
A table of contents for *The Expository Times* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[Issue]_[1st page of article].pdf

and modern psychology, such are a few of the subjects that lead up to the final chapters, where the whole immense field of comparative religion, as that term is technically used, is traversed, hurriedly yet fully. Naturally the style is curt and compressed. There is not much room for eloquence upon a sign-post. Yet this is no mere jumbled pile of material heaped confusedly together anyhow, but a real book. What strikes one is the wealth of reading and sheer learning that lies behind every page. Try where you will, you will find nothing omitted. Remember some corner of the subject where you have some claim to exact knowledge, and you will light upon a compact paragraph upon it with footnotes added, full and accurate and up to date. Turn the pages, and you come, here on picturesque figures like Marco Polo or Raymond Lull, and there on a table of years showing how from Baur's day to Harnack's the dates of the Gospels have been pressed back and back; here is a fine study of Averroes, and there a passage on the primitive monotheism held by some to have preceded polytheism in China, and so on endlessly. A main impression left upon the mind is the humbling reflexion that there is nothing new under the sun, that our most original thinking is hoary with antiquity, and the novelties that catch men's excited minds are only faint far-blown echoes of what has been often said hundreds, sometimes thousands, of years ago, that the wheel goes round and round.

> I am like a stream that flows
> Full of the cold springs that arose
> In morning lands, in distant hills;
> And down the plain my channel fills
> With meltings of forgotten snows.

Is it all then only a scurrying of white mice in a cage, up and back and round once more, with no real progress or advance, in spite of all the rush and noise and pother? Our author is quite sure it is not so. As yet the study of comparative religion is in its infancy, but it is sufficiently far advanced, he thinks, for one to fashion a method, compounded out of hints from all the schools, which will be really scientific, and the formulating of that is the purpose of his second volume. It is an audacious adventure, but the study ought to prove a fascinating and informing one.

ARTHUR J. GOSSIP.

Aberdeen.

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

Clean.[1]

'Ye shall be clean.'—Ezk 36[25].

THE other day I read a sad thing. You know how beautiful the sea birds are, the gulls, the kittiwakes, the guillemots, and all the rest of them; how they glint and gleam when the sun strikes on them; how easily they wheel and turn and bank and dip and dive and right themselves, far more cleverly than any airman can; how clean they are, and pure and white. God means them to be that, and they keep themselves spotless, can't be happy if they are soiled.

And yet all round the coast of England, east and south and west, they are having a pitiful time, so I am told. Many vessels use oil nowadays, and let the waste and dirty oil out into the sea—a horrid, sticky, smelly, messy mass it is. And it seems that the birds lighting on the water, or darting at a fish, often land in this nastiness and can hardly struggle to shore, for it glues their wings, it mats their feathers, it covers them all over with a horrible greasy dirtiness; and though they work at it continually, preening themselves all day, it won't come off. And the poor birds, meant to be clean, and longing to be clean, but coated with that disgusting foulness, pine and droop and die—thousands and thousands of them, so they say, all round the coast.

Well, you and I are like these birds. We too are meant to be clean. God made us for that. And yet there is a horrid, sticky, greasy nastiness, called sin; and if we get any of that on us, we'll just be miserable; for it won't come off, and it is so messy and foul and horrible. And we can't be really happy unless we are clean.

I know quite well that there is a healthy kind of grubbiness that you like; can't understand why

[1] By the Reverend Arthur J. Gossip.

Mother has a craze for sending you to wash your hands, when they seem to yourself to look quite decent; and why she is so fussy over tide-marks left on your wrists and neck, or up under your hair. When some one calls that you must see, and you are sent for from your games, and scrubbed till your face shines, and have your hair brushed so hard and straight and plastered down that it looks as if it were painted on your head, like a doll's, and get a clean hard collar on, you just hate it, you don't recognize yourself, you seem quite strange and queer. And when you get out again, back to cricket or footer, and your hair is rumpled, and your collar is all crumply, and your face is streaked again—ah! that's better! Yes, I know. And yet—honest injun, isn't it lovely to have a wash after a hard game or a long walk? And you wee ones are never really quite as comfy and cosy—now are you?—as when you are bathed and clean and ready for bed. It's comfy to be clean. Our bodies feel that. And so do our hearts inside. They too know it's comfy to be clean, and horrid to be dirty. You remember the other day you said what wasn't just quite true, and you have been unhappy about it ever since, feel mean and soiled and grubby, wish you weren't, that you could get the dirt away. But it's oily stuff, and it sticks. Or you made rather a fool of yourself when they ran you out. Perhaps you weren't run out, but it was silly to lose your temper, and argue and sulk and get quite hot and angry over it. And now you wish you hadn't, are almost ashamed to meet the other fellows. It's not nice to be dirty, and sin is so very dirty and greasy and unclean. We can never be happy, any more than the poor birds, so long as we are like that.

Well, what are we to do?—we and they? The filthy stuff sticks fast. They preen themselves and work at it all day, but it's no use. And so do we, but we can't get clean either. A man in the Bible, looking at us, feels disgusted at such dirty people, and cries in a shuddering kind of way, 'Wash you, make you clean.' But we can't. Look at these poor birds labouring so hard all day long, yet it's no use. And we've tried too; tried to get rid of that quick temper, of our grabbing, selfish ways, of our funkiness when we are in a hole, and there's likely to be trouble. But we are all coated over with it, and it has sunk right in, and we can't get clean. It's like trying to wash off oil with no soap; it's worse than that, says a man in the Bible, for though you take much soap it will still stick, do what you can. We are like poor Topsy, the wee black lassie, who kept scrubbing at her face, but it would never come white. Another man in the Bible knew that well: pictures us all standing pretty wretchedly in filthy clothes, all mud and dirt. If only we could get them off, and be done with them, and be clean! I remember a man like that at the Front. In an advance he had got into one of these horrid cesspool kind of things they have in French farmyards, right into it, almost to the waist. And there was he all day, wet and smelly, foul, and very much ashamed—much more worried about being so dirty than about all the shells, and longing until he could get a bath. Perhaps you have felt something like that. Perhaps as a wee chap you fell full length in a muddy road on a wet day, and got up a poor, unhappy, little figure, standing so miserable with mud on your clothes, and mud on your face, and mud in your hair, and mud dripping from your fingers—all spread out. It was so wet and uncomfortable. And yet you could do nothing, needed some one to help you, and, of course, Mother came, wiped your face; and that felt better; and rubbed your hands, and that was fine; and scraped your clothes a bit, and by and by, when they were dry, brushed them, and you would never have known at last that you had had a fall. But you needed Mother to help you to get clean. And we need some one to help us too. And we have some one. In the Testament a poor soul with a dreadful foulness came to Jesus, and said, 'Look at me! If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.' And Jesus said, 'I will: be thou clean.' And it came true. And always He was doing that. John tells us that what Christ did for him was that. He washed him—washed him from his sins. He was so sticky and wretched and messy and unhappy, like those miserable birds; he had tried and tried and tried, and couldn't get it off. But Jesus did it for him. And He'll do it for you too.

Think of these birds. If one of them could get rid of the oily nastiness, how happy it would be, clean, free, living its glorious life again up in the sunshine, as God meant that it should do. And wouldn't it be splendid to be done with tempers and sulks, and peevishness and crossness, to be clean and happy as our Father wants us to be? Well, we can, for Christ will help us. There is a lonely grave away up near the Pole, which was at

one time, perhaps still is for all I know, the most northerly grave of which we know. It was a British seaman who died there, one of a Polar expedition, and they buried him yonder far away, with nothing but the great snowfields and unending ice in their pureness round about him, and they set up a little wooden cross, and on it cut this text—'Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.' And if you ask God, He will do it for you too, will make you clean, quite clean.

Are you Infectious?[1]

'It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones. Take heed to yourselves.'—Lk $17^{2.3}$.

The other week a queer thing happened in London that caused quite a big scare for a time. Somebody found a little parcel lying on one of the streets. And when they opened it, they saw it was a lot of small glass tubes, all carefully sealed at the ends; but some of them had got cracked and broken in the fall, and there was oozing out a sticky, messy mass. Well, they took it to the police station, and then things began to happen. For some one was sure that these glass tubes were full of the germs of diseases and illnesses. Oh yes! just as bad as measles and far worse, though you didn't like even that much when you had it—horrible diseases. And here were twenty-one tubes, they said, all full of the beginnings of them, and somebody had spilt them here on the road, and if they hadn't been found in time, anything might have happened, and all London have been in their beds; and whoever had been throwing things like this about the streets (take care there how you handle them or you may get it)—cholera, or plague, or something dreadful. So they said, and there was fuss and talking and excitement till they got them all safely destroyed. And yet, do you know that we are all carrying about with us glass tubes like that, full of really terrible illnesses, and if we aren't very careful we may let them slip and break, and with that the germs will get out, and some one, many people perhaps, may grow badly ill; and all because we were clumsy-fingered or forgetful, and didn't notice we had let them fall. When you had measles (or was it scarlet fever?) you didn't have a happy time. The bed got so hot and crumby and crumply, and you so tired of lying still, of reading, of all your toys, of pretending that the ceiling was a desert island, and the wee bumps in it mountains, and the cracks rivers, and you a shipwrecked sailor on it like Robinson Crusoe, tired of everything and anything. Well, you got measles from some one. He had it, and he passed it on to you. And if you could find him, you would give him a bit of your mind. But he meant no harm; the poor chap didn't know that he was ill when he gave it to you. And you, without meaning it, have likely handed it on to some one else; and when you gave it to that other girl, it was Christmas time, and she lost all the parties and the holiday that had been planned, which was far worse for her than it had been for you. And you did it, not knowing, all because you were infectious. Yes, but we pass on other things as well, worse even than that. We carry about with us glass tubes, and very brittle things they are, easily smashed, and then, oh dear! what have we done? Out fly the germs of ugly horrid things, and everybody round about us seems to take them all at once. There's temper; how easily that glass tube gets cracked! The other day you were playing football, and some one on the other side swerved ever so neatly and got past you and scored right under the posts. And, instead of taking it in good humour, and saying to him, 'Well played! You got me that time, but you won't do it again,' you got cross and lost your head, and started playing roughly, and with that he started too, and soon every one was at it, and the whole game was quite spoiled. All because you let slip that little glass tube and broke it, and out the germs rushed. A boy in a bad temper is dreadfully infectious, and ought to be shut up all by himself, for at least an hour. Or you are a big one at home, don't go to bed with the little ones, but sit up half an hour longer. And because you are big, the wee ones do what you do and think that fine and grown-up. And if you are grabby and selfish and cross, they will be apt to be the very same. If you are always snatching at the best, they will say to themselves they will have to snatch first if they are to have anything; and you will all be snatching, all because you began it, for a selfish person is infectious, and gives selfishness to other people, though he keeps everything else to himself. We must be careful of these glass tubes, you and I, and not leave them lying about to get broken. For look what mischief that can cause! And if you ask, but why ever are there these stupid tubes at all, and

[1] By the Reverend Arthur J. Gossip.

why am I, who can never keep anything (look at my pockets), who am always finding things in the queerest places, and always mislaying my books, and my cap, and my everything, why am I given such a dangerous thing as a temper to keep? Surely they might know I would be screwing off the top to see what's inside; or doing something foolish with it. But it's a very good thing to have these glass tubes full of germs, if they are kept in their right places and used as they should be. For wise men study them, and learn from them how it is folk get ill, and what it is that makes them worse, and how they can help them to get better, and keep them, indeed, from becoming ill at all. And a temper is a fine thing, if we use it properly, and don't let it slip and break. It too will help us to keep from getting ill, and to get better if we do. The Lord Christ was sometimes angry, but only at the proper times and at the proper things. And even selfishness can be very useful, if we use it as we are meant to do, and not in the wrong way we do do. Do to others, says Christ, as you would that they should do to you. Think what you would like done to yourself, and then do that to the new boy at school, or the fellow at the party who seems to be having rather a stale time. Keep it in its tube and use it properly, and it will help. But break and lose it, and there's endless trouble. So we must be upon our guard, says Christ. For it is only when one doesn't know he is infectious, he is likely to give things to some one else. Once he does know, he will surely take care. And now you know you have these brittle tubes to guard, and you will do your best. But indeed they are so dangerous, that I think, perhaps, because we are so stupid and clumsy and so apt to let them slip, we had better do what they did in London, break them all up and be done with them, make a full end of temper and selfishness altogether. Don't you think that's safest, for then we couldn't be infectious and do harm?

The Christian Year.

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT.

The Lamb of God.

'The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.'—Jn 1^{29}.

There had been no prophet in Israel for five long centuries. And now suddenly a voice is heard in the wilderness—the voice of a prophet. It made a great impression upon the people. They were struck first of all by his appearance. But they marvelled still more at the things which the prophet said. They quoted his sharp sayings to the Pharisees, to the Roman soldiers, and to others, with delight. And when he preached, no one could be indifferent to his words. The echo of his words has reached down the long centuries to the present day. It was mighty preaching that stirred the hearts of all men, and every one felt that a new day had come to Israel, that a real preacher of righteousness had been found at last.

Who was he, then, this John the Baptist? He had been born in a godly family. His father was one of the priests, and his mother also belonged to a priestly family. What was it that sent him out into the wilderness?

It was a strange thing; it was the sense of sin that drove him there. Nowadays people do not worry so much about their sins. Every generation has produced a host of writers who try to persuade the world that sin is nothing but a trifle; it may be a kind of immaturity, which will be outgrown in time. Dr. Parker has a sufficient answer. 'It could not have been a trifle,' he says, 'that started the great drops of blood from the body of Jesus Christ in Gethsemane, or that caused Him His exceeding sorrow on the tree. Great natures cannot weep blood except on great occasions. There must have been something terrible about this moral putrescence which is called sin. It was no speck on the surface; it was poison in the blood.'

It was the sense of sin that drove John to the wilderness. And what did the wilderness do for him? It brought him face to face with God. We need to be face to face with God to understand what sin is. When its only background is God's holiness and purity, then we see our sin as it really is; we see it in all its hideousness and loathsomeness. And in the loneliness there, he meditated upon the Old Testament revelation, so that it became full of meaning to him. How often he must have read of the suffering Messiah, of One who bears other people's sins, of One who suffers the just for the unjust! 'Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.' And so when John saw Jesus coming to him, he recognized Him as the suffering

Messiah, and he cried out, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.'

1. Why did John call Jesus the *Lamb* of God? Perhaps it was the time of the Passover and the Paschal lambs were being driven to Jerusalem.

All in the April evening,
April airs were abroad;
The sheep with their little lambs
Passed me by on the road.

The sheep with their little lambs
Passed me by on the road;
All in the April evening
I thought on the Lamb of God.

A lamb is innocent and mild
And merry on the soft green sod,
And Jesus Christ the Undefiled
Is the Lamb of God.

(1) Both to John and to us the first thought the word 'lamb' brings is that of innocence. He who takes away the sin of the world must be Himself without sin. We don't make enough of Christ's sinless life. It's not simply that He is an example offered for our imitation. His sinlessness is the very essence of His life, His sinlessness is Himself. But it is not the innocence of a child that knows nothing of the world. It is the innocence of one who has taken life in both hands; of one who has gone down among the sins and temptations of life, and has come out of them pure and unsoiled.

(2) But the idea that was in John's mind when he called Jesus the Lamb of God was not so much innocence or any other quality, but the thought of death or sacrifice. 'He was led as a lamb to the slaughter,' says Isaiah, and the Passover lambs, if they were passing by at that moment, were being led to Jerusalem to be offered as a sacrifice to God. But they are unwilling victims, these lambs; they go to their death reluctantly. So their deaths have no moral significance. But the remarkable thing about the death of the Lamb of God is that it is purely voluntary. Death did not choose Him. He chose death. He met it at the trysting-place that had been fixed from the beginning of the world, and He went to it though legions of angels were waiting to bear Him away from it. That's what makes His death a thing absolutely unique in the history of the world.

2. But why does John call Him the Lamb *of God*? For the very fullest of reasons. Because God provided Him and God accepted Him. He was provided by God—'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.' That's the great difference, the eternal difference, between Christianity and every other religion. In other religions man provides the sacrifice for his God. In Christianity God provides the sacrifice for man. If it cost Christ something to die, it cost the Father something to give Him up to death. The two are in absolute unity in working out man's salvation.

And so the Lamb of God, which God Himself provides, is accepted by God. It is because He is provided by God and accepted by God that He is able to save us to the uttermost.

3. 'Behold the Lamb of God, *which taketh away the sin of the world*.' What a tremendous sweep it is—the sin of the whole world. But if it is a great sweep, it is not done in any wholesale way. It is done by each individual having his own sin taken away. That is why John says, 'Behold!' Every man must look for himself. When Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, it was only those who looked who were healed. I lay *my* sins on Jesus—not the sin of the whole world. I lay *my* sins on Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God. And even if we find it difficult to see why the death of Christ upon the Cross is an atonement for the sins of the whole world, does that prevent us from making the trial in our own particular case? If we want to travel by the electric cars, must we know all about electricity and the force that moves them before we do it? If we are thirsty, will we refuse a glass of water till we know what its chemical constituents are? 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' That is the gospel. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, because they are washed in the blood of the Lamb.

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT.

Loneliness.

'For himself hath said, I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee.'—He 13^5 (R.V.).

Loneliness is one of the most trying experiences possible to man. It never has been from man's creation, and never will be to all eternity, 'good for man to be alone.' Our Lord Himself, in the midst of His terrible conflict, felt keenly the burden of loneliness: 'Ye shall be scattered, every man

to his own, and shall leave me alone' (Jn 16^{32}). The only qualifying assurance which made that loneliness bearable to Him was—'Yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.' This feeling of isolation deepening into desolation reached an intensity of agony, fit to break His heart, in the moment when God and man seemed to stand aloof, and when from the depths of His anguish there went up the piercing cry that rent the heavens—'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' This was pre-eminently a *human* cry. Man yearns for fellowship—fellowship with man, and, above all, fellowship with God. To be without God is to be without hope. To be isolated from the great Father of spirits is to be orphaned indeed. The promise of our text—like that given by Christ on the eve of His own desolation, 'I will not leave you orphans'—is a gospel to the orphaned heart of man when it seeks God if haply it might find Him.

No passage exactly parallel to the text can be found within the covers of this Book, the nearest approach being the words which were uttered by the Lord to Joshua, 'I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee' (Jos 1^{5}), and repeated by David to Solomon, 'He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee' (1 Ch 28^{20}). There is an apparent superfluity of negatives in our text which we do not find in either of these parallel passages. They occur in Greek five times in this brief sentence. The literal translation would be, as nearly as we can give it in English—'No, I will never fail thee, no, I will never, never forsake thee.' This repetition is exceedingly significant, since these words are given as the promise of God, with whom there is no idle word, no word which does not carry its peculiar burden of sacred significance.

1. God's promise *projects itself into the unknown future.* 'I will *never* leave thee.' Man cannot live in the present. He ever looks forward. His hopes and fears come from life's morrows. This accounts for the interest which promises and predictions ever awaken in the heart of man. The gospel for man must have something to say about the time to come. Our Lord struck the keynote in the Sermon on the Mount by announcing the great 'Hereafter,' and drawing therefrom the most powerful considerations for present duty and privilege. Man repudiates being shut up to the present. He protests against mortality, and in his inmost heart will not admit of the possibility of dying quite out. From his earliest days he yearns for what he can keep. His grip of even temporal things is that of an immortal being. One of the most pathetic phases of human life is that he who wants things which he can keep is always snatching at things which he cannot keep. He has aspirations which earthly possessions, attainments, and friendships cannot satisfy. God meets that yearning in all who trust Him with the assurance, 'I will never leave thee.' In other words—'Through all time, and for all eternity, thou shalt draw from My resources, thou shalt satisfy thy life in the light and beneath the smile of thy God.'

2. The promise *includes every change of circumstance and variety of experience.* The words of God by the mouth of Isaiah emphasize this: 'When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee' (Is 43^{2}). In the face of the infinite variety of disappointment and trouble is the permanence of this Divine promise that God will be with us. The 'I am' is the name in which God speaks to man amid the whirling changes and startling transitions of our mortal life. None but the eternal and unchanging God, as revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord, can satisfy our yearnings and meet our needs. It is, however, enough if He be with us. The consciousness of His presence and blessing has been that which in all ages has sustained God's saints, and imparted to them the truest heroism. They undertook no task without Him, but, having once accepted the most difficult work for Him, they 'endured as seeing the invisible.'

This ray of promise falls on darkened ways,
'Lo, I am with you alway—all the days.'
The bright, untroubled, gladsome days of life,
The days of bitterness and care and strife;

The days when peace doth like a river flow,
The days of grief with weary hours and slow.
He goes not on far journeys. Christ is near,
He leaves no day without His help and cheer.

As once of old 'He knew what He would do,'
When servants were dismayed and troubled too,
So now, with infinite supplies at hand
He walks with us, though in a barren land.

Some sweet surprise He doubtless has in store,
Some secret that He never told before.
For this, perhaps, He leads through shaded ways,
And you will understand ere many days.

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT.

The Number of the Hours.

'Are there not twelve hours in the day?'—Jn 11[9].

These words were spoken by Jesus at the time when news had been brought Him that Lazarus was sick. For two days Jesus had made no move. The disciples would be certain to misconstrue that inactivity—they would whisper, 'Our Master at last is growing prudent'—and therefore their amazement and dismay when Christ announced He was going to Judea. They broke out upon Him with expostulation—'Lord, it was but yesterday that you were stoned there. It is as much as your life is worth to think of going—it were the rankest folly to run that tremendous risk.' And it was then that Jesus turned upon the Twelve, with a look which they never would forget, and said to them, 'Are there not twelve hours in the day?'

Let us use these words to illumine some of the characteristics of the Lord.

1. They throw light on the *earnestness of Christ.* Behind all stir and change, and the varied and free activity of Christ, we discern the pressure of a mighty purpose moving without a swerve towards its goal. From the hour of His boyhood when He said to Mary, 'Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?' on to the hour of triumph on the Cross when He cried with a loud voice, 'It is finished,' unhasting and unresting, without one check or falter, the face of Jesus is set in one direction; and it is when we come to recognize that unity, hidden amid the luxuriance of freedom, that we wake to the sublime earnestness of Christ.

One reason of our Lord's whole-hearted zeal was His knowledge that there were only twelve hours in His day. Before His birth, in His pre-existent life, there had been no rising or setting of the sun. After His death, in the life beyond the grave, the day would be endless, for 'there is no night there.' But here on earth, with a mighty work to do, and to get finished before His side was pierced, Christ was aroused into triumphant energy by the thought of the determined time. 'I must work the works of my Father while it is day. The night cometh when no man can work.'

It is the same with us—twelve hours, no more. Time is fugitive indeed; the golden hours pass swiftly with their happy opportunities of serving God and man; let us not permit any of them to slip away in careless oblivion of their precious chances. God has sent us here to do something, to attain to something, to let ourselves flow out in helpfulness to others. Seize the moment, indeed, and extract all its marrow of satisfaction, but let that satisfaction be a worthy one—the satisfaction of knowing that we are fulfilling a heavenly mission, serving our Divine Father through our human brothers and sisters while the chance is still ours.

> Night comes behind.
> I needs must hurry with the wind,
> And trim me best for sailing.[1]

2. The text illuminates *Christ's fearlessness,* and that indeed is the textual meaning of it, for it was when the disciples were trying to alarm Him that Jesus silenced their suggestions so. What did He mean? He meant, 'I have my day. Its dawn and its sunset have been fixed by God. Nothing can shorten it, and nothing can prolong it.' It was that steadying sense of the Divine disposal which made the Christ so absolutely fearless, and braced Him for every 'clenched antagonism' that rose with menace upon the path of duty. When Dr. Livingstone was in the heart of Africa, he wrote a memorable sentence in his diary. He was ill, and far away from any friend, and he was deserted by his medicine-carrier. But he was willing to go anywhere provided it was forward, and what he traced with a trembling hand was this: 'I am immortal till my work is done.'

3. The text illuminates *Christ's fretlessness.* For never was there a life of such untiring labour that breathed such a spirit of unruffled calm. Now He was teaching—now He was healing—now He was parrying some cruel attack. Yet through it all, with all its stir and movement, there is a brooding calm upon the heart of Christ that is only comparable to a waveless sea asleep in the stillness of a summer evening. And no man will ever be calm as Christ was calm who cannot halt in the midst of the stir, and say, 'My peace'; who cannot stop for a moment in the busiest whirl, and say to himself, 'My times are in Thy hand.' God never blesses unnecessary labour. That is the labour of the thirteenth hour.

[1] Lanier.

Just here we ought to bear in mind that the true measurement of life is not duration. We live in deeds, not breaths—it is not time, it is intensity that is life's measurement. Twelve hours of joy, what a brief space they are! Twelve hours of pain, what an eternity! We take the equal hours which the clock gives, and we mould them in the matrix of our hearts. 'Are there not twelve hours in the day?' said Jesus—yet Jesus died when He was thirty-three. The dial of God has got no minute hands, its hours are measured by service and by sacrifice.[1]

Fifth Sunday in Lent.

The Meekness of the Cross.

'Not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others.'—Ph 2[4] (R.V.).

1. *The humility of Christ.*—The Atonement was the act of the Eternal, who, in the Person of the Son, emptied Himself of all that lifted Him above the race of men whom He came forth to redeem. He approaches mankind not as their benefactor, but as their debtor. The form of a slave is no human pageantry, but the sacramental expression of a Divine surrender. Tragedy enters into the very existence of the Living God. The Eternal Himself passes through the Valley of Humiliation. As the Bible shows us Redemption, it is not an Almighty Benefactor conferring a priceless boon upon His graceless children, but the Servant of servants, who lays aside His vesture and girds Himself as with an apron that He may wash His people's feet. 'He took upon him the form of a slave.' Those are the Apostle's words; and we denude them of their appropriate meaning if we fail to see that as St. Paul spoke them it is God Himself to whom they are properly applied, and not alone that Manhood which, in the terms of our orthodox theology, we say that God assumed. For He who from all eternity was in the form of God is God. God, and none but God, could humble Himself when, renouncing those riches which were His before the worlds, for our sakes He became poor, and from a life of servitude passed to a Cross of Shame. Humility was not first brought to the birth in the stable at Bethlehem, nor was the Cross the earliest throne where it received the Crown. Its reign was already from of old when the morning stars sang together. It was as the sword in the hand of St. Michael when Lucifer was thrust down from heaven. It is the spirit in which from creation's earliest dawn the Divine finger has wakened all things into life; the spirit in which a bounteous Providence, beholding the things that are in heaven and earth, has crowned the year with His goodness; the spirit in which the Father has wistfully sought the love and friendship of His children. Humility is not the creation of God's hand. It lives in the beating of His heart. As He loves, so He humbles Himself. And the Death of His Son was no benefaction with which, out of the riches of an infinite liberality, He endowed the poor, but the offering with which He pressed His suit upon a reluctant people, saying to each one of us, 'My son, give me thy heart.'

That is the consideration which gives to humility its true dignity and value in the character of the Christian man.

2. *Humility a Christian grace.*—It is important to remember that the service of man need not involve the spirit of sacrifice which is the joy of Calvary, may lack that great humility which is the mind of Christ. 'Blessed are ye poor.' 'Be not ye called benefactors.'

The appeal of Jesus is to something higher than the merely moral man. Those who are indeed to be constrained by the love of Christ must be prepared for adventures into a region which lies beyond the ethics of the market-place. The graces of the Christian character—meekness, forgiveness, humility—are not such as can be expressed in terms of scientific analysis.

Watch Christ in His dealings with the young man who asked what good thing he should do to inherit eternal life. He had come prepared to do great things. There was nothing about him that was sordid or base. No sooner had the Master's eye rested on him than Jesus loved him. It is clear that in his great possessions the young man saw large possibilities of service. It was no selfish refusal to abandon the means of personal pleasure or sensuous delights that at length sent him away sorrowful. There was a true nobility, not the mean desire to secure the next world in order that he might enjoy this, that expressed itself in the eager question, 'What good thing shall I do to inherit eternal life?' The pathos of the story lies surely in the inability of an otherwise large heart to take the one step which should cut him off from the prospect of an honourable success and transform

[1] G. H. Morrison, *The Wings of the Morning*, 236.

the spirit of magnanimous service into the heart of humble sacrifice. If Christ had said, 'Spend your wealth, occupy your time, devote your life for the good of others; place those exceptional advantages of head and heart with which liberal Fortune has endowed you at the service of your fellow-men,' would he not eagerly have embraced the prospect of a useful and honourable career which the Master had opened before him? But there was something so paradoxical in the demand which Jesus really made; the romance of it was altogether so baffling to the imagination that in the very moment of a glad surrender to a great enthusiasm the young man shrank back from the impossible. 'Sell all that thou hast. Make your act of distribution to the poor once for all. Cut off once and for ever all further opportunities for benevolence and kindly patronage. Seek that treasure which is to be the instrument of your devotion not on earth, but in heaven, and come follow Me. Henceforth be poorer than the foxes and the birds. Call no place your home. Stand forth in the simplicity of your personal life, and, when the time comes, be ready for the cross of a criminal and the ignominious death of a slave.'

It is just that demand, and nothing less, that Christ is making of the men of this generation. The age is full of generous impulse. There are, as of course there always have been, the idle rich, the frivolous wastrels, who are not grieved for the afflictions of Joseph. But there is no lack of those who are not only willing but eager to make the best of their lives, to occupy positions of responsible usefulness, and to become real servants of their fellow-men.

But what if Christ should apply to any such the supreme test, 'Sell all that thou hast,' what then would be the answer? You would be perfect,—then renounce the opportunity. You seek a real adventure,—forgo your vantage-ground of wealth, station, official responsibility; take up your cross and follow Me.

3. *The source of humility.*—Many descriptions of humility fall infinitely short of its true proportions.

(1) It is doubtless true that 'God is in heaven, and thou upon earth,' and that therefore it becomes the children of men to refrain their souls and keep them low. But just as many a man will talk bravely of the rights of property who is yet careful to add that 'of course, we are only stewards,' so the infinite distance which separates the creature from the Creator may encourage rather than repress a spirit which is the reverse of humility in the narrower sphere where comparison is not impossible, but inevitable. Nor can that lay claim to rank as a Christian virtue which depends for its realization upon the chasm that separates human personality from Divine. If it be true that, as the Hebrew prophet bids us, we are to walk humbly with our God, or, as the Christian Apostle puts it, to humble ourselves beneath His mighty hand, we must seek the principle of this self-abasement elsewhere than in the infinite distance which separates our little lives from His august Eternity.

(2) It is the same thought which prevents us from fixing this principle in the recognition of human sin. For those who have sinned, the broken and the contrite heart will never fail to be one aspect of Christian humility. God must indeed break the backbone of that stubborn pride to which the Cross is a perpetual scandal and Calvary a superfluity of pain. But in proportion as Christian men attain the height of their destiny, in proportion as they are conformed to the image of the Eternal Son—nay, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory—then, though to themselves the shadow of a sin-stained past is ever present to move to self-abhorrence and unseal the fount of penitential tears, yet it is the reflexion of the heavenly vision which brings others to take knowledge of them that they have been with Him who is meek and lowly in heart.

(3) Humility, like every aspect of the character that is truly and properly Christian, must find its spring no less than its goal in the character of God. St. Peter had entered into the mind of the Master when he gave the exhortation to be 'clothed with humility.'

The man whose character exhibits this crowning grace is he who in his work for the good of others is not unwilling to believe that those on whose behalf he labours are ever his superiors; who so banishes self-consciousness that his personality—and not his goods—is at the disposal of his fellow-men; and for whom the object of loving solicitude is 'the brother for whom Christ died.' The man who instinctively rejects all talk of inferior races, and to whom it is against the grain to speak of the aborigines or the proletariat, is learning to be humble. These are traits that

reveal the man. They exhibit something of that Divine courtesy which could not bear help to mankind except in the character of a slave. Servitude to our fellow-men is an attitude that is painful to us all. But it is the brand of the Lord Jesus. That great Christian, St. Paul, gave as the motive of his abundant labours, his tireless activity, his ceaseless solicitude, the truly remarkable reason—I am a debtor. As with Sir Walter Scott, the desire to pay his creditors quickened his genius. He was expressing the mind that was in Christ Jesus. How full of romance will be the career of him who day by day can go forth to new opportunities, new conquests, new achievements, under this great compulsion—I am a debtor! No man will be dull if only you can approach him with the thought—I am a debtor. No dependence will be a wound to our self-esteem if only joyfully and thankfully we can exclaim, 'We are debtors.'

It is never the service that he renders, but the spirit in which he renders it, that distinguishes the Christian. Whatever the conditions of his outward life may be, poverty is always his bride. Even if his station be splendid, he wears it but as the pontificals of office, beneath which are the coarse garments of his daily life. His ideal is not to live for others, but to die for them. The humble man is he who is capable of that only form of self-sacrifice which admits of no degrees because it is whole, final, and complete, and that is the sacrifice of himself.

When St. Paul acknowledged himself all men's debtor, he went on to indicate the form in which he hoped to discharge the account—'So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel.' Like his Divine Master, he had learned through the things which he suffered that man doth not live by bread only, but by the living Word. And these have ever been the uses of the desert—'I humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not.' Pride scorns the notion of a Lenten fast. Why sojourn in a barren land? Shall God indeed prepare a table in the wilderness? But the humble, as His friends and guests, take their place at God's board; they eat of His bread and drink of the wine that He has mingled. So Christ gives to them the heart of sacrifice, and among the servants of men they are distinguished by one mark of difference, and by one only. As with the rest they go forth to their work and to their labour until the evening, the brow of each is circled with a crown of thorns.[1]

PALM SUNDAY.

The Tears of Christ.

'And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it.'—Lk 19^{41}.

In the morning Christ set forth on His journey from Bethany to Jerusalem by the road which went over the southern shoulder of Mount Olivet. 'As he drew near, at the descent of the mount of Olives'—when the road began to descend and the first view of Jerusalem was caught, the hymn of triumph broke forth, 'Hosanna to the Son of David.'

Again the procession advanced. The road descends a slight declivity, and the glimpse of the city is again withdrawn behind the intervening ridge of Olivet. A few moments, and the path mounts again; it climbs a rugged ascent, it reaches a ledge of smooth rock, and in an instant the whole city bursts into view. Immediately below was the Valley of the Kedron, here seen in its greatest depth as it joins the Valley of Hinnom, and thus giving full effect to the great peculiarity of Jerusalem seen only on its eastern side—its situation as of a city rising out of a deep abyss. It is hardly possible to doubt that this rise and turn of the road, this rocky ledge, was the exact point where the multitude paused again, and 'he, when he beheld the city, wept over it.'[2]

There are only two occasions on which it is recorded that Jesus wept. This is the second. The first was at the grave of Lazarus. And there is one thing common to both occasions which should be noted. It is that Christ's tears were not for Himself, but for others. They were not wrung out of Him by suffering; they were tears of tender compassion. And whenever one thinks of that, one is impressed again with the wonder of the figure of the Christ, so infinitely pitiful and tender-hearted; so unswervingly and magnificently brave.

'He beheld the city, and wept over it.'

1. They were *the tears of a Patriot.* Instinctively the multitude had paused with Him as they turned the crest of Olivet to gaze for a moment on the

[1] J. G. Simpson, *Christus Crucifixus*, 4.
[2] A. P. Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, 192.

splendid spectacle of Jerusalem glowing in the morning sunlight with its massive walls.

Jesus was interested in every land and in every race. No land or race was shut out from His heart. But there were special attachments to Palestine, and strong ties to the Holy City. He did not weep because Jerusalem was not everlasting, and because Palestine was not for ever. He knew that in the fullness of time the earth would be dissolved, and that previous to this consummation cities would rise and fall; but He could not bear to think that while other lands were fertile, this should be as barrenness, that while other cities stood, this should be a desolation, that while other nations were continued, this people should be scattered abroad. They were 'His own,' His own race, His own flesh and blood.

2. They were *the tears of a Saviour.* Jesus Christ came to save His people from their sins, and they would not. 'Ye will not come to me that ye might have life.' He looked upon those who would not be saved, and wept over them. Measure His sorrow by His knowledge and by His hatred of sin; measure His sorrow by His own freedom from sin; measure His sorrow by the love of His large heart. To see evil and to be unable to remedy it is anguish; but to see evil, to be able and willing to remove it, and to be baffled by the wilfulness and waywardness of the sufferer or of the evil-doer, is anguish keener and deeper still.[1]

Jerusalem had missed its opportunity. Again and again He had preached there, but Jerusalem had closed its ears and steeled its heart against the message of redeeming love. It had not known 'the day of its visitation.' There are in the lives of all of us times of visitation. At all times our opportunities are great. But there are times when God draws much nearer to the soul—as in sickness, as in affliction, as in bereavement—when God's truth shines out more clearly, when the powers of the world to come are realized, when eternity opens before the soul, when the conscience is tender and the world for a time loses its power.

EASTER SUNDAY.

The Morning Glory.

'He is not here: for he is risen.'—Mt 28[6].

What a sunrise this was after these dark days of disaster and hopeless defeat! The great Lover had seemed to be the very fountain of life, with quickening vitality which nothing could destroy, and yet the fountain had been choked up in Gethsemane and Calvary! 'We trusted that it had been he who should have redeemed Israel,' but the shining, welcoming pool proved to be only a mirage, hope withered in disillusionment, and the brutal majesty of material force held the entire field.

And so all the disciples were in a mood of deepest and darkest depression. Simon Peter was gloomy with despondency and haggard with remorse. Two disciples were walking in the twilight to Emmaus, 'looking sad,' communing about the awful and sudden eclipse in which their hopes had been so miserably quenched. In every life the light was out. No one was anxiously watching on the third day, with eyes intently fixed upon a mysterious east. No; death reigned, and wickedness, and hopelessness, and no one was looking for the morning!

And then came the cry, 'He is risen!' Think of that great burning light streaming through the darkness, kindling life after life into blazing hope again—now the Magdalene, now Peter, now John, now the two journeying to Emmaus, now Thomas, until the entire disciple band was a circle of light again.

What did the Resurrection mean?

1. It meant first that Jesus of Nazareth had been clearly manifested to be the Son of God. Before this wonderful morning the disciples had been the victims of uncertainty, chilled by cloudy moods of doubt and fear. But with the resurrection the uncertainty ends. It is with that trumpet note that St. Paul begins his great letter to the Romans. 'Jesus Christ . . . declared with power to be the Son of God . . . by the resurrection from the dead.' Not, you will notice, 'declared to be the Son of God with power'; the power belongs to the declaration, the proclamation, the trumpet.

2. The second thing which the Resurrection meant was new power to men, a reservoir of spiritual energy opened for the quickening and emancipation of the race. It is our faith that just as Christ walked out of that tomb we too can walk out of the grave and graveyard of our own corrupt past, and in vigour and sweetness of being become alive unto God.

Surely we have a wonderful symbolism of all this in the mystic movements of the spring-time. If any one would be besieged by suggestions of the

[1] S. Martin, *Rain upon the Mown Grass*, 217.

resurrection, let him look about in garden and in field and he will see the quickening glory. 'Never do I,' says Dr. Jowett, 'so intensely feel the pressure of the quickening Spirit as when I see the black hedgerows bursting with their flooding life into green and tender leaf. Never do I so realize the surging, encompassing energy of God's resurrecting Presence. I can pray with more intimate and eager communion, when the dominion of winter is breaking, and the time of the singing of birds is come. "In Christ shall all be made alive!"'

We would have the resurrection power flow into our dead affections, and make them bud in tender sympathies, and gentle courtesies, and all the exquisite graces of the heart of our Lord. And we would have the resurrection power pervade our dead conscience, and make it act with hallowed sensitiveness, with fine scrupulous feeling of the sacred and the profane. And we would have the resurrection power possess our mind, and make it fertile in noble ideals, in holy purpose, and in chivalrous resolution.

3. (1) The resurrection meant not only something for the present, but something for the future. Christ brought not only life but immortality to light.

'Truly there is nothing any one can do in the face' of death, are the words on a second-century papyrus. A certain Taonnophris [1] and her husband Philo have apparently lost a son, and a friend Irene, who had herself suffered bereavement, writes to condole with them in the following terms:

> Irene to Taonnophris and Philo, good cheer! I was as much grieved and wept over the blessed one, as I wept for Didymas, and everything that was fitting I did, and all who were with me. Epaphroditus and Thermouthion and Philion and Apollonius and Plantas. But truly there is nothing any one can do in the face of such things. Do you therefore comfort one another. Farewell!

Very touching, is it not? The desire to mourn with those who mourn, and yet the feeling of utter helplessness in the presence of what death brings—'Truly there is nothing any one can do in the face of such things.' How unlike the calm tone of assurance with which St. Paul comforts the Thessalonian mourners in like circumstances: 'We would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest'—Irene, Taonnophris, Philo, and all similarly situated—'which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him' (1 Th $4^{13.\ 14}$).

(2) Our Lord's resurrection is the pledge of the resurrection of all that shares His nature. The Apostles early laid hold of the fact that in the resurrection right was manifested as the ultimate might. It had seemed to the apostles as though the truth had been defeated, and that amid the laughter and ribaldry of its foes it had sunk in complete and final disaster. But on the Easter morn the truth emerged again.

The great resurrection chapter, the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, ends with the thought of the indestructibility of the Christ-like—'wherefore, my beloved brethren,' St. Paul says, 'be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.' He seems to say, 'Your Lord emerged from the grave in irresistible strength and glory. There were no bonds strong enough to hold Him. So shall it be with the truth in our life and service. It shall not go under in endless defeat. Every bit of truth shall live, every bit of chivalrous service shall abide for ever.' 'Wherefore, be ye stedfast, unmoveable'; go on living the truth, speaking and doing the truth, even though immediate circumstances crush you like a juggernaut—go on—there is resurrection power in the truth, and it shall reappear and surely conquer, and your labour shall 'not be in vain in the Lord.' [2]

[1] G. Milligan, *Here and There among the Papyri*, 106.

[2] J. H. Jowett, *The School of Calvary*, 121.