

## THE "MAN OF SORROWS."

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O ever homeless Stranger !  
Thus dearest Friend to me ;  
An outcast in a manger,  
That Thou might'st with us be !

How rightly rose the praises  
Of heaven, that wondrous night,  
When shepherds hid their faces  
In brightest angel-light !

More just those acclamations,  
Than when the glorious band  
Chanted earth's deep foundations,  
Just laid by God's right hand.

Come now, and view that manger,  
The Lord of Glory see,  
A houseless, homeless, Stranger,  
In this poor world, for thee,—

" *To God, in th' highest, glory,  
And peace on earth,*" to find ;  
And learn that wondrous story,  
" *Good pleasure in mankind.*"

( How bless'd those heavenly spirits  
Who joy increasing find,  
That, spite of our demerits,  
God's pleasure 's in *mankind* ;

And chant the highest glory  
Of Him they praise above,  
In telling out the story,  
Of God come down in love !)

Oh, strange yet fit beginning,  
Of all that life of woe,  
In which Thy grace was winning  
Poor man his God to know !

Bless'd Babe ! who lowly liest  
 In manger-cradle there ;  
 Descended from the highest,  
 Our sorrows all to share.

Oh, suited now in nature  
 For Love's Divinest ways,  
 To make the fallen creature  
 The vessel of Thy praise !

O Love ! all thought surpassing !  
 That Thou should'st with us be :  
 Nor yet in triumph passing,  
 But—human infancy !

We cling to Thee in weakness,  
 The manger and the cross ;  
 We gaze upon Thy meekness,  
 Through suffering, pain and loss ;

There see the Godhead glory  
 Shine through that human veil ;  
 And willing, hear the story  
 Of love that's come to heal !

My soul in secret follows  
 The footsteps of His love ;  
 I trace the Man of sorrows,  
 His boundless grace to prove.

A child in growth and stature,  
 Yet full of wisdom rare ;  
 Sonship in conscious nature,  
 His words and ways declare.

Yet still, in meek submission,  
 His patient path He trod,  
 To wait His heavenly mission,  
 Unknown to all but God,

But who, Thy path of service,  
 Thy steps removed from ill,  
 Thy patient love to serve us,  
 With human tongue can tell?

Midst sin, and all corruption,  
 Where hatred did abound,  
 Thy path of true perfection  
 Was light on all around.

In scorn, neglect, reviling,  
 Thy patient grace stood fast,  
 Man's malice unavailing  
 To move Thy heart to haste.

O'er all, Thy perfect goodness  
 Rose blessedly Divine ;  
 Poor hearts oppressed with sadness,  
 Found ever rest in Thine !

The strong man in his armour  
 Thou mettest in Thy grace ;  
 Did'st spoil the mighty charmer  
 Of our unhappy race.

The chains of man, his victim,  
 Were loosened by Thy Hand,  
 No evils that afflict him  
 Before Thy power could stand.

Disease, and death, and demon,  
 All fled, before Thy word,  
 As darkness, the dominion  
 Of day's returning lord !

The love that bore our burden  
 On the accursèd tree,  
 Would give the heart its pardon,  
 And set the sinner free.

Love, that made Thee a mourner  
 In this sad world of woe,  
 Made wretched man a scorner  
 Of grace, that brought Thee low ;

Still in Thee, love's sweet savour  
 Shone forth in every deed,  
 And showed God's loving favour  
 To every soul in need.

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I pause :—for, in Thy vision,  
 The day is hastening now,  
 When, for our lost condition,  
 Thy holy head shall bow ;

When, deep to deep still calling,  
 The waters reach Thy soul,  
 And, death and wrath appalling,  
 Their waves shall o'er Thee roll.

O day of mightiest sorrow,  
 Day of unfathomed grief !  
 When Thou should'st taste the horror  
 Of wrath, without relief :

O day of man's dishonour !  
 When, for Thy love supreme,  
 He sought to mar Thine honour,  
 Thy glory turn to shame :

O day of our confusion !  
 When Satan's darkness lay,  
 In hatred, and delusion,  
 On ruined nature's way.

Thou soughtest for compassion,  
 Some heart Thy grief to know,  
 To watch Thine hour of passion,  
 For comforters in woe.

No eye was found to pity,  
 No heart to bear Thy woe :  
 But shame, and scorn, and spitting ;  
 None cared Thy Name to know.

The pride of careless greatness  
 Could wash its hands of Thee :  
 Priests, that should plead for weakness,  
 Must Thine accusers be !

Mán's boasting love disowns Thee ;  
 Thine own Thy danger flee ;  
 A Judas only owns Thee,  
 That Thou may'st captive be.

O man ! how hast thou provèd  
 What in thy heart is found ;  
 By grace Divine unmovèd ,  
 By self in fetters bound !

Yet, with all grief acquainted,  
 The Man of sorrows view  
 Unmoved, by ill untainted,  
 The path of grace pursue !

In death, obedience yielding  
 To God His Father's will,  
 Love still its power is weilding  
 To meet all human ill.

On him who had disowned Thee  
 Thine eye could look in love,  
 'Midst threats and taunts around Thee,  
 To tears of grace to move !

What words of love and mercy  
 Flow from those lips of grace,  
 For followers that desert Thee,  
 For sinners in disgrace !

The robber learned, beside Thee  
 Upon the cross of shame,  
 While taunts and jeers deride Thee,  
 The savour of Thy name.

Then, finished all, in meekness  
 Thou to Thy Father's hand  
 (Perfect Thy strength in weakness),  
 Thy spirit dost commend.

O Lord! Thy wondrous story  
 My inmost soul doth move;  
 I ponder o'er Thy glory,  
 Thy lonely path of love.

But, O Divine Sojourner  
 'Midst man's unfathomed ill,  
 Love, that made Thee a mourner,  
 It is not man's to tell!

We worship, when we see Thee  
 In all Thy sorrowing path;  
 We long soon to be with Thee,  
 Who bore for us the wrath!

Come then, expected Saviour,  
 Thou Man of Sorrows, come!  
 Almighty, blest Deliverer!  
 And take us to Thee—home.



## THE MAN CHRIST JESUS.

(PSALM XVI.)

What we find written in the Psalms is primarily connected with the Jews, or the Lord Jesus Himself, and particularly as Messiah. They have a special reference to the godly remnant in the latter

day. Many of their expressions wholly belong to the Jews, and cannot be used by the church. Hence, the true solution of those passages which have been such a terrible stumbling to Christians not seeing it. The saints of the present dispensation cannot rightly be looking for the destruction of their enemies, as a way of escape from their sorrows. But in the time of trouble, such as never has been, that is to come, it will be quite proper for the suffering Jews to look for judgments as a way of deliverance. They are God's promises, and what their hope rests upon. But the church looks to be caught up, and escape from sorrow, by being with the Lord in the heavens, whilst it is quite true that she has His sympathy in her sorrow down here. But what the Psalms are chiefly occupied with is the suffering of the soul, the sorrows of the godly remnant of the Jews, and God coming in judgment, as their deliverer, by the execution of vengeance on all their foes. Christ is viewed there as associated with Israel, and enters into all the sufferings of the holy remnant. Then there are certain Psalms which belong personally to Himself. They shew out the character of the spirit of Christ, as the Gospels shew His walk and work. The Gospels display the One in whom was no selfishness. They tell out the heart that was ready for everybody. No matter how deep His own sorrow, he always cared for others. He could warn Peter in Gethsemane, and comfort the dying thief on the cross. His heart was above circum-

ances, never acting under them, but ever according to God in them. We see that He was always sensible to them, and often get in the Psalms expressions of what His heart felt in them : " I am poured out like water ; " " My bones are out of joint ; " " My heart is like wax." He was the tried man ; and, as man tried, I am called to follow Him. I should forget self and the things belonging to self, in shewing love to others. The true effect of being near Christ puts me into fellowship with Himself about others, instead of being under my own circumstances. How can I be turning my heart to the joys of one, and the sorrows of another, unless I am living close to Christ, and getting my heart filled with Him instead of self ? What we find all through the life of Christ, as shewn out in the Gospels, is the total absence of selfishness, never acting for self in any way whatever. He could rejoice with those who had joy, and grieve with those in sorrow. He could cheer, warn, or rebuke, as need arose. Whatever love dictated, that He did. In Psalm xxii. we see Christ alone, suffering under God, enduring the wrath due to sin, but continuing the righteous man, crying unto God, and justifying Him, even when forsaken by Him ; or if we look at Him, as in Psalm lxix., suffering rather from men, God is still His refuge. His heart goes through all the sorrow sin could bring on one who takes the sinner's place. He passed through the deepest exercises heart could endure, but He brings all to



God. We find the greatest difficulty often in bringing our sorrow to God. How can I do so, the soul of some may be saying, as my sorrow is the fruit of my sin? How can I take it to God? If it was suffering for righteousness' sake, then I would, but I am suffering for my sin; and can I, in the integrity of my heart towards God, take my sorrows to Him, knowing I deserve them? Yes; Christ has been to God about them. This, then, is the ground on which I can go. There has been perfect atonement for all my sins; Christ has been judged for them. Will God judge us both? No; I go to Him on the ground of atonement, and God can afford to meet me in all my sorrow, because Christ's work has been so perfectly done.

In the main, all sorrow is from sin, and all help is grounded upon the atonement. There would be no possibility of my trusting in God, had not all His dealings with sin been put upon another.

God could not be indifferent about sin. Peter knew that, when he said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." The holy character of God has been fully exercised in putting away sin. He hath dealt with Christ about it, according to all that He is. I may have to taste the bitterness of its fruits; God may make me to feel the effects of my sin, because He is not going to judge me for it, that "as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ." I get my conscience perfectly purged, through the blood of Christ shed

in perfect love. The obedience of the One who bore my sins is mine. I am declared righteous through the righteousness of Another. My heart is free : I can deal with God about my sin, because He has dealt with Christ on the cross about it. I can go to Him in all my sorrow on account of it. I can confess my sin : yea, more, I can say, " Search me, O God, and try me . . . . and see if there be any wicked way in me," etc. (Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24.) Through grace I can take the place before God which Christ takes, and the ground for me is the atonement.

We find divine utterance in the Psalms for all our sorrows, and it is blessed to look at them in this way. Christ entered into the full effects of sin, as none other can, in a way we never shall ; and, when He had been at the " horns of the unicorn "—the very transit of death, as it were—and had settled every question with God about sin, He could then say, " I will declare Thy name unto My brethren ; in the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee " (Ps. xxii. 21, 22). We shall never lose Him as our companion : what a comfort ! We shall follow Him to the glory. I am going to be with Him : His presence will be my delight ! What a place the saints are brought to in Christ—all sorrow passed !

We get in Psalm xvi. expressions of the Lord's own proper joy—the joy of Him whom God called His " fellow " (Zech. xiii. 7). Peter on the mount of transfiguration would have put Him on a level

with Moses and Elias : but God said, as it were, No ; He is My fellow, not man's. When the young man in the gospel went to Him, saying, " Good master "—coming to Him as man—He said, " Why callest thou me good ? there is none good but one, that is, God " (Matt. xix.) Goodness was not to be looked for in man, not even in Him if He had been only man. The saints are Christ's constant delight, and the poor sinner who puts his trust in God has the Lord Jesus for his comforter ; and He, having been tempted, knows how to help, as none other can.

In the days of John the Baptist all who repented came to the waters of baptism ; Jesus did the same. He could not repent, but He would not be separated from them, and said, " Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." I will take my place with you, with the saints in the earth.

What abundant consolation faith gives the man who hangs on God ! Christ when down here could say, " I set Jehovah always before me ; " and should not I ? In the details of life, do I not constantly need Him ? How continually I get moved by circumstances ! He alone can stay me. Christ once took the dependent place. He was raised by the power of the Spirit, through God the Father. He could have raised Himself ; death hath no power over Him. The Son was the Father's delight. The Father's heart was bound up in the Son. The Lord Jesus Christ was all the Father's delight.

Christ is in His presence as man and for man, as our forerunner and our way (Heb. vi. 20 ; John xiv. 6). It is so blessed to look at Christ as the way ; it brings Him so near to us. As surely as I have, as a man, partaken of the first Adam's nature, and the consequences of his sin, so have I as a believer a portion in the second Adam. The Lord Jesus Christ is in the presence of God for me. There are truly difficulties down here ; but I shall be with Him where there are joys for evermore. God will be glorified as God, but He will be displayed as man also ; and, as in Christ, we shall share the glory (John xvii. 22-24). How gracious and truly blessed those words, " Let not your heart be troubled : ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions ; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself ; that where I am, there ye may be also " (John xiv. 1-3). He will be with His saints, and His saints with Him. They shall be conformed to His image ; they shall be displayed in His likeness. We shall see Him, and we shall be like Him ; and now, in the measure we are looking at Him, are we transformed into His image.

It is our positive portion, and in communion with Him we share what He is. His delight is with the saints. He entered into their deepest sorrow, and they shall share His joy and glory, as exalted on high.

How am I acting towards Him now? Do I take all my concerns to Him? Do I make Him the uppermost thought in all my need, in every exercise of soul, and also in my seasons of joy? This is the way to learn Him, and to know the love that is in His heart.

There is no condition but what I may have Him for my companion in. "Deep calleth unto deep," He could say. There is not a place faith cannot find Christ in. "Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things" (Eph. iv. 9, 10). But am I going on in the world with Him? Are my joys such as I can share along with Him? Am I walking with Him in my every-day life? If I am in sorrow, how far has He lifted me up? If I am resting on Him, He has lifted me up, and this is my positive privilege. The heart that is cast upon Christ finds constant comfort. The heart that keeps close to Christ gets nothing apart from Him. (See Psalm xxiii.) If I have a question of want, I can say, there is no fear, "The Lord is my Shepherd." Am I saying, I am in green pastures, but they will soon be gone? Nay, He maketh me to "lie down" in them. Then there are "still waters," but may they not be shortly troubled? How is that, when Christ leads me beside them? My heart is sorrowful; I have wandered away from Him. This is sad.

But Christ "restoreth my soul;" and if I have to "walk through the valley of the shadow of death," He will be with me, and will comfort me. Ah! but I am in the land of my enemies. What of that? Christ prepares a table for me in their very presence. "Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

How blessed it is to look at the Lord in this way! He is our present and eternal joy. The time will come when all our sorrow will be over, but our Friend will remain. He is our tried and true Friend. He has entered into the deepest woes of our heart, and will make us the sharers of His joy for ever. Our blessing, our safety, our hope is all grounded on the atonement. Is there a soul reading this who cannot rejoice in Christ, who knows Him not as his portion? Is there one who is saying, My sin is too great to be pardoned? To feel about your sin is right, but to be in despair about it is quite wrong. You are virtually saying, My sin is greater than the grace of God. You will not dare to say so if you are looking at Christ. Is Christ come short? Is grace beneath your need or above it? Christ is the portion of every poor soul who believes on Him. The atoning work is done. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin (1 John i. 7).

**TRUE GREATNESS.**

(LUKE XXII. 14-30.)

I do not know that there is a more touching lesson in any of the words or ways of our Lord Jesus Christ than that which comes before us at the last supper.

First of all His desire is to eat that paschal feast with His disciples. He was the only One who knew what it meant—the One to whom it spoke of such a burden as never was nor could be borne by mere man.

And yet with desire He desired to eat of that passover before He suffered. He knew it was the immediate harbinger of His death upon the cross. Yet there was not one of the disciples that so desired to eat it with Him, as He desired to eat it with them. This is love, and love is self-sacrificing.

It was this cup that He told them to divide among themselves—not that of the Lord's supper. Our Lord Jesus never partook of His own supper. He partook of the paschal supper, but not of His own. For this is for us, being the witness of a redemption which He wrought for us (not for Himself, of course). The paschal supper was for Him as well as for the disciples, and He desired to eat it along with them. On the occasion of the passover, after its cup was passed round, He institutes His own supper; but before that He says He was no longer to drink of the fruit of the vine till the



kingdom of God was come. He had done with the earth and had no fellowship more with men in flesh and blood. He took the supper, to Him not a sign of joy, but of the deepest suffering. The Lord's supper, which speaks to us of perfect peace through His suffering, He needed not : He gave it all to us.

But this very thing forthwith brings out, as grace invariably does, whatever is unjudged in nature. The more love you show, if there is not a heart that answers to it, it is but provoked by it, and takes advantage of it. The very perfection of Christ's love brought out whatever was unjudged in the disciples. As for one of them, there was nothing at all in him but unjudged self, and he betrayed his Master. As for the others, what were they doing? They were striving at that precise moment which of them should be the greatest. That was the question in their minds. Jesus was going to shew that He would become the least and lowest of all, that they might be exalted ; yet this was just the moment in which they had this discussion which should be the chief among them. But our Lord turned it to infinite profit, bringing out for us the character of true greatness. Self is never great, and it has the consciousness of its own littleness. Persons strive to be great, when they have no greatness in reality ; whereas when the soul has found Christ and when Christ is the object of the soul, our satisfaction in His greatness forms our affections. Accordingly, here with the



disciples, self was their object. Thus they were totally inconsistent with what Christ had made them. Had they had Christ, not only as their life before God, but as the object of that life, there would have been, without a thought about it, the real greatness which properly belongs to the child of God.

True greatness at the present time is shewn by being nothing at all. Greatness can go down ; greatness, instead of seeking to be served, serves others : greatness now, in an evil world far from God, shews itself in the resources of grace known in Christ before God, and giving out of that fulness which it possesses in Christ. Everything in the world is founded on the exact opposite ; and the deeper runs the stream of the world, the greater is the desire to be something, and the desire to parade whatever we think we have. This is flesh in its littleness ; and flesh and the world always keep company together. Self likes the world : it holds hard what it has got, and seeks to make a bargain with the world to get more. The knowledge of Christ delivers from all this. But a Christian who does not know that he is a Christian, who does not know that he has got Christ and eternal life in Christ is entirely inconsistent, and all else must be out of course. In order to have practical power, I must not only have the thing, but know that I have it. Supposing a man possesses all the wealth of India and does not know that he has got it, it is practically useless to him.

The consequence is that the man, after the manner of men, is miserable ; he can do nothing, serve nothing, help nothing. The possession of the things of this life never makes a man happy ; but Christ does, and we possess all in Him.

Why was the poor widow who gave the mites the richest of all, as the Lord Jesus marks her out with His eye of love ? She was the only one who had such consciousness of what she hoped for from God, that all that she had in the world was but an offering for the Lord. And we rob ourselves, as well as defraud Him, if we do not exercise this ennobling faith. Conscious of what we possess in Christ, all that we have is at the Lord's disposal. The consciousness of the grace of Christ imprints its own character upon us : instead of seeking, it gives ; and instead of seeking to be served by others, it loves to serve. There is not one of us that is free from this tendency to self, but there is not one that may not have a complete victory over it. Let my heart be only towards Christ and set upon Christ, and it will be impossible for Satan to get me into anything mean or selfish. But let my eye be off Christ, and there is nothing I may not do, nothing too low or too unworthy that Satan may not slip in by.

What is the Bible ? The history of the struggle between God and the devil. This one thing runs from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation. It is not merely a question of man, but of Satan working by man to dishonour God. The

earth was the place where the battle was fought. The first Adam comes, but falls ; and all the history of the Old Testament is the failure of the first Adam, with promises and predictions of the triumph of the Second. Then the New Testament comes ; the battle is over, the triumph is won. We (*i. e.* believers) are put with the Second Adam, and Christ looks that we should be victorious. But we are never victorious except so far as Christ is our object, when He is before our eyes at each moment, in each difficulty or trial that comes before us here below. When are we happy ? When Christ is before our eyes—not when we are looking back to the happiness of yesterday. Satan would have us look back upon past happiness, and perhaps date our blessing upon such or such a day. But it ought not to be so. I am, of course, to have a joyful recollection of all that the Lord shews me, and I shall certainly not forget the first moment of blessing from Him. But how miserable if this only be our comfort and stability now, and our assurance that we shall be with Christ ! Nay ; it is a living Christ that we have—a Christ that died and is alive again, and a Christ that would imprint His own character upon us, making us truly great. It is holding fast what Christ has given us that delivers us from littleness, and holding it fast in Christ Himself.

The Lord grant that, strengthened of His grace, we may be enabled thus to do. Then each word of Christ will have its own power over our souls, will be clothed with His own love ; it will come to us not as some great draught upon us, as if the Lord could be enriched by us, save only in such

honour to Him as really blesses our own souls. It is the consciousness that we have such blessing, such wealth, such dignity in Christ, which gives and keeps us in the feeling that all that is of this world would rather detract from us than add anything to us. It is not only that we have got Christ, but that there is nothing but Christ that is a real honour or power or glory to the saint of God. And the bright day will come when Jesus will tell us what He told the disciples, "Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations." This was after the discussion of who should be the greatest, after He had before Him the treachery of one disciple, and the unworthy vanity of the others; after all that He says, "Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations." But knowing all that they had been in the past, the trial they had been to Himself, their many weaknesses and failures, yet He puts it as an honour to them, "Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations." It was He who had continued with them, who had sustained and kept them in spite of themselves. Yet see how love delights in saying to us, "Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me; that ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom."

The Lord give us then to be stedfast. It is but "a little while." Soon the time of our trials and temptations will close. Soon the time of Christ's dishonour in this world will give place to a throne of glory, and "every eye shall see Him," and every knee bow before Him. May we be faithful to Him for this little while. Bright will be the remembrance of suffering for Him in His presence for ever!