

Consecration.

[ORIGINAL.]

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HIS subject has occupied the minds of many of God's people of late, and has led them to investigate the true meaning of the term. Let us look at a few passages of Scripture bearing on it, and learn from them how we may be fully consecrated to the Lord's service. In Leviticus viii. a description is given of the ceremony of the Consecration of Aaron and his Sons for the Priesthood. We find the following details given us : v. 2. *Take Aaron and his Sons.* v. 6. *Moses brought Aaron and his Sons, and washed them with water.* v. 7 and 13, and *clothed* them. These are the first steps. We must be *taken by God, brought into His presence, cleansed and clothed.* All that pertained to the old life and habit of sin must be taken off us, and we must be arrayed in the fitting garments of righteousness. In v. 18. we see the identification of Aaron and his Sons with the Sacrifice, in the laying of their hands on the head of the Ram. In v. 24, the anointing of the right ear, hand and toe with the Blood of the Sacrifice. In v. 27, the *filling* of their hands with the portions of the Ram of Consecrations; and lastly in v. 30, the sprinkling of the holy anointing oil upon them and their garments. The principal feature of the ceremony is the *filling* of the hands with the portions of the Sacrifice. First comes identification with the Lord Jesus as the Sacrifice for us, and the putting of the Blood upon us, separating us off by the tokens of death from the world and all its allurements and maxims, and then our empty hands can be filled with the same blessed sacrifice, and we present Jesus before God. Our lives, our thoughts, our hearts, are to be filled up with Himself, and nothing but Himself. When thus filled with Christ, the Holy Ghost anoints us, and we are sanctified for the ministry and work of God. To be emptied that we may be filled is the true idea of Consecration. In John ii. we find the story of the wine running short at the marriage feast; but the Lord was there to undertake the supply of the need. His first command was "Fill the water pots with water." They filled them to the brim. The water pots were for purification, but they were empty, hence the need of their being filled. Then the measure of water was the measure of wine. The measure of

purification, of sanctification, was the measure of joy. And what was that measure? FULNESS. "Of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace."

How shall we empty ourselves? How be humbled and abased before God that He may fill us! Many of the narratives of the experiences of the Old Testament saints will illustrate this for us.

First. Cant. i : 5, 6. The Bride says, "I am black, for the sun hath looked upon me." Her natural ugliness was revealed to her by the pure, strong light of the sun. When we get under the unclouded rays of the Sun of Righteousness, all our loveliness is turned into corruption, and we have to exclaim, "I am black." But what says the Bridegroom, as he gazes on the Bride in the fulness of love and compassion, chap. i. 15, "Behold thou art fair, my love; behold thou art fair." Emptied of self, she is attractive to the Lord, and *communion* is maintained. The heart is now filled with the Lord, and the affections are consecrated to Him.

Second. Job xlii. 5, 6. "Mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." A look at God in His holiness has emptied and humbled Job; now he is ready for God's service; and in vs. 7, 8 we find four times the expression, "My servant Job," and the command given to his three friends to obtain the intercession of Job on their behalf. "*Him will I accept,*" says God. Here is power for prayer.

Third. Isaiah vi. The prophet had a short time before seen the remains of Uzziah, the leprous king of Judah, borne away to their last resting place, and now his eyes behold the Lord on His throne, "high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple." Strange contrast to the faded, tarnished glory of the earthly king. But the sight of the King of Glory reveals to the Prophet the solemn fact that he, too, is leprous, for he cries out, "Woe is me, for I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." A leper, and dwelling amongst lepers. He who had pronounced in chap. v. six times over the words "Woe unto them," has now to say, "Woe is me." A glimpse at the glory of Jesus empties self and reveals the hidden sin and corruption. But the cry of distress brings the swift answer from the King, and the remedy is applied, namely, the live coal off the Altar, and in response to the appeal, "Who will go for us?" comes the glad answer, "Here am I, send me." Consecration for service is here seen, and the command is given, "Go and tell this people." Only one who has seen the Lord, and been humbled by the sight, can bear the King's messages of judgment and warning with boldness and courage.