



GOD'S GLORY

AS SEEN IN

CHRIST AND THE CHURCH.



Being the substance of an Address on
Gen. i. 26—28. John i. 14, 16, 17. Heb. i. Rev. xxi. 9—27.

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I HAVE begun with the first chapter in this book, and have gone, not exactly to the last chapter, but to the conclusion of the matter. This conclusion is coming to pass on the earth, and I want you to travel with me in order that we may see that that which is coming to pass was always in the purpose of God *from* the creation of the world.

What was it that God purposed? You get it set forth in Gen. i. There was more—God's eternal purpose, that which He counselled *before* the foundation of the world; but just now I want you to be occupied with what God had in His mind when He created the world and brought man into it, and I think that comes out in Gen. i.; not that it is developed there, but the instructed man will see it there. I think you will agree when I come to the end of my remarks that it does come out there.

It is stated that God took six days in creation. When He arrived at the sixth day He came to the conclusion, in view of which all the preceding steps were preparatory, by bringing in the man and the woman. He created man in His own likeness and image, and He told him to have dominion over everything, to fill the earth with fruit, and to subdue everything to God. Man was set in that position as having been created in the likeness of God.

Now I do not want you to think that Adam was created absolutely in the likeness and image of God. What we are told of him is that he was created "good" and "upright" (Gen. i. 31; Eccl. vii. 29). But I want you rather to be occupied with God's thought and purpose, which is declared here in a shadowy way. God had in His mind a man who was to be like Him, *i.e.*, to be of His character (likeness refers to character) and that he was to express Him (image refers to the expression of what He is). I think it is very clear that that was the thought and purpose of God—that man was to be like Him in character and that he was to express Him in every way.

• There was another thing, he was given dominion over the scene, and he was told to subdue everything.

If I pursue the history of Adam, I find in the next chapter the relationships in which he was set. I do not want to go fully into detail. You do not

get a repetition of creation, but you get the relative positions in which man was set by God with regard to Himself, with regard to the woman, and with regard to the rest of creation; and you get the question of responsibility put into the hands of the man—not into the hands of the woman.

In the third chapter you will find that the woman takes up the question of responsibility, and thus getting out of her true order, she falls. You must fall if you take up that which is not given to you to take up.

Now what came in with the woman going out of her place? The result was corruption (which is the opposite of the likeness of God). The devil corrupted Eve. Corruption comes in in the third chapter of Genesis, and violence in the fourth; and in the sixth corruption and violence filled the earth.

God says, That is not what I created man for, and I will remove that man out of sight. He has not carried out what I created him for. Satan having corrupted man's mind, it was Satan—not God—that was expressed in man, and the dominion man exercised was not the benign sway of God, but the Satanic sway of violence.

With man fell also the rest of creation, and God swept all off the scene. The lawless man was thus removed, and surely this teaches us that lawlessness will not respond to God's mind for man, and that the Christian should shun lawlessness and all

insubjection to God, and walk in lowly subjection to His will.

Then, for over two thousand years God tested man in various ways. He saved Noah in the ark, and then said, as it were : Now, Noah, you begin again, and I will be the power to subdue evil in your hand. Do not let violence into this world. But he failed to express Him. The sword of government was put into the hands of Noah, but he could not govern himself—the flesh was not subject to God. He became drunken—there was corruption there. Division and confusion of tongues followed.

Next, God called Abraham ; and a little later a people from his loins after the flesh, to whom He said : Now you will go out of Egypt and I will lead you into Canaan, and you are to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation unto Me, if you obey My commandments. They said, We will do it ; and there came a test—the test of God's law given to man in the flesh, to test whether man had any capacity to fulfil it.

The law of God was not in his heart ; how could he fulfil it ? The law of the flesh was there, and if I may so say, the law of the devil. What is that ? You get it in Rom. iii. The principle of action in man is self-will—the law of the devil. Every activity of man was consequently the display of Satan. Why ? Because corruption was there, sin was there, and sin came out in violence. The

display, or the "image" of Satan came out because Satan had taken possession of the heart. Corruption was in the heart, and violence came out of every member of the body.

Now whilst God was going on with Israel (you remember the history in Ex. xix.) the Law was given, and Israel said, We will do all Thy commandments. But within forty days they forgot the terror of Mount Sinai and fell down and worshipped the god of their hearts—the golden calf.

God then leads them to Kadesh Barnea, and in Num. xiv. they are told to go into Canaan. They come to a mountain—which mountain is, in figure, the flesh—and they had to overcome it to get into Canaan. They had got the fruits of Canaan before them and they cannot help saying, "It is beautiful, it is lovely"; but added, "*We* cannot go in"—they did not reckon on God. Very well, what will you do? "We will make us a captain and go back into Egypt." That was lawlessness. They had placed themselves under law but here was lawlessness. Turning away from the truth because you find *you* cannot do it—that is lawlessness.

Then what is to be done? Some of them said, We *will* enter Canaan, when God had said "Go not in." They said, We are not going to wander forty years in the wilderness—and became law breakers.

Now all this was written for *our* learning, and we ought all to know how to apply it.

We Christians have had spies who have searched the land ; the report of it has come to us by Paul and John—they are the spies of the church. What does John say ? “ God is love.” What does Paul say ? “ I go on to apprehend that for which I have been apprehended of God in Christ.” Go in and possess the land. *We* cannot. Then what ? Give it up ? Some people say, Give it up and let us do the best we can, in the lawless condition that was before the deluge. That will not do.

God says, I will teach you but it will take you forty years ; “ a year for a day,” to teach you that you cannot go in, in the flesh. Whatever truth you learn the report of from the apostles in a day, will take you a year of dependence on God to apprehend and make your own. That is a great deal too long, some say, as some of Israel said at Kadesh Barnea—we will go in *now*. (I am speaking from Num. xiv.) “ But they presumed to go up unto the hill top.” (v. 44). Moses says to them, You will be destroyed if you go in. They do not listen but go in and *are* destroyed.

The fact of the matter is *we* cannot do it *at all*. Lawlessness will not do it, and essaying to do it in the power of the flesh certainly will not do it, for flesh cannot overcome flesh. What is to be done ? *God* alone can do it. That is the point, and we have to go on in dependence on Christ ; and so He says to Moses, “ Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt

and in the wilderness, have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice, surely they shall not see the land which I swore unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it : but my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went ; and his seed shall possess it." (Num. xiv. 22-24).

Joshua and Caleb said, Enemies? Of course there are. Great cities? Of course there are ; but God is able to take us in. The ten said, *They* will eat *us* up ; but Joshua and Caleb said, *They* are food for *us*. It makes all the difference whether it is God for you or whether it is the flesh for God. It must be *all* of God, and faith gets tested *all* the way along, and the tests are the food, not only one day or one year, but all the way along, and so Joshua and Caleb have to go on with the rest of them. In God's things endurance wins the day, and impatience and precipitancy will not do.

Here, God says to Moses, " I have pardoned according to thy word : but as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." (v. 20, 21). Does God live? Is He the living God? It is similar to what you get in Gen. i., only what an advance! How great a difference! Sin and dishonour to God had come in, and the whole world lay in the wicked one, and who was there with power to bring in the glory of God—to

change the scene from dishonour to glory?

Glory may be looked at in two ways—one is what God is, His character—the intrinsic, the other is the display of what God is—the extrinsic. What is to come out in display? What God is; and how blessed to know Him, and go on in dependence on Him—in the faith of Christ, who has trod the whole pathway of faith, and reached the glory of God, and sat down (Heb. xii. 1—4). “All the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.” How that was to be nobody knew. He must make the ground perfectly sure; He must prepare for that which is inscrutable—a perfect mystery to man. How is God going to do that? “As I live,” He says—He swears by Himself; I am going to do it. Do you believe that the display of God is to come out in the very place where Satan has been displayed?

No doubt Moses wondered how He was going to do it, especially when at the foot of Mount Sinai (after saying they would do so well, they would be a nation of priests, and a holy nation) Israel fell down and worshipped the golden calf. Moses says, how *can* it be done? “Show me thy glory.” God says, Nobody can look upon my face and live, but I will put you into a cleft of the rock, and I will put my hand over you while my glory passes by, and when my glory has passed be you may look at my back parts; but my face you cannot see. God did so, and Moses heard thy

proclamation of what God is, but saw not the glory of God in its full revelation (Exod. xxxiii. 18-23; xxxiv. 1-8). He is going to see it after it has passed by.

Now come to the gospel of John—there you get the expression of God. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (i. 1). There was a Person called the Word. Who was that? The Son, "and without him was not anything made that was made." By Him God made the heavens and the earth. Did He express Himself then? He did, in measure but not fully. When creation came into being "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy" (Job xxxviii. 7). They saw, as it were, a little bit of the glory of God.

But with Christ come in flesh comes the full expression of God; the Son becomes man in order that God might be expressed. The glory of God was in Him, and the glory of God shone from Him—the likeness and the image, or expression. God says, I cannot trust the created man any longer; I do not commit myself to man. I will come out in the person of my Son. God comes out to express Himself in Christ—His Anointed (John x. 26). Such an One is addressed by God in two ways—as One who is man, but also as One who is the fellow of the Lord of hosts (Zech. xiii. 7). That is why I read Heb. i.

There He is as man, the Son of God, but then He is, in His Person, God. "That holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke i. 35). You cannot *call* God anything—God is God, and the "Son" is God, but as born into this world, and come into manhood He is "called" the Son of God. In the beginning "He was"; before there was a beginning the "I am"—but He became man, He became the expression to men of God. What did He express? The Father. That is what God is—love. The word Father involves it. How has He been expressed? In the Son, in all His divine life of activities down here, and then He goes down into death. That is where *I* get the touch of love, because that is where *I* was because of my sins. I could not rise to Him; He came down to me. I was under judgment and death because of what I was—a sinner. Christ died for my sins. Christ died for me, the sinner; He was buried. Thus to God the man is gone who did not express God, and to me who have felt the touch of the love of the One who died for me, that man is gone also. And now the only Man that lives to me is the Man who gave me life by dying for me and rising again, the last Adam—a quickening spirit.

We who are believers, have by the Spirit the power thus to reckon ourselves dead unto sin and alive unto God in Christ Jesus. Travelling

through the bitter experience of Romans vii. you have got to see that self is but a "body of death," and when you have got to this, all fleshly endeavour is over—you have come to realise that *you* can do nothing, and turn away with loathing from yourself to Christ, and thus you get the Spirit's power to do what you had with all your efforts failed to do, and thus you please God. In doing His pleasure you live. That is what the children of Israel had to come to in type and figure, in Num. xxi. They saw a serpent lifted up, but it was a serpent of brass. The brass was *made* a serpent—a type of the One who was *made* sin. He in whom was no sin had power to put away sin, by becoming that which he loathed, and dying to it; He was buried and rose again, the beginner of a new race for God.

He glorified God. All the glory of God was in Him, and all the glory of God came out in Him, and in death He glorified God, and put everything morally right.

Before this everything was morally topsy-turvy. Man in his presumption fancied that he had wings: he thought to be as God (Gen. iii.), to reach up to God (Gen. xi.). We have to have our wings plucked so that we may stand upon our feet as men. God will give you wings, if you take your right place in His presence, but those are the wings of the Spirit, not *your* wings, and you only get them when you give Christ His right place in

your heart, and then they can be used to fly away from yourself and where "self" lives, to find your rest in Him where He lives, as the Man of God's pleasure. Then will you know what "the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" means.

God wants to give us wings, but He cannot give us wings till He has plucked our own, and the process described in Rom. vii. is God's way of accomplishing this. It is a moral course we have to pass through, like Israel's 40 years in the wilderness, till we find out *our* nothingness, and at the same time God's sufficiency and His delight in us. The wings of spiritual pride will never carry us into heavenly places. The man who fancies he has wings, or thinks to go over the mountain in the power of the flesh, must find his end in death and destruction like the children of Israel, who girded on their weapons and tried to go over the mountain and were destroyed unto Hormah (compare Num. xiv. 40-45 and Deut. i. 41-44).

John the Baptist comes into this world and tells you the history and character of man. Who are you, John? I am simply the forerunner of Another, who coming after me is preferred before me. But who are *you*, John? John is figuratively the last man of Adam's race. I think the reason why he is called the chief of those that are born of women is, that he came in to go out. He was to figure the last man of that race, and to show that man the proper way to act when God

comes in, *i.e.* to go out. John went out—"He must increase, but I must decrease" (John iii. 30). John is extinguished. He does not preach a long gospel to his two disciples; he looks on that blessed One walking this earth, and he says, God is in this world expressing Himself. "Behold the Lamb of God" (John i. 36), holy spotless, sinless, who is going down into death. John there accepts death he retires, and the two disciples leave him; they no longer want John the Baptist.

I dare say they are very thankful to him for leading them to the point of leaving him and going to Jesus, *i.e.*, they esteem him very highly for his work's sake (1 Thess. v. 13). That is the true way of ministry. John was figuratively the man that had to go out, in order to let God's man in. If you and I want to minister Christ it is not to set ourselves before men, but to be extinguished ourselves by our appreciation of Christ. It makes disciples leave us in order to follow Him, who has extinguished us in the power of divine life.

Further, we get in John the man that did not declare the glory of God—the man who was the "nay"—giving expression to the consciousness of what he was, and going out in the light of the man who is the "yea" of the glory of God, and the display of God's glory; who is "full of grace and truth" (John i. 14). Truth is God expressed in nature and character—Christ was and is the fulness of it. Grace is what God is towards man,

it is the display of God in righteousness. In Him the glory of God was, in nature and character, and He was the display of that glory to poor wretched man, and that display went on to death. In John xvii., He says, I have displayed Thee, "I have given them Thy word." He goes out of this scene, and into another, and the Holy Ghost comes down. God has put man in the flesh out of sight in Christ's death, and what is He doing now? God is making no claim upon man in the flesh. I do not say that man is not responsible to God—he surely is—but it has been adequately proved that man can under responsibility give no answer to God's claim, and it is God who is now working by the Spirit to produce what He seeks.

In Gen. ii., the question of the two trees was committed to Adam—he was placed in Eden with responsibility. Eve had no responsibility whatever in connection with the trees. She had a privilege—what was it? To keep near Adam, and get everything from Adam—to derive from him. She had to lean upon Adam, not to her own understanding. If she had done this, and if Adam had stood, she would have been standing to this day. I do not say that if Satan had presented himself to Adam he would have stood, but I do know that Eve taking up the responsibility that was given to Adam, was the cause of the fall; and this is the lesson we have to learn—we stand by faith (Rom. xi. 20).

Now, beloved, the church in its responsible state has got to its present condition owing to not holding her Head, like Eve. That is why the church, set up to be the body of Christ down here, a testimony to the absent Bridegroom, is now testifying to herself. She is saying, "I am rich, and increased with goods and have need of nothing" (Rev. iii. 17) not knowing that all that is really hers has to be bought of Him—is derived from Him. That is pride, just what Eve got—"pride." What ought she to have done? To have been subject to her head. Subject? Some say, I do not like that word. It is because they do not love—first love has gone. That is probably what Eve thought when she got away from Adam. She dragged the whole world down to its present position.

The professing church is hissed at by the world because it has great pretension of being the church of Christ, without being the display of God—holy love and grace. The display of violence is there because corruption is there. It is in a sorry state, wherever you look. There is lust of the flesh, and lust of the eye and pride, instead of what you find in John the Baptist. He shows us, as I have said, what man should be—extinguished, in order to let Christ be seen.

Christ has come in and settled the question of good and evil by bearing the judgment and dying. He has established righteousness—put things right

morally with God. He has glorified God. God is love and God's supremacy in love has been established against all the power of Satan.

Moreover, the first man who fell from the estate in which he was set by God, has been removed from the eye of God, together with the system of things in which he lived. Do you see that the fallen man has been removed? According to the measure in which you do see it you will not be lawless, nor legal, but under the power of the love of Christ who died for you, *you* will be extinguished, Christ will live in you and your practical life down here will be marked by dependence on Him, as at close of Gal. ii.

Thus you will be a testimony down here to that which has been accomplished for the eye of God—not Jewish in your character and activities, nor Gentile in your character and activities, but a new order of man in Christ (Eph. ii. 14-16). There will be no fleshly endeavour to *be* anything like the Jew and there will be no indifference to the will of God like the Gentile. You will love God. The Spirit of God is given and brings the love of God down to you. We know the love of God to us, and therefore "we love him because he first loved us." (1 John iv. 19).

That is how the church is being fashioned. God is fashioning the church by the ministry of the death of Christ and the ministry of the new covenant—the presentation of Christ in glory.

He is working in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure, by a new power—not by demand, but by bringing divine love into your heart and presenting a perfect Object for the love of your heart. God in His great love removed in the death of Christ the man who would not love God, and sent the Spirit of another man into hearts by which we cry “Abba, Father.”

The light of another man, who loved His law, and who loved God to God's satisfaction, has reached us in the very place where we lay in sin and death, and now God is working to maintain a testimony down here. What of? His own power. A testimony to what? To the reproduction of Christ—the Man who hated lawlessness and loved righteousness. He loved God and His neighbour better than Himself. He never broke the bruised reed or quenched the smoking flax. Where there was smoke in the flax He fanned it into a flame; where there was a bruised reed He bound it up. Do you do that, or do you say “Poor man” and pass by on the other side; priding yourself, perhaps, on much knowledge which puffs up, while lacking the love which edifies. There is the poor bruised reed, writhing under what he finds in himself. Do you say to him, You are still in Rom. vii.? That will not help him; that will break him to pieces. What will you do? Tell him the way out of it, if you know the way yourself, and if you do not, hold your peace.

If divine love is working in me as it worked in Christ, I shall be towards all men as Christ was. That is something being done in me according to the character of God, and something coming out of me which is the display of God. What a subduing power is at work!—the love of God. Is the subduing process completed in any of us? It takes a long time to subdue a wild animal, and man who abode not in the honour in which he was created, having lost God, is but that at his best. (See Psa. xlix. 12-20; Job xi. 12). But divine grace is capable of subduing us, if we continue in the faith grounded and settled and not moved away from the hope of the gospel.

The Galatians thought that they were to subdue themselves; they were putting themselves under law, as those that "say they are Jews and are not, but do lie," and they were departing from Christianity and adopting principles which could only lead them to Laodicea, for the principle of Law puts Christ outside the door.

The Corinthians, on the other hand, were giving up the race—giving up Christianity in another way, which, equally with the Galatian way, would put Christ outside the door. They were saying, "Let us go back into Egypt." But Paul told them the true way, the more excellent way of 1 Cor. xiii., which God had inaugurated by Jesus Christ and made good in Paul. "And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the

Jews ; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law." He was not under law, but he could go to the poor, feeble man that was under law, to minister Christ to him—to deliver him from the law, he himself having been delivered. He could reach the lawless man, because he himself was subject to Christ and inexorable over his own body (1 Cor. ix. 19-27).

That is the way he built up saints. To go to the feet of a saint is very humiliating work—it means that you do not think anything of yourself, you are delivered from yourself. It was the nature of Christ ; He washed the disciples' feet by dying for them, and He says, "Go and do likewise" (compare John x. 11 ; xiii. 13-17 ; 1 Pet. v. 1-4 ; 1 John iii. 14-16).

I am bringing in these details that there may be some moral food for souls here. What was displayed in Christ is in very little measure displayed in saints now. The display is only according to the measure of Christ in you. If Christ is in you, Christ will come out of you. If Christ is not in you, that is to say, the nature of God not formed in you, clearly Christ, the image of God, will not come out of you.

If you have not truth in the inward parts, the truth of God certainly will not come out. The intrinsic must be there before the extrinsic can appear.

God is doing a great work at the present.

moment. Christ has gone out of this scene, but He is coming back. What is He going to do? He came here to glorify God; He has done it in His pathway of life unto death (John xiii. 31 32). He has thus laid a stable, because a righteous foundation, and in resurrection He has Himself become the chief corner stone. Now He is building up the superstructure for the time that is coming, when God's oath will be carried out, and the glory of God will cover the earth.

The glory of God was in Christ—in that blessed Man down here upon the earth, and the display of glory was there, but all in one vessel. And He went about doing good, and delivering those who were oppressed of the devil. Man is under the oppression of the devil, and we, while Satan rules outwardly, are left here as a testimony to the power of God, who is building up the superstructure for the full display of His glory by Christ. And when that comes out, Satan will be trodden under the feet of the saints and man will be delivered from the oppression of the devil, and come universally under the benign and righteous dominion of Christ, exercised through the holy Jerusalem—the Bride, the Lamb's wife.

I take it that in Ps. cxxxix. 13-18 you get Christ in the Spirit speaking of his members being formed upon the earth by God. That has been going on ever since Christ died. It was necessary before the purpose of God, in relation to this

world, could be accomplished, that another, an eternal purpose, formed before the foundation of the world for His glory, must be carried out, and that is that He should have a heavenly vessel prepared by His love, and suited for the display to the whole world of such love as should keep man on earth in its power.

Christ holds the Church for God in the power of divine love. Christ in the power of the Spirit makes you and me act in grace in the very scene of Satan's activities, under the impulse of divine love, and this impulse is going to be communicated by Christ through the administration of the holy Jerusalem to the whole millennial universe while Satan will be bound.

God is going to present a bride to Christ; and that innumerable multitude of saints in the holy Jerusalem will display what God is. He is going to fill the heavens with His glory, in order that the whole universe may look up and say, in conscious adoration, "God is love." All the glory of God which subsists in Christ will shine out from that innumerable company, and all the grace of God will be ministered to man through that company, so that the whole earth will be filled with the glory of the Lord. It will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

That is the Church in display; and when that mystery—the Church—is unveiled, the "Mystery of God" (Rev. x. 7) will be finished. "The

Mystery of God"—what is that? "Verily thou art a God that hideth thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour" (Isa. xlv. 15). "Show thyself" (Ps. lxxx. 1; xciv. 1). God is hidden to the world, and when Christ was here Himself He would not shew Himself to the world—His time was not yet come (John ii. 4; vii. 6). But He is not hidden to the Church, for she has through grace the secret of all mysteries, for this is the Spirit's day, wherein Christ is showing those who love Him plainly of the Father (John xvi. 25).

Thus by the Spirit the full revelation of God has reached us. The world does not know Him—He is hidden to it. How does the Church know God? "In the face of Jesus Christ." Paul by the Spirit uses great plainness of speech (2 Cor. iii. 12). We, by the Spirit, are in the value of that which the world does not know. "God is love" is plainly known in our hearts, written there by the Spirit of the living God. And thus we are able to look at the things which are eternal and not visible, while to the world which lives by sight and sense God is still in mystery.

But then do you not see too, that if you are true to Christ you will be a mystery upon the earth; the world will not know you. They did not know Christ, and they will not know you if you are true to Him. But they will have a sense, nevertheless, that God is with you and in you (1 Cor. xiv. 25).

God is in mystery now, and that mystery is going on in this scene at the same time as another mystery. There is a mystery of lawlessness in this scene, and Satan is the power of it, while the world is its sphere. There is also a mystery of piety in this scene—God is known in it, and the Church is the pillar and support of it. There is a continuation of the testimony of the man who was down here—God was manifest in the flesh (compare 2 Thess. ii. 7 and 1 Tim. iii. 15-16).

The Church is going to come out in the full display of that of which it is the testimony now. It is now carrying through the wilderness the Ark of the Covenant of the God of all the earth (Josh. iii. 11, 13), and Jordan is dried up to those who are in the value of the death of Christ; but when the display takes place the whole world will partake openly of the new covenant.

Where is Israel—where are the Jews meanwhile? That is another mystery. Shall I tell you? Where was Moses? Under the hand of Jehovah, in the rock, until Jehovah's glory passed by (see Ex. xxxiii. 18-23). It is passing by now—that is a mystery, nobody *knows* it, but you and I are responsible to day that people have some sense of it, for if the Church were in unity, in the full display of Christ, the world would believe (John xvii. 21). But the glory is passing by, and the world knows it not, neither does Israel. Is it known to you and me? If so, what manner

of people should we be in all holy conversation and piety (2 Peter iii. 11)? The time is coming when God will take His hand off Moses and His people Israel. When will He do that? When they have come to where you and I have now to get to morally, before we see the mystery. What is that? The end of ourselves; nobody ever yet saw the mystery till he came to an end of Himself.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 1). If you have got to this you have left the sphere where sin is, *i.e.*, the sphere of yourself, and have come to a sphere where there is no sin—the place which God has provided for you, *i.e.* "in Christ Jesus," who has prepared a place for us by going into the presence of His Father as Man. "I go to prepare a place for you" (John xiv. 2).

The church—the whole body—is presented to God "in Him," and as you apprehend this you will live in this sphere, you will abide "in Him" as taught by the Spirit (1 John ii. 27-28). Israel and the world are not in the sense of God's purpose. The church anticipates it.

Israel will have their eyes opened when the mystery is unveiled. When Israel have come to an end of themselves after passing through great tribulation (see Matt. xxiv. 15-27) they cry to God. "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut

Rahab and wounded the dragon? Art thou not it which hath dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?" (Isa. li. 9-10). Now they come back to the line of faith; they turn to the Lord (2 Cor. iii. 16, Rom. xi. 23); but there is no power in Israel. They see the import of that which happened nearly 4,000 years before. What happened? They see the truth of the Red Sea, and the truth of the brazen serpent—that there was no power in them against their enemies. The "body of death" is in them, and they cry to God to awake. They remind God of His past earthly deliverances and God answers. "I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass?" (Isa. li. 12).

The nation stumbled at the stumbling stone—Christ in humiliation—but now He is about to appear in glory. They would not have Him to reign over them and preferred Barabbas and Cæsar but now their eyes are opened. They turn from Barabbas and Cæsar to the Lord. When they call upon Him, He answers. "But I am the Lord thy God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared: The Lord of hosts is his name. And I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and

say unto Zion, Thou art my people" (v. 15, 16).

God laid the foundation of His City in His Firstborn, and will set up the gates of it in the last saint He adds to the Church. Thus, in His sovereignty, He has been planting the heavens, and when He is ready He will remove His hand and say unto Zion, "Thou art my people."

I am sure many Christians do not know what God is doing. What a complete answer to the work of Satan by the first Adam, in rebuilding Jericho, the city of the curse (see Josh. vi. 26, 27 and i. Kings xvi. 34).

God is operating on the basis of His three unconditional promises to Abraham that his seed should be as the dust of the earth, as the sand of the seashore, and as the stars of heaven. God has begun with the last promise—thy seed shall be as the stars of heaven. He is going to fulfil the other two. Meantime He is planting the heavens, and then He calls upon Israel to awake and see what He has done; He removes His hand, and the display comes out—the glory of God. Can any creature see God directly? No, and yet they will see God. How? In that city that comes forth—it is the display of God. God calls upon Israel to awake and look up, and see what He has done in heaven. The display of God to the earth will be from heaven.

May God give us to know what it is to be down here preparing for that display. May He help us

to recognise also that it is no use trying to make clean the outside of the cup and platter, if the heart is not right with God—kept in the sense of His love, as presented in 1 Cor. i. and 2 Cor. iii.—so that it responds to His heart. And then the eye will be fixed on Christ, so as to draw down from Him, the head, all the resources of God, which are filled full in Him for us (see Col. i. 19; ii. 9, 10). “In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love.” And this will lead us in spirit outside of ourselves to Him who is the object of faith, and the effect will be to make each of us “glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world.” There we shall find ourselves in the power of new creation affections (Gal. v. 5, 6; vi. 14, 15) which are alone the true rule for our walk (Gal. vi. 16) as God’s Israel on earth during the time of Christ’s rejection.

What a testimony God’s saints would present to the world if they were thus walking in the three unities set forth in Eph. iv. 3–7; v. 6, the Father in them; v. 5., the Lord the object of faith as the One to whose death we have been baptized and from whom we derive everything (Eph. ii. 14–16); v. 4., the Spirit the power to keep us true to our baptism, maintaining us in the love of God, as seen in Christ’s death and resurrection (Eph. ii. 18).

And according to the measure in which each individual saint is using diligence to maintain this unity, he would be able to minister rightly for the building up of the body of Christ. No servant would seek to get prominent, or to exercise a predominance over another, but be in the power of Him who went up, *because* He went down (compare Phil. ii. ; Eph. iv. 9, 10 : 1 Cor. ix. 19 ; Gal. v. 13 ; John xiii. 14—17 ; Luke xiv. 7—11 ; xvii. 10).

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