

The Christian.

ST. JOHN. N. B. - - - DECEMBER, 1891.

EDITORIAL.

WHAT READING DOES

But even until this day when Moses is read, the veil is on their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. II. Cor. III. 15, 16.

Veils are so often mentioned in the Bible, and are in such frequent use in our day, that their description is unnecessary. Veils, either partially or totally, hide things from our sight. In like manner a veil over the heart keeps out the love of God, for as light meets the wants of the eye so does the love of God meet the desires and capabilities of the human heart.

Paul says that the Jews had a veil upon their heart—their minds were blinded—and tells how this veil was to be taken away, which subject we now consider.

"When it shall turn to the Lord," he says, "the veil shall be taken away."

The above leads to this important inquiry: What is the antecedent to the word *it*? or what is it that turns to the Lord before the veil is removed?

Every thoughtful Christian will see the importance of this question. Reader, do you remember how it troubled you when you tried to come to the Saviour? how anxious you were to feel the love of God, and how thick and hard was the veil on your heart, which kept out His love. Is it not important to know how that veil is taken away?

Ask the missionary of the cross: What is your sorest trial? Is it about the wants of yourself and family? "Not at all," will be his answer. Is it to gain the friendship of those you would lead to Jesus? "I always meet friends," he replies. Is it to have the veil taken from the hearts of the people, so that the love of God may enter and remain there? "That's it, that's it," is his answer. "I would gladly endure greater hardships to see the veil removed and the people receive the love of the Saviour."

We shall then enquire, What does Paul say shall turn to the Lord? Passing by many answers to this question, we will look at one, which is very plausible, and given by many great and good men, and we will endeavor to treat it fairly and Christianly. It is this: "When the Jews shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away." The Jews then stand for the antecedent of the pronoun *it*, which is grammatically wrong, one being plural the other singular. But what is still worse, it is theologically wrong teaching, that the turning to the Lord precedes rather than succeeds the removal of the veil from the heart—that men love the Lord after they turn to Him and not before; that they are converted to Him before they love Him. This cannot be. It is God's love that draws them from sin to His service.

We ask again, What is it that turns to the Lord before the veil is taken away? To our mind it is very clear that it is "the reading" that turns to the Lord. The apostle shows what the reading of the Jews was and what was its effects. "But their minds were blinded, for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old Testament, which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord the veil shall be taken away. The two readings are here contrasted, each with its own effect, one leaving the veil upon the heart, the other taking it away. Our understanding of the passage, then, is as follows, viz.: Even until this day when the Israelites are reading Moses and the old Testament the veil is upon their heart, but when Christ shall be read

the veil shall be removed. The reading here referred to is an eager, important reading. It is like a man on trial for his life reading the verdict of the jury. The Jews met to hear what God would do with sinners, and to learn the divine character. They trusted to Moses to reveal God to them. Moses showed the justice of God, and how every "transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward." He declared that "the soul that sinneth it shall die," but showed no way of clearing the guilty. These things were read to them every Sabbath in their synagogues. Now and then such parts as the fifteenth chapter of Numbers would be read, showing the fate of him who gathered sticks on the Sabbath day. No prayer was to be offered for him, no pity to be felt, but he was to be taken and by the congregation stoned until he died. The veil would be on the heart of the dying criminal, and also on the hearts of those who threw the great stones at him. It would kindle in them no feeling of love to God or man, but would fill them with the terror of a God so great, and holy, and just, who would by no means clear the guilty.

What was there in such reading to remove the veil and kindle the love of God in their hearts? They could see where even Moses himself was punished for his sin, and died before he entered the promised land. All these things left the veil upon their heart.

But when eager souls read the Lord Jesus, the Christ, how different the effect. He has come to reveal God in all His holy and just and loveable character. And He has done it so clearly and so effectually that He declares, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." (Jno. xiv. 9). In all the actions of His life He magnified the law of God and made it honorable. As Man, He showed how blessed it was for man to keep that law without one breach and to have the testimony of God, "Thou art my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." When He spoke of God it was on this wise, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." When He speaks of man in all his villainess and ruin, He says: "He that believeth on Him is not condemned," and shows that it is only unbelief that condemns him. His whole life testifies that He did not come to condemn men, for though often urged to condemn the guilty He never did. Even His own murderers He did not condemn, but effectually prayed for their pardon. His grand mission was to separate the sinner from his sins and condemn them, but justify him.

After He had honored the law of God which man has broken, He offered Himself without spot to God a sacrifice for our sins. God has accepted His offering and raised Jesus from the dead. His Father loved Him because He laid down His life that He might take it again. (John x. 17).

When Jesus had risen and was ascending to heaven He sent a message of pardon to every sinner in the whole world on the plainest and easiest possible terms. No wonder that the veil is taken away from every heart that reads and believes on the Lord.

It was when Peter read or declared Christ at Pentecost that the veil was taken from the hearts of thousands. Saul of Tarsus read Moses with a heart so hard that he could approve of the stoning of Stephen and give his voice against many of the saints when they were imprisoned and put to death. But the veil was taken away when he heard the voice of Jesus. By constantly reading Him he could exclaim, "But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord." The glory of the Lord that

shone in the cloud which led the Israelites through the Red Sea and the wilderness and filled the holiest of all had no glory by reason of the excelling glory that shines in the face of Jesus Christ. The Gospel reveals the glorious union of the human and divine nature in the man Christ Jesus with the clearness of a mirror, and the sinner who looks into that mirror, trusting alone in Jesus, will be delivered from that veil and will love Him who died for his sins and rose again for his justification, and by continually beholding at in a glass the glory of the Lord he will be changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the spirit of the Lord.

Original Contributions.

THE LATEST HERESY.

"The church at Duck River, Tennessee, is disturbed. An innovation has been introduced and some of the brethren are aroused over the matter. The following query to the *Gospel Advocate* shows the fearful tendency of the times at Duck River":

"Please answer through the *Advocate* if it is wrong to have a clock in a church house. We have one and some of the brethren think it is in the wrong place. Q. A. DEAN."

"The *Advocate* suggests that a sun-dial would do as well, and also expresses its conviction that those who object are the ones who are late to church. The *Advocate* should not poke fun at the consciences of these brethren. It should say to the progressive ones at Duck River, 'that if a clock cause my brethren to become offended I will never have a clock while the world stands.' Let the clock go and all will be peace in Zion at Duck River."—*Christian Courier*.

"Here is a splendid opportunity for the practice of a little old-fashioned, genuine 'quackery,' which the Simon-pure, thus-saith-the-Lord fraternity ought to improve to the utmost."—*Christian Evangelist*.

The air is full of heresy. The old standards of orthodoxy are being abandoned and left to the mercy of mid-ocean waves. The flags of truce that so long marked the boundary line between belief and unbelief are being struck. Men everywhere are challenging the Bible. Heresy hunters with ear trumpet, spy glass and microscope are going about seeking whom they may devour. Synods, Councils, Presbyteries, creed mongers and creed bunglers are over head and ears in business. So great is the rush that they are compelled to work after hours. The dark ages are recalled to testify to the most efficient way of silencing these heretics. In those ages there was an efficient way—an unanswerable argument—for the brutal logic of the rack, the thumbscrew and the stake did not permit of a reply. But since religion has tamed, to a great extent, the wild beast that there is in the heart of men, these death-dealing arguments are no longer in vogue; and the mighty force of policemen who keep watch over the minds of those who happen to fall within their jurisdiction are often powerless to arrest a single man who gets into forbidden pasture.

We have thus far lived in the hope that an end to all this strife would come, but, alas! we are doomed to disappointment. Each day discloses fresh heresies. A wail now comes up from "away down in Tennessee." Lamentations, surpassed only by those of Ezekiel, fall dolefully upon our ears. The quiet and unobtrusive settlement of Duck River has been shaken from centre to circumference. Heresy, unheard of since the foundation of the world, is harrowing the hearts of the orthodox, and threatens to spread destruction within the walls of Zion. The mystery of iniquity has begun to work. The mother of harlots has sent some of her loathsome progeny to evangelize in that circuit. Their efforts have been successful, and a reign of spiritual depression broods over the land. Tongue can never tell the far-reaching consequence of the heretical abomination which has landed at Duck