

we are bought with a price. When we had erred and strayed from his ways like lost sheep, God sought us out, manifested His wonderful mercy to us, and brought us back to the sheepfold. Christ has redeemed us to himself; therefore we belong to Him, and not to the devil. Long he strove to make us his slaves; often have we sought to bind ourselves to do his pleasure: but our Maker never forgot his right and title to us. He is calling upon each of you to return to your allegiance, for you are His. And the way is open; for you are not under the law but under grace. If, then, we are not our own, by what law should we live? Not by the law of selfishness, as self-seekers and self-pleasers; not in isolation from God. But by the divine law of love, which means the sacrifice of self; by being ever in living communion with God; and thus being able to dedicate ourselves, soul and body, to his most reasonable service.

Ver. 2nd. We are told here why God claims all things as His,—because everything was made by Him. “He hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.” The expressions used are poetical, and may suggest two ideas:—(1) the thought of God’s wonderful power in basing this solid earth, seemingly so stable and self-existent, on a substance so proverbially “unstable” as water; and (2) from this we are led to the higher thought of the frailty and uncertainty of all things earthly and material, seeing that they are based on the mobile sea, yea on the very heaving floods, than which by no possibility can there be a more insecure foundation. This is carrying out the thought of the 1st verse; dwelling on the same idea that the earth is the Lord’s, dependent on Him, having no root of existence whatever in itself. “Of old, hast thou laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands. *They shall perish, but thou shalt endure.*” (Ps. cii. 25.)

We have thus considered the first grand thought which the Psalmist here sings. His wing is strong, and his flight in the serene regions above earth’s puddles and confusions.

All things are the Lord’s. We also; for He made us. His, too, by a stronger right; for He has re-created us. We are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s. All things, then, are ours: He hath given us dominion over all. Everything, then, is a gift from God, and to be used as such. Well then could the Apostle quote this verse in confirmation of his argument on Christian liberty: “Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience’ sake; for the earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof.”

II. “Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? and who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall re-

ceive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation. This is the generation of them that seek Him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah.”

The Psalmist now rises from the thought of God’s sovereignty over material nature to the thought of his parallel but higher kingdom of spiritual nature. We, and all things, are the Lord’s subjects by natural right. He made all. But who only are or can be the subjects of His everlasting kingdom of spirituality? for that is the great question. It is a grand thing to be the Lord’s by the same right and title as that by which the brute earth and the beasts of the field are His. But how much grander to be His on the same principles as those by which the intelligences of Heaven are His,—the principle of community of nature, the having in us a breath of the Almighty, “something which was before the elements, and which owes no homage to the sun.” “Who shall ascend unto the hill of the Lord?” That is the great question, David puts aside all thoughts of the world and its fullness: they are not enough for man. There is a higher heritage, and one that cannot be obtained by all, for the soul feels that there is an estrangement between itself and God; and while it is in that state the prime question with it must be, “Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God?” “Lord, *who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?*”

The metaphor here used of “ascending unto the hill of the Lord,” is taken from the circumstances in which the Israelites then were. The temple was built on a hill, and there, too, was the tabernacle pitched, and the ark to be carried. And as the great heaving mass of Israelites slowly wound up the hill, this allusion in the psalm they were singing would well remind them that as they were living under a dispensation that was wholly typical of better things to come, so also that this particular act of accompanying the ark to its prepared place had a deep spiritual meaning; even that as the Israelites alone were permitted to ascend the hill with the ark, so also only the true spiritual Israel of God could ascend the hill of the Lord and be acceptable in His sight. In like manner, the Church of Christ, the ante-type of the temple, is compared by Christ to a city set upon a hill. It is elevated high above the noise and bustle of the world beneath, a retreat from the cares and weariness that oppress us as we struggle ’mid the thronging crowd of life. It is set upon a hill, its serene atmosphere unpolluted by any exhalations from the reeking tide of sin that surges beneath, and seen clearly of all men, so that all may escape to it when the avenger of blood pursueth. Set upon a hill, that each one as he enters may show himself openly to the world, for though many who are not Christ’s disciples in truth profess his name, yet no