COALS OF FIRE

BEING

EXPOSITIONS OF SCRIPTURE

ON THE

Doctrine, Experience, and Practice of

Christian Holiness

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INTRODUCTION.

The subject of Scriptural holiness has a rapidly growing literature, which, if prayerfully read, must go far to convince the Christian world of the truth of the doctrine, provided sound argument, clear Scriptural exposition, and eloquent appeal, can do it. Each writer on the subject seems to have a style and a method peculiar to himself. But whatever the style, whether argumentative, expository, or experiential, each comes to the same conclusion, that God commands us to be holy, and has made provision to save to the uttermost all that will come unto Him by Christ.

The author of this volume finds entire sanctification in many portions of the Old Testament where few people have ever thought to look for either the doctrine or the experience. But
Christians are beginning to believe that the subject is webbing all through Revelation. It is the great truth which glows upon every page of the Holy Book; the great law of all worlds and all ages,—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart."

The author has searched the Old Testament diligently for this gem of Christian doctrine and experience, and discovering it, he has brought it forth, and held it up to the gaze of Christian faith as the pearl of doctrines. After reading his expositions, the Old Testament will appear to the reader, what it is in fact, "A Treatise on Perfect Holiness."

We are sure that "Coals of Fire" is not in any respect inferior to the author's earlier works, which have found a wide sale and many admirers. But if we are able to judge correctly, this is his best effort, the fruit of mature thought and broader experience. We bespeak for it the candid perusal which its merits demand.

W. McDonald.
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CHAPTER I.

ISAIAH'S LIVE COAL.

The Scripture to be expounded in the present chapter, is found in Isaiah vi. 1-8. The items under which all the ideas may be classified, are as follows: —

I. The time of Isaiah's purification. "In the year that king Uzziah died." According to our best authorities on chronology, this experience of Isaiah occurred two years after he began his prophetic ministry. It would be utterly inadmissible to suppose that he was an unconverted man when he began to prophesy, and the only rational conclusion is, that the purifying baptism which is recorded in this chapter, was subsequent to his regeneration.

He does not give us the date of his conversion, which probably occurred in his youth; but
his entire sanctification formed such an epoch in his experience and ministry, as to morally necessitate a public record of it. But this is in perfect accord with many other Scriptures.

When the Jews crossed the Red Sea, they sang a song of deliverance; but when they crossed the Jordan into the Canaan of rest, God commanded them to build a monument of stones, which should be a memorial forever of their entering into the land (Joshua iv. 7). Also, in the case of the disciples, we have no record as to the exact time when each of them were converted, but the day when they received the sanctifying baptism of the Spirit has been made memorable for all time. To this, also, agrees the experience of believers; for while it is true that nearly all Christians know the time of their conversion, and more especially if the doctrines of pardon and adoption have been distinctly preached to them,—still, to those who have experienced the witness of the Spirit to entire sanctification, there is in the latter experience such a marvelous distinctness, such a pungent consciousness of the work wrought, such a profound and complete change in all the inner nature, as to render it the most memorable epoch in the soul's history up to that time. In saying this, I do not minify in the least the most remarkable experience at conversion.
It is likely that persons who have not experienced the witness to heart purity, may disagree with these statements; but those who have received the full baptism of the Spirit, will confirm their truthfulness.

II. *Isaiah's vision.*—The vision which God gave the prophet was the means of bringing him to see his need of entire holiness. The features of this vision were such as belonged within the "second vail," where the high priest alone could enter. Isaiah was not a priest, and hence had never had the privilege of entering into the second vail; but God revealed all the mysteries of the most holy place to him in a vision. The items of the vision are worthy of separate notice.

1. "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up." This was doubtless none other than the Lord Jesus, manifesting Himself as he had promised unto Moses in Exodus xxv., saying, "I will meet thee and commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubims." It is by clear and distinct views of God to the soul, that it apprehends its own corruption, its own dissimilarity to God, and its infinite need of holiness. The Greek motto was, "Know thyself"; but the Bible motto is, "Know God." Alas, that so many
professed Christians should put the aphorism of man above the aphorism of God. A creature mind can only know itself and all things, truly, as it knows God. There is no true light except what comes down from Jesus to the soul. A clear vision of the person and purity of God, will enable us to discern our own inner being, and also the character of those around us.

2. "Above it stood the seraphim." The term "seraphim" is synonymous with "cherubim." The word cherub signifies "shining one"; the word seraph signifies "burning one." A common error, almost universal, is to confound these beings referred to here, with angels. There is no place in Scripture where the word angel is used interchangeably with cherubim or seraphim; neither are their works or office described as the same. Perhaps the ablest explanation of the terms cherub and seraph, is found in Mr. George Smith's "Harmony of Divine Dispensations." He argues that the seraphim refer to redeemed men fully baptized of the Holy Ghost. The proofs are, in brief,—

The cherubim on the mercy-seat was composed of the same piece of gold that formed the lid of the mercy-seat, and upon which the blood was sprinkled, identifying the creature with that which is redeemed.

Again, Moses was commanded to make no
image of that which was in Heaven above, or earth beneath; but if the forms of the cherubim represented angels, that would be a breaking of that law; but if they represented redeemed men under the Holy Ghost dispensation, they were prophetic images of future facts.

Again, there is nothing in the whole imagery of the temple to represent the fruit of redemption, except the cherubim.

These, with many others which cannot be here mentioned, have led me to accept of his views as being the true Scriptural idea.

3. The theme of the seraphim — a declaration of God's holiness. "And one cried unto another and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts."

All true preaching of the Gospel must consist largely in proclaiming the nature, purity, and character of God. It is impossible for men to form any estimate of righteousness or holiness, of experience or practice, except it is furnished by a revelation from the character and conduct of God. The revelation of God through Jesus Christ, is our only standard of inner life and outward behavior. It is lamentable to notice what an infinite amount of stuff is palmed off on the generations as Gospel, which has to it no glowing background of the holiness of God. It was this declaration and vision of the Divine purity, which caused Isaiah to perceive
the necessity of his "perfecting holiness in the fear of God"; and the same spiritual law applies to other believers as well.

4. The glory of God filling the earth. "The whole earth is full of his glory." This expression must have reference to the sanctification of God's people throughout the earth. There is a parallel passage in Numbers xiv. 21. When the Jews turned back from entering into Canaan, God declared that though that generation should die in the wilderness, yet as "truly as I live all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord"; from which we learn that the glory of the Lord is identified with having His people enter upon their full privileges. So in this passage from Isaiah, the seraphim, elsewhere called the "living creatures," representing the fire-baptized heralds of salvation, intimate that when the holiness of God is proclaimed and accepted, this will fill the earth with His glory. Another thought may be gleaned from this passage, that those who are in a state of holiness, and look out upon the world from God's standpoint, see the fulfillment of God's purposes, through a different medium from those who look through the medium of the carnal mind. Isaiah at this time saw the earth filled with carnality and desolation; but these flaming ministers of grace saw the possibilities and achieve-
ments of grace in human hearts, through the glowing atmosphere of the Holy Ghost. Where­ever sunlight falls upon the edges of leaves, chips, or grains of sand, there are beautiful sun­bows, with all the colors of the rainbow; but our eyes are too coarse to see them. If our vision was fine enough, on any sunny day we would see the whole earth literally bespangled with the seven-fold colors of the “showery arch.” The spread of holiness is the true glory of God.

5. The supernatural motion of the temple. “And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried.” The margin says, “the thresholds moved.” There is both a scientific and spiritual significance to this verse, both of which are intensely interesting. The scientific thought is briefly this: It is an established fact that all the particles of matter, everywhere, are constantly in a vibratory motion; just as on a larger scale the pulse of animals, the tides of ocean, and the rolling of spheres, are unceasing. Sound, itself, is only a mode of motion; different substances have a different key and rapidity of vibration, so that when certain notes are struck, all particles of matter near by, whose vibrations are in the same key with the note, will be accelerated in their motion by the striking of the note. This can be proved by a thousand illustrations.
A lamp chimney will ring at the touch of a certain key in the piano; deaf persons can read music by placing their fingers on the instrument when being played, and by the vibrations in the wood read the tune through their fingers, etc.

If the voices of the seraphim were pitched in concert with the molecular motion of the temple, then, as a simple scientific fact, the pillars and threshold would tremble at their songs, as churches do from an organ. I have not time to trace this thought out in its vast results; except to suggest, that the sounding of the “trump of God” may be so connected with the molecular motion of the dust of the dead, as to be a factor in the resurrection.

But this verse has a still higher signification. There is a shaking of our whole nature, in connection with the baptism of the Holy Spirit. St. Paul, in Hebrews xii., in drawing a contrast between Pentecost and Mount Sinai, mentions this fact of the two shakings, which must be understood as having relation to the church and soul, as well as to material nature: “Yet once more I shake not the earth only but also heaven; and this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.” Now to prove that this refers to the soul and to experience, he goes right on to say,
“Wherefore we receiving a kingdom [in the present tense] which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear.” Our sinful life must be shaken by the power of conviction and regeneration, and our spiritual life must be again shaken by “the consuming fire” of sanctification, till that which “cannot be shaken” is left in unmixed stability.

6. “The house was filled with smoke.” Throughout the Scriptures, smoke is an emblem of that which proceeds out of the heart of man through his mouth. The breathings of the heart in prayer is compared to the smoke of sweet burning spices; on the other hand, the blasphemies of the ungodly are compared to the stifling stench of burning sulphur; hence we see at the dedication of the tabernacle by Moses, and of the temple by Solomon, the prayers of the people, and God’s glorious answer, were symbolized by smoke.

III. The third general feature of this Scripture, was Isaiah’s confession. “Then said I, Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.” By close examination, we find there are four items in this confession.
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Whether this were true in the case of Isaiah, or not, it has been true in thousands of instances, with God's true and earnest, yet not fully sanctified ministers. Has not every minister, as well as every child of God, many a time, discovered a vast amount of self-will, self-planning, rashness of spirit, harshness of words, subtle animosity, censoriousness of spirit, towards the sinfulness or sluggishness of our fellow-beings? almost as much gall as love, mingling with our zealous words and religious performances; laying the blame of the church's sterility on others' defects, and not on our own secret, subtle depravity? Has not the interior vision of these things, driven thousands in shame to their closets and their knees, and made them cry, "I am a man of unclean lips"? Such experiences are painful, yet nevertheless are the Gethsemane-path to the crucifixion of self, and the being baptized with all the mind that was in Christ.

3. "I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." He saw in the transcendant light of this vision, the true complexion of the character of the people around him. There is here a very important suggestion. Ministers are liable to go to extremes with regard to the sins of the people around them. A large class of nominal or professional preachers, have in all
ages made light of the sins of the people; have preached smooth things to please their hearers have utterly shunned from showing the people their sins. The Universalist teaching that God is too good to punish sinners; the Unitarian teaching that human nature is too fine and good to be punished; the Plymouth Brother teaching that all manner of sinfulness is easily covered over by the white mantle of the so-called "finished work"; the semi-Swedenborgian and naturalistic preachers, teaching that sin is only a sort of sour sap, which will mellow into goodness in the autumn of life; the time-serving ritualist, who is too dainty-tongued to even read God's words respecting hell and the judgment; and, last of all, the back-slidden Orthodox, with whom preaching has become a mere profession by which to make a living; who goes on in a beaten track, and will not warn the people respecting their coming doom. Isaiah belonged to none of these: he saw the peoples' sins, their responsible and punishable sins.

There is another class, much smaller than the former, who go to the opposite extreme, and do nothing but denounce sinners and declaim against the imperfections of God's people. They denounce in unmeasured bitterness every branch and organization of the visible church. In public, in private, and in print, they excoriate
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the ministers and servants of God. They think they must use insulting and abusive language to their hearers; they magnify the ordinary faults of good people into the most heinous sins; their speech is filled with gall and sulphur; but their eyes shed no tears “over the slain of the daughter of my people.”

They fancy that the height of their piety is measured by the extent of their denunciation; they think they are foreordained to be “sharp threshing instruments, having teeth,” but overlook entirely the “gentleness and meekness of Jesus.”

Between these two extremes was Isaiah, the pattern of the true minister of God. He had one trait which neither of the above class exhibit: he confessed his own corruption of nature in connection with that of his people, seeing both in the same light, but unbosoming his own depravity first, and that of his people afterwards. A parallel example is found in Daniel ix. 21: “While I was speaking in prayer and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, etc.” It is impossible for us to properly expose the sins of the people as Jesus did, unless we are filled with the same spirit that filled Him. To attempt to imitate the example of Christ in any given thing, without having the “same mind that was in Him,” is gross machine
service, and makes havoc with the work of God.

4. "For mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." He attributed the light by which he saw his own defection, as coming directly from the Lord. It was not the result of natural acuteness of perception; it was not a philosophical analysis; it was not a deduction of reason; it was not the mere emotional whim of low spirits; it was not a "blue-Monday" conclusion of his temporary feelings; but it was the broad, cloudless, serious, sober, thorough revelation of all the inner facts of his nature, produced by the strongest of all causes,—his seeing the Lord of hosts. In this confession we have no account of his weeping, or his praying, but that which includes and goes beyond mere sighs and petitions; namely, an utter and unlimited confession of the whole heart. How few understand what is a perfect confession to God! It is, as it were, the turning of the soul inside out, without any apology or excuse for its contents. So much is involved in complete confession, that upon it God conditions both pardon for all actual sins, and cleansing from all unrighteousness (1 John i. 9).

IV. Isaiah's complete sanctification. "Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a
live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from the altar; and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.” The items in these verses needing special notice, are: —

1. The agency of the seraphim. He did not sanctify Isaiah, neither did he create the sanctifying agent; but in harmony with the idea that the seraphim represent the office of the apostles or evangelists, fully anointed for work under the Spirit’s dispensation, acting as God’s agent in first proclaiming the holiness of God, and then conveying to the earnest seeker those fire-charged and spirit-illuminated promises of truth, through which we are sanctified. If we carefully collect all the passages referring to the cherubim, the seraphim, or the living creatures, and examine their activities, we find them to correspond with the zeal and functions of the apostles and evangelists as exhibited in the Acts of the Apostles.

2. Having a live coal in his hand. This live coal is the word, the truth, the promise of God, set on fire of the Holy Ghost. The mere written word of Scripture, apart from the accompaniment of the Holy Ghost, is like anthracite coal, lying dark and chill in the mine; but when the Scripture is applied to the heart
by the personal agency of the Spirit of God, it is like the same anthracite coal, glowing white with heat in the furnace.

The written word, in and of itself, does not save us; the mere "letter killeth"; the spirit gives both heat and light to the written word. Whole chapters of Scripture may be committed to memory without penetrating the heart; but if only one brief verse is laid on the heart, hot with the Holy Ghost's presence in it, there will be a supernatural shock, sufficient to make the dead leap into life, and the leprosy of hidden sin vanish into nonentity. When the coal from the mines is brought out and set on fire, it drives the machinery of the world; and when the written word is preached and applied by the burning and luminous touch of the Spirit, it impels the souls of Christendom along paths of holy conquest. He took the live coal from the altar, the altar where the sacrifice had been offered; the altar where the blood flowed, and the sacrifice was burned. What can this mean but that all Scripture is not only from Him who is the Word of God, but from Him crucified? The live coals of Divine promise which God's baptized heralds extend to the people, cannot be gathered from the frozen regions of science or poesy, but must be taken from the altar-cross, baptized with His blood, glowing
with that sacrificial flame. If the word of God we handle is not taken hot from that altar, it will never convert sinners or sanctify believers.

3. And “he laid it upon my mouth and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips.” The sanctifying remedy is applied to the diseased spot. Isaiah spoke of unclean lips, and hence to the lips the fire must needs be applied. God's sanctifying grace is as various in its virtue as are the defections and needs of the soul; each one needs a touch of fire at the spot of his besetting sin.

4. “Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.” It does not say thine iniquities or thy sins, as would have been the case had he been an unjustified transgressor; for “although his actual sins had been as scarlet, they had been made as white as snow” (chap. i. 18).

That which was cleansed away now was not a something in the plural number, but a unit principle of evil, latent within him. In all this Scripture there is no intimation of Isaiah being an actual sinner. It is not a voice of pardon, but of purification.

“Thine iniquity.” The word iniquity means inequality, up and down. There is in every believer an up-and-down experience in his faith, his peace, and obedience; an unevenness, an inequality in his inner life, which is never brought
into a straight, even stream of faith, and hope, and love, till the subtle crookedness is taken away, and the inward sin purged.

V. The results of the sanctifying touch. "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I, send me." Here are two or three marvellous effects specified, as the direct fruit of the baptism of fire.

1. He heard the voice of the Lord. Up to this time there is no account in the vision of his hearing the Divine voice, but only hearing the voice of His flaming messengers. According to a multitude of Scriptures, there are five spiritual senses, as really as the five physical ones; but these spiritual senses are folded, blunted, impaired, by the existence of inbred sin.

Regeneration restores life to the spiritual senses, but they are not fully opened and clarified for full exercise till all the carnal mind is extirpated, and the inner man filled with the Holy Ghost. There is a spiritual ear in the heart, and when the wax of depravity is removed under the full baptism of the Spirit, how acute is its hearing! Then it is true in a high sense, "My sheep hear my voice." When Isaiah's spiritual hearing was perfectly healed,
he could catch the gentle voice of his God, even though that voice came through the sound of singing seraphim and shouting cherubim, with a swiftness and distinctness of accent never heard before. It is not the loudness of the voice, but the affinity which the ear has for it, which renders it heard with ease. A fully-sanctified soul will have its spiritual senses opened, and energized to hear, see, touch, taste, and smell, spiritual facts, spiritual truths, spiritual sensations, utterly unknown before; and almost utterly discredited by those who are yet partly carnal. As St. Paul tells us, "strong meat belongeth to them that are perfect, to those who by a habit of perfection, have their spiritual senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Hebrews v. 14, margin). How many go on guessing at the Divine voice, often confounding it with self or Satan, when, if the wax were purged from their spiritual ears, they might catch the articulations of the Holy One, and distinguish it in storm or calm, from the mingled sounds of earth.

2. His soul discovered the blessed Trinity. "Who will go for Us?" This is the only verse in this chapter where God is spoken of in the plural. Here we discover that He who is One, is also more than one. Jesus told the disciples that when they received the abiding Comforter,
they should know the Trinity, not as a dogma, but as an inward revelation to the heart. "The Spirit of Truth shall be in you, and ye shall know that I am in my Father" (John xiv. 17-20).

What ineffable experiences of the revelation of the Trinity to the hearts of perfect believers might be collected from the history of the saints! Isaiah’s discovery of the voice as coming from a plural God-head, is a clear intimation that he discerned the sacred personalities and saving offices of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

8. "Then said I, here am I: send me." Prompt, willing, unreserved, individual, glad and unquestioning response to the Divine will. This is the fruit of the sanctifying baptism. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the service of the partially and fully sanctified Christian, but there is in that of the former a reserve, a questioning, a hesitation, an element of coercion, or forcing one’s self along, a waiting for others, which does not characterize the believer when filled with the Holy Spirit.

There is a celestial ring in the very words of Isaiah, a boldness, an individuality, an aggressiveness of spirit in the "here am I: send me," which proves that the touch of the live coal had gone all through his members, melting his heart, opening his senses, clarifying his perceptions,
purifying his nature, thrilling his will, sweetening his temper, enrapturing his love, and bringing him in such blessed union with God as to clothe him with light and fire, and put such wings to his obedience as to virtually transform him into a seraph, whose mission it should evermore be to go through time and eternity singing Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts.
CHAPTER II.

SACRIFICE AND PRAYER; OR, THE BRAZEN AND GOLDEN ALTARS.

Let us, in this chapter, examine a cluster of Scripture passages showing the relation between the spirit of sacrifice and the spirit of prayer.

We can find a key text in Ps. 1. 5. "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." Here we have the statement of a great spiritual law, of which we can find multitudes of illustrations in the Word of God and the experience of saints. Here is one of God's definitions of a saint: those who have made a covenant with Him by sacrifice. A covenant is a bargain, an agreement between two parties with fixed conditions and pledges of fidelity. But in God's dealings with man, all covenants are accompanied by sacrifice, as a test and guarantee of fidelity, or basis of agreement. God enters into a covenant with us by the sacrifice of His Son, and we enter into covenant and agreement with Him by the sacrifice of ourselves.
In order to bring this truth with such poignancy upon our hearts as to deepen our spiritual fervor, let us array some illustrations from Scripture before us.

The two altars of the tabernacle were an embodiment of this. The altar of brass was for sacrifice; and the altar of gold was for prayer.

In Ex. xxvii. 1-8, we have a full description of the brazen altar, upon which the sacrificial animals were to be offered and burned; then in Ex. xxx. 1-10, we have an elaborate account of the golden altar of incense where the priest should stand and "burn sweet incense" and offer prayer, after having burnt the sacrifice. The order of service, however, was not the incense first, but the sacrifice first, then the prayer, of which incense was the type. First the brass, then the gold; first the suffering, then the sweet odors. This is the old and secret combination for unlocking the Divine safe. In the experience of Abraham, as recorded in Gen. xv. 9-18, which occurred four hundred years previous to the building of the tabernacle, we see a vivid example of the truth of the two altars; first the offering the sacrifice, then the smoking furuace, corresponding to the incense, after which it is stated, "In the same day, the Lord made a covenant with Abram." In this example, it is still further worthy of notice, that the sacrifice by
which Abraham entered into this great covenant, was not only outward and typical, but inward and real, as well; for after offering the animals and birds, "lo! an horror of great darkness fell upon him," and he saw through the black tunnel of four hundred years of affliction for his children, so that in yielding up to God his sympathies in these future sorrows, he underwent a profound interior crucifixion, which was the condition upon which God linked the everlasting covenant.

Moses, in pronouncing the blessing on the priestly tribe, says, "They shall teach Israel thy law; they shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt sacrifices upon thine altar" (Deut. xxxiii. 10). Here we have a poetical climax, which accounts for the reversing the order of terms. Both in the order of history and experience, first comes the sacrifice, then the incense, then the teaching.

In 1 Kings viii. 5–11, we find another illustration of the intimate relation subsisting between sacrifice and answered prayer; and also between the prodigality of the one and the splendor of the other; for the "sacrificing of sheep and oxen that could not be told or numbered for multitude," was followed by the excessive response, "that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord
had filled the house.” This overwhelming cloud was the outward sign of the mighty prayer of the king and its answer; for we must remember that in Scripture, prayer and its answer are so blended into one as not to demand separate symbols. Prayer is the explosion of the inward state of the heart, the molten condition of the inner spirit poured forth in the volcanic lava of words, sighs and tears. Our heavenly Father, seeing the volcanic formation of prayer within us, in infinite love and precision often prepares the answer and dispatches it on the way to meet us, even before the eruption of the prayer in words. “It shall come to pass that before they call I will answer; and while they are yet speaking I will hear.”

Hence David says, as soon as he determined to confess his sins, God forgave him (Ps. xxxii. 5); and the angel told Daniel that at the “beginning of his prayer,” the commandment of answer went forth. Hence in this class of texts we are now examining, the “smoke,” the “incense cloud,” is sometimes typical of the prayer, and again of the “glory of the Lord,” that is, the answer of the prayer; so swiftly related are the cravings of the suppliant heart and the responsiveness of the “God of all grace.”

But to resume the main thought of this reading, the antecedence of sacrifice to prayer, the
case of Elijah, in 1 Kings xviii. 38–39, is familiar. One more illustration from the Old Testament, and a very practical one, is found in Ps. xlvii. 6–11. David discovered that it was not the sacrifice of sheep and oxen that pleased God, but the generous, loving sacrifice of his will; and, after making this offering, he pours out his prayer in verse 11.

The intercessory prayers of our Saviour are founded upon His sacrificial death; and when He prayed “Father, forgive them,” the river of sacrificial blood He was then shedding, floated His prayer with acceptance to the Father.

We must never fail to distinguish that, while the death of Jesus is the fountain of merit for His intercessions and our prayers (Heb. ix. 14, 15), on the other hand, the sacrifices we yield to God do not contain any saving merit, but simply put us into such harmony with the will of God, that the merit of Christ's sacrifice is available for all our needs. We must sacrifice all sins and sinful pleasures, in order that our prayer for pardon may be answered; then, as believers, we must sacrifice that precious thing — self and self-will — in order that our prayers for heart purity may be accepted; and after we are fully sanctified, in the progress of the spiritual life, and in securing answers to our manifold prayers, this principle of sacrifice is amplified
and spread abroad over numberless details of experience, so that we are often re-tested at the brazen altar, and find many occasions to offer up our wills, our affections, our hopes, our labors, ourselves in some shape to God, which will prove the genuineness and continuity of our entire consecration. In confirmation of these sentiments, let us notice some passages from the New Testament.

“If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift” (Matt. v. 23-24). From this text, we see that the offering of the outward ceremonial gift is so inferior to the true crucifixion of spirit, it is to be suspended, and the act of worship or prayer delayed till we have gone to our brother and humbled ourselves, and made a sacrifice of our time and self-esteem, and even of our own legal rights, it may be; and then our act of worship will be instantly accepted as a sweet odor. We learn the relation of the two altars, or sacrifice and accepted prayer, in those words of our Lord, “This kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting” (Mark ix. 29). The brazen altar is couched under the term of fasting, which, in the language of Isaiah, “makes our voice or prayer to be heard on high,” to the casting out of demons.
When the hundred and twenty were praying and waiting for the baptism of the Holy Ghost, where was the feature of sacrifices in connection with their praying? Many items from their experience might be collated to sustain the teaching of this chapter, but the most practical one for us is suggested by these words, "When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place" (Acts ii. 1). This oneness of accord not only means they had agreed to meet in the same place, but they had come, through many individual surrenders, to an inner heart and mind accordancy respecting the promise. They could not reach oneness of accord till each had laid down his private opinion, private criticism, personal theological ipse dixit, secret jealousies, personal ambitions, individual motives and ends; and each had given up the spirit of dictation to others, till each utterly yielded to One Will; and all had sunk to perfect simplicity and transparency of motive and purpose; then, and not till then, "suddenly they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Oh, what tremendous, multiform, personal and delicate sacrifices of heart, mind and will, are enveloped under oneness of accord?

It would cost any ordinary congregation of worshippers manifold and excruciating deaths of self in various points, to reach this unselfish
simplicity and oneness of motive. Hence thousands of congregations verbally pray for the Holy Spirit, but on how many does He fall? We might slightly change the words of the great poet, and say:—

"Our prayers fly up, our sacrifice is below,
Prayers without sacrifice cannot to heaven go."

If our prayers are answered with Pentecostal power, we must pay Pentecostal prices.

"And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts iv. 31); but the secret magazine which supplied the moral dynamite for this prayer-meeting is found in the utter self-sacrifice recorded in verse 19, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye."

Another very interesting illustration is found in the experience of Peter (Acts. x. 9.-16).

He went up on the housetop to pray, but before that prayer and the service of that day could be accepted, he must make the sacrifice of entirely relinquishing his Jewish and narrow-minded prejudices against the Gentiles.

Do not forget that previous to this, Peter was fully sanctified on the day of Pentecost, and at this time there is no proof of sin in his heart;
but there was a previous bigoted education, a strong predilection for old opinions, a limited view of Gospel purposes, which hindered his widest fruitfulness. But in evidence that his heart was full of purity and obedience, as soon as he was convinced from God, he instantly sacrificed his former opinions, and followed the Spirit.

This lesson from Peter is often repeated in some form in the experience of holy people.

Perhaps the most glowing sketch we can find of the union between the spirit of sacrifice and victorious prayer, is that furnished in the sixth and seventh chapters of Revelation.

And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?—Rev. vi. 9–10.

And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.—Rev. viii. 3–5.
In these verses we see first the uttermost sacrifice of actual martyrdom, then such a volume of intercessions and prayers of these saints from the golden altar as to form a smoke of fragrance unto God, and then when the response of these mighty prayers fell on the earth, the stupendous effects are suggested by "voices, and thunderings, and lightnings and an earthquake."

Heartquake sacrifices upon the brazen altar, bring earthquake responses from the golden altar.

The fixed spiritual law of grace running through these texts, and illustrated by these examples, furnishes us with the key to prevailing prayers, and reveals the cause why so many who seem to earnestly seek, fail to find pardon or heart purity. Let us not shun the brazen altar, in too great a hurry to get to the golden.

The only way to the upper-room tongues of flame, is by the way of the bleeding Cross.

"The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit." Every prayer issuing from a contrite and obedient heart, is a sweet perfume to God. One of the last sacrifices to be offered in connection with prayer, is to abandon our anxiety as to the answer of the prayer; for peaceful, quiet waiting, is itself a sweet sacrifice.
CHAPTER III.

THE LOVE SLAVE.

Now these are the judgments which thou shalt set before them.

If thou buy a Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing.

If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him.

If his master have given him a wife, and she have borne him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself.

And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free:

Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door-post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him forever. — EXODUS XXI. 1-6.

We shall get a very clear insight into the spiritual meaning of sundry laws and customs which God prescribed to his Jewish people, if we carry along with us the recollection that God was not only dealing with the outward well-being of that people, but he had in his mind as well the ulterior and spiritual benefit of his people in all subsequent ages. God's prescriptions to them
for the outer life, were patterns of his prescriptions to us for the inner spiritual life; as the bark takes the shape of the tree upon which it grows, so the outward laws for the Jews were so arranged as to take the shape of spiritual things. If we carefully analyze this portion of Jewish domestic life, we find it foreshadows and illustrates, with remarkable clearness and beauty, all the leading features of a Christian’s relation to Jesus. The points in it most suggestive to my mind, are the following:

I. **Sold for debt.** "If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years shall he serve."

The reason why a Hebrew might sell himself, is explained in Leviticus xxv. 39–40. "If thy brother be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee, thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bond servant, and he shall serve thee unto the year of jubilee." Hence the reason for the sale was debt; as for example, if a young man were in debt, and unable to pay, he might sell himself to a rich relative, who would assume all his liabilities, and thus escape the shame and imprisonment which otherwise might result from his poverty.

This is the true picture of the condition of every penitent sinner. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." **Having committed sin, we are**
utterly unable to meet the claims of the moral law upon us, and unable to render God the service due him. We are thereby thrown into irretrievable debt and bankruptcy, in our moral nature.

But the ten commandments still pursue us with their claims, accompanied by severe and eternal penalties. The law is God's police agent to arrest the soul, and to ultimately lock it up in the penitentiary of everlasting woe. Every guilty, sinning soul, on earth, is at this hour under God's law, and on the way to an eternal jail. As soon as the soul is awakened to its true condition, and in utter self-despair cries out for help, it is immediately met by its great kinsman, Jesus; "who was born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." If the debt-burdened sinner will enter into an agreement with Christ; will turn over to Christ all the liabilities of his immortal nature; and all the possibilities of his future service, and thus sell himself to his Kinsman, Jesus will meet all the claims and penalties against that sinner, release him from fetters and imprisonment, and bring the thus pardoned sinner into his own house to serve him.

II. The probation of service. “Six years he shall serve, and in the seventh he shall go out
free for nothing;" or else, at the end of six years, he might enter into a still stronger covenant with his master for an unlimited service. (See Deut. xv. 16.) In this we find a principle which is eminently true in Christian experience.

After the convert has served Christ for a longer or shorter period, he is brought to a point, where either by the convictions of the Spirit, or by the needs of his own experience, he is compelled to choose between being a mere ordinary Christian, with a meager experience, or entering into a perfect sacrifice of himself to God, and follow the Spirit in the deep things of Christ. Just as every sinner in the world is at some time brought to a point where he practically decides the question of eternal life or death, so every Christian is brought to a point where he inevitably chooses between a present and full sanctification, or practically putting it off till death. It does not always take this definite shape to the mind, but it practically amounts to this. Mr. Wesley in his sermon on "The more excellent way," which was written in his old age, says, "From long experience and observation I am inclined to think that whoever is justified, has then the choice of walking in the higher or lower path. I believe the Holy Spirit at that time sets before him the more excellent way and incites him to walk therein, to choose the narrow-
est path in the narrow way; to aspire after the
heights and depths of holiness—after the en-
tire image of God. But if he does not accept
this offer, he insensibly declines into the lower
order of Christians. He still goes on, in what
may be called a good way, serving God in a de-
gree, and finds mercy in the close of life, through
the blood of the covenant.”

This striking passage of Mr. Wesley, was the
fruit of a long and wide experience in soul sav-
ing and building up of the saints; and is a fine
comment on the scripture before us, as to the
choice of a Hebrew servant, whether he should
go out to the ordinary life of a Jewish citizen
and laborer, or by binding himself for life to his
rich relative, enjoy emoluments and blessings
which he could never acquire by himself. It
often happens, when the doctrine of entire sanc-
tification is first distinctly preached in a com-

munity, that church members think the subject
is merely optional with them, and that they can
reject it, and still go on getting refreshings of
grace as in former times, when holiness was not
definitely set before them. But such is never
the case. They have been serving Christ for a
longer or shorter period, and, it may be, follow-
ing Him up to their measure of light, but now
their “year of jubilee has come,” the privileges
and claims of Christian perfection are distinctly
sounded in their ears, and it is impossible to avoid the issue. They have come to a fork in the road, and must inevitably choose between a higher and a lower type of piety, the results of which choice we will see further on.

III. Profit and loss of spiritual gifts and graces. "If he came in by himself he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him; if his master have given him a wife, and she have borne him sons, or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself." What a sad, solemn lesson is suggested by these last words; and yet they are as inevitably true in spiritual things to-day, as they were true in the domestic life of the Jews.

Put before your mind's eye this picture: a poverty-stricken man, selling himself to serve six years; during his servitude his master gives him a wife, builds him a cottage in a vineyard; as the years pass on, children are born unto him; vines and shrubbery and flowers grow about his cottage; comforts multiply around him, and one would think he was fairly settled for life.

But the year of jubilee arrives; momentous questions are to be settled; he is compelled either to increase or diminish his blessings; he must either get closer to, or further away from
his master; he must settle the question of profit and loss. If he decides to go out from his master, he must lose all the gifts and emoluments which he has acquired from his master, except simply that he goes out free from debt. If on the other hand he decides to enter into still deeper covenant with his master, he can retain all his blessings, with a prospect of still greater favors being bestowed upon him. How strikingly and minutely do these facts illustrate the condition of believers with reference to spiritual gifts and graces! A poor sinner burdened with the debt of death penalty, flies to Christ and is "justified freely by his death." Jesus not only forgives his debt, but receives him into the royal family, and bestows upon him manifold gifts and graces according to his measure. There are bestowed upon him the graces of the Holy Spirit, various gifts for usefulness, and many emoluments accruing from membership in his church. And in the years of his first love to his Master, he exercises himself in prayer, song, exhortation, testimony, benevolence, Christian visitation, spiritual reading, or it may be in preaching, revival work, writing books or tracts, until he is quite well-to-do in his spiritual estate. But sooner or later God brings around to his soul the year of jubilee. He may not comprehend the magnitude of the crisis, but an epoch is being approached in his career.
COALS OF FIRE.

In some way he must face the question of entire sanctification. It may be some great calamity comes upon him, loss of wealth, or loss of friends, or loss of health, or strange and extreme temptations; or it may be during a revival, or at some camp-meeting, or through reading a book; in some form or other, the question of complete devotion to God, of entire crucifixion of self, is brought right before him. He cannot shun the issue, he can no longer live along on the same plane he has been living; he is absolutely compelled to get closer to Christ or further away, to take higher or lower ground in religion. Perhaps millions come to this jubilee crisis in their spiritual life without comprehending what it involves, without estimating the profit and loss of their decision.

If they neglect the experience of entire holiness, or pass it lightly by, or think they can serve God without making a specialty of holiness, they inevitably begin to lose from that day; their spiritual gifts begin to fade away, their graces begin to dry up, they may escape the death penalty, but they are reduced to great poverty in spiritual things.

This truth has a thousand living comments all around us. What multitudes of ministers, that were full of gifts and zeal, and begot many souls in the Gospel, have had to face the ques.
tion of entire sanctification, and thought they could get along without it; have from that very time gone into moral poverty, both in their own experience and in their labors; preaching the same old sermons without their early fire; the fervor has left their prayers, the pathos has left their voice, the light has left their religious perceptions, they have become dull and uninteresting; many of them laid on ecclesiastical shelves; the gifts have retired to the hand that gave them.

How many family altars have been silenced, how many voices have ceased to sing, how many who once testified in social meetings testify no longer, how many active and soul-salving Christians have become barren; all the result of refusing to choose a closer walk with God. Like the Jewish servant, they thought they could take their interests largely into their own hand; thought if they could escape the jail of hell, they could get along well enough without entering into the perpetual slavery of holy love, without submitting to the "ear marks" of full sanctification.

IV. Choosing the more excellent way. "If the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, my children, I will not go out free." Here we see the character of him, who prefers to take higher ground in his devotion, to enter
into still deeper servitude; who appreciates the gifts of his master, and prefers his master's provision for him, to his own self management.

We have here a fine illustration of the two forms of love, so often dwelt upon in mental and moral science; namely, the love of gratitude, and the love of personal excellence.

We may suppose that when the poor young man sold himself to the rich neighbor, it was not personal regard for the neighbor, but personal protection from punishment, which led to the act; then when his master cancelled his debts, and showered many blessings upon him, there would spring up the love of gratitude to his master; but as he became more thoroughly acquainted with the amiable character of his master, his attachment to him would become a love of his excellence; so that apart from the mere gifts, he would love the man for his own sake. In like manner it is self-preservation from "the wrath to come" that drives the awakened sinner to his Saviour, and when Christ blots out his transgressions, and pours many favors upon his soul, there springs up the love of gratitude. "We love him because he first loved us," but when the believer becomes thoroughly acquainted with Jesus as a person, and understands His inner life, His love to Christ will become a deep spiritual passion, a supreme attachment to His person, "he is one all together lovely."
It is this latter form of love, which is the secret spring of unlimited sacrifice, devotion and service; both in social and religious matters, the love of person is far stronger than the love of gratitude; the love of personal attachment will lead to a thousand-fold more sacrifice and self-forgetfulness, than any other form of love. The character now before us, chooses to have his ear bored, to enter into a life-long servitude, to abandon his labors to the mere will of another, because "he loves his master." It is true, he loves his wife, and his children, and he loves his master because of his gifts; but over and above all this, he is attached to his master as a brother, he honors his character, he can repose in his plans, he can trust in his care, he never wants to get any farther away from him. His affection for his master is not ambiguous, it is not silent, but he plainly says, "I love my master." This is the secret spring of those who take the highest ground of devotion to Jesus: they long for purity, they cannot brook anything that separates them from Christ. Not because they are afraid of going to hell, not because they want merely to retain the gifts of Christ, but their acquaintance with Him has made them willing to do anything, to be anything and to suffer anything, that they might be united with Him forever. What a world of suggestion is in "I will not go out free"!
When his master took him, he had nothing but debt, he was always a poor manager of his own affairs; his master takes infinitely better care of him than he did of himself.

Ah, if Christians could only see this in their relation to Jesus! The great mass of believers think if Jesus will only save them from hell, they think they can manage their other affairs themselves. They seek their own honor, or wealth; they plan to get into certain offices, or into certain situations; they manage their own petty interests, and think way ahead and lay petty schemes for themselves, or their friends; they cannot wait for the slow footsteps of God’s will, they are afraid God would not feather their nest thick enough; they think they might be left behind; and so they go out free, trusting God on general principles, but trusting themselves as to the details. But they land in spiritual bankruptcy.

Ah, blessed is the soul that will not dare trust itself, that will not dare “go out free” upon its own plans, but abandons itself, in every general and in every particular, to the supervision of its Master; and will dare receive only what He gives; that identifies its interest at every point and forever, with the will of Christ; that prefers the absolute and unending slavery of love, to the apparent freedom of legality.
V. The covenant of love service. "Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door-post, and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall serve him forever."

This verse involves the act of perfect self-sacrifice to our Master's will, and also His act of destroying all remaining disloyalty in our nature. We find in it the following suggestive items.

1. The transaction was to have the sanction of the law. "His master shall bring him unto the judges." The judges were to settle all matters of law and equity between man and man. (See Exodus xxii. 8-9.) The judges took no part in boring the servant's ear, but simply were witnesses of the transaction. In like manner the law has no power to regenerate or purify the human heart, but by putting us under conviction for pardon or purity, it is a school-master to lead us to Christ. We are not saved by the law, but Jesus saves us in harmony with the law; and our salvation is at every step sanctioned by the law. "For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and by a sacrifice for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the
law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit” (Romans viii. 3-4, margin).

Hence in our full sanctification, we do not, as the imputed holiness men teach, “make void the law through faith; God forbid, yea, we establish the law.” The law is established and fulfilled in us, when we have perfect love to God and man out of a pure heart.

2. The most perfect identification of the servant with the master's interests. His ear was to be pinned to the door or door-posts of the master's house. He would thereby be pledged to protect the master's property, to guard the interests of his family, to be identified with the master's estate, and to forego all private and personal interests in anybody else's house or estate. This is the spirit which must fill the believer, when he passes himself over to an unlimited and unquestioning conformity to Christ. It is a willingness to be nailed to His cross, to be incorporated with the exclusive interests of His throne, to forego all other masters and all other service, in whole and in part, in act and in spirit.

A fine comment on this scripture is found in the experience of David, recorded in Psalms xl. 6-8. “Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened... Theu
said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God." This is a direct reference to the scripture under consideration. The word opened here is in Hebrew *digg'd* or *bore*. David discovered that the sacrifice which God wanted, was the unlimited sacrifice of his will, and declares that he had made this perfect sacrifice to God, by having the Lord *dig* or *bore* his ears, which proves that the lesson under consideration was designed to foreshadow the believer's complete devotion to his Master.

3. **The opening of the organ of hearing to readily understand the master's commands.** This we have seen illustrated in the experience of Isaiah. "For thou, O Lord of Hosts, God of Israel, hast opened the ear of thy servant" (2 Sam. vii. 27). Solomon describes the blessedness of the man whose ear has been bored with reference to his readiness and acuteness of hearing the divine commands, saying, "Hear instruction and be wise and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors" (Prov. viii. 33-34). Here is the picture of the ready, docile, and unquestioning service of the servant, whose ear has been bored. If we want to find the opposite extreme of this, we have simply to take a quotation from Stephen's fiery sermon to
the backslidden Jews: "Ye stiffnecked and un­
circumcised in heart and ears, ye do always re­
sist the Holy Ghost" (Acts vii. 51).

Notice how prompt obedience is connected
with the boring of the ear, and an inability to
hear the Holy Ghost is connected with uncir­
cumcised or unbored ears. How sadly true this
is to-day!

Many who would not enter into this entire
crucifixion, who would not consent to wear the
mark of entire sanctification, like the stubborn
and backslidden members of the Jewish church,
do always resist the Holy Ghost; they resist
holy people, holy testimony, all efforts to pro­
mote holiness; but this resistance to all holy
things, is because they resist the Holy Ghost,
and will listen to almost any spirit except the
Holy Spirit.

How infinitely blessed is that servant who
with transpierced ears, quietly, patiently listens
at the door-posts of his Saviour's palace, to catch
every whispered command!

4. "And his master shall bore his ear through
with an awl, and he shall serve him forever."

Here are the two supreme acts; one, that of
the master, the other that of the servant. It is
the master's hand and his alone that applies the
stroke of crucifixion. Not the judges, not his
loved ones, not his own virtuous works, not any
law of development or growth, but the short, sudden stroke, of the loving Master's hand. On the part of the servant, his service, his devotion, is pushed out into an unlimited measure, by having that tremendous "forever" thrown into it.

From this time on, all partial measures, all questionings of authority, all mental reservations as to the extent of sacrifice, all spirit of human policy, is forever left behind.

He launches upon a boundless sea of service, knowing not the details of the demands to be made upon him; but trusting unreservedly to the care of his master, agrees to serve him without stint or measure, without specified pay or honor, through thick or thin, through time and through eternity. Such a Christian sells himself to his Saviour for love, serves him from love, asks no pay but love, keeps no account of his labors of love.

These are the servants of God that transform the nations with their self-sacrificing toils, and ask no higher honor in earth or heaven than that of wearing the mark of crucifixion which their Master has fixed upon them.
CHAPTER IV.

THE FOUR-FOLD RIVER.

And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

And a river went out of Eden to water the garden: and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.

The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold;

And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx-stone.

And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia.

And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.

And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it. —Gen. ii. 8-15.

DOUBTFLESS God arranged the Garden of Eden and the external world as a shadow and emblem of the inner soul-world. If man had not fallen, he would have beheld in the objects of material nature, as in a lovely mirror, the reflection of some distinct truth corresponding to some fact
in his own spirit. A river is a frequent type of the Holy Spirit, and Jesus puts this type in the plural, and says in John vii. 38, 39, that out of the believer shall flow rivers of living water; but this He spake with reference to the gift of the Spirit.

The thoughts of God are the same in all ages; and, if He saw the baptism of the Spirit when in the flesh, under the emblem of rivers flowing out of the soul, then that is the same emblem under which He saw it at the creation of the world.

The Garden of Eden in which Adam walked, had its higher counterpart in the heart of Adam, which was the spiritual garden in which the Lord himself walked. The river that flowed through Eden, and branched off into four streams, had its spiritual counterpart in the gift of the Spirit, abiding in the heart, and flowing out from thence, as Jesus says, like rivers of water. If we compare the word in Genesis ii. 10-14, with John vii. 38, 39, we may gather some interesting suggestions.

1. The locality of the river in the garden—that is, in the heart of the sinless pair, or in the heart of the perfect believer—proved by such passages as these: “Thou shalt be like a watered garden;” “Their souls shall be like a watered garden;” “Out of your inmost souls shall flow
rivers of water;" "The earnest or gift of the Spirit in our hearts."

2. The one river with its four streams, corresponding to the one full, personal, abiding gift of the Holy Spirit to the purified believer, with His manifold outstreaming manifestations through experience, work and influence. Jesus speaks of only one gift of the Spirit, but describes His manifestations as outflowing rivers; and Paul delineates the diversities of operation from the same baptism of the Spirit (1 Cor. xii. 4-13).

3. The significance of the four streams. Not only do various passages show that the river in Eden is a type of the abiding Comforter, but, singular enough, the names of the four branch rivers have a striking correspondence in advanced religious experience.

The first is Pison, which means overflowing, expansion, covering over, etc. Heart-cleansing is by naked faith, and often is received in great emptiness of feeling, but when the baptism of the Spirit comes to fill the cleansed heart, the first outflowing form of feeling is that of Pison—an overflowing. The soul, like dry ground, seems to drink itself so full of rain as to overflow itself, and these two ideas of "drinking and overflowing" are those mentioned by Christ in John vii. 35-38. The full baptism of the Spirit
produces in its first sensations such an expansiveness; the cleansing power seems to have such an ample sweep to it, the whole nature has a sensation of being deluged; the banks of the soul expand from a narrow creek to an inland sea. It sees and feels,

"There's a wideness in God's mercy
Like the wideness of the sea."

The name of the second river was Gihon, which signifies bursting out—breaking forth—as the bursting forth of pent-up waters, or breaking forth of fire into flame. When this thought of Gihon is applied to the soul, it implies an intense disposition to utter itself, to pour forth the hot contents of the heart in expressions of praise, testimony, exhortation, etc. Pison is the gentle overflow of the river banks, but Gihon is when the waters, gathering volume, pour through narrow passes, cutting a wider and deeper channel. If the first sensation of perfect love is that of a melting, calm, overflow, the next form of experience will likely be a bursting forth of new testimony. "They spake with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance." The tide of salvation in the heart must needs cut a new channel of expression for itself.

The third river was Hiddekel, which means active, vehement, and fitly represents the push and
energy, the intense zeal that is developed soon after receiving the baptism of the Spirit. It is common for souls at this stage of experience to feel a nervous, restless go, pushing outward, almost a frenzy of zeal to rush out in evangelistic fields and turn the world upside down. This is the dangerous passage in the sanctified life. It is in this Hiddekel phase of experience that some are apt to rush out in evangelism before fitted for it, or against Providence, or break loose from church restraints into come-outism, or break away from plain old truth into all sorts of new theologies.

This is the hot, boiling, midsummer, dog-star period of religious life, in which it is easy to make or blast a fine crop of grain. The best, when perverted, becomes worst. Blessed are they that can run the hot torrent of Hiddekel zeal, without sinking on a snag or stranding on a bar!

The fourth river was named Euphrates, which literally signifies "His sweet waters." This is the mild, sweet, September season of grace-growing. This corresponds with the seraphic fourth gospel of St. John, and with the full, outflowing tide of the thirteenth of first Corinthians. It is this Euphrates form of experience which saturates the whole being with the mild, quiet, sweet spirit of Jesus, described by
Paul in Phil. i. 9-11. Not only perfect love, but the sweetness of perfect love, abounding more and more, till reason and knowledge and judgment and zeal are covered with love, ripening the soul in all the fruits of righteousness.

This is the river of the Spirit, and these are the main streams of full-salvation experiences.
CHAPTER V.

THE CAPTIVE BRIDE.

When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies, and the Lord thy God hath delivered them into thine hands, and thou hast taken them captive,
And seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire unto her, that thou wouldst have her to thy wife;
Then thou shalt bring her home to thy house, and she shall shave her head, and pare her nails;
And she shall put the raiment of her captivity from off her, and shall remain in thy house, and bewail her father and her mother a full month: and after that, thou shalt go in unto her, and be her husband, and she shall be thy wife.

Spiritual facts are never fashioned to suit the forms of their earthly shadows, but just the opposite: the shadow partakes of the form of the substance. Paul speaks of “earthly patterns of things in heaven.” God made man in His own image and likeness, “in the form of his shadow.” Over and over again, Jesus is set forth in Scripture as the espoused Bridegroom of the saved soul. From the heavenly reality, God projected the shadow of this truth into the
domestic life of His ancient people; "for what things happened unto them aforetime was written for our instruction." This glittering gem of Scripture will serve as a centre around which all the kindred portions of truth may be crystallized; but let us remember, we are not dealing in fanciful and sentimental poetry, but with lofty, sober spiritual realities; for as the passing shadow of an eagle is a hint to look up at the reality, so these verses will help us to look aloft for relationships and experiences, spiritual and eternal. There are seven steps in this history.

1. The capture. "When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies, and the Lord thy God hath delivered them into thine hands, and thou hast taken them captive." This was the formulation of that sentiment which in the days of chivalry was coined into a motto, "The brave deserve the fair." Jesus is to capture His bride from the ranks of His foes. How often along the line of Jewish history do we see this truth illustrated; the Hebrew bridegroom capturing his wife from the outside Gentiles and heathen. Joseph and Solomon married Egyptian wives; a prince of Judah wedded the heathen captive Rahab; and the noble Boaz married the Gentile Ruth. Ever and anon the hand of Providence was stretched out; sometimes in war, sometimes in famine, to snatch a captive woman from the
poor, despised, wicked heathen, to be forever incorpored with the church and to be a “mother in Israel.” This is the flitting shadow upon the surface of time, pointing to loftier realities in eternity. The Lord Jesus does not select His bride from the glittering circles of unfallen worlds, but from the dark, polluted race of earth, from His stubborn and unreasonable enemies. Armed with the implements of sacrifice, with no weapons except the blood from His veins and the words from His mouth, He invades our sin-loving and God-hating race, which, like a Jericho, crumbles at the touch of His cross, and from its dismantled pride and tottering iniquities, he gathers the trembling, penitent, Rahab’s souls, and leads them into the captivity of grace.

2. The Bridegroom’s choice. “And seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire unto her, that thou wouldst have her to thy wife.” It is not the atonement of Jesus that makes God love us, but just the opposite. It was His love for us, “His desire unto us,” which was the producing cause of the plan of salvation. The gallant warrior in the above Scripture did not fall in love with the woman after she had been domesticated and decked in a Jewish home, but right on the bloody battlefield, amid scenes of desolation, the burning of houses, the haggard and wailing condition of the
captives. The terror in the face, and the tears from the eyes, served to render the helpless captive more lovable to the victorious soldier. In like manner, Jesus does not beautify us with His grace in order to make Himself love us, but in our utter desolation, He fastens His love upon us. "Of old His delights were with the sons of man." On the battle-field watered by His tears and sweat and blood, where devils tempt and men crucify, amid tumbling temples of heathendom and the groans and tears of captive penitents, the heroic Jesus chooses His bride.

"The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself above all that are upon the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you nor choose you because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you" (Deut. vii. 6-8). This is not the dry, heartless choice of an arbitrary will, but there is first a loving and then a choosing. Is is "the election of grace." Love does the choosing. God is love, and, being love, all His acts and choosings flow from love, not from an arbitrary will. Love chooses those who are willing to be loved, those distressed ones who need love, those who are willing to be saved by love.

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit"
(John xv. 16). Love is not arbitrary; love knows its object. Jesus, from his heart, chooses those to be His bride who are willing in this life "to be made conformable unto His death," and through the death of self to "bear much fruit." Even after entering the kingdom of Christ, our rank in that kingdom is according to the measure of our drinking His cup and being baptized with His baptism (Matt. xx. 20-23).

3. The domestication of the soul in the Divine family. "Then thou shalt bring her home to thine house." There was to be a complete change of home-life and of domestic relations. It was not to be a rough, uncivil, coerced marriage, such as occurred among all Gentile nations, and even the so-called cultured Greeks and Romans; but a genuine love-scheme of inducements and wooings. Here is a touch of domestic civilization in those dark ages superior to anything in heathenism. The soldier loved the gentle captive on the battle-field, but there was to be such a wealth of wisdom displayed in the overture of that love, as to completely win its object, making her not only the weeping captive of war, but the willing captive of love. When the victor had led his prize to his home, and she found herself surrounded by a mother's love, and the tender sympathies of sisters and friends, it would serve to assuage her grief, and
also cause the tender buds of gratitude, esteem, and affection, to spring forth in her desolate heart toward her gallant captor. But how rough and meagre is this bit of domestic poetry compared to the infinite energy and delicateness of the love of Jesus; and the far-reaching plans and tender scheming of that love to dry up our penitential woes and make us glad captives to its will! We are all familiar with the idea of adoption, the witness of the Spirit, which makes us feel that we are the children of God at the time of our justification (Rom. v. 1; Gal. iv. 6), but the line of thought in this lesson is somewhat different from the adoption of a child; it is the adoption of a bride—a bosom partner—and we must remember that as the chords in a piano all harmonize, yet each is twined separately, so each truth in Scripture has its own line of correlative passages, without conflicting with other lines of truth. Many Scriptures represent Jesus as bringing us to His Father’s family and adopting us His children; there are other Scriptures representing the espousal of the soul to Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom.

Neither let the son of the stranger that hath joined himself to the Lord speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree.

For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my
Sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant;

Even unto them will I give in my house, and within my walls, a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. — Isa. lvi. 3-5.

In these verses we see the Saviour gathering the disconsolate Gentiles to the home circle of the redeemed, and honoring them even above the Jews, giving them a place and a name, better than of sons and daughters. But what can that be, unless it means that from the outcast and grace-conquered Gentiles Jesus will gather His bride?

What infinite care does Jesus take to domesticate us in His Father's family, to draw out our affections to angels and saints, to make us feel perfectly at home in the "heavenly places."

For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,

And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:

But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

To the general assembly and church of the firstborn. — Heb. xii. 18-23.

How slow we are to appreciate this heavenly
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home circle to which Christ brings the soul He desires to espouse.

4. **Transformation of the mind.** “And she shall shave her head and pare her nails.” The hair is an emblem of power, of glory, of beauty and unction. In the soul’s espousal to Jesus, there must be a complete transformation; all of its natural power, glory, and beauty, must be shorn away, so that it may take on the power, beauty, and glory, of Jesus, inwrought by the Holy Spirit. Samson said to Delilah, “If I be shaven, then my strength will go from me” (Judges xvi.17–19). Samson lost his God-given strength; but, conversely, we must be shorn of our natural strength, our inherent self-sufficiency. Not only is it true with regard to unregenerate persons, but, in a great degree, it is true of believers who are not fully crucified; it is next to impossible for them to conceive how full they are of their own strength, their own wisdom and self-sufficiency. And the worst of it is that, until we are utterly crucified, we are so blind to our own self-conceit and self-sufficiency. It breaks out in sermon, song, conversation, Christian testimony, writing, at every pore of life. What multitudes of partially illuminated Christians at this hour, think they will get holy by good resolutions, think they can correct and tame the depravity of their natures!
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Alas! is there one in a thousand who really apprehends the extent of the fall, the utter poverty of the soul? Yes, we must be shorn; even though we have been captured and chosen and brought into the celestial family circle, there is a luxuriant growth of subtle self-conceit, self-reliance, self-sufficiency, which must be shaved off till our natural strength is bald and pared away down to the very quick of the soul's life.

What a strange and alarming experience it is, that when the believer begins to seek earnestly for an increase of grace and power, God answers him by revealing more than ever his spiritual poverty and utter weakness, so that what little strength he had is shorn from him. Ah, soul! in order that the new locks of God-given energy may cover thy head, those remnants of natural strength, of natural will-power, which have so often deceived thee, and in which thou hast so often unconsciously trusted, must all be shaved away. God's strength is made perfect only at the point where our weakness is made perfect.

The hair is not only a type of strength, but of beauty (Cant. iv. 1), and of honor (Isa. iii. 24), and of unction (Ps. cxxxiii. 2), and of glory (1 Cor. xi. 15). Hence, in order to our entire transformation and union with our Divine Captor, all our natural glory, our carnal beauty, our self-esteem, wisdom and unction, our
human will-power, and mere human virtue, must be shaved away to make room for the glorious products of grace. Oh, what desolation God has to make all through us to beautify us for Himself! Christian people think it is all right for God to desolate sinners, in order to convert them; yet thousands of them are under the miserable delusion that they must not be desolated in order to their perfect transformation into the mind of Jesus. How the mighty salvation of God must drive rough-shod over the pet idols of our heads: our views and theories, and human prudence, and fastidious tastes, and churchly pride, our mixed goodness and the cold, moonshine-beauty of our half-hearted devotion; these long, pretty, Absalom locks of uncrucified nature must be shorn by the scissors of God's Word, down to the very scalp, till in self-hatred we seek only the beauty, and strength, and glory, which comes from God. Then we shall loathe the splendid wisdom of men as heartily as we loathe their crimes, for they both proceed from the same vile root of self.

5. The change of raiment. "And she shall put the raiment of her captivity from off her." Here is another item in the soul's preparation for perfect union with the Lord. You will observe it is not the raiment of her gay, heathen
life, which she is to put off, but the raiment of her captivity. We are to put away the garniture of servitude—even of religious servitude. Throughout the Scriptures, robes, garments, clothing, raiment, are used in a Scriptural sense to express those moral qualities which deck and garniture the soul. The very word “habit” refers to a garment for the body, and also to the daily attitude and carriage of the soul. There is an envelopment about the soul, some habit, or manner, or expression, some air, or tone—a moral investment, woven out from the quality of the inner spirit, which forms its appropriate clothing. Some are clad in pride: their looks, voice, motion, and soul’s expression, indicate that “pride covers them as a garment.” Others are draped in melancholy: their heart is a loom which weaves only what merchants call “mourning goods.” Multitudes of Christians are clothed with the garments of spiritual bondage, like the case in our text. We can see it in sermons, prayers, testimony, religious work, spiritual conversation, and even in singing, there is a restraint, a reserve, an over-caution, which indicates that the soul is tied at various points by invisible strings. They lack that frank, fresh, full, free motion of soul which perfect love has. Persons who are well dressed (I do not say extravagantly dressed) always have a freedom
and ease in company which it is impossible to have when conscious of wearing rents or patches likely to be seen. That is exactly true with the soul. The soul is instinctively aware of a rent or patch in its experience, and it instinctively moves around in the royal family with an effort to conceal its shabbiness. Before the soul can be wedded to Christ, it must be freed from all the bondage investments, and freed from the old, shoddy threads of self, out of which the bondage raiment is woven. For, be it remembered, that the antinomian heresy of the soul being full of depravity, and at the same time clothed in the mere, imputed robes of Christ's personal holiness, is a theoretical fiction, and propagated by the clumsiest perversions of a few verses. A true spiritual wardrobe is opened in Col. iii. 8-14, and Rev. vii. 14.

God changes and whitens the soul's raiment by changing and cleansing the heart-threads and spirit mechanism which produce the investment. The King's wife is clothed in wrought gold, not imputed gold (Ps. xliv. 13).

6. Weaned from old relationships. "And she shall remain in thy house, and bewail her father and her mother a full month." The balance of the thought is implied, though not expressed; namely, that after she has bewailed her parents a month, she is to bewail them no more. She is
to bid an everlasting farewell to the old life, even in its subtiest and tenderest forms; and every tendril of her heart be gladly twined around the new and superior one to whom she is espoused. Now, if any one thinks this Scripture was not fashioned so as to shadow forth spiritual things, we have simply to read the forty-fifth Psalm, a most glowing description of the Messiah-King and His bride, and in which direct reference is made to this being weaned from all mere earthly relationships, in order to be the most beautiful and acceptable to Jesus. "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear: forget also thine own people and thy father's house; so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord; and worship thou Him." What a depth and perfection of deadness to the world is suggested in this passage! Old worldly ties, carnal friendships, the merely intellectual and social bonds, all semi-earthly affinities, not only broken and gone from the heart, but even forgotten like a dream. This weaning of the soul is not so much a preliminary as it is a result of sanctification. David testifies to this advanced experience, this experience of quietly nestling in the bosom of God, being content with His will, and having the heart set loose from all things earthly and transitory; a heart so in love with Jesus that it
readily forgets all contrary loves. "Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child" (Ps. cxxxi. 2).

7. **Wedded to Christ.** "And thou shalt be her husband and she shall be thy wife." "On thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir. She is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needle-work. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought; they shall enter into the King's palace." "There are threescore queens and virgins without number. My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the choice one of her that bare her." "So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty." Oh, how Jesus loves the soul that is abandoned to His arms without any reserve, that has bid an unchangeable, eternal adieu to the last vestiges of old heathen self! the soul that will gladly take him for better, for worse; the soul that thirsts to drink of His spirit, to partake of the traits of His mind, and to go forth with Him on the battle-fields of time, sharing His fortunes in the plan of saving the world. The poor, distressed maiden who was captured on a battle-field, after being transformed in her affections and united to her royal captor, rides forth by his side to make further conquests upon the ranks from
whence she was won. Hence we see in Revelation xiv. 1-5 and xix. 1-14, that the saints "rode on white horses with Jesus" (riding the hobby of a holy doctrine) were the hundred and forty-four thousand, who are called "the wife of the Lamb," the called, and chosen, and faithful, who had put off the raiment of bond-service, and "were clothed in fine linen, white and clean."

What multitudes there are who, having been captured by the Lord Jesus from the ranks of Satan, have not yet become perfectly one with Him in heart, and will, and life, making Him and His purposes the unmixed choice and glory of their existence!
CHAPTER VI.

THE THREE HEARKENS.

Hearken unto me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.

Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.

For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody.

Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people.

My righteousness is near; my salvation has gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust.

Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be forever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.

Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.

For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shal
The word "hearken" is composed of two words: hear, and ken; the one denotes the function of the ear, the other the function of the eye. Hearing and seeing are the two most acute, essential, and far-reaching senses with which our bodies are endowed. The word "hearken" expresses the united and concentrated powers of hearing and seeing, upon any one given thing; and when our God says to us, "hearken!" He means that all our capacity for looking and listening, all our powers of undistracted attention, shall be centred upon the information He is about to give us. As the forms and elements of nature influence us to the extent that they penetrate and fill our physical senses, so the things of God are controlling realities in us to the extent that they enter and occupy our inner spiritual senses. Divine truth enters into us in proportion to the strength and continuity of our attention to it.

To hearken to God! what a serene, blessed attitude of soul! To leave every receptive capacity open to Him — the ear listening, the eye looking, the heart longing, for every step of His feet, every word of His lips, and every touch of His Spirit!

In this fifty-first chapter of Isaiah, the word
"hearken" is addressed three times to as many different shades of religious character. In the first verse the Lord says "hearken" to those who seek; in the fourth verse He says "hearken" to those just entering the blessing; in the seventh verse He says "hearken" to those who who are in the knowledge and conscious possession of the blessing. To each of these "hearkens" there is attached specific instructions and promises exactly adapted to the moral state of the person addressed.

1. "Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord." This "hearken" is to the seeker; and whether it be the seeking for the "forgiveness of sins," or seeking the perfect "cleansing from all sin," the same truth holds good in either case; and yet, judging from the fact that God is addressing His own people (verse 4), and from the instruction immediately following, it applies with special pointedness to those seeking entire holiness. There are two items of encouragement given to this seeker of holiness.

The first is, look at what God has already done for you, and take courage. "Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." Every converted soul can look back to wonders of mercy already wrought in its favor. The Lord first
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takes us up out of the mire, and then takes all the mire out of us. He first draws us out of Satan's pit, and then destroys the work of Satan out of us. Having done the former of these things for us, should we not be encouraged to press on and obtain the latter also?
The second item of encouragement is looking at the example of those who have received the very grace we seek. "Look unto Abraham your father, for I blessed him." Our fathers and mothers were as sinful by nature and weak as we are; they had as corrupt hearts and as sore difficulties to encounter as we have, and if God "called them and blessed them" with perfect love, and led them through the lowly "valley of blessing so sweet," will He not do the same for us? After presenting these two strong encouragements to the seeker who is "following after holiness," He then holds out a promise of great wealth, and just such a promise as appeals most tenderly and effectively to a sad and weary heart. This promise (in third verse) is specifically that of the Abiding "Comforter." The perfection of the promise is seen in the fact that it is exactly seven-fold, corresponding to the seven lamps of the golden candle-stick. Notice how the "waste," "wilderness," "desert," things of the heart, are to be replaced by the seven words, "comfort," "Eden," "garden,"
"joy," "gladness," "thanksgiving," and "melody." The promise begins on the minor strain of consolation, and rises through the gradation of blessing till every fibre of the heart rises to concert-pitch of full salvation (see Eph. v. 18–20). This is held forth for the "seeker" who will "hearken."

2. The second "hearken" in this chapter is in verse 4, and is particularly applicable to those who are at the very edge of the blessing sought. As the first "hearken" was accompanied with promises specifically adapted to the seeker, so the second "hearken" is accompanied with promises that point directly to the act of trusting and receiving the salvation. "My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth."

If the seeker has followed fully the first "hearken," he is in such an attitude that God can say to him, "My righteousness is at your very door; I have given commandment to save you (Ps. lxxi. 3); My salvation is gone forth, and is already speeding its lightning flight to your waiting heart."

If we look carefully through verses 4, 5 and 6, connected with the second "hearken," we can see in them a vivid picture of what transpires in the soul just at the moment of its gliding into the sanctifying fountain — just in the act of crossing the trust-line into full salvation.
"A law shall proceed from My mouth." The act of receiving salvation is the very thing of receiving the words that proceed from His mouth, as the authoritative "law of life, which frees us from the law of sin." As we enter the realm of entire purity, and tread the margin of it, we come to a place where faith has no stepping-stones but the simple words from His mouth.

"On mine arm shall they trust" (verse 5). How true to experience is this order of statement: when our souls do fully repose upon the promises from His mouth as the only and sufficient authority for our perfect cleansing from sin, we discover that we are actually trusting on the arm of infinite Love. Resting on the naked promise from His mouth in verse 4, turns out to be serenely riding on the out-stretched Arm of power in verse 5. We always find the Promiser concealed in His promise; the written promise is the sleeve in which the real arm of the Infinite Spirit abides; fall on the sleeve and you will touch the arm.

This picture of the "faith act" is not complete till we take in verse 6, where we see as in a panorama all visible things vanishing away, and the soul becoming detached from created things, settles down into the "everlasting salvation of God." True, this verse will have its ex-
ternal and literal accomplishment at the end of the world; but it also has its interior, spiritual fulfillment, in the soul, when the self-life expires, and all the heartstrings are cut from earthly things and fixed in God; then, so far as that soul is concerned, "the heavens have vanished away like smoke, and the earth has waxed old like a garment." Such a soul wears the world as "a loose garment," and is prepared to have it come to an end at any time.

We find here in these three verses, three great concomitant truths arranged in the order which self-evidence confirms, when the soul enters fully into purity and power; first, the bold, steady step upon the Word "proceeding from His mouth;" then the conscious touch of a Spirit-power, " trusting on His arm;" and then the purified spiritual vision, piercing the transitoriness of outward things; or, as it is emphatically expressed in this sixth verse, the "lifting up of the eyes to behold" the surroundings of nature only as an empty cloud; to see that the heart has been divorced from time and sense, and to make the blissful discovery that it is sinking into that full "salvation which shall be forever and ever," and only broadens in its ineffable manifestations as eternal ages roll! These verses—like all others in Scripture—are not tumbled together in a hap-hazard manner, but
are linked with inconceivable precision, and successive order. But we can discover those links in the written Word, only about as fast as the chain is wrought in our experience. The repose on God's Word, the touch of an Almighty arm, and an anointed eye to pierce through space and time: what an epoch to the soul! How is it reached? By hearkening to the sweet, omnipotent voice. "Give ear unto me."

I have been forcibly struck with that sententious expression: "Hear, and your soul shall live" (Isa. lv. 3). How simple! how sublime! The river of crystal love flowing into my panting spirit, simply by my listening to the ripple of its flow! Cease your useless struggling; hush the self-noise of your will and heart; get quiet; listen to Jesus,—only let His Word float into your ears, down into your heart, and it will heal. A boy falls on the pavement, muddies his clothing, and gets up crying. Hark! a band of music is just turning down the street, playing "Home, sweet home." The boy hearkens—all his nerves centre then in his ears; the melody pours through his little vexed brain like a flood of balm, washing away his little grief, and transforming the whole child into a bundle of delight. He listened; that was all. Ah! if our entire soul will but hearken to Christ, His Word will heal our sores, His voice soften and pacify us.
3. The third “hearken,” in verse 7, is addressed to those who have received the gift of the Spirit—who have entered the realm of full assurance. “Hearken, ye that know righteousness; in whose heart is my law.” This is a bugle-call for patient, loving heroism on the part of those who have received the blessing sought; that they must be brave, loving, long-suffering witnesses to the salvation found. The Voice now commands the purified soul not to fear reproach and revilings. Notice, there is no allusion in this chapter to reproach and persecution, till after the soul becomes a witness to what it consciously knows of salvation. This is ever the order. In the Beatitudes, the blessedness of persecution comes after the blessedness of heart purity.

The soul that has reached full assurance must utter itself: the wondrous seven-fold promise—the “comfort,” the “Eden,” the “garden,” the “joy,” the “gladness,” the “thanksgiving,” and the “melody,” offered to the seeker in verse 3, have been transmuted into experience in verse 7, and like an artesian well, the fountain of pure love rushes forth in testimony upon men; but the very overflow of this well, while entering the soil, will also give an occasion for the briars and thorns of “reproach” to grow along its course; the ringing bells of testimony will often
wake the growling wolves along the path of the sanctified believer.

I think every truly purified soul, soon after finding the experience, will hear a gentle yet authoritative Voice whispering the mandate of courage in the recesses of the heart. "Tell it, my child! tell it! Report the sweet miracle I have wrought in you; lovingly, bravely, constantly tell it. Be not afraid of reproach; it is I, be not afraid." Oh! it is worth a universe to know that God talks to your heart in that strain!

And then, what a scene of contrast is presented in verse 8! Here we see the vast army of cold critics and persecutors — those who spurn a sanctification testimony — those who inuendo and reproach the holy specialists — those who count the cleansing blood a common thing,—all these in the lapse of a few years are seen melting away like old, "moth-eaten garments," while, on the other hand, the tried and true blood-washed witnesses of Jesus, with experiences of perennial green, and gathering humility and love from every trial, are seen passing on "from generation to generation."

We have in these three "hearkens" the beginning, progress, and triumph of a soul in the history of full salvation. This great salvation depends upon the degree of intensity with which
we hear and ken the truth of God. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith."
CHAPTER VII.

THE FEEDING OF ELIJAH.

There is something both interesting and instructive in the extraordinary modes in which God fed the Prophet Elijah on several occasions. He was supplied with food in an extraordinary manner; first, by the ravens; then, by the poor widow; then, by the Angel Jehovah himself. I do not claim to have discovered the exact spiritual significance of all this, but I can certainly draw from it lessons for my own heart, which may be a help also to others. We see his table spread first, on the plain of law, nature, and its instincts; secondly on the plain of human fellowship and combined faith; thirdly, on the plain of the supernatural and communion with celestial beings.

1. The feeding by the ravens (see 1 Kings xvii. 3–6). God said to Elijah, "Hide thyself by the brook Cherith, and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the
brook.” How simple the words, “I have commanded the ravens.” How God holds every element and law of nature under His immediate “command,” and can work all to the benefit of His children. Those ravens were not aware of any special command from God, they simply followed a mere impulse impressed on their instincts by the hidden finger of their Creator. They brought the prophet two good meals a day, with all the silence and undeviating regularity of a natural law. There is a correspondence to this in the way God feeds His children in the infant stages of grace. Not only are we convicted by the law and led to Christ; but after we are converted we are at first nourished through what may be termed the natural law of religion. As a young vine needs a trellis to lean on, so the young believer needs specific and external and prescribed routine duties in order to bring the soul to the habits of grace. He cannot yet nourish himself from deep spiritual processes, and needs the regularity of set times and rules like the instinctive ravens to serve as conductors of soul food.

2. Fed by the widow (I Kings xvii. 8–9). “Arise, get thee to Zarephath; behold I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.” Did God utter an articulate command to the widow to feed Elijah? The record does
not so indicate. He who "commanded" the ravens "commanded" also the widow; but God articulates His words according to the nature addressed. The ravens were creatures of instinct, and God issued his command to them in the shape of a new instinct within them; but the widow was a creature of faith, and God issued His "command" to her in the shape of a new and vigorous stretch of faith. The highest voice of God's commandment is when it is uttered in the bias of souls. Here we see Elijah fed from the table of faith and fellowship. Notice, the visits of the ravens had the appearance of natural law and instinct; but there was neither instinct nor natural law in the incoming of meal into the barrel: in the first case it looked like repose on a law; in the other it was repose on a naked promise. It was not only faith, but a conjoining of faith. The prophet and the widow helped each other by their mutual and perfect trust. After God has fed us for a season through the medium of external duties, He bids us arise and go forward. He takes away the routine props of our experience or shows us their insufficiency, leads us to some believing or illuminated soul for specific instruction or fellowship, removes the natural phenomena away from us, takes away signs and brings us by a blessed "command" to trust his naked promise for our salvation and food of life.
3. Fed by the angel (I Kings xviii. 5-8). Here we find Elijah separated from all human beings, in utter despair of human help, panting to be absent from the body and present with the Lord. In this state of mind he slept, weary, hungry, and sad. An angel touched him, saying, “Arise and eat.” On awaking he saw the warm cakes and bottle of water right at his pillow. This was repeated. This angel is called the angel of the Lord; he was the Angel Jehovah, the Lord Jesus. In this case we see Elijah fed on a supernatural plain, nourished directly from the hand of his Redeemer; and in addition to that, receiving a special and personal manifestation of the Lord. It is worth noticing that the food given by this angel possessed such invigorating power as to last through a forty days’ journey.

There is something agreeing to this incident in the advanced experiences of sanctification. After the soul has entered the life of perfect trust, God often leads it into a solitariness of feeling and a period of separation from all human souls not unlike Elijah under the juniper tree, and Jesus in Gethsemane. He draws us from depending for nourishment upon intermediate laws and agencies, brings us to feed directly on Himself, the vitality of His precious flesh and blood,—the bread of His body and the
water of His living Spirit. When Elijah was farthest removed from other souls, the Lord most distinctly unveiled Himself; the same was true of John in Patmos. It is not that we cease to have fellowship, but there is a weaning from other souls, which furnishes an occasion for the most distinct and immediate views of the Lord.

Each of these modes of feeding contain suggestions worth elaborating had I space. I have only hinted at the principal ones. We discover progress at each step.

Progress as to the nearness of the food: at first it was wafted to him from an unknown distance; the next it was supplied in the house where he lodged; but at last it was placed at his very bolster (see margin). To use a military phrase, he was getting nearer each time to his base of supplies. Thus Jesus would “prepare tables for us” (Ps. xxii.), till we can find morning by morning the living food at our very bolsters.

We see progress in fellowship, at first with the works of God, then with the saints of God, then with the personal Lord. We see progress in the disclosure of Divine agency; in the feeding by the ravens God mantles His agency under the mute instincts of the birds; in feeding from the mysterious and unexhausted barrel, the immediate agency of God comes a little
nearer to view, His miraculous finger is almost visible at the bottom of the barrel, yet no person is seen; but in the feeding by the Angel Jehovah all intermediate veils are laid aside, the agency of the blessed Provider stands revealed direct in familiar love and personal form. Thus He, whose very name is the Bread of Life, “feeds us with food convenient for us,” from this infant state of grace up to those sturdier experiences of abandonment and trust in which He can make free with us, and give us our daily bread, as it were, from His ungloved hand; for the glove is ever on His hand, and the veil is ever on His face, except to those whose eyes are anointed to “see Him who is invisible.”
CHAPTER VIII.

SCRIPTURE EMBLEMS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Among the various emblems which the Scriptures use to represent the office and work of the Holy Spirit, we may select four as perhaps illustrating the main features, in the Spirit's mission; viz., the air, the fire, the water, and the oil. Perhaps none of these emblems is sufficient to set forth all the work of the Spirit, and so all of them are requisite in giving us an elaborate picture of His manifold work upon, and within, the human soul.

Upon a careful examination of these various emblems, I am convinced that each one sets forth some particular work of the Spirit; that these types are not used indiscriminately, nor always synonymously, but that the Spirit Himself selected these which best adumbrated His mission, and uses each type for a special reason.

Let us look at these four types in detail.

I. The type of the wind, or air.
Gen. ii. 7: "And the Lord God formed man
of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." The expression, "breath of life," in this verse, is more strictly, in the original, "breath of lives," teaching us that the Holy Spirit is the Divine agent of communicating vitality to the creation; not only of spiritual life, but the natural, animal life, which is in the body, was communicated by the Holy Spirit. The office of the Spirit is here presented as that of a producer of life. There is nothing said here as to the empowering of the individual, or the making him holy, but simply the impartation of a spiritual life to the frame which had been fashioned by the Lord Jesus. This seems to be the office of the Spirit, set forth in Gen. i. 2. "The Spirit of God moved," like an all-pervading vital force, on the surface of the waters; and at the various fiats issued by the Word of God, this all-pervading Spirit imparted life to the earth and sea. The point to be noticed is, that when the Spirit is compared to "wind," it always sets Him forth as the generator of life, or the originator of lost life from the soul.

Job xxxiii. 4: "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." This is a very clear statement of the office of the Spirit in producing life, set forth
under the emblem of breath or air. When Job says, the Spirit of God hath made me, it does not at all conflict with the expression of St. John which says, “All things were made by Jesus Christ, and without Him was not anything made that was made.” Jesus is evidently set forth in the Scriptures as the One creating all things, under the command of God the Father, and as having authority to send forth His Spirit, utilizing, harmonizing, beautifying and vitalizing the work of His hands. When Job says, “The Spirit of God made me,” he must refer to his thinking, conscious spirit, and not to his mere animal frame. And this corresponds with the text from Genesis, that by the inbreathing of God, that is, the Spirit of God, man became a living soul. We will notice in this text that Job does not say the water of the Almighty hath given me life; or the fire of the Almighty hath given me life; but the “breath” of the Almighty, that is, the Spirit, under the emblem of the wind, hath given me life.

Ezek. xxxvii. 9, 10: “Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood upon their feet, an exceeding great army.”
This text is in exact conformity with the previous ones, that when the Spirit is set forth under the emblem of the wind or breath, it always indicates His office as implanting life or restoring life that had been lost.

The wind is nowhere used as a type of sanctification in the Word of God. It is nowhere used as a type of teaching or instruction. It is nowhere used as a type of destroying sin, or cleansing the heart, or illuminating the mind; but it is invariably used to indicate the gift of life. This valley of dry bones represented the backsliders in God's kingdom, who had lost the spirituality once given. Here we see the Holy Ghost as a mighty wind blowing over this dreary scene, restoring life again to the dead. The memorable words of Jesus, in St. John's Gospel, third chapter and eighth verse, are in confirmation of this interpretation. Jesus is speaking to Nicodemus concerning the new birth; first of its absolute necessity, and secondly of its mysteriousness: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit." Christ introduced the metaphor of the wind, as an illustration of the office of the Spirit, but He applies it only to the work of the new birth, to the imparting of the life of God to the
soul. Some one may ask, "Was not the sanctifying baptism of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, compared to wind?" I answer, the Scriptures do not say so. The record says there came a "sound" from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind. The sound was like the wind. It does not say that there came a rushing wind, but a rushing sound, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. It does not say the wind filled the house, but the mysterious roaring noise, resembling the noise of the tempest, filled the house. The emblem selected by the Spirit on that occasion was fire. The sound was produced by the fire, though it resembled the sound of wind. I think that the Scriptures, carefully searched, will bear out this interpretation, that when the Spirit is compared to wind, it describes His office only in the work of implanting life, either in nature, or in the soul of man.

II. The emblem of fire.

Let us now notice the emblem of fire as setting forth one of the offices of the Spirit. Mr. George Smith, in his harmony of the Divine dispensations, makes out a very clear argument that the flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life, mentioned in Gen. iii. 24, was really a "revolving flame," located between the two cherubims, corresponding
with the Shekinah flame which was afterwards located between the cherubim on the Mercy-seat, and that this "revolving fire" was a type of the Holy Spirit. I shall not be able to make all the quotations from the Scriptures in which the fire symbol is used, and only select a few illustrative passages.

In Lev. iv. 4-10, we have an account of the sin-offering which was to be consumed by fire. We shall find that just as the wind typifies the life-imparting office of the Spirit, so fire typifies the cleansing, sanctifying office of the Spirit. And as wind is nowhere the emblem of sanctification, so fire is nowhere the emblem of regeneration. The fire emblem is used when the idea is that of consuming, destroying, purging away. We know that in nature the atmosphere is the preserver and communicator of life. All animals and plants, and the very drops of water, live only by and through the atmosphere; but that the atmosphere of itself has no power of purification. We know, also, in nature, that fire is a great purifier; that the heat of the sun, clouds of electricity, the burning of forests and of cities, the kindling of a fire in a sickroom, are powerful agents in consuming disease, and in purifying. I think that we shall find that when the Spirit is set forth as fire in the Scriptures, it will correspond very closely to the office of fire in nature.
Isa. ix. 5: “For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire.”

Isa. vi. 6, 7: “Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar, and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.”

In this case Isaiah had had the Divine life imparted to him years before. It was not regeneration that he needed, but to have the remains of the old sinful nature completely destroyed. Hence the work of the Spirit is set forth as a live coal of fire burning the dross of sin out of his soul.

Matt. iii. 11, 12: “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but He that cometh after me, shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” There are two kinds of burning,—either sin must be burned out of the soul, or the soul itself must burn forever. In this passage we see the prominent thought is that of destruction, of consuming.

Acts ii. 3, 4: “And there appeared unto them
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cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

It is worthy to note the two distinct receivings of the Holy Spirit by the Apostles. Shortly after Christ’s resurrection, he met the disciples in a private room and breathed on them, saying, Receive ye the Holy Ghost (see John xx. 22). That was doubtless the Holy Spirit implanting within them more clearly than ever before, the new life, and His office is set forth under the breathing. And when these same disciples received the full sanctifying baptism on the day of Pentecost, He came under the form of fire. The work that the Spirit wrought in their hearts on that day, is interpreted by the work He wrought upon Isaiah, and by the words which Peter uses in the fifteenth chapter of Acts, where he says: “God gave them the Holy Ghost, purifying their hearts by faith.”

Heb. xiii. 11, 12: “For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate.” In this passage Paul teaches us that the burning of the sin-offering was a type of sanctifying the soul
through the blood of Christ by the operation of the Spirit.

III. The emblem of water.
The third emblem under which the Spirit is set forth is that of water, either in the form of dew, or rain, or shower, or river, or bubbling wells. I have not space to put down all the quotations that might be collected under this head. After searching the Scriptures through to find the mind of the Spirit as to what is the significance of the water emblem, I have reached the conclusion that it bodies forth the thought of cleansing and nourishing.

We have been taught by the early writers of Methodism the two-foldness of sanctification. One is negative, the other is positive. The negative side of sanctification is that of emptying, removing, destroying the carnal mind. The positive side of sanctification involves the filling of the purified heart with light and love; the multiplying within it the graces of the Spirit, and enjoying those graces. Now, so far as I can discover, this is just the significance of the two sanctifying emblems of fire and water. Fire represents purity with the idea of destruction — of consuming. Water represents the idea of purity with the positive upbuilding of the soul in truth and strength and love. Let me call your attention to a few proof texts.
Isaiah xliv. 3, 4: "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses."

This idea of comparing the Spirit to the water-courses flowing through the soul, upon whose ever-moist banks grow the flourishing trees of grace and righteousness, is one largely set forth in the Scriptures. (See Psalm i.; Ezek. xlvi.; Rev. xxi.)

This positive side of sanctification is set forth in Ezek. xxxvi. 25-30: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you, and I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes, and I will multiply the fruit of the tree."

In this chapter we have a striking picture of holiness with the concomitant idea of nourishing and building up the soul in the fruit of the Spirit.

Ephesians v. 55-27: "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."
Here again we see the idea of sanctification accompanied with its positive side of being filled with glory and without blemish. When the Scriptures use the emblem of fire it is mostly in connection with the blood of sacrifices, showing that the Spirit, when acting as a fire, applies the blood of Christ. But when the Scriptures represent the Spirit as water, it speaks of the truth, or the Word of God, from which it would seem that the Spirit applying the blood produces sanctification in its negative form of cleansing, destroying the evil; and that the Spirit, applying the Word or truth of God, produces sanctification in its positive form of nourishing, strengthening and upbuilding the soul. Jesus says, "Sanctify through thy truth, thy Word is truth."

I think a great many scriptures could be compiled to sustain these remarks. It may be worthy to notice that in the representations of the work of the Spirit in the future world the only type that is used is that of water. There will be no new impartation of life to the soul beyond death. Neither will there be any work of destroying the carnal mind from us beyond death. Hence we have no type of the Spirit acting as wind or as fire upon the saints in the future world; but the purified soul will forever need to be sustained by the truth— the living
Word of God—which will be its food in the future economy. Hence the Scriptures represent the Spirit as acting under the form of water.

Revelation vii. 17: “For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters.” The various books and chapters of God’s Word are the living fountains of waters. The Scriptures have not been given in vain, and somewhere in the history of the saint everything is to be interpreted entirely to his mind and applied with power and unction to his heart. And Jesus, through the agency of his Spirit, will lead his glorified saints through all the words of God, and open them up within the heart as fountains of living waters. The vision that John gives us in the last chapter of Revelation of a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb, is a most charming type of the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son, streaming forever through the souls of the glorified, like a crystal river, imparting immortal spring and verdure to the soul, causing all the fruits and graces of the Divine life to flourish and grow within it.

IV. The emblem of oil.
Oil is a very frequent type in the Scriptures of the Holy Spirit, and yet this type has its specific significance. The oil emblem has no reference to the giving of life, and has no reference to sanctification or cleansing, but signifies always the endowing of the purified nature with gifts, illumination, power and wisdom.

In Exodus xxx. 22–33, we have an account of the composition of the holy anointing oil. There was a special command that no other oil should be made like it. Whosoever compounded any like it should be cut off from his people, from which we gather the truth that when the Spirit acts as an Anointer, bestowing His gifts and illuminations, they can never be counterfeited by any art or learning, or any natural genius or necromancy or hypocrisy, and whoever attempts to counterfeit the gifts of the Spirit shall be cut off.

1 Sam. xvi. 13: “Then Samuel took the horn and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward.”

Here we see a clear illustration of the peculiar office of the Spirit as an Anointer. From the time David was anointed by Samuel, the Spirit began to call forth all the faculties and gifts of his nature, or else began to clothe him with those gifts which would especially fit him
to be the king of Israel, and the head and leader of the Jewish Church.

We are familiar with the instances in Leviticus of how the priests were set apart, purified by the sprinkling of blood, and then anointed with oil, typifying the enduement of spiritual gifts, rendering them thoroughly competent to be teachers and spiritual guides of the peoples.

Psalm xcii. 10, 11: "I shall be anointed with fresh oil. Mine eye also shall see my desire on mine enemies, and mine ears shall hear my desire of the wicked that rise up against me." In this passage we see that the anointing was not for the purpose of cleansing, but for opening the eyes and ears, the quickening and strengthening of the spiritual senses, to comprehend the dealings of God with men.

Psalm xxiii. 5, 6: "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 will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

In this passage we see the anointing oil is attended with a deep discernment into the dealings of God, an apprehension of future blessedness, and the confirmation or the assurance of eternal salvation. While the Spirit is the agent that works in us in every stage of grace, yet He has distinct kinds of work to perform within
the soul. At one time it is a work of destruction. At another, a work of restoring, healing or strengthening the spirit. At another, of endowing with peculiar gifts and power for specific ends. At another, of revealing to the soul things to come. At another, confirming the soul unto eternal salvation. This last work of the Spirit seems to be the one referred to in this quotation from the twenty-third Psalm. The anointing that David speaks of seems to have carried with it an inward conviction and deep certainty that goodness and mercy should follow him all his life, and that he would dwell forever with God.

Psalm cv. 14, 15: “He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, He reproved kings for their sakes; saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.”

In this place the anointing which God poured on Abraham and the patriarchs, seems to secure to them special preservation and privileges.

Acts x. 38: “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil.” Here we see that the anointing was not for the purpose of making holy, but was the special enduement with power to heal all diseases, break the fetters of Satan, and deliver those who were oppressed. This corres
ponds with the prophecy in the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Doubtless all ministers and Christian workers who will follow the Lord perfectly in the regenerating and sanctifying offices of the Spirit, will receive each in his measure this same anointing of the Spirit, of which Isaiah speaks. It is often the case that there are latent gifts within us, unknown capabilities of heart, or mind, or voice, or hand, which conversion does not unfold, which mere heart-cleansing as a negative process does not empower, but after we are converted, and after we are cleansed from inbred sin, we need this Divine oil, this peculiar office of the Spirit pouring himself over our whole being, like the oil on the head of Aaron that ran down to the skirts of his garments, clothing the entire mind with light and strength and skill to do just the work described in this prophecy of Isaiah.

1 John ii. 27: "But the anointing which ye
have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him.”

Here again we see that the anointing has a special reference to teaching, communicating spiritual truth, to the discerning of truth from error. The same idea is presented in the twentieth verse: “But ye have an unction — that is, an anointing — from the Holy One, and ye know all things.” This knowing of all things refers to the discerning of the true Christ from the false Christs spoken of in verses 18, 19. How true this Scripture is being fulfilled to-day! There are so many false Christs not only in the world, but even in the visible Church. So many who preach science and think it the Gospel. So many false notions respecting holiness. So many professed followers of Christ who have in their physiognomy the image of the world. It requires nothing less than the specific anointing spoken of in this chapter to enable the believer to discern the true from the false.

This anointing is given after the work of heart cleansing. It is nowhere represented as perform the work of purity, but is a special enduement of light and power from the Holy Ghost upon the sanctified soul.
I think if you will examine the work of the Spirit as set forth under these four types, you will find it in keeping both with the Scriptures and with experience.

And yet in order to be judges in this matter the soul must have the experiences described by these various types. It is the same Spirit that works in every stage of Christian life, and yet His special works are set forth by special emblems. No one type of nature is sufficient to body forth His whole ministry.

There are other types in Scripture, and yet perhaps they could all be classified under these four. Living as we do in a material world, and encompassed with material senses, God speaks to us through material emblems.

But the time is coming when He will not speak to us in parables, but will bring our spirits into immediate vision and communion with the Father. Then the soul will be able to dispense with all secondary terms and types, and having lost itself in the ocean of the Divine nature, and being one with the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, it will not need to be taught any more, but will see and know all things in the cloudless comprehension which the Spirit will constantly give to the glorified soul.
CHAPTER IX.

BETHEL AND PENIEL.

In the closing parts of the Bible, as in the Epistles, we have very accurate theological statements and definitions, but in the earlier portions of Scripture we have a panoramic theology written out in the lives of the patriarchs and prophets. Both of these forms of presenting truth are essential: they supplement and illustrate each other. Thus the Epistles to the Galatians and Ephesians have a living commentary in the life and experience of the patriarch Jacob. There are many religious teachers who, in order to avoid the Scriptural logic of the second blessing, will pervert and deceitfully handle large portions of Scripture. Nothing is more common than to hear ministers and other professed religious teachers representing Isaiah as an unregenerate man until his live-coal baptism; representing the hundred and twenty disciples as unconverted till the day of Pentecost; representing Moses as a half heathen till his burning-bush experience; and Jacob is slandered — with-
out a single Scripture warrant—as a skinflint and a thief until his Peniel experience. And this bearing of false witness against Bible characters, representing them as common sinners up to the period of their full salvation, is made right in the face of blazing statements of Scripture to the contrary. If we candidly peruse the progressive steps of the religious experience of Jacob, we shall see reflected, as in a mirror, the New Testament teachings of adoption, consecration, and the baptism of power. If we will read from the twenty-eighth to the thirty-third chapters of Genesis, we can readily crystallize all the items of religious truth around the following points.

I. **Jacob's adoption of God.**

In Gen. xxviii. 10–22, we can find all the New Testament elements entering into our adoption into the "house," or family of God.

1. **A way opened between God and man.** "He dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it." Jesus gives us to understand that this ladder was a type of Himself. Nathanael lived near the place of this ladder dream, and when Jesus met him He associated him with Jacob, calling him "an Israelite indeed." and
promising him he should "see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man," in which Jesus identifies Himself as the veritable ladder from earth to heaven. Now the first requisite to a New Testament conversion is a mediation—an open way between the sinner and God, and this Jacob had in the ladder.

2. A revelation of the fatherhood of God to Jacob.

And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

Could Jacob, could any one, have a more accurate, tender, and elaborate assurance of his adoption of God, than is conveyed in these remarkable expressions of Divine grace? Look at these merciful words. Would God address such words to an alien, to an unconverted soul? They were not spoken through an eloquent angel or a mumbling priest, but from Jehovah di-
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rectly to Jacob. Here is an expression of Divine fatherhood, accompanied with a land-grant and a covenant of grace extending to all the families of the earth, and a promise of God's perpetual presence and of His keeping power. God never spoke such words to one who was not his child.

3. Jacob recognized the gracious words coming from God. "Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not"; that is, he did not know the previous evening when he lay down that God was so near to him, but now the Divine presence is known. It was not one of those old-style, Calvinistic, hope-so conversions, in which a soul is supposed to be years finding out really whether God spoke to it or not; but he had the witness within him, the vision lingered in his soul, the heavenly message was fastened in his heart and memory.

The very name he gave to the spot—Bethel—i.e., the house of God, indicates that he then felt himself within the walls of the covenant grace. The house of God is the family of God, the kingdom of God. His sins were forgiven, for he felt himself in the gate to heaven.

4. As a fruit of Jacob's conversion, he not only makes an open and enduring profession of God's manifestation to him, but he enters into a financial covenant with the Lord, to give Him
“one tenth of all his income.” God was so pleased with this financial covenant, that he made it the law for subsequent generations. If the giving of a tenth is God’s idea of religious business, and if that same idea was in Jacob’s heart, does it not prove that his heart had been so changed as to be in agreement with God? I have heard Jacob severely denounced for making this “money bargain” with God, yet the Lord emblazons His approval of this same money bargain, and made it a law for His church, and the very basis of that poor man’s prosperity. It were well if those who criticise Jacob as having no religion till Peniel, had themselves as remarkable and practical a conversion as he had at Bethel: for, be it remembered, that this penniless patriarch, twenty years before his full sanctification, founded a law of giving, which, if practised to-day by all professed Christians, it would literally flood the globe with benefactions, and leave no poor unsupplied.

II. Jacob’s legal service.
What do we mean by legality? We mean rendering service by law, by a rigid routine, by specified wages, a service that is measured off, as it were, by the yard and the pound; so much labor for so much joy, so much performing of duty for so much of salvation. This is where
the great bulk of nominal religionists are, trying to get such and such degrees of grace by the doing of such and such performances; serving God by the inch and ounce. The Epistle to the Galatians is a very elaborate and luminous unfolding of the principle of legal service. In this Epistle Paul states a general fact, that even the children of God, who are in their spiritual minority—not yet delivered from the native reasonings and carnality of nature—have, in their measure, the same legal bondage that many sincere, but unregenerate ceremonialists have. “Now I say that the heir (the regenerated soul), as long as he is a child (a babe yet partly carnal), differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors (under the influence of what this and that one may say, under the coercion of this and that performance), until the time appointed of the father—until he receives the promise of the Father, the baptism of the Spirit” (Gal. iv. 1–2).

There are four kinds of religious law. The first three always bring the soul into bondage, the last one alone brings true Scriptural liberty and joy of service. Before examining Jacob’s legal service, let us notice briefly four laws.

First, is the so-called Adamic law; often alluded to by theologians, yet no one ever knew
what it was; it never was written out; it is referred to as the *ideal rule* of *exact propriety* in thought, word and act. This is the dreamy sort of perfection some people demand of us. Persons who are striving to think, act, feel, look, and move with the utmost geometrical precision, who are straining after some angelic or chiseled ideal of life, are the dupes and serfs of an impractical imagination. They have left the simple New Testament Jesus, and are serving a god of their fancy. Serving an ideal is the quintessence of soul slavery.

The second law is the ceremonial, the ritualistic, in which religion is prescribed and written out in external duties; all of life and time is parcelled out into specified rites and prayers and performances; religion is measured out by the inch and ounce, like feeding a baby with a spoon. Such a service produces weariness and slavery to body and mind. No soul ever found sweet peace and rest from going through a prescribed ritualism.

The third is the moral law, the ten commandments. This law differs widely from the ceremonial law. The latter was written by Moses, and abrogated by Christ, but the ten commandments were written by no creature, but by the finger of God, and were not repealed by Christ, as the Antinomians teach, but are binding on
all generations. Still it is impossible for any to keep the moral law until they are brought under the power of grace. It is here that imperfect Christians have their legal struggles. They have enough grace to make them love the moral law, and they strive to keep that law in the full spirit as well as the letter, but remaining impurity of heart foils their efforts, and brings them into a struggling bondage.

The fourth religious law is the evangelical "law of faith," "the law of life in Christ Jesus," "the perfect law of liberty," the "eleventh commandment," the "law of love out of a pure heart." This law of perfect faith, working by love, is the outlet from the bondage of the other laws. The law of faith and love is just the reverse of legality. The legalist thinks if he could just keep the law, then God would save him; but the believer goes to Jesus first to get fully saved, and then he can keep the law; and he can keep the law only so long as Jesus fully saves him.

Let us now look at the illustrative legal years of Jacob, before his full deliverance. Although he was a son and heir, yet he was under providential legal tutors, by which he learned those severe lessons which led him to a life of perfect trust. Jacob's legal bondage is described in the twenty-ninth and thirty-first of Genesis.
1. He was a child, but not in full, happy fellowship with his parents. Far away from home; and the faces of loved ones shone only in memory. How many of God's people are in a similar condition! Instead of going on to perfection, they have allowed the fear of some Esau to come between them and the smiles of God; still striving on without immediate communion with their heavenly Father.

2. An heir, yet working for stipulated wages. Inheriting the vast wealth of Abraham and Isaac, yet so far removed from his legitimate fortune as to be a hired servant. How many in the Church of Christ are in this state, serving for wages, doing this, giving that, going there, hoping thereby to get a little comfort. These heirs in exile, entitled to the baptism of the Holy Ghost, with its wealth of results, under some legal task-master serving for wages; so much work for so much religion.

2. He was under Laban, the Syrian. Laban is a very accurate type of the mere letter of the written law. The word Laban signifies "whiteness," and the mere letter of law, whether ceremonial or moral, is holy, just and good, yet in itself utterly void of all mercy or love. In judging of Bible characters, I take sides with the Lord. If I can find out the Lord's decision upon a person, I at once adopt it as mine, what-
ever the appearances to the contrary may be. There is not a trace of God's approval upon Laban. We can read between the lines that he was rigid, exacting, merciless; always driving a hard bargain, yet never getting rich: his daughters complained that their hard-hearted father "sold them," instead of giving them away; he reduced everything, even the sweetest affections of earth, to a mere trade. What a picture of cold, iron law! And yet legality is just such a spirit. It knows nothing but hard, driving duties; it reduces prayer and devotion, nay, even the soul's espousal to Christ, to a sort of a trade. It knows nothing of a glad, generous, love service.

4. Laban was never satisfied, but grew more and more exacting, and "changed Jacob's wages ten times." Such is the nature of legal service; it never yields peace, contentment, satisfaction. Let one attempt to follow out a religion of the mere letter; the duties are multiplied, tasks grow more irksome, anticipated experiences are not reached. How touching are the words of Jacob to Rachel and Leah, "Ye know that with all my power I have served your father, and your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times, but the God of my father hath been with me, and suffered your father not to hurt me." But for what grace Jesus gives to
his people in such a state, they would be crushed by the iron heel of legalism.

III. *Steps to liberty.*

1. “And the Lord said unto Jacob, return unto the land of thy fathers, and I will be with thee.” There is nothing like the distinct, specific voice of God, calling the believer to spiritual liberty. Many will serve God year after year, in a hard, legal way. They may hear sermons and testimonies, and read books on the higher life, but somehow the truth does not dawn upon them till God, in His own way, brings on a crisis in their souls, and His call penetrates them: “Arise, get thee out of this bondage.” All our preaching and writing is vain unless we can get God, by the Holy Spirit, to speak directly to souls Himself.

2. Jacob followed the call of God at once, without consulting a word with Laban (xxxii. 20). So must you do, O tired and fettered soul! If you stop to consult the routine of duty, or consult other fettered Christians, you will get into deeper bondage. You must let the dead bury their dead, let dead religionists take care of dead forms, you follow Christ.

3. Laban chased Jacob down and searched his stuff (xxxii. 36, 37). Thus it will be with you when you “set your face toward Mount
Gilead," the mount of healing balm; some evil spirit will chase you, and search you; try to entrap you back, charge you with rashness, presumption, aiming too high, acting without proper counsel; anything to keep you in the old ruts.

4. When Laban found that Jacob and his family could not be turned back, then he gave them his kiss and blessing (xxx. 55). Even the letter of the law, that killeth when you are under it, will turn and kiss you when you get free from it. The hard duties of life put on a sweet and friendly look after you get free from their drudgery. When you are put on an equality with law it will treat you very nicely; but treat you rough if it is over you.

5. "As Jacob went on his way, the angels of God met him" (xxxii. 1). These angels were precursors of victory, to encourage and prepare him for meeting the Angel of Covenant, who should transform him fully. Even so it is now: when the believer presses on his way to the land of promise, good angels in some shape will meet him. Some witness, or teacher, or book, or evangel of grace, will be sent to meet such a soul to help it on.

IV. Jacob's entire consecration.
He had been consecrated to God ever since
his Bethel experience, but he had come to a crisis when every element of consecration was to be brought to perfection. Every believer is consecrated in a measure, yet very few have carried their self-sacrifice to God to the point of completeness. In the sacrifice of his all to God which Jacob made, we gather:—

1. *He yielded his all, item by item.* In sending his present to Esau to appease him—which was in reality committing it to the will of God—he parcelled it out, drove by drove, leaving a space between (xxxii. 13–23). This is a characteristic of entire consecration. The Holy Spirit, who conducts the believer through that exercise, presents to him an accurate analysis of all he has and is, and leads the soul to yield its effects up to God, item by item, up to the last atom.

2. *It was risking his all to an unknown destiny.* It was make or break; it was win all or lose all; it was complete victory or his destruction. No middle ground, no half-measure would answer. In his prayer (xxxii. 6–11), you see the distress of that crisis. He must run an infinite risk, and leave God to turn the scales. In after years he referred to this as “the day of his distress” (Gen. xxxv. 3). To entirely pass one's-self over to the unknown and eternal will of God, is a serious, eventful act. There often
sweeps before the mind, at such an hour, a vast field of possibilities, liabilities, and contingencies. For better, for worse; for weal or woe it is the problem of all or none. In a certain sense, the soul solemnly chooses to run an infinite risk with the incomprehensible purposes of God for both worlds. A superficial Christian is leagues away from such an act.

3. His strength had to be broken by the Lord. “And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him; and when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob’s thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him” (xxxii. 24, 25). After committing all he had to the providence of God, it remained for him to put himself into the Divine hand. Left alone with God. Religion, in its last analysis, reduces itself to two persons, God and myself. God draws us away from things and all other creatures. He will settle all questions of destiny directly with the soul, apart from secondary laws or agents. It was not Jacob that wrestled with the angel primarily, but it was the God-man that wrestled with Jacob. Jacob’s only path to victory was his complete subjugation by the Lord. All that long night the Son of God wrestled with every power of Jacob’s nature, reducing all his energies of self-will, self-plan-
ning, self-desire, self-esteem, till his spiritual
"bones were broken" (Ps. li. 8), and to cut the
work short, he unjointed his sturdy limb and
made him a limping picture of weakness. It is
our strength that God must hew away in order
to bless us. Isaiah says, "The lame take the
prey." He who is perfectly conquered by the
Lord, cannot be conquered by anything else.
but if God does not conquer us, we are an easy
prey to a thousand foes. The soul that is thor-
oughly subjugated by the Lord, will march or
limp triumphantly through earth and sky, ap-
parently as weak as an infant, but as invincible
as gravitation.

4. The innermost and uttermost confession of
his being to God. The Lord said, "What is thy
name? And he said, Jacob." What a vast dif-
fERENCE there is between confessing the mere
actions, and confessing the inmost character of
the being. In Hebrew literature, a name stands
to represent the character of that which is
named. Jacob signifies a supplanter: that was
the original, inherent trend of his moral being,
and for which he was no more responsible than
for the color of his eyes; yet none the less must
this inherent evil be fully confessed and purged
away. The outward act of supplanting his
brother had been confessed; and pardon for his
sins granted at Bethel. This confession is fun-
damental; he frankly opens the complexion and core of his nature to God. This is the final step in his sacrifice of self, the expiring breath of the old nature.

V. Notice in the conclusion of this study, Jacob's victorious blessing.

1. His whole moral nature was purified. The changing of his name to "Israel," that is, a prince of God, implies, in the strongest manner, his complete cleansing from depravity. There is no hint in Scripture that any one can have the full baptism of the Spirit, and yet continue to have inbred sin remaining. It was no empty, earthly title put on Jacob, but a Divine verity wrought in his soul. He was, from that time, in reality a prince of God. No one can be such as this title implies without inwrought holiness.

2. The enduement of power. "Thou hast power with God and with man, and hast prevailed." This gift of pure, Divine unction to a soul, is beyond all measurable and created force; it is far beyond all science or comprehension of man; it is entirely supernatural in its nature and operations; it mocks all reasoning and defies intellectual investigation. It is like an investment on the soul, an atmosphere around the spirit, a fiery breath, a spiritual lightning, which ignores things great and wise, never works ac-
according to our forecasting, and brings most marvellous things to pass with utmost ease.

After Jacob is thoroughly crucified, how readily he can receive power from God! now that the dyke of self is swept away, the cataracts of heaven flow easily over him. With this mysterious power on his soul, he meets Esau, and that vindictive man weeps like a child, conquered by an unknown force (Gen. xxxiii. 4). In his subsequent marchings from place to place, a supernatural terror fell on the surrounding tribes, "so that they were afraid to pursue after Jacob" (Gen. xxxv. 5). Similar efforts often flow from the gift of power.

3. The vision of God. "He called the name of the place Peniel — that is, the face of God — for I have seen God face to face." Jacob had not, perhaps, fully recognized the strange Wrestler as the personal Jehovah, until after his purification; but in the light of that Divine day-break which filled his spiritual senses, he saw the lineaments of that countenance which fills heaven with joy. How the baptism of the Spirit liberates all the spiritual senses to discover the features and personality of Jesus!

4. An assurance of unlimited wealth. How can the soul fear poverty or want when filled with God! When Israel met Esau, he urged upon him a present, saying, "Take, I pray thee.
my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have all things” (margin). How this agrees with the post-Pentecostal epistle, “All things are yours!” The man whose original tendency was to overreach his brother, under the perfect transformation, finds the currents of his heart flowing out in royal blessing.

Bethel and Peniel, the kingdom and the face of God. Except we be converted we cannot enter the kingdom, and except we have pure hearts we cannot see the face of God.
CHAPTER X.

AT THE BURNING BUSH.

There is probably an infinite variety in the shadings of religious experience. Just as there are seven prime colors in the rainbow, yet these seven can be so combined as to produce an endless variety of colors and shades of color, so there are a few prime, staple facts or principles, which form all character and experience, whether good or evil, yet these few principles are so differently compounded in different persons as to produce an infinite diversity in the details of soul history; and it is safe to say that no two experiences, either in sin or holiness, have ever been duplicated; and yet in the leading principles there is a general similarity in all. In no one Scripture portrait can we find our exact reflection, yet by walking through this gallery of character and experience, we may find ourselves sufficiently delineated as to find our true moral stature and complexion. We shall find lessons and shadings of experience in Moses at the burning bush diversified from
Isaiah and Jacob, though composed of the same prime elements.

Without detaining ourselves too long, let us notice briefly the religious standing of Moses at the time he saw the burning bush.

We learn from the twelfth of Hebrews that Moses was truly converted before he left Egypt. "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith, he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible."

In these verses we have summed up all the essential elements of justifying faith and genuine religion.

1. Acting upon his own responsibility.
2. Rejecting heathen honors.
3. Choosing affliction with God's people.
4. Renouncing the pleasures of sin.
5. Faith in a coming Christ.
7. Obeying God against an earthly king.
8. Apprehending invisible things.

This constellation of virtues entitled him,
even at that early age, to be enrolled among the heroes of faith. Then, after leaving Egypt, he sought the society of the godly and devout, uniting himself with the family of Jethro, who was a worshiper of the true God and the "priest of Midian." So that we may safely affirm that, at the time our lesson begins, Moses was the best and foremost servant of the Lord on earth.

The spiritual lessons to which I ask your attention, are found in the third and fourth chapters of Exodus.

1. "And the angel of the Lord appeared unto Moses in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush."

The person here referred to is no other than the Lord Jesus; he is afterwards called God, the Jehovah, the I AM. It may help the common reader to state here, that in reading the Old Testament, when the word Lord is spelled in capital letters, as "LORD," it is a translation of the word Jehovah, and corresponds with the person of the Lord Jesus, as the covenanting God of all grace; and when the Scriptures speak of an angel, they may refer to any celestial messenger, but the expression "the angel of the Lord," refers almost invariably to Christ, the angel of the covenant. Hence, in all those Divine manifestations made to patriarchs and prophets, Christ was revealing Himself accord
ing to the needs and circumstances of the time.

We have seen in a previous chapter that fire is an emblem of sanctification, and though Moses was a very eminent servant of God, we shall see farther on in the chapter that there were elements of hesitancy and disobedience lingering in his nature which needed to be destroyed by a consuming flame.

2. "And Moses said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight," from which we learn the lesson of taking time to wait on God, and giving attention to our own spiritual needs.

It is amazing in how many things Christian people will repeat the excuses about Christian perfection which sinners give against conversion. How difficult it is to persuade the Lord's servants to take time to seek the baptism of fire! For example: I once attended a holiness convention, where there were about twenty ministers in attendance, all of whom seemed partially interested in holiness; but none of them so much interested as Moses was, to let sheep-tending and all secondary matters alone long enough to wait for the anointing.

One had a little country appointment to fill, another had a sick person to visit, another had a church collection to work up, another had a Sunday-school essay to write, and so each one
had some little task (allowing no time to seek the sanctifying grace) which was all right in its place, but which, when brought in competition with the necessity of a clean heart and the baptism of power, was as small dust in the balance.

How easy it is for Satan to make us neglect the imperative duty of seeking holiness, under the guise of some other little duty, which may be really disobedience under a false veil! As people do not get converted in a hap-hazard way while paying attention to a hundred other little matters, neither do believers get fully sanctified by accident while running here and there absorbed in subordinate matters. The supreme duty of Moses was to turn aside and pay attention to the burning bush, laying aside for a while the care of the sheep and all earthly interests.

When Jesus told the hundred and twenty to tarry in the upper room for the Holy Ghost, it would have been a positive sin for them to have gone running around Jerusalem, even though they were visiting the sick and feeding the hungry.

The doing of one good work can never atone for not doing the supreme duty of the hour.

"Take time to be holy,
No longer delay,
The time passeth quickly,
Come now while 'tis day."
"Take time to be holy,
Speak oft with the Lord,
Abide in Him always
And feed on His Word.

"Take time to be holy,
The world rushes on,
Spend much time in secret,
With Jesus alone."

No time is lost in a journey, by stopping for prayer and provender. No real duties are ever neglected by stopping to get filled with the Holy Spirit.

3. "Behold the bush burned with fire and the bush was not consumed."

It is evident that this burning bush was a type of what God wanted Moses to be. Just as the flame pervaded the bush without withering its leaves, or in any wise damaging its natural functions, so God designed that the whole being of Moses should be aflame with the supernatural presence of the Holy Ghost, without infringing upon his free agency and without destroying any of the legitimate functions and faculties of his being. The question is often asked, What will the baptism of the Holy Ghost eliminate from human nature? The true Scriptural answer is, Sin, and nothing but sin. Some have imagined that if all sinful tempers and desires are removed, it involves the partial
destruction of human nature. No, it simply involves the destruction of sin from human nature. When it is preached that the Holy Ghost can destroy the mental taste for light, trashy literature, or for mere speculative philosophy, it does not involve the changing of the constitution of the mind, but simply the purging out from the mind vitiated and false tastes.

When we insist that the Holy Spirit can destroy the desire for alcohol, opium and tobacco, it is thought by some that it involves the upsetting of the physical economy of man. But no; it simply involves the destruction of abnormal appetites, and cravings for those things which are positively against the normal constitution of man's body. All those appetites and faculties which God appointed to the body and mind, will not be destroyed by any degree of holiness. To teach otherwise St. Paul characterizes as the doctrine of devils (1 Tim. iv. 1, 3). But those appetencies which have been wrought in man by the work of the devil, God has promised to destroy. The flame of fire did not change the original constitution of the bush or turn it into another species of tree, or straighten the limbs into mathematical lines. The full baptism of the Holy Spirit cleanses away all sin from the believer and fills him with the love of God, without deranging in the least the original
constitution of either body, mind, or spirit; without turning the believer into any other species of being; without changing his capabilities into those of any other person; without necessarily straightening his peculiarities and idiosyncrasies into ideal and prim proportions. There are a multitude of defects attaching even to the holy ones; defects resulting from a thousand complex causes; some from heredity, some from race, some from education, some from previous sinful habits, some from defective faculties, and many other causes, so blended that none but God, the infinite searcher of hearts, can unweave the tangled skein, and weigh and judge all the details of a Christian’s life in thought and action.

We may be no giant Mariposa towering aloft over the centuries, no poetical palm, no cedar of Lebanon, dressed in perennial green, but only an acacia shrub growing on a stony mountain side, in ourselves the poorest, and weakest, and most despised things, loaded with manifold infirmities, and yet be so cleansed from sin, so pervaded with the pure love of Jesus, so filled with celestial flame, that intelligences, higher and better than we are, may pause to wonder at the mystery of such weak things being the residence of such glory. Pure love is a flame that burns without consuming the soul.
Now let us notice how God draws his servant into such an attitude as to turn him into a spiritual burning bush.

4. “And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush and said Moses, Moses.” I have noticed in previous chapters this item of God’s personal call to holiness. We are not justified or sanctified in a collective mass, but God deals with us in our separate, individual character. “And Moses said, Here am I.” All through the Word of God, all ultimate questions of salvation and destiny, are brought down to a fine point and settled between the “I Am” of God, and the “Here am I” of man.

“And the Lord said, Put off thy shoes”—or sandals—“from off thy feet.” The shoe separates us from that whereon we stand. It may be made a weight and a hindrance to the most rapid motion. The priests were to put off their shoes when they entered the holy places in the tabernacle. When Joshua entered the land of Canaan, and met the God-man in the plain of Jericho, he was commanded to put off his shoes, for the ground whereon he stood was holy.

Whatever hinders us from standing on the simple Word of God, from immediate contact with the promise and the Promiser, is to be put off. “For the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.”
Many persons seem very much confused as to the difference between *imputed* and *imparted* holiness. I think the demarkation is illustrated at the burning bush. The inanimate and impersonal ground was holy by imputation, being used for the time being as the Divine sanctuary, the place for cleansing; yet neither Scripture nor common reason teach us that holiness resided in the earth. Canaan is called the holy land; the temple was called holy, only because designed for the use of a holy God and a holy people.

The holiness to which God called Moses was very different in character from this official and imputed kind. His was to be a holiness wrought into his heart and will by the Holy Ghost, and the same in kind with the holiness of God. To teach, as some do, that the holiness to which God calls believers is no higher in kind than the ceremonial holiness of the furniture of the tabernacle, betrays great ignorance of moral distinctions and Scripture teaching. Inanimate things can only be holy by imputation, as they are absolutely destitute of moral quality; for an opposite reason, intelligent, volitional, and immortal spirits can be holy only by impartation, for moral character is as essential to a spiritual being as it is impossible to an inanimate object.
“Come, now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh that thou mayest bring forth my people out of Egypt.” There are two things in this Divine call: first, the call to personal holiness; and second, the mission assigned to him under the baptism of fire. This order should never be reversed, though it often is. How many there are, running hither and thither, attempting herculean things for God — the deliverance of a race, or the shattering of the kingdom of Satan — who have never taken time to take off their shoes before God, or to be filled with His spirit. Hence the enormous waste of mere human zeal, with so little Divine and abiding fruit. Jesus gave his disciples two words, which form the key of the Church’s mission: one is the word tarry; the other is the word go. “Go preach my Gospel, but tarry till ye be endued.”

Go, but tarry; these are the negative and positive poles of that battery which is to shock the moral world. It is rebellion to accept one of these words and reject the other. It is treason against the Holy Ghost to go before we are fired.

5. Let us now examine the items in the entire consecration of Moses, or rather the points upon which his perfect obedience hinged. “And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh”? 
The first difficulty which he saw was his own littleness and inability for such a great work. Humility is essential to all true greatness and usefulness, but when it seems to stand in our way of yielding prompt and courageous obedience, then it is not humility. Nothing can be more subtle and deceitful than depravity. It will assume a thousand forms and hues; it will mask itself under the guise of all the Christian graces; and under the plea of humility, it will conceal the pride of Lucifer; under the plea of weakness, it will hide great self-dependence; it is so swift and treacherous that none but God can search it out in its ultimate lurking places, and by the touch-stone of appropriate tests, like the touch of Ithuriel's spear, make it show its true nature. Moses was sincere and truly humble, and he could apprehend the greatness of the work set before him, and I cannot detect any pride under his plea of inefficiency; but he was looking at his nothingness apart from God's Almightiness, hence the Divine answer, "Certainly I will be with thee." The "I" of Moses was but a cipher, but the "I" of God multiplied the cipher into efficiency equal to the task. The very bush upon which Moses was gazing, was a weak shrub and had no strength as compared to forest trees, yet when aflame with Jehovah's presence, it became the instrument of
power such as all the forests of earth have never equalled. In how many different ways must we learn that God’s strength is made perfect in man’s weakness!

After the question of ability was settled, the next difficulty was as to the nature of his message and his authority for this mission.

“And Moses said, when I come unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you, and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?”

This question refers to a lack of wisdom, as the previous question referred to a lack of strength. When we come to look at the work of God in its true light, we find that it lies entirely beyond the range of human wit and skill. It is a supernatural work, mingling, it is true, with the human, but to be carried on by supernatural principles and a simplicity of wisdom beyond the mere human mind. See how the answer of God exactly corresponds to this second difficulty! “And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM; and he said, thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.” I have not time here to elaborate all the suggestions in this answer; the general thought is this, that God is an eternal, independent, self-existent Being; that He is
always present with His servants; that the infinite resources of His power, wisdom, and love, are at His command any instant of duration; and being always present with His servants, these resources are available for them under any emergency and at any moment. This was just the truth that would meet the difficulty in the mind of Moses: “What shall I say unto them?” It is one thing for us to learn this Divine name of “I AM” intellectually, and quite a different thing to learn it spiritually.

To learn this name truly, is to so apprehend and practice the Divine presence, as to live with God a moment at a time, drawing from Him wisdom and strength for the needs of the hour, without relying on past successes, or flinching from future difficulties. There is an enormous Gospel set forth in this very name of I AM. The next difficulty to be overcome was the apprehended unbelief of the Israelites.

“And Moses answered and said, But behold they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice.” How anxious we are by nature that people should have faith in us, and believe our words! Other people may be discredited, but it is so humiliating that what we say should not pass for full value. How hard to the natural mind to take contradiction, to have our testimony disputed! There is often a subtle pride, a secret
self-esteem, a secret desire to have people believe us more than to have them believe God.

But we are not really in a condition to be perfect witnesses for Christ, until all this spirit is purged from us, until we are sublimely indifferent whether people take our words or not, so they will only take the words of God. When the interest in our reputation is entirely lost in being interested for Christ's reputation, when anxiety about the acceptance of our words is swallowed in the desire for having Christ's words accepted, we can then be the conductors of such truth as will draw people to Christ, instead of to ourselves, and ground their faith in His words, and not in our mere say so.

This is just the manner in which God answered Moses' third difficulty. "And the Lord said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. And He said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent, and Moses fled from before it."

Let us remember that up to this time there were no written Scriptures. God embodied His word and revelations in individual patriarchs and prophetic teachers. The rod or shepherd's crook, which Moses had with him, was selected by the Lord as an emblem of His Word, by which miracles and mighty wonders were to be
wrought. The history of this rod in connection with the ten plagues, the dividing of the Red Sea, the coming together again of the waters, and the smiting of the rock in the wilderness, is familiar to all. From this time on in the history of the Hebrew people, the rod was a type of the Word of God; it was in allusion to this that David said, "Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." While the rod was in the hand of Moses, it was a lifeless stick; but when, in obedience to God he cast it on the ground, it became a living thing. In like manner, the Word of God as a mere letter, held in the grasp of human reason, is lifeless; but when under a Divine commission, cast forth upon human hearts, it becomes a living truth, "quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The rod became a terror even to Moses himself. The Word of God is greater than the man who preaches it, and many a faithful minister has felt a sacred terror at the very Divine message which he was casting forth.

This, then, was to be the thing that should convince the unbelievers, and so it is to this day. It is our place to cast forth the words of God, in their purity, and they will prove their own divinity.
If people will not believe us, let us give them the living Word. It is our place to obey; it is God’s place to take care of our reputation.

The next difficulty was the overcoming of a natural infirmity. “And Moses said unto the Lord, I am not eloquent, but I am slow of speech, and have a slow tongue.”

How natural it was for Moses to think that eloquence and swiftness of speech were requisite to such a mission, when the fact was, it was not the quantity but the quality of words which were essential. He did not then understand how that God could turn his infirmity into an advantage by giving him an opportunity to think twice before speaking once, and making his words the more wise and weighty when uttered. What multitudes there are yet, who think they cannot be free from sin, and yield perfect heart loyalty to God, because of some natural infirmity.

“And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man’s mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the Lord? Now, therefore, go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.”

Surely this Scripture ought to be a panacea for all who are stumbling over their infirmities. A slow tongue, with God in it, is better than
eloquence; a deaf ear, with the Holy Ghost, will hear profoundest things; a blind man, with God, will walk straighter than they who have eyes without Him. God does not say in this passage that He will remove the infirmity, but something far better, *He will unite Himself with the infirmity*, saying, “I will be with thy mouth.”

We must let God take us continually, just as we are, infirmities and all, and if He will condescend to unite the unction and energy of the Holy Ghost with our infirmities, let us patiently bear them; nay, like Paul, even glory in them, that the power of Christ may rest upon us.

Notwithstanding God’s giving a complete answer to all his objections, Moses yet shrank from obedience. The last citadel into which old self had retreated needed yet to be exploded. “And Moses said, O my Lord, send, I pray Thee, by the hand of him whom Thou wilt send.” In other words, send by anybody except me. He had no more rational excuses to offer.

Depravity is something that can never be reasoned out of the human heart; every objection may be answered, every difficulty may be fairly met, and yet the old self-life will hide and shirk and retreat to the last cell of nature; but if depravity will not be reasoned out, it must be burned out, slain, crucified without mercy; and so we read, “The anger of the Lord was kindled.
against Moses." God loved Moses, but His wrath burned against the carnal mind that was in Moses.

Under this indignation from the Lord, the last vestige of Moses' nature yielded to God. The very wrath of God against our depravity turns out to be His intense love for us. "And Moses went and returned unto Jethro his father-in-law, and said unto him, Let me go, I pray thee, and return unto my brethren which are in Egypt." Notice how the whole current of his heart now flowed out in obedience.

He does not say I must go into Egypt, but "let me go, I pray thee," as if a portion of God’s love and sympathy for the poor Israelites had been transferred to his own heart, and as if suffering and toiling to deliver them would now be the highest joy of his life. The very thing he shrank from, he now prays for the privilege of doing. How often this is the case with believers who, under the full baptism of the Holy Spirit, do things gladly which they had thought both impossible and impracticable.

In concluding this chapter, let me call your attention to a very severe and delicate test, to which Moses was subjected soon after receiving the baptism of the Spirit.

The whole story is not written out in detail, but enough is stated to give us a clue to all the
particulars. The account will be found in Exodus iv. 24–26. He had married into a family which worshiped the true God, but were Gentiles and not under the covenant of circumcision. The sons that had been born to Moses had not been circumcised, and on his way to Egypt he understood it to be God's will to circumcise his sons. To this his wife Zipporah stoutly objected. Here was a delicate trial involving either disobedience to God or a temporary disruption of domestic love and harmony.

We know not the details of the dispute between Moses and his wife on this subject, but it seems that in some way he was about to compromise or postpone the duty, and we read that "It came to pass by the way in the inn that the Lord met him and sought to kill him." This may sound like strange and very severe language toward the man who had been so highly honored and blest of God. Yet there is in it a great principle. The nearer we get to God, the more heinous the principle of disobedience becomes. It was a question of whether he would obey God, or yield to the prejudices of his wife, when to have yielded to the latter would have been practical rebellion to Jehovah. When Moses saw the seriousness of the situation, having within him the principle of perfect heart obedience, he decided to obey God at any cost.
His wife was very much enraged at her husband's invincible conformity to the Jewish covenant. "Then Zipporah took a sharp stone and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me. So the Lord let him go, then his wife said, A bloody husband art thou because of the circumcision."

Moses had the favor of God, though he had to endure the petty and temporary anger of his wife.

Here is a lesson for all who are fully sanctified. The circumstances of the trial may be infinitely varied, but we may rest assured that there will come some test to the principle of perfect love and obedience. It may come from good people, from relatives, from those we dearly love; it may come from a quarter we least anticipated; it may test us to the quick; in a manner very delicate and severe, it may be such a test that no other one will know just how to sympathize with us; it may be a test which would be nothing to other people, but very great to us. God will select the test with infinite skill, and have it so applied to us as to prove our heart loyalty to Him to the very core. God is our all and in all; our happiness and well-being for both worlds is entirely from Him. If we set Him foremost in all things, and make
conformity to His will the chief business of our lives, and obey and trust Him come what may, He has pledged His infinite goodness to make all things work together for our good. The highest and easiest service we can render to God, is to serve Him for His own sake, for the very love we bear Him. Love gets the highest rewards, yet it seeks no reward except to serve with a greater love.