

The Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter no. 120

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Editorial

Dear Brethren and Sisters and Friends, Greetings in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Thank you for your letters. Several of you have been “under the weather” lately but I understand you are all better or at least, over the worst.

Sister Audrey Bundy writes, “Please give my love to all the brethren and sisters and my best wishes for the New Year... Our Lord’s return cannot be far away now, so we must be all the more diligent in our watch for His coming.”

There is no “Chat Section” this month but the letter on page 3 from Brother Phil Parry has a bearing on one of the subjects raised in the Chat Section and an article which appeared last July. I am sure Brother Harold Dawson is waiting anxiously for your letters so he can enlarge his “Chat Section” next month!

There is much speculation about global warming, melting ice caps, rising oceans, holes in the ozone layer, changing climates, etc. What changes would be taking place without mankind on the earth and what changes are due to man’s misuse of natural resources we have no way of knowing, but mankind has been irresponsible in causing pollution in rivers and oceans as well as the atmosphere, although, in spite of the worst man has done, increasing food production throughout the world is more than keeping pace with increasing populations. Famines, however, are due to man’s selfishness in failing to distribute food to where it is needed, due usually to political struggles. “For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows, and ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled (alarmed): for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.” (Matthew 24:7 & 6).

Russell Gregory.

Exhortation

Dear Brethren and Sisters, The words of exhortation in the circumstances of isolation which applies to most of us in the Nazarene Fellowship, must be more than preparation before we take the emblems of the bread and wine, as given to us by Jesus Himself, but words also of encouragement to renew our flagging spirits; to renew faith, to renew our ability to love what is to us, unlovable and which, let us admit it, is really beyond the best that is in us. How few can honestly say that they love those that behave

towards us like enemies and cause us unhappiness, and maybe even take away things and interests that we should regard as ours.

It is a severe test indeed, if such is our experience, and we should be thankful if we have not encountered such troubles, when our attitude to life and others is one of neutrality and kindness, only to find ourselves in problems, without cause as far as we are concerned. There is no need to go into details of known trials of faith, of the most extreme injustice that have assailed those known to us all. And how true it is that “time and chance” indeed test also the little flock who seek also God’s Kingdom and the righteousness thereof.

If we cannot love and forgive, let us pray that God will, and He knows our limits. The prayers of the righteous avail much and impossible situations can be eased and removed if we take our problems to the Lord in prayer. Let us not forget that we are never really alone; the Lord knows those that are His, and let us stop, here and now, from trying to “do” everything ourselves when we can ask for help. If we do not ask for help it could be that our vision of faith that we ought to have is also at a low ebb, and this also the Lord understands.

Jesus, in His experiences of the three years of His ministry, knew the emptiness and the disappointment and the despair. Do you recall the words addressed to the disciples “Will you also go away?” Our reply must be the same as the disciples. Lord, where shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. Of course He has the answer to all our problems, whatever and however extensive they may be. The real truth about ourselves is that we are weak, and our motives, at best, are frequently suspect. We cannot, because of this, ever earn Salvation by our works and good intentions, or an achieved standard of righteousness.

Speaking of salvation the Apostle Paul writes, “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” (Ephesians 2:8). This must leave us so grateful to Jesus for what He did for us. He was and is our “Righteousness.” Our faith is the faith that He had: the yoke He offers to exchange is light, because the sting of death, eternal death, was taken out of the heavy burden we would have without Jesus. He redeemed us. He was qualified to do so: He paid our debts, not being in debt Himself. He laid down His unforfeited life: spent His riches, to redeem His brethren. For the Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give His life as a ransom for many - and this is what He did!

In Jesus’ first advent He was indeed the Lamb led to the slaughter; who opened not His mouth in His own defence. His mission the first time was to take away the sins of the world for those who look to Him as Saviour and Friend. But next time it will be very different for He will be the Lion of the Tribe of Spiritual Judah; the Head of God’s Government, to replace the failure of human government with divine success, and in that) success we are in prospect of having an abiding port. Natural Israel will look on Him whom they pierced and they will mourn.

Can we comprehend what lies ahead? It is no further than the rest of our natural life away, for in the sleep of death we shall be unaware of for how long, and in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye we shall be changed, having put on immortality and incorruptibility. (We all know these words so well). This our hope and this should be our prayer, “Even so, come. Lord Jesus.”

Through the words of exhortation we need indeed to be encouraged and built up in our faith. There is so much to encourage us and we most certainly are not alone, though lonely we may be. When taking the Bread and Wine let us remember prayer is a source of comfort and strength we really do need to avail ourselves of. The assurance of Jesus is this: “Fear not, little flock, it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the Kingdom.” Amen.

Brother Harold Dawson.

A few weeks ago I wrote to Brother Phil Parry regarding a seeming contradiction in our understanding of the second death, for in the July 1989 C.L. on page 12, under the heading of “Jesus said...” where it was said that our first death was baptism and natural death which may follow was our second death. However, some see a different “second death” as is evident in the replies to the Sister who queries God’s purpose in raising some simply to die again.

Bro. Phil’s reply:-

“Having discarded 37 years ago the theory and belief that the common or natural death experienced by Adam and all creation as a result of corruptible nature limited to a varying life-span according to species, is not in Adam’s case, the penalty for his sin. I was directed to the teaching of the Scriptures as to what really was the Death which came by man, for it is obvious that natural death comes by God because He created man in a nature incapable of living for ever. The first man is of the earth, earthy (1 Corinthians 15:46-50). If Adam had remained obedient, a change of nature would still have been necessary if he were to live for ever. Therefore, as Paul teaches in Romans 5, ‘death by sin’ was the penalty of violation of God’s decree to Adam, and this was legal and judicial, the taking away of the life forfeited. In the animal slain for the procuring of the sin-covering and redemption, Adam died in symbol. This means of faith was perpetuated from then on even to the coming of the Messiah, after whose sacrifice as the substance of these types and shadows, it was replaced by the ritual of baptism by immersion. Therefore, judicial death is the first death. He that despised Moses’ Law died without mercy under two or three witnesses, (Hebrews 10:28). Having been the subject of the first death through the type this was the judicial second death under the Law of Moses, therefore I would not expect a resurrection of such an individual at the end of the Millennium in order to partake in the second death described in Revelation 20:15. There could be exceptional cases but only God is the Judge as I see it). We must understand that the “first death judicial” is by infliction, an act of slaying for the taking of life. The “second death judicial” has power over those who are not the subjects of the first resurrection and it will be noticed that the second death operates after the reign of a thousand years and is reckoned as an event occurring after “The Great White Throne Judgement” at that time. The partakers of the second death are described in Revelation 21:8, so in any case I cannot accept that the faithful who have fallen asleep in Christ for a transitional period yet are alive unto God, can be said to have experienced a second death, for as Jesus said, John 5:24, they had previously passed from death to life. Certainly the grave does hold them until an allotted time when they hear the voice of Jesus but so also the grave cannot hold those who have done evil if they hear his voice to come forth. So it is not altogether true to say that the grave has no power to hold us when it has held some for thousands of years, Abel, Seth, Noah and Abraham for examples. It could not hold Jesus because He was unique as the Son of God without federal or any committed sin. My conclusion, therefore is, that the first and second deaths are mainly concerned with Divine legal and moral principles and not with the physical laws set in motion at Creation (which man can abuse to his own disadvantage). To the former, if responsible, he can make a choice of passing from death to life without the need for a change of nature, and await the appointed time when the Lord will shout, with the voice of the Archangel and the trump of God and the dead in Christ shall rise first...” (1 Thessalonians 4:15-18). The rest of the dead can only be those who remain in the dust at this particular time - not necessarily those who die during the Millennium.

Brother Phil Parry.

A Name

Many times in our lives we hear the question asked, What’s in a name? When Moses was instructed by God to return to the land of Egypt and lead out the children of Israel, he in effect, asked the same question, as seen in Exodus 3:13 & 14, “...when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM... Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.”

Today, as Bible students, a name can mean much to us. Moreover, it can be changed. But first, what is a name? I quote from the I.S.B.E. (International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia), "In the Bible a "name" is that title, designation by which a person, place, or thing can be known or marked out as distinguishable from another." It is not just a 'tag' using the word in a general sense. Those who have a name given them by their parents have no say in the matter, humanly speaking, but even in such cases it may be given to an individual as to a family, or house, or reputation, so that it records a name or person that it may pass on to future generations. But in the Scriptures we have many instances where the naming of a person following traditional practice is brought to a halt, or even has a prophetic compound. Our minds go to the first chapter of Luke where we have a two-fold example: first, a case of divine intervention of stating a definite name to be used. God knowing that which would take place in later years, Luke 1:28 – 31:-

"And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women... And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found favour with God... and behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS."

A little later in the same chapter, we have an example where traditional naming of a child is changed. It concerns John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus, v.59, "...and they called his name Zacharias, after the name of his father... his mother answered and said, Not so... he shall be called JOHN... His father said, His name is JOHN."

In the Scriptures, another fact comes before us from time to time concerning ones name; a very close association with the events of the birth and the character which develops in later life. This of course, is not a mere matter of chance. Two instances come to mind among many others; Nabal, and Jacob. First, the name Nabal, whose meaning is 'fool.' We read in 1 Samuel 25:25, where Abigail comes to David saying,

"Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this man of Belial, even Nabal; for as his name is, so is he; Nabal is his name, and folly is with him." Then let us turn to Jacob; his name is given by one writer as meaning "the crafty one," and "the over-reacher" by another. Genesis confirms this, chapter 27,v 36 "And he said, is he not rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing..."

Poor Esau; but despite what Jacob had done, there was good in him, as we read a little later, at the time his name was changed. His thought and way of life was more God-ward than it appears was Esau's, for when Jacob wrestled with the angel, while he was in flight from the wrath of Esau, we read in Genesis 32, he had power with God. I think this meant he had Godly thoughts, and on such reflection of his later life, this is confirmed. Jacob's name, however, was changed, as we read in Genesis 32:26 & 27,

"And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob... Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men and hast prevailed." Again, Jacob asks the angel's name. We are told Jacob was blessed, and the name Jacob from now on appears less and less in the Scriptures, but the name Israel appears more and more. When we look at the name Israel its many connections consist of, or relate to the events recorded at the time Jacob struggled with the angel, for he persisted that the angel would give him a blessing before releasing him. The I.S.B.E. draws our attention to various connections and events concerning the nation of Israel involving: STRIVE, PERSEVERE, and PERSIST.

Numerous other name changes are recorded in the Old Testament. I leave the reader to sort them out and relate any connections between the old and new name:

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| ABRAHAM and SARAH | Genesis 17. |
| JOSEPH | Genesis 30 |
| DANIEL | Daniel 3 |

Before turning a little more to the New Testament, I will look at a promise contained in the prophet Isaiah in his 56th chapter, verse 1,

“Thus saith the Lord, keep ye judgement and do justice; for my salvation is near to come...”(verse 5), “I will give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters; I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.”

In Mark chapter 3, we have recorded Jesus’ selection of the twelve disciples with a few choice words concerning the names of some; James and John, whom He surnamed Boanerges, which is. The sons of thunder; thunder is a powerful element and if we trace their ministry and impetuosity we find they were aptly name by Jesus. Simon, Jesus surnamed Peter, i.e. a stone, or rock. On an occasion Jesus asked his disciples, “But whom say ye that I am?” It was Simon Peter who answered, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Then follow those well known words as recorded in Matthew 16:17 - 19. Most buildings have a name or number, if in a block of construction, but whatever is erected to withstand wind, time and tide, according to its use, two things are essential - a foundation, and a corner stone. When Jesus said to Peter, “thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church,” He meant nothing like what the Roman Catholics believe that Peter was the foundation on which to build. Peter was to use the Rock of Truth in building upon the foundation. In the parable the house which withstood the storm had a foundation of rock, not sand.

There is no doubt concerning the Church of God, of both the foundation and the corner stone. The foundation is seen in 1 Corinthians 3; and the corner stone in Ephesians 2. 1 Corinthians 3:11, “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ I’ Ephesians 2:20, “Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.” Acts 4:11, “This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.”

As in the days of Jesus the religious authorities rejected Him as the Son of God, their Saviour, even today they are no better, for in a recent T.V. channel 4 series, concerning “The Jews of London,” the Chief Rabbi stated, “We are still waiting for our Messiah, not as the Son of God, but a man from amongst our fellows.” The Jews of Jesus’ day were merely looking for a physical Redeemer from the Romans. What are the Rabbi and other Jewish leaders looking for and what do they expect him to do for them?

Now briefly let me turn to the subject of our heading, “A Name.” At birth we have an identity associated with a name; quite apart from that which is given us by our parents. We are sons and daughters of the race begotten by Adam. What does that entitle us to? A natural life of around three score years and ten, a few more if we have suitable strength. Psalm 90:10,

“The days of our years are three score years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be four score years.... and we fly away.” And what then? (v.12), We pray God that He may “So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” So let us apply our hearts unto wisdom; the wisdom of the Scriptures. Proverbs 22:1, “A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold.”

1 Corinthians 15:22, “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

When we come to understand our state in Adam, we must make a change. Change our name, as it were, from Adam to Christ. In Adam all die: in Christ we are made alive. Alive? What to? A resurrection. Daniel 12:2, “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, (on whom the second death hath no power) and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”

May we be found among those who come forth to everlasting life at the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet another change, and additional name may be ours, as seen in Revelation 2:17,

“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.”

Brother Harvey Linggood.

REBEKAH

This grand-daughter of Abraham’s brother Nahor, and daughter of his nephew Bethuel, was better as a wife for Isaac than the heathen women of Canaan. A generation below Isaac, yet suited for his age, is thus an incidental proof of the truth of the record.

When we first read of Rebekah, she came to the well and found Abraham’s servant waiting for Divine guidance regarding his next move. Rebekah, a beautiful girl, appeared, showed herself courteous, answering his request with “Drink, my lord.” Alert, she hastened, let down her pitcher and gave him drink. Then, with a sympathetic insight into the needs of another and a readiness to do all in her power to help she said “I will draw for thy camels also.”

She gave a straightforward answer to his question “Who art thou?” and readily informed him that provision for his comfort could be found in her father’s home. She ran home to tell her mother with the quick eager movements which had been seen as she ‘hastened’ to draw water.

The servant was welcomed, and so was the information he could give concerning Abraham. The family, of course, knew something of Nahor’s brother, and some news travelled between the families occasionally.

Rebekah and her mother would be delighted with the gifts of Jewellery, but the whole events of that remarkable day drew from Laban and Bethuel the candid declaration “The thing proceedeth from the Lord: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good.”

Rebekah decided with her usual promptness “I will go.” We wonder how much she knew of her great-uncle and the son of his old age - evidently enough to make her willing to leave home and family immediately. Did she think of it as a call from God, as Abraham had done long before? She was ready to go at once, no hesitation, no lengthy preparation; accompanied by her nurse she left for ever the home which had sheltered her for so long - never to return to it, as far as we know, or to see any of its inmates again.

Arriving at the journey’s end the travellers saw Isaac wandering in the field, apparently lost in thought. Rebekah’s quick insight showed itself in her courtesy; covering herself with a veil she slid off her camel and met face to face the man with whom the remainder of her life would be spent.

We know very little of Isaac personally; he seems to have been quiet, thoughtful and peace-loving, all of which might be expected in view of his parentage and up-bringing. All his life Sarah had cared for him, and had guided his boyish thoughts into ideals worthy of his special position. Sarah was no longer there, and there is something pathetic about the lonely figure wandering in the field waiting to meet the woman whom the Lord was sending to share his life.

Isaac took her into Sarah’s tent, thus indicating to all in the camp the social position of the newcomer, and claiming for her the loyal service which was her right. One short sentence completes the picture - “Isaac was comforted after his mother’s death.”

We read nothing more of these two until twin sons came into the home bringing with them that parental favouritism which was to cause so much sorrow. Isaac loved Esau; Rebekah loved Jacob.

These lads were very different; the hunter and the home-lover. Rebekah had been told “the elder shall serve the younger,” her loving devotion was lavished on Jacob and her greatest ambitions were for his welfare. It thus became a matter of grave concern to her when Isaac asked for a meal preparatory to giving him the blessing. She was most anxious that her younger son should have this blessing, and without waiting to see how divine promise would be fulfilled, mother and son discussed a bold plan of deceit. Jacob demurred, mentioned the difficulties, but Rebekah was ready to meet them all, and not only so, but to take full responsibility for the deception. Her orders were emphatic, “Upon me be thy curse, my son, only obey my voice and go.” The fact that Esau had sold his birthright does not seem to have any effect on the events of this particular day.

We know the success of the deceit, and how Jacob’s life was threatened by his angry brother. Resourceful Rebekah was faced with another difficult task. Jacob must be protected by some means; the safest plan would be to send him away – but suppose Isaac made inconvenient inquiries! His co-operation must be obtained, but how? A wife; Rebekah had her clue, and tactfully remarked to Isaac that the women of neighbouring tribes were not suitable. Isaac agreed, and Jacob left for a visit to his mother’s family.

Rebekah’s last recorded words to her son are just such as might be expected. “Now therefore my son, obey my voice; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran; and tarry with him a few days, until thy brother’s fury turn away - then I will send and fetch thee from thence.”

This promise to send for Jacob either could not be fulfilled, or was frustrated in Padan-Aram; for Jacob and his mother never saw one another afterwards. Rebekah’s trust in God was not equal to patient waiting to see how the divine promise would be fulfilled; her impatience led to deceit, for which she was severely punished by separation from her favourite son.

Jacob, who aided in the deceit, also suffered severely, being exiled from home and family for twenty years; and the boy who had deceived his father was himself cheated by his uncle Laban. “With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.”

Jacob was forgiven and allowed to prosper, but many of his troubles might have been avoided if he had kept nearer to the ideals of Abraham and Isaac.

Rebekah was laid to rest in the cave of Machpelah, with Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac. Other members of the family were taken there afterwards, and there they sleep waiting till the Lord shall call them to their reward.

We study their characters and profit by their example; for certainly these things were written for our learning. We admire Sarah’s trust in God, her loyalty to her husband and her constant devotion to duty. Her life had its difficulties but she met them bravely, and her name is among those of whom the writer to the Hebrews states, “God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city.” Hebrews 11:16. Rebekah, too, had sterling qualities which we should do well to imitate, while avoiding any deception in our relations with others.

May the Lord grant that we, in spite of our failures, may remain true to Him; and being saved by His grace, be at last permitted to share the fulfilment of the promises made to the worthies of old.

Sister Mona Dawes.

“If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.”

John 9:41.

The sin of the Pharisees was that they were content with what they saw. They claimed to be disciples of Moses, but they were unwilling to see that Jesus Christ was their Messiah, the Son of God, preferring blindness. But the man born blind had not asked to see, neither did he know who Jesus was until Jesus found him and gave him sight. This blind man then saw more than the Pharisees and knew that Jesus was a prophet, and on meeting Him again found Him to be the Son of God. He responded to the love and compassion of Jesus Christ and worshipped Him.

We cannot boast of the things we see for it is only by the grace of God that we have the ability, and our seeing is yet imperfect for “we see through a glass darkly” (1 Corinthians 13:12). To claim more is to deceive ourselves and maybe others, and such deceit has been man’s enemy from the beginning.

We, too, were born blind and Jesus found us and gave us sight - insight and perception - that we might respond to His great love and compassion, and worship and praise Him.

But let us also desire to see more clearly the things of God and of His Christ. There was another blind man, a beggar of Jericho, of whom Jesus asked, “What wilt thou that I should do for thee? and he said, Lord that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. And immediately he received his sight and followed Him, glorifying God.” (Luke 18:41-43)

We should never be content with what we see but ever search prayerfully and diligently to see and perceive more and more of the things of the Spirit.

THE TWO SONS OF GOD

Chapter Two

THE GREAT DAY OF ATONEMENT

Among the advantages, specified by Paul, which the Jews had over the Gentiles, were “the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises.” These gifts enabled the intelligent and faithful of that generation, contemporary with the preaching of Christ and His Apostles, to apprehend with greater facility the meaning of Christ’s mission. They had, Paul says in another place, “the form of knowledge and the truth of the law.” The devoutly studious would, after these lessons in outline, so to speak, more readily fill in the rest of the picture, while the Gentiles must needs be taught the very first forms and figures of the truth.

Multifarious as were the Jewish rites, the whole system rested on several principal ordinances, the most striking probably of all was the national sin-offering, on the tenth day of the seventh month. The lines of this shadow must be distinct even to the minds of those students of Moses who never saw the ceremonies of that great day of blood. But to such as had witnessed the offerings the solemn pomp, and joy of that day, and then recognised, as did those three thousand Jews on the day of Pentecost, that in Jesus all was fulfilled, the remembrance of the shadowy rite must have returned with an effect not easy to describe by words.

One grand mistake was rectified that day. The Jew had esteemed the offerings of the day of Atonement sufficient for the accomplishment of the object to which they only pointed, namely, the

forgiveness of sin. The great obstacle, therefore, in the way of their receiving a crucified Messiah made it nationally well nigh impossible for them to accept Jesus.

In the eye of the nation every part of the decree from Sinai was perfect: it was no type or herald of better things; but complete and final. The result was that the harshest ideas were formed of remission of sins by human sacrifice, and, above all, by such a sacrifice consisting of God's well beloved Son.

This particular trait of Jewish thought seems to be continued to the present day by the followers of Socinus, to whom nothing appears more objectionable than the slaying of a good son to put away the trespass of all those who by "one offence were made sinners." And it is remarkable that none have been under so much necessity to depart from the universally acknowledged canon of Scripture as they. As with the Jews, prophecy must be mutilated, and much of the New Testament, if not all as with them, is rejected.

The one idea that remains is God. He, as a kind Father, naturally inspires brotherly kindness among His children; and out of this thought flow excellent lessons of morality. Beyond this, nothing is safe or desirable. The idea of an after existence, in or out of the body, of any forms of worship, of approaching God through His Son as a mediator - all these things are discarded, or at least held lightly, as matters of theological speculation, attended with little or no profit.

But, enlightened by the Scripture, we find pleasure in regarding the things enacted aforesaid, as written for our learning.

THE TABERNACLE OF WITNESS

This construction of boards, curtains, and skins is the first place of abode occupied by the Eternal Spirit among men. Here Jehovah may be said to have walked and dwelt upon the earth. His residence, however, was only temporary, and, as we gather from other portions of the Word, typical of an eternal dwelling among the glorified sons of Adam. "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God." Revelation 21:3.

Viewing the tabernacle as the dwelling place of the Almighty, it seems to resemble an ordinary house, being furnished with food, drink, light, and other things, in which those permitted to abide with Him were allowed to share. This idea seems to bring God near to man, to create a kind of equality and friendship: that sort of equality and friendship which subsist between a father and his children. It is productive of love rather than of fear; of affection and trust rather than of awe and dread. This is the spirit of the relationship seen between Jesus and His Father when Jesus was on earth; it is also exactly the spirit of that relationship which He so beautifully illustrated in His parables. "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give good things unto them that ask Him?"

It was the Jewish nation, says Dean Stanhope, that God intended the tabernacle for, as an emblem of the whole world; the outward representing the earth and sea, the inward heaven; the former as sensible and familiar; the latter invisible and as yet inaccessible to us." Whence some have thought the title, "a worldly sanctuary," to have been given to it here.

THE SANCTUARY

This is the name given by Paul to the holy place, or first enclosure. The veil which divided this compartment from the Holy of Holies the apostle styles "the second veil," because there was another veil which formed the entrance from the court to the Holy. The priests went regularly into this for the performance of worship; but beyond the second veil none was permitted to pass but the high priest, and he only once a year, that is, on the great Day of Atonement.

It is not, however, to be understood that the high priest entered the holiest of all only once on that day; his duties required him to go in several times. The once refers not to the number of times he went in,

but to the one day on which he was to enter. He first entered with a censer of burning coals, and his hands full of sweet incense: the incense he placed upon the fire so that when the cloud of smoke rose up it covered the mercy-seat. He then took some of the blood of the bullock slain outside, and sprinkled it seven times before the mercy-seat, besides putting some of it upon the mercy-seat. He then went out to kill the goat, and afterwards came in again to do likewise with his blood. Leviticus 16:12 - 15.

Paul says this “was a figure for the time then present.” We naturally ask, A figure of what? And the answer will come just as readily as the question – A figure of Christ’s house. Moses and his house were typical of Christ and His house, “whose house are we if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.”

It is to be observed that the things which constituted this great “figure” were no figure at all before they were sanctified. When the workmen had finished them, and all was ready, no worship could be performed until the whole had been judicially cleansed. After this ceremony the whole was legally clean, whereas before, it was legally unclean. These types were no more fit for divine use before cleansing, than mankind at large are fit to be styled Christ’s house, not having been purged with His blood. The important conclusion which follows is, that all the shadows of Moses’ house foretold that He who was the substance thereof was to be “holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.”

THE CANDLESTICK, THE TABLE, AND THE SHEW BREAD

These are the principle things which belonged to the Sanctuary. Looking upon the tabernacle as a house, the articles enumerated by Paul are consistent with that idea.

There can be but one idea attached to a candlestick, namely, that of giving light. Not that God needed any light in His dwelling; but that those who were to approach Him, and to dwell with Him could only do so by means of light, and that of His ordaining. It may be profitably observed that the oil burnt was “pure olive.”

The greatest care was taken as to the purity and perfection of all that entered into that house, which Paul has taught us to look upon as “a shadow of good things to come.” Jesus declared Himself to be the true Light. He is also represented as standing in the midst of the Seven Churches of Asia, symbolised by seven candlesticks. And those who walk in His steps are said to walk in the light.

The table set with unleavened bread is suggestive of regular meals. Ordinary bread is said to be the staff of life; and the teaching of Paul clearly proves that this Mosaic shew bread was figurative of a perpetual subsistence, or feast upon “the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” It is also indicative of the presence of God, being called the bread of the presence.

Christ, in whom there was no leaven of sin, and in whom the Father was ever present by His Spirit, answers to this unleavened bread. The Father dwelt both in shadow and substance, in a clean, or holy place, “I and my Father are one: I in Him and He in me.” Under Moses, all must be cleansed before they were allowed to be partakers; under Christ, all must be made “clean through the word” before they are allowed to be partakers of Him in a spiritual or figurative sense. This idea of cleanness cannot be too strongly insisted upon, for we find that it runs through every detail of the typical economy.

THE SECOND VEIL

We have inspired authority for the belief that the veil was a type of Christ’s body, that is to say. His flesh. Once a year the high priest drew aside the veil in order to carry fire, incense, and the blood up to the mercy-seat, to present them before Jehovah. But after this the veil returned to its original position, shrouding the glory of God.

All this, Paul declares, was intended by the Holy Spirit to signify that “the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing.” As a confirmation of the truth

of this, when the body of Christ was pierced with the Roman spear and torn with the nails, “the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.”

The way to approach to the Divine presence was not merely by passing from one side of the curtain to the other, it was by blood. Without blood there was no admission, therefore the blood was accounted to be the way. Aaron carried the blood of the bullock and the goat in a basin to sprinkle it upon and before the ark. But when this was done the victim was dead. Upon this circumstance the apostle makes an important observation. He points out that, in drawing nigh to God “by the blood of Jesus,” we approached “by a newly slain yet living way.” (The first clause of Hebrew 10:20, is more correctly rendered thus).

Here is the superiority of the substance to the shadow. The typical victim by which Israel, after the flesh, entered the Holy of Holies was dead; the victim by which Israel, after the spirit, entered the holiest of all, was living. If, however, a rigidly exact counterpart were looked for it would make Christ no better than the Mosaic way. Moreover, the high priest took the blood of the victim into the Holy of Holies, but Jesus did not take His blood there: He entered Heaven itself by means of His own blood, being raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father.

It has been reasonably conjectured that the blue and purple of the Mosaic veil had typical reference to the cleansing power, and to the royalty of Him who is the substance. But neither the cleansing power nor the royalty could be said to be literally present as part of Christ’s body. Though men are spoken of as washed and cleansed through His blood, nobody imagines that this is literally the fact. The blood of Jesus being legally clean has power, when scripturally applied, to purge those who are legally unclean. It is not a question of flesh, as we have elsewhere said, it is a question of law.

We speak of royal blood; but this signifies no difference at all in the quality of the blood; all the difference that exists lies in its legal value. While legally or lawfully royal, it is precisely the same as the blood of the meanest slave alive with regard to its constitution; it is simply human blood made regal by law.

The blood of a Jew is constitutionally identical with that of a Gentile; but in the eye of Divine law the Jews were a royal nation, a holy people. Jesus was a Jew, and His blood was just the same, constitutionally, as the blood of any other Jew, or of any Gentile. But by Heaven’s decree it was blood royal. With respect to sin, however, no mere decree could make that sinless which is constituted sinful by unchanging law. It was therefore needful for God Himself to be the Father of Jesus, in order to bring the Redeemer into the world free from the effect of Adam’s guilt, so that He might be at once the Just and the Justifier.

Is it not then more reasonable to say that the Christ stood related to sin; stood related to cleansing; stood related to royalty; than it is to say that sin was in Him; which would also make it necessary to say that the cleansing and royalty were in Him too? Though “undefiled and separate from sinners,” He held the same relation to the defiled and to sinners that we behold in a sin-offering; but if we push this connection farther, then, we make Him an offering of sin for sin, instead of a spotless sacrifice for the transgression of His people.

THE HOLY OF HOLIES

The Holiest of all is the name given to this chamber by Paul. The whole court or principal enclosure was holy, but the superlative, or highest degree, was attained by passing through this and the first chamber of the Mosaic Tent into the small room furnished with the Ark of the Covenant, the golden pot, Aaron’s rod, the tables of the covenant, and the cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy-seat.

When the apostle was drawing a general comparison between these things and Christ he could not “speak particularly” of each. He does not, however, thereby prohibit us from considering them by the aid of the scriptures.

Commentators in general have seized upon the fact that Jesus is said to have been our forerunner in entering within the veil to show that God intends us to enter into heaven. The inference is by no means devoid of plausibility. A forerunner is one who goes before those who are intended to follow, and as Jesus has ascended into heaven it is concluded that His disciples are also to go there.

But the apostle drew his comparison from the custom of Aaron entering within the veil. Here it is to be remarked that no countenance is given to the supposition that the people of Israel were to go in after him. It does not therefore follow that though Christ is gone into heaven we are to follow Him in person. The Israelites followed their high priest into the holiest with their prayers: we also follow our High Priest in like manner into the presence of God in heaven; while in person, as was the case with Israel, we remain without.

Locality is of little importance. God has not informed us that He has designed to benefit man by changing his abode, but by changing his state. Paul looked forward with joy not to a transfer from earth to heaven, but to the putting off of the mortal and to the putting on of the immortal body. If the figures under the old economy were typical of place, no advantage would accrue to us; but as types of state they are indeed a shadow of good things. To lift man from earth to sky would not necessarily change his physical structure, but to exalt him from corruption to incorruption, in any locality known to us, would be an inestimable blessing. Man has no reasonable grounds to desire a better place than the earth; all his longings point to a change of nature. We therefore regard the figures of the Jewish economy as typical of state, not of place.

BURNT SACRIFICE

This name was given to a particular kind of offering because the animal presented was to be wholly consumed without reserve. Calmet says that the Jews appear to have had three sorts of sacrifices:- 1st. The burnt offering. 2nd. The sacrifice for sin, or sacrifice of expiation for the purification of a person who had fallen under an offence against the law. 3rd. The peace offering, or sacrifice of thanks-giving, by which devout thanks were returned to God for benefits received.

Burnt sacrifices are the most ancient of all, they are spoken of by heathens as well as by Jewish writers. The Greek historian Zenophon says that burnt oxen were offered to Jupiter, and horses were burnt in sacrifice to the Sun.

There have been various opinions as to the precise intention of burnt offerings, some supposing them to do honour to the Almighty as the preserver of all others to expiate evil thoughts: but we may safely say - with Dr Jennings, that they all had a typical significance, directing the faith of Old Testament believers to that only true atoning sacrifice which the Son of God was to offer in due time.

The book of Leviticus is chiefly occupied in describing the service and sacrifice of the tabernacle, and from that it derives its name. The first chapter opens with Jehovah's directions to Moses concerning burnt sacrifices: "Speak unto the children of Israel and say unto them. If any man of you bring an offering unto the Lord, ye shall bring your offering of the cattle, even of the herd and of the flock. If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish, he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord."

The animal victim could, of course, have no will in the matter. But the offerer must see that the best was every way suitable, and it must be offered in a perfectly voluntary manner. If there were any blemish in the beast, or if the person who brought it to the priest for sacrifice, were at all reluctant or hesitant, then there was no atoning power attached to the offering. These considerations are of great moment when we look forward from the shadow to the substance.

The Almighty had strictly appointed certain kinds of animals for sacrifice, specifying that each was to be clean and perfect of its kind. Any departure from this injunction on the part of the Jews was a capital offence. But the Gentiles, who imitated the Jews in their sacrifices, took all kinds, clean or unclean, just

as they considered them to be of value to themselves, inferring, as Dean Spencer remarks, that what they prized most would be most acceptable to their deities.

To sacrifice to God an unclean thing was the same as to go into His presence in a sinful state, after He had graciously provided the means to wash and be clean.

When the priest had carefully examined the beast at the door of the tabernacle, the person who brought it was directed to lay his hand on its head, by which act, says Veysie, he acknowledged his own guilt, and prayed that it might be punished in the victim upon which his hand was laid. And accordingly we find in the rabbinical writers a set form of prayer, which, according to them, was always used on this occasion. In this form the delinquent acknowledged his offence, professes his repentance, and concludes with a petition that the victim upon which he laid his hand might be his expiation.

THE HIGH PRIEST'S OFFERING.

This was the beginning of the great work of yearly expiation made on the tenth day of the seventh month of the Jewish calendar. On this day the high priest was dressed, not in his grand robes of office, with the ephod, breastplate, chains, and bells, but in his garments of white linen. These were typical of the perfect righteousness of the world's Great High Priest, Jesus the Christ, and also more in harmony with the solemn ceremonies of repentance than the full dress worn on other occasions. They are described by Moses as "the holy linen coat, the linen breeches, the linen girdle, and the linen mitre."

The unblemished bullock was now slain, and some of the life-blood caught in a bowl in the hand of the high priest. He also took his censer full of burning coals from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense. He passes within the veil, and "for a little while" is hid from all without. He is there concealed making expiation for himself and all his house, which seems to include the whole tribe of Levi.

The Divine glory resting inside this otherwise dark chamber; its singular and majestic furniture; the shadowing wings of the cherubim upon the lid of the ark, the golden jar, containing a little of the manna that fell day by day for forty years; Aaron's rod that budded; the two tables of Moses brought down from Sinai inscribed with the finger of God; the high priest in his snow white dress with beard falling to the waist, holding in one hand the smoking censer, in the other the bowl of steaming blood; the thousands of Israel all standing without in breathless silence, with their white tents circling around for miles, make a picture of solemn and imposing grandeur.

Having sprinkled the blood upon the mercy-seat he emerges from the Divine presence, passes through the holy place, in which is no man beside himself, and immediately presents himself cleansed and accepted of God, in the sight of all Israel.

Besides the sins of his household, the high priest was obliged to atone for his own sins. This was one of the imperfections of the Mosaic system, not that the system was imperfect, but that it was inefficient to accomplish the object attained by the Christian High Priest; it was imperfect in the sense that all shadows are imperfect in comparison with the corresponding substance.

But Christ had no sins of His own to expiate. He is, both by the prophets and the apostles, declared to be sinless. His expiation therefore was only for His house. Some writers say that the high priest made three distinct confessions on the day of atonement, one for himself; the second for the other priests, upon the bullock, and the third for all Israel, on the scape goat.

The prayers of the holy men mentioned in the Bible, are remarkable for their full and frequent confession of sins; both their own and those of their nation, but in all that we read concerning the prayers of Christ, nothing of the kind appears. The obvious reason is that He had nothing to confess, nothing to deplore concerning Himself.

THE TWO GOATS

These were two parts of one offering. They were both presented before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. The ceremony of casting lots was then gone through, and the goat on which the Lord's lot fell was offered for a sin-offering. When he had killed the goat Aaron took the blood in a bowl and went again into the Holy of Holies and sprinkled it upon and before the mercy-seat seven times, in sign of that perfect sprinkling of the heart by faith with the blood of Jesus.

The carcasses of the goat and bullock were afterwards conveyed outside the camp and utterly burnt. This part of the ceremony Paul intimates was typical of the suffering of Jesus without the gate of Jerusalem. With the blood of these sacrifices Aaron made an atonement for the tabernacle, the altar, and the holy place. This was done in consequence of the uncleanness, the iniquities, and the transgressions of the children of Israel during the past year. It was not to foreshadow any natural or physical defect, or imperfection in Jesus.

We are then informed, that when the high priest had made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he brought the live goat, and Aaron laid both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confessed over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and sent him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness. And the goat bore upon him all the iniquities into a land not inhabited, or, as the expression also signifies, a land of separation.

This part of the work was of most striking significance. Although the goat bore the sins of the whole nation on his head, he was allowed to escape alive. Death followed at once on the first goat which foreshadowed the death of the Great Sin-Bearer; He also, like the scape goat, took away the sins of the people into "a land of separation," that is, the grave, which effectually separates the living from the dead; from this, in agreement with the typical goat. He escaped alive.

Exactly where the scape goat was sent is not known. The Jews affirm that the locality was called the wilderness of Izak, ten miles from Jerusalem. They also state that, at the end of each mile, a tent was fixed, and that meat and drink were provided for the man who conducted the goat, for fear he should faint. At the end of the journey the goat was led to the top of a rock and let go to carry the sins of the nation away out of sight.

To be continued...