

The Wesleyan.

PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF A COMMITTEE OF WESLEYAN MINISTERS, IN CONNEXION WITH THE BRITISH CONFERENCE.

"WISDOM IS THE PRINCIPAL THING; THEREFORE GET WISDOM."

VOL. II.

TORONTO, CANADA, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1842.

No. 11.

Theology.

BENEFITS FLOWING FROM THE EXERCISE OF OUR LORD'S PRIESTHOOD.

1. *The communication of the Holy Spirit*, is most certainly the first, and greatest benefit, flowing from the intercession of Christ. He himself has described this comprehensive donation, as imparted to man in answer to his mediatorial prayer. *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.* We are explicitly informed, that the Holy Spirit was not given, at least to any considerable extent; because Christ was not yet glorified. This Comforter, he told them, could not come before his departure; his full manifestation, in all the richness and variety of his gifts, was reserved to grace the celestial triumph of the ascended Saviour, agreeably to the ancient and perspicuous prophecy, recorded in the sixty-eighth psalm. *Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men; yea for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.* That those gifts comprised both the ordinary and miraculous influences of the Holy Spirit is clear, from St. Paul's interpretation of the passage; and also the intimation, that their communication was subsequent to the Messiah's ascension. This effusion, agreeably to our Lord's promise, took place on the day of Pentecost. Then was the Saviour glorified; then was the church consecrated, as the spiritual residence of the Deity;—and then was introduced that dispensation, which is emphatically, the ministration of the Spirit in the hearts of mankind. Our blessed Redeemer, being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received the promised Holy Spirit from the Father, pours it out upon us, according to our faith. While every donation is to be ascribed to the intercession of Christ, let it be remembered, that the personal communication is suspended on the exercise of fervent and effectual prayer. Let us, then, join in earnest supplication for that internal revelation of power and glory, which will display the presence of the Redeemer in our assemblies, and cause the droppings of the heavenly Sanctuary to fall in copious abundance on our worshipping spirits.

2. *The revelation of evangelical truth*, is another benefit flowing from the exercise of our Lord's priesthood. Under the Law, the High Priest communicated to the people such portions of the mind and will of God, as he saw proper to impart. *The priests kept knowledge*; and it was a part of their office to instruct the ignorant. During the feast of the seventh month, the high priest went into the most holy place, and took the book of the law out of the ark, to read it to the people. To this there is an allusion in the vision, with which the beloved disciple was favoured; *He saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals; and no man was able to open the book, till the Lamb of God appeared; and they then sang a new song, saying, thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.* Christ, our great High Priest, hath prevailed to open the book with the seven seals. He hath revealed the mystery, hid from ages and generations, and made it manifest to his saints. *No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.* All saving knowledge of God, of his nature, his will, and his love, is derived from Christ. The prophets and apostles were only organs, through which the spirit of Christ that was in them spake; all the light that issued from them was received from him. He

done, fully knows the mind of God, being always in the bosom of the Father, and he is willing to communicate to us, all that knowledge which will conduce to our present sanctification, and our preparation for future felicity. Let us, therefore, with the docility of children, apply to him, as we do to our Father, and strong desire, let us listen to the first whisper of his voice, in the oracle of God, and thus receive into our hearts, all his gracious instructions, and the precious elements of truth and holiness, and the only light that leads to heaven.

3. *Freedom of access to the presence of God*, is another benefit flowing from the exercise of our Lord's priesthood. A discussion of this amazing result of Christ's appearance at the right hand of God is considered unnecessary, by the preceding mention of the discourse, which is so fully proved, that the throne of God is now accessible to penitent, believing sinners. He who sits upon it, is God in Christ; and he looks forth from the ineffable glory of his heavenly place, not as he looked upon the Egyptian host, to punish and destroy, but to purify and save. He now goes forth to every guilty race, the assurance of a gracious welcome. His language is, *whosoever cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.* *Come unto me all ye who labour, and ye will find rest.* *Whosoever cometh to me, I will give him rest.* *Whosoever cometh to me, the name of Christ shall be upon him.* Every obstacle is removed, the path of access to God is open, and Christ is now waiting to receive every returning sinner, and to reconcile him to his Father. Christ then, thou poor depending sinner, thou art no reason for those gloomy misgivings, and fearful apprehensions, which torment the spirit; God has fully pardoned all thy iniquity; pardon is purchased, and thou art presented; arise then, and show, for that which is come, fear not to follow it, it will lead thee to the superior light of heaven, the glory of God's favour. That compassionate Saviour who loved thee to the death, and thought of thee amidst the agonies of Gethsemane and Calvary, will not be slow or reluctant to meet thee with the blessing and manifestation of his favour. Shrink not from the awful presence of an offended God, for Christ thy advocate and friend is there, and because he lives, thou shalt live also.

4. Finally, *the prospect of future felicity*, is another blessing we possess, through the mediation of Christ. We have, from the discoveries of inspiration, and the concurrent testimony of the eternal Spirit in our hearts, that he has passed within the soul, as our forerunner; and is now employed in making preparation for our entrance, and he may receive us, into everlasting habitations. When by faith we contemplate the glory to which he is exalted in the Mediator, our hearts glow with the anticipation of a day sharing it with him; for he assures us, that if we overcome, we shall sit with him on his throne. *We know that which he appears in shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is; out the multitude of his felicity, rises far above the lofty conceptions of the warmest imagination, and is lost in the depths of a boundless eternity; it will be a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* If this be the case, and heaven is the home, and final resting place of every faithful believer; if the prize be so transcendently great, and so certain to be severing both, why are we so careless and unconcerned? Why so deeply engaged in the world? Let us, from this moment, arise and shake off the dust, and let our selves up, to lay hold on eternal life. *And may 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, to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen.—Rev. T. Lessey.*

From the Rev. C. Benson's History of the Jews.

THE DISPERSION OF THE JEWS.

Go where you will, and in every nation under the sun, in the east and in the west, in the north and in the south, in the snowy mountain and in the sandy desert, in every land almost in every village, you will behold the face of some exiled Israelite, fulfilling, in his destiny, the prophecy of the Lord. There is something peculiarly remarkable and apparently providential in this universal dispersion of the people of God. They are to be found in all nations, and in all nations they are found despised and rejected of men, without a home and without a country, without the rights or the protection of other citizens. Still there are some places in which they are less hated and oppressed than in others; and under the mild and paternal government of our fatherland they have nothing to fear and less to suffer than in other countries in the world. Why, then, do they not gradually quit those lands of their oppressors, to seek safety on the rock of comparative respect and peace? It is the common doctrine of human nature to flee from distress, and seek comfort and security wherever they may be found, no matter in what country or under what crown. Why, then, does not the oppressed Jew, the victim of a German popular and the barbarity of the chauntans of Austria, and the grinding exactions of Parkish avarice, by raising the tabernacle of his rest under the influence of the freedom and protection of Britain's laws? Or why, if in any country he is condemned to exile, why does he not turn his steps towards the land of his fathers, after whom he sighs, and endeavour to earn his subsistence by his own industry, as was done by the Jews of Jordan, which he loves? Such would be the natural conduct of common men; but the Jews acts not thus. Oppressed and persecuted, he still continues to live where he has lived, and grows and multiplies in adversity without the thought of change. Neither tribulation, nor anguish, nor hardship, nor distress, nor even the fear of death itself, can drive him away from the soil in which chance has planted the inheritance of his misery.—Now, let us for this singularity in his conduct that we have to account. That the Jew alone should remain unmoved by those motives which operate upon the masses of mankind—that the Jew alone should act contrary to our general experience of the rest of the world—to what can we ascribe it, but to the providential dispensation of God? Why not, but that he is immovably fixed and rooted, as it were, by the never-fading word of prophecy, to the soil on which he dwells? Why not, that he does not look to the land of his fathers, but because Jesus has said that he shall be led captive into "all nations"? And why does he not strive for the possession of Jerusalem again, but because the same Jesus has said, that "Jerusalem shall be trodden under foot of the Gentiles, until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled"? Yea, and for the same reason it is, that he that did once strive to restore it to these children of vengeance, did strive in vain.

PREVALENCE OF A MOTHER'S PRAYER.

When the sigh of the midnight storm sends fraternal agony into another's heart, as she thinks of her tender boy, now exposed to its fury, on the waters of a distant ocean,—the disciples of a hard and stern infidelity on the notion of a rigid and unalterable constancy in nature, would forbid her prayers—holding them to be as impotent and vain, though addressed to that God who has all the elements in his hand, as if lifted up with senseless impotency to the raving elements themselves. Yet nature would strongly prompt to the aspiration, and if there be truth in our argument, there is nothing in the constitution of the universe to forbid its accomplishment. God might

answer the prayer, not by unsettling the order of secondary causes—not by reversing any of the wanted successions that are known to take place, in the ever-restless, ever-beaving atmosphere—not by sensible in each among those nearer footsteps when the philosopher has traced, but by the touch of an invisible hand among the deep recesses of created nature which are beyond the ken of his instruments. It is true that the Sovereign of nature might fold the wild unsear of the elements into silence. It is true that the virtue comes out of Heaven upon us like a swift-winged messenger, from the invisible to the visible, and that the thin shell of separation between these two regions, expresses the direction of the Almighty's will on the remotest cause to which science in mount her way. From that point in the series, the path of descent along the line of nearer and proximate causes may be rigidly variable; and in respect of the order, the precise undetermined order, whereby they follow each other, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. The heat, and the vapour, and the atmospherical pressures, and the consequent moving forces by which nature raises a new tertiary structure of clouds and rain—all these may proceed, and show that one hour's breadth of deviation, according to the succession of our earthly seasons—yet each be but the obedient assent of that voice, which gave forth a command at the fountain-head of the whole operation, which commanded the vapours to ascend from the bosom of the earth, and made lightnings for the rain, and through the winds out of his treasures. These are the palpable steps of nature, and not an unseen influence, which is the spiritual part of man's boasted dominion, may have set them a going. And in allusion to this have been accorded to prayer—the power that moves Him who moves the universe, and who, without visible cause, to the regularities of nature, can either send forth the hurricane over the face of the desert, or recall it at his pleasure. Such is the partial persuasion of faith, and philosophy cannot dispute it. A woman's feeble cry may have overruled the elemental war, and hushed to silence this wild frenzy of the winds and waves; and evoked the gentle breezes from the cave of the ruminant, and waded the vessel of her dearest hopes, and which held the first and fondst of her earthly treasures, to its destined haven.—*Dr. Chalmers.*

Biblical Literature.

OF THE MEANING OF WORDS.

(Continued.)

15. *The sense of words depends on the usual manner in which they are used.* The sense of words is conventional, and regulated wholly by usage. Usage being arbitrary, the sense of words is arbitrary and partial.

16. *Words have their sense determined in a variety of ways.* To determine it, respect must be had to (a) religion; (b) sect, education, and civil affairs; (c) the influence on an author's language, and character; (d) the sense of words employed in one sense respecting the things of common life; in another, respecting the things of religion; in another still, in the schools of philosophy, and even these are not always agreed in the sense of words.

(a) The ancient and modern sense of many words differs.

(b) Victim, sacrifice, law, &c., in the Old Testament, are often employed in a sense, which differs from that of the same words in the New Testament.

(c) Thus to perceive in common life is to feel or experience, in philosophy, to form an idea in the mind, among the Academic sect, it means to know a thing with certainty, in opposition to mere conjecture. So *etharismos*,