down his life, and to take it again; and the merit of whose sacrifice entitled him to the honour of thus asserting his dominion over death, on behalf of his people. And sometimes it is attributed to the Holy Spirit, as in the following words of the Apostle:—'He was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.'

*The resurrection of Christ is a clear and incontestable proof of his Divinity.*

He had declared himself equal with God the Father, and one with him in nature, and in glory. He had told the people that he would prove the truth of this declaration, by rising from the grave three days after his death. And when the morning of the third day began to dawn upon the sepulchre, lo! there was an earthquake, and the dead body arose, triumphant over the power of corruption.

1. This was the most stupendous miracle ever exhibited on earth, and its language is:—'Behold, ye persecuting Jews and murdering Romans, the proof of my Godhead! Behold, Caiaphas, Herod, Pilate, the power, and glory of your Victim!' 'I am he that liveth, and was dead; and lo!

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I am alive for evermore!' 'I am the root, and the offspring of David, and the Bright, and Morning Star!' 'Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and besides me there is none else!'

*Our Lord's resurrection affords incontrovertible evidence of the truth of Christianity.*



Pilate wrote the title of Christ in three languages on the cross; and many have written excellent, and unanswerable things, on the truth of the Christian Scriptures, and the reality of the Christian religion; but the best argument that has ever been written on the subject was written by the invisible hand of the Eternal Power, in the rocks of our Saviour's sepulchre. This confounds the sceptic, settles the controversy, and affords an ample, and sure foundation for all them that believe.

If any one asks whether Christianity is from heaven, or of men, we point him to the 'tomb hewn out of the rock,' and say — 'There is your answer! Jesus was crucified, and laid in that cave; but on the morning of the third day it was found empty; our Master had risen, and gone forth from the grave victorious.'

This is the pillar that supports the whole fabric of our religion; and he who attempts to pull it down, like Samson, pulls ruin upon himself, 'If Christ is not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain, ye are yet in your sins;' but if the fact is clearly proved, then Christianity is unquestionably true, and its disciples are safe.

This is the ground on which the Apostle stood, and asserted the divinity of his faith:— 'Moreover, I testify unto you the gospel, which I preached unto you; which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain; for I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he

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was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures.'

*The resurrection of Jesus is the most stupendous manifestation of the power of God, and the pledge of eternal life to his people*

The apostle calls it 'the exceeding greatness of his power to usward, who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead.' This is a river overflowing its banks — an idea too large for language. Let us look at it a moment.

Where do we find 'the exceeding greatness of his power'? In the creation of the world? in the seven Stars and Orion? in the strength of Behemoth and Leviathan? No! In the Deluge? in the fiery destruction of Sodom? in the overthrow of Pharaoh, and his host? in hurling Nebuchadnezzar, like Lucifer, from the political firmament? No! It is the power which he wrought in Christ. When? When he healed the sick? when he raised the

dead? when he cast out devils? when he blasted the fruitless fig-tree? when he walked upon the waters of Galilee? No! It was 'when he raised him from the dead.' Then the Father placed the sceptre in the hands of the Son, 'and set him above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and put all things under his feet, and gave him to be Head over all things to the Church.'

This is the source of our spiritual life. The same power that raised the dead body of our Lord from the grave, quickens the soul of the believer from the death in trespasses, and sins. His riven tomb is a fountain of living waters; whereof, if a man drink, he shall never die. His raised, and glorified body is the sun, whence streams eternal light upon our spirits; the light of life, that never can be quenched.

Nor here does the influence of his resurrection end.

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'He who raised up Jesus from the dead shall, also, quicken our mortal bodies.' His resurrection is the pledge, and the pattern of ours. 'Because he lives, we shall live also.' 'He shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.' We hear him speaking in the Prophet:— 'Thy dead shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake, and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out her dead.'

How divinely does the Apostle speak of the resurrection body of the saints! 'It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory!" O death, where is thy victory? O grave, where is thy sting? Thanks be unto God that giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.'

Ever since the fall in Eden, man is born to die. He lives to die. He eats, and drinks, sleeps, and wakes, to die. Death, like a dark steel-clad warrior, stands ever before us; and his gigantic shadow comes continually between us, and happiness. But Christ hath 'abolished death, and brought life, and immortality to light through the gospel.' He was born in Bethlehem, that he might die on Calvary. He was made under the law, that he might bear the direst penalty of the law. He lived thirty-three years, sinless, among sinners, that he might offer himself a sin-offering for sinners upon the cross. Thus 'He became obedient unto death,' that he might destroy the power of death;

and on the third morning, a mighty angel, rolling away the stone from the mouth of the sepulchre, makes the very door of death's castle the throne whence he proclaims 'the resurrection, and the life.'

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The Hero of our salvation travelled into Death's dominion, took possession of the whole territory on our behalf, and returning, laden with spoils, ascended to the Heaven of heavens. He went to the palace, seized the tyrant, and wrested away his sceptre. He descended into the prison-house, knocked off the fetters of the captives; and when he came up again, left the door of every cell open, that they might follow him. He has gone over into our promised inheritance, and his glory illuminates the mountains of immortality; and through the telescope which he has bequeathed us we 'see the land which is very far off.'

I recollect reading, in the writings of Flavel, this sentiment — that the souls in Paradise wait, with intense desire, for the reanimation of their dead bodies, that they may be united to them, in bliss for ever. Oh what rapture there shall be among the saints, when those frail vessels, from which they escaped with such a struggle, as they foundered in the gulf of death, shall come floating in, with the spring-tide of the resurrection, to the harbour of immortality! How glorious the reunion, when the seeds of affliction, and death are left behind in the tomb! Jacob no longer lame, nor Moses slow of speech, nor Lazarus covered with sores, nor Paul troubled with a thorn in the flesh!

'It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.' The glory of the body of Christ is far above our present conception. When he was transfigured on Tabor, his face shone like the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. This is the pattern shown to his people on the mount. This is the model after which the bodies of believers shall be fashioned in the resurrection. 'They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever, and ever.'

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In conclusion:— The angel said to the woman, 'Go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him; lo! I have told you. And they departed quickly from the sepulchre, with fear, and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.'

Brethren! followers of Jesus! be ye also preachers of a risen Saviour! Go quickly — there is no time for delay and publish the glad tidings to sinners! Tell them that Christ died for their sins, and rose again for their justification, and ascended to the right hand of the Father to make intercession for them, and is now able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him!

And you, impenitent, and unbelieving men! hear this blessed message of salvation! Do you intend ever to embrace the proffered mercy of the Gospel? Make haste! Procrastination is ruin! Now is the accepted time! Oh, fly to the throne of grace! Time is hastening; you will soon be swallowed up in eternity! May the Lord have mercy upon you, and rouse you from your indifference, and sloth! It is my delight to invite you to Christ; but I feel more pleasure, and more confidence in praying for you to God. I have besought, and entreated you, by every argument, and every motive in my power; but you are yet in your sins, and rushing on toward hell. Yet I will not give you up in despair. If I cannot persuade you to flee from the wrath to come, I will intercede with God to have mercy upon you, for the sake of his beloved Son. If I cannot prevail in the pulpit, I will try to prevail at the throne.

This must be regarded as a very noble piece; the words make themselves felt; evidently, the resurrection of our Lord, to this preacher, was a great reality; it is now, by many, regarded only as a charming myth; a very curious eschatology in our

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day has found its way even into our pulpits, and we have eminent ministers of the Church of England, well-known Congregational, and other ministers, who affect to believe, and to preach the Resurrection of Christ; but a careful listener in the pew, or a converser by the fireside, will find, to his amazement, that the resurrection, as believed by them, is no honest resurrection at all: it is a spiritual resurrection which leaves the body of Jesus unrisen, and in the possession of death, and the grave. In that view, which has just passed before us, a very different, and most absolutely real resurrection is preached; indeed, it is the only view which leaves a heart of immortal hope in the Christian faith, the only view which seems at all tenable, if we are to believe in the power of Christ's resurrection.

We will close these extracts by one of yet another order, — a vivid descriptive picture of the smiting of the rock, the streams flowing through the desert, and the joy of the mighty caravan of pilgrims on their way to the promised land.

## THEY DRANK OF THAT ROCK WHICH FOLLOWED THEM.

Having spoken of *the smiting*, let us, *now*, look at *the result*, the flowing of the waters; a timely mercy to 'the many thousands of Israel,' on the point of perishing in the desert; shadowing forth a far greater mercy, the flowing of living waters from the 'spiritual rock,' which is Christ.

In the death of our Redeemer, we see three infinite depths moved for the relief of human misery: the love of the Father, the merit of the Son, and the energy of the Holy Spirit. These are the depths of wonder whence arise the rivers of salvation.

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*The waters flowed in the presence of the whole assembly.* The agent was invisible, but his work was manifest.

The water flowed *in great abundance*, filling the whole camp, and supplying all the people. Notwithstanding the immense number, and the greatness of their thirst, there was enough for each, and for all. The streams ran in every direction to meet the sufferers, and their rippling murmur seemed to say — 'Open thy mouth, and I will fill it.' Look to the cross! See there the gracious fountain opened, and streams of pardoning, and purifying mercy flowing down the rock of Calvary, sweeping over the mount of Olives, and cleaving it asunder, to make a channel for the living waters to go out over the whole world, that God may be glorified among the Gentiles, and all the ends of the earth may see his salvation.

The water flowed *from the rock*, not pumped by human labour, but drawn by the hand of God. It was the same power that opened the springs of mercy upon the cross. It was the wisdom of God that devised the plan, and the mercy of God that furnished the Victim. His was the truth, and love that gave the promise by the prophet — 'In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin, and uncleanness.' His was the unchanging faithfulness that fulfilled it in his Son — 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Lord.' Our salvation is wholly of God, and we have no other agency in the matter than the mere acceptance of his proffered grace.

The water flowed *in twelve different channels*; and, according to Dr Pococke, of Scotland, who visited the place, the deep traces in the rock are visible to this day. But the twelve streams, one for each tribe, all issued from the same fountain, in the same rock. So the great salvation flowed

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out through the ministry of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and went abroad over all the earth. But the fountain is one. All the apostles preached the same Saviour, and pointed to the same cross. 'Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.' We must come to this spring, or perish.

The flowing of the waters *was irresistible by human power*. Who can close the fountain which God hath opened? can Edom, or Moab, or Sihon, or Og dam up the current which Jehovah hath drawn from the rock? Can Caiaphas, and all the Jews, aided by the prince of this world — can all the powers of earth and hell combined — arrest the work of redemption, and dry up the fountain of mercy which Christ is opening on Calvary? As soon might they dry up the Atlantic, and stop the revolutions of the globe. It is written, and must be fulfilled. Christ must suffer, and enter into his glory — must be lifted up, and draw all men unto him — and repentance, and remission of sins must be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

*The water flowing from the rock was like a river of life to the children of Israel.* Who can describe the distress throughout the camp, and the appearance of the people, when they were invited to approach a flinty rock, instead of a fountain, or a stream, to quench their thirst? What angry countenances were there, what bitter censures, and ungrateful murmurings, as Moses went up to the rock, with nothing in his hand but a rod! 'Where is he going,' said they, 'with that dry stick? What is he going to do on that rock? Does he mean to make fools of us all? Is it not enough that he has brought us into this wilderness to die of thirst? Will he mock us now by pretending to seek water in these sands, or open fountains in the solid granite?' But see! he lifts the rod, he smites the rock; and lo, it bursts into a fountain; and twelve crystal streams roll down

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before the people! Who can conceive the sudden transport? Hear the shout of joy ringing through the camp, and rolling back in tumultuous echoes from the crags, and cliffs of Horeb, — 'Water! water! A miracle! a miracle! Glory to the God of Israel! glory to his servant Moses!' It was a resurrection-day to Israel, the morning light bursting upon the shadow of death. New life, and joy are seen throughout the camp. The maidens are running with cups, and pitchers, to the rock. They fill, and drink; then fill again, and haste away to their respective tents, with water for the sick, the aged, and the little ones, joyfully exclaiming — 'Drink, father! Drink, mother! Drink, children! Drink, all of you! Drink abundantly! Plenty of

water now! Rivers flowing from the rock!' Now the oxen are coming, the asses, the camels, the sheep, and the goats — coming in crowds to quench their thirst, and plunging into the streams before them. And the feathered tribes are coming, the turtle-dove, the pigeon, the swallow, the sparrow, the robin, and the wren; while the croaking raven, and the fierce-eyed eagle, scenting the water from afar mingle with them round the rock.

Brethren, this is but a faint emblem of the joy of the Church, in drinking the waters that descend from Calvary, the streams that gladden the city of our God. Go back to the day of Pentecost for an instance. Oh what a revolution of thought, and feeling, and character! What a change of countenance, and conscience, and heart! Three thousand men, that morning full of ignorance, and corruption, and guilt — idolaters, sensualists, blasphemers, persecutors — before night were perfectly transformed — the lions converted into lambs — the hard heart melted, the dead conscience quickened, and the whole man become a new creature in Christ Jesus! They thirsted, they found the 'Spiritual rock,' tasted its living waters, and suddenly leaped into new life, like Lazarus from the inanition of the grave!

This is the blessing which follows the Church through

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all her wanderings in the wilderness, accompanies her through the scorching desert of affliction, and the valley of the shadow of death; and when, at last, she shall come up out of great tribulation, her garments shall be found washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb; and the Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, shall lead her to everlasting fountains, and she shall thirst no more!

Among the great Welsh preachers, then, in closing, it will now be enough to say, that, without claiming for Christmas Evans pre-eminence above all his contemporaries, or countrymen, it may, with truth, be said, we have yet better means of forming an opinion of him than of any other. We have attempted to avail ourselves of such traditions, and stories of their pulpit ministration, and such fragments of their spoken words, as may convey some, if faint, still fair, idea of their powers. Even of Christmas Evans our knowledge is, by no means, ample, nor are there many of his sermons left to us; but such as we possess seem sufficient for the formation of as high an estimate, through the medium of criticism, and the press, as that which was formed by the flocking crowds, and thousands who deemed it one of their greatest privileges, and pleasures to listen to his living voice. And it must be admitted, we think, that these sermons are of that order which retains much of its power, when the

voice through which it spoke is still. Welsh sermons, beyond almost any others, lose their vitality by the transference to the press, and no doubt this preacher suffers in this way, too; some, however, will not bear the printing machine at all, and when the voice ceases to speak, all which made

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them effective is gone. With these sermons it is, undoubtedly, otherwise, and from some of them it may, perhaps, even be possible to find models of the mould of thought, and the mode at once of arrangement, as well as the qualities of emotion, and expression, which make preaching successful, whether for converting, or comforting the souls of men. Nor is it less significant that this man, who exercised a ministry of immense usefulness for more than half a century, and retained his power over men, with the same average freshness, and splendour until within four days of his death, did so in virtue of the living freshness of his heart, and mind. Like such men as John Bunyan, and Richard Baxter, no University could claim him, for he was of none; he had graduated in no college, had sat before no academical prelections, and was decorated with no diplomas, — only the Divine Spirit was master of the college in which he was schooled. We write this with no desire to speak disparagingly of such training, but, rather, to bring out into conspicuous honour the strength of this self-formed, severely toiling, and nobly suffering man. He was a spiritual athlete in labours more abundant; perhaps it might seem that the ‘one-eyed man of Anglesey,’ as he was so familiarly called, until this designation yielded to the more affectionate term of ‘Old Christmas,’ throughout the Principality — must have been in bodily presence contemptible; but if his appearance was rugged, we suppose it could scarcely have been less than royal, — a man, the spell of whose name, when he came into a neighbourhood, could wake up all the sleepy villages, and bid their inhabitants pour

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along, up by the hills, and down by the valleys, expectant crowds watching his appearance with tears, and sometimes hailing him with shouts — must have been something like a king among men. We have seen how poor he was, and how indifferent to all that the world regarded as wealth, but he was one of those of whom the apostle speaks ‘as poor, yet making many rich, as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.’ And thus, from every consideration, whether we regard his singular



genius, so truly national, and representative of the mind, and character of his country, his indomitable struggles, and earnest self-training, his extraordinary power over his congregations, his long, earnest life of self-denying usefulness, especially his intense reality, the holy purity, and consecration of his soul, Christmas Evans deserves our reverent memory while we glorify God in him.

## APPENDATORY

### *SELECTION OF ILLUSTRATIVE SERMONS*

AND now, although the various, and several selections we have given in the different preceding sections of this volume, may assist the reader in forming some idea of the manner, and method of Christmas Evans, before closing the volume we will present some selections from entire sermons, translated from the Welsh; and while, of course, labouring beneath the disadvantages of translation, we trust they will not unfavourably represent those various attributes of pulpit power, for which we have given the great preacher credit.

SERMON I. —THE TIME OF REFORMATION

SERMON II. —THE PURIFICATION OF THE  
CONSCIENCE

SERMON III. FINISHED REDEMPTION

SERMON IV. THE FATHER AND SON GLORIFIED

SERMON V. —THE CEDAR OF GOD

# SERMON I

## THE TIME OF REFORMATION

*'Until the time of reformation.'* — HEBREWS 9:10

THE ceremonies pertaining to the service of God, under Sinaitic dispensation, were entirely typical in their character; mere figures of Christ, the 'High-priest of good things to

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come, by a greater, and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands'; who, 'not by the blood of goats, and calves, but by his own blood, has entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us'. Sustaining such a relation to other ages, and events, they were necessarily imperfect, consisting 'only in meats, and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances,' not intended for perpetual observance, but imposed upon the Jewish people merely 'until the time of reformation,' when the shadow should give place to the substance, and a Greater than Moses should 'make all things new'. Let us notice the time of reformation, and the reformation itself.

I. Time may be divided into three parts; the Golden Age before the fall, the Iron Age after the fall, and the Messiah's Age of Jubilee.

In the Golden Age, the heavens, and the earth were created; the Garden of Eden was planted; man was made in the image of God, and placed in the garden to dress, and keep it; matrimony was instituted; and God, resting from his labour, sanctified the seventh day, as a day of holy rest to man.

The Iron Age was introduced by the temptation of a foreigner, who obtruded himself into Paradise, and persuaded its happy denizens to cast off the golden yoke of obedience, and love to God. Man, desiring independence, became a rebel against heaven, a miserable captive of sin, and Satan, obnoxious to the Divine displeasure, and exposed to eternal death. The law was violated; the image of God was lost, and the enemy came in like a flood. All communication between the island of Time, and the continent of Immortality was cut off, and the unhappy exiles saw no hope of crossing the ocean that intervened.

The Messiah's Age may be divided into three parts; the time of Preparation, the time of Actual War, and the time of Victory and Triumph.

The Preparation began with the dawning of the day in

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Eden, when the Messiah came in the ship of the Promise, and landed on the island of Time, and notified its inhabitants of his gracious intention to visit them again, and assume their nature, and live and die among them; to break their covenant allegiance to the prince of the iron yoke; and deliver to them the charter, signed, and sealed with his own blood, for the redemption, and renovation of their island, and the restoration of its suspended intercourse with the land of Eternal Life. The motto inscribed upon the banners of this age was, — 'He shall bruise thy heel, and thou shalt bruise his head.' Here Jehovah thundered forth his hatred of sin from the thick darkness, and wrote his curse in fire upon the face of heaven; while rivers of sacrificial blood proclaimed the miserable state of man, and his need of a costlier atonement than mere humanity could offer. Here, also, the spirit of Messiah fell upon the prophets, leading them to search diligently for the way of deliverance, and enabling them to 'testify beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.'

Then came the season of Actual War. 'Messiah the Prince' was born in Bethlehem, wrapped in swaddling bands, and laid in a manger, — the Great Deliverer, 'made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem those that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.' With his almighty hand, he laid hold on the works of the devil, unlocked the iron furnace, and broke the brazen bands asunder. He opened his mouth, and the deaf heard, the blind saw, the dumb spoke, the lame walked, and the lepers were cleansed. In the house of Jairus, in the street of Nain, and in the burial ground of Bethany, his word was mightier than death; and the damsel on her bed, the young man on his bier, and Lazarus in his tomb, rising to second life, were but the earnest of his future triumph. The diseases of sin he healed, the iron chains of guilt he shattered, and all the horrible caves of human corruption, and misery were opened by the Heavenly Warrior. He took our yoke, and bore it

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away upon his own shoulder, and cast it, broken, into the bottomless pit. He felt in his hands, and feet, the nails, and in his side the spear. The

iron entered into his soul, but the corrosive power of his blood destroyed it, and shall ultimately eat away all the iron in the kingdom of death. Behold him hanging on Calvary, nailing upon his cross three bills, the handwriting of the law which was against us, the oath of our allegiance to the prince of darkness, and the charter of the 'everlasting covenant;' fulfilling the first, breaking the second, and sealing the third with his blood!

Now begins the scene of Victory and Triumph. On the morning of the third day, the Conqueror is seen 'coming from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah.' He has 'trodden the winepress alone.' By the might of his single arm he has routed the hosts of hell, and spoiled the dominions of death. The iron castle of the foe is demolished, and the Hero returns from the war, 'glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength.' He enters the gates of the everlasting city, amid the rejoicing of angels, and the shouts of his redeemed. And still he rides forth in the chariot of his grace, 'conquering, and to conquer.' A two-edged sword issues from his mouth, and, in his train, follow the victorious armies of heaven. Lo! before him fall the altars of idols, and the temples of devils; and the slaves of sin are becoming the servants, and sons of the living God; and the proud sceptic beholds, wonders, believes, and adores; and the blasphemer begins to pray, and the persecutor is melted into penitence, and love, and the wolf comes, and lays him down gently by the side of the lamb. And Messiah shall never quit the field, till he has completed the conquest, and swallowed up death in victory. In his 'vesture dipped in blood,' he shall pursue the armies of Gog and Magog on the field of Amageddon, and break the iron teeth of the beast of power, and cast down Babylon as a mill-stone into the sea, and bind the old serpent in the lake of fire, and brimstone, and raise up to life immortal

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the tenants of the grave. Then shall the New Jerusalem, the metropolis of Messiah's golden empire, descend from heaven, adorned with all the jewellery of creation, guarded at every gate by angelic sentinels, and enlightened by the glory of God, and of the Lamb; and the faithful shall dwell within its walls, and sin, and sorrow, and death, shall be shut out for ever!

Then shall Time be swallowed up in Eternity. The righteous shall inherit life everlasting, and the ungodly shall find their portion in the

second death. Time is the age of the visible world; eternity is the age of the invisible God. All things in time are changeful; all things in eternity are immutable. If you pass from time to eternity, without faith in Christ, without love in God, an enemy to prayer, an enemy to holiness, 'impurged and unforgiven,' so you must ever remain. Now is the season of that blessed change, for which myriads shall sing everlasting anthems of praise. 'Today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.' Today the office is open: if you have any business with the Governor, make no delay. Now he has time to talk with the woman of Samaria by the well, and the penitent thief upon the cross. Now he is ready to forgive your sins, and renew your souls, and make you meet to become the partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. Now he waits to wash the filthy, and feed the hungry, and clothe the naked, and raise the humble, and quicken the spiritually dead, and enrich the poor, and wretched, and reconcile enemies by his blood. He came to unloose your bands, and open to you the gates of Eden; condemned for your acquittal, and slain for the recovery of your forfeited immortality. The design of all the travelling from heaven to earth, and from earth to heaven, is the salvation of that which was lost, the restoration of intercourse, and amity between the Maker and the worm. This is the chief of the ways of God to man, ancient in its origin, wise in its contrivance, dear in its accomplishment, powerful in its application, gracious in its

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influence, and everlasting in its results. Christ is riding in his chariot of salvation, through the land of destruction, and death, clothed in the majesty of mercy, and offering eternal life to all who will believe. O captives of evil! now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation now is the year of jubilee; now is the age of deliverance now is 'the time of reformation.'

II. All the prophets speak of something within the veil, to be manifested in due time; the advent of a Divine agent in a future age, to accomplish a glorious 'reformation.' They represent him as a prince, a hero, a high priest, a branch growing out of dry ground, a child toying with the asp, and the lion, and leading the wolf, and the lamb together. The bill of the reformation had been repeatedly read by the prophets, and its passage required the descent of the Lord from heaven. None but himself could effect the change of the dispensation. None but himself had the authority and the power to remove the first, and establish the

second. He whose voice once shook the earth, speaks again, and heaven is shaken. He whose footsteps once kindled Sinai into flame, descends again, and Calvary is red with blood. The God of the ancient covenant introduces anew, which is to abide for ever. The Lord of the temple alone could change the furniture, and the service from the original pattern shown to Moses on the mount; and six days before the rending of the veil, significant of abrogation of the old ceremonial, Moses came down upon a mountain in Palestine to deliver up the pattern to him of whom he had received it on Sinai, that he might nail it to the cross on Calvary; for the 'gifts and sacrifices' belonging to the legal dispensation, 'could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats, and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.'

This reformation signifieth 'the removal of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things

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which cannot be shaken may remain;' the abrogation of 'carnal ordinances,' which were local, and temporal in their nature, to make room for a spiritual worship, of universal, and perpetual adaptation. Henceforth the blood of bulls, and goats is superseded by the great reconciling sacrifice of the Lamb of God, and outward forms, and ceremonies give place to the inward operations of a renovating, and purifying Spirit.

To the Jewish Church, the covenant of Sinai was a sort of starry heaven. The Shekinah was its sun; the holy festivals, its moon; and prophets, priests, and kings, its stars. But Messiah, when he came, shook them all from their spheres, and filled the firmament himself. He is our 'Bright and Morning Star;' the 'Sun of Righteousness,' rising upon us 'with healing in his wings.'

The old covenant was an accuser, and a judge, but offered no pardon to the guilty. It revealed the corruption of the natural heart, but provided no renovating, and sanctifying grace. It was a natural institution, for special benefit of the seed of Abraham. It was a small vessel, trading only with the land of Canaan. It secured, to a few, the temporal blessings of the promised possession, but never delivered a single soul from eternal death, never bore a single soul over to the heavenly inheritance. But the new covenant is a covenant of grace, and mercy, proffering forgiveness, and a clean heart, not on the ground of any carnal relationship, but solely

through faith in Jesus Christ. Christianity is a personal concern between each man, and his God, and none but the penitent believer has any right to its spiritual privileges. It is adapted to Gentiles, as well as Jews, 'even as many as the Lord our God shall call.' Already has it rescued myriads from the bondage of sin, and conveyed them over to the land of immortality; and its voyages of grace shall continue to the end of time, 'bringing many sons to glory.'

'Old things are passed away, and all things are become

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new.' The circumcision of the flesh, made with hands, has given place to the circumcision of the heart by the Holy Ghost. The Shekinah has departed from Mount Zion, but its glory is illuminating the world. The Sword of Joshua is returned to its scabbard; and 'the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,' issues from the mouth of Messiah, and subdues the people under him. The glorious High-priesthood of Christ has superseded sacerdotal office among men. Aaron was removed from the altar by death before his work was finished; but our High-priest still wears his sacrificial vestments, and death hath established him before the mercy-seat, 'a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.' The earthquake which shook Mount Calvary, and rent the veil of the temple, demolished 'the middle wall of partition' between Jews and Gentiles. The incense which Jesus offered fills the temple, and the land of Judea cannot confine its fragrance. The fountain which burst forth in Jerusalem, has sent out its living streams into every land; and the heat of summer cannot dry them up, nor the frosts of winter congeal them.

In short, all the vessels of the sanctuary are taken away by the Lord of the temple. The 'twelve oxen,' bearing the 'molten sea,' have given place to 'the twelve Apostles of the Lamb,' proclaiming, 'the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.' The sprinkled mercy-seat, with its over-shadowing, and intensely-gazing cherubim, has given place to 'the throne of grace,' stained with the blood of a costlier sacrifice, into which the angels desire to look. The priest, the altar, the burnt-offering, the table of show-bread, and the golden candlestick, have given place to the better things of the new dispensation introduced by the Son of God, of which they were only the figures, and the types. Behold, the glory has gone up from the temple, and rests upon Jesus on Mount Tabor; and Moses, and Elias are there, with Peter, and James, and



John; and the representatives of the old covenant are communing with the Apostles

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of the new, and the transfigured Christ is the medium of the communication; and a voice of majestic music, issuing from ‘the excellent glory,’ proclaims — ‘This is my beloved Son, hear ye him.’

‘God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners spake unto our fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.’ Behold him nailed to the Cross, and hear him cry — ‘It is finished!’ The voice which shook Sinai is shaking Calvary. Heaven and hell are in conflict, and earth trembles at the shock of battle. The Prince of Life expires, and the sun puts on his robes of mourning. Gabriel! descend from heaven, and explain to us the wondrous emblem! As set the sun at noon on Golgotha, making preternatural night throughout the land of Palestine, so shall the empire of sin, and death be darkened, and their light shall be quenched at meridian. As the Sun of Righteousness, rising from the night of the grave on the third morning, brings life, and immortality to light; so shall ‘the day-spring from on high’ yet dawn upon our gloomy vale, and ‘the power of his resurrection’ shall reanimate the dust of every cemetery!

He that sitteth upon the throne hath spoken — ‘Behold, I make all things new.’ The reformation includes not only the abrogation of the old, but also the introduction of the new. It gives us a new Mediator, a new covenant of grace, a new way of salvation, a new heart of flesh, a new heaven and a new earth. It has established a new union, by a new medium, between God, and man. ‘The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.’ ‘Forasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.’ ‘God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.’ Here was a new thing under the sun; the ‘Son of man’ bearing the ‘express

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image’ of the living God; bearing it untarnished through the world; through the temptations and sorrows of such a wilderness as humanity never trod before; through the unknown agony of Olivet, and the supernatural gloom of Golgotha, and the dark dominion of the king of

terrors to the Heaven of heavens; where he sits, the adorable representative of two worlds, the union of God and man! Thence he sends forth the Holy Spirit, to collect 'the travail of his soul,' and lead them into all truth, and bring them to Zion with songs of everlasting joy. See them, the redeemed of the Lord, flocking as returning doves upon the wing, 'to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God; and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to an innumerable company of angel; and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant; and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.'

Oh, join the joyful multitude! the year of jubilee is come. The veil is rent asunder. The way into the holiest is laid open. The blood of Jesus is on the mercy-seat The Lamb newly slain is in the midst of the throne. Go ye, with boldness, into his gracious presence. Lo, the King is your brother, and for you has he stained his robe with blood! The robe alone can clothe your naked souls, and shield them in the day of burning. Awake! awake! put on the Lord Jesus Christ! The covenant of Sinai cannot save you from wrath. Descent from Abraham cannot entitle you to the king dom of heaven. 'Ye must be born again,' 'born not of the flesh, nor of the will of men, but of God.' You must have a new heart, and become a new creation in Jesus Christ. This is the promise of the Father.

This is the dear redeeming grace,  
For every sinner free.

Many reformations have expired with the reformers. But our Great Reformer 'ever liveth' to carry on his reformation, till his enemies become his footstool, and death and hell

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are cast into the lake of fire. He will finish the building of his Church. When he laid 'the chief corner-stone' on Calvary, the shock jarred the earth, and awoke the dead, and shook the nether world with terror; but when he shall bring forth the top stone with shoutings of 'Grace!' the dominion of Death and Hades shall perish, and the last captive shall escape, and the song of the bursting sepulchre shall be sweeter than the chorus of the morning stars! Even now, there are new things in heaven; the Lamb from the slaughter, alive 'in the midst of the throne;' worshipped by innumerable seraphim and cherubim, and adored by the redeemed from earth; his name the wonder of angels, the terror of devils, and the hope of men; his praise the 'new song,' which shall constitute the employment of eternity!

## SERMON 2

### *The Purification of the Conscience*

*'How much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.'* —

HEBREWS 9:14

THE Hebrew Christians, to whom the Apostle wrote, were well acquainted with the laws of ceremonial purification by the blood of beasts, and birds, for by blood almost everything was purified in the service of the Temple. But it is only the blood of Christ that can purge the human conscience. In speaking of this purification, as presented in our text, let us notice — the *object*, the *means*, and the *end*.

I. The object of this purification is the conscience which all the sacrificial blood shed, from the gate of Eden down to the extinction of the fire on the Jewish altar, was not sufficient to purge.

*What is the conscience?* An inferior judge, the representative of Jehovah, holding his court in the human soul; according

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to whose decision we feel either confidence, and joy in God, or condemnation, and tormenting fear. His judicial power is graduated by the degree of moral and evangelical light which has been shed upon his palace. His knowledge of the will, and character of God is the law by which he justifies, or condemns. His intelligence is the measure of his authority; and the perfection of knowledge would be the infallibility of conscience.

This faithful recorder, and deputy judge is with us through all the journey of life, and will accompany us with his register over the river Jordan, whether to Abraham's bosom or the society of the rich man in hell. While conscience keeps a record on earth, Jehovah keeps a record in heaven; and when both books shall be opened in the final judgement, there shall be found a perfect correspondence. When temptations are presented, the understanding opposes them, but the carnal mind indulges them, and there is a contest between the judgement, and the will, and we hesitate which to obey, till the warning bell of conscience rings through the soul, and gives distinct notice of his awful recognition; and when

we turn away recklessly from his faithful admonitions, we hear low mutterings of wrath stealing along the avenues, and the quick sound of writing-pens in the recording office, causing every denizen of the mental palace to tremble.

There is a *good conscience, and an evil conscience*. The work of both, however, is the same; consisting in keeping a true record of the actions of men, and passing sentence upon them according to their deserts. Conscience is called good, or evil only with reference to the character of its record, and its sentence. If the record is one of virtues, and the sentence one of approval, the conscience is good; if the record is one of vices, and the sentence one of condemnation, the conscience is evil.

Some have a *guilty conscience*, that is, a conscience that holds up to their view a black catalogue of crimes, and rings

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in their ears a sentence of condemnation. If you have such a conscience, you are invited to Jesus, that you may find peace to your souls. He is ever in his office, receiving all who come, and blotting out, with his own blood, the handwriting which is against them.

But some have a *despairing conscience*. They think that their crimes are too great to be forgiven. The registry of guilt, and the decree of death, hide from their eyes the mercy of God, and the merit of Christ. Their sins rise like mountains between them, and heaven. But let them look away to Calvary. If their sins are a thousand times more numerous than their tears, the blood of Jesus is ten thousand times more powerful than their sins. 'He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.'

And others have a *dark, and hardened conscience*. They are so deceived, that they 'cry peace, and safety, when destruction is at the door.' They are 'past feeling, having the conscience scared as with a hot iron.' They have sold themselves to work evil; to eat sin like bread, and drink iniquity like water. They have bribed, or gagged the recorder, and accuser within them. They will betray the just cause of the righteous, and slay the messengers of salvation, and think that they are doing God service. John the Baptist is beheaded, that Herod may keep his oath of honour. A dead fish cannot swim against the stream; but if the king's conscience had been alive and faithful, he would have said — 'Girl, I promised to give thee thy request, even to the half of my kingdom; but thou hast requested too much; for the head of Messiah's herald is more valuable

than my whole kingdom, and all the kingdoms of the world!' But he had not the fear of God before his eyes, and the proud fool sent, and beheaded the prophet in his cell.

*A good conscience* is a faithful conscience, a lively conscience, a peaceful conscience, a conscience void of offence

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toward God, and man, resting in the shadow of the cross, and assured of an interest in his infinite merit. It is the victory of faith unfeigned, working by love, and purifying the heart. It is always found in the neighbourhood, and society of its brethren, 'a broken heart and a contrite spirit;' an intense hatred of sin, and an ardent love of holiness; a spirit of fervent prayer, and supplication, and a life of scrupulous integrity, and charity; and above all, a humble confidence in the mercy of God, through the mediation of Christ. These constitute the brotherhood of Christianity; and wherever they abound, a good conscience is never lacking. They are its very element, and life; its food, its sunshine, and its vital air.

Conscience was a faithful recorder, and judge under the law, and notwithstanding the revolution which has taken place, introducing a new constitution, and a new administration, Conscience still retains his office; and when 'purged from dead works to serve the living God,' is appropriately called a good *conscience*.

II. The means of this purification is 'the blood of Christ who through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God.'

Could we take in, at a single view, all the bearings of 'the blood of Christ,' as exhibited in the Gospel, what an astonishing light would it cast upon the condition of man; the character of God; the nature, and requirements of his law; the dreadful consequences of sin; the wondrous expiation of the cross: the reconciliation of Heaven, and earth; the blessed union of the believer with God in Christ, as a just God, and a Saviour; and the whole scheme of our justification, sanctification, and redemption, through free, sovereign, infinite, and unspeakable grace!

There is no knowledge like the knowledge of Christ, for the excellency of which the apostle counted all things but loss. Christ is the Sun of Righteousness, in whose light we see the tops of the mountains of immortality, towering

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above the dense clouds which overhang the valley of death. All the wisdom which philosophers have learned from nature, and providence, compared with that which is afforded by the Christian revelation, is like the *ignis fatuus*, compared with the sun. The knowledge of Plato, and Socrates, and all the renowned sages of antiquity, was nothing to the knowledge of the feeblest believer in 'the blood of Christ.'

'The blood of Christ' is of infinite value. There is none like it flowing in human veins. It was the blood of a man, but of a man who knew no iniquity; the blood of a sinless humanity, in which dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. the blood of the second Adam, who is the Lord from Heaven, and a quickening Spirit upon earth. It pressed through every pore of his body in the garden; and gushed from his head, his hands, his feet, and his side, upon the cross. I approach with fear, and trembling, yet with humble confidence, and joy. I take off my shoes, like Moses, as he approaches the burning bush, for I hear a voice coming forth from the altar, saying, 'I and my Father are one; I am the true God, and Eternal Life.'

The expression, 'the blood of Christ,' includes the whole of his obedience to the moral law, by the imputation of which we are justified; and all the sufferings of his soul and his body as our Mediator, by which an atonement is made for our sins, and a fountain opened to wash them all away. This is the spring whence rise the rivers of forgiving and sanctifying grace.

In the representation which the text gives us of this redeeming blood, are several points worthy of our special consideration:

1. It is '*the blood of Christ;*' the appointed Substitute and Saviour of men the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world.'

2. It is the blood of Christ, *who offered himself*. His humanity was the only sacrifice which would answer the demands of justice, and atone for the transgressions of mankind.

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Therefore 'He has made his soul an offering for sin.'

3. It is the blood of Christ, who offered himself to God. It was the eternal Father, whose broken law must be repaired, whose dishonoured government must be vindicated, and whose flaming indignation must be turned away. The well-beloved Son must meet the Father's frown, and

bear the Father's curse for us. All the Divine attributes called for the offering; and without it, could not be reconciled to the sinner.

4. It is the blood of Christ, who offered himself to God, *without spot*. This was a perfect sacrifice. The Victim was without blemish, or defect; the altar was complete in all its appurtenances; and the High Priest possessed every conceivable qualification for his work. Christ was at once victim, altar, and high-priest; 'holy, harmless, and undefiled' — 'God manifest in the flesh.' Being himself perfect God and perfect man, and perfect Mediator between God and man, he perfects for ever all them that believe.

5. It is the blood of Christ, who offered himself to God, without spot, *through the eternal Spirit*. By the eternal Spirit, here, we are to understand, not the third Person of the Godhead, but the second; Christ's own Divine nature, which was co-eternal with the Father before the world was, and which, in the fulness of time, seized on humanity — sinless, and immaculate humanity — and offered it, body, and soul, as a sacrifice for human sins. The eternal Spirit was at once the priest that offered the victim, and the altar that sanctified the offering. Without his agency, there could have been no atonement. The offering of mere humanity, however spotless, aside from the merit derived from its connection with Divinity, could not have been a sacrifice of sweet-smelling savour unto God.

6. It is the blood of Christ, who offered himself to God, without spot, through the eternal Spirit, *that he might purge your conscience*. As the typical sacrifices under

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the law purified men from ceremonial defilement, so the real sacrifice of the Gospel saves the believer from moral pollution. Blood was the life of all the services of the tabernacle made with hands, and gave significance, and utility to all the rites of the former dispensation. By blood the covenant between God, and his people was sealed. By blood the officers, and vessels of the sanctuary were consecrated. By blood the children of Israel were preserved in Egypt from the destroying angel. So the blood of Christ is our justification, sanctification, and redemption. All the blessings of the Gospel flow to us through the blood of the Lamb. Mercy, when she writes our pardon, and when she registers our names in 'the Book of Life,' dips her pen in the blood of the Lamb. And the vast company that John saw before the throne had come out of great

tribulation, having 'washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'

The children of Israel were delivered from Egypt, on the very night that the paschal lamb was slain, and its blood sprinkled upon the doorposts, as if their liberty, and life were procured by its death. This typified the necessity, and power of the Atonement, which is the very heart of the Gospel, and the spiritual life of the believer. In Egypt, however, there was a lamb slain for every family; but under the new covenant God has but one family, and one Lamb is sufficient for their salvation.

In the cleansing of the leper, several things were necessary; as running water, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop, and the finger of the priest; but it was the blood that gave efficacy to the whole. So it is in the purification of the conscience. Without the shedding of blood, the leper could not be cleansed; without the shedding of blood, the conscience cannot be purged. 'The blood of Christ' seals every precept, every promise, every warning, of the New Testament. 'The blood of Christ' renders the Scriptures 'profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction

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in righteousness.' 'The blood of Christ' gives efficiency to the pulpit; and when 'Jesus Christ and him crucified' is shut out, the virtue is wanting which heals, and restores the soul. It is only through the crucifixion of Christ that 'the old man' is crucified in the believer. It is only through his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, that our dead souls are quickened, to serve God in newness of life.

Here rest our hopes. 'The foundation of God standeth sure.' The bill of redemption being presented by Christ, was read by the prophets, and passed unanimously in both houses of parliament. It had its final reading in the lower house, when Messiah hung on Calvary; and passed three days afterward, when he rose from the dead. It was introduced to the upper house by the Son of God himself, who appeared before the throne 'as a lamb newly slain,' and was carried by acclamation of the heavenly hosts. Then it became a law of the Kingdom of Heaven, and the Holy Ghost was sent down to establish it in the hearts of men. It is 'the perfect law of liberty,' by which God is reconciling the world unto himself. It is 'the law of the Spirit of life,' by which he is 'purging our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.'



III. The end of this purification is twofold, — that we may cease from dead works, and serve the living God.

1. The works of unrenewed souls are all ‘dead works,’ can be no other than ‘dead works,’ because the agents are ‘dead in trespasses and sins.’ They proceed from the ‘carnal mind,’ which ‘is enmity against God,’ which ‘is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.’ How can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit, or a corrupt fountain send forth pure water?

But ‘the blood of Christ’ is intended to ‘purge the conscience from dead works.’ The apostle says—‘Ye are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver, and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your

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fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish, and without spot.’ The Jews were in a state of bondage to the ceremonial law, toiling at the ‘dead works,’ the vain, and empty forms, which could never take away sin; and unjustified, and unregenerate men are still captives of Satan, slaves of sin, and death, tyrannised over by various evil habits, and propensities, which are invincible to all things but ‘the blood of Christ.’ He died to redeem, both from the burdens of the Mosaic ritual, and from the despotism of moral evil — to purge the conscience of both Jew, and Gentile ‘from dead works to serve the living God.’

2. We cannot ‘serve the living God’ without this preparatory purification of conscience. If our guilt is uncanceled — if the love of sin is not dethroned — the service of the knee, and the lip is nothing but hypocrisy. ‘If we regard iniquity in our hearts, the Lord will not hear us.’ Cherishing what he hates, all our offerings are an abomination to him; and we can no more stand in his holy presence than the dry stubble can stand before a flaming fire. He who has an evil conscience flees from the face of God, as did Adam in the garden. Nothing but ‘the blood of Christ,’ applied by the Holy Spirit, can remove the sinner’s guilty fear, and enable him to draw nigh to God, in the humble confidence of acceptance through the Beloved.

The service of the living God must flow from a new principle of life in the soul. The Divine word must be the rule of our actions. The Divine will must be consulted and obeyed. We must remember that God is holy, and jealous of his honour. The consideration that he is everywhere, and

sees everything, and will bring every work into judgement, must fill us with reverence and godly fear. An ardent love for his law, and his character must supplant the love of sin, and prompt to a cheerful and impartial obedience.

And let us remember that he is 'the living God.' Pharaoh is dead, Herod is dead, Nero is dead; but Jehovah is 'the living God.' And it is a fearful thing

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to have him for an enemy. Death cannot deliver from his hand. Time, and even eternity, cannot limit his holy anger. He has manifested, in a thousand instances, his hatred of sin: in the destruction of the old world, the burning of Sodom, and Gomorrah, the drowning of Pharaoh and his host in the sea; and I tell thee, sinner, except thou repent, thou shalt likewise perish! Oh, think what punishment 'the living God' can inflict upon his adversaries — the loss of all good — the endurance of all evil — the undying worm — the unquenchable fire — the blackness of darkness for ever!

The gods of the heathen have no life in them, and they that worship them are like unto them. But our God is 'the living God,' and 'the God of the living.' If you are united to him by faith in 'the blood of Christ,' your souls are 'quicken together with him,' and 'the power which raised him from the dead shall also quicken your mortal body.'

May the Lord awaken those who are dead in trespasses, and sins, and revive his work in the midst of the years, and strengthen the feeble graces of his people, and bless abundantly the labours of his servants, so that many consciences may be purged from dead works to serve the living God!

There is a fountain filled with blood,  
 Drawn from Emmanuel's veins,  
 And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,  
 Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see  
 That fountain in his day;  
 And there may I, as vile as he,  
 Wash all my sins away.

Dear dying Lamb! Thy precious blood  
 Shall never lose its power,

Till all the ransomed sons of God  
Are saved, to sin no more.

## SERMON 3

### *FINISHED REDEMPTION*

*'It is finished.' — JOHN 19:30*

THIS exclamation derives all its importance from the magnitude of the work alluded to, and the glorious character of the Agent. The work is the redemption of the world; the Agent is God, manifested in the flesh. He who finished the creation of the heavens, and the earth in six days, is laying the foundation of a new creation on Calvary. Four thousand years he has been giving notice of his intention to mankind; more than thirty years he has been personally upon earth, preparing the material; and now he lays the chief corner-stone in Zion, exclaiming — 'It is finished.'

We will consider the special import of the exclamation, and then offer a few remarks of a more general character.

I. 'It is finished.' This saying of the Son of God is a very striking one; and, uttered, as it was, while he hung in dying agonies on the cross, cannot fail to make a strong impression upon the mind. It is natural for us to inquire — 'What does it mean? To what does the glorious Victim refer?' A complete answer to the question would develop the whole scheme of redemption. We can only glance at a few leading ideas.

The sufferings of Christ are ended. Never again shall he be persecuted from city to city, as an impostor, and servant of Satan. Never again shall he say, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.' Never again shall he agonise in Gethsemane, and sweat great drops of blood. Never again shall he be derided by the rabble, and insulted by men in power. Never again shall he be crowned with thorns, lacerated by the scourge, and nailed to the accursed tree. Never again shall he cry out, in the anguish of his

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soul, and the baptism of blood — 'My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me!'

The predictions of his death are fulfilled. The prophets had spoken of his crucifixion many hundred years before his birth. They foresaw the Governor who was to come forth from Bethlehem. They knew the Babe in the manger, as he whose goings forth are of old, even from everlasting. They drew an accurate chart of his travels, from the manger to the cross, and from the cross to the throne. All these things must be fulfilled. Jesus knew the necessity, and seemed anxious that every jot, and tittle should receive an exact accomplishment. His whole life was a fulfilment of prophecy. On every path he walked, on every house he entered, on every city he visited, and especially on the mysterious phenomena which accompanied his crucifixion, it was written — ‘that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.’

The great sacrifice for sin is accomplished. For this purpose Christ came into the world. He is our appointed High Priest, the elect of the Father, and the desire of the nations. He alone was in the bosom of the Father, and could offer a sacrifice of sufficient merit to atone for human transgression. But it was necessary also that he should have somewhat to offer. Therefore a body was prepared for him. He assumed the seed of Abraham, and suffered in the flesh. This was a sacrifice of infinite value, being sanctified by the altar of Divinity on which it was offered. All the ceremonial sacrifices could not obtain the bond from the hand of the creditor. They were only acknowledgment of the debt. But Jesus, by one offering, paid the whole, took up the bond, the hand-writing that was against us, and nailed it to the cross; and when driving the last nail, he cried — ‘It is finished!’

The satisfaction of Divine justice is completed. The violated law must be vindicated; the deserved penalty must be endured; if not by the sinner himself, yet by the sinner’s Substitute. This was the great undertaking of the

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Son of God. He ‘bore our sins’ — that is, the punishment of our sins — ‘in his own body on the tree.’ He was ‘made a curse for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.’ There was no other way by which the honour of God and the dignity of his law could be sustained, and therefore ‘the Lord laid upon him the iniquities of us all.’ He ‘died unto sin once;’ not merely for sin, enduring its punishment in our stead; but also ‘unto sin,’ abolishing its power, and putting it away. Therefore it is said, he ‘made an end of sin’ — destroyed its condemning,

and tormenting power on behalf of all them that believe his sufferings were equal to the claims of justice; and his dying cry was the voice of justice himself proclaiming the satisfaction. Here, then, may the dying thief, and the persecutor of the holy, lay down their load of guilt, and woe at the foot of the cross.

The new, and living way to God is consecrated. A veil has hitherto concealed the holy of holies. None but the High Priest has seen the ark of the covenant, and the glory of God resting upon the Mercy-seat between the cherubim. He alone might enter, and he but once a year, and then with fear, and trembling, and the sprinkling of atoning blood, after the most careful purification, and sacrifice for himself. He has filled his hands with his own blood, and entered into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for us. The sweet incense which he offers fills the temple, and the merit of his sacrifice remains the same through all time, superseding all other offerings for ever. Therefore we are exhorted to come boldly to the throne of grace. The tunnel under the Thames could not be completed on account of an accident which greatly damaged the work, without a new subscription for raising money; but Jesus found infinite riches in himself, sufficient for the completion of a new way to the Father — a living way through the valley of the shadow of death to ‘the city of the Great King.’

The conquest of the powers of darkness is achieved. When

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their hour was come, the prince and his host were on the alert to accomplish the destruction of the Son of God. They hailed him with peculiar temptations, and levelled against him their heaviest artillery. They instigated one disciple to betray him and another to deny him. They fired the rage of the multitude against him, so that the same tongues that lately sang, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David!’ now shouted, ‘Crucify him! crucify him!’ They filled the priests, and scribes with envy, that they might accuse him without a cause; and inspired Pilate with an accursed ambition, that he might condemn him without a fault. They seared the conscience of the false witnesses, that they might charge the just One with the most flagrant crimes; and cauterised the hearts of the Roman soldiers, that they might mock him in his sufferings, and nail him to the cross. Having succeeded so far in their hellish plot, they doubtless deemed their victory certain. I see them crowding around the cross, waiting impatiently to witness his last breath, ready to shout with

infernal triumph to the depths of hell, till the brazen walls should send back their echoes to the gates of the heavenly city. But hark! the dying Saviour exclaims — ‘It is finished!’ and the great dragon and his host retreat, howling, from the cross. The Prince of our Salvation turned back all their artillery upon themselves, and their own stratagems became their ruin. The old serpent seized Messiah’s heel, but Messiah stamped upon the serpent’s head. The dying cry of Jesus shook the dominions of death, so that the bodies of many that slept arose; and rang through all the depths of hell the knell of its departed power. Thus the Prince of this world was foiled in his schemes, and disappointed in his hopes, like the men of Gaza, when they locked up Samson at night, thinking to kill him in the morning; but awoke to find that he was gone, with the gates of the city upon his shoulders. When the Philistines caught Samson, and brought him to their Temple, to make sport for them, they never dreamed of the disaster in

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which it would result — never dreamed that their triumph over the poor blind captive would be the occasion of their destruction. ‘Suffer me,’ said he, ‘to lean on the two pillars.’ Then he bowed himself, and died with his enemies. So Christ on Calvary, while the powers of darkness exulted over their victim, seized the main pillars of sin, and death, and brought down the temple of Satan upon its occupants; but on the morning of the third day, he left them all in the ruins, where they shall remain for ever, and commenced his journey home to his Father’s house.

II. So much concerning the import of our Saviour’s exclamation. Such was the work he finished upon the cross. We add a few remarks of a more general character.

The sufferings of Christ were vicarious. He died, not for his own sins, but for ours. He humbled himself, that we might be exalted. He became poor, that we might be made rich. He was wounded, that we might be healed. He drained the cup of wrath, that we might drink the waters of salvation. He died the shameful and excruciating death of the cross, that we might live and reign with him for ever.

‘Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to have entered into his glory?’ This ‘ought’ is the ought of mercy, and of covenant engagement. He must discharge the obligation which he had voluntarily assumed. He must finish the work which he had graciously begun. There was no other Saviour — no other being in the universe willing to

undertake the work; or, if any willing to undertake, none able to accomplish it. The salvation of one human soul would have been too mighty an achievement for Gabriel — for all the angels in heaven. Had not ‘the only-begotten of the Father’ become our Surety, we must have lain for ever under the wrath of God, amid ‘weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.’ None but the Lion of the tribe of Judah could break the seals of that mysterious book. None but ‘God manifest in the flesh’ could deliver us from the second death.

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The dying cry of Jesus indicates the dignity of his nature, and the power of life that was in him to the last. All men die of weakness — of inability to resist death — die because they can live no longer. But this was not the case with the Son of God. He speaks of laying down his life as his own voluntary act;—‘No man taketh it from he, but I lie it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.’ ‘He poured out his soul unto death’ — did not wait for it to be torn from him — did not hang languishing upon the cross, till life ‘ebbed out by slow degrees;’ but poured it out freely, suddenly, and unexpectedly. As soon as the work was done for which he came into the world, he cried — ‘It is finished!’ ‘bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.’ Then the sun was darkened, the earth quaked, the rocks rent, the graves opened, and the centurion said — ‘Truly, this Man was the Son of God!’ He cried with a loud voice, to show that he was still unconquered by pain, mighty even upon the cross, he bowed his head that death might seize him. He was naturally far above the reach of death, his Divine nature being self-existent and eternal, and his human nature entitled to immortality by its immaculate holiness; yet ‘He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross’ — ‘He bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.’

We may regard this last exclamation, also, as an expression of his joy at having accomplished the great ‘travail of his soul,’ in the work of our redemption. It was the work which the Father had given him, and which he had covenanted to do. It lay heavy upon his heart, and oh, how was he straitened till it was accomplished! His ‘soul was exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death;’ ‘and his sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, falling down to the ground.’ But upon the cross, he saw of the travail of his soul, and was satisfied. He saw that his sacrifice was



accepted, and the object of his agony secured — that death would not be

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able to detain him in the grave, nor hell to defeat the purpose of his grace; that the gates of the eternal city would soon open to receive him as a conqueror, and myriads of exultant angels shout him to his throne; whither he would be followed by his redeemed, with songs of everlasting joy. He saw, and he was satisfied; and, not waiting for the morning of the third day, but already confident of victory, he uttered this note of triumph, and died.

And if we may suppose them to have understood its import, what a source of consolation it must have been to his sorrowing disciples! The sword had pierced through Mary's heart, according to the prediction of old Simeon over the infant Jesus. Her affections had bled at the agony of her supernatural Son, and her wounded faith had well-nigh perished at his cross. And how must all his followers have felt, standing afar off, and beholding their supposed Redeemer suffering as a malefactor! How must all their hopes have died within them, as they gazed on the accursed tree! The tragedy was mysterious, and they deemed their enemies victorious. Jesus is treading the winepress in Bozrah, and the earth is shaking, and the rocks are rending, and the luminaries of heaven are expiring, and all the powers of nature are fainting, in sympathy with his mighty agony. Now he is lost in the fire, and smoke of battle, and the dread artillery of justice is heard thundering through the thick darkness, and shouts of victory rise from the troops of hell, and who shall foretell the issue of the combat, or the fate of the Champion? But lo! He cometh forth from the cloud of battle, with blood upon his garments! He is wounded, but he hath the tread, and the aspect of a conqueror. He waves his crimsoned sword, and cries — 'It is finished!' Courage, ye weepers at the cross! Courage, ye tremblers afar off! The Prince of your salvation is victor, and this bulletin of the war shall cheer myriads of believers in the house of their pilgrimage, and the achievement which it announces shall constitute an everlasting theme of praise.

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'It is finished!' The word smote on the walls of the celestial city, and thrilled the hosts of heaven with ecstasy unspeakable. How must 'the spirits of just men made perfect' have leaped for joy, to hear that the Captain of their salvation was victorious over all his enemies, and that

the work he had engaged to do for them, and their brethren was completed! And with what wonder, and delight must the holy angels have witnessed the triumph of him, whom they were commanded to worship, over the powers of darkness! It was the commencement of a new era in heaven, and never before had its happy denizens seen so much of God.

'It is finished!' Go, ye heralds of salvation, into all the world, and proclaim the joyful tidings! Cry aloud, and spare not; lift up your voice like a trumpet, and publish, to all men, that the work of the cross is finished — that the Great Mediator, 'made perfect through sufferings,' has become 'the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him' — 'is of God made unto us, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption!' Go, teach the degraded pagan, the deluded Mohammedan, and the superstitious Papist, that the finished work of Jesus is the only way of acceptance with God. Go, tell the polished scholar, the profound philosopher, and the vaunting moralist, that the doctrine of Christ crucified is the only knowledge that can save the soul! Go, — say to the proud sceptic, the bold blasphemer, and the polluted libertine, 'Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.' Preach it to the gasping sinner upon the death-bed, and the sullen murderer in his cell! Let it ring in every human ear, and thrill in every human heart, till the gladness of earth shall be the counterpart of heaven!

## SERMON 4

### *THE FATHER AND SON GLORIFIED.*

*'Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and, he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore, said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.'* — JOHN 16:13–15.

THE wonderful Providence, which brought the children of Israel out of the house of bondage, was a chain of many links, not one of which could be omitted without destroying the beauty, and defeating the end of the Divine economy. The family of Jacob came to Egypt in the time of famine — they multiply — they are oppressed — their cries reach to heaven — God manifests himself in the burning bush — Moses is sent to Egypt — miracles are wrought by his hand — Pharaoh's heart is hardened — the firstborn are slain — the passover is eaten — the people depart, led by the pillar of God — the sea is divided — and, with many signs, and wonders, the thousands of Israel are conducted through the wilderness to the Promised Land. Had one of these links been wanting, the chain of deliverance had been defective.

So, in the salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ, all the conditions, and preparatives were essential to the completeness, and glory of the scheme. The Son of God must consent to undertake our cause, and become our substitute — the promise must be given to Adam, and frequently repeated to the patriarchs — bloody sacrifices must be instituted, to typify the vicarious sufferings of Messiah — a long line of prophets must foretell his advent, and the glory of his kingdom — he must be born in Bethlehem, crucified on Calvary, and buried in Joseph's new tomb — must rise from the dead, ascend to the right hand of the Father, and send down the Holy Spirit to guide and sanctify his Church. Without

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all these circumstances, the economy of redemption would have been incomplete and inefficient.

The last link in the chain is the mission and work of the Holy Spirit. This is quite as important as any of the rest. Our Saviour's heart seems to have been much set upon it, during all his ministry, and especially during the last few days, before his crucifixion. He spoke of it, frequently, to his disciples, and told them that he would not leave them comfortless, but would send them 'another Comforter,' who should abide with them for ever; and that his own departure was necessary, to prepare the way for the coming of the heavenly Paraclete. In our text, he describes the office of the Holy Spirit, and the specific relation which he sustains to the work of Salvation:— 'Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.'

These words teach us two important truths — *first*, that the Son is equal with the Father; and, *secondly*, that the Father, and the Son are alike glorified in the economy of salvation.

1. The Son claims equality with the Father. 'All things that the Father hath are mine.'

This sentence is very comprehensive, and sublime — an unquestionable affirmation of the Messiah's 'eternal power, and Godhead.' The same doctrine is taught us, in many other recorded sayings of Christ, and sustained by all the prophets, and apostles; and when I consider this declaration, in connection with the general strain of the inspired writers on the subject, I seem to hear the Saviour himself addressing the world in the following manner:—

All things that the Father hath are mine. His *names* are mine. I am Jehovah — the mighty God, and the everlasting

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Father — the Lord of Hosts — the Living God — the True God, and Eternal Life.

His *works* are mine. All things were made by me, and I uphold all things by the word of my power. My Father worketh hitherto, and I work; for as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. I am the Author of universal being, and my hand moveth all the machinery of Providence.

His *honours* are mine. I have an indisputable right to the homage of all created intelligences. I inhabit the praises of Eternity. Before the foundation of the world, I was the object of angelic adoration; and when I became incarnate as a Saviour, the Father published his decree in heaven, saying — ‘Let all the angels of God worship him!’ It is his will, also, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father — in the same manner, and the same degree. He that honoureth the Son, honoureth the Father and he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father: for I and my Father are one — one in honour — possessing joint interest, and authority.

His *attributes* are mine. Though as man, and Mediator I am inferior to the Father; yet my nature is no more inferior to his, than the nature of the Prince of Wales is inferior to the nature of the King of England. You see me clothed in humanity; but, in my original state, I thought it not robbery to be equal with God. I was in the beginning with God, and possessed the same eternity of being. Like him, I am almighty, omniscient, and immutable; infinite in holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. All these attributes, with every other possible perfection, belong to me, in the same sense as they belong to the Father. They are absolute, and independent, underived, and unoriginated — the essential qualities of my nature.

His *riches of grace* are mine. I am the Mediator of the new covenant — the Channel of my Father’s mercies to

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mankind. I have the keys of the House of David, and the seal of the Kingdom of Heaven. I have come from the bosom of the Father, freighted with the precious treasures of his good will to men. I have sailed over the sea of tribulation, and death, to bring you the wealth of the other world. I am the Father’s Messenger, publishing peace on earth — a peace which I have purchased with my own blood upon the cross. It has pleased the Father that in me all fulness should dwell — all fulness of wisdom, and grace — whatever is necessary for the justification, sanctification, and redemption of them that believe. My Father, and I are one, in the work of salvation, as in the work of creation. We have the same will, and the same intention of mercy toward the children of the great captivity.

The *objects of his love* are mine. He hath given them to me in an everlasting covenant. He hath given me the heathen for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession. They were mine by the original right of creation; but now they are doubly mine, by the superadded claim of redemption. My Father, before the world was, gave me a charter of all the souls I would redeem. I have fulfilled the condition. I have poured out my

soul unto death, and sealed the covenant with the blood of my cross. Therefore, all believers are mine. I have bought them with a price. I have redeemed them from the bondage of sin, and death. Their names are engraven on my hands, and my feet. They are written with the soldier's spear upon my heart. And of all that the Father hath given me, I will lose nothing. I will draw them all to myself; I will raise them up at the last day; and they shall be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which I had with the Father before the foundation of the world.

II. The Father and the Son are equally glorified in the economy of redemption, and the work of the Holy Spirit.

I. The Son glorifies the Father. I hear him praying in

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the garden:— 'Father, I have glorified thee on earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.' I hear him, again, amidst the supernatural gloom of Calvary, with a voice that rings through the dominions of death, and hell, crying — 'It is finished!'

What mighty achievement hast thou finished today, blessed Jesus? and how have thine unknown agony, and shameful death glorified the Father?

I have glorified the Father, by raising up those precious things which fell in Eden, and were lost in the abyss.

I have raised up my Father's *law*. I found it cast down to the earth, and trampled into the dust. I have magnified, and found it honourable. I have vindicated its authority in the sight of men, and angels. I have satisfied its demands on behalf of my redeemed, and become the end of the law for righteousness to all who will receive me as their surety.

I have raised up my Father's *name*. I have declared it to my brethren. I have manifested it to the men whom he has given me. I have given a new revelation of his character to the world. I have shown him to sinners, as a just God, and a Saviour. I have restored his worship in purity, and spiritually upon earth. I have opened a new, and living way to his throne of grace. I have written the record of his mercy with my own blood upon the rocks of Calvary.

I have raised up my Father's *image*. I have imprinted it afresh upon human nature, from which it was effaced by sin. I have displayed its excellence in my own character. I have passed through the pollutions of the world, and the territory of death, without tarnishing its lustre, or injuring its symmetry. Though my visage is marred with grief, and my back ploughed with scourges, and my hands, and feet nailed to the accursed cross, not one trace

of my Father's image has been obliterated from my human soul. It is as perfect, and as spotless now as when I lay in the manger. I will carry it unstained with me into heaven. I will give a full description of it in my Gospel upon earth. I will

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change my people into the same image, from glory, to glory. I will also renovate, and transform their vile bodies, and fashion them like unto my own glorious body. I will ransom them from the power of the grave; and because I live, they shall live also — the counterpart of my own immaculate humanity — mirrors to reflect my Father's glory for ever.

2. The Father glorifies the Son. He prayed in the garden,—'And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.' Was the petition granted? Answer, ye Roman sentinels, who watched his sepulchre! Answer, ye men of Galilee, who gazed upon his chariot, as he ascended from the mount of Olives!

The glorification of the Son by the Father implies all the honours of his mediatorial office — all the crowns which he won by his victory over the powers of death, and hell. The Father raised him from the dead, and received him up into glory, as a testimony of his acceptance as the sinner's Surety — an expression of perfect satisfaction with his vicarious sacrifice upon the cross. It was the just reward of his work; it was the fruit of his gracious travail. He is 'crowned with glory and honour for the sufferings of death.' 'Because he hath poured out his soul unto death,' therefore 'God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name.'

What an honour would it be to a man, to receive eight, or ten of the highest offices in the kingdom! Infinitely greater is the glory of Emmanuel. His name includes all the offices, and titles of the kingdom of heaven. The Father hath made him 'both Lord, and Christ' — that is, given him the supreme prerogatives of government and salvation.

Him hath God exalted to be a prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins.' He is 'head over all things in the Church' — Prime Minister in the kingdom of heaven — Lord Treasurer, dispensing the bounties

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of Divine grace to mankind — Lord High-Chancellor of the Realm, and Keeper of the great Seal of the living God; holding in his hand the charter of our redemption, and certifying the authenticity of the Divine

covenant — Lord Chief Justice of heaven, and earth, having all power, and authority to administer the laws of Providence throughout the universe — the chief Prince — the General of the army — the Captain of the Lord's host — the Champion who conquered Satan, sin, and death; bruising the head of the first, destroying the power of the second, and swallowing up the third in victory. He hath the keys of hell, and of death. He shutteth, and no man openeth; he openeth, and no man shutteth. He bears all the honours of his Father's house; and concentrates in himself all the glories of Supreme Divinity, redeemed humanity, and 'mediator between God, and man.'

3. The Holy Spirit glorifies Father and Son together. He is procured for the world by the blood of the Son, and sent into the world by the authority of the Father; so that both are alike represented in his mission, and equally glorified in his office. The gracious things which the Father gave into the hands of the Son, when he descended from heaven, the Son gave into the hands of the Spirit, when he returned to heaven. 'All things that the Father hath are mine; and he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.'

This is the object of the Spirit's advent, the communication of the things of Christ to men. What are the things of Christ? His merit, his mercy, his image, his Gospel, his promises, all the gifts of his grace, all the treasures of his love, and all the immunities of eternal redemption. These the Father hath given to the Son, as the great Trustee of the Church; and the Son hath given them to the Spirit, as the appointed Agent of their communication.

A ship was laden in India, arrived safely in London, unloaded her precious cargo, and the goods were soon distributed all over the country, and offered for sale in a

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thousand stores. The Son of God brought immense riches of Divine grace from heaven to earth, which are all left to the disposal of the Holy Spirit, and freely proffered to the perishing, wherever the Gospel is preached.

The Holy Spirit came, not to construct a new engine of mercy, but to propel that already constructed by Christ. Its first revolution rent the rocks of Calvary, and shook the rocky hearts of men. Its second revolution demolished the throne of death, burst his prison-doors, and liberated many of his captives. Its third revolution carried its builder up



into the Heaven of heavens, and brought down the Holy Spirit to move its machinery for ever. Its next revolution, under the impulse of this new Agent, was like 'the rushing of a mighty wind' among the assembled disciples at Jerusalem, kindled a fire upon the head of every Christian, inspired them to speak all the languages of the babbling earth, and killed, and quickened three thousand souls of the hearers.

The Holy Spirit is still on earth, glorifying the Father, and the Son. He convinces the world of sin. He leads men to Christ, through the rivers of corruption, the mountains of presumption, and the terrible bogs of despair, affording them no rest till they come to the city of refuge. He continues on the field to bring up the rear; while the Captain of our Salvation, on his white horse, rides victorious in the van of battle. He strengthens the soldiers — 'faint, yet pursuing!' raises the fallen; encourages the despondent; feeds them with the bread of life, and the new wine of the kingdom; and leads them on—'conquering and to conquer.'

His work will not be finished till the resurrection. Then will he quicken our mortal bodies. Then will he light his candle, and sweep the house till he find every lost piece of silver. Then will he descend into the dark caves of death, and gather all the gems of redeemed humanity, and weave them into a crown for Emmanuel, and place that crown upon Emmanuel's head, amid the songs of the adoring seraphim!

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Thus the Holy Spirit glorifies the Father, and the Son. Let us pray for the outpouring of his grace upon the Church. In proportion to his manifestation in our hearts, will be our 'knowledge of the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.' Nor is this all; in proportion to the visitations of the Holy Spirit, will be the purity of our lives, the spirituality of our worship, the ardour of our zeal, and charity, and the extent of our usefulness to the cause of Christ. Would you see a revival of religion? pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon you, to sanctify your hearts, and lives, that your light may 'so shine before men, that others may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.'

'When thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, then thou shalt bestir thyself; for then the Lord shall go out before thee, to strike the hosts of the Philistines.' Brethren, this is the time. The mulberry trees are shaking. God is going before his people, to prepare

their way to victory. The hand of Divine Providence is opening a great, and effectual door for the Gospel. The mountains are levelled, the valleys are exalted, and a highway is cast up in the wilderness for our God. The arts of printing, and navigation, the increasing commerce of the world, the general prevalence of the Spirit of peace, the rapid march of literature and science, and the correspondence of eminent and leading men in every nation, are so many preparatives for the moral conquest of the world. The Captain of our Salvation, on the white horse of the Gospel, can now ride through Europe and America: and will soon lead forth his army, to take possession of Asia, and Africa. The wings of the mighty angel are unbound, and he is flying in the midst of heaven.

Again: Christians are better informed concerning the moral state of the world than formerly. If my neighbour's house were on fire, and I knew nothing of it, I could not be blamed for rendering him no assistance; but who could be

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guiltless in beholding the building in flames, without an effort to rescue its occupants? Brethren, you have heard of the perishing heathen. You have heard of their dreadful superstitions, their human sacrifices, and their abominable rites. You have heard of juggernaut, and the River Ganges, and the murder of infants, and the immolation of widows, and the worship of idols, and demons. You know something of the delusion of Mohammedanism, the cruel, and degrading ignorance of Popery, and how millions around you are perishing for the lack of knowledge. Do you feel no solicitude for their souls — no desire to pluck them as brands from the burning?

What can we do? The Scriptures have been translated into nearly all the languages of the babbling earth. Missionaries have gone into many lands — have met the Indian in his wigwam, the African in his Devil's-bush, and the devotee on his way to Mecca. We can furnish more men for the field, and more money to sustain them. But these things cannot change, and renovate the human heart. 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.' This is the grand regenerating agency. He alone can convince and save the world. His aid is given in answer to, prayer; and the Father is more ready to give than we are to, ask.

Mr Ward, one of the Baptist missionaries in India, in a missionary discourse at Bristol, said,—'Brethren, we need your money, — we need

your prayers more.' Oh, what encouragement we have to pray for our missionaries! Thus, saith the Lord: 'I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.' Let, us plead with God for the accomplishment of the promise, 'Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest till he make Jerusalem a praise in the whole earth.'

Brethren in the ministry! let us remember that all our

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success depends upon the aid of the Holy Spirit, and let us pray constantly for his blessing upon the world! Brethren in the Church! forget not the connection between the work of the Holy Spirit and the glory of your Best Friend, and earnestly entreat him to mingle his sanctifying unction with the treasures of Divine Truth contained in these earthen vessels! "Finally, Brethren, pray for us; that the Word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified;" and all the ends of the earth see the salvation of our God!

## SERMON 5

### THE CEDAR OF GOD

*Thus saith the Lord God: I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and plant it upon a high mountain and eminent; in the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar; and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell; and all the trees of the field shall know that I, the Lord, have brought down the high tree, and have exalted the low tree — have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish. I, the Lord, have spoken, and I have done it. — EZEKIEL 17:22–24.*

YOU perceive that our text abounds in the beautiful language of allegory. In the context is portrayed the captivity of the children of Israel, and especially the carrying away of the royal family by the king of Babylon. Here God promises to restore them to their own land, in greater prosperity than ever; and to raise up Messiah, the Branch, out of the house of David, to be their king. All this is presented in a glowing figurative style, dressed out in all the wealth of poetic imagery so peculiar to the Orientals. Nebuchadnezzar, the great eagle — the long-winged, full-feathered, embroidered eagle — is represented as coming to Lebanon, and taking the highest branch of the tallest cedar, bearing it off

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as the crow bears the acorn in its beak, and planting it in the land of traffic. The Lord God, in his turn, takes the highest branch of the same cedar, and plants it on the high mountain of Israel, where it flourishes and bears fruit, and the fowls of the air dwell under the shadow of its branches.

We will make a few general remarks on the character of the promise, and then pass to a more particular consideration of its import.

I. This is an *evangelical* promise. It relates to the coming and kingdom of Messiah. Not one of the kings of Judah since the captivity, as Boothroyd well observes, answers to the description here given. Not one of them was a cedar whose branches could afford shadow, and shelter for all the fowls of heaven. But the prophecy receives its fulfilment in Christ,

the Desire of all nations, to whom the ends of the earth shall come for salvation.

This prophecy bears a striking resemblance, in several particulars, to the parable of the mustard-seed, delivered by our Lord. 'The mustard-seed,' said Jesus, 'is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.' So the delicate twig of the young, and tender branch, becomes a goodly cedar, and under its shadow dwell all fowl, of every wing. The prophecy, and the parable are alike intended to represent the growth, and prosperity of Messiah's kingdom, and the gracious protection, and spiritual refreshment afforded to its subjects. Christ is the mustard plant, and cedar of God; and to him shall the gathering of all the people be; and multitudes of pardoned sinners shall sit under his shadow, with great delight, and his fruit shall be sweet to their taste.

This prophecy is a promise of the true, and faithful, and immutable God. It begins with — 'Thus saith the Lord God, I will do thus and so;' and concludes with — 'I, the Lord, have spoken, and I have done it.' There is no peradventure with God. His Word is for ever settled in

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heaven, and cannot fail of its fulfilment. When he says, 'I promise to pay,' there is no failure, whatever the sum. The Bank of grace cannot break. It is the oldest and best in the universe. Its capital is infinite; its credit is infallible. The mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, is able to fulfil, to the utmost, all his engagements. He can do anything that does not imply a contradiction, or a moral absurdity. He could take upon himself the form of a servant, and become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: but we can never forget, or disregard, his promise, any more than he can cease to exist. His nature renders both impossible. Heaven, and earth shall pass away, but his word shall not pass away. Every jot, and tittle shall be fulfilled. This is the consolation of the Church. Here rested the patriarchs, and prophets. Here reposes the faith of the saints, to the end of time. God abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself. Our text is already partially verified in the advent of Christ, and the establishment of his Church; the continuous growth of the gospel kingdom indicates its progressive fulfilment; and we anticipate the time, as not far distant, when the whole earth shall be overshadowed by the branches of the cedar of God.

II. We proceed to consider, with a little more particularity, the import of this evangelical prophecy. It describes the character, and mediatorial kingdom of Christ, and the blessings which he confers upon his people.

I. His character and mediatorial kingdom. — ‘I will take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and plant it upon a high mountain and eminent; in the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it.’

Christ, as concerning the flesh, is of the seed of Abraham — a rod issuing from the stem of Jesse, and a branch growing out of his root. As the new vine is found in the cluster, and one saith, ‘Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it,’ so

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the children of Israel were spared, notwithstanding their perverseness, and their backslidings, because they were the cluster from which should be expressed in due time the new wine of the kingdom — because from them was to come forth the blessing, the promised seed, in whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed. The Word that was in the beginning with God, one with God, in essence, and in attributes, in the fulness of time assumed our nature, and tabernacled, and dwelt among us. Here is the union of God, and man. Here is the great mystery of godliness — God manifest in the flesh. But I have only time now to take off my shoes, and draw near the burning bush, and gaze a moment upon this great sight.

The Father is represented as preparing a body, for his Son. He goes to the quarry to seek a stone, a foundation-stone, for Zion. The angel said to Mary:— ‘The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.’ The Eternal lays hold on that nature which is hastening downward, on the flood of sin, to the gulf of death, and destruction, and binds it to himself. Though made in the likeness of sinful flesh, he was holy, harmless, and undefiled. He did no iniquity, neither was guile found in his mouth. The rod out of the stem of Jesse is also Jehovah, our righteousness. The Child born in Bethlehem is the mighty God. The Son given to Israel is the Everlasting Father. He is of the seed of Abraham, according to the flesh; but he is also the true God, and eternal life. Two natures, and three offices meet mysteriously in his Person. He is at once the bleeding sacrifice, the sanctifying altar, the officiating priest, the prophet of Israel, and the Prince of Peace. All

this was necessary that he might become 'the Author of eternal salvation, to all them that obey him.'

Hear Jehovah speaking of Messiah and his kingdom:—

Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain

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thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take council together against the Lord, and against his anointed. Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree by which he is to rule his redeemed empire.' That decree, long kept secret, was gradually announced by the prophets, but at the new tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, Jehovah himself proclaimed it aloud, to the astonishment of earth, the terror of hell, and the joy of heaven:— 'Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Come forth from the womb of the grave, thou whose goings forth have been from of old, even from everlasting. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. I will exalt thee to the throne of the universe, and thou shalt be chief in the chariot of the Gospel. Thou shalt ride through the dark places of the earth, with the lamps of eternal life suspended to thy chariot, enlightening the world. Be wise, now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little. Let no man withstand him. Let no man seek to stay his progress. Herod, Pilate, Caiaphas, stand off! clear the way! lest ye be crushed beneath the wheels of his chariot! for that which is a savour of life to some, is to others a savour of death; and if this stone shall fall upon you, it shall grind you to powder!

Behold, here is wisdom! All other mysteries are toys, in comparison with the mystery of the everlasting gospel — the union of three Persons in the Godhead — the union of two natures in the Mediator — the union of believers in Christ, as the branches to the vine — the union of all the saints together in him, who is the head of the body, and the chief stone of the corner — the mighty God transfixed to the cross — the Son of Mary ruling in the Heaven of heavens — the rod of Jesse becoming the sceptre of universal dominion — the

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Branch growing out of his root, the little delicate branch which a lamb might crop for its food, terrifying and taming the serpent, the lion, the leopard, the tiger, and the wolf, and transforming into gentleness, and love, the wild, and savage nature of all the beasts of prey upon the

mountain! 'And such,' old Corinthian sinners, 'were some of you; but ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.' And such, my brethren, were some of you; but ye have been made a new creation in Jesus Christ; old things are passed away, and all things are become new. Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. He is one with the Father, and ye are one in him; united and interwoven, like the roots of the trees in the forest of Lebanon; so that none can injure the least disciple of Christ, without touching the apple of his eye, and grieving all his members.

II. The blessings which he confers upon his people. It shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar, and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell; and all the trees of the field shall know that I, the Lord, have brought down the high tree, and have exalted the low tree — have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish.

*Christ is a fruitful tree.* 'The tree is known by his fruit. Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, and every evil tree bringeth forth evil fruit.' This is a singular, supernatural tree. Though its top reaches to the Heaven of heavens, its branches fill the universe, and bend down to the earth, laden with the precious fruits of pardon, and holiness, and eternal life. On the day of Pentecost, we see them hang so low over Jerusalem, that the very murderers of the Son of God reach, and pluck, and eat, and three thousand sinners feast on more than angels' food. That was the feast

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of first-fruits. Never before was there such a harvest and such a festival. Angels know nothing of the delicious fruits of the tree of redemption. They know nothing of the joy of pardon, and the spirit of adoption. The Bride of the Lamb alone can say:— 'As the apple-tree among the trees of the forest, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow, with great delight, and his fruit was sweet, to my taste. He brought me also to his banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love.'

These blessings are the precious effects of Christ's mediatorial work; flowing down to all believers, like streams of living water. Come, ye famishing souls, and take, without money, and without price. All things are now ready. 'The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, both new, and old.' Here is no scarcity. Our



Elder Brother keeps a rich table in our Father's house. Hear him proclaiming in the streets of the city, in the chief places of concourse:— 'Come to the festival. There is bread enough, and to spare. My oxen, and my fatlings are killed. My board is spread with the most delicious delicacies — wine on the lees well refined, and fruits such as angels never tasted.'

*Christ is a tree of protection to his people.* This cedar not only beautifies the forest, but also affords shade, and shelter for the fowls of the air. We have the same idea in the parable of the mustard-seed, 'The birds of the air came and lodged in the branches thereof.' This is the fulfilment of the promise concerning Shiloh, 'To him shall the gathering of the people be.' It is the drawing of sinners to Christ, and the union of believers with God. 'All fowl of every wing.' Sinners of every age, and every degree — sinners of all languages, colours, and climes — sinners of all principles, customs, and habits — sinners whose crimes are of the blackest hue — sinners carrying about them the savour of the brimstone of hell — sinners deserving eternal damnation — sinners perishing for lack of knowledge — sinners

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pierced by the arrows of conviction — sinners ready to sink under the burden of sin — sinners overwhelmed with terror and despair — are seen flying to Christ as a cloud, and as doves to their windows — moving to the ark of mercy before the door is shut — seeking rest in the shadow of this goodly cedar!

Christ is the sure defence of his Church. A thousand times has she been assailed by her enemies. The princes of the earth have set themselves in array against her, and hell has opened upon her all its batteries. But the Rock of Ages has ever been her strong fortress, and high tower. He will never refuse to shelter her from her adversaries. In the time of trouble he shall hide her in his pavilion; in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide her. When the heavens are dark, and angry, she flies, like the affrighted dove, to the thick branches of the 'Goodly Cedar,' There she is safe from the windy storm, and tempest. There she may rest in confidence, till these calamities be overpast. The tree of her protection can never be riven by the lightning, nor broken by the blast.

*Christ is the source of life, and beauty to all the trees in the garden. of God.* Jehovah determined to teach 'the trees of the forest' a new lesson. Let the princes of this world hear it, and the proud philosophers of Greece and

Rome. 'I have brought down the high tree, and exalted the low tree — I have dried up the green tree, and made the dry tree to flourish.' Many things have occurred, in the providence of God, which might illustrate these metaphors; such as the bringing of Pharaoh down to the bottom of the sea, that Israel might be exalted to sing the song of Moses; and the drying up of the pride, and pomp of Haman, that Mordecai might flourish in honour, and esteem. But for the most transcendent accomplishment of the prophecy, we must go to Calvary. There is the high tree, brought down to the dust of death, that the low tree might be exalted to life eternal; the green tree dried up by the fires of Divine

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wrath, that the dry tree might flourish in the favour of God for ever.

To this, particularly, our blessed Redeemer seems to refer, in his address to the daughters of Jerusalem, as they follow him, weeping, to the place of crucifixion. 'Weep not for me,' saith he. 'There is a mystery in all this, which you cannot now comprehend. Like Joseph, I have been sold by my brethren; but like Joseph, I will be a blessing to all my Father's house. I am carrying this cross to Calvary, that I may be crucified upon it between two thieves; but when the lid of the mystical ark shall be lifted, then shall ye see that it is to save sinners I give my back to the smiters, and my life for a sacrifice. Weep not for me, but for yourselves, and your children; for if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry? I am the green tree today; and, behold, I am consumed, that you may flourish. I am the high tree, and am prostrated that you may be exalted.'

The fire-brands of Jerusalem had well-nigh kindled to a flame of themselves, amid the tumult of the people, when they cried out, 'Away with him! Crucify him! His blood be on us, and on our children!' O wonder of mercy! that they were not seized and consumed at once by fire from heaven! But he whom they crucify prays for them, and they are spared. Hear his intercession:— 'Father, forgive them! save these sinners, ready for the fire. On me, on me alone, be the fierceness of thy indignation. I am ready to drink the cup which thou hast mingled, I am willing to fall beneath the stroke of thy angry justice. I come to suffer for the guilty. Bind me in their stead, lay me upon the altar, and send down fire to consume the Sacrifice!'

It was done. I heard a great voice from heaven: 'Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd! Kindle the flame! Let off the artillery!' Night suddenly enveloped the earth. Nature trembled around me. I heard the

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rending of the rocks. I looked, and lo! the stroke had fallen upon the high tree, and the green tree was all on fire! While I gazed, I heard a voice, mournful, but strangely sweet, 'My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me? My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws. One may tell all my bones. Dogs have compassed me about; strong bulls of Bashan have beset me. They stare at me; they gape upon me with their mouths; they pierce my hands and my feet. Deliver my soul from the lions; my darling from the power of the dogs!'

'It is finished!' O with what majestic sweetness fell that voice upon my soul! Instantly the clouds were scattered. I looked, and saw, with unspeakable wonder, millions of the low trees shooting up, and millions of the dry trees putting forth leaves, and fruit. Then I took my harp, and sang this song:— 'Worthy is the Lamb! for he was humbled that we might be exalted; he was wounded that we might be healed; he was robbed that we might be enriched; he was slain that we might live!'

Then I saw the beam of a great scale; one end descending to the abyss, borne down by the power of the Atonement; the other ascending to the Heaven of heavens, and lifting up the prisoners of the tomb. Wonderful scheme! Christ condemned for our justification; forsaken of his Father, that we might enjoy his fellowship; passing under the curse of the law, to bear it away from the believer for ever! This is the great scale of Redemption. As one end the beam falls under the load of our sins, which were laid on Christ; the other rises, bearing the basket of mercy, full of pardons, and blessings, and hopes. 'He who knew no sin was made sin for us' — that is his end of the beam; 'that we might be made the righteousness of God in him' — this is ours. 'Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor,' — there goes his end down; 'that we, through his poverty, might be rich,' — here comes ours up.

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O sinners! ye withered and fallen trees, fuel for the everlasting burning, ready to ignite at the first spark of vengeance! O ye faithless souls! self-ruined and self-condemned! enemies in your hearts by wicked works! we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God! He has

found out a plan for your salvation — to raise up the low tree, by humbling the high, and save the dry tree from the fire, by burning up the green. He is able to put, at the same time, a crown of glory on the head of the law, and a crown of mercy on the head of the sinner. One of those hands which were nailed to the cross blotted out the fiery handwriting of Sinai, while the other opened the prison-doors of the captives. From the mysterious depths of Messiah's sufferings flows the river of the waters of life. Eternal light rises from the gloom of Gethsemane. Satan planted the tree of death on the grave of the first Adam, and sought to plant it also on the grave of the second; but how terrible was his disappointment and despair, when he found that the wrong seed had been deposited there, and was springing up into everlasting life! Come! fly to the shelter of this tree, and dwell in the shadow of its branches, and eat of its fruit, and live!

To conclude:— Is not the conversion of sinners an object dear to the hearts of the saints? God alone can do the work. He can say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back. He can bring his sons from afar, and his daughters from the ends of the earth. Our Shiloh has an attractive power, and to him shall the gathering of the people be. Pray, my brethren, pray earnestly, that the God of all grace may find them out, and gather them from the forest, and fish them up from the sea, and bring them home as the shepherd brings the stray lambs to the fold. God alone can catch these 'fowl of every wing.' They fly away from us. To our grief they often fly far away, when we think them almost in our hands; and then the most talented and holy ministers cannot overtake them. But the

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Lord is swifter than they. His arrows will reach them and bring them from their lofty flight to the earth. Then he will heal their wounds, and tame their wild nature, and give them rest beneath the branches of the 'Goodly Cedar.'



The following is so characteristic that, although it is in circulation as a tract, it shall be quoted here; it has been called

## A SERMON ON THE WELSH HILLS

**H**E once preached from the text, 'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock.'

Oh, my dear brethren, [he said] why will you pay no attention to your best Friend? Why will you let him stand knocking, night and day, in all weathers, and never open the door to him? If the horse-dealer, or cattle-drover came, you would run to open the door to him, and set meat, and drink before him, because you think to make money by him — the filthy lucre that perishes in the using. But when the Lord Jesus stands knocking at the door of your heart, bringing to you the everlasting wealth, which he gives without money, and without price, you are deaf, and blind; you are so busy, you can't attend. Markets, and fairs, and pleasures, and profits occupy you; you have neither time, nor inclination for such as he. Let him knock! Let him stand without, the door shut in his face, what matters it to you? Oh, but it does matter to you.

Oh, my brethren, I will relate to you a parable of truth. In a familiar parable I will tell you how it is with some of you, and, alas! how it will be in the end. I will tell you what happened in a Welsh village, I need not say where. I was going through this village in early spring, and saw before me a beautiful house. The farmer had just brought into the yard his load of lime; his horses were fat,

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and all were well to do about him. He went in, and sat down to his dinner, and as I came up a man stood knocking at the door. There was a friendly look in his face that made me say as I passed, 'The master's at home; they won't keep you waiting.'

Before long I was again on that road, and as soon as came in sight of the house, there stood the same man knocking. At this I wondered, and as I came near I saw that he stood as one who had knocked long; and as he knocked he listened. Said I, 'The farmer is busy making up his books, or counting his money, or eating, and drinking. Knock louder, sir, and he will hear you. But,' said I, 'you have great patience, sir, for you have

been knocking a long time. If I were you I would leave him tonight, and come back tomorrow.'

'He is in danger, and I must warn him,' replied he and knocked louder than ever.

Some time afterwards I went that way again, and there still stood the man, knocking, knocking, knocking. 'Well, sir,' said I, 'your perseverance is the most remarkable I ever saw! How long do you mean to stop?'

'Till I can make him hear,' was his answer; and he knocked again.

Said I, 'He wants for no good thing. He has a fine farm, and flocks, and herds, and stack-yards, and barns.'

'Yes,' he replied, 'for the Lord is kind to the unthankful, and the evil.'

Then he knocked again, and I went on my way, wondering at the goodness, and patience of this man.

Again I was in those parts. It was very cold weather. There was an east wind blowing, and the sleety rain fell. It was getting dark, too, and the pleasantest place, as you all know, at such a time, is the fireside. As I came by the farm-house I saw the candle-light shining through the windows, and the smoke of a good fire coming out of the chimney. But there was still the man outside — knocking,

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knocking! And as I looked at him I saw that his hands, and feet were bare, and bleeding, and his visage as that of one marred with sorrow. My heart was very sad for him, and I said, 'Sir, you had better not stand any longer at that hard man's door. Let me advise you to go over the way to the poor widow. She has many children, and she works for her daily bread; but she will make you welcome.'

'I know her,' he said. 'I am with her continually; her door is ever open to me, for the Lord is the husband of the widow, and the father of the fatherless. She is in bed with her little children.'

'Then go,' I replied, to the blacksmith's yonder. I see the cheerful blaze of his smithy; he works early, and late. His wife is a kind-hearted woman. They will treat you like a prince.'

He answered solemnly, '*I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*'

At that moment the door opened, and the farmer came out, cursing, and swearing, with a cudgel in his hand, with which he smote him, and then angrily shut the door in his face. This excited a fierce anger in me. I was full of indignation to think that a Welshman should treat a stranger

in that fashion. I was ready to burst into the house, and maltreat him in his turn. But the patient stranger laid his hand upon my arm, and said, 'Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.'

'Sir,' I exclaimed, 'your patience, and your long-suffering are wonderful; they are beyond my comprehension.'

'The Lord is long-suffering, full of compassion, slow to anger, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.' And again he knocked, as he answered me.

It was dark; the smithy was closed; they were shutting up the inn, and I made haste to get shelter for the night, wondering more, and more at the patience, and pity of the man. In the public-house I learned from the landlord the

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character of the farmer, and, late as it was, I went back to the patient stranger and said, 'Sir, come away; he is not worth all this trouble. He is a hard, cruel, wicked man. He has robbed the fatherless, he has defamed his friend, he has built his house in iniquity. Come away, sir. Make yourself comfortable with us, by the warm fireside. This man is not worth saving.' With that he spread his bleeding palms before me, and showed me his bleeding feet, and his side which they had pierced; and I beheld it was the Lord Jesus.

'Smite him, Lord!' I cried in my indignation; 'then perhaps he will hear thee.'

'Of a truth he *shall* hear me. In the day of judgement he shall hear me when I say, Depart from me, thou worker of iniquity, into everlasting darkness, prepared for the devil and his angels.' After these words I saw him no more. The wind blew, and the sleety rain fell, and I went back to the inn.

In the night there was a knocking at my chamber. 'Christmas *bach!*' [*Bach* is a Welsh term of affection] cried my landlord, 'get up! get up! You are wanted with a neighbour, who is at the point of death!'

Away I hurried along the street, to the end of the village, to the very farm-house where the stranger had been knocking. But before I got there, I heard the voice of his agony: 'Oh, Lord Jesus, save me! Oh, Lord Jesus, have mercy upon me! Yet a day — yet an hour for repentance! Oh, Lord, save me!'

His wife was wringing her hands, his children were frightened out of their senses. 'Pray! pray for me!' he cried. 'Oh, Christmas *bach*, cry to

God for me! He will hear *you; me* he will not hear!' I knelt to pray; but  
it was too late. He was gone.



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## INTRODUCTION

**I**N presenting to the public a selection from the sermons of Christmas Evans, we find ourselves embarrassed by two circumstances:

First. — It is impossible to exhibit on paper the peculiarly forcible elocution of the author. Some of the most effective discourses ever delivered seem comparatively powerless when perused afterward in private. This observation is verified in the case of the two most remarkable pulpit orators of modern times, George Whitefield and John Summerfield. Their spoken eloquence was like the breathings of the seraphim, but their printed sermons are of no very extraordinary character. Like them, Mr Evans was much indebted, for his success, to a very popular and powerful delivery. His appearance in the pulpit was fine and commanding; his voice, one of unrivalled compass and melody; his gesticulation, always easy, appropriate, and forcible; and when he warmed under the inspiration of his theme, his large bright eye shot fire through the assembly. But the sermons are now divested of all these auxiliary accompaniments; and without the prophet before us, we may wonder at the effects attributed to his message. The following selections will give the reader at least a tolerable idea of Mr Evans's modes of thought and illustration; but if he would have any adequate conception of the splendid phantasmagora in process of exhibition, he must imagine the burning lamp within the scenes.

But the greater difficulty is the impossibility of a perfect translation. Genius is proverbially eccentric. Mr Evans's style is altogether unique. The structure of his sentences is very original. None of his countrymen approximated his peculiar mode of expression. It would be exceedingly difficult for any man, however well qualified to translate other Welsh authors, to render him into English, with the preservation, everywhere, of his spirit. The

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writer at first thought of publishing a selection from his sermons, as translated by J Davis; but upon examination, that translation was found so faulty, that it was deemed expedient, if possible, to produce a new. In pursuance of this purpose he obtained the aid of a friend, whose excellent literary taste, and accurate acquaintance with both languages, constitute a sufficient guarantee for the general correctness of the

following translation. It lays no claim to perfection, though it is at least free from the most obvious and glaring faults of Mr Davis's version. Some of the nicest shades of thought are inevitably lost, and many of the startling metaphors and splendid allegories have doubtless suffered some diminution of their original force and beauty; but the writer trusts that enough of the author's spirit is retained to furnish a pretty correct idea of his talents, and render the book acceptable to the reader.

With these apologetic remarks, we commit the sermons of Christmas Evans to the press; praying that they may be accompanied with something of the same Divine unction, as when, in their original delivery by the author, they 'set the land of Cambria on fire!'

JOSEPH CROSS

## Sermon I [DUPLICATE]

### THE TIME OF REFORMATION

*Until the time of reformation (Hebrews 9:10).*

THE ceremonies pertaining to the service of God under the Sinaic dispensation were entirely typical in their character; mere figures of Christ, the 'High-priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands'; who, 'not by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, has entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us'. Sustaining such a relation to other ages and events, they were necessarily imperfect, consisting 'only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances', not intended for perpetual observance, but imposed upon the Jewish people merely 'until the time of reformation', when the shadow should give place to the substance, and a Greater than Moses should 'make all things new'. Let us notice the time of reformation, and the reformation itself.

I. Time may be divided into three parts; the Golden Age before the fall, the Iron Age after the fall, and the Messiah's Age of Jubilee.

In the Golden Age, the heavens and the earth were created; the garden of Eden was planted; man was made in the image of God, and placed in the garden to dress and to keep it; matrimony was instituted; and God, resting from his labour, sanctified the Seventh. Day, as a day of holy rest to man.

The Iron Age was introduced by the temptation of a foreigner, who obtruded himself into Paradise, and persuaded its happy denizens to cast off the golden yoke of obedience and love to God. Man, desiring independence, became a rebel against Heaven, a miserable captive of sin and Satan, obnoxious to the Divine displeasure, and exposed to eternal death. The law was violated;

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the image of God was lost, and the enemy came in like a flood. All communication between the island of time and the continent of immortality was cut off, and the unhappy exiles saw no hope of crossing the ocean that intervened.

The Messiah's Age may be divided into three parts; the time of Preparation, the time of Actual War, and the time of Victory and Triumph.

The Preparation began with the dawning of the day in Eden, when Messiah came in the ship of the Promise, and landed on the island of Time, and notified its inhabitants of his gracious intention to visit them again, and assume their nature, and live and die among them; to break their covenant allegiance to the prince of the iron yoke; and deliver to them the charter, signed and sealed with his own blood, for the redemption and renovation of their island, and the restoration of its suspended intercourse with the land of Eternal Life. The motto inscribed upon the banners of this age was, — 'He shall bruise thy heel, and thou shalt bruise his head.' Here Jehovah thundered forth his hatred of sin from the thick darkness, and wrote his curse in fire upon the face of heaven; while rivers of sacrificial blood proclaimed the miserable state of man, and his need of a costlier atonement than mere humanity could offer. Here also the spirit of Messiah fell upon the prophets, leading them to search diligently for the way of deliverance, and enabling them to 'testify beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow'.

Then came the season of Actual War. 'Messiah the Prince', was born in Bethlehem, wrapped in swaddling-bands, and laid in a manger. The Great Deliverer was 'made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem those that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons'. With an almighty hand, he laid hold on the works of the devil, unlocked the iron furnace, and broke the brazen bands asunder. He opened his mouth, and the deaf heard, the blind saw, the dumb spake, the lame walked, and the lepers were cleansed. In the house of Jairus, in the street of Nain, and in the burial-ground of Bethany, his word was mightier than death; and the damsel on her bed, the young man on his bier, and Lazarus in his tomb, rising to second life, were but the earnest of his future triumph. The diseases of sin he healed, the iron chains of guilt he shattered, and all the horrible caves of human

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corruption and misery were opened by the Heavenly Warrior. He took our yoke, and bore it away upon his own shoulder, and cast it broken into the bottomless pit. He felt in his hands and his feet the nails, and in his side the spear. The iron entered into his soul, but the corrosive power of his blood destroyed it, and shall ultimately eat away all the iron in the kingdom of death. Behold him hanging on Calvary, nailing upon his cross three bills; the handwriting of the law which was against us, the oath of our allegiance to the prince of darkness, and the charter of the 'everlasting covenant'; fulfilling the first, breaking the second, and sealing the third with his blood!

Now begins the scene of Victory and Triumph. On the morning of the third day, the Conqueror is seen 'coming from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah'. He has 'trodden the wine-press alone'. By the might of his single arm, he has routed the hosts of hell, and spoiled the dominions of death. The iron castle of the foe is demolished, and the hero returns from the war, 'glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength'. He enters the gates of the everlasting city, amid the rejoicing of angels, and the shouts of his redeemed. And still he rides forth in the chariot of his grace, 'conquering, and to conquer'. A two-edged sword issues from his mouth, and in his train follow the victorious armies of heaven. Lo! before him fall the altars of idols, and the temples of devils; and the slaves of sin are becoming the servants and sons of the living God; and the proud sceptic beholds, wonders, believes, and adores; and the blasphemer begins to pray, and the persecutor is melted into penitence and love, and the wolf comes and lays him down gently by the side of the lamb. And Messiah shall never quit the field, till he has completed the conquest, and swallowed up death in victory. In his 'vesture dipped in blood', he shall pursue the armies of Gog and Magog on the field of Armageddon, and break the iron teeth of the beast of power, and cast down Babylon as a millstone into the sea, and bind the old serpent in the lake of fire and brimstone, and raise up to life immortal the tenants of the grave. Then shall the New Jerusalem, the metropolis of Messiah's golden empire, descend from heaven, adorned with all the jewellery of creation, guarded at every gate by angelic sentinels, and enlightened by the glory of God and

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of the Lamb; and the faithful shall dwell within its walls, and sin, and sorrow, and death, shall be shut out for ever!

Then shall time be swallowed up in eternity. The righteous shall inherit life everlasting, and the ungodly shall find their portion in the second death. Time is the age of the visible world; eternity is the age of the invisible God. All things in time are changeful; all things in eternity are immutable. If you pass from time to eternity, without faith in Christ, without love to God, an enemy to prayer, an enemy to holiness, 'unpurged and unforgiven', so you must ever remain. Now is the season of that blessed change, for which myriads shall sing everlasting anthems of praise. 'Today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.' Today the office is open; if you have any business with the Governor, make no delay. Now he has time to talk with the woman of Samaria by the well, and the penitent thief upon the cross. Now he is ready to forgive your sins, and renew your souls, and make you meet to become partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. Now he waits to wash the filthy, and feed the hungry, and clothe the naked, and raise the humble, and quicken the spiritually dead, and enrich the poor and wretched, and reconcile enemies by his blood. He came to unloose your bands, and open to you the gates of Eden; condemned for your acquittal, and slain for the recovery of your forfeited immortality. The design of all the travelling from heaven to earth, and from earth to heaven, is the salvation of that which was lost, the restoration of intercourse and amity between the Maker and the worm. This is the chief of the ways of God to man, ancient in its origin, wise in its contrivance, dear in its accomplishment, powerful in its application, gracious in its influence, and everlasting in its results. Christ is riding in his chariot of salvation, through the land of destruction and death, clothed in the majesty of mercy, and offering eternal life to all who will believe. O captives of evil! now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation; now is the year of jubilee; now is the age of deliverance; now is 'the time of reformation'!

II. All the prophets speak of something within the veil, to be manifested in due time; the advent of a Divine agent in a future age, to accomplish a glorious 'reformation'. They represent him as a prince; a hero; a high-priest; a branch growing out of dry ground; a child toying with the asp and the lion, and leading the

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wolf and the lamb together. The bill of the reformation had been repeatedly read by the prophets, but its passage required the descent of the Lord from heaven. None but himself could effect the change of the dispensation. None but himself had the authority and the power to remove the first, and establish the second. He whose voice once shook the earth, speaks again, and heaven is shaken. He whose footsteps once kindled Sinai into flame, descends again, and Calvary is red with blood. The God of the ancient covenant introduces a new, which is to abide for ever. The Lord of the temple alone could change the furniture and the service from the original pattern shown to Moses in the mount; and six days before the rending of the veil, significant of the abrogation of the old ceremonial, Moses came down upon a mountain in Palestine to deliver up the pattern to him of whom he had received it on Sinai, that he might nail it to his cross on Calvary; for the 'gifts and sacrifices' belonging to the legal dispensation 'could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats, and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation'.

This reformation signifieth 'the removal of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain'; the abrogation of 'carnal ordinances', which were local and temporal in their nature, to make room for a spiritual worship, of universal and perpetual adaptation. Henceforth the blood of bulls and goats is superseded by the great reconciling sacrifice of the Lamb of God, and outward forms and ceremonies give place to the inward operations of a renovating and purifying Spirit.

To the Jewish church, the covenant of Sinai was a sort of starry heaven. The Shekinah was its sun; the holy festivals, its moon; and prophets, priests, and kings, its stars. But Messiah, when he came, shook them all from their spheres, and filled the firmament himself. He is our 'Bright and Morning Star'; the 'Sun of Righteousness', rising upon us 'with healing in his wings'.

The old covenant was an accuser and a judge, but offered no pardon to the guilty. It revealed the corruption of the natural heart, but provided no renovating and sanctifying grace. It was a national institution, for the special benefit of the seed of Abraham. It was a small vessel, trading only with the land of Canaan. It

secured to a few the temporal blessings of the promised possession, but never delivered a single soul from eternal death; never bore a single soul over to the heavenly inheritance. But the new covenant is a covenant of grace and mercy, proffering forgiveness and a clean heart, not on the ground of any carnal relationship, but solely through faith in Jesus Christ. Christianity is a personal concern between each man and his God, and none but the penitent believer has any right to its spiritual privileges. It is adapted to Gentiles as well as Jews, 'even as many as the Lord our God shall call'. Already has it rescued myriads from the bondage of sin, and conveyed them over to the land of immortality; and its voyages of grace shall continue to the end of time, 'bringing many sons to glory'.

'Old things are passed away, and all things are become new.' The circumcision of the flesh, made with hands, has given place to the circumcision of the heart by the Holy Ghost. The Shekinah has departed from Mount Zion, but its glory is illuminating the world. The sword of Joshua is returned to its scabbard; and 'the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God', issues from the mouth of Messiah, and subdues the people under him. The glorious High-priesthood of Christ has superseded the sacerdotal office among men. Aaron was removed from the altar by death before his work was finished; but our High-priest still wears his sacrificial vestments, and death has established him before the mercy-seat, 'a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec'. The earthquake which shook mount Calvary, and rent the veil of the temple, demolished 'the middle wall of partition' between Jews and Gentiles. The incense which Jesus offered fills the temple, and the land of Judæa cannot confine its fragrance. The fountain which burst forth in Jerusalem, has sent out its living streams into every land; and the heat of summer cannot dry them up, nor the frosts of winter congeal.

In short, all the vessels of the sanctuary are taken away by the Lord of the temple. The 'twelve oxen', bearing the 'molten sea', have given place to 'the twelve apostles of the Lamb', proclaiming 'the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost'. The sprinkled mercy-seat, with its overshadowing and intensely-gazing cherubim, has given place to 'the throne of grace', stained with the blood of a costlier sacrifice, into which



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the angels desire to look. The priest, the altar, the burnt-offering the table of show-bread, and the golden candlestick, have given place to the better things of the new dispensation introduced by the Son of God, of which they were only the figures and the types. Behold, the glory is gone up from the temple, and rests upon Jesus on mount Tabor; and Moses and Elias are there, with Peter, and James, and John; and the representatives of the old covenant are communing with the apostles of the new, and the transfigured Christ is the medium of the communication; and a voice of majestic music, issuing from 'the excellent glory', proclaims — 'This is my beloved Son; hear ye him!'

'God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake unto our fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.' Behold him nailed to the cross, and hear him cry — 'It is finished!' The voice which shook Sinai is shaking Calvary. Heaven and hell are in conflict, and earth trembles at the shock of battle. The Prince of Life expires, and the sun puts on his robes of mourning. Gabriel! descend from heaven, and explain to us the wondrous emblem! As set the sun at noon on Golgotha, making preternatural night throughout the land of Palestine; so shall the empire of sin and death be darkened, and their light shall be quenched at meridian. As the Sun of Righteousness, rising from the night of the grave on the third morning, brings life and immortality to light; so shall 'the day-spring from on high' yet dawn upon our gloomy vale, and 'the power of his resurrection' shall reanimate the dust of every cemetery!

He that sitteth upon the throne hath spoken — 'Behold, I make all things new!' The reformation includes not only the abrogation of the old, but also the introduction of the new. It gives us a new Mediator, a new covenant of grace, a new way of salvation, a new heart of flesh, a new heaven and a new earth. It has established a new union, by a new medium, between God and man. 'The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.' 'Forasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.' 'God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.' Here was a new thing under the sun; the 'Son of

man' bearing the 'express image' of the living God; bearing it untarnished through the world; through the temptations and sorrows of such a wilderness as humanity never trod before; through the unknown agony of Olivet, and the supernatural gloom of Golgotha, and the dark dominion of the king of terrors; to the heaven of heavens; where he sits, the adorable representative of two worlds, the union of God and man! Thence he sends forth the Holy Spirit, to collect 'the travail of his soul', and lead them into all truth, and bring them to Zion with songs of everlasting joy. See them, the redeemed of the Lord, flocking, as returning doves upon the wing, 'to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God; and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to an innumerable company of angels; and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant; and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.'

O, join the joyful multitude! The year of jubilee is come. The veil is rent asunder. The way into the holiest is laid open. The blood of Jesus is on the mercy-seat. The Lamb newly slain is in the midst of the throne. Go ye with boldness into his gracious presence. Lo, the King is your brother, and for you has he stained his robe with blood! That robe alone can clothe your naked souls, and shield them in the day of burning. Awake! awake! put on the Lord Jesus Christ! The covenant of Sinai cannot save you from wrath. Descent from Abraham cannot entitle you to the kingdom of heaven. 'Ye must be born again'; 'born, not of the flesh, nor of the will of men, but of God'. You must have a new heart, and become a new creation in Christ Jesus. This is the promise of the Father.

This is the dear redeeming grace,  
For every sinner free!

Many reformations have expired with the reformers. But our Great Reformer 'ever liveth' to carry on his reformation, till his enemies become his footstool, and death and hell are cast into the lake of fire. He will finish the building of his church. When he laid the 'chief corner-stone' on Calvary, the shock jarred the earth, and awoke the dead, and shook the nether world with terror; but when he shall bring forth the top stone with shoutings of 'grace' the dominion of Death and Hades shall perish, and the last captive shall escape, and the song of the bursting sepulchre

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shall be sweeter than the chorus of the morning stars! Even now, there are new things in heaven; the Lamb from the slaughter, alive 'in the midst of the throne'; worshipped by innumerable seraphim and cherubim, and adored by the redeemed from earth; his name the wonder of angels, the terror of devils, and the hope of men; his praise the 'new song', which shall constitute the employment of eternity!

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## Sermon 2

### THE TRIUMPH OF CALVARY

*Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help, and I wondered that there was none to uphold. therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth (Isaiah 63:1-6).*

THIS passage is one of the sublimest in the Bible. Not more majestic and overwhelming is the voice of God issuing from the burning bush. It represents 'the Captain of our salvation', left alone in the heat of battle, marching victoriously through the broken columns of the foe, bursting the bars asunder, bearing away the brazen gates, and delivering by conquest the captives of sin and death. Let us first determine the events to which our text relates, and then briefly explain the questions and answers which it contains.

I. We have here a wonderful victory, obtained by Christ, in the city of Bozrah, in the land of Edom. Our first inquiry concerns the time and the place of that achievement.

Some of the prophecies are literal, and others are figurative. Some of them are already fulfilled, and others are in daily process of fulfilment. Respecting this prophecy, divines disagree. Some think it is a description of Christ's conflict and victory, without the gates of Jerusalem, eighteen centuries ago; and others understand it as referring to the great battle of Armageddon, predicted in the Apocalypse, and yet to be consummated before the end of the world.

I am not willing to pass by mount Calvary, and Joseph's new tomb, on my way to the field of Armageddon; nor am I willing to

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pause at the scene of the crucifixion and the ascension, without going farther on to the final conquest of the foe. I believe Divine inspiration has included both events in the text; the victory already won on Calvary, and the victory yet to be accomplished in Armageddon; the finished victory of Messiah's passion, and the progressive victory of his gospel and his grace.

The chief difficulty, in understanding some parts of the word of God, arises from untranslated words; many of which are found in our own version, as well as in that of our English neighbours. For instance — in Matthew 2:23, it is said, 'He came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, he shall be called a Nazarene.' Where in the prophets is it predicted that Christ shall be called a Nazarene? Nowhere. When the proper names are translated, the difficulty vanishes. 'He came and dwelt in a city called *plantation*, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, he shall be called *the Branch*.' This name is given him by Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Zechariah. Now this is precisely the difficulty that occurs in our text, and the translation of the terms unties the knot:— 'Who is this that cometh from Edom', *red earth* — 'with dyed garments from Bozrah', *tribulation*?

The former part of the text has reference to the victory of Calvary; the latter part anticipates the battle and triumph of Armageddon, mentioned in Revelation 16:16. The victory of Calvary is consummated on the morning of the third day after the crucifixion. The Conqueror comes up from the earth, exclaiming:— 'I have trodden the winepress alone on Calvary; and I will tread them in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, at the battle of Armageddon. I will overtake and destroy the beast, and the false prophet, and that old serpent the devil, with all their hosts.'

When the tide of battle turned, on the field of Waterloo, the Duke of Wellington mounted his horse, and pursued the vanquished foe. So Isaiah's Conqueror, having routed the powers of hell on Calvary, pursues and destroys them on the field of Armageddon. Here he is represented as a hero on foot, a prince without an army; but John, the revelator, saw him riding on a white horse, and followed by the armies of heaven, all on white horses, and not a footman among them.

The victory of Calvary is like the blood of atonement in the

sanctuary. The cherubim were some of them looking one way, and some the other, but all were looking on the atoning blood. Thus all the great events of time — all the trials and triumphs of God's people — those which happened before, those which have happened since, and those which are yet to happen, are all looking toward the wrestling of Gethsemene, the conflict of Golgotha, and the triumph of Olivet. The escape from Egypt, and the return from Babylon, looked forward to the cross of Christ; and the faith of the perfect man of Uz hung on a risen Redeemer. The Christian martyrs overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and all their victories were in virtue of one great achievement. The tomb of Jesus is the birthplace of his people's immortality, and the power which raised him from the dead shall open the sepulchres of all his saints. 'Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body, shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast forth her dead.'

Christ offered himself a sacrifice for us, and drank the cup of God's righteous indignation in our stead. He was trodden by Almighty justice, as a cluster of grapes, in the winepress of the law, till the vessels of mercy overflowed with the wine of peace and pardon, which has made thousands of contrite and humble spirits 'rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.' He suffered for us, that we might triumph with him. But our text describes him as a king and a conqueror. He was, at once, the dying victim and the immortal victor. In 'the power of an endless life', he was standing by the altar, when the sacrifice was burning. He was alive in his sacerdotal vestments, with his golden censer in his hand. He was alive in his kingly glory, with his sword and his sceptre in his hand. He was alive in his conquering prowess, and had made an end of sin, and bruised the head of the serpent, and spoiled the principalities and powers of hell, and turned the vanquished hosts of the prince of darkness down to the winepress of the wrath of Almighty God. Then, on the morning of the third day, when he arose from the dead, and made a show of them openly — then began the year of jubilee with power!

After the prophets of ancient times had long gazed through the mists of futurity, at the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow, a company of them were gathered together on the summit

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of Calvary. They saw a host of enemies ascending the hill, arrayed for battle, and most terrific in their aspect. In the middle of the line was the law of God, fiery and exceeding broad, and working wrath. On the right wing, was Beelzebub with his troops of infernals; and on the left Caiaphas with his Jewish priests, and Pilate with his Roman soldiers. The rear was brought up by Death, the last enemy. When the holy seers had espied this army, and perceived that it was drawing nigh, they started back, and prepared for flight. As they looked round, they saw the Son of God advancing with intrepid step, having his face fixed on the hostile band. 'Seest thou the danger that is before thee,' said one of the men of God. 'I will tread them in mine anger,' he replied, 'and trample them in my fury.' 'Who art thou?' said the prophet; he answered: 'I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.' 'Wilt thou venture to the battle alone?' asked the seer. The Son of God replied: 'I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered there was none to uphold; therefore mine own arm shall bring salvation unto me; and my fury it shall uphold me.' 'At what point wilt thou commence thy attack?' inquired the anxious prophet. 'I will first meet the Law,' he replied, 'and pass under its curse: for lo! I come to do thy will, O God. When I shall have succeeded at the centre of the line, the colours will turn in my favour.' So saying he moved forward. Instantly the thunderings of Sinai were heard, and the whole band of prophets quaked with terror. But he advanced, undaunted, amidst the gleaming lightnings. For a moment he was concealed from view; and the banner of wrath waved above in triumph. Suddenly the scene was changed. A stream of blood poured forth from his wounded side, and put out all the fires of Sinai. The flag of peace was now seen unfurled, and consternation filled the ranks of his foes. He then crushed, with his bruised heel, the old serpent's head; and put all the infernal powers to flight. With his iron rod he dashed to pieces the enemies on the left wing, like a potter's vessel. Death still remained, who thought himself invincible, having hitherto triumphed over all. He came forward, brandishing his sting, which he had whetted on Sinai's tables of stone. He darted it at the Conqueror, but it turned down, and hung like the flexible lash of a whip. Dismayed, he retreated to the grave, his palace, into which the Conqueror pursued. In a dark corner of

his den, he sat on his throne of mouldering skulls, and called upon the worms, his hitherto faithful allies, to aid him in the conflict; but they replied — ‘His flesh shall see no corruption!’ The sceptre fell from his hand. The Conqueror seized him, bound him, and condemned him to the lake of fire; and then rose from the grave, followed by a band of released captives, who came forth after his resurrection to be witnesses of the victory which he had won.\*

John in the Apocalypse did not look so far back as the treading of this winepress; but John saw him on his white horse, decked with his many crowns, his eyes like flames of fire, a two-edged sword in his hand, in the van of the armies of heaven, going forth conquering and to conquer. This is the fulfilment of his declaration in our text:— ‘For I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury.’ This is the beginning of the jubilee, the battle of Armageddon, wherein all heathen idolatry and superstition shall be overthrown, and the beast and the false prophet shall be discomfited, and the devil and his legions shall be taken prisoners by Emmanuel, and shut up in the bottomless pit. He who hath conquered principalities and powers on Calvary, will not leave the field, till he make all his enemies his footstool, and sway his sceptre over a subject universe. Having sent forth the gospel from Jerusalem, he accompanies it with the grace of his Holy Spirit; and it shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish that which be pleaseth, and prosper in the thing whereto he hath sent it.

The victory of Armageddon is obtained by virtue of the victory of Calvary. It is but the consummation of the same glorious campaign; and the first decisive blow dealt on the prince of darkness is a sure precursor of the final conquest. ‘I will meet thee again at Philippi!’ said the ghost of Julius Cæsar to Brutus. ‘I will meet thee again at Armageddon!’ saith the Son of God to Satan on Calvary — ‘I will meet thee in the engagement between good and evil, grace and depravity, in every believer’s heart; in the contest of Divine Truth with human errors, of the religion of God with the superstitions of men; in every sermon, every revival, every missionary enterprise; in the spread and glory of the gospel

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\* This paragraph is one of the celebrated *Specimens of Welsh Preaching*, printed in England some years before the publication of any of these sermons. We give the first English version verbatim. Ed.



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in the latter day, I will meet thee; and the heel which thou hast now bruised, shall crush thy head for ever!’

Man’s deliverance is of God. Man had neither the inclination nor the power. His salvation originated in the Divine Love, and burst forth like an ocean from the fountains of eternity. Satan, as a ravenous lion, had taken the prey, and was running to his den with the bleeding sheep in his mouth; but the Shepherd of Israel pursues him, overtakes him, and rends him as if he were a kid. The declaration of war was made in Eden:— ‘I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; thou shalt bruise his heel, and he shall bruise thy head.’ It shall be fulfilled. The league with hell, and the covenant with death shall not stand. The rebellion shall be quelled, the conspiracy shall be broken, and the strong man armed shall yield the citadel to a stronger. The works of the devil shall be destroyed, and the prey shall be taken from the teeth of the terrible. The house of David shall grow stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul shall grow weaker and weaker, till the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ, and Satan shall be bound in chains of darkness, and cast into the lake of fire. All the enemies of Zion shall be vanquished, and the forfeited favour of God shall be recovered, and the lost territory of peace and holiness and immortality shall be restored to man.

This campaign is carried on at the expense of the government of heaven. The treasury is inexhaustible; the arms are irresistible; therefore the victory is sure. The Almighty King has descended; he has taken the city of Bozrah; he has swayed his sceptre over Edom; he has risen victoriously, and gone up with a shout, as the leader of all the army. This is but the pledge and the earnest of his future achievements. In the battle of Armageddon, he shall go forth as a mighty man; he shall stir up jealousy as a man of war; and he shall preveil against his enemies. They shall be turned back — they shall be greatly ashamed, that trust in graven images — that say unto molten images, ‘Ye are our gods!’ Then he will open the blind eyes, and bring the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house. He will make bare his holy arm — he will show the sword in that hand which was hidden under the scarlet robe — he will manifest his power in the destruction of his enemies, and the salvation of his

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people. As certainly as he hath shed his blood on Calvary, shall he stain all his raiment with the blood of his foes on the field of Armageddon. As certainly as he hath drained the cup of wrath, and received the baptism of suffering, on Calvary, shall he wield the iron rod of justice, and sway the golden sceptre of mercy, on the field of Armageddon. Already the sword is drawn, and the decisive blow is struck, and the helmet of Apollyon is cleft, and the bonds of iniquity are cut asunder. Already the fire is kindled, and all the powers of hell cannot quench it. It has fallen from heaven; it is consuming the camp of the foe; it is inflaming the hearts of men; it is renovating the earth, and purging away the curse. 'The bright and Morning Star' has risen on Calvary; and soon 'the Son of Righteousness' shall shine on the field of Armageddon; and the darkness that covers the earth, and the gross darkness that covers the people, shall melt away; and Mohammedanism, and Paganism, and Popery, with their prince, the devil, shall seek shelter in the bottomless pit!

After a battle, we are anxious to learn who is dead, who is wounded, and who is missing from the ranks. In the engagement of Messiah with Satan and his allies on Calvary, Messiah's heel was bruised, but Satan and his allies received a mortal wound in the head. The head denotes wisdom, cunning, power, government. The devil, sin, and death have lost their dominion over the believer in Christ, since the achievement of Calvary. There is now no condemnation, no fear of hell. But the serpent, though his head is bruised, may be able to move his tail, and alarm those of little faith. Yet it cannot last long. The wound is mortal, and the triumph is sure. On Calvary the dragon's head was crushed by the Captain of our salvation; after the battle of Armageddon, his tail shall shake no more!

There is no discharge in this war. He that enlisteth under the banner of the cross must endure faithful until death — must not lay aside his arms till death is swallowed up in victory. Then shall every conqueror bear the image of the heavenly, and wear the crown instead of the cross, and carry the palm instead of the spear. Let us be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, that we may be able to stand in the evil day; and after all the war is over, to stand accepted in the Beloved, that we may reign with him for ever and ever!

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II. It remains for us to explain, very briefly, the glorious colloquy in the text — the interrogatives of the church, and the answers of Messiah.

How great was the wonder and joy of Mary, when she met the Master at the tomb, clothed in immortality, where she thought to find him shrouded in death! How unspeakable was the astonishment and rapture of the disciples, when their Lord, whom they had so recently buried, came into the house where they were assembled, and said — ‘Peace be unto you!’ Such are the feelings which the church is represented as expressing in this sublime colloquy with the Captain of her salvation. He has travelled into the land of tribulation; he has gone down to the dust of death; but lo, he returns a conqueror, the golden sceptre of love in his left hand, the iron rod of justice in his right, and on his head a crown of many stars. The church beholds him with great amazement and delight. She lately followed him, weeping, to the cross, and mourned over his body in the tomb; but now she beholds him risen indeed, having destroyed death, and him that had the power of death — that is, the devil. She goes forth to meet him with songs of rejoicing, as the daughters of Israel went out to welcome David, when he returned from the valley, with the head of the giant in his hand, and the blood running down upon his raiment. The choir of the church is divided into two bands; which chant to each other in alternate strains. The right hand division begins the glorious colloquy — ‘Who is this that cometh from Edom?’ and the left takes up the interrogative, and repeats it with a variation — ‘with dyed garments from Bozrah?’ ‘This that is glorious in his apparel?’ resumes the right-hand company — ‘glorious notwithstanding the tribulations he hath endured?’ ‘Travelling in the greatness of his strength?’ responds the left — ‘strength sufficient to unbar the gates of the grave, and liberate the captives of corruption?’ The celestial Conqueror pauses, and casts upon the company of the daughters of Zion a look of infinite benignity; and with a voice of angel melody, and more than angel majesty, he replies ‘I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save!’ Now bursts the song again, like the sound of many waters, from the right — ‘Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel?’ and the response rolls back in melodised thunder from the left — ‘And thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat?’ The Divine hero answers:—

I have trodden the wine-press alone; and of the people there was none with me. Even Peter has left me, with all his courage and affection; and as for John, to talk of love is all that he can do. I have triumphed over principalities and powers. I am wounded, but they are vanquished. Behold the blood which I have lost! behold the spoils which I have won! Now will I mount my white horse, and pursue after Satan, and demolish his kingdom, and send him back to the land of darkness in everlasting chains, and all his allies shall be exiles with him for ever. My own arm, which has gained the victory on Calvary, and brought salvation to all my people from the sepulchre, is still strong enough to wield the golden sceptre of love, and break my foes on the field of Armageddon. I will destroy the works of the devil, and demolish all his hosts; I will dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. My compassion is stirred for the captives of sin and death; my fury is kindled against the tyrants that oppress them. It is time for me to open the prisons, and break off the fetters. I must gather my people to myself. I must seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away. I must bind up that which was broken, and strengthen that which was weak; but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgement; I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury, and bring down their strength to the earth, and stain all my raiment with their blood!

Let us flee from the wrath to come! Behold, the sun is risen high on the day of vengeance! Let us not be found among the enemies of Messiah, lest we fall a sacrifice to his righteous indignation on the field of Armageddon! Let us escape for our lives, for the fire-storm of his anger will burn to the lowest hell! Let us pray for grace to lay hold on the salvation of his redeemed! It is a free, full, perfect, glorious, and eternal salvation. Return, ye ransomed exiles from happiness, return to your forfeited inheritance! Now is the year of jubilee. Come to Jesus, that your debts may be cancelled, your sins forgiven, and your persons justified! Come, for the Conqueror of your foes is on the throne! Come, for the trumpets of mercy are sounding! Come, for all things are now ready!

## Sermon 3

### THE SMITTEN ROCK

*For they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them and that rock was Christ (1 Corinthians 10:4).*

**I**N this chapter the apostle solemnly cautions his brethren against Apostasy, and consequent shipwreck of their spiritual privileges. His admonitions are educed from important events in the history of the journey of the Israelites from Egypt to the land of Canaan. He speaks of the march of the twelve tribes out of the scene of their bondage, under the uplifted banner of God; of their baptism unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, when Jehovah gloriously displayed his power in preserving their lives between the watery ramparts which shut them in like the solid walls of the sepulchre, while the cloud rested upon them through the deep night, like the marble covering of the tomb; of their safe emerging on the other side of the flood, a type of the resurrection, leaving Pharaoh and his host to sleep in the waters till the morning of the last day, when they shall rise without their chariots and their horses; of their miraculous supply in the wilderness, with bread from heaven, and water from the smitten rock, which he calls spiritual meat and spiritual drink, because of their typical reference to the sacrificial death of Christ, which is the spiritual life of the world; and of their subsequent ingratitude and forgetfulness of God, notwithstanding these great deliverances and mercies, their murmurings, idolatries, fornications, and tempting of Christ, for which they were destroyed by the plague, slain by fiery serpents, smitten by the angel of the Lord, and fell to the number of three and twenty thousand in one day. 'Now all these things,' he adds, 'happened unto them for ensamples, and are written for our admonition,

upon whom the ends of the world are come; wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.' Thus he opens the graves of

ancient sinners, and brings before his brethren the carcasses of those 'who fell in the wilderness'; brings them into our solemn assemblies, and hangs them up over the pulpit, the baptistry, and the communion-table, terrible warnings against departing from the living God; even as the censers of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were beaten up, and made a covering for the altar, for a perpetual sign and memorial to Israel, to keep them from the sin of those men, that they might not share their fate.

In speaking of the smitten rock, which the apostle authorises us to regard as a type of Christ, we shall consider:— *First*, Its smiting by Moses; and *Secondly*, The consequent flowing of the waters.

I. The smitten rock was a type of Christ. Messiah is the 'Rock of Ages' to his church. He is the foundation of her hope, sure and steadfast, and her protection in times of danger and of dread. The armour and the prowess of Egypt constituted no rock like this rock. Edom, and Moab, and Philistia, and the seven nations of Canaan, had their gods and their heroes; but their rock was not able to shelter them from the wrath of Jehovah, when it came upon them like a tempest of hail. The gods that made not the heavens and the earth are far off in the day of trouble; but the God of Israel is 'nigh at hand', and his arm is strong to deliver. He is the rock that stood firm and immovable, for the defence of his people, amid the ragings of the Red Sea. Messiah is the man, who is predicted as 'a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, and the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.' He can shield, not only from the scorching sun and the scathing simoom [a hot suffocating wind which blows in northern Africa and Arabia and the adjacent countries from the interior deserts] of the desert; but also from the fiery torments of remorse, and the ruinous judgements of heaven. Our Lord is, a rock, also, on account of the blessings which flow from him, for the refreshment of his Israel; as 'the droppings of honey from the rock'; as 'springs of water in a dry place'; as 'living streams in the desert', and 'rivers from the mountains of Lebanon'.

There are two accounts of the smiting of the rock; one in Exodus 17, and the other in Numbers 20. From a comparison of these two accounts, it appears that the rock was smitten at two different times; the first, as is supposed, about a year after the egress from Egypt, and the

other about a year before the entrance into Canaan; making an intervening period of about thirty-eight years. The war with Amalek succeeded the first; the embassy to Edom followed the second. At the first, Miriam was alive; just before the second is the record of her death.

It seems that the people murmured bitterly against Moses, spoke of their superior fare in Egypt, and accused him of bringing them out into the wilderness to kill them with thirst. This is ever the spirit of backsliding. Those who are under its influence are apt to complain of the burdens imposed upon them by their religion, and the injuries occasioned to them by their brethren; and to speak uncharitably of their spiritual leaders, instead of crying to God for help. To ask, 'Is the Lord among us?' when his word and his works, indicating either his pleasure or his displeasure, testify that he is, is tempting God, with a dreadful presumption.

It does not appear that Moses sinned the first time he smote the rock; but the second time, the servant of God was evidently off his guard, and the meekest of men 'spake unadvisedly with his lips'; on account of which, both he and Aaron were shut out of the promised land. His sin consisted in entering into a quarrel with the people, instead of asking God for water to quench their thirst. It appears that their chidings had provoked him to anger, and he had lost the spirit of sympathy for their sufferings, and his hard feelings stood like a thick wall between him and the miracle which God was about to work for his own glory and his people's relief. Neither did he as God commanded him; for instead of simply speaking to the rock, as he was bidden, he smote it twice, with evident agitation of mind; and at the same time, bitterly reproached the people with their rebellion.

Every minister of the gospel is a 'drawer of water', to his congregation, from the 'Spiritual Rock' which follows the church. He must be clothed with meekness from Heaven, or the provocations of the people will be apt to embitter his spirit. God would have us minister mercy, in the spirit of his own mercy. 'The servant of God must not strive, but be gentle toward all men; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if, peradventure, God would grant them repentance unto the acknowledging of the truth: and that they might recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.'

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The smiting of the rock was intended to open it, that the water might flow. This prefigured the smiting of Christ, 'the Rock of Ages', and 'the Shepherd of the sheep'. The shedding of the blood of lambs, and goats, and calves, and bullocks, for the space of four thousand years, faintly shadowed forth the sacrificial passion of our blessed Lord. Their groans and struggles under the slaughtering knife; the sound of the blood, falling into the golden basins, and poured into the flames upon the altar; the noise occasioned in cutting up the victim, and piling the pieces upon the fire; and the smoke and vapour ascending from the consuming sacrifice to heaven; all, all, in their own way, foreshadowed the necessity of mangling the body and shedding the blood of Messiah, that pardoning mercy might have an open way to flow to sinners, like the water from the smitten rock; and the agonies of those slaughtered victims were an imperfect type of the agonies of the soul of Jesus, in the garden and on the cross.

The smiting of a flinty rock, for the purpose of obtaining water, was a scheme of the Divine Mind, whose ways are higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts. It was certainly the last place to which Moses would have gone for water; and he might have expected the stroke to elicit sparks of fire, rather than cool refreshing streams. What eye had not seen and ear had not heard, either of men or of angels — what had not entered into the heart of any created being to conceive, terrestrial or celestial — was, that the smiting of the Shepherd should save the sheep; that the condemnation of the just should bring the unjust to God; that the making of Messiah a curse should secure infinite blessings to mankind; that the poverty of Jesus should enrich us, and his death raise us to life eternal. Consuming flames of Divine indignation might have been expected to flash upon the guilty world from every wound of the thorns, the nails and the spear, in the sacred person of Emmanuel; but, to the astonishment of men and angels, a tide of love and mercy ran freely from every bleeding vein, to wash away the guilt and pollution of human crimes, according to the determinate counsel and immutable promise of our God.

The rock must be smitten by a rod. Had Moses been left to choose his own instrument, he would probably have taken a hammer, or perhaps a lever; but God commands him to take the rod. The rock would not have yielded water to any other instrument



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than the rod that smote the waters of Egypt, and turned them into blood. This rod was an emblem of the sovereignty of God over Israel, and is therefore called 'the rod of God, which the Lord gave unto Moses' — as his deputy governor — 'to lead Israel, and to work miracles before their eyes.' It was also a symbol of the royal law of Heaven; which, prior to the fall, was a rod of life; but afterward became a rod of iron, to break in pieces the offender — an angry serpent, to sting the transgressor with dreadful torments; and finally, when Christ endured the curse, and honoured the violated mandate, by his death upon the tree, it was transformed again into a guiding and correcting rod. As the rock would have yielded water under no other stroke than that of 'the rod of God', so the sufferings of Christ would have been ineffectual, had they not happened under the law of the Father, and according to the counsel of Infinite Wisdom. When Isaac was about to be offered up on mount Moriah, the wood, the fire, and the knife, must all come from his father's house, and the dreadful deed must be done by his father's hand. So Jesus must die in no ordinary or accidental way. He must not suffer himself to be slain by the sword of Herod, nor cast over the brow of the hill by the people. He must receive the mortal cup from no other hand than that of the Father. He must die the appointed death; at the appointed time; in the appointed place, without the camp; and in the appointed manner, by hanging on a tree. The wreath of thorns, the scarlet robe, the nails, the cross, the spear, and even the vinegar offered him in his agony, were all according to his Father's counsel. He knew the necessity, and said — 'Thy will be done!' The Shepherd of Israel would bow under no other stroke than that of the Lord of Hosts. A cradle, a cross, and a grave, all of his Father's appointing, must Jesus have, in order to open a fountain of living water to the world.

The rock must be smitten in a public manner, in the sight of the sun, and before all the elders of Israel, that God might be sanctified in the eyes of his people. This was intended to foreshadow the publicity of the death of Christ, which took place during one of the great public festivals of the Jews, in the presence of nearly the whole nation, and on the hill Calvary; and to denote the proclamation of Christ crucified throughout the world, as the true propitiation and object of faith, to be looked upon by Jews and Gentiles,

to the softening of the heart, and the flowing of repentant tears, according to the prophecy — ‘They shall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn for him, as one mourneth for an only son.’ The Spirit of grace directs the eyes of men to the cross, upon which the prophet Isaiah, with transcendent sublimity of language, describes the Saviour as passing from Calvary to the grave, from the grave to the empyrean [the highest heaven, where the pure element of fire was supposed by the ancients to subsist; the visible heavens], and thence back again to earth, crying — ‘Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and beside me there is no Saviour!’

The rock must be smitten in the presence of God. ‘Behold, I will stand before thee there on the rock in Horeb.’ (Exodus 17:6) He stood upon the rock in Horeb, though invisible, in the glory of his loving-kindness and his power, to guide the hand of his servant Moses, and open a source of timely succour to his perishing people. But when the rod of the law smote the Rock of our salvation, when the curse fell upon the sinner’s Substitute and Surety, then God stood forth before the world upon the rock of Calvary, amid the darkened heavens, the trembling earth, and the opening sepulchres, as if all the machinery of nature had been suddenly disordered and disorganised — stood forth in the plenitude of his power, his wisdom, his justice, his mercy, and his truth, to prosper the work of man’s redemption, and open a channel through which the river of life might flow out to a famishing race. On Calvary still he stands, with the cup of salvation in his hand, and streams of living water rolling at his feet, and cries — ‘Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters!’

According to the command of God, the rock was to be smitten but once. Once smitten, it needed only to be spoken to; and, though it was more than thirty years afterward, it would yield forth its water. But Moses, provoked to anger by the murmurings and complainings of the people, transcended the Divine injunction, and though he had once smitten the rock, smote it again; yea, when he should have spoken to it only, smote it twice with his rod. This was his sin, for which God would not permit him to enter the promised land. Christ has been once smitten, and woe to those who smite him again! He has once offered himself a sacrifice, and once entered into the holy place, having finished his work of atonement, and made an end of sin, and superseded the

sacrifices of the law. Henceforth, ye Jews, relinquish your burnt-offerings, your

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meat-offerings, your drink-offerings, your peace-offerings; and trust no longer in beasts, and birds, and flour, and oil; but in 'the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world'. Crucify him afresh no more, O ye backsliders; for 'there remaineth no other sacrifice for sin!' Smite him not again, lest he swear unto you in his wrath, as unto Moses, that ye shall not enter into his rest!

II. Having spoken of the smiting, let us now look at the result, the flowing of the waters; a timely mercy to 'the many thousands of Israel', on the point of perishing in the desert; shadowing forth a far greater mercy, the flowing of living waters from the 'spiritual rock', which is Christ.

In the death of our Redeemer, we see three infinite depths moved for the relief of human misery; the love of the Father, the merit of the Son, and the energy of the Holy Spirit. These are the depths of wonder whence arise the rivers of salvation.

The waters flowed in the presence of the whole assembly. The agent was invisible, but his work was manifest.

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The water flowed in great abundance, filling the whole camp, and supplying all the people. Notwithstanding the immense number, and the greatness of their thirst, there was enough for each and for all. The streams ran in every direction to meet the sufferers, and their rippling murmur seemed to say — 'Open thy mouth, and I will fill it.' Look to the cross! See there the gracious fountain opened, and streams of pardoning and purifying mercy flowing down the rock of Calvary, sweeping over the mount of Olives, and cleaving it asunder, to make a channel for the living waters to go out over the whole world, that God may be glorified among the Gentiles, and all the ends of the earth may see his salvation!

The water flowed from the rock, not pumped by human labour, but drawn by the hand of God. It was the same power, that opened the springs of mercy upon the cross. It was the wisdom of God that devised the plan, and the mercy of God that furnished the victim. His was the truth and love that gave the promise by the prophet — 'In that day there

shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and uncleanness.' His was the unchanging faithfulness that fulfilled it in his Son — 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration,

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and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on as abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Lord.' Our salvation is wholly of God; and we have no other agency in the matter, than the mere acceptance of his proffered grace.

The water flowed in twelve different channels; and, according to Dr Pococke, of Scotland, who visited the place, the deep traces in the rock are visible to this day. But the twelve streams, one for each tribe, all issued from the same fountain, in the same rock. So the great salvation flowed out through the ministry of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and went abroad over all the earth. But the fountain is one. All the apostles preached the same Saviour, and pointed to the same cross. 'Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.' We must come to this spring, or perish.

The flowing of the waters was irresistible by human power. Who can close the fountain which God hath opened? Can Edom, or Moab, or Sihon, or Og, dam up the current which Jehovah hath drawn from the rock? Can Caiaphas, and all the Jews, aided by the Prince of this world — can all the powers of earth and hell combined — arrest the work of redemption, and dry up the fountain of mercy that Christ is opening on Calvary? As soon might they dry up the Atlantic, and stop the revolutions of the globe. It is written, and must be fulfilled. Christ must suffer, and enter into his glory — must be lifted up, and draw all men unto him — and repentance and remission of sins must be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

The water flowing from the rock was like a river of life to the children of Israel. Who can describe the distress throughout the camp; and the appearance of the people, when they were invited to approach a flinty rock, instead of a fountain or a stream, to quench their thirst? What angry countenances were there, what bitter censures, and ungrateful murmurings, as Moses went up to the rock, with nothing in his hand but a rod! 'Where is he going,' said they, 'with that dry stick? What is he

going to do on that rock? Does he mean to make fools of us all? Is it not enough that he has brought us into this wilderness to die of thirst? Will he mock us now by pretending to seek water in these sands, or open fountains in the solid granite?' But see! he lifts the rod; he smites the rock; and lo, it bursts into a fountain; and twelve

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crystal streams roll down before the people! Who can conceive the sudden transport? Hear the shout of joy ringing through the camp, and rolling back in tumultuous echoes from the crags and cliffs of Horeb! 'Water! water! A miracle! a miracle! Glory to the God of Israel! Glory to his servant Moses!' It was a resurrection day to Israel, the morning light bursting upon the shadow of death. New life and joy are seen throughout the camp. The maidens are running, with cups and pitchers, to the rock. They fill and drink; then fill again, and haste away to their respective tents, with water for the sick, the aged, and the little ones, joyfully exclaiming — 'Drink, father! Drink, mother! Drink, children! Drink, all of you! Drink abundantly! Plenty of water now! Rivers flowing from the rock!' Now the oxen are coming, the asses, the camels, the sheep, and the goats — coming in crowds to quench their thirst, and plunging into the streams before them. And the feathered tribes are coming, the turtle-dove, the pigeon, the swallow, the sparrow, the robin, and the wren; while the croaking raven and the fierce-eyed eagle, scenting the water from afar, mingle with them around the rock.

Brethren, this is but a faint emblem of the joy of the church, in drinking the waters that descend from Calvary, the streams that gladden the city of our God. Go back to the day of Pentecost for an instance. O what a revolution of thought, and feeling, and character! What a change of countenance, and conscience, and heart! Three thousand men, that morning full of ignorance, and corruption, and guilt — idolaters, sensualists, blasphemers, persecutors — before night were perfectly transformed — the lions converted into lambs — the hard heart melted, the dead conscience quickened, and the whole man become a new creature in Christ Jesus! They thirsted, they found the 'Spiritual rock', tasted its living waters, and suddenly leaped into new life, like Lazarus from the inanition [exhaustion from lack of food] of the grave!

This is the blessing which follows the church through all her wanderings in the wilderness; accompanies her through the scorching desert of affliction, and the valley of the shadow of death; and when at

last she shall come up out of great tribulation, her garments shall be found washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb; and the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall lead her to everlasting fountains, and she shall thirst no more!

## Sermon 4

### FALL AND RECOVERY OF MAN

*For if, through the offence of one, many be dead; much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ hath abounded unto many (Romans 5:15).*

MAN was created in the image of God. Knowledge and perfect holiness were impressed upon the very nature and faculties of his soul. He had constant access to his Maker, and enjoyed free communion with him, on the ground of his spotless moral rectitude. But alas! the glorious diadem is broken; the crown of righteousness is fallen. Man's purity is gone, and his happiness is forfeited. 'There is none righteous; no, not one.' 'All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.' But the ruin is not hopeless. What was lost in Adam, is restored in Christ. His blood redeems us from bondage, and his gospel gives us back the forfeited inheritance. 'For if, through the offence of one, many be dead; much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.' Let us consider; — *First*, The corruption and condemnation of man; and *Secondly*, *His gracious restoration to the favour of his offended God.*

I. To find the cause of man's corruption and condemnation, we must go back to Eden. The eating of the 'forbidden tree' was 'the offence of one', in consequence of which 'many are dead'. This was the 'sin', the act of 'disobedience', which 'brought death into the world, and all our woe'. It was the greatest ingratitude to the Divine bounty, and the boldest rebellion against the Divine sovereignty. The royalty of God was contemned; the riches of his goodness slighted; and his most desperate enemy preferred before him, as if he were a wiser counsellor than Infinite

Wisdom. Thus man joined in league with hell, against Heaven; with demons of the bottomless pit, against the Almighty Maker and Benefactor; robbing God of the obedience due to his command, and the

glory due to his name; worshipping the creature, instead of the Creator; and opening the door to pride, unbelief, enmity, and all wicked and abominable passions. How is the 'noble vine', which was planted 'wholly a right seed', 'turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine'!

Who can look for pure water from such a fountain? 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh.' All the faculties of the soul are corrupted by sin; the understanding dark; the will perverse; the affections carnal; the conscience full of shame, remorse, confusion, and mortal fear. Man is a hard-hearted and stiff-necked sinner; loving darkness rather than light, because his deeds are evil; eating sin like bread, and drinking iniquity like water; holding fast deceit, and refusing to let it go. His heart is desperately wicked; full of pride, vanity, hypocrisy, covetousness, hatred of truth, and hostility to all that is good.

This depravity is universal. Among the natural children of Adam, there is no exemption from the original taint. 'The whole world lieth in wickedness.' 'We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness is as filthy rags.' The corruption may vary in the degrees of development, in different persons; but the elements are in all, and their nature is everywhere the same; the same in the blooming youth, and the withered sire; in the haughty prince, and the humble peasant; in the strongest flint, and the feeblest invalid. The enemy has 'come in like a flood'. The deluge of sin has swept the world. From the highest to the lowest, there is no health or moral soundness. From the crown of the head to the soles of the feet, there is nothing but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores. The laws, and their violation, and the punishments everywhere invented for the suppression of vice, prove the universality of the evil. The bloody sacrifices, and various purifications, of the pagans, show the handwriting of remorse upon their consciences; proclaim their sense of guilt, and their dread of punishment. None of them is free from the fear which hath torment, whatever their efforts to overcome it, and however great their boldness in the service of sin and Satan. 'Mene! Tekel!' is written on every human heart. 'Wanting!

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wanting!' is inscribed on heathen fanes and altars; on the laws, customs, and institutions of every nation; and on the universal consciousness of mankind.

This inward corruption manifests itself in outward actions. 'The tree is known by its fruit.' As the smoke and sparks of the chimney show that



there is fire within; so all the 'filthy conversation' of men, and all 'the unfruitful works of darkness' in which they delight, evidently indicate the pollution of the source whence they proceed. 'Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.' The sinner's speech betrayeth him. 'Evil speaking' proceeds from malice and envy. 'Foolish talking and jesting', are evidence of impure and trifling thoughts. The mouth full of cursing and bitterness, the throat an open sepulchre, the poison of asps under the tongue, the feet swift to shed blood, destruction and misery in their paths, and the way of peace unknown to them, are the clearest and amplest demonstration that men 'have gone out of the way', 'have together become unprofitable'. We see the bitter fruit of the same corruption in robbery, adultery, gluttony, drunkenness, extortion, intolerance, persecution, apostasy, and every evil work — in all false religions; the Jew, obstinately adhering to the carnal ceremonies of an abrogated law; the Mohammedan, honouring an impostor, and receiving a lie for a revelation from God; the Papist, worshipping images and relics, praying to departed saints, seeking absolution from sinful men, and trusting in the most absurd mummeries for salvation; the Pagan, attributing divinity to the works of his own hands, adoring idols of wood and stone, sacrificing to malignant demons, casting his children into the fire or the flood as an offering to imaginary deities, and changing the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the beast and the worm.

'For these things' sake the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience.' They are under the sentence of the broken law; the malediction of Eternal Justice. 'By the offence of one, judgement came upon all men unto condemnation.' 'He that believeth not is condemned already.' 'The wrath of God abideth on him.' 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law, to do them.' 'Woe unto the wicked; it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him.' 'They that plough iniquity, and sow wickedness,

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shall reap the same.' 'Upon the wicked the Lord shall rain fire, and snares, and a horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup.' 'God is angry with the wicked every day; if he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.'

Who shall describe the misery of fallen men! His days, though few, are full of evil. Trouble and sorrow press him forward to the tomb. All the world, except Noah and his family, are drowning in the deluge. A storm of fire and brimstone is fallen from heaven upon Sodom and Gomorrah. The earth is opening her mouth to swallow up alive Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Wrath is coming upon 'the Beloved City', even 'wrath unto the uttermost'. The tender and delicate mother is devouring her darling infant. The sword of man is executing the vengeance of God. The earth is emptying its inhabitants into the bottomless pit. On every hand are 'confused noises, and garments rolled in blood'. Fire and sword fill the land with consternation and dismay. Amid the universal devastation, wild shrieks and despairing groans fill the air. God of mercy! is thy ear heavy, that thou canst not hear? or thy arm shortened, that thou canst not save? The heavens above are brass, and the earth beneath is iron; for Jehovah is pouring his indignation upon his adversaries, and he will not pity or spare.

Verily, 'the misery of man is great upon him!' Behold the wretched fallen creature! The pestilence pursues him. The leprosy cleaves to him. Consumption is wasting him. Inflammation is devouring his vitals. Burning fever has seized upon the very springs of life. The destroying angel has overtaken the sinner in his sins. The hand of God is upon him. The fires of wrath are kindling about him, drying up every well of comfort, and scorching all his hopes to ashes. Conscience is chastising him with scorpions. See how he writhes! Hear how he shrieks for help! Mark what agony and terror are in his soul, and on his brow! Death stares him in the face, and shakes at him his iron spear. He trembles, he turns pale, as a culprit at the bar, as a convict on the scaffold. He is condemned already. Conscience has pronounced the sentence. Anguish has taken hold upon him. Terrors gather in battle-array about him. He looks back, and the storms of Sinai pursue him; forward, and hell is moved to meet him; above, and the heavens

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are on fire; beneath, and the world is burning. He listens, and the judgement trump is calling; again, and the brazen chariots of vengeance are thundering from afar; yet again, and the sentence penetrates his soul with anguish unspeakable — 'Depart! ye accursed! into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!'

Thus, 'by one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.' They are 'dead in trespasses and sins'; spiritually dead, and legally dead; dead by the mortal power of sin, and dead by the condemnatory sentence of the law; and helpless as sheep to the slaughter, they are driven fiercely on by the ministers of wrath to the all-devouring grave, and the lake of fire!

But is there no mercy? Is there no means of salvation? Hark! amidst all this prelude of wrath and ruin, comes a still small voice, saying: 'much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.'

II. This brings us to our second topic, man's gracious recovery to the favour of his offended God.

I know not how to represent to you this glorious work, better than by the following figure. Suppose a vast graveyard, surrounded by a lofty wall, with only one entrance, which is by a massive iron gate, and that is fast bolted. Within are thousands and millions of human beings, of all ages and classes, by one epidemic disease bending to the grave. The graves yawn to swallow them, and they must all perish. There is no balm to relieve, no physician there. Such is the condition of man as a sinner. All have sinned; and it is written, 'The soul that sinneth shall die.' But while the unhappy race lay in that dismal prison, Mercy came and stood at the gate, and wept over the melancholy scene, exclaiming — 'O that I might enter! I would bind up their wounds; I would relieve their sorrows; I would save their souls!' An embassy of angels, commissioned from the court of Heaven to some other world, paused at the sight, and Heaven forgave that pause. Seeing Mercy standing there, they cried:— 'Mercy! canst thou not enter? Canst thou look upon that scene and not pity? Canst thou pity, and not relieve?' Mercy replied: 'I can see!' and — in her tears she added, 'I can pity, but I cannot relieve!' 'Why canst thou not enter?' inquired the heavenly host. 'Oh!' said

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Mercy, 'Justice has barred the gate against me, and I must not — cannot unbar it!' At this moment, Justice himself appeared, as if to watch the gate. The angels asked, 'Why wilt thou not suffer Mercy to enter?' He sternly replied: 'The law is broken, and it must be honoured! Die they or Justice must!' Then appeared a form among the angelic band like unto the Son of God. Addressing himself to Justice, he said: 'What are thy demands?' Justice replied: 'My demands are rigid; I must have ignominy

for their honour, sickness for their health, death for their life. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission!' 'Justice,' said the Son of God, 'I accept thy terms! On me be this wrong! Let Mercy enter, and stay the carnival of death!' 'What pledge dost thou give for the performance of these conditions?' 'My word; my oath!' 'When wilt thou perform them?' 'Four thousand years hence, on the hill of Calvary, without the walls of Jerusalem!' The bond was prepared, and signed and sealed in the presence of attendant angels. Justice was satisfied, the gate was opened, and Mercy entered, preaching salvation in the name of Jesus. The bond was committed to patriarchs and prophets. A long series of rites and ceremonies, sacrifices and oblations, was instituted to perpetuate the memory of that solemn deed. At the close of the four-thousandth year, when Daniel's 'seventy weeks' were accomplished, Justice and Mercy appeared on the hill of Calvary. 'Where,' said Justice, 'is the Son of God?' 'Behold him,' answered Mercy, 'at the foot of the hill!' And there he came, bearing his own cross, and followed by his weeping church. Mercy retired, and stood aloof from the scene. Jesus ascended the hill, like a lamb for the sacrifice. Justice presented the dreadful bond, saying, 'This is the day on which this article must be cancelled.' The Redeemer took it. What did he do with it? Tear it in pieces, and scatter it to the winds? No! he nailed it to his cross, crying, 'It is finished!' The Victim ascended the altar. Justice called on holy fire to come down and consume the sacrifice. Holy fire replied: 'I come! I will consume the sacrifice, and then I will burn up the world!' It fell upon the Son of God, and rapidly consumed his humanity; but when it touched his Deity, it expired. Then was there darkness over the whole land, and an earthquake shook the mountain; but the heavenly host broke forth

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in rapturous song — 'Glory to God in the highest! on earth peace good will to man!'<sup>\*</sup>

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<sup>\*</sup> The substance of this transcendent passage Christmas Evans often repeated in his preaching, and of course with considerable variation on different occasions. There are two other versions of it in English. One of them, translated many years ago, and published under the title of *A Specimen of Welsh Preaching*, has been everywhere justly admired, as one of the finest productions of sanctified genius. The other, which we give below, was taken from the lips of the preacher, and rendered into English, by one of his frequent hearers and intimate friends. 'All the stores of his energy,' says the editor of the English memoir, 'and the resources of his voice, which was one of great compass, depth, and sweetness, seemed reserved for the closing portions of the picture, when he delineated the routed and battered hosts of the pit, retreating from the cross, where they had anticipated a triumph, and met

a signal and irretrievable overthrow.' — EDITOR.

Methinks I find myself standing upon the summit of one of the highest of the everlasting hills, permitted thence to take a survey of our earth. It shows to me a wide and far-spread burial-ground, over which lie scattered in countless multitudes the wretched and perishing children of Adam. The ground is full of hollows, the yawning caverns of death, while over it broods a thick cloud of fearful darkness. No light from above shines upon it, nor is the ray of the sun or moon, or the beams of a candle seen through all its borders. It is walled around. Its gates, large and massive, ten thousand times stronger than all the gates of brass forged among men, are one and all safely locked. It is the hand of Divine Justice that has locked them, and so firmly secured are, the strong bolts which hold those doors, that all the created powers even of the heavenly world, were they to labour to all eternity, could not drive so much as one of them back. How hopeless the wretchedness to which the race are doomed, and into what irrecoverable depths of ruin has the disobedience of their first parent plunged them!

But behold, in the cool of the day there is seen descending from the eternal hills in the distance, the radiant form of Mercy, seated in the chariot of the divine promise, and clothed with splendour, infinitely brighter than the golden rays of the morning when seen shooting over mountains of pearls. Seated beside Mercy in that chariot is seen another form like unto the Son of man. His mysterious name is the 'Seed of the Woman', and girt around him shines the girdle of eternity, radiant with the lustre of the heaven of heavens. 'He has descended into the lower parts of the earth.' I see Mercy alight from that chariot, and she is knocking at the huge gate of this vast cemetery. She asks of Justice: 'Is there no entrance into this field of death! May I not visit these caverns of the grave, and seek, if it may be, to raise some names at least of the children of destruction, and bring them again to the light of day! Open, Justice, open; drive back these iron bolts and let me in, that I may proclaim the jubilee of deliverance to the children of the dust.' But I hear the stern reply of Justice from within those walls; it is:— 'Mercy, surely thou

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Thus grace has abounded, and the free gift has come upon all, and the gospel has gone forth proclaiming redemption to every

lovest Justice too well, to wish to burst these gates by force of arm, and thus obtain entrance by mere lawless violence. And I cannot open the door. I cherish no anger towards the unhappy wretches. I have no delight in their eternal death, or in hearing their cries as they lie upon the burning hearth of the great fire kindled by the wrath of God, in the land that is lower than the grave. But I am bound to vindicate the purity, holiness, and equity of God's laws; for, 'without shedding of blood there is no remission'. 'Be it so,' said Mercy, but wilt thou not accept of a surety who may make a sufficient atonement for the crime committed and the offence given?' 'That will I,' said Justice, 'only let him be duly allied to either party in this sad controversy, a Kinsman, near alike to the injured Lawgiver, and to the guilty tenants of the burial-ground.' 'Wilt thou, then,' said Mercy, 'accept of the puissant Michael, prince among the hosts of heaven, who fought bravely in the day when there was war in heaven, and also vanquished Apollyon upon the summit of the everlasting hills!' 'No,' said Justice, 'I may not, for his goings forth are not from the beginning, even from everlasting.' 'Wilt thou not then accept of the valiant Gabriel, who compelled Beelzebub to turn and seek safety in flight from the walls of the heavenly city?' 'No,' cried Justice, 'for Gabriel is already bound to render his appointed service to the King Almighty; and who may serve in his place while he should be attempting the salvation of Adam's race? There needs,' continued Justice, 'one who has, of right belonging to him, both omnipotence and eternity, to achieve the enterprise. Let him clothe himself with the nature of these wretches. Let him be born within these gloomy walls, and himself undergo death within this unapproachable place, if he would buy the favour of Heaven for these children of the

captivity!’

But while this dialogue was held, behold, a form fairer than the morning dawn, and full of the glory of heaven, is seen descending from that chariot. Casting, as he passes, a glance of infinite benignity upon the hapless, tenants of that burial-ground, he approaches, and asks of Justice: ‘Wilt thou accept of me?’ ‘I will,’ said Justice, ‘for greater art thou than heaven and the whole universe.’

‘Behold, then,’ said the stranger, I come: in the volume of the book has it been written of me. I will go down, in the fullness of time, into the sides of the pit of corruption. I will lay hold of this nature, and take upon me the dust of Eden, and, allied to that dust, I will pour into thy balance, Justice, blood of such worth and virtue that the court of heaven shall pronounce its claims satisfied, and bid the children of the great captivity go free.’

Centuries have rolled by, and the fullness of time is now accomplished; and see, an infant of days is born within the old burial ground of Eden. Behold a Son given to the dwellers of the tomb, and a spotless Lamb, the Lamb of God, is seen within that gloomy enclosure. When the hour came at which the ministers of the Divine Justice must seize upon the victim, I see them hurrying towards Gethsemane. There, in heaviness and sorrow of soul, praying more earnestly, the surety is seen bowed to the earth, and the heavy

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creature. ‘By grace ye are saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, least any man should boast.’ By grace ye are loved, redeemed and justified. By grace ye are called, converted, reconciled and sanctified. Salvation is wholly of grace. The plan, the process, the consummation, are all of grace.

Grace all the work shall crown,  
Through everlasting days;  
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,  
And well deserves the praise!’

‘Where sin abounded, grace hath much more abounded.’ ‘Through the offence of one, many were dead.’ And as men multiplied,

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burden he had assumed is now weighing him down. Like a lamb, he is led towards Golgotha — the hill of skulls. There are mustered all the hosts of darkness, rejoicing in the hope of their speedy conquest over him. The monsters of the pit, huge, fierce, and relentless, are there. The lions,\* as in a great army, were grinding fearfully their teeth, ready to tear him in pieces. The unicorns,\* a countless host, were rushing onwards to thrust him through, and trample him beneath their feet. And there were the bulls of Bashan,\* roaring terribly; the dragons\* of the pit are unfolding themselves, and shooting out their stings, and dogs\* many are all around the mountain. ‘It is the hour and power of darkness.’ I see him passing along through this dense array of foes, an unresisting victim. He is nailed to the cross; and now Beelzebub and all the master-spirits in the hosts of hell have formed, though invisible to man, a ring around the cross. It was about the third hour of the day, or the hour of nine in the morning, that he was bound as a sacrifice, even to the horns of the altar. The fire of divine vengeance has fallen, and the flames of the curse have now caught upon him. The blood of the victim is fast dropping, and the hosts of hell are shouting impatiently: ‘The victory will soon be ours.’ And the fire went on burning until the ninth hour of the day, or the hour of three in the afternoon, when it touched his Deity, — and then it expired. For the ransom was now paid and the victory won. It was his. His hellish foes, crushed in his fall, the unicorns and the bulls of Bashan retreated from the encounter with shattered horns; the jaws of the lions had been broken and their claws

torn off, and the old dragon, with bruised head, dragged himself slowly away from the scene, in deathlike feebleness. 'He triumphed over them openly', and now is he for ever the Prince and Captain of our salvation, made perfect through sufferings. The graves of the old burial-ground have been thrown open; and from yonder hills gales of life have blown down upon this valley of dry bones, and an exceedingly great army have already been sealed to our God, as among the living in Zion.

\* Allusion to the language in which Psalm 22 predicts the Saviour's sufferings. The Psalm which our Saviour himself quoted upon the Cross, when he cried, 'My God, why hast thou forsaken me.'

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the offence abounded. The waters deluged the world, but could not wash away the dreadful stain. The fire fell from heaven, but could not burn out the accursed plague. The earth opened her mouth, but could not swallow up the monster sin. The law thundered forth its threat from the thick darkness on Sinai; but could not restrain, by all its terrors, the children of disobedience. Still the offence abounded, and multiplied as the sands on the sea-shore. It waxed bold, and pitched its tents on Calvary, and nailed the Lawgiver to a tree. But in that conflict sin received its mortal wound. The Victim was the Victor. He fell, but in his fall he crushed the foe. He died unto sin, but sin and death were crucified upon his cross. Where sin abounded to condemn, grace hath much more abounded to justify. Where sin abounded to corrupt, grace hath much more abounded to purify. Where sin abounded to harden, grace hath much more abounded to soften and subdue. Where sin abounded to imprison men, grace hath much more abounded to proclaim liberty to the captives. Where sin abounded to break the law and dishonour the Lawgiver, grace hath much more abounded to repair the breach and efface the stain. Where sin abounded to consume the soul as with unquenchable fire and a gnawing worm, grace hath much more abounded to extinguish the flame and heal the wound. Grace hath abounded! It hath established its throne on the merit of the Redeemer's sufferings. It hath put on the crown, and laid hold of the golden sceptre, and spoiled the dominion of the prince of darkness, and the gates of the great cemetery are thrown open, and there is the beating of a new life-pulse throughout its wretched population, and Immortality is walking among the tombs!

This abounding grace is manifested in the gift of Jesus Christ, by whose mediation our reconciliation and salvation are effected. With him, believers are dead unto sin, and alive unto God. Our sins were slain at his cross, and buried in his tomb. His resurrection hath opened our graves, and given us an assurance of immortality. 'God commendeth his

love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us; much more, then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him; for if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.'

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'The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.' Glory to God, for the death of his Son, by which this enmity is slain, and reconciliation is effected between the rebel and the law! This was the unspeakable gift that saved us from ruin; that wrestled with the storm, and turned it away from the devoted head of the sinner. Had all the angels of God attempted to stand between these two conflicting seas, they would have been swept to the gulf of destruction. 'The blood of bulls and goats, on Jewish altars slain', could not take away sin, could not pacify the conscience. But Christ, the gift of Divine Grace, 'Pascal Lamb by God appointed', 'a sacrifice of nobler name and richer blood than they', bore our sins, and carried our sorrows, and obtained for us the boon of eternal redemption. He met the fury of the tempest, and the floods went over his head; but his offering was an offering of peace, calming the storms and the waves, magnifying the law, glorifying its Author, and rescuing its violator from wrath and rain. Justice hath laid down his sword at the foot of the cross, and amity is restored between heaven and earth.

Hither, O ye guilty! come and cast away your weapons of rebellion! Come with your bad principles, and wicked actions; your unbelief, and enmity, and pride; and throw them off at the Redeemer's feet! God is here, waiting to be gracious. He will receive you; he will cast all your sins behind his back, into the depths of the sea; and they shall be remembered against you no more for ever. By Heaven's 'Unspeakable Gift', by Christ's invaluable atonement, by the free and infinite grace of the Father and the Son, we persuade you, we beseech you, we entreat you, 'be ye reconciled to God!'

It is by the work of the Holy Spirit within us, that we obtain a personal interest in the work wrought on Calvary for us. If our sins are cancelled, they are also crucified. If we are reconciled in Christ, we fight against our God no more. This is the fruit of faith 'With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.' May the Lord inspire in every one of us that saving principle!



But those who have been restored to the Divine favour may sometimes be cast down and dejected. They have passed through the sea, and sung praises on the shore of deliverance; but there is yet between them and Canaan 'a waste howling wilderness', a long

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and weary pilgrimage, hostile nations, fiery serpents, scarcity of food, and the river Jordan. Fears within and fightings without, they may grow discouraged, and yield to temptation, and murmur against God, and desire to return to Egypt. But fear not, thou worm Jacob! Reconciled by the death of Christ; much more, being reconciled, thou shalt be saved by his life. His death was the price of our redemption; his life insures liberty to the believer. If by his death he brought you through the Red Sea in the night, by his life he can lead you through the river Jordan in the day. If by his death he delivered you from the iron furnace in Egypt, by his life he can save you from all the perils of the wilderness. If by his death he conquered Pharaoh, the chief foe, by his life he can subdue Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, the king of Bashan. 'We shall be saved by his life.' 'Because he liveth, we shall live also.' 'Be of good cheer!' The work is finished; the ransom is effected; the kingdom of heaven is opened to all believers. 'Lift up your heads and rejoice,' 'ye prisoners of hope!' There is no debt unpaid, no devil unconquered, no enemy within your own hearts that has not received a mortal wound! 'Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!'

## Sermon 5

### ONE GOD AND ONE MEDIATOR

*For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 2:5).*

THE apostle Paul urges the propriety and importance of praying for all men, in the several conditions and relations of life, from a consideration of God's merciful intentions toward all men, as exhibited in the sufficiency of the gospel provision for their salvation. But if any are saved, it must be through the medium which God has ordained, and in the manner which God has prescribed. Therefore the apostle adds: 'For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.' 'There is one God', to whom sinners have to be reconciled; 'and one Mediator', through whom that reconciliation is to be effected. We have a nearly parallel passage in another epistle: 'To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.' The unity of God, and the mediation of Christ, are the two great topics of the text, to which we solicit your attention.

I. 'For there is one God.' Two infinite beings cannot co-exist, unless they are one in essence and in operation. The God of Israel pervades the universe of matter, and fills the immensity of space. There is no room for another God, possessing the same ubiquity. 'There is one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.' In him alone, all things live, move, and have their being.

This doctrine is stamped on all the works of nature. They all exhibit unity of design, and must have been contrived by the same infinite wisdom, and executed by the same infinite power. The

hand which created and arranged them is constantly seen in their preservation. The Maker of all things continues to uphold all things by the word of his power. The great Architect still presides over the

immense fabric which he has reared. The universe, from age to age, is governed by the same unvarying laws. All things remain as they were from the beginning. The earth, the air, and the sea, sustain the same mutual relations, and answer the same important ends; and the sun, the moon, and the stars, shine on for ever. The same order and regularity everywhere prevail, as when the chorus of the morning stars welcomed the new creation into being. Nature proclaims aloud: 'There is one God.'

The same doctrine is impressed upon the Bible. It is not only the book of God, but evidently the book of 'one God'. It is a series of Divine Revelations, reaching from Eden to Calvary, and from Calvary onward to the end of the world. It is a golden chain, passing through all time, and uniting the two eternities; and all its links are similar, and depend upon each other. Its several parts are perfectly harmonious, proving them to have emanated from the same infinite mind. Everywhere we find the same character of God and of man; the same description of the law and of sin; the same way of pardon, and holiness, and immortal life. The same Eternal Spirit, that inspired the Historian of Creation, speaks in the Apocalypse of St John, and in all the intervenient books of the Bible. It was the same Sun of Righteousness, that rose in Eden, and set on Calvary; and thence rose again the third day, to set no more for ever.

'The world by wisdom knew not God.' The heathen lost the doctrine of the unity of God; not because it was difficult to preserve, but because they did not love the character of God, 'did not like to retain God in their knowledge'. The pride of the carnal mind led them to turn away from the light of heaven, to walk amid sparks of their own kindling. They boasted of their wisdom; they boasted of their philosophy. And what gained they by the exchange? The most absurd and stupid notions of the Great First Cause; almost total ignorance of his attributes. 'Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools; and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made with hands, like unto corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.' Shame to philosophic Greece and Rome!

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No nation, having once lost the doctrine of the unity of God, ever regained it by the light of nature. If the light of nature is sufficient to preserve it in possession, it is not sufficient to restore it lost. It is restored only by the gospel. The gospel has restored it in India, in Otaheite, and

other heathen lands. It has done more; it has revealed to the savage the only way of salvation; it has 'brought life and immortality to light.'

Fly abroad, thou mighty gospel!  
Win and conquer! never cease!

Lift up thy voice with strength, and proclaim to Greece and Rome, and to all the ends of the earth, as well as to the cities of Judah, that the Son of Mary is the God of Israel, 'God manifest in the flesh', 'God blessed forever!' 'The man Christ Jesus' is 'the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person, in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily'; 'in whom also we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace'.

II. But this leads us to our second topic: 'And one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.' The two doctrines, you perceive, are intimately related to each other. 'One God' 'One Mediator.' As we have but 'one God', we need but 'one Mediator'. As that Mediator is himself God, the merit of his mediation is sufficient for the salvation of all them that believe.

The office of a Mediator supposes two parties at variance, between whom he interposes to produce a reconciliation. It is thus 'between God and man'. God gave man a law, 'holy, and just, and good'; man revolted, and 'there is wrath'. Reconciliation is impossible, without the intervention of a mediator. Let us look at the parties engaged in this dreadful controversy.

On one side we see Jehovah, possessed of infinite perfections, and clothed with uncreated excellence and glory. He is self-existent, independent and eternal. Omnipresence, Omniscience, and Almightyness are his. He is great in wisdom, full of goodness, slow to anger, and ready to pardon. His love is ineffable, and 'his mercy endureth forever'. He is 'glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders'. These perfections are the pearls and diamonds in his crown. 'With him also is terrible majesty.' Life and joy are in his smile, but the angel of destruction waits upon his frown. One beam of his love can raise thousands of men

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to heaven: one glance of his anger, sink myriads of angels to hell. 'He sitteth upon the circles of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers.' 'All nations before him are as nothing; they are counted less than nothing and vanity.' 'He doeth according to his will among the children of men, and ruleth the armies of heaven.' 'At his wrath the earth

shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.' O what majesty and power belong unto the Lord our God!

With this imperfect view, contrast the impotence and insignificance of sinful man. What is he? A being of yesterday, 'whose breath is in his nostrils', and 'whose foundation is in the dust'. A frail, helpless, perishing thing; dependent upon God, the Creator, for all his comforts, for life itself. What is man? A fool; an alien from all good; an embodiment of all evil. His understanding is dark; his will perverse; his affections carnal. His 'throat is an open sepulchre'; swallowing up 'whatsoever things are true, pure, lovely, or of good report'; emitting a pestilential vapour, which withers every green herb, and sweet flower, and delicious fruit, of honour to God, and happiness to man. 'The poison of asps is under his tongue'; an inflaming poison, affecting all the members, and 'setting on fire the whole course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell'. 'His heart is fully set in him to do evil'; 'deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.' He is an enemy to his Maker; a rebel against Jehovah; a blank — nay, worse — a blot in God's creation; dead to every virtue, dead to every thing but sin; lost to every gracious purpose of his being; a withered branch, fit only to be plucked off, and cast into the fire; stubble, ready for the burning. 'Let him alone!' said Reason. 'Cut him down!' cried Justice. 'I hate the workers of iniquity!' added Holiness. 'He or I must perish!' exclaimed Truth. 'Spare him! Spare him! Spare him!' pleaded weeping Mercy. And Wisdom came forth, leading the Son of God, and said: 'I have found a ransom! Behold the Mediator!' And all the attributes met and embraced at the manger, and kissed each other at the cross!

It was man's place, as the offender, to seek a reconciliation God was under no obligation. But, alas! man had neither the means nor the inclination. What could be done? Hear, O ye heavens! and be astonished! Listen, O earth! and wonder and adore! While man was far from God, an enemy in his heart by

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wicked works, rushing on in determined hostility to his Maker's government, and there was no sacrifice found for his sin, and no disposition in him to seek a sacrifice, God sought within himself the adequate and only means of pardon and peace. He found in his own bosom the Lamb for the altar; exhibited him to Israel in the predictions and promises of the Old Testament; and in the fullness of time, sent him forth to expiate sin, by the offering of himself, once for all. 'For the Word

was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.' 'And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.'

God provided a Mediator. Why? Did he fear that the deserved ruin of the human race would dethrone eternal Justice? No. Eternal Justice would have been honoured as much in their destruction as in their salvation. The law would have been as fully vindicated in the infliction of its penalty upon the transgressor, as in the reparation of its breach by a vicarious atonement. The glory of the Divine government would have been untarnished, as when the rebel angels were cast down from heaven, and locked up in everlasting darkness. This wondrous provision was not the result of necessity, but the prompting of Infinite Love. Divine Mercy sought to remove the barrier interposed by Divine Justice. The sinner cannot be pardoned, till his Great Substitute has met the demands of the law. There must be a full satisfaction and settlement of its claims, as the only ground on which the rebel can be acquitted.

Love is the 'Alpha and Omega' of redemption, the love of God to man. Read it in the journey of the Mediator from heaven to earth! Read it in his pilgrimage through the land of sorrow! Behold him 'nailed to the shameful tree!' See the blood and, water gushing from his side! Hear the sound of the water-spouts, as the floods of wrath roll over him! Then ask the reason. The answer is: 'God is love'. 'He is not willing that any should perish.' It seemed good in his sight to save his rebel children, whatever it might cost him. 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.' 'Herein is love, not that we loved God' — no; we hated him; we were his sworn, inveterate foes; 'but that he loved us' — loved us while we were yet enemies

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— loved us with an ineffable love; 'and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.'

Wonderful must be the qualifications of such a Mediator. He fills with his own merit the gap between two worlds. He bows the heavens, and lifts up the earth to meet them. He takes hold of God and man, and brings them together in himself. He reconciles the rebel and the law, glorifies the Father by humbling himself, and his cross becomes our life, and his tomb the birthplace of our immortality.

England and Wales could not be united till the son of the king of England was born in Wales, and became Prince of Wales. The English regarded him as heir to the throne of England; while the Welsh claimed him as their brother, a native of their own country, born in the castle of Caernarvon. Behold 'the well beloved' — the only begotten of the Father', 'heir of all things', 'Lord of lords, and King of kings', 'born in Bethlehem of Judæa'; 'the Son of God — the Son of man'; partaking of both natures, and representing both parties in the great controversy. He is 'the Mighty God, and the Everlasting Father'; yet he is our near kinsman — bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. In his person, heaven and earth are joined; by his blood, God and man are reconciled. Heaven is his throne, for God is his father; earth is his principality, for it is the land of his nativity. In him angels recognise their King, and men behold their brother.

I gaze on the cross, and methinks I hear the victim say: 'Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and beside me there is none else. I opened a way for my people of old, by dividing the waters, to the Canaan of Promise; I am now preparing a path for believers, through the red sea of my blood, to the inheritance in heaven. I gave the law amid fire and smoke on Sinai, and thundered forth my curse upon its violator; I am here on Calvary, to honour that violated law, and remove that curse from its violator by taking it upon myself. Behold my hands, my feet, my side! This blood, O men! is your sacrifice. I will expiate your sin by my sufferings. I will magnify the law, and make it honourable. And though in your nature I hang on this tree today, I will revive, and live for ever, to make intercession for the transgressors, and save to the uttermost all that come unto God by me!'

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The mediatorial office of 'the man Christ Jesus' consists of two parts, sacrifice and intercession. They are equally important, and mutually dependent. Without sacrifice, there is no ground of intercession; without intercession, there is no benefit in sacrifice. The former renders the latter influential with God; the latter renders the former available to man. The one removes the obstacles to reconciliation, the other brings the adverse parties together.

The first part of the mediatorial office is sacrifice. In order to understand this aright, we must have correct views of God, of man, and of sin. We must consider God as the lawgiver and governor of the

universe, eternally hostile to all iniquity, and determined to sustain his just administration. We must consider man as a guilty and polluted creature, a rebel in arms against his Maker a prisoner under sentence and deserving punishment. We must consider sin as an inexcusable omission of duty, and a flagrant transgression of the law, under circumstances of peculiar aggravation. The debt must be paid, or the sinner must perish. An atonement must be made, of merit equal to the turpitude of our crimes. The stain which we have cast upon the law, must be washed out by blood of infinite preciousness. This is the work of our Mediator. He 'gave himself a ransom for all'. He made a perfect satisfaction for our sins. 'He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.' It is not by blood of bulls and goats, slain on Jewish altars, but by a nobler and costlier sacrifice — the paschal 'Lamb of God', that heaven and earth are reconciled — God and man united.

The second part of the mediatorial office is intercession. It was through the High-priest, the typical mediator, that God communicated with Israel, and Israel communicated with God; it is through 'the man Christ Jesus', the real Mediator, that God speaks to the world, and receives the prayers of his people. Having 'borne the sins of many', he 'maketh intercession for the transgressors.' 'He hath entered into heaven himself, there to appear in the presence of God for us.' He has gone into the holy of holies, with 'the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel'. 'If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' 'Through him we both' — that is, both Jews and Gentiles — 'have access by one Spirit unto the

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Father.' He holds in his hand the golden censer, and offers much incense before the throne. It is this that perfumes our prayers, and renders them acceptable to God. He pleaded for his murderers when he hung upon the cross, and now he pleads in heaven for those who crucify him afresh. And what is the ground of his plea? Not the merit of our works, but the merit of his own sufferings. Not the infinitude of the Father's mercy, but the sufficiency of his own sacrifice. This is the sure foundation of a sinner's hope. If Satan suggests that his crimes are too great to be forgiven, he may reply: 'The man Christ Jesus' is my advocate, the advocate of the chief of sinners;



And should I die with mercy sought,  
 When I his grace have tried,  
 I sure should die — delightful thought! —  
 Where sinner never died!

‘One Mediator.’ There is no choice. You must accept of him, or remain unreconciled, and be cast into hell. Israel found but one path through the Red Sea; the church shall never find more than one way to the heavenly Canaan. It is only by faith in the ‘One Mediator’, that you can obtain the favour of the ‘One God’. He is the elect and beloved of the Father, the appointed medium of man’s approach, the designated channel of God’s communication. ‘Neither is there salvation in any other.’ No other has been provided. No other is suited to our necessities. O sinner! come through this ‘new and living way’! Christ invites your confidence.

Venture on him; venture freely;  
 Let no other trust intrude!  
 None but Jesus, none but Jesus,  
 Can do helpless sinners good.

These glorious truths, we cannot read too often, or meditate too much. They represent to us the great evil of sin, the infinite mercy of God, the inflexible character of the law, and the incalculable preciousness of the gospel. Such is the Father’s estimate of the Mediator, that he will be reconciled to sinners only through his blood. He is well pleased with his Son, and well pleased with all who seek him through his Son, and nothing is more offensive to him than the rejection of his Son. May these remarks preserve you from despair under a sense of your guilt and wretchedness; drive

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you from all false refuges to the cross, with a penitent and grateful heart; induce you to trust, not in your own strength, or wisdom, or righteousness, but in the adorable name of Jesus; to live a life of faith in him, of love towards him, and of patient waiting for his mercy unto eternal salvation!

If you are already partakers of these blessings, how transcendent is your privilege! ‘Ye are come unto mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of angels; and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven; and to God, the judge of all; and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant; and to the

blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.' Follow the Captain of your salvation. Cleave to him in the fire and the flood. Turn not aside to the lying vanities of the world, lest you drink the cup of its eternal sorrows. Remember that those who suffer with the crucified shall reign with the glorified; that such as are faithful unto death shall receive the crown of life. Be careful to 'keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace'. Endure unto the end, and ye shall be saved.

'Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be glory for ever and ever.' Amen.

## Sermon 6

### *THE LIVING REDEEMER*

*Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book! that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever! For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me (Job 19:23-27).*

IT is the common opinion of learned divines, that Job was an ancient prince in some part of Arabia, known in his day by the name of Uz. His three friends also — ‘Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite’ — were neighbouring princes. In their visit of condolence, they were accompanied by Elihu, who seems to have been a young man of extraordinary intelligence and virtue. The occasion of this visit was the apparent judgements of God upon the patriarch. They held a long controversy with him, in which they insisted that his unparalleled calamities and sufferings proved him the chief of hypocrites. Job as strenuously maintained his innocence and integrity, and argued that his providential afflictions were intended only for the proof and the improvement of his piety; and that when this purpose should be accomplished, he would come forth as gold purified from the furnace. God, answering out of the whirlwind, settled the dispute, deciding in favour of his servant Job; his three friends were required to offer sacrifice for their faults, and Job must pray for their forgiveness. Then the wheel of fortune turned in his favour, and he was restored to his former prosperity.

Job and his friends evidently had a clear understanding of the evil of sin, the wickedness of hypocrisy, the importance of the fear of God, and the doctrine of an all-wise superintending providence;

and knew how to approach Jehovah through sacrifice, in anticipation of the promised Messiah.

We shall offer a few general remarks on Job's faith in a living Redeemer, as expressed in our text.

I. Our minds are struck with wonder and pleasure, in beholding the patriarchs and prophets of ancient times, moved by the Spirit of God, searching diligently for the person and grace of the Messiah; like miners, opening an entrance to a precious treasure, which is to redeem them and their brethren from bondage.

Job has no reference here to any temporal deliverer, nor to any other than the Messiah himself. He evidently saw what he needed, when he was speaking of the Daysman, the Umpire, one that might argue and settle the case between him and his Maker, one that might lay his hand alike on God and man. With the eye of faith, he saw the Messiah, setting one foot on the continent of eternity, and the other on the sea of human misery, and lifting up his hand and saying — 'Time and eternity are mine! I am God, and beside me there is no Saviour!' Elihu also speaks of the same person, under the name of 'a messenger', 'an interpreter', 'one of a thousand', that might commune with both God and man, concerning atonement, and justifying righteousness, and deliverance from the pit of eternal destruction.

The promise of a Redeemer descended from Eden like a precious ark, containing, for all mankind, the bread of life, and the unsearchable riches of Divine grace. It was conveyed from the house of Adam to the house of Seth, from the house of Seth to the house of Noah, from the house of Noah to the house of Abraham, and thence down through successive generations to the time of Messiah's advent. The patriarchs, before their departure, received from this ark invaluable spiritual blessings, and a passport to the everlasting city; but the ark itself they left behind for the benefit of their posterity, who found therein the balm of life, and died in the faith of a Saviour to come, according to the promise.

Job's living Redeemer is none other than the promised 'Seed', that should 'bruise the serpent's head' — Jacob's 'Lion', 'stooping down' to the 'new tomb hewn out of a rock', aiming at the King of Terrors, and on the third morning leaping and 'rushing upon the prey', and becoming the plague of death, and the destruction of the grave — the 'Jehovah-jireh' of Abraham — the 'I

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Am', who appeared to Moses in the burning bush — the 'Wonderful', the 'Councillor', the 'Child-born', and 'the Everlasting Father', predicted

by Isaiah — Jeremiah's 'Jehovah our Righteousness' — the 'Branch' and 'Fountain' of Zechariah — the 'Shepherd and Stone of Israel' — the 'Shiloh', to whom should be 'the gathering of the people' — the 'Governor', who should 'come out of Bethlehem' — Malachi's 'Sun of Righteousness' — Paul's 'Captain of our Salvation', 'bringing many sons to glory'; opening a tunnel under the river of his own sufferings, and the seas of human guilt and woe, through which his redeemed might go home to their Father's house — Peter's 'Prince of Life', 'slain and hung on a tree' — John's 'Word', that 'was in the beginning with God, and was God'; but 'was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth'.

II. The word here rendered Redeemer, is Goel in the original; and in the book of Ruth, is translated kinsman, one who has a right to redeem. The Redeemer is our near kinsman; for 'he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren'.

An individual in this country returned from India so rich that he conferred upon all his relatives an independent fortune. To us also a brother was born against the day of adversity, Who is able to enrich us all with eternal riches. You know not what hardships your brother endured in the East, while gathering the wealth you now enjoy; but we know that our brother, 'though he was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich'.

When Naomi returned from the land of Moab, Elimelech, her husband, was dead, and the inheritance greatly involved in debt. According to the law of the tribes, the nearest kinsman of the deceased debtor was obliged to marry the widow, and redeem the inheritance, so as to retain it in the same tribe. The purchaser was sought in the land of Bethlehem. One was found, sufficiently rich, but unwilling. He preferred to take off his own shoes, before the elders, at the gate of the city, rather than stand in the shoes of his deceased brother. It was done, however, by another, of the name of Boaz. But who will stand in the place of sinners, who have forfeited all claim to the heavenly inheritance, and deserve eternal damnation? Let heaven and earth meet in council, and see who is able and willing to 'redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom

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for him'. Earth replies — 'There is no such person here.' All the angels around the throne answer — 'There is none in the celestial city.' Search

the streets of Jerusalem; go to the garden of Gethsemane; inquire on the hill of Calvary. Who is willing to die for sinners today? There is the tree. There is the executioner, with hammer and nails. Who will offer himself a sacrifice there, for the redemption of man? None but Jesus. None but Jesus was able; none but Jesus was willing. 'Here am I,' said he; 'if ye seek me, let these go their way.' And without the gates of Jerusalem, he honoured the law, spoiled principalities, and redeemed his people. He suffered the curse in the sinner's stead, and swallowed up all its plagues in himself. As your representative, he endured all the agony and ignominy you justly deserved. And when you by faith lay hold of his atonement, you shall be made the righteousness of God in him — shall be dealt with, not according to your deserts, but according to his merit and his mercy. He was humbled that you might be exalted, impoverished that you might be enriched, bound that you might be released, punished that you might be spared, condemned that you might be acquitted, wounded that you might be healed, cursed that you might be blessed, and slain that you might live for ever.

III. Job's faith anticipated a Living Redeemer. 'I know that my Redeemer liveth' — is the Living One — he that has life, underived and independent, in himself — the agent and source of all life in the universe, who will at last quicken the dead.

The first woman was called Eve — that is, Life — because she was the mother of all living — the mother of him who is the life of the world. This was fulfilled four thousand years afterward in one of her daughters, a virgin, who brought forth a son, whose name is Jesus, Emmanuel, the Living God, the true God, and eternal Life. He is the Lord of life, and the life of all that believe. 'Because I live, ye shall live also.' With the flame of one candle you may light many others, and the light of all is the same. Christ is the source whence all his people derive their light, the great central luminary of his church. 'In him was life, and the life was the light of men.'

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When the prophet stood in the valley of dry bones and prophesied, there was a wonderful agitation, and the bones came together, and formed themselves into skeletons, and sinews and flesh covered them, and each form was enclosed with a skin; but they were still dead, and it was not till the breath of God blew upon them, and kindled the flame of life within them, that they 'stood up an exceeding great army'. So

Christ is the resurrection and life alike of the soul and of the body. 'He that believeth on him, though he were dead, yet shall he live.' He is the bread and the water of life. 'He that cometh unto him, shall never hunger; and he that believeth on him, shall never thirst.' 'He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son, hath not life.' 'We are dead; and our life is hid with Christ in God; when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.'

IV. The Living Redeemer of Job was to appear in this world. He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.'

A woman who is travelling, and has no money to bear her expenses, obtains credit on her husband's account, who afterward passes that way, and discharges the obligation. So ancient saints went home to glory on credit: and in the fullness of time, Christ came and paid their debt; not by instalments, but all at once; and the virtue of his own offering went up to the gate of Eden, and down to the end of the world. As on both sides of the altar of burnt-offering, were pipes, conveying the blood into the basins, till they were full; so the great altar on Calvary communicates with past generations, and generations yet to come; and the saving merit of the one sacrifice runs back to Abel and to Adam, and forward to the last believer.

Whom do I see in the garden yonder, in such agony of soul, prostrate in prayer, and sweating great drops of blood? Job's Living Redeemer. Why is his heart thus wrung with anguish? Is there a dark register of sins in his conscience, like the fiery handwriting of God upon the wall? No, he has not a single crime to confess. He has done no iniquity, neither is guile found in his mouth. Why then does he suffer? He is bearing our griefs, carrying our sorrows, and receiving the chastisement of our peace. Behold him on the mountain, 'wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities'. 'All we like sheep have gone astray

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we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.' 'He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.' 'Who shall declare his generation?' Who shall give us his pedigree, his history, his character? Will none of the angels of heaven make the air of Calvary ring with the sufferer's name? Behold! the darkened sun and quaking earth proclaim him God! Hark! he speaks — 'I am the true God, and eternal life. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning of the

Creator's way, or ever the earth was. When there was no depths, nor fountains of water; before the mountains were settled; before the hills was I brought forth; while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there; when he set a compass upon the deep; when he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the foundations of the deep; when he gave the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he established the foundations of the earth; then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men; and therefore I am here, hanging, on the cross today!

V. Job's Living Redeemer was to deliver him from the power of death.

Job anticipated the coming of 'the last enemy', who should give his flesh to be food for worms. The Sabeans had taken away the oxen and the asses, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword. The fire had fallen from heaven, and burnt up the sheep and the shepherds. The Chaldeans had robbed him of his camels, and murdered his domestics. The whirlwind had killed his sons and his daughters in the house of their feasting. His body was covered with putrid ulcers, from head to foot. His best friends turned against him, and even his wife tempted him to 'curse God and die'. But amid all his calamities, he saw another enemy, ready to assail his body, and drag it away to the tomb, and reduce it to dust and ashes. At the same time, his faith beheld the Messiah swallowing up death in victory. He saw the Son of Mary in the house of Jairus, where the lion had just slain his victim; and on the street of Nain, where he was taking the prey to his den; and

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at the grave in Bethany, where he was banqueting with worms in the joy of victory. Death could not stand before the Prince of Life. The spoiler yielded up his spoil. Christ sailed on the open channel like a man of war, delivering the hapless captives of the great pirate Death, to the astonishment and joy of the people, from Samaria to the borders of Tyre and Sidon. But on a certain day, ever to be remembered, as he drew near the ramparts of Sinai, all its batteries were opened upon him. He stood in the fire all night, and fought till he sweat great drops of blood. He threw himself between his friends and the fort, and sustained the shock of its heaviest artillery, which played upon him without intermission,



especially the old cannon of Eden — ‘Dying thou shalt die’ — until three o’clock in the afternoon of the next day, when he received a shot in the heart and, crying, ‘It is finished!’ gave up the ghost. The whole creation trembled when he fell, and was swallowed up in the horrible abyss. But on the morning of the third day, the earth was seized with new spasms, and he that was dead came forth to be the life of his people; and the cable of faith, the anchor of hope, and the sails of love, ascended with him from the deep, never to go down again. He is alive for evermore, and has the keys of hell and of death.

VI. Job speaks of the period of Messiah’s advent, under the term of ‘the latter day.’ This may refer, either to the end of the Jewish dispensation, or to the end of the world.

Christ has already once appeared on earth, fulfilled the types and shadows, made an end of sins, and brought in everlasting righteousness; ‘and to them that look for him, he shall appear the second time, without a sin-offering, unto salvation’. ‘When the Son of man shall come in his glory, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them as the shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats.’ Then shall God have finished his work in mount Zion, and the trumpets of the gospel shall cease to sound, and the great net shall be taken up from the sea, and the labourers in the vineyard shall receive their wages, and the tares shall be cast into the unquenchable fire.

Wonderful shall be the glory and the terror of that day; ‘when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire; taking vengeance on them that know not

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God, and obey not the gospel; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe.’ What a glorious army shall attend him down the sky — myriads of his saints, and all the celestial powers and principalities! ‘Fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people.’ His throne shall be ‘like a fiery flame, and his wheels like a burning furnace’. He ‘shall descend with a shout, and the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God’. The sound of the trumpet on Sinai was long and loud, and ‘exceeding terrible’; but

how much more powerful shall be the voice of 'the last trumpet', penetrating the cold ear of death, and awaking into immortality the dust of the grave! Then the Messiah shall not appear 'as a root out of dry ground'; but shall stand forth before heaven and earth 'in the glory of the Father, and of his holy angels'; in addition to the glory of his own person as God-man, and the glory of his work as Mediator. Before him, 'the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up'; and death and hell shall deliver up their dead; and all men shall stand and receive their sentence from him who was an infant in Bethlehem — 'a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief' — condemned by Pilate, mocked by the multitude, and nailed upon the cross. This is Job's living Redeemer, the resurrection and life of all who believe.

VII. Our text contains Job's confession of faith. It is brief, but very comprehensive, and may be called an epitome of the gospel. Here we have the Divinity and the humanity of Christ, his work of redemption, his victory over death and hell, his second advent, and the resurrection of the dead.

The Athenians mocked when they heard of the resurrection of the dead; and the Sadducees greatly erred on this subject, 'not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God'; and many of the Corinthians imbibed the same poison of unbelief. But the patriarch of Uz thought it not 'a thing incredible that God should raise the dead'. He firmly believed the doctrine, and gave it a prominent place in his confession. He knew that God is able to watch and preserve the dust of his saints; has his eye upon every

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particle, throughout all the periods of time; and through the Divine Mediator, 'will raise it up at the last day'. This doctrine was to him a great consolation in his unparalleled afflictions. 'Though my skin,' says he, 'is a tissue of disease and corruption — yea, though my body sink into the earth, and be eaten up of the worms, and my very reins be consumed within me — yet in my flesh, in this same body, reorganised, reanimated, and made immortal from the tomb, I shall see God — shall see him for myself, with these self-same eyes.'

Yes, brethren; the souls and bodies of all the human race shall be reunited; and with our own eyes, we shall see the judgment of quick and

dead, with his fan in his hand, thoroughly purging his floor, gathering the wheat into his garner, and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire. In that day, the tares and the wheat shall be for ever separated, and there shall be no more foolish virgins among the wise. 'For we must all appear before the judgement-seat of Christ, that we may receive the things done in the body, according to that we have done, whether it be good or evil.'

How vast the difference between Messiah's first and second advents! When he 'tabernacled and dwelt among us', he appeared 'in the form of a servant'; but when he shall come again, he shall come as a judge, and 'sit upon the throne of his glory'; and 'all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation'. 'For the Son of man shall send forth his angels; and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; then shall the righteous shine forth as the Sun in the kingdom of their Father.'

VIII. I call your attention to one other topic suggested by the text — the confidence with which Job speaks of his interest in the living Redeemer. 'For I know that my Redeemer liveth.' It was not a mere conjecture. There was no doubt in the case. The patriarch had reached the assurance of faith; and so perfectly satisfied was he of the fact, that he expressed an intense desire that his words might be recorded on the most durable materials, that they might be read by generations to come.

How may we acquire the same confidence? What is the evidence

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of our interest in Job's living Redeemer? The nature and effects of the change which has taken place in our hearts. You that 'were sometime darkness, are now light in the Lord'; have been 'called out of darkness into his marvellous light'; and can say — 'One thing I know, that whereas I was once blind, now I see.' 'The carnal mind is enmity against God'; but those that are born of the Spirit love God; and love and hatred are not so much alike, that you cannot tell by which principle you are governed. While the strong man armed kept the palace, his goods were in peace; but when a stronger than he came and cast him out, there was a warfare commenced between the old man and the new. You were formerly dead in trespasses and sins; but are now alive to God, through

our Lord Jesus Christ. You were once destitute of faith in the Redeemer; but now you believe in him, and rely upon his righteousness alone, as the ground of your acceptance and salvation. How can you experience such a transformation, and know nothing of the matter? As well might the sick, when Christ healed them — as well might the blind, when Christ opened their eyes — as well might the dead, when Christ raised them to second life from the bed, the bier, or the grave — have been ignorant of the mighty change.

In the word of God, we have the testimony of many who had obtained the assurance of faith. ‘I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand upon the earth at the latter day’ — was the testimony of Job. ‘The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, and the horn of my salvation, in whom I will trust’ — was the testimony of David. ‘I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall be joyful in God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation; he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness’ — was the testimony of Isaiah. ‘I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day’ — was the testimony of the apostle Paul. ‘We know that we are of God; we know that we have passed from death unto life; we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is’ — was the testimony of John, ‘the beloved disciple.’

‘These things,’ saith the apostle, ‘have I written unto you that believe in the name of the Son of God, that ye might know that ye have eternal life.’ This is the design of God, in revealing

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his will to the church. We may — we should know that we have eternal life. ‘He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.’ But this assurance of faith is not a mere imagination of the brain. It is not founded on a vague notion of your being one of the elect, without any other evidence. It is not founded on a voice from heaven, bidding you be of good cheer, and go in peace, because your sins are forgiven you. It is founded on the fruits of the Spirit, and the testimony of Divine Revelation. True believers are ‘created anew in Christ Jesus, unto good works’; evincing the reality of their love to God by keeping his commandments.

Let us, therefore, give all diligence to make our calling and election sure. Let us examine ourselves, whether we are in the faith. Let us

compare our religion with the precepts of the Bible, and the example of ancient saints. But as our hearts are so wicked and deceitful, let us not trust them, but pray to God for the aid of his Holy Spirit, in this important work of self-examination. Behold 'the Sweet Singer of Israel', praying — 'Search me, O God, and try me; prove me, and know my heart.' The Holy Spirit has given you a rule by which you are to examine yourselves; and he works in you a conformity to that rule, and bears witness with your spirits that you are the children of God. In proportion to his operation upon the heart, will be the assurance of faith; and in proportion to the assurance of faith, will be your spiritual comfort and joy. The Lord grant us that 'faith which worketh by love, and purifieth the heart!'

Are you stripped of property, bereft of children, afflicted in body, forsaken of friends, persecuted and insulted by relatives? Think of Job, and of Job's living Redeemer! Imitate the patriarch's patience and confidence amid all the troubles and conflicts of life! Go your way until the end; for you shall rest, and stand in your several lots at last!

## Sermon 7

### MESSIAH'S KINGDOM

*And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold, the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure (Daniel 2:44,45).*

IN these words we have a prophetic description of the kingdom of Christ, as the fifth empire that should arise after the date of this prophecy. The wonderful image which so troubled the king of Babylon in his dream, and occasioned him so much solicitude when he awoke, denoted four of the great empires of the world. The head of gold represented the Babylonian empire; the breasts and arms of silver, the Medo-Persian empire; the belly and thighs of brass, the Grecian empire, under Alexander the Great; the legs and feet of iron, the Roman empire in its strength and glory; and the ten toes of mingled iron and clay, the same empire in its divided and enfeebled state. The last circumstance was intended to denote the same thing as the ten horns on the head of the Beast in the Book of Revelation. As iron is firm and strong, and able to bruise and break all materials of a softer quality; so the Roman empire once crushed beneath its power all other kingdoms, and dictated laws to the world. As the beast with iron teeth trampled and rent to pieces all that came in its way; so the Roman tyrant, like a lion among the lambs of the flock, tore and devoured the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus.

The kingdom of Christ is represented under the figure of 'a

stone cut out of the mountain without hands': that is, without human agency — without any wisdom or power of man, but by the Spirit of God; smiting the feet of the image, and shattering it into fragments; then

becoming a great mountain, and filling the whole earth. In the history of Christianity we have the counterpart of the emblem. Messiah appeared in the form of a servant; born of a poor virgin, in the despised town of Bethlehem; lived a life of poverty, persecution, and various sorrow, from the manger to the tree; died the most painful and ignominious of deaths, even the accursed death of the cross; but rose from the dead on the predicted morning, the morning of the third day; commissioned his apostles, the fishermen of Galilee, to 'go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature'; ascended on high, and sent down the Holy Spirit, the promised Comforter, to give energy and efficacy to the word, to prove its divinity, and convince and save mankind. The apostles immediately commenced their work; persevered in the divine employment; were prospered by the power of God; and the stone, rolling forth from Mount Zion, and raising a dust which darkened the very heavens, smote the feet and legs of the image, until it shook, and the earth trembled around it; and that stone is still rolling on, and shall crush and demolish the image, and grind it to powder, and scatter it to the winds of heaven; and shall increase, till it becomes a great mountain, and fills the whole earth for ever.

In speaking of the accomplishment of this prophecy, we will notice — its certainty, its attendant glory, and the nearness of its approach.

I. The certainty of the accomplishment of this prophecy is founded, *first*, on the Father's promise to the Son, made on the express condition of his pouring out his soul unto death. 'I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thy hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring forth the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the Prison-house.' Christ's universal dominion is the promised reward of his sufferings, and the Father speaks as if he intended to raise his wages. 'Thus saith the Lord; It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a light of the

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gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the ends of the earth.' 'Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.' Such is the promise. All nations shall come and worship before him. All that the Father hath

given shall come unto him, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against them.

The certainty of Messiah's universal dominion is founded, *secondly*, on his perfect qualification to accomplish the work which the Father hath given him to do. 'No one knoweth the Father', in all the perfection of his nature, all the wisdom of his counsels, and all the immutability of his purposes, 'but the Son; and no one knoweth the Son, but the Father', as he alone is of the same essence, and exhibits the same attributes. Christ is 'God manifest in the flesh'; 'the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person.' None but a divine person could give, and none but a divine person could receive, such a privilege as is here promised. None but a divine person could be competent to the eternal redemption of countless millions of the human race. Christ 'is the true God, and Eternal Life' — 'the Faithful Witness, the First Begotten from the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth' — 'the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, the First and the Last' — 'the Root and the Offspring of David, and the Bright and Morning Star' — 'Over all, God, blessed for ever.' These are Messiah's titles, which evince his equality to the work which he has undertaken — the salvation of the world, and the subjugation of all things unto himself. He is able, not only to set up his kingdom, but also to establish it for ever. It shall never be destroyed, nor left to other people; but shall break in pieces and destroy all other kingdoms, and the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ.

Take courage, ye fearful saints! Your king is the Almighty God. He shall conquer all your enemies. The victory of Calvary is the pledge and earnest of his universal dominion. You shall soon be more than conquerors, through him that hath loved you, and given himself for you. He is able to protect you against the combined powers of earth and hell. Omniscient, he is well acquainted with all the plots of his enemies; Almighty, he can at any moment frustrate them. The prince of darkness, with all his hosts, cannot impede the progress of his kingdom. In all their councils, he is

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present, hearing their deliberations and discovering their malice. He overturns their schemes, or employs them for the accomplishment of his own gracious purposes. 'His counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure.' Too wise to err, and too powerful to be overcome, he marches



in the van of battle, and will never forsake his soldiers. The very sight of his helmet and his plume is victory to his followers, and death to his foes.

Courage, ye friends of Zion! 'Lift up your hearts and rejoice, for your redemption draweth nigh.' Take the whole armour of God; quit you like men; be strong; for the decisive conflict is at hand. Behold your General, clothed with a garment white as snow, girt about the loins with a golden girdle, his feet as fine brass burning in a furnace, his countenance as the sun shining in his strength, his eyes as a flame of fire, his voice as the sound of many waters, a sharp two-edged sword proceeding out of his mouth, seven stars in his right hand, and at his girdle the keys of death and hell. This is the Captain of your salvation, of whom the Evangelical Prophet inquires — 'Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength?' This is Emmanuel; mighty to conquer, and mighty to save. Who can stand before the glory of his power? Who can hinder the universal triumph of his cause? The government shall be upon his shoulder, and he shall reign for ever and ever.

What has been said is deemed sufficient to show the certainty of Messiah's universal empire. The promises of the Father to the Son are so many drafts of immense amount, upon the bank of heaven, which will be paid without discount at the appointed time; and the character of Christ is a sufficient guarantee that he will carry forward to its completion the work which he has begun. Having secured a title to the kingdom by his sufferings, he shall certainly come, and take possession, and reign for ever. The gospel is a lever, whose fulcrum is the Rock of Ages, and it shall yet lift our fallen world to heaven. Balaam knew that his curses could not injure Israel, whom Jehovah had blessed, The kingdom of Messiah is mightier than Moab. The people beloved of the Lord shall prosper in spite of their enemies — as gardens by the rivers, and willows by the water-courses. 'There shall be a handful of corn', not a sackful, only so much as the sower may hold in his

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hand — not on the bank of the Nile, nor in the valley of the Jordan, but 'on the top of the mountain' — the wild, high, rocky, uncultivated mountain; 'the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon,' and the wind shall carry the seed to the uttermost parts of the earth, and young Lebanons shall grow up everywhere, and even the barren rocks and sands of Arabia

shall become as the garden of God. It was but a handful of the seed of the kingdom, which Peter cast abroad on the day of Pentecost; it was but a handful he sowed in the house of Cornelius, the captain of the Italian band; but it soon spread throughout Judæa, and even to the isles of the sea, so that nothing was more manifest or more abundant than its fruit. But the prevalence of Christ's millennial kingdom shall be still more rapid and glorious; and 'from the rising to the setting of the sun, his name shall be great among the Gentiles.'

Already the church is singing — 'Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O thou Most Mighty; and in thy majesty, ride prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness. Thine arrows are sharp in the hearts of the king's enemies, whereby the people fall under thee.' The song has reached the ear of the Prince of Darkness, and he 'hath come in great wrath' to the battle, 'for he knoweth that he hath but a short time.' He knows that 'the Desire of nations' is come; and that his kingdom, already begun, shall be established for ever, and extend from sea to sea, till the knowledge of his glory and the victories of his grace shall cover the earth. He sees the Stone rolling against the idols of India, and Africa, and the islands of the sea, and feels his kingdom shake beneath its progress. He sees the Bramins, the Karens, the worshippers of Juggernaut and the Ganges, plucked as brands out of the burning. He trembles to anticipate the announcement — 'The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ!' He beholds the mighty angel, with the keys of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand, descending from heaven, to bind him in his prison. He hates the church, with her various benevolent enterprises; for he sees in them the artillery of Heaven, playing upon his fortresses of infidelity, and idolatry, and vice — the enginery of God, setting up a kingdom which shall consume all others, and stand for ever. 'The dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof is sure.'

## II. We call your attention to the glory of Messiah's universal

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reign. It includes three things; the victory obtained, the blessings bestowed, and the duration of the kingdom. Let us consider them distinctly.

*First.* The victory obtained. Here we behold the 'stone cut out of the mountain', rolling down the steep, rushing and leaping toward the great image, and smiting and breaking its feet of iron and clay, so that it falls

like Dagon before the ark. And still the Stone, instinct with the power of God, and increasing in size and velocity, keeps rolling to and fro, bounding and rebounding, till it grinds the fallen image to powder, and scatters it as the dust of the summer threshing-floor. It is endued with perpetual motion; keeping up a constant action and reaction, crushing whatever opposes its progress, and growing to such a magnitude as shall shortly fill the whole earth. This is the salt of Galilee, seasoning the nations — the leaven of Jerusalem, spreading through the world. This is the victorious reign of Christ, from the Tiber to the Thames, from the Euphrates to the Ganges, from Britain to Japan, from sea to sea, and from pole to pole. This glorious conquest is to be obtained by 'the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God'; in connection with the vast machinery of Divine Providence, all the wheels of which are under the direction of Jesus the Christ. It is a victory over Satan, by bruising his head; a victory over sin, by destroying its power; a victory over death, by swallowing it up for ever. Emmanuel has already successfully engaged all these foes; and having routed them on Calvary eighteen hundred years ago, he still pursues their flight; and shall not turn again, till he has trampled 'the last enemy' under his feet.

Satan is the prince and the god of this world. In the management of his affairs, he employs a policy similar to that of the Sultan of Constantinople, who sets up many pashas or governors under him, as the Pasha of Egypt, the Pasha of Aleppo, the Pasha of Damascus, all possessing the same despotic spirit, and carrying out the same tyrannical measures. The devil has established a great number of pashas throughout his dominion. Three of them are described by the Revelator, as unclean spirits, like frogs; one of them issuing from the mouth of Satan himself, representing undisguised Paganism; another from the mouth of the Beast, representing a persecuting civil power; the third from the mouth of the False Prophet, representing abominable and damnable heresies.

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But these shall all be conquered; these, and every other enemy of Messiah upon earth. Jewish impenitence and unbelief, which, for a period of eighteen centuries, has ruled with an absolute sceptre the lineal descendants of Abraham, shall be overcome. Mohammedanism, the 'king of fierce countenance, understanding dark sentences', that has reigned over so large a portion of the world, practising and prospering, deceiving millions of souls, and destroying the holy people, shall be

broken without hand, and his kingdom shall come to naught. The drunken harlot of Rome, riding on her scarlet beast, that is, a cruel and persecuting civil government, and making all nations drink of the wine of her fornication, shall be obliged to drink the wine of the wrath of Almighty God; and all the saints shall clap their hands at her overthrow, and shout hallelujah to the Captain of their salvation. And all those Protestant pashas of Satan, who would undermine the gospel by denying its peculiar and fundamental doctrines — such as the Divinity of Christ, the merit of his sacrifice, the excellency of his offices, the personality and work of the Holy Spirit — and even the existence of his own infernal majesty, shall be destroyed by the brightness of Emmanuel's coming, when he shall appear in the glory of his millennial kingdom. Then shall the song of the heavenly host break once more upon the ear of Zion — 'Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee!' And 'the Gentiles shall come to her light, and kings to the brightness of her rising.' 'Her sons shall come from far, and her daughters shall be nursed at her side.' 'The glory of the Lord shall be displayed, and all flesh shall see it together.'

*Secondly.* The blessings bestowed. Christ 'hath ascended on high, and received gifts for men; yea for the rebellious also, that God may dwell among them.' The celestial reservoir is full; and the golden pipes are laid, for conveying the waters of life to every soul of man; and the time shall yet come, when all shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest. The gospel salvation shall be an ocean, spreading over the whole earth; and there shall be no more ebbing and flowing of the waters, but a continual full tide from shore to shore. The Chinese, the Hottentot, and the American Indian, shall be as thoroughly instructed in Divine things as the Welshman; and the Welshman shall be seven times more intelligent than now. And this universally prevalent knowledge of

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Christ shall be, not merely nominal and theoretical, but experimental and practical. It shall be a 'faith unfeigned,' 'of the operation of God', 'working by love, and purifying the heart'. The light of the gospel shall be 'as the sun shining in his strength', scattering all clouds from the face of the world, and the moon and the stars shall be lost in its effulgence. Living waters shall flow out from the spiritual Jerusalem in summer and winter; neither frozen by the cold, nor evaporated by the heat. Like the deluge of Noah, they shall cover the mountains; but they shall save, and

not destroy, all whom they shall overwhelm. 'In that day, there shall be one Lord, and his name shall be one'; and he 'shall be king over all the earth'. The cause of Christ shall be pre-eminent in the estimation of mankind. The duties and interests of Christianity shall constitute no secondary concern. 'The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the tops of the mountains, and exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it.'

Among the blessings of this happy period, shall be that of a universal and everlasting peace. There shall be no more contention and bloodshed upon earth. 'Nation shall no more lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.' The arsenals shall empty their contents into the foundries and blacksmith-shops, and the weapons of war shall be converted into scythes and plowshares. O, glorious day! when heaven shall be seen upon earth, and earth itself shall seem like heaven! Behold the ferocious wolf dwelling with the gentle lamb; the furious leopard lying down with the innocent kid; the cow and the bear feeding in the same pasture; the infant leading the lion by the mane, and playing upon the den of the adder and the asp; and no disposition to hurt or destroy. These are the scriptural emblems of that blessed peace. Holiness and happiness, more united than David and Jonathan, more inseparable than Ruth and Naomi, hand in hand, two heavenly twins, shall go singing over the world. All envy and jealousy and hostility, whether of nations, of churches, or of individuals, shall perish before Messiah's kingdom, as perished the image in the vision before that wondrous stone.

*Thirdly.* The duration of the kingdom. This is the crowning circumstance of its glory. It 'shall not be destroyed, nor left to other people'. Its enemies, however numerous and mighty, cannot overthrow it; and it 'shall stand for ever'. Where now are the

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illustrious empires of Babylon, and Persia, and Greece, and Rome? Where are the Pharaohs, the Ptolemies, the Alexanders, the Cæsars, the Napoleons, whose voice terrified nations, and whose tread shook the world? Where — with all their power and splendour, their iron sceptres and golden crowns? Gone; mouldering in the dust; and their magnificence nourishes the worm. They are utterly demolished, and shall rise no more. But the King of Zion liveth through all time, and is himself 'the Father of Eternity,' 'the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the

Ending, the First and the Last'. 'His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and of his dominion there shall be no end.'

III. Let us consider the nearness of its approach. The language of prophecy, viewed in connection with the signs of the times, will lead us to the conclusion that it is nigh at hand, even at the door.

Many learned divines are of opinion that Popery and Mohammedanism, the Antichrists of the east and the west, must fall about the year 1866. This notion is founded on the following words: 'From the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and threescore days — Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days' (Daniel 12:11,12). Different writers on the prophecies, however, differ in opinion concerning the times of their fulfilment. All these speculations are very uncertain, if not utterly unprofitable. What matters it, if our watches do not exactly agree? We all know that the night is far spent, and the day is at hand, and the magnitude and importance of our duty requires prompt and earnest attention.

Five men were determined to rise early in the morning, to engage in a great work, upon which depended their future fortunes. The first was up before the morning star; and though uncertain as to the hour, immediately prepared for business. The second, when he rose, saw the star just above the horizon, and hastened to his work with animation and joy. The third slept a little too long and awoke in great confusion and alarm; but hurrying through the day as well as he could, though with a heavy heart and many a blunder, he made out partially to redeem his delinquency. The

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fourth heard the cock crowing, but thought there was no need of being in a hurry, and composed himself to sleep again; and when his neighbours called him, turned in his bed, and answered — 'A little more slumber'; and awaking about nine of the clock, found the day too far advanced, and abandoned his purpose in despair. The fifth, disturbed by the bustle of the others before daylight, got up and looked out of the window; and finding it as dark as it was at midnight, was very angry, called his neighbours a set of fools, and declared he would have nothing to do with the enterprise; and while all the others made themselves rich, he lived and died in deserved poverty; and some pitied him for his

misfortune, and others ridiculed him for his folly. Mark the wise man, and follow his example.

The kingdom of Antichrist has of late been greatly weakened in many parts of the world. Providence is pouring the vials of wrath upon the Beast and the False Prophet. The idols and altars of Paganism fall before the advancing ark of God. The church, with its train of benevolent institutions — like the bride, with her attendant virgins, going forth to meet the royal bridegroom — proclaims the coming of the Prince of Peace. The Bible, Missionary, Sabbath-school, and Tract societies, are four heralds, running before Messiah's chariot; rather, the four wheels of that chariot in which he rides victoriously.

The rise and progress of the British and Foreign Bible Society remind me of the stream in Ezekiel's vision. This great river had its source in one of the mountains of Wales. In the year 1802, the Rev. Mr Charles of Bala, an ordained minister of the established church, officiating in connection with the Calvinistic Methodists, deeply impressed with the preciousness of the Bible, and aware of the scarcity of copies throughout the principality, felt that some measures ought to be adopted to furnish it at a reduced price, and circulate it gratuitously among the poor. He wrote concerning it to his countryman, the Rev. Mr Owen, an Episcopal clergyman in London. The subject was subsequently introduced to a circle of Christian gentlemen, who had met to transact other business. It elicited much conversation, and excited a lively interest. The Rev. Joseph Hughes, a Welshman, and Baptist minister at Battersea, near London, suggested that Wales was not the only part of the world that felt a want of the Bread of Life; and that it was

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desirable to awaken, if possible, a more extensive interest on the subject among Christians of every name; and stir them up to the adoption of some measure, which might lead to a general circulation of the Scriptures. The suggestion was heartily entertained, and warmly supported by the rest of the company; and its discussion led to those incipient efforts, which, in 1804, issued in the organisation of the British and Foreign Bible Society. The little spring of Bala soon became a stream large enough for a man to swim in; and now it widens and deepens into a great river, on which float the merchandise of Zion, and the navies of God.

Welshmen! it is your privilege and honour, as well as your duty, to sustain this excellent institution. It is a native of Wales, born in your northern mountains. It is your own child, and you are bound to protect and support it to the extent of your ability. I call upon you as Welshmen, to aid an institution originating in Welsh philanthropy. I call upon you as Welsh Baptists, to help forward an enterprise which sprang from the heart of a Welsh Baptist minister. I appeal to you in the language of another:—

The cause in which we are engaged is the cause of God, and must succeed. Divine goodness has inspired, divine wisdom and power will sustain it. The Bible will be carried throughout the habitable globe. Nor deserts — nor oceans — nor Alpine solitudes — nor Himalayan heights, will obstruct its progress. It will go through polar ice and equatorial fire, wherever a soul may possibly be saved. It will go on victorious, like the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, carrying every thing before it. Error and delusion must vanish as the mists of the morning before the rising splendour of the sun. The powers of darkness must recede like spectres before the bursting of the day-spring from on high. False gods and their altars must fall together in the dust. The followers of Confucius and Zoroaster will take up their cross and follow Christ. The wandering Arab will sit and sing at Messiah's feet; and the deluded disciples of Mohammed, instead of going in painful pilgrimage to Mecca, will turn their penitent eyes to Calvary. The dark places of the earth will be enlightened, and the habitations of cruelty will become the abodes of love. Rivers will no longer roll with human blood, nor sacrificial fires be fed with human victims. Mothers will no longer destroy their innocent children, nor aged parents be immolated by their inhuman offspring. Marriage will be instituted

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in places where it is now unknown, and savage practices be supplanted by the virtuous institutions of the gospel. The Cannibal of New Zealand will be humanised, and the Caffre and the Hottentot clothed and in their right minds. The descendants of Abraham must be gathered from the four quarters of the earth; Jerusalem arise and shine; and the dejected Jordan roll his streams with joy. Barren climes will teem with life — dreary deserts blossom as the rose. Rivers of salvation will run down the hills, and fertilise the plains. The Saviour will ride forth in the chariot of the everlasting gospel, conquering and to conquer. Nations will fall down before him, and mountains melt at his approach. And thus nation after nation will be converted, and empire upon empire will be conquered; and Christianity will spread from clime to clime, and from pole to pole; until the final arrival



of the blessed day, when the knowledge of the Lord shall literally cover the earth as the waters cover the deep — when there shall be but one people and one God — when the millennial day shall burst upon the earth, like a flood of glory from on high — when the trump of Jubilee shall sound, and countless millions of the redeemed shall sing, Hallelujah! the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!

Such, brethren, is the approaching triumph of Emmanuel. The mighty angel, having found an old copy of the everlasting gospel, which the Pope had kept locked up in his bureau for many centuries is flying in the midst of heaven, in sight of all the world. His progress is rapid as the wings of the wind, and his sweet strong voice is publishing the glad tidings to all people. But we look for greater things than these. Following, comes another mighty angel, casting a great millstone into the sea, and saying — ‘Thus shall Babylon, that great city, be thrown down, and found no more at all.’ Another follows, crying with a loud voice ‘Babylon is fallen, is fallen!’ Another descends with the key and the chain, and binds the dragon in the bottomless pit. Then appears one ‘like unto the Son of Man’, sitting upon a white cloud, and wearing a golden crown. He thrusts in his sharp sickle, and reaps the harvest of the earth, and gathers the wheat into his garner, the church. Again the sickle falls, and the vintage of wickedness is gathered, and cast into the wine-press of the wrath of Almighty God. Then comes the voice of a great multitude, as of many waters and mighty thunderings — the blended

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minstrelsy of earth and heaven — ascribing salvation and dominion and glory to him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.

The Prince of Darkness, with all his infernal hosts, and all his allies upon earth, is fearfully agitated, as he witnesses the preparation for the great decisive battle. ‘Why so much benevolence? Why so many societies? Why such extraordinary schemes and efforts?’ Nothing disturbs them so much as the sight of Emmanuel’s troops, with their faces toward the field of Armageddon, led on by the Captain of their Salvation, on his white horse, with his vesture dipped in blood. They know that this is the Lion of the tribe of Judah; and the redness of his apparel, reminding them of their defeat when he bruised their heads on Calvary, shoots consternation and anguish through all their ranks; and the gates of hell tremble at the shaking of the iron rod in his hand, which shall dash them in pieces as a potter’s vessel. But the saints are rejoicing in his train; for

they know that not one of the faithful shall perish — that not one of them shall be wounded — that each shall be more than conqueror, and all shall appear with songs of everlasting joy at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

And now, my brethren, children of my heavenly Father, of every name and order, loved with the same love, redeemed with the same blood, called by the same Spirit, clothed with the same garment, fed on the same manna, engaged in the same cause — the great Missionary enterprise — as you love the Saviour as you appreciate his salvation, as you desire the introduction of his millennial kingdom, we beseech you to give us a liberal contribution!

We are now ready to receive your money for Missionary purposes; and while you are casting it into the treasury, let me remind you that your gold and your silver are beautiful birds plumed for flight, that Christian liberality is the scissors with which you may clip their wings, and a short winged bird is better than none. May we all act today as stewards of the Lord, in the immediate presence of our Master, before whom we must soon appear to account for the use made of our talents; and when the time of reckoning shall come, may each receive the gracious plaudit — ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many! Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!’ Amen.

## Sermon 8

### *THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST*

*Who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree; that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed (1 Peter 2:24).*

WHAT great encouragement to patience and fortitude is afforded the followers of Jesus, by the apostle's contrast of the light and transient afflictions of the present time, with the eternal weight of glory reserved for them in heaven! How forcible the argument which he draws from the approaching scenes of another world, to urge Christians in this to a life of holiness and self-denial! How vivid and terrible his picture of the dissolution of nature by the great conflagration! Imagine the heavens wrapped in dissolving flames, and the elements melting to the centre of the globe. The victorious and inextinguishable fire towers to the empyrean; the magnificent palace of creation is lost in the smoke of its own burning; and the ear is stunned, and the soul is horrified, by the crash of its final fall. 'Seeing then, that all these things must be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness; looking for, and hasting unto the coming of the day of God'; 'using all diligence to make your calling and election sure'; 'that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless'; that 'so an abundant entrance may be ministered unto you, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ'!

Such, substantially, is the argument. But the apostle employs another; the Christian's obligation to imitate Christ, suffering for him as he suffered for us, with the same fortitude and resignation, though not to the same extent, nor for the same purpose. It is in

this connection he uses the language of the text:—'Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if,

when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.' We are to suffer for Christ as his disciples and confessors; he suffered for us as our substitute, our atoning sacrifice and Saviour. Let us attend, first, to this description of his sufferings; and then to the end for which he endured them.

I. The text describes Christ in his vicarious sufferings, as *bearing our sins*; bearing our sins, *his own self*; bearing our sins, his own self, *in his own body*; and bearing our sins, his own self, in his own body, *on the tree*.

1. *He bore our sins*. To get a correct understanding of this expression, we must turn to the record of the ordinance to which it alludes, which is as follows:— 'And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat, and Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, in all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat; and shall send him away, by the hand of a fit man, into the wilderness; and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities into a land not inhabited; and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.' But this part of the ceremony was preceded by another, of very solemn import. A goat was selected for a sin-offering. He was brought before the Lord, and Aaron put his hands upon him, and devoted him to death. He was slain, and his blood was sprinkled upon the altar and the mercy-seat. Then the sins of the children of Israel were laid upon the head of the other goat, and he was led forth, and

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sent away into the wilderness, to return no more. Both these goats represented Christ; who, as our Saviour, answers to both; at once, suffering for our sins, and bearing them away into the land of forgetfulness.

Three things were found continually in the temple; fire, and blood, and sweet incense. The fire denoted the wrath of God against sin; the

blood prefigured the sacrificial sufferings of Christ; and the sweet incense typified his intercession at the right hand of the Father, on the ground of his vicarious death upon the cross. The goat of the sin-offering was bound and slain; and then burnt up, with the fat thereof, upon the altar. So Christ was crucified for us without the gates of Jerusalem; and his humanity was consumed by the fire of God's holy indignation against sin, on the altar of his Divinity; while from that altar ascended a column of the sweetest incense to the heaven of heavens — 'Father, forgive them!' In hell also there is fire, where sinners suffer upon the altars of eternal justice. Every sacrifice is salted with fire, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever. But the black and sulphurous smoke of the bottomless pit is not a sweet smelling savour unto God, like the fumes of the sacrifice once offered on Calvary — a sacrifice which satisfied the claim of Heaven, and expiated the offence of earth.

The form of expression used in our text is one which frequently occurs in the Old Testament, and signifies the enduring of punishment. Of the impenitent sinner it is said, 'He shall bear his iniquity' — that is, he shall endure the just punishment of his sins. He shall carry the burden alone, and for ever sink beneath the load, and mercy shall never come to his relief. Christ's bearing our sins, then, signifies his enduring the punishment in our stead. Glory to God, that every poor trembling sinner may cast his burden upon one who is able to sustain it, who has already sustained it in his stead! The law passed the guilty, and arrested the guiltless. Jesus willingly gave himself up as the victim, saying — 'I am he; if ye seek me, let these go their way.' His sufferings constitute the sea, in which are buried for ever the sins of his people; sins of the greatest magnitude; sins of the deepest dye. The Father, who turned his back upon the sufferings of his Son, hath said — 'I will cast all thy sins behind my back, into the depth of the sea.' This is the abyss, in which they are swallowed up, and seen no more.

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2. He bore our sins, *his own self*. God and man were parties at variance. There was but one who could stand between them as mediator, and he gave himself a substitute and sacrifice for the sinner. Uniting in his person the two natures, human and Divine, he was fully qualified for his work; and by once offering himself, he satisfied the demands of the insulted law, and 'became the author of eternal salvation to all them that

obey him'. He offered up himself, without the aid of another; and it was his own blessed person that he threw between you and the destroying angel, between you and the mortal plague of sin, between you and the unquenchable fires of hell.

None but Moses, the mediator, could penetrate the thick darkness in which, as in a pavilion, God dwelt, upon the mount of terror; and none but Aaron, the high-priest, dared enter the holy of holies, and he only once a year, on the great day of atonement, with trembling steps, and sacrificial blood. So Jesus, the mediator of a better covenant, and high-priest of the true sanctuary, the sum and substance of all the types and shadows of the old dispensation, when, in the garden of Gethsemane, he approached the black and terrible cloud, where God revealed the terrors of his justice, and the fierceness of his wrath, said to his disciples:— 'Tarry ye here, while I go yonder. Ye cannot go; the place is too dreadful. I will go alone.' Alone he went; and as he drew near the furnace, his countenance was marvellously altered, his heart melted in the midst of his bowels, and the very substance of his life pressed through the pores of his skin. All the visible fire which flamed on the summit of Sinai, now breaks forth anew on Calvary; and though unseen by man, envelopes in its burning the soul and the body of our glorious Substitute. Behold him rushing between you and the flames, shielding you, and quenching the flames in his blood!

3. He bore our sins, his own self, in his *own body*. Atonement was made for the sins of Israel by the blood of slaughtered beasts. But 'the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctified only to the purifying of the flesh.' The blood of Christ alone has power to 'purge the conscience from dead works, to serve the living God'. It was his own body, that our blessed Redeemer offered as a sacrifice for our sins, a sacrifice of a sweet savour unto God. The Divine person bore the

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punishment of sins in human nature. 'It was not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins.' We hear the Son saying to the Father:— 'Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared for me. I see that the services of the altar are of no avail, and are passing away. In burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast no pleasure. At this moment, the great cause of difference between heaven and earth remains untaken away. The bills are all uncanceled. The

handwriting in the book of the law, and in the book of conscience, continues in full force unto this day. But lo, I come to do thy will, O my God. Yea, thy law is within my heart. I delight to honour its claims, while I save its violators. I will obey, even unto the death of the cross, and expiate human transgression by my meritorious sufferings. Then, as first begotten from the dead, will I declare the decree which thou didst read to me before the foundation of the world 'Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Because I have bruised thee, and put thee to grief, thou shalt see thy seed, and prolong thy days; and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in thy hand. Because thou hast borne the sins of many, thou shalt justify many. Because thou hast been numbered with the transgressors and made intercession for them, thou shalt see of the travail of thy soul, and be satisfied. Because thou hast made thy soul an offering for sin, pouring it out unto death, I will divide thee a portion with the great, and thou shalt divide the spoil with the strong. I will make thee king in Zion and thou shalt reign for ever and ever!'

The sufferings of the Son are accomplished, and the promise of the Father is receiving its fulfilment. The law of the Spirit of Life hath gone forth; and sinners, with songs of salvation, are crowding to the cross!

4. He bore our sins, his own self, in his own body, *on the tree*. In Deuteronomy 21:22,23, we find that death by hanging on a tree was deemed an accursed death. Paul refers to this passage in the third chapter of his epistle to the Galatians:—'As it is written; cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.' By consenting to crucifixion Christ was 'made a curse for us'. What shame and ignominy did he endure in our behalf! See him arrayed in royal purple, the reed of scorn in his hand, the crown of thorns upon his head, and the cross of infamy upon his back. He grows faint beneath his

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burden. His murderers, fearing lest his woes should pass endurance before their cruel thirst for his blood could be satiated, compel Simon of Cyrene to carry one end of the cross. Thus they move on to the summit of Calvary. They lay the tree upon the ground, and stretch the Son of God upon it, and nail his hands and his feet to the wood. It is reared on high, with its bleeding victim; and there he hangs, before the gazing world, and the wondering heavens; suffering the most excruciating death ever invented, the most shameful in the sight of man, the most accursed in the sight of God. All the springs of consolation are

sealed to the glorious sufferer; and he finds not a single drop of comfort in his great extremity. True, the fountains of the deep are broken up, and the windows of heaven are opened; but not to supply him with drink who saith — ‘I thirst!’ From below burst forth upon him the streams of hellish rage, a fiery deluge from the mouth of the dragon; while from above Divine Justice pours down a cataract of wrath, overwhelming his soul with agony, and baptising his body with blood. This is the baptism which he anticipated in talking with his disciples:— ‘I have a baptism to be baptised with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!’ Let us pause a moment to contemplate this baptism. It was the anguish of his soul, wringing the blood from his person, till the crimson dew stood thick upon his brow, and rolled down in great drops to the ground. The sufferings of his soul constituted the soul of his sufferings. ‘My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.’ It was not the taunt of the rabble, the derision of the governors, nor the cruelly lacerating scourge, that Jesus dreaded in the garden, and deprecated in that mysterious agony. Nor was it the thorns, the nails, the tree, or the spear. It was the burden, O man! of thy guilt; the flaming curse of the law; the felt displeasure of the Father against sin. When the martyrs suffered death for Jesus’s sake, they rejoiced in the midst of the fire, for the Son of man was there to sustain them; but when Christ suffered, the Just for the unjust, he felt the hidings of his Father’s face, and cried after him through the blackening heavens — ‘My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me!’

In the Bible we read of two very remarkable trees; ‘the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden’, and the tree of redemption high planted on ‘the place of skulls’. Milton

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has made the former the theme of his majestic song, which he opens wide the following strain:—

Of man’s first disobedience, and the fruit  
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste  
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,  
With loss of Eden, \* \* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \* \* sing, Heavenly Muse!

But let me extol that mysterious tree of life on Golgotha, by which, —

— One Greater Man  
Restores us, and regains the blissful seat!



'Sing, Heavenly Muse,' of Jesus and his cross! Sing of the wormwood and the gall, of the strife and the triumph of Calvary! Let us compare these two trees. By the former, 'the first Adam' transgressed, and entailed ruin upon his posterity; by the latter, 'the second Adam' 'became obedient unto death', and 'brought life and immortality to light.' By a forbidden approach to the one, the chain of the covenant was broken, Paradise forfeited, God's image and favour lost, the league with hell signed, and sealed, and ratified, and the whole earth converted into a province of the Prince of Darkness, and delivered up to the despotism of Sin and Death; but four thousand years afterward, the Son of God took his stand on the other, wrestled gloriously with the tyrant usurpers, dethroned Satan, condemned and abolished Sin, swallowed up Death in victory, disannulled the league of earth with hell, restored to believers the favour and image of God, reopened the gates of the forfeited Eden to the exiles, and established a new and everlasting covenant of grace. The blood of Jesus cancelled the debt of man, and quenched the wrath of God; and from all them that obey him, it will ultimately wash away all the stains of sin, and all the dust of death. This is the newly consecrated way into the holy of holies; this is eternal life! 'Sing, Heavenly Muse', once more!

We too with him are dead,  
 And shall with him arise:  
 The cross on which he bows his head  
 Shall lift us to the skies!

Thus, the Son of God, 'his own self, bore our sins, in his own body, on the tree'. The burden beneath which he fainted was our burden, and would have sunk us to perdition. It was for us

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he suffered and died. Though our iniquities were laid on him, they were yet our iniquities. He endured the punishment in our stead. He stood between us and the uplifted arm of Justice; and the sword which would have cleft our souls asunder, was sheathed in Emmanuel's heart. His righteousness, imputed to us, and appropriated by faith, is 'the righteousness of God, which is unto all and upon all them that believe', covering their sins, and rendering them 'accepted in the Beloved'.

Can we pass by mount Calvary, and gaze upon that wondrous sight, and still remain unmoved? Have we no tears of gratitude and love? Pause

we not to wonder and adore? O the depth of the riches! the riches of his wisdom! the riches of his grace!

II. Having thus spoken of Christ's vicarious sufferings, let us notice a little more particularly the end for which he endured them. 'That we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed.'

This death unto sin, and this new life unto righteousness, denote the sanctification of the soul 'by the renewing of the Holy Spirit'. The 'spiritually minded' man is made, through the grace of God, a 'partaker of the Divine nature'. He has received a new principle, whereby his lusts and corruptions are mortified, crucified, and slain. The right hand that offended is cut off; the right eye that offended is plucked out. He delights in the law of God; he feels a strong desire, and makes strenuous efforts, to conform himself, in heart and life, to its holy requirements. Made free from the dominion and condemning power of sin, he still needs, however, the aid of the Holy Spirit, to crucify the old man; to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world; to die to sins, and live unto righteousness. In the court of heaven, he is justified by the righteousness of Christ; but before men, he is justified by his own righteousness. 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.' Be as a candle, not under a bushel, but on a candlestick, enlightening all around you. Paul to the Ephesians says, that Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without

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blemish. God hath not called us unto uncleanness but unto holiness. Let us, therefore cleanse ourselves from all filthiness — from all manner of pollution — of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. For it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy; holy in all manner of conversation; holy in all stations, relations, and conditions of life — as husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants; and this always, and in all places — at home and abroad, in private and in public, in prosperity and adversity. Our conversation should be such as becometh the nature and requirements of the gospel of Christ. Forgetting the things that are behind, we should be ever pressing forward

towards those things that are before — not as though we had already attained, either were already perfect; but making perfection our mark; for we know not yet what we shall be, but one thing we do know — that when he shall appear, we shall be like him! Then, and not till then, shall we be satisfied, when we awake in his likeness. We must be conformed to the image of God's Son in this world, otherwise we cannot have the enjoyment of him in the world to come. We must have the spirit of Christ, to love, righteousness, and to hate iniquity. We must imitate his example in zeal and activity, doing our Father's work while the day lasts. Die to sin, we must. 'For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die, but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.' Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth. Put off the old man with all his deceitful lusts, and put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. Abstain from those fleshy lusts that war against the soul; always keeping in mind, that they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts. To die to sin, implies a perfect hatred of it, deep sorrow and contrition on account of it, and a constant desire and effort to forsake it. We should conscientiously use all the means of grace, and depend entirely upon the grace of God, as that by which alone we can obtain a victory — final and complete, — over all our enemies, the flesh, the world, and the devil. Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion goeth about, seeking whom he may devour. Good reason have you to pray without ceasing, that you may be made strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. You must put on the whole armour

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of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Your loins must be girt about with truth. The breast-plate of righteousness you must wear. Your heart must be protected by the shield of faith, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Forget not the helmet of salvation, nor the sword of the Spirit, nor to write often to the King — directing to the care of Jesus, that your petitions may not fail — 'Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.' As ye formerly yielded your members servants to uncleanness, even so now yield your members servants of righteousness unto holiness. Live unto righteousness. Yield yourselves up unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members

as instruments of righteousness unto God. Conform to his revealed will, and keep an eye single to his glory in the performance of every duty.

To produce in his people this happy change, was the end of Messiah's sufferings. But this was not all, for the apostle adds, 'By whose stripes ye were healed'. Divine philosophy! supernatural science! transcending all original conception of men and angels! Who could ever have dreamed of healing by his stripes, soundness by his wounds, pleasure by his pains, and life eternal by his death! We are afflicted by the old inveterate plague of sin, but there is balm in Gilead, and a Physician there. His blood alone can cure the malady, and that is infallible. All the way from Bethlehem to Calvary, he was employed in preparing his *materia medica*. The Gospel is the great store-house of this precious preparation. It is always full; it is always free; and the sign over its entrance is — 'Able to save to the uttermost.' The Holy Spirit is continually making the application, and all who come are cured.

It is a matter of all others the most momentous, that we know our personal interest in these things. If we be not dead to sins, and alive unto righteousness — if we be not healed by the stripes of Jesus — his sufferings upon the cross, and our theoretical faith in their vicarious character and saving power, will profit us nothing. 'If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.' There is a vast difference between sanctification and morality. A man may perform many excellent deeds, while the principle that

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actuates him is averse to true godliness. Happy are they, whose sins are pardoned, whose persons are justified, and whose bodies are become temples of the Holy Ghost. The Lord is their God and Father. They have passed from death unto life, and shall not come into condemnation. 'There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; for the law of the Spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death.'

## Sermon 9[DUPLICATE]

### THE PURIFICATION OF CONSCIENCE

*How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (Hebrews 9:14)*

THE Hebrew Christians, to whom the apostle wrote, were well acquainted with the laws of ceremonial purification by the blood of beasts and birds, for by blood almost every thing was purified in the service of the temple. But it is only the blood of Christ that can purge the human conscience. In speaking of this purification, as presented in our text, let us notice — the *object*, the *means*, and the *end*.

I. The object of this purification is the conscience; which all the sacrificial blood shed, from the gate of Eden, down to the extinction of the fire on the Jewish altar, was not sufficient to purge.

*What is the conscience?* An inferior judge, the representative of Jehovah, holding his court in the human soul; according to whose decision we feel either confidence and joy in God, or condemnation and tormenting fear. His judicial power is graduated by the degree of moral and evangelical light which has been shed upon his palace. His knowledge of the will and the character of God is the law by which he justifies or condemns. His intelligence is the measure of his authority; and the perfection of knowledge would be the infallibility of conscience.

This faithful recorder and deputy judge is with us through all the journey of life, and will accompany us with his register over the river Jordan, whether to Abraham's bosom or the society of the

rich man in hell. While conscience keeps a record on earth, Jehovah keeps a record in heaven; and when both books shall be opened in the final judgement, there shall be found a perfect correspondence. When temptations are presented, the understanding opposes them, but the carnal mind indulges them, and there is a contest between the judgement and the will, and we hesitate which to obey, till the warning

bell of conscience rings through the soul, and gives distinct notice of his awful recognition; and when we turn away recklessly from his faithful admonitions, we hear low mutterings of wrath stealing along the avenues, and the quick sound of writing-pens in the recording office, causing every denizen of the mental palace to tremble.

There is a *good conscience*, and an *evil conscience*. The work of both, however, is the same; consisting in keeping a true record of the actions of men, and passing sentence upon them according to their deserts. Conscience is called good or evil only with reference to the character of its record and its sentence. If the record is one of virtues, and the sentence one of approval, the conscience is good; if the record is one of vices, and the sentence one of condemnation, the conscience is evil.

Some have a *guilty conscience*; that is, a conscience that holds up to their view a black catalogue of crimes, and rings in their ears the sentence of condemnation. If you have such a conscience, you are invited to Jesus, that you may find peace to your souls. He is ever in his office, receiving all who come, and blotting out with his own blood the handwriting which is against them.

But some have a *despairing conscience*. They think that their crimes are too great to be forgiven. The registry of guilt, and the decree of death, hide from their eyes the mercy of God, and the merit of Christ. Their sins rise like mountains between them and heaven. But let them look away to Calvary. If their sins are a thousand times more numerous than their tears, the blood of Jesus is ten thousand times more powerful than their sins. 'He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.'

And others have a *dark and hardened conscience*. They are so deceived, that they 'cry peace and safety, when destruction is at the door'. They are 'past feeling, having the conscience seared as with a hot iron'. They have sold themselves to work evil; to

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eat sin like bread, and drink iniquity like water. They have bribed or gagged the recorder and accuser within them. They will betray the just cause of the righteous, and slay the messengers of salvation, and think that they are doing God service. John the Baptist is beheaded, that Herod may keep his oath of honour. A dead fish cannot swim against the stream; but if the king's conscience had been alive and faithful, he would have said:— 'Girl, I promised to give thee thy request, even to the half of my

kingdom; but thou hast requested too much; for the head of Messiah's herald is more valuable than my whole kingdom, and all the kingdoms of the world!' But he had not the fear of God before his eyes, and the proud fool sent and beheaded the prophet in his cell.

A *good conscience* is a faithful conscience, a lively conscience, a peaceful conscience, a conscience void of offence toward God and man, resting in the shadow of the cross, and assured of an interest in its infinite merit. It is the victory of faith unfeigned, working by love, and purifying the heart. It is always found in the neighbourhood and society of its brethren; 'a broken heart, and a contrite spirit'; an intense hatred of sin, and an ardent love of holiness; a spirit of fervent prayer and supplication, and a life of scrupulous integrity and charity; and above all, an humble confidence in the mercy of God, through the mediation of Christ. These constitute the brotherhood of Christianity; and wherever they abound, a good conscience is never lacking. They are its very element and life; its food, its sunshine, and its vital air.

Conscience was a faithful recorder and judge under the law; and notwithstanding the revolution which has taken place, introducing a new constitution, and a new administration, Conscience still retains his office; and when 'purged from dead works to serve the living God', is appropriately called a *good conscience*.

II. The means of this purification is 'the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God'.

Could we take in, at a single view, all the bearings of 'the blood of Christ', as exhibited in the gospel, what an astonishing light would it cast upon the condition of man; the character of God; the nature and requirements of his law; the dreadful consequences of sin; the wondrous expiation of the cross; the reconciliation of Heaven and earth; the blessed union of the believer with God in Christ, as a just God and a Saviour; and the whole

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scheme of our justification, sanctification, and redemption, through free, sovereign, infinite, and unspeakable grace!

There is no knowledge like the knowledge of Christ, for the excellency of which the apostle counted all things but loss. Christ is the Sun of Righteousness, in whose light we see the tops of the mountains of immortality, towering above the dense clouds which overhang the valley of death. All the wisdom which philosophers have learned from

nature and providence, compared with that which is afforded by the Christian Revelation, is like the *ignis fatuus* compared with the sun. The knowledge of Plato, and Socrates, and all the renowned sages of antiquity, was nothing to the knowledge of the feeblest believer in 'the blood of Christ'.

'The blood of Christ' is of infinite value. There is none like it flowing in human veins. It was the blood of a man, but of a man who knew no iniquity; the blood of a sinless humanity, in which dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; the blood of the second Adam, who is the Lord from heaven, and a quickening spirit upon earth. It pressed through every pore of his body in the garden; and gushed from his head, his hands, his feet, and his side, upon the cross. I approach with fear and trembling, yet with humble confidence and joy. I take off my shoes, like Moses, as he draws near the burning bush; for I hear a voice coming forth from the altar, saying — 'I and my Father are one; I am the true God, and eternal life.'

The expression, 'the blood of Christ', includes the whole of his obedience to the moral law, by the imputation of which we are justified; and all the sufferings of his soul and his body as our Mediator, by which an atonement is made for our sins, and a fountain opened to wash them all away. This is the spring whence rise the rivers of forgiving and sanctifying grace.

In the representation which the text gives us of this redeeming blood, are several points worthy of our special consideration:—

1. It is *the blood of Christ*; the appointed Substitute and Saviour of men; 'the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world'.

2. It is the blood of Christ, who *offered himself*. His humanity was the only sacrifice which would answer the demands of justice, and atone for the transgressions of mankind. Therefore 'he made his soul an offering for sin'.

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3. It is the blood of Christ, who offered himself to God. It was the eternal Father, whose broken law must be repaired, whose dishonoured government must be vindicated, and whose flaming indignation must be turned away. The well beloved Son must meet the Father's frown, and bear the Father's curse for us. All the Divine attributes called for the offering; and without it, could not be reconciled to the sinner.



4. It is the blood of Christ, who offered himself to God, *without spot*. This was a perfect sacrifice. The victim was without blemish or defect; the altar was complete in all its appurtenances; and the high-priest possessed every conceivable qualification for his work. Christ was at once victim, altar, and high-priest; 'holy, harmless, and undefiled'; 'God manifest in the flesh'. Being himself perfect God, and perfect man, and perfect Mediator between God and man, he perfects for ever all them that believe.

5. It is the blood of Christ, who offered himself to God, without spot, *through the eternal Spirit*. By the eternal Spirit here, we are to understand, not the third person of the Godhead, but the second; Christ's own Divine nature, which was co-eternal with the Father before the world was; and which, in the fullness of time, seized on humanity, sinless and immaculate humanity, and offered it body and soul, as a sacrifice for human sins. The eternal Spirit was at once the priest that offered the victim, and the altar that sanctified the offering. Without this agency, there could have been no atonement. The offering of mere humanity, however spotless, aside from the merit derived from its connection with Divinity, could not have been a sacrifice of sweet-smelling savour unto God.

6. It is the blood of Christ, who offered himself to God, without spot, through the eternal Spirit, *that he might purge your conscience*. As the typical sacrifices under the law purified men from ceremonial defilement, so the real sacrifice of the Gospel saves the believer from moral pollution. Blood was the life of all the services of the tabernacle made with hands, and gave significance and utility to all the rites of the former dispensation. By blood the covenant between God and his people was sealed. By blood the officers and vessels of the sanctuary were consecrated. By blood the children of Israel were preserved in Egypt from the destroying angel. So the blood of Christ is our justification, sanctification, and redemption. All the blessings of the gospel flow to us through the blood

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of the Lamb. Mercy, when she writes our pardon, and when she registers our names in 'the Book of Life', dips her pen in the blood of the Lamb. And the vast company that John saw before the throne had come out of great tribulation, having 'washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb'.

The children of Israel were delivered from Egypt, on the very night that the paschal lamb was slain, and its blood sprinkled upon the door-posts, as if their liberty and life were procured by its death. This typified the necessity and power of the atonement, which is the very heart of the gospel, and the spiritual life of the believer. In Egypt, however, there was a lamb slain for every family; but under the new covenant God has but one family, and one Lamb is sufficient for their salvation.

In the cleansing of the leper, several things were necessary; as running water, cedar wood, scarlet and hyssop, and the finger of the priest; but it was the blood that gave efficacy to the whole. So it is in the purification of the conscience. Without the shedding of blood, the leper could not be cleansed; without the shedding of blood, the conscience cannot be purged. 'The blood of Christ' seals every precept, every promise, every warning, of the New Testament. 'The blood of Christ' renders the Scriptures 'profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness'. 'The blood of Christ' gives efficiency to the pulpit; and when 'Jesus Christ and him crucified' is shut out, the virtue is wanting which heals and restores the soul. It is only through the crucifixion of Christ, that 'the old man' is crucified in the believer. It is only through his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, that our dead souls are quickened, to serve God in newness of life.

Here rest our hopes. 'The foundation of God standeth sure.' The bill of redemption being presented by Christ, was read by the prophets, and passed unanimously in both houses of parliament. It had its final reading in the lower house, when Messiah hung on Calvary; and passed three days afterward, when he rose from the dead. It was introduced to the upper house by the Son of God himself, who appeared before the throne 'as a lamb newly slain', and was carried by acclamation of the heavenly hosts. Then it became a law of the kingdom of heaven, and the Holy Ghost was sent down to establish it in the hearts of men. It is 'the perfect

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law of liberty', by which God is reconciling the world unto himself. It is 'the law of the Spirit of Life', by which he is 'purging our conscience from dead works to serve the living God'.

III. The end of this purification is twofold:— that we may cease from dead works, and serve the living God.

1. The works of unrenewed souls are all 'dead works', can be no other than 'dead works', because the agents are 'dead in trespasses and sins'. They proceed from 'the carnal mind', which is enmity against God', which 'is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be'. How can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit, or a corrupt fountain send forth pure water?

But 'the blood of Christ' is intended to 'purge the conscience from dead works'. The apostle says — 'Ye are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot'. The Jews were in a state of bondage to the ceremonial law, toiling at the 'dead works', the vain and empty forms, which could never take away sin; and unjustified and unregenerate men are still captives of Satan, slaves of sin and death, tyrannised over by various evil habits and propensities, which are invincible to all things but 'the blood of Christ'. He died to redeem, both from the burdens of the Mosaic ritual, and from the despotism of moral evil — to purge the conscience of both Jew and Gentile 'from dead works, to serve the living God'.

2. We cannot 'serve the living God', without this preparatory purification of conscience. If our guilt is uncanceled — if the love of sin is not dethroned — the service of the knee and the lip is nothing but hypocrisy. 'If we regard iniquity in our hearts, the Lord will not hear us.' Cherishing what he hates, all our offerings are an abomination to him; and we can no more stand in his holy presence than the dry stubble can stand before a flaming fire. He who has an evil conscience, flees from the face of God, as did Adam in the garden. Nothing but 'the blood of Christ', applied by the Holy Spirit, can remove the sinner's guilty fear, and enable him to draw nigh to God in the humble confidence of acceptance through the Beloved.

The service of the living God must flow from a new principle of life in the soul. The Divine word must be the rule of our actions.

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The Divine will must be consulted and obeyed. We must remember that God is holy, and jealous of his honour. The consideration that he is everywhere, and sees everything, and will bring every work into judgement, must fill us with reverence and godly fear. An ardent love

for his law and his character must supplant the love of sin, and prompt to a cheerful and impartial obedience.

And let us remember that he is 'the *living* God'. Pharaoh is dead, Herod is dead, Nero is dead; but Jehovah is 'the living God', and it is a fearful thing to have him for an enemy. Death cannot deliver from his hand. Time, and even eternity, cannot limit his holy anger. He has manifested, in a thousand instances, his hatred of sin; in the destruction of the old world, the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, the drowning of Pharaoh and his host in the sea; and I tell thee, sinner, except thou repent, thou shalt likewise perish! O, think what punishment 'the living God' can inflict upon his adversaries — the loss of all good — the endurance of all evil — the undying worm — the unquenchable fire — the blackness of darkness for ever!

The gods of the heathen have no life in them, and they who worship them are like unto them. But our God is 'the living God', and 'the God of the living'. If you are united to him by faith in 'the blood of Christ', your souls are 'quickened together with him', and 'the power which raised him from the dead shall also quicken your mortal body'.

May the Lord awaken those who are dead in trespasses and sins, and revive his work in the midst of the years, and strengthen the feeble graces of his people, and bless abundantly the labours of his servants, so that many consciences may be purged from dead works to serve the living God!

There is a fountain filled with blood,  
 Drawn from Emmanuel's veins,  
 And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,  
 Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see  
 That fountain in his day;  
 And there may I, as vile as he,  
 Wash all my sins away.

Dear dying Lamb! thy precious blood  
 Shall never lose its power,  
 Till all the ransomed sons of God  
 Are saved to sin no more!

## Sermon 10 [DUPLICATE]

### THE CEDAR OF GOD

*Thus saith the Lord God: I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and plant it upon a high mountain and eminent in the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar; and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing, in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell; and all the trees of the field shall know that I, the Lord, have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish. I, the Lord, have spoken and have done it (Ezekiel 17:22–24).*

YOU perceive that our text abounds in the beautiful language of allegory. In the context is portrayed the captivity of the children of Israel, and especially the carrying away of the royal family, by the king of Babylon. Here God promises to restore them to their own land, in greater prosperity than ever; and to raise up Messiah, the Branch, out of the house of David, to be their king. All this is presented in a glowing figurative style, dressed out in all the wealth of poetic imagery, so peculiar to the orientals. Nebuchadnezzar, the great eagle — the long-winged, full-feathered, embroidered eagle — is represented as coming to Lebanon, and taking the highest branch of the tallest cedar, bearing it off as the crow bears the acorn in its beak, and planting it in the land of traffic. The Lord God, in his turn, takes the highest branch of the same cedar, and plants it on the high mountain of Israel, where it flourishes and bears fruit, and the fowls of the air dwell under the shadow of its branches.

We will make a few general remarks on the character of the promise, and then pass to a more particular consideration of its import.

I. This is an *evangelical* promise. It relates to the coming and

kingdom of Messiah. Not one of the kings of Judah since the captivity, as Boothroyd well observes, answers to the description here given. Not one of them was a cedar whose branches could afford shadow and shelter

for all the fowls of heaven. But the prophecy receives its fulfilment in Christ, the desire of all nations, to whom the ends of the earth shall come for salvation.

This prophecy bears a striking resemblance in several particulars, to the parable of the mustard-seed, delivered by our Lord. The mustard-seed, said Jesus, 'is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof'. So the delicate twig of the young and tender branch becomes a goodly cedar, and under its shadow dwell all fowl of every wing. The prophecy and the parable are alike intended to represent the growth and prosperity of Messiah's kingdom, and the gracious protection and spiritual refreshment afforded to its subjects. Christ is the mustard plant, and cedar of God; and to him shall the gathering of the people be; and multitudes of pardoned sinners shall sit under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit shall be sweet to their taste.

This prophecy is a promise of the true, and faithful, and immutable God. It begins with — 'Thus saith the Lord God, I will do thus and so'; and concludes with — 'I, the Lord, have spoken, and I have done it'. There is no peradventure with God. His word is for ever settled in heaven, and cannot fail of its fulfilment. When he says — 'I promise to pay', there is no failure, whatever the sum. The bank of heaven cannot break. It is the oldest and best in the universe. Its capital is infinite; its credit is infallible. The mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, is able to fulfil to the utmost all his engagements. He can do any thing that does not imply a contradiction, or a moral absurdity. He could take upon himself the form of a servant, and become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; but he can never forget or disregard his promise, any more than he can cease to exist. His nature renders both impossible. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but his word shall not pass away. Every jot and tittle shall be fulfilled. This is the consolation of the church. Here rested the patriarchs and the prophets. Here reposes the faith of the saints to the end of time. God abideth faithful; he

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cannot deny himself. Our text is already partially verified in the advent of Christ, and the establishment of his church; the continuous growth of the gospel kingdom indicates its progressive fulfilment; and we anticipate

the time, as not far distant, when the whole earth shall be overshadowed by the branches of the cedar of God.

II. We proceed to consider, with a little more particularity, the import of this evangelical prophecy. It describes the character and mediatorial kingdom of Christ, and the blessings which he confers upon his people.

1. His character and mediatorial kingdom. 'I will take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and plant it upon a high mountain and eminent; in the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it.'

Christ, as concerning the flesh, is of the seed of Abraham — a rod issuing from the stem of Jesse, and a branch growing out of his root. 'As the new vine is found in the cluster, and one saith, destroy it not, for a blessing is in it'; so the children of Israel were spared, notwithstanding their perverseness and their backslidings, because they were the cluster from which should be expressed in due time the new wine of the kingdom — because from them was to come forth the blessing, the promised seed in whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed. The Word that was in the beginning with God, one with God in essence and in attributes, in the fullness of time assumed our nature, and tabernacled and dwelt among us. Here is the union of God and man. Here is the great mystery of godliness — God manifest in the flesh. But I have only time now to take off my shoes, and draw near the burning bush, and gaze a moment upon this great sight.

The Father is represented as preparing a body for his Son. He goes to the quarry to seek a stone, a foundation stone for Zion. The angel said to Mary:— 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.' The eternal lays hold on that nature which is hastening downward, on the flood of sin, to the gulf of death and destruction, and binds it to himself. Though made in the likeness of sinful flesh, he was holy, harmless, and undefiled. He did no

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iniquity, neither was guile found in his mouth. The rod out of the stem of Jesse is also Jehovah our righteousness. The child born in Bethlehem is the mighty God. The Son given to Israel is the everlasting Father. He is of the seed of Abraham, according to the flesh; but he is also the true God and eternal life. Two natures and three offices meet mysteriously in his person. He is at once the bleeding sacrifice, the sanctifying altar, the

officiating priest, the prophet of Israel, and the Prince of Peace. All this was necessary, that he might become 'the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him'.

Hear Jehovah speaking of Messiah and his kingdom:— 'Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree by which he is to rule his redeemed empire.' That decree, long kept secret, was gradually announced by the prophets; but at the new tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, Jehovah himself proclaimed it aloud, to the astonishment of earth, the terror of hell, and the joy of heaven:— 'Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Come forth from the womb of the grave, thou whose goings forth have been from of old, even from everlasting. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. I will exalt thee to the throne of the universe, and thou shalt be chief in the chariot of the gospel. Thou shalt ride through the dark places of the earth, with the lamps of eternal life suspended to thy chariot, enlightening the world. Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little. Let no man withstand him. Let no man seek to stay his progress. Herod, Pilate, Caiaphas, stand off! clear the way! lest ye be crushed beneath the wheels of his chariot! for that which is a savour of life to some, is to others a savour of death; and if this stone shall fall upon you, it shall grind you to powder!'

Behold, here is wisdom! All other mysteries are toys in comparison with the mystery of the everlasting gospel — the union of three persons in the Godhead — the union of two natures in the

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Mediator — the union of believers to Christ, as the branches to the vine — the union of all the saints together in him, who is the head of the body, and the chief stone of the corner — the mighty God transfixed to the cross — the son of Mary ruling in the heaven of heavens — the rod of Jesse becoming the sceptre of universal dominion — the Branch growing out of his root, the little delicate branch which a lamb might crop for its food, terrifying and taming the serpent, the lion, the leopard, the tiger, and the wolf, and transforming into gentleness and love the



wild and savage nature of all the beasts of prey upon the mountain! 'And such,' old Corinthian sinners, 'were some of you; but ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God.' And such, my brethren, were some of you; but ye have been made a new creation in Christ Jesus; old things are passed away, and all things are become new. Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. He is one with the Father, and ye are one in him; united and interwoven, like the roots of the trees in the forest of Lebanon; so that none can injure the least disciple of Christ, without touching the apple of his eye, and grieving all his members.

2. The blessings which he confers upon his people. 'It shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar, and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell; and all the trees of the field shall know that I, the Lord, have brought down the high tree, and have exalted the low tree — have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish.'

*Christ is a fruitful tree.* 'The tree is known by his fruit. Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, and every evil tree bringeth forth evil fruit.' This is a singular, supernatural tree. Though its top reaches to the heaven of heavens, its branches fill the universe, and bend down to the earth, laden with the precious fruits of pardon, and holiness, and eternal life. On the day of Pentecost, we see them hang so low over Jerusalem, that the very murderers of the Son of God reach and pluck and eat, and three thousand sinners feast on more than angels' food. That was the feast of first-fruits. Never before was there such a harvest and such a festival. Angels know nothing of the delicious fruits of the tree of redemption.

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### III

They know nothing of the joy of pardon, and the spirit of adoption. The bride of the Lamb alone can say:— 'As the apple tree among the trees of the forest, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me also to his banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.'

These blessings are the precious effects of Christ's mediatorial work; flowing down to all believers, like streams of living water. Come, ye famishing souls, and take, without money and without price. All things are now ready. 'The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all

manner of pleasant fruits, both new and old.' Here is no scarcity. Our Elder Brother keeps a rich table in our Father's house. Hear him proclaiming in the streets of the city, in the chief places of concourse:— 'Come to the festival. There is bread enough, and to spare. My oxen and my fatlings are killed. My board is spread with the most exquisite delicacies — wine on the lees well refined, and fruits such as angels never tasted.'

*Christ is a tree of protection to his people.* This cedar not only beautifies the forest, but also affords shade and shelter for the fowls of the air. We have the same idea in the parable of the mustard seed:— 'the birds of the air came and lodged in the branches thereof.' This is the fulfilment of the promise concerning the Shiloh:— 'to him shall the gathering of the people be.' It is the drawing of sinners to Christ; and the union of believers with God.

'All fowl of every wing.' Sinners of every age and every degree — sinners of all languages, colours, and climes — sinners of all principles, customs, and habits — sinners whose crimes are of the blackest hue — sinners carrying about them the savour of the brimstone of hell — sinners deserving eternal damnation — sinners perishing for lack of knowledge — sinners pierced by the arrows of conviction — sinners ready to sink under the burden of sin — sinners overwhelmed with terror and despair — are seen flying to Christ as a cloud, and as doves to their windows — moving to the ark of mercy before the door is shut — seeking rest in the shadow of this goodly cedar!

Christ is the sure defence of his church. A thousand times has she been assailed by her enemies. The princes of the earth have set themselves in array against her, and hell has opened upon her

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all its batteries. But the Rock of Ages has ever been her strong fortress and high tower. He will never refuse to shelter her from her adversaries. In the time of trouble, he shall hide her in his pavilion; in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide her. When the heavens are dark and angry, she flies, like the affrighted dove, to the thick branches of the 'Goodly Cedar'. There she is safe from the windy storm and tempest. There she may rest in confidence, till these calamities be overpast. The tree of her protection can never be riven by the lightning, nor broken by the blast.

*Christ is the source of life and beauty to all the trees in the garden of God.* Jehovah determined to teach 'the trees of the forest' a new lesson. Let the

princes of this world hear it, and the proud philosophers of Greece and Rome. 'I have brought down the high tree, and exalted the low tree — have dried up the green tree, and made the dry tree to flourish.' Many things have occurred, in the providence of God, which might illustrate these metaphors; such as the bringing of Pharaoh down to the bottom of the sea, that Israel might be exalted to sing the song of Moses; and the drying, up of the pride and pomp of Haman, that Mordecai might flourish in honour and esteem. But for the most transcendent accomplishment of the prophecy, we must go to Calvary. There is the high tree brought down to the dust of death, that the low tree might be exalted to life eternal; the green tree dried up by the fires of Divine wrath, that the dry tree might flourish in the favour of God for ever.

To this, particularly, our blessed Redeemer seems to refer, in his address to the daughters of Jerusalem, as they follow him, weeping, to the place of crucifixion. 'Weep not for me,' saith he. 'There is a mystery in all this, which you cannot now comprehend. Like Joseph, I have been sold by my brethren; but like Joseph, I will be a blessing to all my Father's house. I am carrying this cross to Calvary that I may be crucified upon it between two thieves; but when the lid of the mystical ark shall be lifted, then shall ye see that it is to save sinners I give my back to the smiters, and my life for a sacrifice. Weep not for me, but for yourselves and your children; for if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry? I am the green tree today; and behold, I am consumed that you may flourish. I am the high tree, and am prostrated that you may be exalted.'

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The fire-brands of Jerusalem had well-nigh kindled to a flame of themselves, amid the tumult of the people, when they cried out — 'Away with him! Crucify him! His blood be on us, and on our children!' O wonder of mercy! that they were not seized and consumed at once by fire from heaven! But he whom they crucify prays for them, and they are spared. Hear his intercession:— 'Father, forgive them! Save these sinners, ready for the fire. On me, on me alone, be the fierceness of thy indignation. I am ready to drink the cup which thou hast mingled. I am willing to fall beneath the stroke of thy angry justice. I come to suffer for the guilty. Bind me in their stead, lay me upon the altar, and send down fire to consume the sacrifice!'

It was done. I heard a great voice from heaven:—‘Awake, O sword, against my shepherd! Kindle the flame! Let off the artillery!’ Night suddenly enveloped the earth. Nature trembled around me. I heard the rending of the rocks. I looked, and lo! the stroke had fallen upon the high tree, and the green tree was all on fire! While I gazed, I heard a voice, mournful, but strangely sweet:—‘My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me? My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws. One may tell all my bones. Dogs have compassed me about; strong bulls of Bashan have beset me. They stare at me; they gape upon me with their mouths; they pierce my hands and my feet. Deliver my soul from the lions; my darling from the power of the dogs!’

‘It is finished!’ O with what majestic sweetness fell that voice upon my soul! Instantly the clouds were scattered. I looked, and saw, with unspeakable wonder, millions of the low trees shooting up, and millions of the dry trees putting forth leaves and fruit. Then I took my harp, and sang this song:—‘Worthy is the Lamb! for he was humbled that we might be exalted; he was wounded that we might be healed; he was robbed that we might be enriched; he was slain that we might live!’

Then I saw the beam of a great scale; one end descending to the abyss, borne down by the power of the atonement; the other ascending to the heaven of heavens, and lifting up the prisoners of the tomb. Wonderful scheme! Christ condemned for our justification; forsaken of his Father, that we might enjoy his fellowship,

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passing under the curse of the law, to bear it away from the believer for ever! This is the great scale of redemption. As one end of the beam falls under the load of our sins, which were laid on Christ; the other rises, bearing the basket of mercy, full of pardons, and blessings, and hopes. ‘He who knew no sin was made sin for us’ — that is his end of the beam; ‘that we might be made the righteousness of God in him’ — this is ours. ‘Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor’ — there goes his end down; ‘that we, through his poverty, might be rich’ — here comes ours up.

O sinners! ye withered and fallen trees, fuel for the everlasting burning, ready to ignite at the first spark of vengeance! O ye faithless souls! self-ruined and self-condemned! enemies in your hearts by wicked works! we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God! He has

found out a plan for your salvation — to raise up the low tree by humbling the high, and save the dry tree from the fire by burning up the green. He is able to put, at the same time, a crown of glory on the head of the law, and a crown of mercy on the head of the sinner. One of those hands which were nailed to the cross blotted out the fiery handwriting of Sinai, while the other opened the prison-doors of the captives. From the mysterious depths of Messiah's sufferings flows the river of the water of life. Eternal light rises from the gloom of Gethsemane. Satan planted the tree of death on the grave of the first Adam, and sought to plant it also on the grave of the second; but how terrible was his disappointment and despair, when he found that the wrong seed had been deposited there, and was springing up unto everlasting life! Come! fly to the shelter of this tree, and dwell in the shadow of its branches, and eat of its fruit, and live!

To conclude:— Is not the conversion of sinners an object dear to the hearts of the saints? God alone can do the work. He can say to the north, give up; and to the south, keep not back. He can bring his sons from afar, and his daughters from the ends of the earth. Our Shiloh has an attractive power, and to him shall the gathering of the people be. Pray, my brethren, pray earnestly, that the God of all grace may find them out, and gather them from the forest, and fish them up from the sea, and bring them home as the shepherd brings the stray lambs to the fold. God alone can

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catch these 'fowl of every wing'. They fly away from us. To our grief, they often fly far away, when we think them almost in our hands; and then the most talented and holy ministers cannot overtake them. But the Lord is swifter than they. His arrows will reach them and bring them from their lofty flight to the earth. Then he will heal their wounds, and tame their wild nature, and give them rest beneath the branches of the 'Goodly Cedar'.

## Sermon II

### THE PRINCE OF SALVATION

*For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings (Hebrews 2:10).*

*And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him (Hebrews 5:9).*

I HAVE put these passages together because of their similarity. In discussing the doctrine which they contain — the doctrine of salvation through the mediatorial work of Christ, I purpose to consider — *First*, His relation to believers, as the author, captain, or prince of their salvation; *Secondly*, His perfect qualification, through meritorious sufferings, to sustain that relation; and *Thirdly*, The character of those who are interested in him as a Saviour.

I. Christ is the prince of our salvation. He is the great antitype of Moses, Joshua, Samson, and David. Their deeds of pious valour faintly foreshadowed the glorious achievements of the Captain of our salvation.

He is a prince in our nature. The Lord from heaven became the second Adam, the seed of the woman, the offspring of David. Divinity and humanity were mysteriously united in his person. The Word that was in the beginning was made flesh, and tabernacled among us. God is now nearer to his people than ever. The Lamb's bride is bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. As the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he himself took part of the same. By taking human nature into union with himself, he has imparted to believers a new and divine life.

Our Prince has conquered our adversaries. His name is Michael, the power of God. He is the mighty prince that stood up on behalf of his people, and bruised Satan under their feet. He has cast out the strong man, and his goods. He has demolished the kingdom of darkness, spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly. He has proved to earth and heaven that the devil is a usurper, and has no claim

whatever to the title, 'God of this world', and 'Prince of this world'. When Christ was crucified, hell quaked to its centre. Then he obtained liberty for the captives, and the opening of the prisons to them that are bound. His victory is our manumission [release] from the slavery of sin and death; and if the Son make us free, we are free indeed.

Three offices meet in the Author of our salvation; the prophetic, the priestly, and the regal. He wears three crowns upon his head; a crown of gold, a crown of silver, and a crown of precious stones. He 'shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne, and shall be a priest upon his throne, and the covenant of peace shall be between them both.' This prophecy is fulfilled in Messiah's mediatorial relations. The house was purified, the altar was consecrated, on the morning of his resurrection. This is the Prince of life, who was dead, and is alive for evermore, and hath the keys of hell and of death. That he might sanctify the people with his own blood, he suffered without the gate; and by suffering, he opened a way for believers into the holiest of all; and lo! his people are standing before the mercy-seat within the veil, and worshipping in open sight of the glory of God that dwelleth between the cherubim. If God smelled 'a savour of rest' in the sacrifice of Noah, much more in the sacrifice of his beloved Son, in whom he is ever well pleased. His sinless soul and body were offered once for all upon the cross. 'He bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.' The Father proclaims the demands of his law fully answered, and invites sinners to come and rest in the Beloved. This is he of whom it was said — 'A man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.' This is the Author and Captain of our salvation.

II. Let us consider how he is qualified for that relation — made perfect through sufferings.

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His sufferings were necessary to constitute him a complete Saviour. 'Without the shedding of blood is no remission'; the blood of Jesus is 'a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness'. It was threatened — 'In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die'; but Christ, by dying in our stead, delivered us from the sentence.

In order that he might bear our sins, it was necessary for him to assume our nature. The Priest must have somewhat to offer as a sacrifice. Divinity could not suffer and die. 'A body hast thou prepared for me.'

The Son of God took that body as his own, and offered it to the Father upon the cross. The blood which he shed was his own blood; the life which he laid down was his own life; the soul which he poured out unto death was his own soul. Moses saw an emblem of this mystery in Mount Horeb — a bush burning with fire, yet unconsumed. 'Our God is a consuming fire', dwelling in a tabernacle of clay. The human nature, though slain, is not consumed. On the third day the bush is found still flourishing and fruitful.

It was necessary that the precept of the law should be obeyed, and the penalty of the law endured, in the very nature of its violator. Christ answered the demands of both tables on behalf of his people, in the purity of his life, and the merit of his obedience unto death. He displayed all the fruits of holiness. He loved righteousness and hated iniquity. He paid our debt, a debt which he never contracted; he endured our curse, a curse which he never deserved. He took the cup of the wine of wrath out of our hand, and drained its very dregs upon the cross. In hell, every one drinks his own cup, and can never exhaust its contents; but behold, on Calvary, one man drains the cup of millions, and cries — 'It is finished!' Not a drop is left, not a particle of any of its ingredients, for his people. God hath condemned and punished sin in the human nature of Christ, and all who believe are justified freely by his blood.

But the author of our salvation is God as well as man. The Divinity often shone out through the humanity, controlling the elements, quickening the tenants of the tomb, and compelling the very devils to obey him. Had he been less than 'God manifest in the flesh', he must have been incompetent to the work of redemption. The Divine nature was necessary to sustain the human nature under its immense burden of sufferings, and render those

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sufferings sufficiently meritorious to atone for the transgressions of mankind. Christ endured more of the Divine displeasure 'from the sixth to the ninth hour', than all the vessels of wrath could endure to all eternity;★ and but for the union of the two natures in his person, he could not have borne his unparalleled woes. But while the man suffered, the God sustained. While the God-man offered up his humanity, his Divinity was the altar that sanctified the gift, and rendered it a sacrifice of sweet smelling savour to the Father. It was man that died upon the cross, but it was man in mysterious union with God, so that the two



natures constituted but one person, and the dignity of the Godhead gave infinite value to the tears and sweat and blood of the manhood. No wonder that the cross of Christ is the admiration of men and angels; and — ‘worthy is the Lamb that was slain!’ the ultimate theme of earth and heaven!

‘And being made perfect.’ In the twentieth chapter of Exodus, we read of ‘the ram of consecration’ — the ram of perfection in the original, or full ram, as the word full signifies complete, mature, perfect. The two rams mentioned in that chapter represent the atonement and intercession of Christ. He is our full, complete, or perfect sacrifice. ‘In him dwelleth the fullness of the Godhead’; and he has the hand of a man to bestow blessings upon his brethren. ‘Of his fullness have all we received, and grace upon grace.’ Our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption are all in the Son of man. Aaron never entered the holy place with empty hands, and our great High-priest hath gone into the celestial sanctuary, bearing with him his own most precious blood, wherewith to sprinkle the mercy-seat, and make it approachable to man. Thus suffering on earth, and pleading the merit of his suffering in heaven, ‘he becomes the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him’.

III. This leads us to our third topic. The character of those who are interested in him as a Saviour — ‘all them that obey him’.

To obey is to submit to authority — to do what is commanded. What is the command of God the Father? That ye should believe on the name of his Son. What is the command of Christ, the Captain of our salvation? ‘Ye believe in God; believe also in

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\* This sentiment, in different forms, occurs very frequently in these sermons. It is questionable theology. — Ed.

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me.’ It is said that he is precious to them that believe, but unbelievers are disobedient. They are all a disaffected and rebellious army, who will not obey their Captain. They have made God a liar, and are condemned for their unbelief. The Father saith — ‘Kiss the Son, lest he be angry!’ but they reply — ‘Away with him! away with him! we will not have him to reign over us!’

Is this your character? You are commanded to ‘behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world’. Have you obeyed? What are you doing? Are you determined to rebel? Will you risk the consequences of disobedience? O, you are reading the book of election, are you? You

are looking for your names in the book of election; but lo! you find them written in the book of damnation, under the article — ‘He that believeth not shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him!’ What shall be done in such a case? Obey the Captain of your salvation. Do ye not hear him, as he rides along the ranks, proclaiming — ‘Today, if ye will hear my voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation! Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live!’ Obey, obey this gracious exhortation. Come, with your petitions for pardon. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved. Behold a door of hope opening for you in the blood of atonement. There is forgiveness and sanctification for all that believe. Does your sense of guilt overwhelm you with gloomy fears, and plunge you in despair? Do you tremble at the thought of the multitude and enormity of your crimes? Cry aloud, with all your hearts — ‘God be merciful to me a sinner!’ Remember that your Prince ‘is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him’. Hear him calling you — ‘Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest! Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest to your souls; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light!’ Who, then, would not obey thee, blessed Jesus?

Had I, dear Lord, a thousand hearts,  
I’d give them all to thee;  
A thousand tongues, they all should join  
The grateful harmony!

We have a remarkable instance of faith and obedience in Abraham. There was no natural probability, there was no apparent

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possibility of the fulfilment of the promise; but Abraham believed, rested on the naked word of God, and went to mount Moriah to offer up his only son. Here was the triumph of faith, and it is recorded for our encouragement. Did the patriarch firmly believe the promise — ‘In Isaac shall thy seed be called?’ Yes verily, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Did the patriarch believe, on the strength of that promise, that God would not permit him to offer up his only son? No, verily; but he was determined to obey God, and leave the event with him, well assured that God would fulfil his word, though it should require the miracle of Isaac’s resurrection. Thus your faith must soar above nature, and lay hold on the righteousness of Christ, which justifieth the ungodly.

When you believe with all your heart, God will smile upon you, and calm your troubled soul, and hush the raging storms of a guilty conscience, for the sake of the satisfaction which he received in the obedience of Christ, as the substitute and surety of his people. This is the Urim and Thummim — light and perfection — of the gospel, beaming upon us through the twelve stars — the apostles of the Lamb, pacifying the conscience, and answering the important question — ‘What shall I do to be saved?’ I feel within me a sea of corruption, but I know that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.

Faith and obedience are inseparable, and the former is dead without the latter. They wrought together in Abel, and therefore he offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. They wrought together in Noah, and led him to prepare an ark to the saving of his house. Abraham not only believed that God would give him and his seed the land of Canaan; but he set forth at the Divine command, not knowing whither he went. Moses not only believed that God would deliver Israel out of Egypt; but, in obedience to his command, he ‘refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season’. Thus, true faith always leads to obedience. It is a living principle, by which the soul is quickened from the death of sin to a new life of holiness. It is the means through which, by the Holy Ghost, we are created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works. It works by love, and love is always the great motive to obedience. It gives us large and clear views of the love of God in Christ; then ‘we love him because

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he first loved us’; and ‘this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments’. Thus, by faith, ‘the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts’, leading us to a holy life. Such is the connection between faith and obedience, and the necessity of one to the other. And now, brethren, let us trust in the Captain of our salvation. In the ages before his advent, many sons were brought to glory through faith in his future sufferings. In the fullness of time, he visited our world; assumed our nature; atoned for our transgressions; and, ascending to the right hand of the Father, as our representative and intercessor, ‘became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him’.

O Captain of salvation! make  
Thy power and glory known,

Till clouds of willing captives come,  
And worship at thy throne!

## Sermon 12 [DUPLICATE]

### FINISHED REDEMPTION

*It is finished (John 19:30).*

THIS exclamation derives all its importance from the magnitude of the work alluded to, and the glorious character of the agent. The work is the redemption of the world; the agent is God manifest in the flesh. He who finished the creation of the heavens and the earth in six days, is laying the foundation of a new creation on Calvary. Four thousand years he has been giving notice of his intention to mankind; more than thirty years he has been personally upon earth, preparing the material; and now he lays the chief corner stone in Zion, exclaiming — ‘It is finished.’

We will first consider the special import of the exclamation, and then offer a few remarks of a more general character.

I. ‘It is finished.’ This saying of the Son of God is a very striking one; and, uttered, as it was, while he hung in dying agonies upon the cross, cannot fail to make a strong impression upon the mind. It is natural for us to inquire — ‘What does it mean? To what does the glorious victim refer?’ A complete answer to the question would develop the whole scheme of redemption. We can only glance at a few leading ideas.

The sufferings of Christ are ended. Never again shall he be persecuted from city to city, as an impostor and servant of Satan. Never again shall he say — ‘My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.’ Never again shall he agonise in Gethsemane, and sweat great drops of blood. Never again shall he be derided by the rabble, and insulted by men in power. Never again shall he be crowned with thorns, lacerated by the scourge, and nailed to the accursed tree. Never again shall he cry out, in the anguish of

his soul, and the baptism of blood — ‘My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me!’

The predictions of his death are fulfilled. The prophets had spoken of his crucifixion many hundred years before his birth. They foresaw the Governor who was to come forth from Bethlehem. They knew the babe in the manger, as he whose goings forth are of old, even from everlasting. They drew an accurate chart of his travels, from the manger to the cross, and from the cross to the throne. All these things must be fulfilled. Jesus knew the necessity, and seemed anxious that every jot and tittle should receive an exact accomplishment. His whole life was a fulfilment of prophecy. On every path he walked, on every house he entered, on every city he visited, and especially on the mysterious phenomena which accompanied his crucifixion, it was written — ‘that the Scriptures might be fulfilled’.

The great sacrifice for sin is accomplished. For this purpose Christ came into the world. He is our appointed high-priest, the elect of the Father, and the desire of nations. He alone who was in the bosom of the Father, could offer a sacrifice of sufficient merit to atone for human transgression. But it was necessary also that he should have somewhat to offer. Therefore a body was prepared for him. He assumed the seed of Abraham, and suffered in the flesh. This was a sacrifice of infinite value, being sanctified by the altar of Divinity on which it was offered. All the ceremonial sacrifices could not obtain the bond from the hand of the creditor. They were only acknowledgements of the debt. But Jesus, by one offering, paid the whole, took up the bond — the handwriting that was against us, and nailed it to his cross; and when driving the last nail, he cried — ‘It is finished!’

The satisfaction of Divine justice is completed. The violated law must be vindicated; the deserved penalty must be endured; if not by the sinner himself, yet by the sinner’s substitute. This was the great undertaking of the Son of God. He ‘bore our sins’ — that is, the punishment of our sins — ‘in his own body on the tree’. He was ‘made a curse for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him’. There was no other way by which the honour of God and the dignity of his law could be sustained, and therefore ‘the Lord laid upon him the iniquities of us all’. He ‘died unto sin once’; not merely for sin, enduring its punishment in our stead; but also

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unto sin’, abolishing its power, and putting it away. Therefore it is said, he ‘made an end of sin’ destroyed its condemning and tormenting power

on behalf of all them that believe. His sufferings were equal to the claims of justice; and his dying cry was the voice of Justice himself proclaiming the satisfaction. Here, then, may the dying thief, and the persecutor of the holy, lay down their load of guilt and woe at the foot of the cross.

The new and living way to God is consecrated. A veil has hitherto concealed the holy of holies. None but the high-priest has seen the ark of the covenant, and the glory of God resting upon the mercy-seat between the cherubim. He alone might enter, and he but once a year, and then with fear and trembling, and the sprinkling of atoning blood, after the most careful purification, and sacrifice for himself and the people. But our great High-priest has made an end of sacrifice by the one offering of himself. He has filled his hands with his own blood, and entered into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for us. The sweet incense which he offers fills the temple, and the merit of his sacrifice remains the same through all time, superseding all other offering for ever. Therefore we are exhorted to come boldly to the throne of grace. The tunnel under the Thames could not be completed on account of an accident which greatly damaged the work, without a new subscription for raising money; but Jesus found infinite riches in himself, sufficient for the completion of a new way to the Father — a living way through the valley of the shadow of death to 'the city of the Great King'. The conquest of the powers of darkness is achieved. When their hour was come, the Prince and his hosts were on the alert to accomplish the destruction of the Son of God. They assailed him with peculiar temptations, and levelled against him their heaviest artillery. They instigated one disciple to betray him and another to deny him. They fired the rage of the multitude against him, so that the same tongues that lately sung — 'Hosanna to the Son of David!' now shouted — 'Crucify him! Crucify him!' They filled the priests and scribes with envy, that they might accuse him without a cause; and inspired Pilate with an accursed ambition, that he might condemn him without a fault. They seared the conscience of the false witnesses, that they might charge the Just One with the most flagrant crimes; and cauterised the hearts of the

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Roman soldiers, that they might mock him in his sufferings, and nail him to the cross. Having succeeded so far in their hellish plot, they doubtless deemed their victory certain. I see them crowding around the cross, waiting impatiently to witness his last breath, ready to shout with

infernal triumph to the depths of hell, till the brazen walls should send back their echoes to the gates of the heavenly city. But hark! the dying Saviour exclaims — ‘It is finished!’ and the great dragon and his host retreat, howling, from the cross. The Prince of our salvation turned back all their artillery upon themselves, and their own stratagems become their ruin. The old serpent seized Messiah’s heel, but Messiah stamped upon the serpent’s head. The dying cry of Jesus shook the dominions of death, so that the bodies of many that slept arose; and rang through all the depths of hell, the knell of its departed power. Thus the Prince of this world was foiled in his schemes, and disappointed in his hopes; like the men of Gaza, when they locked up Samson at night, thinking to kill him in the morning; but awoke to find that he was gone, with the gates of the city upon his shoulders. When the Philistines caught Samson, and brought him to their temple, to make sport for them, they never dreamed of the disaster in which it would result — never dreamed that their triumph over the poor blind captive would be the occasion of their destruction. Suffer me, said he, to lean on the two pillars. Then he bowed himself, and died with his enemies. So Christ on Calvary, while the powers of darkness exulted over their victim, seized the main pillars of sin and death, and brought down the temple of Satan upon its occupants; but on the morning of the third day, he left them all in the ruins, where they shall remain for ever, and commenced his journey home to his Father’s house.

II. So much concerning the import of our Saviour’s exclamation. Such was the work which he finished upon the cross. We add a few remarks of a more general character.

The sufferings of Christ were vicarious. He died, not for his own sins, but for ours. He humbled himself, that we might be exalted. He became poor, that we might be made rich. He was wounded, that we might be healed. He drained the cup of wrath, that we might drink the waters of salvation. He died the shameful and excruciating death of the cross, that we might live and reign with him for ever.

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‘Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to have entered his glory?’ This ‘ought’ is the ought of mercy and of covenant engagement. He must discharge the obligation which he had voluntarily assumed. He must finish the work which he had graciously begun. There was no other Saviour — no other being in the universe willing to



undertake the work; or, if any willing to undertake, none able to accomplish it. The salvation of one human soul would have been too mighty an achievement for Gabriel — for all the angels in heaven. Had not ‘the Only Begotten of the Father’ become our surety, we must have lain for ever under the wrath of God, amid ‘weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth’. None but the Lion of the tribe of Judah could break the seals of that mysterious book. None but ‘God manifest in the flesh’ could deliver us from the second death.

The dying cry of Jesus indicates the dignity of his nature, and the power of life that was in him to the last. All men die of weakness — of inability to resist death — die because they can live no longer. But this was not the case with the Son of God. He speaks of laying down his life as his own voluntary act; — ‘No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.’ He ‘poured out his soul unto death’ — did not wait for it to be torn from him — did not hang languishing upon the cross, till life ‘ebbed out by slow degrees’; but poured it out freely, suddenly, and unexpectedly. As soon as the work was done for which he came into the world, he cried — ‘It is finished!’ ‘bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.’ Then the sun was darkened, the earth quaked, the rocks rent, the graves opened, and the centurion said — ‘Truly, this man was the Son of God!’ He cried with a loud voice, to show that he was still unconquered by pain, mighty even upon the cross. He bowed his head that death might seize him. He was naturally far above the reach of death, his Divine nature being self-existent and eternal, and his human nature entitled to immortality by its immaculate holiness; yet ‘he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross’ — ‘He bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.’

We may regard his last exclamation, also, as an expression of his joy, at having accomplished the great ‘travail of his soul’, in the work of our redemption. It was the work which the Father had

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given him, and which he had covenanted to do. It lay heavy upon his heart; and O, how was he straitened till it was accomplished! His ‘soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death’; ‘and his sweat as it were great drops of blood, falling down to the ground’. But upon the cross, he saw of the travail of his soul, and was satisfied. He saw that his sacrifice was accepted, and the object of his agony secured — that death would not

be able to detain him in the grave, nor hell to defeat the purposes of his grace — that the gates of the eternal city would soon open to receive him as a conqueror, and myriads of exultant angels shout him to his throne; whither he would be followed by his redeemed, with songs of everlasting joy. He saw, and he was satisfied; and, not waiting for the morning of the third day, but already confident of victory, he uttered this note of triumph, and died.

And if we may suppose them to have understood its import, what a source of consolation must it have been to his sorrowing disciples! The sword had pierced through Mary's heart, according to the prediction of old Simeon over the infant Jesus. Her affections had bled at the agony of her supernatural Son, and her wounded faith had well-nigh perished at his cross. And how must all his followers have felt, standing afar off, and beholding their supposed Redeemer suffering as a malefactor! How must all their hopes have died within them, as they gazed on the accursed tree! The tragedy was mysterious, and they deemed their enemies victorious. Jesus is treading the winepress in Bozrah, and the earth is shaking, and the rocks are rending, and the luminaries of heaven are expiring, and all the powers of nature are fainting, in sympathy with his mighty agony. Now he is lost in the fire and smoke of battle, and the dread artillery of justice is heard thundering through the thick darkness, and shouts of victory rise from the troops of hell, and who shall foretell the issue of the combat, or the fate of the Champion? But lo! he cometh forth from the cloud of battle, with blood upon his garments! He is wounded, but he hath the tread and the aspect of a conqueror. He waves his crimsoned sword, and cries — 'It is finished!' Courage, ye weepers at the cross! Courage, ye tremblers standing afar off! The Prince of our salvation is victor, and this bulletin of the war shall cheer myriads of believers in the house of their pilgrimage, and the achievement which it announces shall constitute an everlasting theme of praise!

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'It is finished!' The word smote on the walls of the celestial city, and thrilled the hosts of heaven with ecstasy unspeakable. How must 'the spirits of just men made perfect' have leaped with joy, to hear that the Captain of their salvation was victorious over all his enemies, and that the work he had engaged to do for them and their brethren was completed! and with what wonder and delight must the holy angels have witnessed the triumph of him, whom they were commanded to worship,

over the powers of darkness! It was the commencement of a new era in heaven, and never before had its happy denizens seen so much of God.

‘It is finished!’ Go, ye heralds of salvation, into all the world, and proclaim the joyful tidings! Cry aloud, and spare not; lift up your voice like a trumpet, and publish to all men, that the work of the cross is finished — that the great Mediator, ‘made perfect through sufferings’, has become ‘the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him’ — ‘is of God made unto us, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption!’ Go, teach the degraded Pagan, the deluded Mohammedan, and the superstitious Papist, that the finished work of Jesus is the only way of acceptance with God! Go, tell the polished scholar, the profound philosopher, and the vaunting moralist, that the doctrine of Christ crucified is the only knowledge that can save the soul! Go, say to the proud sceptic, the bold blasphemer, and the polluted libertine, ‘Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world!’ Preach it to the gasping sinner upon his death-bed, and the sullen murderer in his cell! Let it ring in every human ear, and thrill in every human heart, till the gladness of earth shall be the counterpart of heaven!

## Sermon 13

### THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

*He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come; see the place where the Lord lay (Matthew 28:6).*

THE celebrated Jonathan Edwards of America begins his *History of Redemption* with an account of the Lord's visit to Adam and Eve at the cool of the day in Eden. All the wonderful works of God toward the children of men, since the seed of the woman was promised to bruise the serpent's head, are to be considered as so many parts of the same great machinery of providence, whose wheels, like those of Ezekiel's vision, all move in majestic harmony, though their thousand revolutions may seem to us discordant and confused. The chief design of all the Divine manifestations recorded in the Old Testament was to prepare the way for the Redeemer's appearance upon earth. Jehovah often suffered his people to be in great distress and perplexity; he lengthened the chain of Satan and his angels, allowed a partial success of their infernal schemes, and permitted them to prevail for a season against his people, and pride themselves in their power and their skill, in order to make their defeat the more signal, and gather more glory to himself from their final overthrow. During the engagement, the victory often seemed to be on the side of the enemy; but when the smoke of battle cleared away, the pillar of God was seen upon the camp of Israel. If his people are besieged between Pi-hahiroth and Baalzephon, he raises the siege by dividing the sea, and making a highway through the deep, while the waters rise up in a solid wall on the right and the left, and roll back in ruin on the pursuing foe. If an army comes to arrest Elisha on Carmel, the mountain is

Covered with celestial warriors, and the surrounding heavens teem with horsemen and chariots of fire, and the enemy are smitten with

blindness, and taken captive by the prophet. If Goliath of Gath confronts the camp of Israel with his challenge, roaring like a lion, till the valley resounds with his voice, a little shepherd-boy goes forth with his sling and the vaunting blasphemer is smitten to the ground, and slain with his own sword. If the worshippers of the true God are cast into the fiery furnace, or the den of lions, to show the power and gratify the pride of an infamous tyrant, there is one among them 'like unto the Son of Man', and the violence of the fire is quenched, and the mouths of the lions are stopped.

But when Messiah was slain and buried, the enemies of God boasted more than ever in their crafty and malicious schemes. This was the great decisive engagement between Heaven and hell. The enemy imagined 'the Captain of our salvation' vanquished and destroyed. But his fall was no defeat. He yielded to the powers of darkness apparently, that he might triumph over them openly. He suffered himself to be taken prisoner by death, that he might seize the tyrant on his throne, demolish his empire, and deliver his captives. And if none of his friends on earth had courage to proclaim his resurrection, a preacher descended from heaven to announce the joyful fact:— 'He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.'

Wonderful message, and wonderful messenger! On the morning of the third day after his crucifixion, Jesus revived in his tomb, and the sound of the earthquake reached the heaven of heavens, and a mighty angel, swifter than the light, descended straight to the new grave in Joseph's garden, calling on no one for the key, instantly rolled away the stone from the door, and sat upon it, and made it his pulpit, from which he preached to the women the doctrine of our Lord's resurrection.

Let us consider, *first*, the testimony by which this fact is sustained, and *secondly*, the fact itself, as the sure basis of Christianity.

I. It appears from the record of the evangelist Luke, that the women were much perplexed at finding the stone rolled away from the mouth of the sepulchre, and the body of Jesus gone. Then they were saluted by two angels in shining apparel, who said;— 'Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen. Remember how he spake unto you while he was yet in Galilee,

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saying — The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered his words.’

Here is the testimony of two credible witnesses, a sufficient number to attest the truth of our Lord’s resurrection; who testified to nothing but what they had personally witnessed, and knew to be fact; and delivered their testimony in simple and unambiguous language, that could not well be misunderstood.

While the women went to inform the disciples of what they had seen and heard, ‘behold, some of the watch came into the city, and showed unto the chief priests all the things that were done’. And what was done? What can be the testimony of these enemies of Christ concerning his resurrection? That ‘an angel, whose countenance was like lightning, and his garments white as snow, descended from heaven, and rolled away the stone from the door, and sat upon it’; which so terrified them that they ‘became as dead men’.

To confirm these testimonies, our blessed Lord himself ‘appeared unto many after his resurrection, who were witnesses of all things which he did, both in the land of the Jews, and at Jerusalem; and how he was slain, and hanged on a tree; and how God raised him up the third day, and showed him openly; not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before of God; even to the disciples, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead; whom he commanded to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he who is ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead’ — ‘to whom he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs; being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.’

Here we may observe, that he appeared to those who knew him best, and gave them satisfactory and incontestable evidence of his resurrection. And he appeared, not only to the apostles, but to more than five hundred brethren at once. We have an account of his appearing at ten or eleven different times. On these occasions, he conversed with his disciples, reminded them of what he had said to them before his crucifixion, showed them his hands and his feet, and besought them to touch and examine his person, and satisfy themselves as to his identity. So that they had ample opportunity, and every facility that could be desired, for ascertaining whether he

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was indeed Jesus of Nazareth, their master, who was lately crucified before their eyes.

It was therefore with great power that the apostles bore witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And the Holy Spirit corroborated their testimony. Our faith in this distinctive doctrine of Christianity rests on a Divine foundation. 'If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater.' 'And the apostles went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord also working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.' In a few weeks after the resurrection of their Master, their testimony concerning it was received and firmly believed by many thousands, not in some distant and desert part of the world, but in Jerusalem, where he had been crucified.

How nobly the apostle Peter reasoned on this subject when he said:— 'Ye men of Israel, hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know; him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain; whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should beholden of it.'

Such was the evidence of our Lord's resurrection, that among those who were living at the time, and even those of them who so strenuously opposed the gospel, it appears to have been scarcely doubted. Pilate, in a letter to Tiberius, the Roman emperor, said, that Jesus, being raised from the dead, was believed by many to be God; whereupon the Roman Senate expressed no doubt of his resurrection, but debated the question of receiving him as one of the gods of Rome; which, however, was overruled by Divine Providence, for the honour of Christianity; for he who is higher than heaven, and the heaven of heavens, was not to be ranked with dumb idols upon earth.

II. Let us now consider the fact of our Lord's resurrection, and its bearing upon the great truths of our holy religion.

This most transcendent of miracles is sometimes attributed to the agency of the Father; who, as the Lawgiver, had arrested and imprisoned in the grave the sinner's Surety, manifesting at once his benevolence and his holiness; but by liberating the prisoner, proclaimed

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that the debt was cancelled, and the claims of the law satisfied. It is sometimes attributed to the Son himself; who had power both to lay down his life, and to take it again; and the merit of whose sacrifice entitled him to the honour of thus asserting his dominion over death, on behalf of his people. And sometimes it is attributed to the Holy Spirit, as in the following words of the apostle:—‘He was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.’

*The resurrection of Christ is clear and incontestable proof of his Divinity.*

He had declared himself equal with God the Father, and one with him in nature and in glory. He had told the people that he would prove the truth of this declaration, by rising from the grave three days after his death. And when the morning of the third day began to dawn upon the sepulchre, lo! there was an earthquake, and the dead body arose, triumphant over the power of corruption. This was the most stupendous miracle ever exhibited on earth, and its language is:—‘Behold, ye persecuting Jews and murdering Romans, the proof of my Godhead! Behold, Caiaphas, Herod, Pilate, the power and glory of your victim! I am he that liveth, and was dead; and lo! I am alive for evermore! I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star! Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and besides me there is none else!’

*Our Lord’s resurrection affords incontrovertible evidence of the truth of Christianity.*

Pilate wrote the title of Christ in three languages on the cross and many have written excellent and unanswerable things, on the truth of the Christian Scriptures, and the reality of the Christian religion; but the best argument that has ever been written on the subject, was written by the invisible hand of the Eternal Power, in the rocks of our Saviour’s sepulchre. This confounds the sceptic, settles the controversy, and affords an ample and sure foundation for all them that believe.

If any one asks whether Christianity is from heaven or of men, we point him to the ‘tomb hewn out of the rock’, and say — ‘There is your answer! Jesus was crucified, and laid in that cave; but on the morning of the third day, it was found empty our Master had risen and gone forth from the grave victorious.’



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This is the pillar that supports the whole fabric of our religion; and he who attempts to pull it down, like Samson, pulls down ruin upon himself. 'If Christ is not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain, ye are yet in your sins;' but if the fact is clearly proved, then Christianity is unquestionably true, and its disciples are safe.

This is the ground on which the apostle stood, and asserted the divinity of his faith:— 'Moreover, I testify unto you the gospel, which I preached unto you; which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain; for I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures.'

*The resurrection of Jesus is the most stupendous manifestation of the power of God, and the pledge of eternal life to his people.*

The apostle calls it 'the exceeding greatness of his power to us ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead.'

This is a river overflowing its banks — an idea too large for language. Let us look at it a moment.

Where do we find 'the exceeding greatness of his power?' In the creation of the world? in the Seven Stars and Orion? in the strength of Behemoth and Leviathan? No! In the deluge? in the fiery destruction of Sodom? in the overthrow of Pharaoh and his host? in hurling Nebuchadnezzar like Lucifer from the political firmament? No! It is the power which he wrought in Christ. When? When he healed the sick? when he raised the dead? when he cast out devils? when he blasted the fruitless fig-tree? when he walked upon the waters of the Galilee? No! It was 'when he raised him from the dead'. Then the Father placed the sceptre in the hand of the Son, 'and set him above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church'.

This is the source of our spiritual life. The same power that raised the dead body of our Lord from the grave, quickens the soul

of the believer from the death in trespasses and sins. His riven tomb is a fountain of living waters; whereof if a man drink, he shall never die. His raised and glorified body is the sun, whence streams eternal light upon our spirits; the light of life, that never can be quenched.

Nor here does the influence of his resurrection end. He who raised up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies. His resurrection is the pledge and the pattern of ours. 'Because he liveth we shall live also.' 'He shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.' We hear him speaking in the prophet:— 'Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out her dead.'

How divinely does the apostle speak of the resurrection-body of the saints! 'It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written — Death is swallowed up in victory! O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be unto God, that giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.'

Ever since the fall in Eden, man is born to die. He lives to die. He eats and drinks, sleeps and wakes, to die. Death, like a dark steel-clad warrior, stands ever before us; and his gigantic shadow comes continually between us and happiness. But Christ hath 'abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel'. He was born in Bethlehem, that he might die on Calvary. He was made under the law, that he might bear the direst penalty of the law. He lived thirty-three years, sinless among sinners, that he might offer himself a sin-offering for sinners upon the cross. Thus he 'became obedient unto death', that he might destroy the power of death; and on the third morning, a mighty angel, rolling away the stone from the mouth of the sepulchre, makes the very door of Death's castle the throne whence he proclaims 'the resurrection and the life.'

The Hero of our salvation travelled into Death's dominion, took

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possession of the whole territory on our behalf, and returning laden with spoils, ascended to the heaven of heavens. He went to the palace, seized the tyrant, and wrested away his sceptre. He descended into the prison-house, knocked off the fetters of the captives; and when he came up again, left the door of every cell open, that they might follow him. He has gone over into our promised inheritance, and his glory illuminates the mountains of immortality; and through the telescope which he has bequeathed us, we 'see the land that is very far off.'

I recollect reading in the writings of Flavel this sentiment — that the souls in paradise wait with intense desire for the reanimation of their dead bodies, that they may be united to them in bliss for ever. O, what rapture there shall be among the saints, when those frail vessels, from which they escaped with such a struggle, as they foundered in the gulf of death, shall come floating in, with the spring-tide of the resurrection to the harbour of immortality! How glorious the reunion, when the seeds of affliction and death are left behind in the tomb! Jacob no longer lame, nor Moses slow of speech, nor Lazarus covered with sores, nor Paul troubled with a thorn in the flesh!

'It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.' The glory of the body of Christ is far above our present conception. When he was transfigured on Tabor, his face shone like the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. This is the pattern shown to his people in the mount. This is the model after which the bodies of believers shall be fashioned in the resurrection. 'They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.'

In conclusion:— The angel said to the women — 'Go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him; lo! I have told you. And they departed quickly from the sepulchre, with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.'

Brethren! followers of Jesus! be ye also preachers of a risen Saviour! Go quickly — there is no time for delay — and publish the glad tidings to sinners! Tell them that Christ died for their sins, and rose again for their justification, and ascended to the right hand

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of the Father to make intercession for them, and is now able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him!

And you, impenitent and unbelieving men! hear this blessed message of salvation! Do you intend ever to embrace the proffered mercy of the gospel? Make haste! Procrastination is ruin! Now is the accepted time! O, fly to the throne of grace! Time is hastening; you will soon be swallowed up in eternity! May the Lord have mercy upon you, and rouse you from your indifference and sloth! It is my delight to invite you to Christ; but I feel more pleasure and more confidence in praying for you to God. I have besought and entreated you, by every argument and every motive in my power; but you are yet in your sins, and rushing on toward hell. Yet I will not give you up in despair. If I cannot persuade you to flee from the wrath to come, I will intercede with God to have mercy upon you for the sake of his beloved Son. If I cannot prevail in the pulpit, I will try to prevail at the throne!

## Sermon 14

### THE ASCENSION

*Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things (Acts 3:21).*

THESE words are part of St Peter's sermon to the people of Jerusalem, on occasion of the cure of the lame man, at the 'Beautiful Gate' of the temple, shortly after the day of Pentecost.

This, and the sermon recorded in the preceding chapter, were perhaps the most effective ever delivered on earth. As the fruit of Peter's ministry in these two discourses, about five thousand souls were converted to Christianity (Acts 4:4).

It is recorded, that, on the day of Pentecost, the hearers 'were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles — Men and brethren, what shall we do?' An inquiry which indicates the utmost solicitude and distress. A sense of sin overwhelmed them, especially of their guilt in rejecting the Son of God; and they pressed around the preacher and his colleagues with this earnest interrogative.

The answer was ready. True ministers of Christ are never at a loss in answering the inquiries of awakened sinners. When the Philippian jailer came trembling to Paul and Silas, and fell down before them, exclaiming — 'What must I do to be saved?' 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved', was the prompt and appropriate answer.

So Peter, on the day of Pentecost, when three thousand conscience-smitten and heart-broken hearers cried out under the sermon — 'What shall we do?' immediately replied — 'Repent

and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; for the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.'

And so in the sermon whence we have taken our text, when he saw that the truth had found its way to the understanding, and the

conscience, and the heart — that many were awakened, and convinced of sin — he exhorted them to repentance and faith in Christ, as the condition of salvation:— ‘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; and he shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you; whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things.’

The doctrine of this text is — the necessity of Christ’s return to heaven till the consummation of his mediatorial work.

It is generally admitted, that the twenty-second psalm has particular reference to Christ. This is evident from his own appropriation of the first verse upon the cross:— ‘My God! my God! Why hast thou forsaken me?’ The title of that psalm is — ‘Ajeleth Shallar’, which signifies — A hart, or — the hind of the morning. The striking metaphors which it contains are descriptive of Messiah’s peculiar sufferings. He is the hart, or hind of the morning, hunted by the black prince, with his hell-hounds — by Satan, and all his allies. The ‘dogs’, the ‘lions’, the ‘unicorns’, and the ‘strong bulls of Bashan’, with their devouring teeth, and their terrible horns, pursued him from Bethlehem to Calvary. They beset him in the manger, gnashed upon him in the garden, and well-nigh tore him to pieces upon the cross. And still they persecute him in his cause, and in the persons and interests of his people.

The faith of the church anticipated the coming of Christ, ‘like a roe or a young hart’, with the dawn of the day promised in Eden; and we hear her exclaiming in the Canticles — ‘The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh, leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills!’ She heard him announce his advent in the promise — ‘Lo, I come to do thy will, O God!’ and with prophetic eye, saw him leaping from the mountains of eternity to the mountains of time, and skipping from hill to hill throughout the land of Palestine, going about doing good. In the various types and shadows of the law, she beheld him ‘standing by the wall,

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looking forth at the windows, showing himself through the lattice’; and then she sung — ‘Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like the roe or the young hart upon the mountains of Bether!’ Bloody sacrifices revealed him to her view, going down to the ‘vineyards of red wine’; whence she traced him to the

meadows of gospel ordinances, where 'he feedeth among the lilies' — to 'the gardens of cucumbers,' and 'the beds of spices'; and then she sung to him again — 'Make haste' — or, flee away — 'my beloved! be thou like the roe or the young hart upon the mountains of spices!'

Thus she longed to see him, first 'on the mountain of Bether', and then 'on the mountain of spices'. On both mountains she saw him eighteen hundred years ago, and on both she may still trace the footsteps of his majesty and his mercy. The former he hath tracked with his own blood, and his path upon the latter is redolent of frankincense and myrrh.

Bether signifies division. This is the craggy mountain of Calvary; whither the 'Hind of the morning' fled, followed by all the wild beasts of the forest, and the hunting-dogs of hell; summoned to the pursuit, and urged on, by the prince of perdition; till the victim, in his agony, sweat great drops of blood — where he was victim, terribly crushed between the cliffs, and dreadfully mangled by sharp and ragged rocks — where he was seized by Death, the great greyhound of the bottomless pit — whence he leaped the precipice, without breaking a bone; and sunk in the dead sea, sunk to its utmost depth, and saw no corruption.

Behold the 'Hind of the morning' on that dreadful mountain! It is the place of skulls, where death holds his carnival in companionship with worms, and hell laughs in the face of heaven. Dark storms are gathering there — convolving clouds, charged with no common wrath. Terrors set themselves in battle-array before the Son of God; and tempests burst upon him, which might sweep all mankind in a moment to eternal ruin. Hark! hear ye not the subterranean thunder? Feel ye not the tremor of the mountain? It is the shock of Satan's artillery, playing upon the Captain of our salvation. It is the explosion of the magazine of vengeance. Lo, the earth is quaking, the rocks are rending, the graves are opening, the dead are rising, and all nature stands aghast at the conflict of divine mercy with the powers of darkness. One dread convulsion

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more, one cry of desperate agony, and Jesus dies — an arrow has entered into his heart. Now leap the lions, roaring, upon their prey; and the bulls of Bashan are bellowing; and the dogs of perdition are barking; and the unicorns toss their horns on high; and the devil, dancing with exultant joy, clanks his iron chains, and thrusts up his fettered hands in defiance toward the face of Jehovah!

Go a little farther upon the mountain, and you come to ‘a new tomb hewn out of the rock’. There lies a dead body. It is the body of Jesus. His disciples have laid it down in sorrow, and returned weeping to the city. Mary’s heart is broken, Peter’s zeal is quenched in tears, and John would fain lie down and die in his Master’s grave. The sepulchre is closed up and sealed, and a Roman sentry placed at its entrance. On the morning of the third day, while it is yet dark, two or three women come to anoint the body. They are debating about the great stone at the mouth of the cave. ‘Who shall roll it away?’ says one of them. ‘Pity we did not bring Peter or John with us.’ But arriving, they find the stone already rolled away, and one sitting upon it, whose countenance is like lightning, and whose garments are white as the light. The steel-clad, iron-hearted soldiers lie around him, like men slain in battle, having swooned with terror. He speaks:— ‘Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here; he is risen; he is gone forth from this cave victoriously.’

It is even so; for there are the shroud, and the napkin, and the heavenly watchers; and when he awoke, and cast off his grave-clothes, the earthquake was felt in the city, and jarred the gates of hell. ‘The Hind of the morning’ is up earlier than any of his pursuers, ‘leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills’. He is seen first with Mary at the tomb; then with the disciples in Jerusalem; then with two of them on the way to Emmaus; then going before his brethren into Galilee; and finally, leaping from the top of Olivet to the hills of Paradise; fleeing away to ‘the mountains of spices’, where he shall never more be hunted by the black prince and his hounds.

Christ is perfect master of gravitation, and all the laws of nature are obedient to his will. Once he walked upon the water, as if it were marble beneath his feet; and now, as he stands blessing his people, the glorious form so recently nailed to the cross, and still more recently cold in the grave, begins to ascend like ‘the living

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creature’ in Ezekiel’s vision, ‘lifted up from the earth’, till nearly out of sight; when ‘the chariots of God, even thousands of angels’, receive him, and haste to the celestial city, waking the thrones of eternity with this jubilant chorus — ‘Lift up your heads, O ye gates! and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors! and the King of glory shall come in!’

Christ might have rode in a chariot of fire all the way from Bethlehem to Calvary; but he preferred riding in a chariot of mercy, whose lining



was crimson, and whose ornament the malefactor's cross. How rapidly rolled his wheels over the hills and the plains of Palestine, gathering up everywhere the children of affliction, and scattering blessings like the beams of the morning! Now we find him in Cana of Galilee, turning water into wine; then treading the waves of the sea, and hushing the roar of the tempest; then delivering the demoniac of Gadara from the fury of a legion of fiends; then healing the nobleman's son at Capernaum; raising the daughter of Jairus, and the young man of Nain; writing upon the grave at Bethany — 'I am the resurrection and the life'; curing the invalid at the pool of Bethesda; feeding the five thousand in the wilderness; preaching to the woman by Jacob's well; acquitting the adulteress, and shaming her accusers; and exercising everywhere, in all his travels, the three offices of Physician, Prophet, and Saviour, as he drove on toward the place of skulls.

Now we see the chariot surrounded with enemies — Herod, and Pilate, and Caiaphas, and the Roman soldiers, and the populace of Jerusalem, and thousands of Jews who have come up to keep the Passover, led on by Judas and the devil. See how they rage and curse, as if they would tear him from his chariot of mercy. But Jesus maintains his seat, and holds fast the reins, and drives right on through the angry crowd, without shooting an arrow, or lifting a spear upon his foes. For in that chariot the King must ride to Calvary — Calvary must be consecrated to mercy for ever. He sees the cross planted upon the brow of the hill, and hastens forward to embrace it. No sacrifice shall be offered to Justice on this day, but the one sacrifice which reconciles heaven and earth. None of those children of Belial shall suffer today. The bribed witnesses, and clamorous murderers, shall be spared — the smiters, the scourgers, the spitters, the thorn-platters, the nail-drivers, the head-shakers; for Jesus pleads on their behalf — 'Father, forgive them! they

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know not what they do. They are ignorant of thy truth and grace. They are not aware whom they are crucifying. O, spare them! Let Death know that he shall have enough to do with me today! Let him open all his batteries upon me! My bosom is bare to the stroke! I will gather all the lances of hell in my heart!

Still the chariot rushes on, and 'fiery darts' are falling thick and fast, like a shower of meteors, on Messiah's head, till he is covered with

wounds, and the blood flows down his garments, and leaves a crimson track behind him. As he passes, he casts at the dying malefactor a glance of benignity, and throws him a passport into Paradise, written with his own blood; stretches forth his sceptre, and touches the prison-door of death, and many of the prisoners come forth, and the tyrant shall never regain his dominion over them; rides triumphant over thrones and principalities, and crushes beneath his wheels the last enemy himself, and leaves the memorial of his march engraven on the rocks of Golgotha!

Christ is everywhere in the Scriptures spoken of as a blessing; and whether we contemplate his advent, his ministry, his miracles, his agony, his crucifixion, his interment, his resurrection, or his ascension, we may truly say, 'all his paths drop fatness'. All his travels were on the road of mercy; and trees are growing up in his footsteps, whose fruit is delicious food, and whose 'leaves are for the healing of the nations'. He walketh upon the south winds, causing propitious gales to blow upon the wilderness, till songs of joy awake in the solitary place, and the desert blossoms as the rose.

If we will consider what the prophets wrote of Messiah, in connection with the evangelical history, we shall be satisfied that none like him, either before or since, ever entered our world, and departed from it. Both God and man — at once the Father of eternity and the son of time — he filled the universe, while he was embodied upon earth; and ruled the celestial principalities and powers, while he wandered — a persecuted stranger — in Judæa. 'No man,' saith he, 'hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven — even the Son of man, who is in heaven.'

Heaven was no strange place to Jesus. He talks of the mansions in his Father's house as familiarly as one of the royal family would talk of Windsor Castle, where he was born; and saith to his disciples — 'I go to prepare a place for you; that where I am, there

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ye may be also.' The glory into which he entered was his own glory — the glory which he had with the Father before the world was. He had an original and supreme right to the celestial mansions; and he acquired a new and additional claim by his office as mediator. Having suffered for our sins, he 'ought to enter into his glory'. He ought, because he is 'God, blessed for ever' — he ought, because he is the

representative of his redeemed people. He has taken possession of the kingdom in our behalf, and left on record for our encouragement this cheering promise — ‘To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne; even as I also have overcome, and am set down with my Father in his throne.’

The departure of God from Eden, and the departure of Christ from the earth, were two of the sublimest events that ever occurred, and fraught with immense consequences to our race. When Jehovah went out from Eden, he left a curse upon the place for man’s sake, and drove out man before him into an accursed earth. But when Jesus ascended from Olivet, he lifted the curse with him, and left a blessing behind him — sowed the world with the seed of eternal blessings; ‘and instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree; and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle-tree; and it shall be to the Lord for a name, and an everlasting sign, that shall not be cut off.’ He ascended to intercede for sinners, and reopen paradise to his people; and when he shall come the second time, according to the promise, with all his holy angels, then shall we be ‘caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord’.

‘The Lord is gone up with a shout’, and has taken our redeemed nature with him. He is the head of the church, and her representative at the right hand of the Father. ‘He hath ascended on high; he hath led captivity captive; he hath received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that God may dwell among them.’ ‘Him hath God exalted, with his own right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins.’ This is the Father’s recognition of his ‘Beloved Son’, and significant acceptance of his sacrifice. ‘Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in the earth, and things under the earth; and that every

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tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.’

The evidence of our Lord’s ascension is ample. He ascended in the presence of many witnesses, who stood gazing after him till a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, two angels appeared to them, and talked with them of what they

had seen. Soon afterward, on the day of Pentecost, he fulfilled, in a remarkable manner, the promise which he had made to his people:—‘If I go away, I will send you another Comforter, who shall abide with you for ever.’ Stephen, the first of his disciples that glorified the Master by martyrdom, testified to his murderers — ‘Lo, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God!’ And John, ‘the beloved disciple’, while an exile ‘in Patmos, for the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ’, beheld him ‘in the midst of the throne, as a Lamb that had been slain’! These are the evidences that our Lord is in heaven; these are our consolations in the house of our pilgrimage.

The apostle speaks of the *necessity* of this event:— ‘Whom the heaven *must* receive.’

Divine necessity is a golden chain, reaching from eternity to eternity, and encircling all the events of time. It consists of many links, all hanging upon each other; and not one of them can be broken, without destroying the support of the whole. The first link is in God, ‘before the world was’; and the last is in heaven, when the world shall be no more. Christ is its Alpha and Omega, and Christ constitutes all its intervenient links. Christ in the bosom of the Father, receiving the promise of eternal life, before the foundation of the world, is the beginning; Christ in his sacrificial blood, atoning for our sins, and pardoning and sanctifying all them that believe, is the middle; and Christ in heaven, pleading the merit of his vicarious sufferings, making intercession for the transgressors, drawing all men unto himself, presenting the prayers of his people, and preparing their mansions, is the end.

There is a necessity in all that Christ has done as our Mediator, in all that he is doing on our behalf, and all that he has engaged to do—the necessity of Divine love manifested, of Divine mercy exercised, of Divine purposes accomplished, of Divine covenants fulfilled, of Divine faithfulness maintained, of Divine justice satisfied,

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of Divine holiness vindicated, and of Divine power displayed. Christ felt this necessity while he tabernacled among us, often declared it to his disciples, and acknowledged it to the Father in the agony of the garden.

Behold him wrestling in prayer, with strong crying and tears:— ‘Father, save me from this hour! If it be possible, let this cup pass from me!’ Now the Father reads to him his covenant engagement, which he signed and sealed with his own hand before the foundation of the world.

The glorious Sufferer replies:— ‘Thy will be done! For this cause came I unto this hour. I will drink the cup which thou hast mingled, and not a dreg of any of its ingredients shall be left for my people. I will pass through the approaching dreadful night, under the hidings of thy countenance, bearing away the curse from my beloved. Henceforth, repentance is hidden from mine eyes!’ Now, on his knees, he reads the covenant engagements of the Father, and adds:— ‘I have glorified thee on the earth. I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. Now glorify thou me, according to thy promise, with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. Father, I will also that they whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory. Thine they were, and thou hast given them to me, on condition of my pouring out my soul unto death. Thou hast promised them, through my righteousness and meritorious sacrifice, the kingdom of heaven, which I now claim on their behalf. Father, glorify my people, with him whom thou lovedst before the foundation of the world!’

The intercession of Christ for his saints, begun on earth, is continued in heaven. This is our confidence and joy in our journeyings through the wilderness. We know that our Joshua has gone over into the land of our inheritance, where he is preparing a place of habitation for Israel, for it is his will that all whom he has redeemed should be with him for ever!

The text speaks of the period when the great purposes of our Lord’s ascension shall be fully accomplished:— ‘until the times of restitution of all things.’

The period here mentioned is ‘the dispensation of the fullness of time,’ when ‘the fullness of the gentiles shall come in,’ and ‘the dispersed of Judah’ shall be restored, and Christ shall ‘gather together in himself all things in heaven and in earth’, overthrow his

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enemies, establish his everlasting kingdom, deliver the groaning creation from its bondage, glorify his people with himself, imprison the devil and his angels in the bottomless pit, and punish with destruction from his presence them that obey not the gospel.

To this glorious consummation, the great travail of redemption, and all the events of time, are only preparatory. It was promised in Eden, and the promise was renewed and enlarged to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. It was described in gorgeous oriental imagery by Isaiah, and ‘the sweet psalmist of Israel’; and ‘spoken of by all the prophets, since the world

began'. Christ came into the world to prepare the way for his future triumph — to lay on Calvary the 'chief corner-stone' of a temple, which shall be completed at the end of time, and endure through all eternity. He began the great restitution. He redeemed his people with a price, and gave them a pledge of redemption by power. He made an end of sin, abolished the Levitical priesthood, and swallowed up all the types and shadows in himself. He sent home the beasts, overthrew the altars, and quenched the holy fire; and, upon the sanctifying altar of his own divinity, offered his own sinless humanity, which was consumed by fire from heaven. He removed the seat of government from Mount Zion in Jerusalem, to Mount Zion above, where he sits — 'a priest upon his throne' — drawing heaven and earth together, and establishing 'the covenant of peace between them both'. Blessed be God! we can now go to Jesus, the mediator; passing by millions of angels, and all the spirits of just men made perfect; till we 'come to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel'. And we look for that blessed day, when 'this gospel of the kingdom' shall be universally prevalent; 'and all shall know the Lord, from the least even to the greatest' — when there shall be 'a new heaven, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness' — when both the political and the moral aspects of our world shall be changed; and a happier state of things shall exist than has ever been known before — when the pestilence, the famine, and the sword shall cease to destroy; and 'the saints of the Most High shall possess the kingdom', in 'quietness and assurance for ever'. 'Then cometh the end', when Emmanuel 'shall destroy in this mountain the veil of the covering cast over all people, and swallow up death in victory!'

But what will it avail you to hear of this glorious restitution, if

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you are not partakers of its incipient benefits, and happily interested in its consummation? Has it begun in your own hearts? Are you restored to God in Christ? Have you a place in his house, and a name among his people? Are your feet running the way of his commandments, and your hands diligent in doing his work? If not, 'it is high time to awake out of sleep'. 'Repent and believe the gospel!' 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, who will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon!'

## Sermon 15

### TRIBULATION CONQUERED

*These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world (John 16:33).*

THE last sayings of those we love are not soon forgotten. These words form the conclusion of our Lord's valedictory to his disciples. They did not yet understand that the redemption of man was to be obtained by the death of their Master. When Christ was put to death, he descended to the lower parts of the earth, in order to raise up sinners; but their faith could not follow him into the deep. Nicholas Pisces sunk into the sea to raise a golden cup, but neither he nor the cup ever came up again. A man clothed in glass went down to prepare for raising the Royal George; the man came up, but the ship remains in the bottom. But our blessed Redeemer, clothed in humanity, descended to the deeps of death, and raised the church from the pit of perdition, and founded her upon a rock, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail.

We would notice, *first*, the peace that is in Christ, in opposition to the tribulation that is in the world; and *secondly*, the victory of Christ over the world, as the source of comfort and joy to believers.

I. 'These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. I know what you will have in the world — mountains of tribulation — nothing but tribulation. I will put my peace in the other end of the scale.'

Peace in Christ is 'the peace of God which passeth all understanding' — an ocean sufficiently deep and large to swallow up millions of fiery mountains. See the awakened sinner, overwhelmed with the terrors of God. His inflexible justice and spotless holiness

seem to him like a mountain of flame, which he cannot approach without being consumed. But the Holy Spirit shows him the reconciling blood of the cross. He sees the crucified God-man rising from the grave,

and ascending on high, 'to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins'. Instantly the terrible mountain sinks and is lost in the sea of his Redeemer's merit. His faith has conquered his fears. His burden of guilt is gone. He is a new creature in Christ Jesus, and in Christ Jesus there is no condemnation. The deluge of tribulation may swell and roar around him, but he is securely enclosed in the ark.

A man in a trance saw himself locked up in a house of steel, through the walls of which, as through walls of glass, he could see his enemies assailing him with swords, spears, and bayonets; but his life was safe, for his fortress was locked within. So is the Christian secure amid the assaults of the world. His 'life is hid with Christ in God'.

The psalmist prayed — 'When my heart is overwhelmed within me, lead me to the Rock that is higher than I.' Imagine a man seated on a lofty rock in the midst of the sea, where he has every thing necessary for his support, shelter, safety, and comfort. The billows heave and break beneath him, and the hungry monsters of the deep wait to devour him; but he is on high, above the rage of the former, and the reach of the latter. Such is the security of faith.

But why need I mention the rock and the steel house? for the peace that is in Christ is a tower ten thousand times stronger, and a refuge ten thousand times safer. Behold the disciples of Jesus exposed to famine, nakedness, peril, and sword — incarcerated in dungeons; thrown to wild beasts; consumed in the fire; sawn asunder; cruelly mocked and scourged; driven from friends and home, to wander among the mountains, and lodge in dens and caves of the earth; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; sorrowful, but always rejoicing; cast down, but not destroyed; an ocean of peace within, which swallows up all their sufferings.

'Neither death', with all its terrors; 'nor life', with all its allurements; 'nor things present', with all their pleasure; 'nor things to come', with all their promise; 'nor height' of prosperity; 'nor depth' of adversity nor angels' of evil; 'nor principalities' of darkness; 'shall be able to separate us from the

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love of God, which is in Christ Jesus'. 'God is our refuge and strength; a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea — though the waters thereof roar and be troubled — though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.' This is the language of



strong faith in the peace of Christ. How is it with you amid such turmoil and commotion? Is all peaceful within? Do you feel secure in the name of the Lord, as in a strong fortress — as in a city well supplied and defended?

‘There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most high. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved. God shall help her, and that right early.’ ‘Unto the upright, there ariseth light in the darkness.’ The bright and morning star, shining upon their pathway, cheers them in their journey home to their Father’s house. And when they come to pass over Jordan, the Sun of Righteousness shall have risen upon them, with healing in his wings. Already they see the tops of the mountains of immortality, gilded with his beams, beyond the valley of the shadow of death. Behold, yonder, old Simeon hoisting his sails, and saying — ‘Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.’ Such is the peace of Jesus, sealed to all them that believe, by the blood of his cross.

When we walk through the field of battle, slippery with blood, and strewn with the bodies of the slain — when we hear the shrieks and the groans of the wounded and the dying — when we see the country wasted, cities burned, houses pillaged, widows and orphans wailing in the track of the victorious army, we cannot help exclaiming — O, what a blessing is peace! When we are obliged to witness family turmoils and strifes — when we see parents and children, brothers and sisters, masters and servants, husbands and wives, contending with each other like tigers — we retire as from a smoky house, and exclaim as we go — O, what a blessing is peace! When duty calls us into that church, where envy and malice prevail, and the spirit of harmony is supplanted by discord and contention — when we see brethren, who ought to be bound together in love, full of pride, hatred, confusion, and every evil work — we quit the unhallowed scene with painful feelings of repulsion, repeating the exclamation — O, what a blessing is peace!

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But how much more precious in the case of the awakened sinner! See him standing, terror-stricken, before mount Sinai. Thunders roll above him — lightnings flash around him — the earth trembles beneath him, as if ready to open her mouth and swallow him up. The sound of the trumpet rings through his soul — ‘Guilty! guilty! guilty!’ Pale and

trembling, he looks eagerly around him, and sees nothing but revelations of wrath. Overwhelmed with fear and dismay, he cries out — ‘O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me! What shall I do?’ A voice reaches his ear — penetrates his heart — ‘Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!’ He turns his eyes to Calvary. Wondrous vision! Emmanuel expiring upon the cross! the sinner’s Substitute satisfying the demand of the law against the sinner! Now all his fears are hushed, and rivers of peace flow into his soul. This is the peace of Christ.

How precious is this peace, amid all the dark vicissitudes of life! How invaluable this jewel, through all the dangers of the wilderness! How cheering to know that Jesus, who hath loved us even unto death, is the pilot of our perilous voyage; that he rules the winds and the waves, and can hush them to silence at his will, and bring the frailest bark of faith to the desired haven! Trusting where he cannot trace his Master’s footsteps, the disciple is joyful amid the darkest dispensations of Divine Providence; turning all his sorrows into songs, and all his tribulations into triumphs. ‘Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee.’

II. The victory of Christ over the world, the source of comfort and joy to believers. ‘In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.’

The world is the great castle of Belial, containing three temples; ‘the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life’; in one or another of which every unconverted soul is a worshipper. But Jesus has demolished that castle, and abolished the service of its several temples.

The world has two modes of warfare. Sometimes it puts on the apparent mildness of a lamb, and allures to destruction with the song of a siren. Again it leaps upon its prey like an angry lion, or pursues its victim like an exasperated dragon. Its frown has destroyed thousands; its smile, tens of thousands.

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A certain man has laid it down as a rule, that all must take the world as it is. But all general rules have their exceptions. Christ is the exception here. Christ conquered the world. The Prince of this world met him in the wilderness, when he was alone, in poverty and distress — weary, hungry, and thirsty — and offered him all the kingdoms of the world, for which have been fought so many battles. But Jesus refused the offer; choosing rather to be poor, than we might be made rich. He detected the

lion in his affectation of the lamb, and stripped from the angel of darkness his garment of light.

Then the enemy assumed another aspect — assailed him with the rage of a wild beast, and the malice of a fiend. No sooner had he preached his first sermon, than there was an attempt to hurl him down the precipice. 'The archers sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him.' Judæa became to him a mountain of leopards, and humanity seemed infernalised. He was stigmatised as a hypocrite — an impostor — a demoniac. He was falsely accused before rulers, and insult was added to perjury. 'But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.' 'He was tempted in all things like as we are, yet without sin.' 'He did no iniquity, neither was guile found in his mouth.' He went through the wilderness without contracting any of its defilement.

But this was comparatively a small part of his victory. A more glorious conquest of the world was achieved by his death upon the cross, and his resurrection from the grave. It is here we behold him 'glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength', trampling the hosts of hell, till his raiment is red with blood. It is here we behold him 'spoiling principalities and powers, and making a show of them openly — triumphing over them' in his atonement. It is here we behold the Prince of this world cast out and judged. The Prince of Peace has broken his sceptre, demolished his throne, and established upon the ruins of his empire an everlasting kingdom of grace.

Caiaphas rejoiced that Christ was under the king's seal in the grave; but his unholy joy was brief as 'the crackling of thorns under a pot.' At the dawning of the third day, Cæsar's seal is broken, the stone rolled away, the tomb deserted of its occupant, Caiaphas's feast of joy turned to lamentation and mourning, and the

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eternal power and Godhead of him whom they crucified engraved for ever on the rent rocks of Calvary.

Alexander conquered the world, but did not live to enjoy the fruits of his victory. But the Captain of our salvation, though he was dead, is alive for evermore. He shall prosecute his conquests, and put all enemies under his feet, and retain his dominion for ever. 'He shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.' He lives to confer upon his people the riches which he procured for them by his death. He lives to defend

his redeemed, and draw all men unto himself. He lives to perpetuate in the church the peace which he bequeathed to her in his last will and testament.

A servant of Julian the Apostate asked one of the martyrs — ‘What is thy God, the carpenter, doing now in heaven?’ He answered — ‘Making a coffin for thy master!’ Julian was soon afterward mortally wounded by an arrow from one of the Scythians. When he was expiring, he waved his hand sorrowfully, and exclaimed — ‘O Galilean, thou hast conquered!’

‘Be of good cheer’, therefore, ye trembling disciples! Christ has vanquished all your enemies. Ye are more than conquerors, through him that loved you, and gave himself for you. ‘In those things wherein they were proud, he was above them.’ When Pharaoh exulted to overtake Israel, shut in between Pi-hahiroth and Baal-zephon, with the sea before them, Jehovah was higher than the Egyptian. His sight was clearer — his arm was stronger — his purpose was firmer. He said to his people — ‘Stand still! you are not able to raise this rampart. I must do it for you. I will divide the sea, and lead you through on dry land, and drown those who have drowned so many of your infants. Every one of them shall perish, from the king to the last footman.’ Thus the Prince of Peace has triumphed over your foes, and you may conquer through faith in his conquest. ‘Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.’

John in the Apocalypse saw the army of the victors — a great multitude, out of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues — standing before the throne, and before the Lamb; clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and crying with a loud voice — ‘Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb!’ And one of the elders asked him — ‘Who are

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these, and whence came they?’ But so wonderfully were they changed, since he saw them on earth — in exile, in prison, in torture and death — that he confessed he knew them not. Then answered the elder — ‘These are they that came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne,

shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.'

Thus, ye saints, shall you 'overcome by the blood of the Lamb'; 'for greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world'; and your sorrows shall be lost in unspeakable joy, and your disgrace in eternal glory!

## Sermon 16

### *THE GLORY OF THE GOSPEL*

*According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God (1 Timothy 1:11).*

THE being of God, and some of his attributes, are revealed to us by natural religion. The proof is seen in all his works, commending itself to the reason and conscience even of pagan nations. 'Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath showed it unto them; for the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead; so that they are without excuse, because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.' (Romans 1:19–21)

Paul's sermon in Athens was founded on the revelations of natural religion:— 'Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious; for as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD; whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us; for in him we live,

and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring' (Acts 17:22–28).

But natural religion, though it reveals the being and attributes of God, cannot teach the way of salvation, nor lead us in the path of holiness. It may excite a thousand fears, not one of which can it allay; and suggest a thousand questions, not one of which can it answer. It leaves us, with the deist, in a region of doubt and perplexity; and neither of its four oracles — creation, providence, reason, and conscience — can satisfy the soul that inquires, ‘What must I do to be saved?’ Its light affords us no guidance in the path of virtue; no certain indications of duty, either to God or man. Our understandings are so darkened, our wills so perverted, our affections so carnal, that we can depend upon no suggestions of external nature, or of reason and conscience, for the regulation of our moral conduct. God, therefore, of his infinite mercy, has given us his written word — a perfect rule both of faith and practice — a law by which we ought to live, and by which we shall be judged — a revelation of the mystery which had been hidden for ages, but is now made manifest to the saints, dispelling the fears of conscience, soothing the sorrows of the heart, and bringing life and immortality to light.

Divine revelation, though infinitely above human reason, does not in the least oppose it. That God should clearly make known his will to man, is so far from being contrary to reason, that we may truly say, nothing is more reasonable. The deductions of reason from the insufficiency of natural religion strongly indicate the necessity of such a revelation; and as to its possibility, we know that there can be no impossibility on the part of God to give it, and there is no impossibility on the part of man to receive it. God is able to communicate his will to his creatures in any way he pleases. He can stamp it on the mind, and make us know that it is he who speaks to us. But he has chosen another method. He has given us a record of his will in the Holy Scriptures. ‘God who, at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds. Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to

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the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.’

Is the gospel the truth of God or not? Much has been written on this question. The arguments that have been advanced in support of the affirmative have never been overthrown, and never can be, by all the

sceptics in the world. The revelation of the method of salvation was given in the garden of Eden to our first parents. Since that period great talents have been employed, talents worthy of a better cause, in ridiculing the Bible; but to very little purpose. The character of the Book of God stands firm as a mountain amid the clouds, the thunders, and the whirlwinds; and all the opposition of infidels and blasphemers, instead of tarnishing, have only brightened its lustre; and from every trial through which it has passed, it has come forth as fine gold from the furnace. The religions of the world, the vices and virtues of the world, all its wisdom and sagacity, and all its power and authority, in league with the demons of the pit, have not been able to destroy the gospel, or stay the wheels of its chariot. Though they were headed by the prince of darkness — the prince of this world — the prince of the power of the air, that worked mightily in the children of disobedience, in Palestine, in Greece and Rome, and all over the world; yet the gospel has proved triumphant. Its enemies, human and infernal, may wonder and be amazed at its prosperity; but let them remember that its author is the living God, and liveth for ever. Though its ministers have been persecuted and imprisoned, stoned, sawn asunder, slain with the sword, and burnt in the flames; yet the word of the Lord is not bound, but is freely preached in many parts of the world, and its doctrines and practices maintained in their purity by multitudes of Christians, notwithstanding the most dreadful attempts that have been made at different times to corrupt and destroy them. 'For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.'

We would now call your attention to the Divine authority of the gospel, and its characteristic glory.

I. It is 'the gospel of the blessed God' — a message from God to man — a revelation of God's gracious method of saving sinners through the death of his Son — a declaration of his sovereign love

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and mercy to the utterly wretched and perishing children of men. It testifieth of the coming of the promised Messiah; of the glory of his person as God-man; of the excellency of his offices, as our Prophet, Priest, and King; the honour which he has conferred upon the law that we have violated, and the satisfaction which he has given to the Divine



justice that we have insulted. It records the sufferings and death of Christ, his victory over the powers of darkness, his resurrection from the grave, his ascension to glory, his session at the right hand of the Father, and his intercession for sinners on the ground of his vicarious sufferings; and predicts his second coming in glory, on the clouds of heaven, to judge the quick and the dead.

I do not mean to say that there is no other truth necessary to be preached and believed, but all the truths of Divine revelation are immediately connected with the doctrine of the cross. This is the testimony that the Father hath testified of his Son. This is the glad tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people. This is the faithful saying, or true report, that is worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save the chief of sinners. This is 'the glorious gospel of the blessed God'; emanating from his spirit, and conducting to his kingdom. Let us consider the evidences of its Divine authority.

The perfections of God, in some degree, are manifested in all his works and words; his character is stamped on every thing that his hands hath formed, and his mouth hath spoken; so that there is a vast difference between the work and language of God, and the work and language of men. This is especially the case in reference to the Christian revelation. It is 'the gospel of the blessed God', and bears throughout the impress of its author. When John saw the Lamb in the midst of the throne, he had no difficulty in determining that he was a proper object of adoration and praise. As soon as any one sees the stone with seven eyes laid before Zerubbabel, he knows that it is not a common stone. When you look to the book of the firmament, the fingers of the Creator's eternal power and Godhead are evidently seen in the sun, the moon and the stars. So, in the Bible, we trace the same Divine hand. As often as I read it, I see eternity, with its flaming eye, gazing upon me. It unfolds to me the mysteries of creation and providence. It informs me who made, and still sustains and governs the universe. It leads me to the spring and original cause of all

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things; and places me immediately before the eyes of the eternal God; and I find myself, in his presence, both killed and made alive — most dreadfully oppressed, and set at perfect liberty — sunk in the valley of repentance and humiliation, and lifted upon the top of Pisgah — full of

fears, and full of joy — desiring to hide myself from his sight, yet wishing to abide in the light of his countenance for ever!

I see the eye of Omniscience looking out upon me from every chapter of the Bible — from every doctrine, every precept, every promise, every ordinance of the gospel — penetrating alike the darkness and the light — searching me through and through, till I can hide nothing from its gaze — giving me a faithful representation of my conscience and my heart — making me hate myself, and confess my uncleanness, and cry out for the creation of a right spirit within me. And then I see it looking far into futurity — discovering, many hundreds of years beforehand, the smallest circumstances in the life and death of Jesus, even to the price of his betrayal, the gall mingled with his drink, and the lot cast for his vesture. How can I doubt that this is the eye of God?

Again: I see Holiness, Justice, and Truth, gazing upon me from the very heart of the gospel, like so many eyes of consuming fire. I tremble before them, like Moses before the burning bush, or Israel at the base of Sinai. Yet do I wish to behold this terrible glory, for it is mingled with milder beams of mercy. I take off my shoes, and approach that I may contemplate. ‘Truly, God is in this place!’ I cannot live in sin under the intense blaze of his countenance. But here also I find the cleft of the Rock, even the Rock of Ages, wherein he hides me with his hand, while he makes all his goodness pass before me, and proclaims to me his name — ‘The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and by no means clearing the guilty!’

‘The word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword; piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow; and discerning’ — revealing — condemning — correcting — ‘the thoughts and intents of the heart.’ It unlocks my soul, and sits upon its throne; an infallible judge over all my secret imaginations, purposes, and feelings; bringing them under its own perfect law; examining them in the light of spotless holiness, inflexible justice, and eternal truth. And when I shrink

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from the scrutiny, overwhelmed with a sense of my corruption, and confessing my guilt with a broken and contrite heart, then it speaks to me of the boundless love of God, and the infinite merit of Christ; and ‘a still small voice’ directs my sight to the holy of holies; where I see, through the rent veil, the King of Zion, sitting upon his throne of grace,

more glorious than the ancient Shekinah upon the mercy-seat. I approach with joyful confidence, and find him invested with my own nature, 'God manifest in the flesh', his royal garments red with sacrificial blood; and again I hear the still small voice — 'Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace!' And when the dark mountains of tribulation rise up before me, I see their tops gilded with beams of love; and when I look into the valley of the shadow of death, I see it brightening with the footsteps of the Son of God; and when the soul sits solitary and dejected in her mortal prison, longing for the wings of a dove, that she may fly away and be at rest, she sees the eyes of her Deliverer looking through the crevices of the wall, and hears his voice at the grated window — 'Fear not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God!'

Thus the gospel commends itself to my conscience and my heart, as 'the gospel of the blessed God'. But there is other, and if possible still stronger, proof of its divinity; namely, its power to renew the human soul, and reform the human character. The Earl of Rochester was a great sceptic, and one of the most witty and sarcastic men of his age. In his last sickness, he was reading the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah; where the prophet, in so graphic and touching a manner, describes the vicarious sufferings of Christ. It scattered all his deistical doubts, as the sun scatters the mist of the morning; led him with a broken and believing heart to the atoning Lamb of God; and converted his death-bed into a vestibule of heaven. This is not a solitary case. Thousands and millions have been, in like manner, awakened and converted through the gospel, and brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. It is 'mighty through God, to the pulling, down of strong-holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God; and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ' — turning men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive remission of sins, and an inheritance among all them that are sanctified

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through faith in Jesus. Matthew at the custom-house, the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well, the dying malefactor upon the cross, the penitent jailer at Philippi, the blasphemous persecutor on the road to Damascus, and three thousand souls under Peter's preaching at the Pentecost, all found it 'the power of God unto salvation'. And still it retains its convincing and quickening virtue. Wherever it is proclaimed in its purity,

and accompanied with the power of the Holy Ghost, proud and hardened sinners are pricked in their hearts, and forced to cry out — ‘Men and brethren, what must we do?’ It answers the question. It points to the crucified and saith — ‘Believe and be saved!’ It reconciles the enemy unto God. It makes the blasphemer a man of prayer, the sensualist a man of purity, the inebriate a man of sobriety; and where sin abounded, grace much more abounds. The dead whom Jesus quickened had no time to inquire into the mysterious process by which the work was wrought. They sprang instantly into life by the power of God. Yet the evidence of the change was clear and incontestable. So it is with the transforming effects of the gospel. We cannot rationally doubt its power to raise the soul from death in trespasses and sins. Suppose I have been long afflicted with a cancer, or have been bitten by a mad-dog, or a rattlesnake; and I find a sovereign and instantaneous remedy; but after I am cured, a sceptic calls upon me, and tries to convince me that the remedy is good for nothing, insists that it is a cheat lately invented by a villain, demands of me to prove that such things were used before the deluge, and asks me a thousand questions about the cure which Solomon could not answer; how can I look upon such a man as better than a maniac? I have tried the experiment, and found it successful; and all his pretended philosophical reasoning rings in my ears like a sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. The wisdom of men has invented many remedies for the guilt and the love of sin; but the vain philosophy of the world has never, like the gospel, restored a single soul to peace, purity, and happiness. I can truly say, after the most careful self-examination, and millions more can testify the same thing, that the gospel, in the hand of the Spirit of God, has subdued the love of sin, and quenched the fire of guilt within me; and has taken away the sting of death, and the terrors of the grave. If the infidel will allow that I am a sane man,

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and a man of truth, what farther proof does he want that this is the gospel of the blessed God?’

Once more: The character of God, as exhibited in the gospel, is perfect, every way worthy of himself, infinitely above any original conception of the human mind. The gods of Homer and Virgil are cruel and revengeful. The god of Mohammed delights in pollution and crime. The god of Voltaire is a buffoon, and the god of Paine a tyrant. But the gospel

represents the Deity in his true character, as the concentration and the fountain of all moral excellence.

All this evidence of the Divine authority of the gospel is corroborated by an overwhelming array of external proof. It was certainly written by the men whose names it bears. They were men of irreproachable character. Their declarations were confirmed by the testimony of miracles, and the fulfilment of prophecy. Jesus of Nazareth was crucified on Calvary, rose from the dead the third day, and ascended to heaven, according to the Scriptures. These were facts believed by the primitive Christians, and admitted by their enemies. They were received with the most perfect confidence by the immediate successors of the original witnesses; and farther corroborated by the testimony of neutrals, apostates, and the most inveterate opponents. The question therefore is settled; all is admitted that is necessary to prove that the Christian's gospel is 'the gospel of the blessed God.'

II. It is 'the *glorious* gospel' — emphatically and pre-eminently glorious; and this is our second topic of discourse.

It is a wonderful exhibition of the glory of God — the most perfect revelation of the Divine attributes ever granted to man — displaying the sovereign mercy of the Father, in the gift of his beloved Son; the infinite compassion of Christ, in offering himself upon the cross for our sins; and the gracious power of the Holy Spirit, in turning us from darkness to light, and renewing us in righteousness and true holiness after the image of God.

But it is chiefly from a comparison of the gospel with the law, both in its dispensation and its character, that we see its transcendent glory. On this point let us fix our attention.

'The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.' The ministration of the law brought the angels from heaven to earth, but the ministration of the gospel required

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the incarnation of the God of angels. The Mediator of the new covenant is Jehovah enshrined in humanity — 'Emmanuel' — 'God with us' — 'God manifest in the flesh' — 'the fullness of the Godhead', that 'fillet all in all', embodied and made visible in the lowly Son of David.

This is the foundation of the apostle's argument, by which he convicts the despisers of the gospel of greater guilt than the transgressors of the law. 'If the word spoken by angels' — that is, the law given upon Sinai

—‘was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape’ — we who have heard the glad tidings of the gospel — ‘if we neglect so great salvation; which at first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, with signs, and wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost?’ If God is greater than man, then the gospel is greater than the law; and its superior excellence constitutes for it a superior claim upon our faith and our affections; and the strength of that claim graduates the guilt of its rejection. There is a fire more intense than that which flamed on Sinai, and a judgement more terrible than that of Korah and his confederates. ‘He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy, under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the Spirit of grace!’

The ceremonial law contained many a type and shadow of Messiah; but the gospel is the history of his advent and mediatorial work. The ceremonial law pointed to the coming Prince of Peace; but the gospel brings him to his throne, and puts the crown upon his head. Christ is ‘the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person’; and Moses and Aaron are lost in his light, as the moon and the stars in the blaze of the rising sun. The excellence of his person, the merit of his sacrifice, and the utility of his offices, give him an immense superiority. The many prophets, priests, and kings, of the former dispensation, were but the shadows cast by the one great Prophet, Priest, and King, which indicated his coming. A light arose from the cross of Calvary, which turned the black cloud on Sinai into a pillar of glory.

Typical blood shielded the children of Israel from the arm of the

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destroying angel, healed the leper, anointed to holy offices, atoned for ceremonial sins, and sealed the covenant of God with his people; but never cancelled the sinner’s debt, nor satisfied his conscience, nor sanctified his affections, nor calmed his trembling spirit in the hour of death. All these blessings, however, flow from the blood of Christ — these, and infinitely more — more than tongue can tell, or heart conceive.

The gospel is emphatically the ministration of mercy — the covenant of grace, ‘ordered in all things and sure’ — a goodly ship, freighted with the bread of life, and commanded by the Son of God, who has steered into the harbour of our famishing world, and is dispensing the precious provision to all who will accept. These are ‘the sure mercies of David’.

The law is only a partial revelation of the Divine attributes, which, in the gospel, are all equally exhibited, and all equally glorified. Here, ‘Mercy and Truth are met together; Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other’. The justice of God looks more terrible at the cross of Christ than at the gate of hell; and is more glorified in the sufferings of his Son than in the eternal agonies of all the damned; while his mercy is more beautiful, because more honourable to his administration, than if sinners had been saved without an atonement.

Thus, while the law reveals the righteousness of God, the gospel brightens the revelation of his righteousness, and adds the revelation of his grace. While the law imprisons the sinner, the gospel liberates him, yet liberates him according to law. While the law shows the malignity of sin, and dooms the sinner to death, the gospel assents to both, but conquers the one and counteracts the other.

The law convinces us of our fall; the gospel assures us of our redemption. The law shows us what we are, and what we ought to be; the gospel tells us what we may become, and how the change must be effected. The law tears open our wounds; the gospel pours in the healing balm. The law makes known our duty; the gospel aids us to perform it. The law plunges us in the ditch; the gospel opens to us the purifying fountain. The law is a mirror in which we behold our own filthiness and deformity; the gospel is a mirror which reflects the glory of God in Christ, and transforms the believer into the same image.

The law has no fellowship with the sinner — offers no pardon to

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the sinner — cannot cure the love of sin in his heart — cannot give a spark of life, without perfect obedience, and full satisfaction for past offences. Therefore some accuse the law of cruelty — cannot set forth the superior glory of the gospel, without representing the law as a tyrant or a vagrant. But it is not the cruelty of the law, but the righteousness of the law, that condemns the sinner. This is the reason that it has no alms-house, nor city of refuge, in its dominion. Yet ‘the law is our schoolmaster, to bring us to Christ’. By convincing us of sin, it shows us

our need of a Saviour. It meets the sinner on his way to hell, and drives him back to Calvary!

But the gospel is more glorious. It enters the sinner's heart, and casts out the love of sin, and scourges the traffickers from the temple of God. It enters the prisoner's cell, knocks off his fetters, and bids him go free. It descends into the valley of dry bones, makes the mouldering skeletons living men, and leads them to Mount Zion with songs of everlasting joy. It gives eyes to the blind, ears to the deaf, feet to the lame, tongues to the dumb, health to the sick, life to the dead, and revives such as are fainting under the terrors of the law. It is 'the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth'.

The Moravian missionaries in Greenland preached several years on the great doctrines of natural religion, and the requirements of the moral law, without producing any visible reformation in their hearers; but under the very first sermon which exhibited 'Jesus Christ and him crucified', many 'were pricked in their hearts', and led effectually to repentance.

We have a striking illustration of the distinguishing glory of the gospel — its mercy — in the parable of the prodigal son. The young man, having received his portion from his Father, went into a far country, and spent all his substance in drunkenness and debauchery. Reduced to the last extremity of want, the proud young nobleman hired himself to a citizen of that country, and became a feeder of swine — the meanest employment to which a Jew could be degraded. On the very verge of starvation, we see him snatching the husks from the mouths of the detested animals to satisfy his hunger. Now he contrasts the present with the past. 'My father's house! O, my father's house!' A trembling hope springs up in his bosom. 'I will arise and go!' I see him coming, full of guilt and shame — halting — trembling — ready to turn back, or lie down by the wayside

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and die. While yet a great way off, the father beholds him — O, not with an eye of anger and revenge! and runs to meet him — O, not with a drawn sword, or an uplifted rod! He feels within him the yearning of a father's heart, leaps to embrace the prodigal, and pours upon him a mingled shower of kisses and tears. Not a reproachful word is uttered — not the slightest censure — nothing but love. 'Father, I have sinned! I am not worthy to be' — 'Peace, my son! Servants, bring a robe, a ring, a



pair of shoes; and haste to kill the fatted calf; and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive, was lost and is found!' 'And they began to be merry.'

Such, my brethren, is the unspeakable mercy of the gospel, which constitutes its distinguishing glory. It is the law that creates the famine in the 'far country' of sin. The poor prodigal goes about, begging for bread; but none will give him a crust, or a crumb. The desert of Mount Sinai is a poor country for a starving soul. There is no bread in all that region, and no toleration for beggars. If the sinner offers to work for any of the citizens — either for Mr Holiness, or Mr Justice, or Mr Truth — he is sent into the fields to feed swine, till he is thoroughly convinced of the nakedness of the land, and the misery of his lot; and if he faints through famine or fatigue, and fails to perform his task, he is thrust into the house of correction, and placed upon the tread-wheel of remorse, till the ministers of mercy come to his relief. It is the gospel that whispers — 'Return to thy father!' It is the gospel that inspires the hope of acceptance. It is the gospel that meets him with more than paternal welcome, and rains upon him the baptism of blessings and tears. It is the gospel that brings its robe of righteousness, and its ring of favour, and spreads its feast of joy, and calls the angels to merry-making 'over one sinner that repenteth'.

O, the love of God! O, the riches of Christ! His salvation is more than a restoration to the joys of Eden. He came that we might have life, and that we might have it more abundantly. Where sin abounded under the law, grace hath much more abounded under the gospel. It is an ocean of blessings — 'blessings of the heaven above, and of the deep that lieth under' — the blessings of Jacob, 'prevailing above the blessings of his progenitors, unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills' — blessings which cannot be circumscribed by time, passing over the mountains which now divide us

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from the promised land, and flowing down on the other side into the pacific vales of immortality!

Such is 'the glorious gospel of the blessed God'. You have seen the evidence of its divinity, and the peculiar excellence of its character. Suffer me to ask, do you believe its doctrines? do you obey its precepts? do you enjoy its blessings? do you delight in its promises? It commends itself every way to your faith, and your affections. It is worthy of all

acceptation. It is the light of the world — walk ye in it! It is a feast for the soul — eat and be satisfied! It is a river of living water — drink and thirst no more!

How miserable is that man who rejects alike its evidences and its offers! How miserable in the hour of death! As Thistlewood said of himself, when on the drop at Newgate, he is 'taking a leap in the dark'! How miserable in the day of judgement! God saith — 'Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hands all the day long, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught my counsel, and would none of my reproof; therefore I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh — when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind — when distress and anguish cometh upon you!'

## Sermon 17

### THE SONG OF THE ANGELS

*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men (Luke 2:14).*

THE most important event recorded in the annals of time, is the incarnation of the Son of God. Anointed to be ‘the Apostle and High Priest of our profession’, it was necessary that he should humble himself, to assume our degraded nature, and enter into our suffering condition. Had he appeared on earth in the unmitigated glory of his Godhead, the children of men could not have borne the revelation, and could not have been benefited by his personal ministry; neither could he have been ‘touched with the feeling of our infirmities’, nor have offered himself a sacrifice for our sins. His manifestation in the flesh was essential to the great objects of his advent; and no wonder the heavenly host descended to announce his coming, and poured forth their delight in this joyful strain; — ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.’

Let us consider, *first*, The incarnation of the Eternal Word; and, *secondly*, The song of the angels on the occasion of his birth.

I. Though it is impossible for the immutable God to be made a creature, yet the Divine nature was so closely and mysteriously joined to the human, that the same person was ‘a child born’, and ‘the Mighty God’ — ‘a son given’, and ‘the Everlasting Father’. The Divinity did not become humanity, and the humanity did not become Divinity; but the two were so united as to constitute but one glorious Mediator.

Though his incarnation did not destroy, or even tarnish in the

least, the essential glory of the Deity; yet was it a mighty and marvellous condescension, for him who is ‘over all, God, blessed for ever’, thus to assume our frail and suffering flesh. Solomon asked — ‘Will God in very deed dwell with men upon the earth?’ A question which neither men nor angels could answer. But God hath answered it himself,

and answered it in the affirmative. 'The Word' that 'was in the beginning with God, and was God', in the fullness of time, 'was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.'

We can form no idea of the natural distance between God and man. But the infinite vacuum is filled up by the Messiah. He is 'Emmanuel' — 'the true God', and 'the Son of Man'. 'He thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of sinful flesh.' Passing by the nobler nature of angels, 'he took on him the seed of Abraham'. Nor did he join himself to humanity in its original perfection and glory. He came into the mean condition of fallen creatures, sharing with us our various infirmities and sufferings. Yet he was free from all moral contamination. He was 'holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners'. He 'knew no sin'. He 'did no iniquity, neither was guile found in his mouth'.

But notwithstanding the humility of his appearance in Bethlehem, such was the dignity of his person, and such the magnitude and grandeur of the work for which he came into the world, that angels descended from heaven to publish the glad tidings to the children of men. True, no ambassadors were sent to the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem — none to the Senate of Rome, to proclaim the coming of the Prince of Peace; but never was there such an embassy on earth, to announce the birth of a royal son, as that which came to the shepherds of Bethlehem. When he appeared among men, the order was given in heaven, that all the angels of God should worship him; and their example was followed by wise men upon earth. The prophet Isaiah said that his name should be called Wonderful; and the angel informed Mary that he should be great, and should be called the Son of the Highest; and that God should give unto him the throne of his father David, and he should reign over the house of Jacob for ever. 'Though he was rich, yet for our sake

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he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich.' He humbled himself that we might be exalted — was bruised and wounded that we might be healed — died the most shameful death that men could inflict, that we might live the most glorious life that God can confer!

II. Let us now consider the import of the anthem, sung by the heavenly host, when he was born in Bethlehem. 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.'

1. 'Glory to God in the highest.' The shining light between the cherubim, on the mercy-seat, was called 'the glory of the Lord', being a supernatural representation of his presence in the sanctuary. Three of the apostles saw the same glory upon the mount of transfiguration, and all believers have seen it by faith. The word 'glory', in the anthem of the angels, refers to the divine honour and praise resulting, from the humiliation of Christ. The redemption of sinners, through the blood of the cross, and by the grace of the Holy Spirit, is not only consistent with the glory of God, but highly promotive of his glory, as our Creator and Lawgiver. It brightens all the gems previously visible in his crown, and reveals others that were concealed. His glory, as seen in the works of creation and providence, is the glory of wisdom, power, and love. His glory, as seen in his law and its administration, is the glory of holiness, justice, and truth. These are essential to his nature and his government. But in the incarnation and the cross of Christ, we behold a new glory, a glory nowhere else displayed, the glory of mercy. God was known before to be the friend of saints, but here he shows himself the friend of sinners. His character as previously revealed was matter of admiration and praise in earth and heaven, but this new revelation occasions new wonder and rejoicing to men and angels. Angels delighted to bear the joyful news to men, and this was the burden of their message:— 'Behold, we bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be unto' — the righteous? the benevolent and charitable? no; but — 'unto all people'. And what are these tidings? 'To you is born, this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.' Here is the Lawgiver embracing the rebels; his the glory, theirs the benefit; while angels participate the joy of both, singing — 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace.'

2. 'On earth peace.' Not by a compromise with Satan, as he

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proposed when he tempted the Son of God in the wilderness. Not at the expense of the Divine law, but by magnifying and making it honourable. Not a peace with enmity, for Christ hath slain the enmity by his cross. Our peace flows from the reconciling blood of Jesus. Nothing else could satisfy the claims of Divine justice, and procure pardon for the penitent believer.

Without the atonement, there is no peace for sinners. There is an accusing witness within. Behold that king in the banqueting-house! Why changes his countenance? Why tremble his knees? Have the wise men of Babylon interpreted the mystic writing upon the wall? No; but conscience has. Conscience has given dreadful intimations of its meaning, before Daniel comes into the presence of the king, and the Hebrew prophet only confirms the previous interpretation. Every sinner bears about with him that internal tormentor. It may be bribed; but not for ever. It may be lulled to sleep; but it will awake with increased energy, and augmented wrath. The gnawing worm may be stupified for a season, but cannot be killed. The devouring fire may be temporarily stifled, but cannot be quenched. How dreadful are its torments, when it wreaks all its anger upon the guilty! To be drowned in the Red Sea, like Pharaoh — to be swallowed up by the earth, like Korah — to be hewn in pieces, like Agag — to be eaten of worms, like Herod — is nothing in the comparison.

Where shall we find peace? We have heard of a stone which nothing but blood can dissolve. Such a stone is the human conscience. But all the blood shed on Jewish altars could never effect the work. It must be the blood of Jesus. He is 'the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world'. At his cross, the believer's conscience finds assurance and repose. He is the good physician, and his blood is the sovereign balm. Come to his extended arms! Come, for he waits to be gracious!

3. 'Good will toward men.' The 'goodwill' of whom? Of God, blessed for ever. The funds of a benevolent society may be exhausted, so that its members in distress can receive no benefit. But in the 'good will' of God we find unsearchable riches of grace, sufficient to pay off our whole debt to the law, and restore our forfeited inheritance; to bring forth the prisoners, and them that sit in darkness, out of the prison-house; to support the believer through life, and comfort him in death, and raise him from the grave not a

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beggar, or a pensioner, but a prince, clothed in white, and entitled to an everlasting kingdom.

Did I possess the nature of angels, with my present sinfulness, I should have no hope of salvation, for God hath provided no mercy for fallen angels; but, in his infinite wisdom, he hath devised a method for the consistent display of his 'good will toward men', by assuming their

nature, and in that nature atoning for their sins. This is a wonderful scheme, whereby God can be just, and yet justify the ungodly. His law is honoured, though its violator be acquitted; and his government is secure, though the rebel be forgiven.

Methinks I hear the Infant in Bethlehem, speaking from the manger, in the strain of the Evangelical Prophet:— ‘Is my hand shortened at all, that I cannot redeem; or have I no power to deliver? Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, and make the rivers a wilderness; I clothe the heavens with blackness, and make sackcloth their covering. Though ye see me in human flesh, I am still Lord of all, and can save unto the uttermost. Though ye do not hear me, I have the tongue of the learned, to speak a word in season to him that is weary. I have taken upon myself your nature, that I may be able to sympathise in your sufferings, and make satisfaction for your sins. For you will I give my back to the smiters, and my cheek to them that pluck off the hair; and I will not hide my face from shame and spitting. Calvary and Joseph’s grave shall manifest my benevolence, and it shall be seen that my mercy is mightier than death. Who will contend with me? Let him come near! Let us stand together! I challenge all the powers of darkness to defeat the purposes of my grace. I will triumph by suffering. I will dash them in pieces as a potter’s vessel. Hell shall tremble at the report; and on every gate and door-post, in all my journey from this place to Golgotha, and thence home to my Father’s house, shall be inscribed the record of my good will toward men!’

‘This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.’ Behold him pressing the wine of eternal life for us from the cup of his own mortality; demolishing the kingdom of darkness on earth, and establishing in its stead the kingdom of heaven; destroying the works of the devil, delivering the captives from his iron yoke, and uniting sinners to himself in everlasting fellowship and love. The

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whole economy of Divine grace, based on the incarnation of the Son of God, is like a complicated piece of machinery, consisting of many wheels, all revolving in harmony, and impelled by the same power. Salvation is a river, flowing from the manger in Bethlehem, conveying eternal life to millions, and bearing away many a precious gem from the dominions of death and hell. It has already swept from the earth more

false gods than would have filled the Roman Pantheon; and carried multitudes of human souls, pardoned and purified, to Abraham's bosom. No opposition of men or devils can stand before 'the glorious gospel of the blessed God'. O that its light may shine into the heart and the conscience of every hearer! May the goodness of God lead you all to repentance, and fill you with peace in believing! Then will you go forth with joy, and publish his 'good will toward men'; and when the purposes of his mercy are accomplished in your hearts, you shall be removed from grace to glory — from peace to perfect love — and sin and sorrow shall be shut out for ever! Amen.



## Sermon 18

### STONE OF ISRAEL

*Behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua. Upon one stone shall be seven eyes. Behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day (Zechariah 3:9).*

**A**MID all the tribulations which the church has suffered, she has ever been preserved and sustained by the gracious providence of God; like the bush in Horeb — burning, yet unconsumed.

In the days of this prophet, the church was feeble and afflicted. Having just returned from the captivity in Babylon, by which she had been greatly reduced, she resembled the myrtle among the oaks, the firs, and the cedars. But the Messiah appears to the prophet, standing among the myrtle-trees, and encouraging the children of Israel to proceed in rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple. The good success of Zerubbabel is represented by a golden candlestick, with a bowl at the top, and seven lamps for the light, and seven pipes to convey the oil to the lamps, and two olive-trees — one on each side — pouring the oil into the pipes. This was intended also to set forth the relation of Christ to his church, as her head, and the fountain whence she derives strength and nourishment, enabling her to grow in grace, and the saving knowledge of God. As they bring forth the foundation and the corner-stones with joy, wondering at the Divine goodness and mercy, Jehovah shows them that he is about to lay in Zion the foundation and chief corner-stone of a spiritual temple: 'Behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua. Upon one stone shall be seven eyes. Behold I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.'

Let us consider the important truths taught us in this metaphorical description of Christ and his mediatorial work.

I. Christ is the foundation and chief corner-stone of his church. This figure is often used in the Holy Scriptures. 'From hence is the Shepherd,

the Stone of Israel’ — said Jacob in the blessing of Joseph. ‘The stone which the builders refused,’ said the Psalmist, ‘is become the head-stone of the corner.’ And Isaiah said — ‘Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I lay in Zion, for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation.’ All these predictions were appropriated by Messiah, to whom they were intended to apply. Christ is the foundation and chief corner-stone. ‘Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.’ ‘Ye are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets’ — that is, the foundation which they recognised and recommended — ‘Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.’ He is indeed the foundation of the world; and in the fullness of time, was declared the foundation of the church. All the buildings of mercy that have ever been erected stand firm and immovable on this Rock of Ages.

In the architecture of the first covenant in Eden, there was a Stone under one end, and earth under the other. ‘The first man was of the earth, earthy.’ And when the storm and the flood came, the earth gave way, and the building fell. But in the architecture of the second covenant upon Calvary, God laid help upon one that was mighty. ‘The second man is the Lord from heaven.’ A stone suitable for the foundation of a royal palace is very valuable, because the safety of the building depends upon the firmness of the foundation. This Stone is ‘chosen of God and precious’. It is long and broad enough for the whole edifice, stretching from eternity to eternity; and sufficiently strong to sustain it, though millions of living stones be built into the spiritual temple; and such is its firmness, that time, with all its storms, shall never destroy it, or injure its beauty. It is a tried and precious stone, composed of all that is excellent on earth, and all that is glorious in heaven — a sinless specimen of humanity, possessing ‘all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.’ As a foundation, it is laid deep in the earth; as a corner-stone, it rises above the stars, and binds the whole building in heaven and earth together.

II. This Stone is ‘laid before Joshua’. God has revealed his

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Son, as the only foundation, and chief corner-stone, to the wise master-builders of his church, in every age of the world. The seed was promised in Eden. Holy men of old beheld the promises afar off. Abraham desired to see his day; he saw it, and was glad. This was the foundation of the prophets and apostles. As Moses found so much of

God in the rod that was in his hand, that he could think of no other means for working a miracle; so the prophets and apostles saw and felt so much of Christ in the revelations of which they were made the media, that they could never think of salvation from sin and hell but through his meritorious death; and the most dreadful tortures, and even martyrdom itself, lost their terrors in 'the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ'.

This Stone was laid also before Wyclif and Luther. The office and work of Christ had been lost sight of, in the intercession of saints, and the merit of human works. But 'the foundation of God standeth sure'; and all the rubbish which Roman monks had heaped upon it could not hide it from the reformers, whose vision had been cleared and quickened by light from heaven. And it was laid before Wesley and Whitefield in England, who built upon it 'gold, silver, and precious stones'; and before Powell, Erbery, and Wroth — before Rowlands, Harris, Jones, Evans, Thomas, and Francis — as the foundation of that wonderful revival in Wales, the blessed effects of which we feel to this day.

We are now endeavouring to exhibit the glory and excellency of this Stone, as the foundation of your hopes. Will you build upon Christ? Can you venture your eternal salvation upon the merit of his sacrifice? 'He that believeth on him shall not be ashamed.'

III. It is said that 'upon one stone shall be seven eyes'; by which we may understand, either seven eyes of others, looking upon the stone; or seven eyes in the stone, looking upon others.

If we take the former idea, there are many eyes looking upon this 'One Stone'; some from envy, malice, and wrath; others from astonishment, gratitude, and love. It attracts the gaze of heaven, earth, and hell. The eternal Lawgiver looks to Messiah for satisfaction on behalf of guilty man. Mercy and Truth look upon him as the foundation of their palaces. Righteousness and Peace look upon him as the only place where they can salute each other with a kiss. The devil and his angels, sin, death, and the

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grave, look upon him with eyes of anger and revenge; determined, if possible, to bruise him with their weapons and cast him among the rubbish, into the pit of corruption. Celestial spirits look upon him with eyes of wonder and delight; announce his coming to Joseph and Mary, sing his advent to the shepherds of Judæa, accompany him through all

his pilgrimage of sorrow, minister to him after the temptation in the wilderness, talk with him on the mount of transfiguration, sustain him in the agony of the garden, gather unseen around his cross, roll away the rock from the entrance of his tomb, and attend him with songs as he ascends to glory. And believers look upon him with eyes of faith and love, as the foundation of all their hopes, in this world, and that which is to come — as their ‘wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.’

The other interpretation refers these ‘seven eyes’ to the perfection of our Lord’s mediatorial character. The priest under the law was to sprinkle the blood seven times upon the mercy-seat, and seven times upon the leper; the first to typify a perfect atonement for sin; the second, a perfect application of its benefits to the believer. When the Lamb of God revived from the ashes on the altar of Calvary, he appeared ‘in the midst of the throne’, having seven horns and seven eyes, to denote the completeness of his prophetic wisdom, and the fullness of his regal authority. He sustains to his people the threefold relation of high-priest, prophet, and king. He is our high-priest, not after the order of Aaron, whom death robbed of his sacerdotal vesture; but ‘a high-priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedec.’ He is our prophet, speaking with the tongue of the learned, and as one having authority — speaking to the conscience and the heart, and the dead hear his voice and live. He is our king, according to the decree, ‘on the holy hill of Zion’; exalted by the right-hand of the Father, and ‘declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead’. Methinks I hear the Father speaking to Caiaphas:— ‘Have you a law, and do you say that by your law he ought to die? I will read to you the law on the morning of the third day, and you shall see that he is the resurrection and the life — that I have made him both Lord and Christ!’ And methinks I bear the voice of the risen Messiah:— ‘I have travelled through the forest of the world’s temptations, through the dens of lions, the

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mountains of leopards, the dark haunts of devils, and the dominions of death and the grave; and have opened, through all the desert, a new and living way to my Father’s house. The powers of darkness thought to strip me of my official regalia, and bind me for ever in the grave; but I have broken Cæsar’s seal, and rent the rocks of Joseph’s sepulchre, and am alive for evermore — the high-priest, prophet, and king of Israel.

Though I gave myself up to death upon the cross, death could not deprive me of my threefold office. I died with my vesture on, my mitre and breastplate, as high-priest over the house of God. I died with the book of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven in my band, as a prophet to instruct my people, and lead them into all truth. I died with the crown upon my head, and all my enemies beneath my feet, as a king, whose dominion is everlasting, and whose glory shall never end. Death and hell could not take from me my triple diadem; and I came forth from the place of the dead in the power of an endless life; and will continue to wear my robes unspotted, till I have finished my mediatorial work, and gathered all the saints unto myself!

IV. This stone is fitted and prepared by God himself. 'I will engrave the gravings thereof, saith the Lord of hosts.'

This figure evidently refers to the sufferings of Christ, by which he was made perfect for his mediatorial work. Many hammers and chisels were upon him from Bethlehem to Calvary; but they were all appointed of God, as the instruments of his preparation to be the sure foundation and chief corner-stone of the church. The Scribes and the Pharisees, Caiaphas, Judas, Pilate, the Jewish populace, and the Roman soldiery, whatever their malicious designs, only accomplished 'the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God' upon his well-beloved Son. All was appointed by the Father; all was understood by the Messiah; all was necessary to secure the great objects of his advent. It pleased the Father to bruise him, and put him to grief; and he cheerfully submitted to suffer, that we might be spared. O, wonder of wonders! Emmanuel wounded, that sinners might be healed! the Golden Vessel marred, that the earthen vessels might be saved! the Green Tree dried up, that the dry tree might grow as the lily, and cast forth its roots like Lebanon! According to another metaphor, 'the ploughers ploughed upon his back; they made long their furrows.' And they were deep as well as

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long. They ploughed into his very heart, and his body was covered with bloody, and his cry of agony pierced the supernatural gloom of Golgotha, and soured the wine of dragons throughout the region of Gehenna!

Thus the foundation was fitted and prepared; and wicked men and devils but blindly did the work which God had before determined to be done. It is fixed in its place, firm and immovable; and the chief Architect

is raising other stones from the quarry, and building them thereon, 'for a habitation of God through the Spirit.' Brethren, 'look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and the hole of the pit whence ye are digged' — even the flinty rock of impenitence, and the horrible pit of corruption. I have known men relinquish the hewing of stones from the quarry, because it was more expense than profit; and I have known men abandon the digging of ore from the mine, because it was too deep in the mountain. But Christ 'descended into the lower parts of the earth', and imbibed the gas of death. He carried in his hand the hammer of the word, which breaketh the flinty rock in pieces. He expelled the deadly vapour, blasted the solid adamant, and prepared the way for the workmen; and when he ascended, he sent down the apostles, to gather stones for his spiritual temple; while he stands at the top of the shaft, and turns the windlass of intercession, by which he draws up all to himself.

The work was gloriously begun on the day of Pentecost, and men and demons have never yet been able entirely to stop its progress. The pope and the devil tried their best, for a long time, to keep the digging and hewing tools of the twelve wise master-builders concealed in the vaults of the monasteries; but Luther, with the lamp of God in his hand, discovered them, brought them forth, and set them at work; and millions of lively stones have since been dug out, and sent up from the pit, to be placed in the walls of 'God's building.'

And still the gospel is mighty in the salvation of souls, of which we have abundant evidence in the principality. What multitudes were converted at Langeitho in the days of Rowlands and Williams; when two thousand communicants in the winter, and three thousand in the summer, met every month in the same place around the table of the Lord! And there are now in Wales hundreds of large and flourishing churches among the Baptists and Independents. Glory

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to God, that I have in my own possession the register of hundreds, who have been hewn from the flinty rock, and raised from the horrible pit, to a place in the Lord's holy temple — from drunkenness to sobriety, from unbelief to faith in Christ, from enmity to reconciliation to God, from persecution to patient suffering for righteousness' sake, from disobedience to the filial temper of 'sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty'; and many of them I have seen going home, rejoicing, to their Father's house above!

Hark! what do I hear? The hammers and chisels of mercy all over the mountain of the militant church. The great Architect is building up Zion. He is gathering his materials from Europe, and Asia, and Africa, and America. Glory to God! I hear his footsteps today in this mountain; I see his hand in this congregation. Brethren in the ministry, we are workers together with him. Delightful work! How easy it is to preach, when the hand of God is with us! Let us labour on! The topstone will soon be brought forth with shouting, the sound of the building shall cease, and we shall receive our reward!

V. The gracious design for which this Divine Foundation is prepared, is the justification and sanctification of sinners. 'I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.'

Christ came to destroy the works of the devil — to take away sin by the offering of himself. As the moon is illuminated by the sun, so the rites and ceremonies of the Old Testament are illustrated by the facts and doctrines of the new. The priesthood of Jesus explains the priesthood of Aaron. The one sacrifice of Calvary explains all the sacrifices that went before. The glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ enters the windows of Solomon's temple, and penetrates the Holy of Holies within the veil. All the bloody offerings of the Mosaic ritual were intended only as types of him who 'removed the iniquity of that land in one day'.

What land? Emmanuel's land — a garden enclosed, and measured by the line of God's eternal purpose; including all the redeemed of the Lord, who will ultimately be brought to glory. The map of 'that land' was in the mind of Jehovah, when he made this promise through the prophet. He remembered his covenant engagement before the foundation of the world in reference to its redemption. He saw it encumbered by mountains of sin, and blasted by the fiery curse of the law; and in the fullness of time, he sent his Son to deliver it.

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To remove iniquity is to remove its penalty and its pollution Christ hath accomplished both for believers. He 'bore our sins in his own body on the tree!' He carried upon his own shoulder the burden which must have sunk the whole human race to eternal perdition. By enduring our punishment, he provided for our purification. In his own wounds a fountain was opened wherein we may wash and be clean. From his own heart the balm was extracted whereby our moral leprosy may be cured.

Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.' See how our great High-priest removes the iniquity of his people not, like Aaron, by many sacrifices; but by the single offering of himself, 'in one day'.

The word which is here rendered 'remove' is in the original the same as that which is used to express the translation of Enoch. As Enoch was removed from the earth, beyond the sight of man, and the power of death; so sin is removed by the Mediator — removed for ever from the believer's heart and conscience — blotted out — cast into the depth of the sea — carried away into the land of forgetfulness. The removal is perfect and everlasting.

This was a work which Jewish sacrifices were too weak to accomplish. For two thousand years the victims bled upon the altar, and not a single sin was actually removed. Every year the goat of the burnt-offering must bleed afresh, and the scapegoat must be sent away into the wilderness. But Jesus, the great antitype of all these emblems, removed in one day, by a single offering, the iniquities of all who believe in him, from the fall to the end of time.

All the sacrifices that preceded his coming were intended only to remind men that they were sinners, that they needed an atonement, and that justification and eternal life could flow only from the meritorious sufferings of the future Christ. But when the substance came, the shadows passed away, and the promised work was at once accomplished; and all our iniquities were lost in the sea of mercy, which rose to a full tide in the Mediator's merit.

Sinners, do you expect ever to be made free from sin? Would you have your leprosy cured, your impurity cleansed, and the curse removed? Come to our great High-priest! Lo, he stands by the altar, and the blood is on his hands! He waits to be gracious! Come, for he has virtually removed your iniquity, and it requires in you but a simple act of faith to realise the benefit! 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved!'



## Sermon 19

### *JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH*

*But how should man be just with God? (Job 9:2).*

THE Almighty proclaimed himself to Moses, 'the Lord, merciful and gracious'; and in the New Testament, he is called 'the God of all grace'. 'Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.' God is determined to glorify the unsearchable riches of his grace in the salvation of sinners. But how can this be done, without casting a cloud over the Divine throne, and bringing into contempt the Divine law? How can the guilty be considered and treated as innocent, without an apparent indifference to the evil of sin, and a total disregard of the claims of eternal justice? How can the rebel be acquitted in the court of Heaven, with honour to the character of God, and safety to the interests of his moral government? This is a question which angels could not answer; but it has been answered by the God of angels. The light of nature and reason is too feeble to afford us any aid in this inquiry but we have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto we do well that we take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place'; for 'God hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ'.

Following, then, the guidance of the New Testament, let us consider the nature and the ground of a sinner's justification with God.

I. To justify is the public act of a judge, declaring a person innocent, not liable to punishment. 'It is God that justifieth' the

ungodly. Justification, in its strict sense, and remission of sins, are two very different things. Job could forgive his friends; but he could not justify them. But in the gracious economy of the gospel, these are always immediately connected; nor these alone, but other and superior mercies

— mercies infinite and unspeakable. Those whom God justifieth are not only forgiven, but also purified and renewed — not only delivered from condemnation, but also entitled to eternal life — not only redeemed from the curse of the law, but also blessed with the spirit and the privilege of adoption — not only liberated from bondage and imprisonment, but also constituted heirs 'to an inheritance that fadeth not away'. They are 'heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ'. They are kings and priests, and shall reign for ever and ever. God having given his Son as our surety, and published 'the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus', and taken his seat upon the throne of grace in the character of a merciful judge, he proclaims the believer free from condemnation, and 'accepted in the Beloved'.

In a human court, a man may be either justified or forgiven. Sometimes the jury find the prisoner innocent, and he is acquitted; sometimes they find him guilty, and he is forgiven. The former is an act of justice; the latter, an act of mercy. No earthly court can go farther; no earthly court can justify the guilty. But God is able, through the wonderful economy of substitution and atonement revealed in the gospel, in the same court, from the same throne, by the same law, and in the same sentence, to proclaim full pardon and free justification to the sinner. By virtue of the obedience and suffering of Christ on his behalf, he is at once forgiven and justified. Faith unites us to Christ, and gives us an interest in him, as our Mediator, who 'bore our sins in his own body on the tree'. 'Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man to whom God imputeth righteousness without works:— Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.'

The righteousness by which the sinner is justified infinitely transcends all other righteousness in earth or heaven. It is the righteousness of the Second Adam — an invaluable pearl, to which all the members of Christ's mystical body are equally entitled. It is the pure gold of the gospel, which cannot be mixed with the works of the law, or derive any increase of value from human merit. It

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lies upon the very surface of evangelical truth, like oil upon the water. It is the righteousness finished upon the cross — a complete wedding garment furnished by the Son of God, which the sinner has only to put on to be prepared for the marriage supper of the Lamb.

How cold and cheerless is the doctrine of the mere moralist, leaving the poor sinner wallowing in the mire, and weltering in his blood, with nothing but his own works to depend upon for salvation! But the doctrine of justification through the satisfying righteousness of Jesus Christ warms the heart, and quickens the soul of the believer into a new and heavenly life. Here is our deliverance from the curse of the law. Here the relation between us and Adam is annihilated, and another relation is established between us and Christ. Here is the sea into which our sins are cast to rise no more. 'There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit;' and they may boldly say — 'O Lord, I will praise thee; for though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me!'

II. The ground of our justification now claims a more particular attention.

This is a subject of the greatest importance; for if we build upon the sand, the whole superstructure inevitably falls, and great must be the fall thereof. The Jews, being ignorant of God's righteousness — the righteousness of faith — went about to establish their own, which was by the works of the law. Let us examine these two foundations — the righteousness which is of the law, and that which is of faith.

What sort of righteousness does the law demand, as the ground of our acceptance with God? It must originate in the heart. It must be commensurate with life, and not a broken link in the chain, for he that offendeth in one point is guilty of all. It must be so comprehensive as to include all your duties to God, your neighbour and yourself. It must engage all the powers of your mind, without the least imperfection, in thought, word, or deed. The coin must be pure gold, of full weight and measure, and bearing the right and lawful stamp. 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.'

'But what saith the righteousness which is of faith?' 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' 'He that

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believeth shall never be confounded.' 'Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.' 'He hath magnified the law, and made it honourable.' 'He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.' This is the doctrine which answers all our

questions, removes all our guilty fears, and opens to us a path of hope in the valley of the shadow of death. The justifying righteousness of Christ is as deep as the misery of man, as high as the requirements of God, as broad as the commandment, and as long as eternity. It is sufficient for all them that believe, and able to save unto the uttermost. It is a deluge which covers the mountains of transgression, and bears the believer securely in the ark. It comes to the sinner, shut up under the judgement of God, and reads to him the article of his manumission. I hear it addressing the guilty in the following language:—

‘I saw the Son of God coming forth from the bosom of the Father, and uniting himself to the nature of man. I saw the mighty God manifested in the Son of Mary, and lying in a manger. I beheld some of his blood shed, as an earnest to the law, when he was eight days old. I stood in the garden of Gethsemane, when he drank the cup of trembling mingled and presented by his Father’s justice. I was with him on Calvary, when he blotted out the handwriting of Eden and Sinai, and nailed it to his cross — when he finished the redemption of man, and spoiled the powers of darkness, and sealed with his own blood the covenant of peace. I beheld him descending to the lower parts of the earth, and lying under the sinner’s sentence in the grave. I beheld him rising in the same human nature, with the keys of death and hell in his hand, and the crown of the mediatorial kingdom upon his head. I beheld him ascending to the right-hand of the Father, leading thy captivity captive, and entering into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for thee. And now I see him in the midst of the throne, as a lamb newly slain; and the merit of his sacrifice, as a sweet-smelling savour, fills the heaven of heavens. On thy behalf he has honoured the law, satisfied the claims of justice, and opened a new and living way, whereby God can be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.’

Thus the question is answered — ‘How should man be just with God?’ Sinners are ‘justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.’ ‘Therefore we conclude

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that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law.’ This is the key-stone of the gospel, and the strength of the arch of salvation. The only way to obtain acceptance with God is by grace; ‘and if by grace, then it is no more of works’. In the justification of the sinner, Divine grace and human works can no more be mixed together than oil and

water, for they belong to different covenants. Christ came into the world, not to repair the old covenant, but to be the mediator of a new covenant, established upon better promises — not to mend the leaky and sinking vessel of the law, but to build and launch a new ark of salvation, and rescue the shipwrecked and the drowning. The law could not save. The law is holy, but we are unclean. The law is spiritual, but we are carnal. The law is righteous, but we are guilty. The law is good, but every imagination of the thoughts of the heart of man is evil, and only evil, and that continually. The law will not consent to a compromise with the sinner, will not relax its claims upon him, nor in any way accommodate itself to his fallen condition. Its power to condemn is commensurate with its authority to command.

Thus we see how it is that no man can be justified by the deeds of the law. We are not under the law, but under grace. Were we under the law, the deeds of the law would be sufficient for our justification. The law demands obedience; obedience satisfies the law. Between obedience and the law there is perfect correspondence and harmony; the one gives what the other asks. There is also a perfect agreement between grace and faith. Grace bestows freely, without money and without price; and faith, having nothing to pay, receives humbly and thankfully. Grace, by bestowing, acquires great glory; faith, by receiving, obtains great happiness. God confers blessings according to the riches of his grace; sinners receive according to the strength of their faith. Faith and the law cannot agree at all, for both are seeking and receiving; neither can works and grace agree, for both live by communicating. Therefore ‘by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast’. Ye are justified through the righteousness and merit of Christ, who became your substitute, and both obeyed the law and suffered the penalty in your stead.

This view of the ground of a sinner’s justification is everywhere

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sustained in the Holy Scriptures. ‘By the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous.’ ‘By the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men, unto justification of life.’ ‘The obedience of one’, and ‘the righteousness of one’, in these two sentences, signify the same thing. Again: ‘He who knew no sin was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.’ ‘In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his

grace.’ ‘All we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.’

The perfect obedience of Christ, and his meritorious death, were both necessary, as the ground of a sinner’s justification. Neither would have been sufficient without the other. His obedience would not answer without his death; for the law which had been broken must be honoured; and the penalty which had been incurred by the sinner must be endured by the Substitute. Neither would his death answer without his obedience for it is the obedient, and not the punished, that the law justifies he who keeps the precept, and not he who endures the penalty. It is only by satisfying both claims on our behalf, that Christ ‘of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption’.

When it is said we are justified by faith, it is not meant that there is any merit in faith, any justifying efficacy; but that faith is the condition on which we are justified for the sake of him who obeyed and suffered for us — the Divinely appointed means by which we appropriate the merit of his obedience and suffering. It is by the eye of faith we see the excellency and adaptation of Christ’s righteousness and merit; and it is by the hand of faith we take and put on the wedding garment provided for us, and thus prepare ourselves for the marriage supper of the Lamb. Faith is the bond which unites us to Christ, by virtue of which union we are justified. Faith is the wedding ring by which the poor daughter of the old Amorite is married to the Prince of Peace. She is raised from the greatest poverty and degradation to unspeakable opulence and honour, not because of the intrinsic value of the ring, though it is a golden one; but on account of the union which it signifies between her and her Beloved. ‘He that hath the Son hath life.’

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‘But faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say — Thou hast faith, and I have works. Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well; the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works? And

by works was faith made perfect; and the scripture was fulfilled which saith — Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God. Ye see, then, how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.’ (James 2:17–26)

We have noticed the nature and ground of justification; in these words of the Apostle, we have the evidence of justification. The same doctrine was preached by our Saviour:— ‘For by thy works thou shalt be justified, and by thy works thou shalt be condemned.’ Works justify only as the fruit of faith. A faith that does not produce good works is inefficient and worthless. It is not the faith which justifies the ungodly. What is it that justifies a man in a court of law? The goodness of his cause? No, verily. A man of common sense will not think of making a long speech to the jury, without adducing any evidence of the truth of his statements. My fellow sinners, if your cause is good, why do you not prove it? Why not bring forward your evidence? Why not act in this supremely important case as in every other? If you have justifying faith, let us see the fruit in a sanctified life. ‘Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.’

In this world, every man receives according to his faith; in the world to come, every man shall receive according to his works.

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.’ Their works do not go before them to divide the river Jordan, and open the gates

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of heaven. This is done by their faith. But their works are left behind, as if done up in a packet, on this side of the river. John saw the great white throne descending for judgement, the Son of Man sitting thereon, and all nations gathered before him. He is dividing the righteous from the wicked, as the shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats. The wicked are set on the left-hand, and the awful sentence is pronounced — ‘Depart from me, ye accursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!’ But the righteous are placed on the right-hand, to hear the joyful welcome — ‘Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!’ The books are opened, and Mercy presents the packets that were left on the other

side of Jordan. They are all opened, and the books are read wherein all their acts of benevolence and virtue are recorded. Justice examines the several packets, and answers — ‘All right. Here they are. Thus it is written — “I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; I was naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me.”’ The righteous look upon each other with wonder, and answer — ‘Those packets must belong to others. We knew nothing of all that. We recollect the wormwood and the gall. We recollect the strait crate, the narrow way, and the Slough of Despond. We recollect the heavy burden that pressed so hard upon us, and how it fell from our shoulders at the sight of the cross. We recollect the time when the eyes of our minds were opened, to behold the evil of sin, the depravity of our hearts, and the excellency of our Redeemer. We recollect the time when our stubborn wills were subdued in the day of his power, so that we were enabled both to will and to do of his good pleasure. We recollect the time when we obtained hope in the merit of Christ, and felt the efficacy of his blood applied to our hearts by the Holy Spirit. And we shall never forget the time when we first experienced the love of God shed abroad in our hearts. O, how sweetly and powerfully it constrained us to love him, his cause, and his ordinances! How we panted after communion and fellowship with him, as the hart panteth after the water-brooks! All this, and a thousand other things, are as fresh in our memory as ever. But we recollect nothing of those bundles of good works. Where was it? Lord,

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when saw we thee hungry, and fed thee; or thirsty, and gave thee drink; or a stranger, and took thee in; or naked, and clothed thee? We have no more recollection than the dead, of ever having visited thee in prison, or ministered to thee in sickness. Surely, those bundles cannot belong to us.’ Mercy replies — ‘Yes, verily, they belong to you; for your names are upon them; and besides, they have not been out of my hands since you left them on the stormy banks of Jordan.’ And the King answers — ‘Verily, I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.’

If the righteous do not know their own good works; if they do not recognise, in the sheaves which they reap at the resurrection, the seed which they have sown in tears on earth, they certainly cannot make



these things the foundation of their hopes of heaven. Christ crucified is their sole dependence for acceptance with God, in time and in eternity. Christ crucified is the great object of their faith, and the centre of their affections; and while their love to him prompts them to live soberly, and righteously, and godly, in this present evil world, they cordially exclaim — 'Not unto us, not unto us, but to thy name, O Lord, give glory!' Amen.

## Sermon 20

### *THE SHIELD OF FAITH*

*Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked (Ephesians 6:16).*

THE Christian is engaged in a warfare, 'not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness' — or wicked spirits — 'in high places'; who go about like roaring lions, seeking whom they may devour; assailing the servants of Christ even on their high places — their Pizgahs, their Tabors, their Olivets; swarming up from the sea of corruption within and around us, like the frogs in Egypt, and entering into our very bed-chambers and closets of devotion.

These spiritual adversaries must be opposed with spiritual armour; and the apostle has here given us a complete set of weapons for fighting, and a complete panoply for defence. The Roman armour consisted of several parts, all of which St Paul makes use of figuratively, to represent the several Christian graces by which we resist our subtle, deceitful, and invisible enemies. As the articles to which he alludes constituted a complete coat of arms, and the soldier was not prepared for the field without the whole; so the Christian graces which they represent are all of them important, 'that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work.' Some of these heavenly qualities may appear brighter at particular times in one Christian than in another; but the whole list is indispensable to every spiritual warrior. Abraham may excel in faith, Moses in meekness, Job in patience, Daniel in

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courage, Peter in zeal, Paul in humility, and John in love; but each must have the entire armour, though different occasions may require the use of different articles in the catalogue. That you may be able to stand in the evil day, you must have the shoes of peace, to preserve your feet; the girdle of truth, to strengthen your loins; the helmet of hope, to defend

your heads; the breastplate of righteousness, to cover your hearts; the sword of the Spirit, to cut your way through the columns of the foe; 'And above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.'

It is only to this article last mentioned, that we would now call your attention; in the consideration of which, let us notice, *first*, The nature of faith; and *secondly*, Its importance and utility as a shield.

I. There are many passages in the word of God which show the excellency of faith; but there is only one passage which contains an exact definition of faith; and that you will find in the first verse of the eleventh chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews:— 'Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen' — or, as it may be read — the confidence of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. I am surprised that divines have taken so little notice of this passage, in treating of the nature of faith. Generally, they wander in the wilderness without a guide; they put out to sea without compass, chart, or helm. Some of them make faith everything, and others make it almost nothing. According to the apostle's definition, it consists of these two things:— a conviction of the truth of the gospel testimony relative to things invisible, and a confidence in the character and word of the invisible Testifier. This is a common-sense definition. Here is no mystification or obscurity. In this way the term faith is understood by all men. In the ordinary transactions of business, we seldom mistake each other on this subject; why should we in the great concern of salvation pending between us and God?

Here is a man who has a note for an amount sufficient to support him comfortably, were he to live a thousand years. Still he appears very unhappy — full of doubts and fears about his future subsistence. Ask him — 'Friend, what think you of that note? is it genuine?' 'O yes,' he replies, 'I am perfectly satisfied that it is genuine.' 'What is the reason, then, that you are not more cheerful and

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happy?' 'Alas, I have no confidence in the bank.' The man is without faith. True, he believes — he believes that the note is not a counterfeit — he is well satisfied of its genuineness; but such a belief is not sufficient, while he is suspicious of the bank — produces no change in his feelings or his conduct. But if, in addition to his conviction of the genuineness of the note, he could be satisfied of the goodness of the bank, then you

should find him quite another man. These two things united constitute faith:— Believing the truth of the gospel respecting things unseen; and trusting in the power and faithfulness of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, to fulfil his promises. This is the faith that justifieth the ungodly; this is the faith that overcometh the world.

Now every one of you believes the truth of the gospel; but the promises of the gospel, which are worthy of all acceptance, some of you have not accepted — are no more influenced by them than if they did not belong to you. The gospel contains a pearl of great price — ‘an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away;’ but your confidence in the promise is feeble and inefficient — does not lead you to prayer — does not influence your conduct, so as to bring you in possession of this heavenly treasure. You have no faith. You have one of the elements of faith, but not the other. You have the belief, but not the confidence — that part of faith which belongs to the intellect, but not that which belongs to the heart. Therefore you are still poor, and naked, and miserable.

The Holy Scriptures record many admirable instances of true faith; in which confidence in the character, the providence, and the promises of God, rises into the most perfect assurance. Behold those women on the bank of the Nile. They are making a basket of bulrushes, and plastering it with bitumen. Placing the infant Moses therein, they commit the frail ark to the floods. Jochebed, why dost thou not fear that the child will be drowned? ‘I believe the promises of God, I believe that he will do good unto his people. I trust in him for the salvation of Israel.’

See that old man on mount Moriah. He has built a rude altar, and laid fire and wood thereon. He has bound his own son — his only son — his well-beloved Isaac, and is about to offer him as a sacrifice. Abraham, stay thy hand. Wilt thou slay thy only son? Then what will become of the promise? ‘My mind is easy. I

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will obey God. I believe he is able to raise Isaac from the dead. I feel assured that he will return home with me alive, and that from him will spring the Messiah.’ So Abraham determined to offer Isaac upon the altar, for he confided in the promise — ‘In Isaac shall thy seed be called.’

We have another instance in the Centurion whose servant was healed by our Lord. He had perfect confidence in the word of Christ, even though Christ had given him no promise. ‘Only say in a word,’ said he,

‘and my servant shall be healed. Thy word created the world; thy word has quickened the dead; and thy word can accomplish a cure without a journey to my house.’ This is an instance of remarkable faith; and our Lord testified — ‘I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.’

Whatever the object of faith, it is always the same in its nature, though not always the same in degree. Christ said to his disciples — ‘O ye of little faith!’ and the apostle saith of Abraham — ‘He was strong in faith, giving glory to God.’ Faith is represented in the Scriptures by a variety of expressions, such as — believing the testimony of God — relying or staying upon the Lord — waiting upon him — trusting in him — looking unto him — coming to Christ — putting on the Lord Jesus — committing the keeping of the soul to him as unto a faithful Creator. These different expressions denote the several modifications of faith, and its several degrees of intensity; but they all fall under the apostolical definition noticed above.

The language of the law was — ‘Do this and live.’ The language of the gospel is — ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.’ Faith in Christ is the prescribed and only condition of acceptance with God. Christ is the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by him. Faith is the eye with which we behold his mercy; faith is the hand by which we receive his blessings; faith is the golden chain which binds us to him for ever. The necessity of faith in the merit and righteousness of our Divine Mediator, as the condition of salvation, is a truth which lies scattered over the surface of inspired Scripture. God has always owned and blessed its proclamation in the conversion of souls. It was the article of Luther’s emancipation from legal bondage. It was the master-key which unlocked the iron gates of Antichrist, and poured the true light over all Europe; so that neither pope nor council, nor both together, could

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hide it again under a bushel. And in the church of England, even in its present weak and languid state, whenever one of its ministers preaches clearly and faithfully this blessed doctrine, souls are given him as the seals of his ministry.

There is no end to the praises of faith. Faith is the glass that draws fire from the Sun of Righteousness. Faith is the wedding ring that joins the sinner to Christ in an everlasting covenant. Faith is the living principle of all holy obedience, working by love, and purifying the heart. If God

command a man to leave his country and his kindred, and go into a strange land — to offer his beloved son as a sacrifice upon the altar — to build an ark on dry ground — to go to the fiery furnace, or the lions' den — to face his exasperated foes at Jerusalem, or hide from them in the caves of the mountains — it is faith that prompts him to the painful duty, and sustains him therein, in spite of improbabilities; and amidst difficulties, dangers, and deaths.

II. This brings us to notice the importance and utility of faith as a shield. 'And above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.'

Faith is in some respects the first of all the Christian graces. It is the beginning of spiritual life in the soul — the originating and sustaining principle of all evangelical holiness. Having faith, we have nothing to do but to add to it all the rest of our lives. '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.'

Love is in some respects superior to faith, and shall live and rejoice before the throne when faith shall have finished its work; but faith is an impenetrable shield, such as love cannot furnish, on the field of battle. The shield was a broad piece of defensive armour, worn ordinarily on the left arm; and which, being movable, might be used to defend any part of the body. According to Homer, the shields of some of the warriors at the siege of Troy were made of sevenfold thick bull-hides, covered with brass.

The value of 'the shield of faith' is seen in the case of David. Look down there in the valley. There is Goliath of Gath, the chief of the giants, blaspheming, and defying the armies of the living God, His spear is as a weaver's beam, and his armour

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bearer carries before him an enormous shield. And there is a fine-looking young man going down to meet him, without any visible weapons, except his shepherd's sling, and five smooth stones from the brook. David! hast thou no fear? Rash youth! is thy unpractised hand able to cope with the mailed champion of Philistia? 'I will go and meet him in the name of my God, for I know that the Lord will deliver him into my hand. God will avenge his people, and vindicate his own honour against the insults of his enemies. He who defended me against the lion

and the bear will save me from the hand of the blasphemer, and glorify himself this day before the thousands of Israel.' He moves on, invincibly shielded by his faith, and the next moment Goliath is slain with his own sword.

Let us look again at the case of Abraham. God said unto him — 'Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering, upon one of the mountains that I will tell thee of.' Now the enemy assails him, in the persuasive language of natural affection, and carnal reasoning; and every word is like a flaming arrow in the patriarch's heart:— 'Abraham! if thou obey this command, thou wilt disobey thereby many other commands. God hath said — "Thou shalt not kill"; and wilt thou shed the blood of thy own child? Canst thou so trample upon the law of God, and all the tender instincts of human nature? How will thy servants regard thee — how will the world look upon thee, after so horrible a deed, What will they think of thy God, when they hear that he has required at thy hand the immolation of thy only son? Will it not bring everlasting dishonour upon his name? And what will become of the Divine promise upon which thy faith is built — that from Isaac's loins shall spring the Messiah, the hope of the world? Besides, thou wilt certainly break poor old Sarah's heart; she will never be able to survive the loss, in so dreadful a manner, of her darling boy. If thou hast any feelings of humanity in thy heart any fear of God before thine eyes, any regard for the glory of his name among men, refrain from that deed of blood!'

Such were the 'fiery darts' which 'the wicked one' hurled at the good man's heart, but they fell harmless upon his 'shield of faith'. 'He staggered not at the promise through unbelief.' 'He conferred not with flesh and blood.' He rose up early in

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the morning, took Isaac and the servants, and set out for the appointed place of sacrifice. He travelled three days toward Moriah, with a settled purpose to cut Isaac's body in pieces, and shed the blood of his heart upon the altar, and burn it to ashes in the consuming flames. He loved his son as his own soul, but the command of God was dearer to his heart. 'And Abraham said unto his young men — Abide ye here with the ass, and I and the lad will go yonder, and worship, and come again to you'; for he firmly believed that God would raise his son from the ashes of the

altar, and that they would return together. I see them ascending the hill — O, what an ascent was that! Never was there a walk so sorrowful, till the great Antitype of Isaac ascended the same mountain to ‘make his soul a sacrifice for sin’. The altar is built, the fire and the wood are placed thereon; and O for words to describe the feelings of both father and son, when Abraham laid hold on Isaac, and took the knife to plunge it into his heart! There is a pause. The patriarch’s arm is stretched aloft, with the instrument of death. God of mercy! is there no help for a father? Earth cannot speak; but there comes a voice from heaven; and O, with what melody it rings through Abraham’s heart! — ‘Abraham! Abraham! lay not thine hand upon the lad; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me.’

There was the triumph of faith. ‘By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said — In Isaac shall thy seed be called; accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead, from whence also he received him in a figure.’ The patriarch’s faith quenched ‘all the fiery darts of the wicked one’, which were cast at him in this dreadful trial.

The arrows of the orientals were often poisoned at one end, and ignited at the other. It is to this circumstance the apostle alludes in the phrase — ‘the fiery darts of the wicked’, or the wicked one. Satan has his quiver full of impoisoned and flaming arrows, from which the servants of Christ would be much endangered without ‘the shield of faith’. He shot one of them at Eve in Paradise, and set the whole world on fire, ‘and it is set on fire of hell’. He shot an arrow of lust at David, and an arrow of fear at Peter; and both of them were dreadfully wounded in the back. He shot

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an arrow of covetousness at Judas, and another at Ananias and Sapphira; and having no ‘shield of faith’, they were smitten, and dropped down into hell.

The devil is a fierce and malicious enemy, ‘going about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour’. Fain would he destroy all the holy from the earth. His ‘fiery darts’ inflame the heart with the love of sin, the fear of man, the torments of remorse, and the apprehensions of judgement and fiery indignation. But when the heart is shielded by the faith of the gospel — when we clearly understand the truth as it is in



Jesus, cordially assent to it, appropriate it experimentally, and surrender ourselves to its sanctifying influence — they have no power to injure, and the Christian is more than conqueror.

‘Cast not away, therefore, the beginning of your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.’ Grasp firmly the shield. Whatever the aspect of the fight, hold it fast till the end. You will need it through all the campaign. You will need it especially in your contest with ‘the last enemy, which is death’. ‘Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.’ So shall you be able to testify with Paul, when he anticipated the termination of the warfare — ‘I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith; and henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord — the righteous judge — shall give unto me in that day.’

## Sermon 21

### THE PARACLETE

*And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him nor neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you (John 14:16, 17).*

THE Bible is a most wonderful book. It came to us from heaven, and is stamped with the Spirit and the character of heaven. It assails our favourite maxims and customs, and declares that he who will be the friend of this world is the enemy of God. It will consent to no compromise with sin. It will not in the least accommodate itself to the carnal inclinations of the human heart. What is written is written, and not one jot or tittle can be altered till heaven and earth shall pass away. It is the sword of God, by which he conquers the nations — the instrument of his grace, by which he renovates the world. Like the ark in the land of the Philistines, which was mightier than all their lords, and Dagon their god, it is more than a match for the cunning and prowess of the Prince of Darkness and his hosts. He who disobeys it kindles a volcano; he who obeys opens to himself a fountain of living waters. And the secret of all its wonderful qualities and achievements is found in its Divine inspiration, and the power of the Holy Ghost which accompanies its truths. It is ‘the sword of the Spirit’, and the Spirit that brought it into the world continues in the world to wield it, and render it quick and powerful.

These remarks introduce to our consideration the mission and office of the Holy Ghost, of which our Saviour speaks in the language of the text. And,

I. We remark, that the Holy Ghost is evidently not a Divine attribute merely, but a Divine person.

His personality is proved by the terms applied to him in the text — the ‘Comforter’, and ‘the Spirit of Truth’; and by many other passages

where he is spoken of in similar language — language wholly incompatible with the idea of his being a mere attribute, and not a person.

The doctrine of his Divinity is sustained by so many texts that their mere quotation would be an irrefutable argument in its favour. David says — ‘The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue; the God of Israel said,’ &c. Here the Holy Ghost is called ‘the Spirit of the Lord’, and ‘the God of Israel’. When Ananias ‘lied to the Holy Ghost’, it is said he ‘lied to God’. The ordinance of Baptism is ordered to be administered ‘in the name of the Holy Ghost’, as well as ‘the name of the Father and the Son’; and his ‘fellowship’ is equally invoked with the love of the former, and the grace of the latter, in the apostolical benediction. Besides, every attribute that belongs to the Deity belongs to him. He is omnipresent, omniscient, and eternal. He is the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of grace, and the Spirit of life. His works also are the works of God. He creates and quickens, which is the prerogative of God alone. He renovates the soul. He raised the body of Jesus, and will raise the bodies of all men in the last day. Finally: Blasphemy against the Son may be forgiven; but ‘blasphemy against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, neither in this world nor in that which is to come.’ If, then, the Father is God, and if the Son is God, so also is the Holy Spirit.

II. The Holy Ghost is the messenger and representative of Jesus Christ in the Church.

Two promises, like heavenly merchant-vessels, brought salvation to our world. The first was given in Eden, and fulfilled on Calvary. The Son of God descended from heaven, suffered in our stead the curse of the law, spoiled the powers of death and hell, and returned to his Father, leaving another promise, shortly to be fulfilled upon his people. With what supernatural power and unction the Holy Spirit manifested himself on the day of Pentecost! Divine Comforter! what treasure bringest thou in thy vessel of grace? ‘The things of Christ; and I will unload them today in

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the region of Calvary. I have come to fulfil the promise, to endow the disciples with power from on high, and finish the work which the Son of God has begun.’ See those tongues of flame sitting upon the fishermen of Galilee; while strangers from many different countries hear from them, each in his own language, ‘the wonderful works of God’.

Only think of three thousand conversions in a day — under a single sermon. Three thousand hearts were wounded by the arrows of Divine love, through the strongest breastplate ever made in hell. This was the work of the Holy Spirit, taking of the things of Christ and showing them to the disciples. It was Christ himself, manifesting himself through his agent. The first promise brought the Messiah into the world in the flesh; the second, in the Spirit — the first, to be crucified; the second, to crucify the sins of his people — the first, to empty himself; the second, to fill the believer with heavenly gifts and graces — the first, to sanctify himself as a sin-offering upon the altar; the second, to give repentance and pardon as a Prince and a Saviour.

The Holy Spirit is still on earth, prosecuting his gracious work, and communicating his heavenly gifts. He strives with sinners, and quickens believers into spiritual life. He dwells in the saints, leads them into all truth, and bears witness with their spirits that they are the Children of God. He illuminates their understanding; subdues their will, purifies their thoughts, and plants within them all holy principles and affections. And this he does, not by an audible voice from heaven, but through the instrumentality of the word, and by secret impressions upon the soul. 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.' The operations of the Holy Ghost are seen only in their effects. It is a drop of water becoming a fountain 'that springeth up unto everlasting life'. It is a spark of fire, kindling a conflagration, which all the rivers of Belial cannot quench.

III. The Holy Ghost is the Paraclete; that is, the Counsellor and Consoller. In our text, he is called the 'Comforter.' 'And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter,' — according to the original, one to plead your cause. The word is the same as that used to designate the Roman ambassadors, who

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were sent to other countries, as representatives of the Roman power, to persuade enemies to submit, or offer terms of peace.

A certain author observes, that the office of the Comforter is to reconcile enemies, and invigorate friends — to console the dejected, strengthen the enfeebled, and support the people of God in all the conflicts and trials of life. It is by his grace that the believer's youth is

renewed as the eagle's, and all his languishing virtues are revived, so that he can 'run and not weary — walk and not faint.'

Another part of his office in the Church is intercession. As he pleads with sinners on behalf of Christ in the gospel, so he pleads for believers in the court of heaven; not personally, like our blessed Lord, but by inspiring the spirit of supplication in their hearts. 'Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered; and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.'

When other nations had offended the Romans, it was common for them, fearing the revenge of that mighty empire, to send messengers to Rome, to plead their cause, and treat for peace. 'The Spirit of Truth', having brought sinners to repentance by pleading with them for Christ in the gospel, pours down upon them the spirit of grace and supplication, so that they cry out for mercy, and this is virtually the Spirit of God crying out within them. What is the meaning of all that prayer and agony in the congregation? The Spirit of God is there. His hammer has broken the rock — his fire has melted the iron. No other power could conquer those proud rebellious hearts, and turn the blasphemer into a man of prayer. Listen! 'If thou shouldst mark iniquity, O Lord, who could stand?' Hark again! 'But thou art a God ready to pardon; there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.' It is the voice of the Spirit, pleading in the awakened soul. See that publican in the temple, smiting upon his breast, and saying, — 'God be merciful to me a sinner!' The Holy Ghost has both convinced him of sin, and inspired him to pray for mercy. No other agency can thus quicken the 'dead in trespasses and sins', and turn the hearts of the children of men to the Lord. The gospel,

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in the hand of the Holy Spirit, 'is the power of God unto salvation'. The Holy Spirit can convince the world — can rend the veil from the mind, and dissolve the ice around the heart. He applies the truth to the conscience, and makes the guilty read their own sentence of condemnation by the light of the fires of Sinai; and then he shows them the atoning blood, and prompts them to pray for pardon. He first convinces them that they are sinking in 'the horrible pit of miry clay';

and then lets down to them the rope of the promise, bids them take hold by faith, draws them out, and sets their feet upon a rock, and puts into their mouth the new song of salvation — ‘O Lord, I will praise thee; for though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me!’

O that the ‘Spirit of grace and supplication’ may ever rest upon us! May we plead for ourselves with God, as Jacob, when he wrestled for the blessing; or Bartimeus, when he besought the Saviour to restore his sight! May we plead for sinners, as Abraham for Sodom, as Moses for Israel, as Daniel for the captives, as the Centurion for his servant, and as the woman of Canaan for her daughter!

IV. The Holy Ghost is called ‘another comforter’; which suggests a difference between his office in the church, and that of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ, by his personal ministry on earth, was the Comforter of his little flock; and by his death upon the cross, the procurer of all the comforts of them that believe; and when he ascended, ‘another comforter’ came down to take his place in the church, and communicate the blessings which he bought with his blood. ‘If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous’; who hath ‘entered into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for us’; while his agent and representative on earth dwells with his followers, leads them into all truth, and carries on within them the process of sanctification. Both are comforters — both are advocates — Christ above, and the Holy Spirit below — Christ by his personal presence before the Father, and the Holy Spirit by his gracious influence in the believer’s heart.

Christ is making intercession on our behalf without us, and independently of us. But the Holy Spirit is making intercession through

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us — pleading in our prayers ‘with groanings that cannot be uttered’. He never acts without us. True repentance and faith are his gifts, but they are also our exercises. He draws us to Christ, but we must yield to his attractions. He inspires us to pray, but the act of prayer is our own. He ‘worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure’, but he does not will and do for us. He gives us the life and the power, but he requires us to use them. He leads us into all truth, but not unless we follow him. He sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts, but not unless we open

our hearts to receive the communication. He destroys the old man within us, and creates the new; but not unless we cordially resign ourselves to his influence, and earnestly co-operate with his grace.

Christ in heaven pleads for the reconciliation of sinners to God. The Holy Spirit on earth awakens sinners, convinces them of sin, draws them to the throne of grace, and breathes into them intense prayers for pardon. He renews them, and purifies them, and makes them temples of his grace, and heirs of glory. He opens the blind eyes, and unstops the deaf ears, and makes the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb to sing. All the true conversions ever effected on earth are the results of his gracious power.

Christ has bound up all the covenants, and carried them with him into heaven, and laid them down before the throne, having obtained eternal redemption for us; and the Holy Spirit has taken of the things of God, and brought them down to men. Christ received gifts for us, and the Holy Spirit confers them upon us. Christ receives from the Father; the Spirit receives from Christ; and we receive from the Spirit. Christ bought the church with his own blood, and the spirit prepares and presents her to him as his bride. Christ opened a way into the Holy of Holies, and the Spirit aids us to offer our sacrifices before the mercy-seat. Christ is the appointed medium of our intercourse with God, and the Spirit helps us to avail ourselves of that unspeakable privilege. Christ in heaven is the life of our redemption, and the Spirit upon earth is the life of the gospel and the ordinances. 'I will draw all men unto myself' — is the motto of Christ; 'I will draw all men unto Christ' — is the motto of the Spirit.

V. The Holy Ghost has taken up his permanent residence among

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the people of God. 'That he may abide with you for ever — for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you.'

His miraculous gifts were temporary; being no longer necessary, when the truth was established in the conviction of mankind. But his renovating and sanctifying grace is as much needed now as ever, and therefore has never been taken from the world. The primitive Christians, and Christians of the present day, in this respect, share the same privilege. It is a 'common salvation'; and the streams will never cease to flow, while there remain 'vessels of mercy' to be filled.

The church in every age has suffered great loss in the death of her most able and efficient ministers. The strongest pillars in the house have fallen; the tallest trees in the forest have been cut down. 'The fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?' Where are the apostles and evangelists? What has become of the great reformers of every age? They have gone the way whence they shall not return. They have ascended in their chariots of fire. Though safe in heaven, they are lost to earth. But the Holy Spirit is a 'Comforter' that shall 'abide with you for ever.' The hands have all departed, one after another, and new crews have been shipped from age to age; but the Captain is still alive; and has remained on board, ever since he first took the register and the compass, on the day of Pentecost; and will never leave the ship, till he brings her in from her last voyage, and lays her up for ever!

Brethren in the ministry! this is our consolation. The Spirit that blessed the labours of David Jones, Daniel Rowlands, and Howell Harris, still 'dwelleth with you, and shall be in you'. O let us seek his aid in our holy work, and pray for his outpouring upon our congregations!

Delegates of the different churches! be of good courage! You may not have seen as many additions lately as in former times; but the Holy Spirit has not yet departed from the faithful. You have heard of wonderful revivals in America, as well as in some parts of Wales. The 'Comforter' is yet at work. The illuminator of souls is yet at hand. The office is yet open. The blessing is yet offered. O, let us all pray for the Holy Spirit! let us look for his coming! let us wait for his salvation!



## Sermon 22 [DUPLICATE]

### THE FATHER AND SON GLORIFIED

*Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth, for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore, said I, that he shall take of mine; and shall show it unto you (John 16:13-15).*

THE wonderful Providence which brought the Children of Israel out of the house of bondage was a chain of many links, not one of which could be omitted without destroying the beauty, and defeating the end of the Divine economy. The family of Jacob come to Egypt in the time of famine — they multiply — they are oppressed — their cries reach to heaven — God manifests himself in the burning bush — Moses is sent to Egypt — miracles are wrought by his hand — Pharaoh's heart is hardened — the first-born are slain — the Passover is eaten — the people depart, led by the pillar of God — the sea is divided — and with many signs and wonders, the thousands of Israel are conducted through the wilderness to the Promised Land. Had one of these links been wanting, the chain of deliverance had been defective.

So, in the salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ, all the conditions and preparatives were essential to the completeness and glory of the scheme. The Son of God must consent to undertake our cause, and become our substitute — the promise must be given to Adam, and frequently repeated to the patriarchs — bloody sacrifices must be instituted to typify the vicarious sufferings of Messiah — a long line of prophets must foretell his advent, and the glory of his kingdom

— he must be born in Bethlehem, crucified on Calvary, and buried in Joseph's new tomb — must rise from the dead, ascend to the right hand of the Father, and send down the Holy Spirit to guide and sanctify his church. Without all these circumstances, the economy of redemption would have been incomplete and inefficient.

The last link in the chain is the mission and work of the Holy Spirit. This is quite as important as any of the rest. Our Saviour's heart seems to have been much set upon it during all his ministry, and especially during the last few days before his crucifixion. He spoke of it frequently to his disciples, and told them that he would not leave them comfortless, but would send them 'another Comforter', who should abide with them for ever; and that his own departure was necessary, to prepare the way for the coming of the heavenly Paraclete. In our text, he describes the office of the Holy Spirit, and the specific relation which he sustains to the work of salvation:— 'Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.'

These words teach us two important truths — *first*, That the Son is equal with the Father; and *secondly*, That the Father and the Son are alike glorified in the economy of salvation.

I. The Son claims equality with the Father. 'All things that the Father hath are mine.'

This sentence is very comprehensive and sublime — an unquestionable affirmation of Messiah's 'eternal power and Godhead.' The same doctrine is taught us in many other recorded sayings of Christ, and sustained by all the prophets and apostles; and when I consider this declaration in connection with the general strain of the inspired writers on the subject, I seem to hear the Saviour himself addressing the world in the following manner:—

'All things that the Father hath are mine. His *names* are mine. I am Jehovah — the Mighty God, and the Everlasting Father — the Lord of Hosts — the Living God — the True God, and Eternal Life.

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'His *works* are mine. All things were made by me, and I uphold all things by the word of my power. My Father worketh hitherto, and I work; for as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. I am the author of universal being, and my hand moves all the machinery of providence.

'His *honours* are mine. I have an indisputable right to the homage of all created intelligences. I inhabit the praises of eternity. Before the

foundation of the world, I was the object of angelic adoration and when I became incarnate as a Saviour, the Father published his decree in heaven, saying — “Let all the angels of God worship him!” It is his will, also, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father — in the same manner, and the same degree. He that honoureth the Son, honoureth the Father; and he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father: for I and my Father are one — one in honour — possessing joint interest and authority.

‘His *attributes* are mine. Though as man and mediator I am inferior to the Father; yet my nature is no more inferior to his, than the nature of the Prince of Wales is inferior to the nature of the King of England. You see me clothed in humanity; but in my original state, I thought it not robbery to be equal with God. I was in the beginning with God, and possessed the same eternity of being. Like him, I am almighty, omniscient, and immutable; infinite in holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. All these attributes, with every other possible perfection, belong to me in the same sense as they belong to the Father. They are absolute and independent, underived and unoriginated — the essential qualities of my nature.

‘His *riches of grace* are mine. I am the mediator of the new covenant — the channel of my Father’s mercies to mankind. I have the keys of the house of David, and the seal of the kingdom of heaven. I have come from the bosom of the Father, freighted with the precious treasures of his good will to men. I have sailed over the sea of tribulation and death, to bring you the wealth of the other world. I am the Father’s messenger, publishing peace on earth — a peace which I have purchased with my own blood upon the cross. It hath pleased the Father that in me all fullness should

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dwell — all fullness of wisdom and grace — whatever is necessary for the justification, sanctification, and redemption of them that believe. My Father and I are one in the work of salvation, as in the work of creation. We have the same will, and the same intention of mercy toward the children of the great captivity.

‘The *objects of his love* are mine. He hath given them to me in an everlasting covenant. He hath given me the heathen for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession. They were mine by the original right of creation; but now they are doubly mine by the

superadded claim of redemption. My Father, before the world was, gave me a charter of all the souls I would redeem. I have fulfilled the condition. I have poured out my soul unto death, and sealed the covenant with the blood of my cross. Therefore all believers are mine. I have bought them with a price. I have redeemed them from the bondage of sin and death. Their names are engraven on my hands and my feet. They are written with the soldier's spear upon my heart. And of all that the Father hath given me, I will lose nothing. I will draw them all to myself; I will raise them up at the last day; and they shall be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory — the glory which I had with the Father before the foundation of the world.'

II. The Father and the Son are equally glorified in the economy of redemption, and the work of the Holy Spirit.

I. The Son glorifies the Father. I hear him praying in the garden:— 'Father, I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.' I hear him again, amid the supernatural gloom of Calvary, with a voice that rings through the dominions of death and hell, crying — 'It is finished!'

What mighty achievement hast thou finished today, blessed Jesus? and how have thy unknown agony and shameful death glorified the Father?

'I have glorified the Father, by raising up those precious things which fell in Eden, and were lost in the abyss.

'I have raised up my Father's *law*. I found it cast down to the earth, and trampled into the dust. I have magnified and made it honourable. I have vindicated its authority in the sight of men and angels. I have satisfied its demands on behalf of my redeemed,

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and become the end of the law for righteousness to all who will receive me as their surety.

'I have raised up my Father's *name*. I have declared it to my brethren. I have manifested it to the men whom he has given me. I have given a new revelation of his character to the world. I have shown him to sinners, as a just God and a Saviour. I have restored his worship in purity and spirituality upon earth. I have opened a new and living way to his throne of grace. I have written the record of his mercy with my own blood upon the rocks of Calvary.

'I have raised up my Father's *image*. I have imprinted it afresh upon human nature, from which it was effaced by sin. I have displayed its

excellence in my own character. I have passed through the pollutions of the world, and the territory of death, without tarnishing its lustre, or injuring its symmetry. Though my visage is marred with grief, and my back ploughed with scourges, and my hands and feet nailed to the accursed cross, not one trace of my Father's image has been obliterated from my human soul. It is as perfect and as spotless now as when I lay in the manger. I will carry it unstained with me into heaven. I will give a full description of it in my gospel upon earth. I will change my people into the same image from glory to glory. I will also renovate and transform their vile bodies, and fashion them like unto my own glorious body. I will ransom them from the power of the grave; and because I live, they shall live also — the counterpart of my own immaculate humanity — mirrors to reflect my Father's glory for ever.

2. The Father glorifies the Son. He prayed in the garden:— 'And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.' Was the petition granted? Answer, ye Roman sentinels, who watched his sepulchre! Answer, ye men of Galilee, who gazed upon his chariot, as he ascended from the Mount of Olives!

The glorification of the Son by the Father implies all the honours of his mediatorial office — all the crowns which he won by his victory over the powers of death and hell. The Father raised him from the dead, and received him up into glory, as a testimony of his acceptance as the sinner's surety — an expression of perfect

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satisfaction with his vicarious sacrifice upon the cross. It was the just reward of his work — it was the fruit of his gracious travail. He is 'crowned with glory and honour for the sufferings of death.' 'Because he hath poured out his soul unto death,' therefore 'God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name.'

What an honour would it be to a man, to receive eight or ten of the highest offices in a kingdom! Infinitely greater is the glory of Emmanuel. His name includes all the offices and titles of the kingdom of heaven. The Father hath made him 'both Lord and Christ' — that is, given him the supreme prerogatives of government and salvation. 'Him hath God exalted to be a prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins.' He is 'head over all things in the church' — Prime Minister of the kingdom of heaven — Lord Treasurer, dispensing the bounties of Divine grace to mankind — Lord High-Chancellor of the

realm, and Keeper of the Great Seal of the living God; holding in his hand the charter of our redemption, and certifying the authenticity of the Divine covenant — Lord Chief Justice of heaven and earth' having all power and authority to administer the laws of Providence throughout the universe — the Chief Prince — the General of the army — the Captain of the Lord's host — the Champion who conquered Satan, Sin, and Death; bruising the head of the first, destroying the power of the second, and swallowing up the third in victory. He hath the keys of hell and of death. He shutteth, and no man openeth; he openeth, and no man shutteth. He bears all the honours of his Father's house; and concentrates in himself all the glories of Supreme Divinity, redeemed humanity, and 'mediator between God and man'.

3. The Holy Spirit glorifies Father and Son together. He is procured for the world by the blood of the Son, and sent into the world by the authority of the Father; so that both are alike represented in his mission, and equally glorified in his office. The gracious things which the Father gave into the hands of the Son when he descended from heaven, the Son gave into the hands of the Spirit when he returned to heaven. 'All things that the Father hath are mine; and he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.'

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This is the object of the Spirit's advent, the communication of the things of Christ to men. What are the things of Christ? His merit, his mercy, his image, his gospel, his promises, all the gifts of his grace, all the treasures of his love, and all the immunities of eternal redemption. These the Father hath given to the Son, as the great Trustee of the church; and the Son hath given them to the Spirit, as the appointed agent of their communication.

A ship was laden in India, arrived safe in London, unloaded her precious cargo, and the goods were soon distributed all over the country, and offered for sale in a thousand stores. The Son of God brought immense riches of Divine grace from heaven to earth, which are all left to the disposal of the Holy Spirit, and freely proffered to the perishing wherever the gospel is preached.

The Holy Spirit came not to construct a new engine of mercy, but to propel that already constructed by Christ. Its first revolution rent the rocks of Calvary, and shook the rocky hearts of men. Its second revolution demolished the throne of death, burst his prison-doors, and

liberated many of his captives. Its third revolution carried its builder up into the heaven of heavens, and brought down the Holy Spirit to move its machinery for ever. Its next revolution, under the impulse of this new Agent, was like 'the rushing of a mighty wind' among the assembled disciples at Jerusalem, kindled a fire upon the head of every Christian, inspired them to speak all the languages of the babbling earth, and killed and quickened three thousand souls of the hearers.

The Holy Spirit is still on earth, glorifying the Father and the Son. He convinces the world of sin. He leads men to Christ, through the rivers of corruption, the mountains of presumption, and the terrible bogs of despair, affording them no rest till they come to the city of refuge. He continues on the field to bring up the rear; while the Captain of our Salvation, on his white horse, rides victorious in the van of battle. He strengthens the soldiers — 'faint, yet pursuing'; raises the fallen; encourages the despondent; feeds them with the bread of life, and the new wine of the kingdom; and leads them on — 'conquering, and to conquer'.

His work will not be finished till the resurrection. Then will he quicken our mortal bodies. Then will he light his candle, and

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sweep the house till he find every lost piece of silver. Then will he descend into the dark caves of death, and gather all the gems of redeemed humanity, and weave them into a crown for Emmanuel, and place that crown upon Emmanuel's head, amid the songs of the adoring seraphim!

Thus the Holy Spirit glorifies the Father and the Son. Let us pray for the outpouring of his grace upon the church. In proportion to his manifestation in our hearts, will be our 'knowledge of the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ'. Nor is this all; in proportion to the visitations of the Holy Spirit, will be the purity of our lives, the spirituality of our worship, the ardour of our zeal and charity, and the extent of our usefulness to the cause of Christ. Would you see a revival of religion? Pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon you, to sanctify your hearts and your lives, that your light may 'so shine before men, that others may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.'

'When thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, then thou shalt bestir thyself; for then the Lord shall go out before

thee, to strike the hosts of the Philistines.' Brethren, this is the time. The mulberry trees are shaking. God is going before his people, to prepare their way to victory. The band of Divine Providence is opening a great and effectual door for the gospel. The mountains are levelled, the valleys are exalted, and a highway is cast up in the wilderness for our God. The arts of printing and navigation, the increasing commerce of the world, the general prevalence of the spirit of peace, the rapid march of literature and science, and the correspondence of eminent and leading men in every nation, are so many preparatives for the moral conquest of the world. The Captain of our Salvation, on the white horse of the gospel, can now ride through Europe and America; and will soon lead forth his army to take possession of Asia and Africa. The wings of the mighty angel are unbound, and he is flying in the midst of heaven.

Again: Christians are better informed concerning the moral state of the world than formerly. If my neighbour's house were on fire, and I knew nothing of it, I could not be blamed for rendering him no assistance; but who could be guiltless in beholding the

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building in flames, without an effort to rescue its occupants? Brethren, you have heard of the perishing heathen. You have heard of their dreadful superstitions, their human sacrifices, and their abominable rites. You have heard of Juggernaut, and the River Ganges, and the murder of infants, and the immolation of widows, and the worship of idols and demons. You know something of the delusion of Mohammedanism, the cruel and degrading ignorance of Popery, and how millions around you are perishing for lack of knowledge. Do you feel no solicitude for their souls — no desire to pluck them as brands from the burning?

What can we do? The Scriptures have been translated into nearly all the languages of the babbling earth. Missionaries have gone into many lands — have met the Indian in his wigwam, the African in his Devil's-bush, and the devotee on his way to Mecca. We can furnish more men for the field, and more money to sustain them. But these things cannot change and renovate the human heart. 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.' This is the grand regenerating agency. He alone can convince and save the world. His aid is given in answer to prayer; and the Father is more ready to give than we are to ask.

Mr Ward, one of the Baptist missionaries in India, in a missionary discourse at Bristol, said, — 'Brethren, we need your money, but we need



your prayers more.' O, what encouragement we have to pray for our missionaries! Thus saith the Lord:— 'I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.' Let us plead with God for the accomplishment of the promise. 'Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest till he make Jerusalem a praise in the whole earth.'

Brethren in the ministry! let us remember that all our success depends upon the aid of the Holy Spirit, and let us pray constantly for his blessing upon the word! Brethren in the church! forget not the connection between the work of the Holy Spirit and the glory of your Best Friend, and earnestly entreat him to mingle his sanctifying unction with the treasures of Divine Truth contained in these earthen vessels! 'Finally, brethren, pray for

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us; that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified'; and all the ends of the earth see the salvation of our God!

Hasten, Lord, the glorious time,  
 When, beneath Messiah's sway,  
 Every tribe, in every clime,  
 Shall the gospel call obey!

Then shall wars and tumults cease;  
 Then be banished grief and pain;  
 Righteousness, and joy, and peace,  
 Undisturbed, for ever reign!

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## EXTRACTS

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## EXTRACTS

### I

#### *THE DEMONIAK OF GADARA*

*AND when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils a long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs.' (Luke 8:26-39)*

**I**MAGINE that this demoniak was not only an object of pity, but he was really a terror in the country. So terrific was his appearance, so dreadful and hideous his screams, so formidable, frightful, and horrid his wild career, that all the women in that region were so much alarmed that none of them dared to go to market.

And what made him still more terrible was the place of his abode: It was not in a city, where some attention might be paid to order and decorum — (though he would sometimes ramble into the city as in this case). It was not in a town, or village, or any house whatever, where assistance might be obtained in case of necessity; but it was among the tombs, and in the wilderness — not far, however, from the turnpike road. No one could tell but that he might jump at them, like a panther, and scare them to death. The gloominess of the place made it more awful and solemn. It was among the tombs — where, in the opinion of some, all witches, corpse-candles, and hobgoblins abide.

One day, however, Mary was determined that no such nuisance should be suffered in the country of the Gadarenes. The man must be clothed, though he was mad and crazy. And if he should at any future time strip himself, tie up his clothes in a bundle, throw them into the river, and tell them to go to see Abraham, he must

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be tied and taken care of. Well, this was all right — no sooner said than done. But, so soon as the fellow was bound in chains and fetters, Samson-like, he broke the bands asunder, and could not be tamed.

By this time, the devil became offended with the Gadarenes, and in a pout he took the demoniac away, and drove him into the wilderness. He thought the Gadarenes had no business to interfere and meddle with his property; for he had possession of the man. And he knew, that 'a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush'. It is probable that he wanted to send him home; for there was no knowing what might happen now-a-days.

But there was too much matter about him to send him as he was; therefore, he thought the best plan would be to persuade him to commit suicide by cutting his throat. But here Satan was at a nonplus — his rope was too short — he could not turn executioner himself, as that would not have answered the design he has in view, when he wants people to commit suicide; for the act would have been his own sin and not the man's. The poor demoniac, therefore, must go about to hunt a sharp stone, or any thing that he could get. He might have been in search of such an article, when he returned from the wilderness into the city, whence he came when he met the Son of God.

Jesus commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. And when he saw Jesus he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee torment me not.

Here is the devil's confession of faith. The devils believe and tremble, while men make a mock of sin, and sport on the brink of eternal ruin. To many of the human race, Christ appears as a root out of dry ground. They see in him neither form nor comeliness, and there is no beauty in him that they should desire him. Some said he was the carpenter's son, and would not believe in him; others said he had a devil, and that it was through Beelzebub the chief of the devils, that he cast out devils; some cried out, Let him be crucified — let him be crucified; and others said, Let his blood be on us and on our children. As the Jews would not have him to reign over them; so many, who call themselves Christians, say that he is a mere man; as such, he has no right to rule over their consciences, and demand their obedience, adoration, and praise. But Diabolus knows better — Jesus is the Son of God most high.

Many of the children of the devil, whose work they do, differ

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very widely from their father in their sentiments respecting the person of Christ.

'Jesus commanded the legion of unclean spirits to come out of the man.' They knew that out they must go. But they were like Scotsmen — very unwilling to return to their own country. They would rather go into hogs' skins than to their own country. And he suffered them to go into the herd of swine. Methinks that one of the men who fed the hogs, kept a better look out than the rest of them, and said, 'What ail the hogs? Look sharp there, boys — keep them in — make good use of your whips. Why don't you run? Why, I declare, one of them has gone over the cliff! There goes another! Drive them back.' Never was there such a running, and whipping, and hallooing; but down go the hogs, before they are aware of it. One of them said, 'They are all gone!' 'No, sure not all gone into the sea!' 'Yes, every one of them, the black hog and all! They are all drowned! — the devil is in them! What shall we do now? — what can we say to the owners?' 'What can we say?' said another. 'We must tell the truth — that is all about it. We did our best — all that was in our power. What could any man do more?'

So they went their way to the city, to tell the masters what had happened. 'John, where are you going,' exclaimed one of the masters. 'Sir, did you know the demoniac that was among the tombs there?' 'Demoniac among the tombs! Where did you leave the hogs?' 'That madman, sir —' 'Madman! — Why do you come home without the hogs?' 'That wild and furious man, sir, that mistress was afraid of so much —' 'Why John, I ask you a plain and simple question — why don't you answer me? Where are the hogs?' 'That man who was possessed with the devils, sir —' 'Why, sure enough, you are crazy! — you look wild! — tell me your story, if you can, let it be what it may.' 'Jesus Christ, sir, has cast out the unclean spirits out of the demoniac; they are gone into the swine; and they are all drowned in the sea; for I saw the tail of the last one!' The Gadarenes went out to see what was done, and finding that it was even so, they were afraid, and besought Jesus to depart from them.

How awful must be the condition of those men who love the things of this world more than Jesus Christ!

The man out of whom the unclean spirits were cast, besought Jesus that he might be with him. But he told him to return to his

own house, and show how great things God had done unto him. And he went his way and published throughout the whole city of Decapolis, how great things Jesus had done unto him. The act of Jesus casting so many devils out of him, was sufficient to persuade him that Jesus was God as well as man.

I imagine I see him going through the city, crying — ‘O yes! O yes! O yes! — Please to take notice of me, the demoniac among the tombs. I am the man who was a terror to the citizens of this place — that wild man, who would wear no clothes, and that no man could bind. Here am I, now, in my right mind. Jesus Christ, the friend of sinners, had compassion on me. He remembered me when I was in my low estate — when there was no eye to pity, and no hand to save. He cast out the devils and redeemed my soul from destruction.’

Most wonderful must have been the surprise of the people, to hear such proclamation. The ladies running to the windows, the shoemakers throwing their lasts one way and their awls another, running out to meet him and to converse with him, that they might be positive there was no imposition, and found it to be a fact that could not be contradicted. ‘O, the wonder of all wonders! Never was there such a thing!’ — must, I think, be the general conversation.

And while they are talking and everybody having something to say, homeward goes the man. As soon as he comes in sight of the house, I imagine I see one of the children running in, and crying, ‘O, mother! father is coming — he will kill us all!’ ‘Children: come all into the house,’ says the mother. ‘Let us fasten the doors. I think: there is no sorrow like my sorrow!’ says the broken-hearted woman. Are all the windows fastened, children?’ ‘Yes, mother.’ ‘Mary, my dear, come from the window — don’t be standing there.’ ‘Why, mother, I can hardly believe it is father! That man is well-dressed.’ ‘O yes, my dear children, it is your own father. I knew him by his walk the moment I saw him.’ Another child stepping to the window, says, ‘Why, mother, I never saw father coming home as he does today. He walks on the footpath and turns round the corner of the fence. He used to come towards the house as straight as a line, over fences, ditches, and hedges; and I never saw him walking as slow as he does now.’

In a few moments, however, he arrives at the door of the house, to the great terror and consternation of all the inmates. He gently tries the

door, and finds no admittance. He pauses a moment, steps towards the window, and says in a low, firm, and melodious voice

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‘My dear wife, if you will let me there is no danger. I will not hurt you. I bring you glad tidings of great joy.’ The door is reluctantly opened, as it were between joy and fear. Having deliberately seated himself, he says: ‘I am come to show you what great things God has done for me. He loved me with an eternal love. He redeemed me from the curse of the law and the threatenings of vindictive justice. He saved me from the power and the dominion of sin. He cast out the devils out of my heart, and made that heart, which was a den of thieves, the temple of the Holy Spirit. I cannot tell you how much I love the Saviour. Jesus Christ is the foundation of my hope, the object of my faith, and the centre of my affections. I can venture my immortal soul upon him. He is my best friend. He is altogether lovely — the chief among ten thousand. He is my wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. There is enough in him to make a poor sinner rich, and a miserable sinner happy. His flesh and blood is my food — his righteousness my wedding garment — and his blood is efficacious to cleanse me from all my sins. Through him I can obtain eternal life; for he is the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person: in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He deserves my highest esteem and my warmest gratitude. Unto him who loved me with an eternal love, and washed me in his own blood, unto him be the glory, dominion, and power, for ever and ever! For he has rescued my soul from hell. He plucked me as a brand out of the burning. He took me out of the miry clay, and out of a horrible pit. He set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings, and put in my mouth a new song of praise and glory to him! Glory to him for ever! — Glory to God in the highest! — Glory to God for ever and ever! Let the whole earth praise him! — Yea, let all the people praise him!’

It is beyond the power of the strongest imagination to conceive the joy and gladness of this family. The joy of seafaring men delivered from shipwreck; the joy of a man delivered from a burning house; the joy of not being found guilty to a criminal at the bar; the joy of receiving pardon to a condemned malefactor; the joy of freedom to a prisoner of war, is nothing in comparison to the joy of him who is delivered from

going down to the pit of eternal destruction. For it is a joy unspeakable  
and full of glory.

## 2

*ENTERING PORT*

*For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:11).*

**T**HIS language seems to be borrowed from the case of a ship bringing her passengers to port on a pleasant afternoon, her sails all white and whole, and her flags majestically waving in the breeze; while the relatives of those on board ascend the high places, to see their brothers and their sisters returning home in safety from the stormy main. How pleasant to a man who is about to emigrate to the new world, America, when he meets with some one that has been there, and who is well acquainted with the coast, knows the best landing-place, and will accompany him on his passage. 'Though I walk through the valley and the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.' He who passed through death himself, and is Lord of the sea, is our High-priest; and, with his priestly vestments on, he will stand in Jordan's current till the feeblest in all the tribes shall be safely landed on Canaan's shore. How delightful must be the feelings of the dying Christian, the testimony of whose conscience unites with the witness of the Spirit, to assure him that Jesus has paid his fare: and who knows he carries in his hand the white stone with the new name, to be exhibited on the pier-head, the other side, hard by his Father's house. This is an abundant entrance, on a fair day, over a fine sea, with a pleasant breeze swelling every sail. 'Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.'

O how different the entrance ministered to the careless professor — the fruitless and idle — who keeps his hand in his bosom, or leaning upon his implements! Though he may reach the shore with his life, it will be at midnight, surrounded by roaring tempests, full of bitter remembrances and most tormenting fears. Yet, with tattered sails and broken ropes, peradventure he may gain the port; 'for the Lord is good, and his mercy endureth for ever.' But who shall



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describe the condition of the ungodly, driven out to sea in all their wickedness; not even allowed a quarantine within sight of the heavenly Jerusalem, but obliged to drift about, dismantled and disabled, amid the darkness of eternal storms! Oh! to be forced from their moorings at midnight, when they cannot see a handbreadth before them; the thunders rolling; the lightnings flashing; strange voices of wrath mingling with every blast; and the great bell of eternity tolling a funeral knell for the lost soul, through all its dismal, and solitary, and everlasting voyage! Let us flee for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before us, which hope is as an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, grasping the Rock of Ages within the veil!

## 3

*THE UNCLEAN SPIRIT IN DRY PLACES*

I SEE the wicked spirit, like a winged dragon, having a long tail, drawing circles and flying in the air, in search of a dwelling-place. Casting his fiery look upon a certain neighbourhood, he spies a young man, in the bloom of his days, and in the strength of his powers, sitting on the box of his cart, going for lime. 'There he is,' says the old hellish dragon; 'his veins are full of blood, and his bones are full of marrow; I will cast the sparks into his bosom, and will set all his lusts on fire; I will lead him on from bad to worse, until he commit every sin. I will make him a murderer, and will plunge his soul for ever beneath the boiling billows of the great fiery furnace.' With this, I see him descending in all the vehemence of his character — but when close by the lad, the dragon hears him sing,

When on the cross the Saviour hung,  
The mid-day sank in midnight gloom;  
When guilty sinners were redeemed,  
The midnight burst in mid-day bloom.

Upon which the dragon cries out, 'This place is too dry for me,' — and away he flies.

I see him again, a second time, hovering in the air, and seeking for a resting-place. In a flowery meadow, by a river of clear water, he sees a maiden, eighteen years of age, among the kine, picking up some beautiful flowers, here and there. 'Behold her,' says Apollyon, full of hellish joy; 'I will poison her mind, and lead her astray from the paths of the Almighty enemy; I will make her a harlot, and will ultimately cast her over the precipice, until she sink for ever in the furnace of divine wrath.' He hastens down; and, approaching the maiden, finds her singing the following stanzas, in a heavenly, transporting frame of mind, and with a voice that might almost melt the rocks:—

Unto the righteous will arrive,  
A day of rest serene,

When to their joy they see the Lord,  
Without a veil between.

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Then from the grave I shall arise,  
And take my joyful stand  
Among the saints who dwell on high,  
Received at God's right hand.

'This place is too dry for me,' says the dragon, and off he flies.

From the meadow he ascends like a great balloon, with renewed rage, blowing smoke and fire from his mouth, and threatening damnation to all creation. 'I will have a place to rest and dwell in,' says Apollyon, 'in spite of the purpose, covenant, and grace of God!' With this he espies an aged woman, sitting at the door of her cot, and spinning on her little wheel. 'Ah, she is ripe for destruction,' says the dragon; 'I will give her a taste of the burning gall of damnation, and will cast her into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone.' With this he descends on the eaves of the cot, and hears the old woman, with a trembling voice, but with heavenly feelings, repeat the following beautiful passage: 'For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee!' 'This place is too dry for me,' says the dragon, and is off again.

It might be thought that all these disappointments would discourage him from prosecuting his infernal designs farther; but not so: he is determined, if possible, to find a dwelling-place. For this purpose he rises again, to mark some spot where he may alight and find a welcome. He sees in a small village a neat and decent house of refreshment. 'There,' says he, 'will I dwell, and lead to bondage every one that shall cross the threshold, and make him fast in eternal fetters.' He flies down like lightning, enters the house, and walks into the parlour; but there he finds a company of ministers of the New Testament, returning from an Association, who are talking about the victory of Calvary, and exchanging appointments with each other. The wicked spirit cannot stay within the sound of their voice, but retreats with hasty steps, muttering and growling as he goes, — 'This place is too dry for me, I will return to my house from which I came out!'

## 4

*THE YOUNG CHILD*

**H**EROD said to the wise men, 'Go and search diligently for the young child.' The magi immediately commenced their inquiries, according to the instructions they received. I see them approaching some village, and when they come to the gate they inquire, 'Do you know any thing of the young child?' The gateman comes to the door; and, supposing them to have asked the amount of the toll, says, 'O, three halfpence an ass is to pay.' 'We do not ask what is to pay,' reply they, 'but, do you know any thing of the young child?' 'No; I know nothing in the world,' answers he; 'but there is a blacksmith's shop a little farther on; inquire there, and you will be very likely to obtain some intelligence concerning him.'

The wise men proceed, and when they come to the blacksmith's shop, they ask, 'Do you know any thing of the young child?' A harsh voice answers, 'There is no such thing possible for you, as having the asses shod now; you shall in two hours hence.' 'We do not ask you to shoe the asses,' say they 'but inquire for the young child, if you know any thing of him?' 'Nothing in the world,' says the blacksmith; 'but inquire at the tavern that is on your road, and probably you may hear something of him there.'

On they go, and stand opposite the door of the tavern, and cry, 'Do you know any thing of the young child?' The landlord, thinking they call for porter, bids the servant attend, saying, 'Go, girl; go with a quart of porter to the strangers.' 'We do not ask for either porter or ale,' say the wise men; 'but something about the young child that is born.' 'I know nothing in the world of him,' says the landlord; 'but turn to the shop on the left hand; the shopkeeper reads all the papers, and you will be likely to hear something respecting him there.'

They proceed accordingly towards the shop, and repeat their inquiry, 'Do you know any thing of the young child, here?' The shopkeeper says to his apprentice, 'Reach half a quarter of tobacco

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to the strangers.' 'We do not ask for tobacco,' say the wise men; 'but for some intelligence of the young child.' 'I do not know any thing of him,' replies the shopkeeper; 'but there is an old Rabbi living in the upper end of the village; call on him, and very probably he will give you all the information you desire respecting the object of your search.'

They immediately direct their course towards the house of the Rabbi; and having reached it, they knock at the door; and being admitted into his presence, they ask him if he knows any thing of the young child. 'Come in,' says he; and when they have entered and are seated, the Rabbi refers to his books and chronicles, and says he to the wise men, 'There is something wonderful about to take place; some remarkable person has been or is to be born; but the best thing for you is to go down yonder street; there is living there, by the river side, the son of an old priest; you will be sure to know all of him.'

Having bid the old Rabbi a respectful farewell, on they go; and reaching the river's side, they inquire of the by-standers for the son of the old priest. Immediately he is pointed out to them. There is a 'raiment of camel's hair about him, and a leathern girdle about his loins.' They ask him if he knows any thing of the young child. 'Yes,' says he, 'there he is: behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world! There he is; he will bruise the dragon's head, and bring in everlasting righteousness to every one that believeth in his name.'

## 5

## VARIETIES OF PREACHING

I PERCEIVE four strong men on their journey toward Lazarus' grave, for the purpose of raising him to life. One of them, who is eminent for his piety, says, 'I will descend into the grave, and will take with me a bowl of the salt of duties, and will rub him well with the sponge of natural ability.' He enters the grave, and commences his rubbing process. I watch his operations at a distance, and after a while inquire, 'Well, are there any symptoms of life there? Does he arise, does he breathe, my brother?' 'No such thing,' replies he, 'he is still quiet, and I cannot salt him to *will* — and besides this, his smell is rather heavy.'

'Well,' says the second, 'come you out; I was afraid that your means would not answer the purpose; let me enter the grave.' The second enters, carrying in his hand a whip of the scorpions of threatening; and, says he, 'I will make him feel.' He directs his scorpion and fiery ministry at the dead corpse; but in vain, and I hear him crying out, 'All is unsuccessful; dead he is after all.'

Says the third, 'Make room for me to enter, and I will see if I cannot bring him to life.' He enters the grave, and takes with him a musical pipe; it is melodious as the song of love; but there is no dancing in the grave.

The fourth says, 'Means of themselves can effect nothing, but I will go for Jesus, who is the resurrection and the life.' Immediately he leaves to seek for Christ, and speedily returns, accompanied by the Saviour. And when the Lord came, he stands in the door of the sepulchre, and cries out, 'Lazarus, come forth!' and the dead body is instantaneously instinct with life.

Let our confidence be in the voice of the Son of God. And let us turn our faces toward the wind, and say, 'O breath, come from the four winds, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live!'

## 6

*THE SIX CROCODILES*

EVERY church-member should learn to hunt a crocodile. The first crocodile is a spirit to search closely for faults, instead of hiding them with brotherly love, according to the directions of the gospel. This is Ham, the old crocodile, that exposed the nakedness of his father, instead of hiding it like Shem and Japheth; for which his father banished him to the river Nilus, where he still remains in Africa, under the curse of his father.

Old pious Eli erred greatly, by allowing his children to enter the sanctuary as crocodiles, by sparing them, and suffering them in their sins, which brought, through these crocodiles, destruction on his house: and in the same manner since upon many congregations, — as the churches of Asia. This is an evil spirit in the mount.

Another crocodile is the spirit of preference. This is the crocodile Judas, who was offended with Jesus in Bethany on account of Mary's ointment, which she poured on the head of Jesus; and that only because they did not consult him; in revenge for which he turned, traitor. He was a selfish miser; and ultimately hung himself, and went to his own place. This crocodile still lurks among the reeds. There are many like him, ready to blame every act of discipline in the church; not that they care so much for the interests of the church, or any belonging to it, but they wish to swallow all up themselves.

Another crocodile is the spirit of Ahithophel, who plotted a cunning artifice to dethrone a person whose heart was with God, and raise Absalom, a wicked man like himself, to the throne in his stead. God turned his counsel into foolishness. He was disappointed — his heart failed — he saddled his ass, and went and hung himself. This was the end of that crocodile.

Another is a spirit to trample and destroy, for the sake of being head. This is the crocodile Joab, who killed Abner, who was better than

himself. This crocodile strikes every one who may be in his way under the fifth rib, for the sake of being head himself. But

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his end came; he lost his life at the horns of the altar, by the sword with which he himself destroyed another.

But, upon looking again, we see the sixth crocodile, and his name is Cain, who would triumph over God and man; without grace, or talents, or faith, or love; and without any sacrifice that has blood in it; and because God will not regard him without faith, he opens his mouth, and sets himself to swallow pious Abel. God delivers him over to the possession of the wicked one.

O brethren, let us prove the spirits, whether they are of God, or of the devil!

I will tell you an anecdote of Mr Rowlands, of Llangeitho. When he wished to crush the spirit of calumny (the crocodile Ham) which lurked in the church, he said to the slanderer: 'Thou sayest, man, that sins must be hunted and exposed, because they are too numerous in the church — and that they ought not be hidden. Be quiet, man. Who art thou? I think I know thy family, and thy eldest brother, even Ham, the son of Noah. His two brothers wished to hide their father's nakedness, but he would expose it. What reward did they receive for covering their father's nakedness? The blessing of God and their father. And what reward did thy brother receive? The curse of God and their father. And I doubt not thy reward will be nothing better.'



## 7

*ENVIOUS AMBITIONS*

THE forest of Lebanon once held a consultation to choose a king, upon the death of the king, the Yew-tree. They agreed to offer the crown to the Cedar; and if the Cedar should refuse, to invite the Vine and the Olive to office. They all refused the honours for the following reasons. The Cedar refused, 'because,' said he, 'I am sufficiently high as I am.' — 'I would rather,' said the Vine, 'yield wine to cheer others, than receive for myself.' And in the same manner, the Olive preferred giving its oil to honour others rather than receive any honours to itself.

All these having refused the honours offered them, they next agreed to call the Thorn to the government; and if he should decline, to choose the Bramble. The White Thorn, in its beautiful dress, received the honour, speaking thus to itself:— 'I have nothing to lose but the white coat, and some red berries; and I have prickles enough to hurt the whole forest.' But the Bramble instigated a rebellion against the White Thorn, and kindled the fire of pride in the forest, so that all the trees were set on flame.

Two or three vain and proud men in a peaceful congregation, have, by contending for the preference, disturbed the peace, and obstructed the prosperity of many a church, while there was no more virtue in them than there is of value in the white thorn or prickly bramble.

## 8

*THE DOVE, THE RAVEN, AND THE EAGLE*

A NOBLEMAN had a Dove, a Raven, and an Eagle, belonging to his palace. There was no sociability or fellowship prevailing among them. The Dove fed on its own food, and hid herself in the clefts of the rocks, or in the dove-house near the palace. The Raven fed upon dead carcasses, and sometimes picked out the eyes of little innocent lambs, if she could pounce upon them in a chance place; she also nestled in the top of the trees. The Eagle was a royal bird, flying very high, but yet of a rapacious character. Sometimes he would not mind eating some half a dozen of the Doves for his breakfast. He thought himself the king of birds because he flew higher than they all. The Doves greatly dreaded his strong beak, his wrathful eyes, and his sharp grappling claws. When the gentle man threw wheat for the Dove on the pavement, the Raven would have a piece of an ear or the foot of a lamb in its beak; and the Eagle was for taking up some little child from the cradle to his nest.

The Dove is the pious diligent Christian; the Raven is the dissolute and difficult to be managed; and the proud, selfish professor is the Eagle. These three characters are too frequently to be found together, and there is no denomination, in church or chapel, without these three birds, if there are any birds at all there. It is impossible for three birds, so different in their dispositions, ever to be happy together. Brethren, pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.