

**“WHOM HAVE I IN HEAVEN BUT THEE?
AND THERE IS NONE UPON EARTH I DE-
SIRE BESIDE THEE.”—Psalm lxxlii. 25.**

JESUS! 'tis Thou Thyself I need,
At every time, at every hour;
Oh! wilt Thou guide my feet, and lead
And keep me by Thy Spirit's power,
That from Thee I may never stray,
But still press on the narrow way.

Close to Thy side I fain would cling,
And learn the mysteries of Thy love,
Into Thy presence entering
With boldness through the precious blood;
Oh! Jesu's love is vaster far
Than all our poor conceptions are.

It is this love my soul would know,
Would learn it in its heights and depths,
Would mark it in that hour of woe,
When on the cross He tasted death—
Would ponder all His wondrous ways,
And never cease His name to praise.

That *precious* name, it cheers the heart
When burden'd, or with care oppress,
Then to that blessed One I turn,
And always find a place of rest,
There on His bosom calmly stay,
And then—all else may pass away.

Yes—every thing may pass away;
In Him my all in all I've found,
And having Him, sure I can say
Now I have all things and abound;
My precious Lord—to Thee I bow,
And own no other Lord but Thou.

It was the power of Jesu's cross,
 That turn'd my darkness into light,
 Now for His sake I'd count but loss,
 All that might dim this precious sight ;
 Full well He knows the flesh how frail,
 Yet in His strength I shall prevail.

Still 'tis Thyself, O Lord, I need
 A sense of Jesus always near ;
 His love, the joy on which I feed,
 His presence, all I need to cheer.
 With this I'll sweetly journey on,
 And wait till He, my Lord, shall come.

PRIESTHOOD.

EXODUS XXIX.

There is a desire at all times in the people of God, whether in Jewish ignorance or Christian life, that they should always have God dwelling with them. Thus, in Exodus xv., as soon as Moses had come out of Egypt, he said, "He is my God ; I will prepare Him a habitation." So we are "builed together for an habitation of God through the spirit." (Eph. ii. 22.)

We do look to God's dwelling amongst us ; yet we have much more thought of dwelling with Him. This was not the case with Israel. *We* have boldness to enter into the holiest, Christ having passed through the heavens for us, as Aaron passed through the tabernacle for them. Israel could not enter within the veil ; but Christ has rent it, and

opened a new and living way which He has consecrated for us. God having, in the cross of Christ, put sin away, we can stand in the light of His presence. Here we find the presence of God among them. This is not redemption, the object of which is that we should be with God. We could not meet God without redemption. Christ suffered, "the just for the unjust that He might bring us to God." (1 Peter iii. 18.)

We learn in this chapter how we can thus be in the presence of God constantly and abidingly. We are really, in title, made "kings and priests to God and His Father;" our provision and character being this, provision is made in Christ for us, so that we can be continually in the presence of God. There was to be the burnt-offering continually at the door of the tabernacle, the place where the Lord met with the people. We are consecrated to God to be priests. Christ has not yet taken upon Him His office as King, but He has taken the priesthood, and therefore we have got, even now, our priesthood. He exercises in heaven continually a perpetual priesthood, filling up in this respect the figure of Aaron, though the *order* be of Melchisedec.

We see here how we are put in the place of priests, and yet Christ is personally distinguished. Aaron goes first (ver. 5-7) alone, to represent Christ; then the sons (ver. 8) to represent the whole church, the priests. In referring to the cleansing of the leper, we have the way a sinner is

cleansed from the evil that is in him. It is the same ordinance as regards the leper and the priest; but the leper wants to get *cleansed* as a sinner, the priest that he may be *consecrated* to God. If not cleansed in every respect, we could not stand before God at all. There was sprinkling of blood on the leper, on the right ear, the right hand, the right toe: his thoughts, his acts, his walk, must be all cleansed, by being brought under the "blood of sprinkling." So in this chapter we are consecrated in the same way. In verse 4, "Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle," etc. You do not find Aaron washed by himself, because Christ did not want it. They are washed together as a figure of the Christian body. Christ as a man identifies Himself with the Church. (1 Cor. xii. 12.) Aaron was anointed. (Ver. 7.) The Holy Ghost descended upon Christ when He had been baptized.

But before unction *we* need to be cleansed. The word of God applied to the heart and conscience with power by the Spirit is called washing with the word. "Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." This is not habitation, but washing. Christ came not by water only, but by water and blood. The blood was for expiation, the water for washing, in order to meet God. In anything of Christ's work, it is not a question merely of atonement, but of meeting God. If I think of meeting God, it is what God requires. There must be perfect cleansing. It turns the eye

on God Himself. I shall always know evil in myself ; but if God is satisfied, so may I be. It is wholesome to look within and judge myself ; but I shall not get the blessed peace that flows from faith, if I am looking for it into my own heart. When we see God is satisfied with Christ, then comes in peace ; it gives the highest standard of right and wrong, but peace, because God is satisfied with Christ. Washing by water is repeated, not by blood.

Moses clothes him with the priest's robe, and there is no sacrifice here, because Christ required none. He was a perfect man in obedience and love. As man, Christ identifies Himself with His people. He comes into the same place as regards the walk of holiness. He was anointed with the Spirit and with power. All He did was in the power of the Spirit. (Ver. 7, 20, 21 ; Acts x. 38.) Christ was anointed as man. When He ascended on high, there He received the promise of the Father, and sent down the Spirit to the saints, so constituting them the Church.

Next, we come to the sons of Aaron. (Ver. 8, 9.) We are going to get them introduced into the priesthood, and now comes the sacrifice. Aaron needed none. (Ver. 10-13, 14.) There is no sweet savour in the sin-offering or trespass-offering. It must be burnt without the camp. Here it is a sin-offering—sin must be totally put away before our consecration. It is the nature judged before God. Christ is made sin for us, that we may be

made priests. We have these two aspects of the value of Christ's work. First, the sin is charged upon Him. In the Hebrew there is no difference between "sin" and "sin-offering." Here He is the sin-offering; He who "knew no sin, made sin for us," etc. Secondly, the other character was offering Himself up to God, all the devotedness of a life of obedience offered up; this was a sweet savour to God. "Therefore hath my Father loved me, because I lay down my life that I may take it again." (John x.)

In verses 15-18 we find Aaron and his sons not merely having sin taken away, but accepted of God in all the perfection of Christ. If I am looked at as a sinner in myself, the sin is put away, but this is not all. Aaron and his sons put their hands upon the sin-offering; they also identified themselves with the burnt offering. All the savour of everything that Christ has done, we are; in everything consumed and put to the test. Nothing failed; it is all gone up, and we are in it before God. Here we get our blessed position, previous to consecration as priests. For this, it is not a question of what I think of myself; but the measure of my acceptance is what Christ is in God's presence and estimate. We cannot measure grace by anything that is fitted for us, but by what is fitted for God.

Verses 19-21. We come now to the proper character of those persons that are cleansed and accepted. Now it is to consecrate, and, as in

cleansing the leper, the blood is put on the right ear, right hand, and right foot—the thoughts, acts and walk. We are now consecrated to God in all these. We have to render unto the Lord our bodies as well as our spirits; for we are not our own, but bought with a price. Every act that Christ did was as perfect as His sacrifice, but every step made it increasingly difficult. So we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. Christ's conduct and Christ's devotedness are the measure of our walk before God. There is not so much as to set one's foot on left for self-will. Christ did not come to do His own will. Even to death He went, the death of the cross. So with us, if the eye is single, the whole body is full of light. If the heart is right it makes the aim right. The apostle says, "Not that I have already attained . . . but this *one* thing I do," etc. He exercised himself day and night "to have a conscience void of offence." Then it is real liberty. If the heart be right, it will be joy; if not, it will be terrible, because there is not the smallest liberty given to self-will. In many things we fail; but if we feel what sin is and the claim God has on us, it will be our privilege to do His will. It is not a pretence that we are set up as something wonderful. No, it is faith in the blood of Christ that has cleansed us as to purpose and thought according to the perfectness of Christ; and now we are consecrated to serve God. It is simple Christianity.

Verse 21 shews them consecrated by the blood

put upon their persons ; but not only so, for there is the anointing with the Spirit of God to give power and energy for action. It was put on the "sons' garments with him." I have got the power of Christ in heaven, and the power of the Spirit that comes down from Christ for garments (that is, for all that I appear in before the world). It is "*with Him*," a thorough, complete association by the power of the Spirit with a crucified Christ who is now in heaven. Thus we get real thorough joy and gladness of heart. The first fruits are with God, the results are in what we shew to men. If peace and joy are in my heart, let me go in that, and it produces joy and gladness in my ways. The beginning of all practical fruits is from what we have with God, and then there is a testimony to men. What we really are with God shews itself out. It is, or should be, the effect of the consciousness of union with Christ.

This anointing of the Spirit can be put on us, because the blood is on us. Aaron had no blood put on him. The Spirit is the seal. The least relic of sin would prevent Him from sealing ; but when the blood has cleansed from sin, then the seal is applied. The presence of the Spirit is the witness of the blood-shedding ; the fruits are the witness of the Spirit. We thus get a wonderful power, stamp and measure of holiness. If we believe in Christ, we are so cleansed that the Spirit can come and dwell in us. The Spirit is the seal to the value of Christ's work, not to what He is

going to produce. (Ver. 23, 24.) Now He can fill Aaron's hands. What is produced by the Spirit is Christ's after all. I can come with an object now that I know God delights in it. Suppose I praise Christ's name, I know God's delight rests on it ; it may be imperfectly done, but I know what the thing is to God, not the manner of my presenting it. It is the sweet savour of Christ to God. (Ver 31, 32.)

We feed on Christ, now that He has given us His flesh to eat and His blood to drink. We gather strength and grace, and comfort, the perfectness of Christ Himself, as our souls' food. "He that eateth me, even he shall live by me." We come so to think of Christ, so to realize in our hearts and spirits what He is, that we live Christ. What a man thinks is what he is, more than what he does. A man may think of sin, and love it, and desire to do it, but will not because of his character ; he may be a hypocrite. If I realize Christ in my heart, I am a Christian.

Verse 42 shews a continual burnt-offering at the place where God meets the people. Christ is before God day by day continually, a sweet savour. I cannot go to God without finding the savour of Christ there, in the perfect sweetness of His offering.

The reason (we hear in Genesis viii.) God gave for not cursing is that He looks to Noah's sacrifice, not to the sin. God deals with us in virtue of what the Mediator is, instead of what we are. It

ought to be always in our hearts, but it is always before God. When the daily sacrifice was taken away, the Jew could not go to God ; there was no savour. (See Dan. viii.)

In verses 42, 43, it is, " I will meet you to speak there to thee." It is through Christ we gain everything. Finally, God says (ver. 45, 46), " I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God." It is by the Spirit He does so now. The whole Church is His dwelling-place. He is not merely a Redeemer, but a constant Dweller with the people ; as verse 46 shews, it was not to do an act and then leave them. So it is with the Church in a still more blessed way.

But let us never forget that sin is put away first; then there is the continual savour where God meets us ; and we are consecrated to His service. It supposes that the heart is right ; for I cannot wish to be consecrated to God and have my own will. The death of Christ will never find its intelligent value in our hearts, if we want to escape the consequences of consecration. If we are consecrated, the motive of every action should be that Christ may be glorified. You cannot be happy unless Christ be everything. We may have to condemn ourselves daily ; but when we think what a savour is before God, we go on with confidence.



JESUS CHRIST, the same yesterday, and today, and forever. (Heb. xiii. 8.)

THOUGHTS ON JOY AND WORSHIP.

(*Extracts from a Letter. A Translation.*)

In the Epistle to the Philippians there are, for the apostle, several causes for joy. In chap. i. 18, he rejoices that Christ is preached, even though some did so "in pretence." In chap. ii. 17, 18, he rejoices at the prospect of being offered upon the sacrifice and service of their faith, and desires that the Philippians rejoice with him, although to human sight there was nothing to rejoice in. Verses 28, 29 give us further cause for joy; but chap. iii. begins with these words: "Finally, my brethren, rejoice *in the Lord*," as much as to say that whatever may be a cause for joy in our surroundings, is only momentary, but that "in the Lord," is "always." It occurs to me, in speaking of this, that the apostle had shown them at the beginning (Acts xvi.), when in prison and covered with bruises, he could sing praises to God at midnight, rejoicing notwithstanding the opposing circumstances, but it was "in the Lord;" and he could say to them—not only as to that, but as to many other things—what "ye have both learned and received, and heard *and seen in me*." (Chap. iv. 9.)

I have, of late, been much occupied with a subject, the importance of which I see more and more as I go on, and that is worship.

In Levit. xiv. 10, 11 we are told that the one

who had been a leper was "on the eighth day to take two he lambs without blemish, and one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish, and three-tenths deal of fine flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, and one log of oil. And the priest that maketh him clean shall present the man that is to be made clean, and those things *before the Lord*, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." We know from the New Testament for what purpose we are brought there. It is indeed that we may be worshippers, worshipping the Father in spirit and in truth. I fear it is a subject but little comprehended, or at least but little realized.

Numbers xxviii. presents us especially with the side less understood, for there we find the part that *God* has in worship, and not a single word is said of *our* part, or in the following chapter either. "Command the children of Israel, and say unto them, *My* offering, *My* bread for *My* sacrifices made by fire, for a sweet savour unto *Me*, shall ye observe to offer unto *Me* in their due season." Worship—that which, in worship, is going on in our hearts—does not belong to us, it is for the Lord. True, the Lord has put it in our hearts for our joy, in order that we may be partakers of the sacrifice of Christ, even the joy of God in Christ; but if we appropriate anything to ourselves it is profanation. Let us remember that all our worship belongs to God, that it is in us the expression of the excellency of Christ. Moreover, when He takes His place in our midst, He says: "I will

declare Thy name unto My brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto Thee." (Heb. ii. 12.) He surely has joy; may we be found in accord with our heavenly Guide! He will conduct our praises well, and in a way pleasing to the Father. The ear of the Father will be attentive when He hears the voice that directs us. How, then, will that voice direct us? Certainly never to self-occupation, but unquestionably to that which God Himself has found in Christ. So in all the succeeding verses in our chapter in Numbers Christ is prefigured—if as a lamb—then we are occupied rather with His death; and how perfect and profound the experience of what is suitable to God must His be who leads our praises! He who in the work of redemption has answered in every way to the mind of God. But with the lamb there was the offering of flour mingled with oil, which represents the humanity of Christ—His grace and His perfection as a living man; all His life and His nature were perfect and acceptable to God, a sacrifice of sweet savour. How much we have to say to God our Father when we contemplate Christ as man in this world, whose will was to do that of His Father, and whose devotedness to the glory of His Father spread a sweet savour on all that He did. All His acts were fragrant with this perfume. There was, in addition to all this, the wine, which we know to be the figure of joy. The Father seeketh worshippers who worship Him in spirit and in

truth, and nothing so rejoices His heart as to see those whom He has sought speaking to Him of The One in whom He has found His delight—this is worship. These are a few imperfect thoughts on this precious subject, and we may well say: "Who is sufficient for these things?" "But our sufficiency is of God," for we have received the Spirit who is in us a fountain springing up into everlasting life.

I add a word as to "fountain," as scripture is exact in the use of terms. We know that water in a fountain will rise to the height of its source, and it is precisely so with worship; its source is in God and it rises to God: "All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee." (1 Chron. xxix. 14.) But when the Lord speaks of ministry He uses the word "river," for the source is always in God, but in order that it may be a blessing everywhere in its course, and that is what we should be wherever we go.



If I get hold of the path, the spirit, the mind of Jesus, nothing would be more hateful to me than anything of self. You never find an act of self in Christ. Not merely was there no selfishness, but there was no self in Him. He has given us the immense privilege of always going down to serve others as He did.

OCCUPATION WITH SELF.

If I am occupied with myself, it must be either with my badness or my goodness. The more conscientious I am, the more I am occupied with my badness, and in a peculiar and fatal way; it is more engrossing than occupation with my goodness. There is at all times very little in this, but in my badness there are the windings, the twistings, the accountings for this thing, the vexation at the other, the way I was tempted, how I yielded, the shame, the contrition, the purpose to amend; each doing its part like a professed company of *dramatis personæ*, and thus I am engrossed with self, and my conscience cannot reprove me for it, for it is avowedly to condemn myself. But it being an engrossment of the most exhausting nature to both heart and mind, warns us sedulously to avoid it. One looks at and pores over one's prostrate self, horror-stricken, and yet provoked the more to look by that which deepens the pain. What is the good, what is the gain, from this engagement? None whatever. It engrosses and occupies the mind exclusively with visions of what *de facto* constitute self, an absorbing object by which the heart is corroded, and the mind wasted.

It is simply evil which is before you, it is yourself placed before your own tribunal, and there is prosecution and defence, and though always the verdict is against you, you still like to linger there, as I have said.

If I see myself as Christ sees me, I am made to feel that whatever is seen is necessarily excluded if not of Him, because *He is light*, not law, which exacts from me ; the good of light is to expose things as they are, and hence a very different action goes on when I see my self in the light ; I am then sensible of the high and blessed deliverance vouchsafed to me ; Christ is made more precious than ever to me ; my heart turns to Him, rests in Him, dwells on Him more fixedly than ever, because I see what I am, and it is by Him who exposes me that I know that I am set *free* from everything exposed. As I feel the smallest atom in my eye, so do I feel my least evils before Him, but He shows me where it is, and seeing it—it is gone—it is refused, and condemned, and I am liberated, and I rejoice in Him ; I know better than ever the righteousness of God to forgive and cleanse me.

In the other case, it was seeing, exploring, and deepening one's mind in all the tortuous workings of oneself, seeking exculpation, but only partially or occasionally finding any, in order to keep up the detention with self.

When I see with the Lord I see without any questioning, and am at the same time relieved by Him, and He, therefore, engages my heart more deeply than ever. My own badness even fades in the distance, and I delight to dwell on, and abide with Him, whom, as I follow, is to me the Light of Life.

MEDITATIONS ON THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

(Continued from page 80.)

(Chapters iii., xii.)

Revivals.

Othniel.

(Ch. iii. 5-11.)

It is most important to understand, as we have seen, that the church having been unfaithful to the call of God, restoration collectively is no longer possible. Christians are sometimes misled, as their thoughts by these very revivals effected by God, especially if they are themselves identified with one of these partial restorations wrought by the Spirit of God. Limited views, perhaps a narrow heart accustomed only to think of and love that portion of the church which more immediately concerns ourselves—a sectarian spirit which leads us to designate as church, the systems which man has substituted for the building of God—such are some of the causes which hinder us from forming a correct estimate of the true state of the assembly in this world. Now it is an indisputable fact for every Christian, in the habit of depending on the Word of God, that the present days are evil, that the mystery of iniquity already works, for there are already many antichrists, and everything ripening for the final apostasy. But another fact quite as positive is, that God is faithful and will never leave Himself without testimony.

He can even make use of the evil as in Ch. ii. to dispense fresh blessings to His people.

In the same way in Judges the deserved oppression of the enemy is used by God to bring about revivals in Israel. "They cried unto the Lord" is invariably the word that ushers them in. Christendom in the present day discusses what means should be used to inaugurate revivals. "*There is but one*;" such a sense of the low condition of the world, of the sinner or of the church, as shall lead the exercised soul to turn to God. "They cried unto the Lord." Then He sent deliverers to them. We shall see these revivals in their various phases from Chap. iii. to Chap. xvi. of this book.

Let us begin by a general observation. When things are morally in a low state, God uses instruments which in themselves are imperfect and bear the stamp of weakness,—Othniel sprang from a younger branch of the family; he was "the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother." Ehud was weak through his infirmity, Shamgar through his weapon, Deborah from her sex, Barak by his natural character, Gideon on account of his relations, Jephthah by his birth. Other judges are mentioned who are rich, influential, or prosperous (x. 1-4; xii. 8-15), and God uses them no doubt, but more to maintain results already obtained than as deliverers. We are no longer in the days of Joshua, or of the Apostles, when a power was developed in man, which hindered the weakness of the vessel from appearing, and yet the very infir-

mity of these witnesses (characteristic of the period we are in) glorified the power of Him who could use them.

We have already spoken of Othniel in his private, domestic life (Ch. i.). God had thus fitted him to be the first judge in Israel. Having fought to win a wife, he became the possessor of his own personal inheritance and of springs to water it. God now uses him to fight for others, and it is ever thus. Before the Christian can be publicly used of God, he must individually have made progress in the knowledge of the Lord, and in the power of his privileges. Before taking up public service, the Christian should have made progress in his own soul in the knowledge of the Lord and of the character of the calling; the absence of these generally accounts for our service being so contracted, our hearts are so little occupied with heavenly things. The moral wealth which Othniel had acquired for himself was soon evident in his walk. In the short compass of verses 10 and 11, six things are mentioned of him: first, "the Spirit of the Lord," the power of God to deliver Israel "came upon him;" secondly, "he judged Israel," he was entrusted with government; thirdly, he "went out to war," here we have conflict; fourthly, "the Lord delivered Chushan-rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia, into his hand," this is victory; fifthly, "his hand prevailed against Chushan-rishathaim," the enemy is finally subjugated; sixthly, "the land had rest forty

years." Israel quietly enjoys the fruits of Othniel's victory,—God's end is achieved; this man who belonged only indirectly to the lineage of the noble Caleb, was fitted beforehand for this service, and when put to the proof, showed himself to be suitable material in the hands of the divine workman.

Let us ask God to raise up Othniels in the present day; yea, rather let us be Othniels ourselves by true consecration of heart to the Lord, by an increasing desire to appropriate and realize these heavenly things, and we shall be instruments well-fitted for the Master and *prepared* unto every good work.

(To be continued, D.V.)

THE NAIL.

There is one Nail fastened in a sure place, and there the flagons hang, and the cups too. "Oh," says one of the little cups, "I am so little and so black, suppose I should drop." The flagon says, "I am so heavy, so weighty, suppose I should drop." One cup says, "Oh, if I felt like that golden cup, I should never fear falling." And the gold cup answers, "It is not my being a gold cup keeps me, but it is *all by the Nail!* If the Nail comes down, we all go! gold cup or pewter cup; but so long as the Nail remains the cups all hang safely." (See Isaiah xxii. 23, 24.)