

'Alas for the unhappy man that is called to stand in the pulpit and not give bread of life. Everything that befalls accuses him. Would he ask contributions for missions foreign or domestic? Instantly his face is suffused with shame to propose to his parish that they should send money a hundred or a thousand miles to furnish such poor fare as they have at home and would do well to go the hundred or the thousand miles to escape. In the street, what has he to say to the village blasphemer? The village blasphemer sees fear in the face, form, and gait of the [unworthy] minister.'—EMERSON.

'If we can never be great in the pulpit when judged by worldly values, we can be prayerfully ambitious to be pure and sincere and void of offence.'—DR. JOWETT.

'We must remember that every true effort is

sure to be repaid. We must be willing to learn by our failures. Perhaps most of all we must be resolute in putting away from us the ignoble and cowardly suggestion, "If only I might begin somewhere else and make a new start under fresh conditions, I could be this or the other." Rather let us thank God, if we have done badly where we are that He still leaves us the opportunity of making reparation before the eyes of those who have been wronged by our negligence. We can always begin again if we are humble and put our confidence in God. It will not be easy, but it is possible. We may not ask for more.'—A. W. ROBINSON.

'With courage and hope let the minister bring to his work the concentrated powers of intellect and affection, and God in whose cause he labours will accompany and crown the labour with almighty blessing.'—W. E. CHANNING.

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## The Spiritual Man.

A STUDY OF A PORTRAIT TO BE FOUND IN 1 COR. 1, 2.

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IT is the purpose of this article to blend together into a portrait certain elements in these two chapters. It is the portrait of the spiritual man. The quality which we name spirituality is hard to define. Sometimes we see a face which suggests it to our minds—an embodiment which is better than a definition. Laurence Sterne saw such a face in the inn at Calais—the face of a monk. 'It was one of those heads which Guido has often painted, mild, pale, penetrating: free from all common-place ideas of fat, contented ignorance looking downwards upon the earth, it looked forwards, but looked as if it looked at something beyond this world.' There is a portrait somewhat like that outlined in this passage—a face certainly not looking downwards, perhaps looking forwards, assuredly looking upwards, a face with something in it that is at once shining and penetrating, as though it had been shone upon, and in that light had seen light.

To pause for a moment on the threshold of this matter, we may possibly take what St. Paul here

reveals of himself as an introduction to what he afterwards tells us in more general terms about the spiritual man. Apparently for a brief space the spiritual man wears St. Paul's garments and speaks with St. Paul's voice. He is not seeking our admiration or applause: he is but telling his experience humbly and gratefully to the praise of the Master who has made him what he is. 'My speech and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.' That phrase 'demonstration of the Spirit' is one of the many Biblical phrases which have been worn threadbare by frequent use: it is worth brooding over until its colours glow again. His ministry had been the proof of a force which needed demonstration if men were to believe in it—the proof of a power which this world did not produce, which human nature with all its complicated mysteries of capacity could not account for, which might easily pass unnoticed among the many fighting forces of the world, but which, when we have been brought up against it,

is a great reality and a great marvel. When a life is possessed by it as St. Paul's was possessed, this unearthly power receives the best possible proof of its reality and might. It enabled this man to take a standpoint of his own—the end of the first chapter tells about that—the strange, unworldly standpoint of the cross. It enabled him to take that standpoint and to hold to it,—against storm and tide, against bribe and threat, against the scorn of the wise and the indifference of the multitude,—so real and so clearly proved was the power of the spiritual in this Apostle's life. If we may judge the spiritual man in advance by him as by a type and example, he is at any rate no colourless and forceless creation. 'Mild, pale, penetrating,' Sterne said of the spiritual face he saw in the inn at Calais. We shall not need the first two of his adjectives to describe the portrait we are now going to examine: here, at least, is no unhealthy pallor and no mildness as of weakness. The spiritual man, if we may judge him by the Apostle who pleads his case, will have some moral originality about him. He will help to shape his world. He will not be enslaved by the day and the place. He will not be dominated by the idols of the market, by the verdict of the newspaper, by the prejudices of the Pharisee, by the shallowness of the man in the street. And when he has seen truth or duty, he will follow it and hold by it though the earth be removed and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea. There is a suggestion here of force, courage, radiance: one hopes to find some secret of attainment in the portrait of the spiritual man which St. Paul now proceeds to sketch in more general terms for all who may care to behold it.

1. The spiritual man in this passage first reveals himself as a *listener*. He may be a speaker sometimes, like St. Paul himself; but he must be, if he is to live up to his calling, a listener always. It is suggestive that St. Paul changes from the singular to the plural when he comes to this: it reads as if half-unconsciously he had begun to range his readers in this matter along with himself. 'Whatsoever things God prepared for them that love him . . . unto us God revealed them through the Spirit.' The spiritual man is one who has learned to listen and who never breaks off the habit. Through the roaring tumult of existence his sense of hearing pierces to the heights, the depths, the eternities. He hears the fabled music of the

spheres and its burden is a song of love,—the things whether past, present, or to come, which God hath prepared for them that love Him.

Love can tell, and love alone,  
Whence the million stars were strewn,  
Why each atom knows its own,  
How, in spite of woe and death,  
Gay is life and sweet is breath.

As for St. Paul himself, he has learned to speak as we have just heard him speaking, because he has first learned to listen as we now watch him listening. The essence of this idea is set before us again in the contrast which is drawn between the blindness of the world and the vision of the spiritual man: 'We received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us by God.' The Apostle's complaint of the world for the moment is not that it is wicked, but merely that it is blind and deaf; it does not know its own opportunities: in its search for pageants of another and more tawdry sort, it is missing all the splendour of the divine beneficence. The spiritual man looks and listens. The heavens are open above him. The music of the spheres reproduces itself in his listening heart, turning there also to a song of love and joy.

Are we not at this point very close to the distinction between the moral and the spiritual? The moral man realizes the things which are asked from him by God, whether through his own conscience or some outward scheme of law. The spiritual man does not forget these things for a moment: his spirituality includes this and transcends it: he realizes not only the things which are demanded by God, but those which are bestowed by God as well. Were it only in the interest of our own moral perfection, it were well for us to realize the freeness of God's giving. Guidance is given: strength is given: the whole armour of God is given. The spiritual man has the reward of his listening in his power to hear such whispers from the heights. It means all the difference between a lonely struggle and a happy alliance, between a cheerless path and the shining of the Morning Star.

2. The portrait fades for a moment, then reappears in v. 15. It shows us the spiritual man in a new aspect, not now as a listener but as a *critic of life*. In this aspect we are inclined to like him less. 'He that is spiritual judgeth all things.' We

have met men and women who have spoken like that, not without a touch of arrogance. There is a type of character which seemingly loves to prove its own spirituality by its censoriousness and by its readiness to judge of matters on which it is by no means infallible—say, the problems of the Higher Criticism, or the spiritual state of individuals. St. Paul would not wish to be made responsible for such folly: we must make him responsible only for what he really means. In his vivid way he states absolutely what we with our more cautious speech would state relatively. The spiritual man is one who has learned to listen Godwards, to heed the loftiest voices and to open his mind to the divinest revelations. In proportion as he does this he is able to see life from its summit and to discern between the worthy and the unworthy, between the evanescent and the abiding. He has a criterion—a means of testing and judging. The Stoic's criterion was 'the moral use of reason.' St. Paul's criterion is as much completer than that as we have seen spirituality to transcend morality: it is the moral use of reason enlightened by the revelation of God, made warm, sensitive, and tender by the love of God. St. Paul's thought is turned into modern speech in this sentence from Amiel's Journal: 'The truest and best judge is infinite Goodness, and next to it the regenerated sinner or the saint; the touchstone in us becomes finer and truer the better we are.' So the man who is truly spiritual becomes in a very wise and penetrating way a critic of life; he knows the things which are best worth having, and the things which by comparison are the sticks and straws and dust of the floor.

It might serve for variety as well as for illustration if we could see this criterion at work in other hands than those of St. Paul. Here is a famous sentence from the pen of another messenger of Christ who wrote about the world and what was in it. 'The world passeth away, and the lust thereof.' How does he know? He needs no special criterion for that: his eyes might tell him: the runes in which one reads that message are history and experience, falling powers, crumbling institutions, graves of men. But he goes on: 'He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.' Again, how does he know? This time he has an inward criterion: his own heart tells him, but, like St. Paul's, it is a heart which has been in touch with the Highest: he lives in the clear light where

shams and shadows are revealed for what they are, where gold is gold and dross is dross, and the eternal sunrise has illumined the things of time. There are critics of life whose business is a poor and petty one, a vending of peevish depreciation or foolish flattery or short-sighted judgment. But he who views life after this spiritual fashion saves his own soul from shame, and helps the world itself a little nearer to the sun by keeping alive in it a witness to the truest and best.

3. After this second glimpse the portrait fades from the argument for a little while. There is a reason for its fading: the fear creeps over the Apostle's heart that, so far as his readers are concerned, these things are more of an ideal than a reality. He stops to remind them how carnal they are after all, how unlike what he has been describing. But towards the end of the third chapter he returns to what is ideal and reality in one, the spiritual man as a *temple of the divine presence*. He may sadly fail of his ideal: nevertheless from his most broken and blundering beginnings to his most perfect and consummate achievements, this is true of him all the way, a rebuke to what he is and a promise of what he shall be: 'Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?' The last explanation of the whole matter is this, that divine power is here, and divine purity, and divine love; and, when these things clothe themselves with our clay, sooner or later they make the spiritual man. The words are the Christian morality expressed at its greatest intensity: it is a terrible and tremendous thing to sin not only against an ideal so high but against a grace so accessible. Yet solemnity is almost swallowed up of joy. We met in the beginning of this passage a preacher on a lonely path with a task unique in its responsibility. At the end of it we meet some common men fighting common and even fleshly temptations. Is it possible for one who has a body of flesh and blood for an ingredient in his being, and the sensuous, tangible world for his environment, to be after all spiritual, to see the far things and follow the high things and lay hold upon eternal life? It is possible because the doctrine of the indwelling Spirit is true: such a life is within the reach of mortal men because first of all it is not their own but His. And even frail men who are willing to open their hearts to His indwelling shall remain among the heroes and

conquerors of the spirit, in the day when the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is, and nothing shall remain save what the Highest Himself has established.

While we have been studying the spiritual portrait we have not been very far away from a simple method of spirituality: each step that we have travelled has been a hint as to ways and means of forming the spiritual character. The beginning of all is the listening attitude, or, to name it a little more broadly, the receptive attitude, which must be regularly, perseveringly, determinedly maintained. Then those who would be spiritual men must put into practice in life the things they have learned in vision and reception. They are critics of life because they have a Lord to follow and a message to live out; and the more they are loyal to what they have heard from Him,

the more does that message become a part of themselves, twisting itself about their understanding and commending itself to heart and conscience: the more often they put it into practice the more certain are they that the lessons they have learned in the secret place are no delusion, and that reality is on the side of the spiritual man and the spiritual outlook. And last, but not least, this abides, through all imperfection in their vision of the ideal or failure in realizing it, 'Ye are the temple.' It is a glorious and amazing encouragement. If men want to live this life, the Highest Himself is willing to be their light, their strength, their help, their beginning and their ending. That is the supreme reason why the spiritual man is wiser than all men, and why his path is as the light of dawn that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

## Recent Foreign Theology.

### Jewish Sūfism.<sup>1</sup>

ALTHOUGH the relations between Mohammed and the Jews were bitterly hostile, a few generations of Islamic rule convinced the Israelites that they had profited by the change of masters; and when about the time of the foundation of Baghdad the Moslems abandoned the principle that there were to be no books after the Qur'an, and Arabic literature began to sprout with tropical exuberance, the Jews gave up the analogous doctrine with regard to their own Scriptures, and started composing books closely following the Islamic models. Some of the classics of this renaissance were written in Arabic; and when the focus of Jewish study was transferred to regions where that language was not understood, the Hebrew translations of these works were multiplied by copyists, and afterwards by the printing-press, whilst the originals were neglected or forgotten. Hence it comes that whereas the Hebrew version of the familiar treatise *Chōbōth ha-Lebōbōth* was printed as early as 1490 and has since been constantly reproduced, the *editio princeps* of the original bears date 1912.

<sup>1</sup> *Al-Hidāja 'ilā Farā' id al-Qulūb* des Bachya Ibn Jōsēr Ibn Paqūda aus Andalusien. Herausgegeben von Dr. A. S. Yahuda. E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1912, 407 + 116 pp.

No more competent editor could have been found than Dr. Yahuda, who is deeply versed in both Arabic and Jewish philology, has the patience to ferret out the truth, and the courage to face it when discovered; he has provided an admirable edition of an interesting and even fascinating text. He rightly holds that the matter is not antiquated even in these days; yet the book is perhaps of more value for what it casually reveals.

Its subject is the higher morality, which with the Moslems forms one of the divisions of Sūfism; and Dr. Yahuda has shown with much learning and acuteness that R. Bachya, the author, has based his treatise on Moslem works. Even the title, *Duties of the Hearts*, re-echoes Sūfi titles, especially *the Food of the Hearts*, by an author who wrote about 350 A.H., from whom Bachya borrows largely. The Rabbi in his Preface apologizes for making use of Gentile wisdom, but the only authorities of the sort whom he ventures to name are Greeks—Aristotle, Euclid, and Galen; these could be mentioned without offence. Had he named his ordinary sources, his work would certainly have failed to secure the popularity among Israelites which it has enjoyed. For among his 'holy men' are the Christian Saviour (pp. 270 and 330, the last a quotation from Mt 5<sup>34</sup>) and