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"HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD."

A sermon preached in St. Mary's Wesleyan Chapel, Truro, on Sunday Morning, December 15, 1872, by Rev. Frank Mason.

"In that day there shall be upon the bells of the horse, Holiness unto the Lord, and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the footstools upon the altar."

This chapter contains one of the most striking prophecies in the Old Testament. First there is a description given of a terrible conflict which is to take place in and around Jerusalem, when "the day of the Lord cometh" (v. 1-2). Suddenly Jehovah interposes on behalf of the oppressed people; his feet stand upon the mount of Olives, which cleaves under beneath his tread; his servants shall escape, and the warlike persecuting nations be overthrown, when the Lord God shall appear and all the nations shall be gathered to him. He shall then be lighted up with an anodyne day, living waters shall issue from Jerusalem, Jehovah shall be King over all the earth, and his unity and supremacy universally recognized (v. 3-13). The city itself is to be exalted, and become what it never was permanently before, a safe habitation, while the surrounding country is to have all its irregularities of surface removed, and be levelled into a plain (v. 14-17). Judgment is denounced against the adversaries, the remnants of the nations will be brought into subjection, and the annual appearance before their Lord as the feast of tabernacles will form the condition upon which the Divine blessing—here spoken of as rain—will be granted to them (v. 18-19). And then shall the result be brought about which is described in the text, and Jerusalem expanded in the vast following of all things and all people shall be holy to the Lord.

Much diversity has prevailed in the interpretation of these prophetic utterances, and it would be presumptuous dogmatism to pronounce any particular view as the only and all-sufficient one. There is the literal interpretation—that which anticipates the return of the Jewish race to their own land; the fighting of a great battle around Zion; the appearance of hostile nations by the visible appearance of the Lord; the conversion of the Jews, and through them of the Gentiles; then a glorious period of Divine rule and universal happiness. While not free from difficulties, this view seems to meet the requirements of many scriptural passages, which are hard to explain on any other theory. There is also the spiritual interpretation, that which regards Jerusalem and its people as figurative of the Church and its members. According to this view, the conflict described in this chapter is already going on, the powers of evil are united together in fierce hostility against the kingdom of God, and must be overthrown; and when their overthrow is accomplished, the Messiah shall reign over a converted world—not as a visible, yet as a real and universal Sovereign.

We should not like to assert that either of these two great systems of interpretation are infallibly and in all points true; that they rest upon a substantial basis of truth we have no doubt whatever. It is possible that the difference between them may not be so essential as many suppose. They have certainly both existed in the Church from early times. Perhaps at some future day a man of might and wisdom may arise, who will be able to reconcile differences, and show substantial agreement upon those concurrent streams of Christian opinion, or what is more likely, their essential truth, or their respective imperfections may not be fully seen till the glorious event foretold in Scripture burst upon the world. On fundamental points Christians are already converted, and that "holiness of the Gentiles" will come in. We believe that every nation and government that exalteth itself against God, shall perish. We believe that the divine dominion shall be established universally, and that Christ shall reign, "King of kings and Lord of lords." Beyond this millennial period lies on the sacred page a vision of dark apostasy, when Satan shall be allowed to tempt and deceive mankind, many of whom will yield to his delusions. Then shall the end come. Clad in clouds of heaven, the Son of Man will appear to avenge himself upon his foes; heaven and earth will pass away in flames of fire; the "great white throne" will be opened, and from it judgment pronounced upon the doings of all mankind.

United in the belief that these awful yet glorious truths, and knowing that "all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" Our text speaks of what will transpire "in that day." This in its full realization is the millennial day, when the Redeemer's reign shall be universally established. But are we to wait for that future day before we seek to enjoy ourselves in the blissfulness described? Is it the Christian's privilege always to have a millennium, as it were, in his own soul. The reign of Christ is set up within him; Christ is in his heart, "the hope of glory;" He has become the "temple of indwelling God." If we do not misunderstand the passage, it teaches that under the Gospel dispensation, all things are made holy, all things consecrated to the service of God. The motto set before us is: "Holiness to the Lord." The distinction between things clean and unclean is to vanish, "the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the footstools upon the altar." Under the law the high priest's mitre—his holy crown of pure gold—bore a sapphire inscription, to indicate the sacredness of his office, and the main object of ceremonial observances; but now all things, even the most unclean, are to be devoted to sacred uses. In so far as this fundamental principle of Christianity is recognized, shall we be prepared to fulfil our heavenly Father's purpose, and to anticipate the latter-day glory. And when all Christians everywhere rise to the retention of their privilege, and the main object of ceremonial observances, to the universal diffusion of the Gospel, the conversion of the world, and the final consummation of the divine purposes towards mankind.

Our text, taken in its general sense, implies two principles: the consecration of all things to the service of the Lord, and the equality of all things in the service of the Lord.

1. The first principle implied is, THE CONSECRATION OF ALL THINGS TO THE SERVICE OF THE LORD. Even the bells of the horses are to bear the inscription, as the mitre of the high priest did, "Holiness to the Lord." The marginal rendering, "bridles," instead of "bells," is incorrect; the textual rendering is the right one. Horses were ornamental collars, to which bells were attached underneath, as a part of oriental display. Nothing is here said as to the practice of keeping horses. Though not absolutely forbidden under the law to the Israelites, it was restricted, as being likely, if largely indulged in, to lead them away from the quiet and peaceful pursuits which were best adapted to their position as the chosen people of Jehovah. In later ages the Hebrew princes multiplied these animals, but not to the advantage of the nation. Why is a reference made to horses in this passage? An answer may be obtained; perhaps, if we consider the uses to which they were anciently applied. They were kept partly for display, and mainly for war. The reign of the Messiah is a peaceful one, a spiritual one. It is not characterized by earthly conquests, by exhibitions of material splendor. Horses and their trappings shall no longer be devoted to purposes of war, shall cease to minister to human pride; even these, unlike as they may seem, belong to Jehovah. The great principle underlying this prophetic language is, Whatever we have is God's, and must be consecrated to his service.

1. Property and material possessions ought to be holy to the Lord. These may descend to us from others, or may be acquired by industry, carefulness and perseverance. But in no case are they absolutely ours. We should use them as servants of God, not abuse them as if we were independent deities. "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them." They are very uncertain in their stay; they will not make you happy; and they are not yours. Write upon your houses and lands, your gold and silver, your horses and cattle, your woods and vineyards, "Holiness to the Lord." This will keep your heart from being carried away with false notions of dignity and superiority, and your heart from trusting in uncertain riches. This rule is not for the rich only. There are duties for other men besides the wealthy and high-born. A man who has but a single acre may be as much an idolater as one who has a million. His idol may not be so big but his worship of it is as real and devoted. If the rich must write "Holiness to the Lord," upon their mansions and splendours, their gold ornaments and diamonds and money chests, the poor must do it upon their cottage walls and mean furniture, upon their penes and fardings. We do not denounce wealth, we do not praise poverty; in either it is our duty to glorify God.

2. Business employments and gains should be regarded as holy to the Lord. Concerning the city of Tyre it is said that after her restoration, "let merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord." This view is very different from the one commonly held. Trade, commerce, labour, gain, capital, are they not matters belonging solely to the domain of political economy? What have they to do with religion in its principles or claims? Or are two simple rules of action may be laid down bearing upon this aspect of the subject. (1) If all we do should have reference to God, it is plain that any business or profession in which we cannot serve Him, should not be followed. There are some pursuits, occupations, employments, which cannot be reckoned holy to the Lord, any more than you can call darkness day or evil good. A Christian will not knowingly enter into them; or if engaged in them before-hand, when he becomes a Christian he will get out of them as quickly as possible. There are many things the lawfulness of which is doubtful; we may not be able to express the command against them, but yet they cannot be reconciled with the general spirit and teaching of the Gospel. In such cases it is best not to allow ourselves the greatest, but the least latitude—not to err, if we do err, on the side of laxity, but of stringency. Whatever occupation is incompatible not merely with the profession, but also with the possession of Christianity, ought to be relinquished. It is often said, "A man must do as his neighbors do." He cannot be always strictly honest and truthful if he is to prosper. That is, he must lie a little, and cheat a little, in order to advance his supposed worldly interest. Such notions are an impeachment of Providence, and ought never to influence a Christian mind. "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shall thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be blessed." (2) In all our employments, let us be guided by the inspiring principle. Much is said in this day about capital and labour, the rights of the workman and the rights of the employer. You cannot settle all such questions and satisfactorily adjust all such relations by mere political economy. Christianity alone can fully work out this end, and its principles of justice, of benevolence, of brotherly kindness were universally acted upon, all these difficulties would speedily find an adequate solution. (3) The grand point is, whatever we do must be done unto the Lord; whatever we gain must be consecrated to the Lord. Write upon your journal and ledger, your bill-book and cash-book, "Holiness to the Lord." On the Monday morning, as you enter upon business, let this be your motto, and on the Sunday evening, I hope no one here leaves his desk until the Sunday—write the same inscription upon all the doings of the week, and see that nothing has intervened contrary to Scriptural requirement. Do the same thing every day. You are tempted, perhaps, to go into some new enterprise, some promising speculation. Can you write on it, "Holiness to the Lord?" Any undertaking on which you cannot sincerely inscribe this motto is not suited to a Christian. Such notions may seem antiquated and puritanical to some; I do not see how contrary sentiments can be reconciled with Gospel precepts. What a different state of things would speedily ensue if all commercial and trading transactions religious principles were made the basis of procedure! We should not then hear of adulterations, of deceitful enterprises, of false representations, of gold and diamond hoaxes, of business shams and frauds, of reckless trading on other people's

capital, of insouciances that improve the position of the insolvent. Mere commercial extension and development of trade are not to be looked upon as an unmitigated good. It is only when they rest upon a basis of Christian morality that they can be depended on for permanent and regarded as beneficial to mankind.

3. All the conveniences and so-called luxuries of life should be reckoned holy to the Lord. By this we do not, of course, mean luxuries in a bad sense, but in the better sense of the term—that which we have over and above what suffices for the ordinary needs of human life. I am aware that what may be, in some cases, necessary to one are luxuries to another, but the general meaning of the word will suffice for our purpose, without notions of explanation. Most people have what may be called luxuries—things not indispensable to human life. Our manners have greatly changed from those of our forefathers, in some respects for the better, in others perhaps for the worse. It would be difficult, probably impossible, to return, to the simplicity of former times; we may set even in many respects be desirable. But greater refinement exposes us to greater perils. It is surely not difficult to learn the lesson of our text. You have a taste for fine houses, beautiful gardens, elegant furniture. Such things are not forbidden, but you must keep this motto in mind. Or you may have a strong predilection for books, paintings, statuary. Well, I cannot believe that our noble and sublime religion was ever intended to keep down the higher faculties of our nature, and reduce us to barbarism; it has always exerted a contrary influence. But, in your use of such things, remember they are the Lord's, and should be consecrated to his service. If your position and means warrant it, have them; but if you find that they wear your soul from God, have them not, or let them become a snare and a curse. And let us never forget the uncertainty of the tenure by which earthly things are held. "The fashion of this world passeth away." For a moment let us turn to another class of luxuries. Few are there in the only mode of display and ostentation. Pride in this day, as in the time of the ancient philosopher, may be seen through holes and shabbiness, as well as through gold and purple and fine lines; though it must be confessed that it does not do this so often. Few will deny that one of the dangers of modern society lies in the direction of excessive adornment of the person, wearing finery instead of becoming attire. You cannot prescribe one style for all; that the tendency of the age is to excess cannot, however, be seriously denied. Ought not Christians to be an example? Our next gives us a grand principle and conduct which will guide us in our actions. Write on your pocket, your bonnet, your gold chain, if you must have one, "Holiness to the Lord."

Look at another aspect of this wide question. St. Paul tells us that whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we must do it to the glory of God. We are made with bodily appetites and necessities, but eating and drinking which are the means, not the end, of life. Must we not confess that luxury in this direction has enormously increased of late years? That a fearful amount of extravagance and waste is going on from year to year—damaging to the individual concerned, and hurtful to society at large? Nor is this state of things confined to one class of the population; many look with astonishment upon the high living of the rich, who yet spend more in proportion to their incomes—in beer and tobacco, for instance—than the wealthiest do in their costly luxuries. Let all we eat and drink be holy to the Lord. Do we not mean that it shall be so when we ask God's blessing at our meals from day to day? What the form we use, a momentary hypocrisy if you will, but if the form itself be forgotten as soon as said?

4. Finally let all our pursuits and pleasures be consecrated to Jehovah. All pleasures are not forbidden, but only sinful pleasures. There are many pursuits and occupations not directly religious, yet which are to be connected with religion, and consecrated to religious ends. Reading, music, travelling, visiting, and other similar employments are to be included in this general category. The Gospel does not teach us that nothing of this kind shall be done; it does teach us that our practices must be kept within Christian limits. Some of the "Rules of the Methodist Societies" have partly gone out of fashion. They forbid "the taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus; singing those songs, and reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God." Observe: it is not forbidden to take diversion, to sing, to read; but only to do so in a way incompatible with the Christian character. Such general rules are easy to understand. Form your own special rules if you choose, but mind they do not violate the great leading principles of action. Perhaps some may say: "These matters seem so difficult to understand, there are so many restrictions, we cannot ascertain our real duty." Then it is time you went to school to learn. Are you willing to be taught? Will you submit to the Great Teacher? If so, you will find full instruction, for He has said: "Learn of Me." Others may deem that such representations make religion a very gloomy and unattractive thing. Not if rightly understood. The highest views of life do not unfit us for the enjoyment of life. Lefty conceptions of God, of eternity, of our destiny, of our duty, will enable us to take just as much advantage from earthly things as they were intended to afford; and will teach us to look beyond this transitory life, to the abiding realities of the future life.

II. The second principle implied in the text is, THE EQUALITY OF ALL THINGS IN THE SERVICE OF THE LORD. "The pots in the Lord's house shall be like the footstools upon the altar." That is, the commonest vessels of the sanctuary shall be as those that were employed in the most solemn sacrifices. A deep saying; what does it mean? We understand the expression to mean, that there is to be no difference in point of purity or consecration in anything we have to do. The law made such distinctions; some things were more sacred than others. Now all things are alike sacred. Not all alike in usefulness,

but alike holy, alike devoted to God. Heaven philosophy never could attain to this elevation of sentiment. It presented a low view of earthly things in general; it debased part of man's nature by treating the body not only as inferior to the soul, but also as irreconcilably opposed to the soul, and incapable of consecration to high religious purposes. The Gospel teaches us that we must be fully devoted to the Lord, wholly sanctified in spirit, soul, and body. Nor can we mark of certain possessions or classes of objects, and say, these are for Jehovah, and the rest, as being of interior worth, can be withheld from his service. By the manifestation of Christ, all things are intended to be sanctified to God.

2. Another, and perhaps even greater, lesson is taught in this passage of ancient prophecy. As all things are to be equal to the Lord, so are all persons. "There shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts." Two theories are in vogue at the present day, both hurtful to true Christian progress. One may be called the sacerdotal theory. Under the legal dispensation there were sacred persons, men specially set apart to the priestly office, and appointed to functions forbidden to all others. Stronians attempts are being made in some quarters to revive this sacerdotal, Levitical idea, which are like endeavours to put life into a dead tree, or to clothe a skeleton with flesh and animate it with new vitality. No such sacerdotal distinctions remain under the Gospel. "We have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God;" and all believers "are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." And there is another theory, which may be termed the popular theory. Most Christians believe there is equality in rank; many try to make out a difference in duty. A minister, a deacon, must be a pattern of all righteousness; if the people do not follow him, they are worthy of praise; if not, they are execrable. But you cannot make two codes of morality, one for the officers-bearers, another for the members of the Church. In the true sense there are no private members. If you belong to the Church, you hold office under Christ; you are a servant, a minister of his. I do not deny that a preacher, a leader, is to be an example. Paul said he was. "What is an example? 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The Family

CHRIST FOR ME.

No Christ for me! the atheist said, And turned in scorn away...

No Christ for me! from lips profane, Rose on the Sabbath air...

No Christ for me! through life he goes With trust and filial fear...

No Christ for me! The Saviour died To save my soul from death...

SUPERSTITION.

That looks like a very long word for the Little Folks' column...

Well, when he told me this, my heart almost stood still for a moment...

Well, I had found out that it was something that could move, as after I went again...

When I looked at her I saw she looked very sober and sad to see...

hand died because he looked into the grave of his own dear pastor...

I was speaking of these things a day or two ago, to a very dear friend...

Such notions are all silly nonsense. God is a God of Providence...

On the golden treasure nature showers down On those loosed to wear the crown...

By ought if he inquired, brusquely. 'We teach boys to be good...

'I purchased nine cent's worth of gingerbread as red as his soft luxuriant hair...

Our red-haired friend was highly pleased with his treatment...

When a company of the boys was taken from the city to the West...

Nothing costs so little and goes so far as good manners. 'Manners are matter'...

be respected and, if aged, or in positions of conspicuous honor...

Good manners, when genuine, rest, for their basis, on two fundamental principles...

There are different kinds and grades of good manners, from those which are simply good...

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There are different kinds and grades of good manners, from those which are simply good...

There are different kinds and grades of good manners, from those which are simply good...



Will Cleanse your Clothes without Rubbing.

EVERY ONE SOLD IS FULLY WARRANTED. NO FLUIDS OR EXTRA SOAP USED.

It Consumes less Soap, less Time, and less Fuel than the usual method.

It Requires no Attention while the Process of Cleansing goes on.

IT WILL DO THE WASHING OF THE FAMILY WHILE YOU ARE EATING BREAKFAST AND DOING UP DISHES.

STEAM has long been known as the most powerful agent in removing dirt, grease, and stains from clothing...

IF IT IS TRULY A LABOR AND CLOTHES-SAVING INVENTION.

READ THE FOLLOWING CIRCULAR AND TESTIMONIALS.

I respectfully ask you to read this circular carefully, and candidly consider what I now propose to you as a matter of business...

Many of my patrons have requested me to suggest to them the best method of selling the Woman's Friend...

On the receipt of five dollars, Canada currency, I will ship you a complete Washer, as a sample, together with the complete book of instructions...

DIRECTIONS.

1. Soak the clothes overnight in warm water in the usual manner. 2. Put in the bottom of the WASHER a quarter bar of good soap...

EXTRACTS FROM A FEW LETTERS.

Our readers will be grateful for the room given to the testimonial of the Hon. J. C. Tilton...

Very respectfully, J. C. TILTON. Dear Sir: Having used your Steam Washer for over four months...

Life of Man Bitters!

FROM THE ROOTS AND PLANTS OF NOVA SCOTIA CURB

Dropsy in its worst form; Liver Complaint, Jaundice, Swelling of the Limbs and Feet...

Invigorating Syrup.

WHICH REGULATES THE BOWELS AND PURIFIES THE BLOOD.

The following certificates describe a few of the astonishing cures which have been made by the use of these remedies—

Mrs. Eliza Rhyndal, of Annapolis, in the Province of Nova Scotia, met with a fatal attack...

RESTORE YOUR SIGHT.

Parties ordering either of the above remedies, will address

CALEB GATES & CO. MIDDLETON, ANAPOLIS CO.

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All diseases of the Eye successfully treated by Ball's New Patent Ivory Eye Cups.

Read for yourself and restore your sight. Spectacles and surgical operations rendered useless...

Patent Improved Ivory Eye Cups.

Many of our most eminent physicians, oculists and surgeons have had their eyes permanently restored for life...

2309 Certificates of Cure.

From honest Farmers, Mechanics and Merchants, some of them the most eminent leading professional and business men...

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All diseases of the Eye successfully treated by Ball's New Patent Ivory Eye Cups.

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