



Christian Resources and Links

Doctrinal & Practical Writings

Kadesh-Barnea, or, The Power of a Surrendered Life

by J. Wilbur Chapman

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Preface



Our Father in Heaven never intended that we, who are his children by regeneration, should live anything else than a life of perfect obedience and trust; for we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. This means more to us than we may at first realize. In his explanation of the miracle of Pentecost, Peter said (Acts 2:33): "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."

Since therefore upon our head, Jesus Christ, God hath poured forth the Holy Ghost, whatsoever the head has received is in trust for the body; and we are the body of Christ and members in particular.

All that the head has obtained, I may claim. *A life of unrest* dishonors Him, for He said in Matthew 11:28,29: "Come onto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall

find rest unto your souls." He surely must be grieved if we have disregarded His promise.

A life devoid of peace discredits His word, for He said (John 14:27): "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Peace is just the opposite of unrest, and no child of God ought to be without it, for it is his birthright in Christ.

A life of failure brings reproach on His cause, for what the Apostle found to be true may also be realized in your experience and mine (Philippians 4:13): "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me"; and may also be the testimony of every child of God. *A life without power* is contrary to His plan for you and me, for one of the last words of Jesus Christ is recorded in Acts 1:8: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."

And since He is no respecter of persons, this power must be yours for the claiming. This blessing of a "Life of Privilege," or a "Victorious Life," or a "Surrendered Life," is not only the *privilege* of every Christian, but it is the birthright of every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ; and if we have not claimed it, the responsibility can be placed on none other than ourselves. "God would and ye would not." These words tell the sad story of the defeat, the discontent, the soul-hunger of many a life to-day.

I believe there is no better illustration of this subject than the history of the Children of Israel, and I am not alone in this view, for Paul tells us in his letter to the Corinthians in speaking of the Israelites (I Corinthians 10:11):

"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."

The marginal reading for the word "ensamples" is "types"; so God must have intended that we should study their failures and take warning, that we should behold their victories and not lose hope. These words were spoken by Jeremiah concerning Israel:

"For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah, saith the LORD; that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory: but they would not hear."

Alas! the same might be spoken concerning God's children to-day. *God would, and ye would not!*

I ask a careful reading of this little book, the thoughts of which are expressed in the simplest language. Dear reader, if you are able to subscribe to the few conditions herein stated, I believe you may enter at once upon the enjoyment of your birthright privilege as a child of God, and lead a fully surrendered life.

J. Wilbur Chapman



Chapter 1 - Egypt

This dark land, in which the Children of Israel served in bondage for over four hundred years, is a perfect type of the world of sin in which the Spirit of God found us. No Egyptian taskmaster was ever more merciless and cruel than sin, and the case of no Israelite was ever more helpless or hopeless than that of a man who is lost in sin, for remember Paul's words, as he describes our lost estate (Ephesians 2:12):

"At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."

They of old in Egypt could not save themselves; the more they struggled, the more helpless they became. Is this not a perfect illustration of that condition in which we were before God saved us? But hope came to Israel, and help came to us from the very same source. But alas! it is true that one may be redeemed and may be in possession of eternal life, and still be dwelling in Egypt. It is not a difficult matter for us to determine whether we are in this position or not. Egypt was the place of bondage for Israel, and the world is the place of bondage for the Christian.

If a Christian is in the world and of it, he has no deliverance from his sin. He is repeatedly making the same failure, he is constantly confessing his weakness, but alas! each day only finds him failing again, and he is of all men most miserable. He is saved from the penalty of sin, but not from its power.

We find also that when Israel was in Egypt, they were all the time groaning in their bondage; and this is the experience of the Christian living in the world. It is perfectly illustrated in the seventh chapter of Romans (which doubtless was a record of Paul's own struggles); and especially in that verse which reads: "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Reader, if you are constantly groaning over your defeat, discouraged because of your failure, and losing hope because you have no song with which to praise God, it is clear evidence that while you may be in possession of eternal life, you are still dwelling in Egypt.

It is also not to be forgotten that while Israel dwelt in Egypt, they were unable to worship God. So there are thousands of Christians, who have been redeemed by the blood, and kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, and yet somehow they are utterly powerless in the matter of worship. Their prayers are like sounding brass, their testimony like a tinkling cymbal. It is because they have continued to dwell in Egypt.



Chapter 2 - The Passover

In the twelfth chapter of Exodus, verses twenty-one and twenty-two, we find these words:

"Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover. And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the bason; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning."

Paul connects this ceremony with us, for he says in the first epistle to the Corinthians, chapter five, verse seven: "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."

It is remarkable what light is shed on the New Testament by the stories of the Old Testament, and thus it is that the Passover of old sheds light on the doctrine of the atonement for to-day; for that ancient ceremony typifies the shedding of the blood of Jesus for us, making us both safe and sure.

It was while the Israelites were yet in Egypt that the Passover was celebrated, and it was while we were yet in our sins that Christ died for the ungodly. In Him we have redemption (I Peter 1:18,19): "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

In Him we have shelter from a doom so terrible that, when compared with that which fell upon Egypt, the trials of the children of Israel seem as nothing.

In Him we have a salvation, which, as John McNeill says, "speaks not only from night till

morning, but all through Time's long night, till the eternal morning breaks. A salvation of which we get the beginning here through faith in the blood of the Passover lamb, but of which we shall sing throughout all eternity."

What did the passover mean to Israel? Moses said: "Draw out a lamb, and kill it"; and every Israelite must have thought: "If I am not to die because of my sin, then something is to die for me." Thus in the Old Testament sacrifice we surely get the foundation-truth of the atonement provided by the Son of God, namely, substitution.

If you take this thought from the scene on Calvary, you rob the atonement of its power, and make the death of Christ the most shocking thing the world has ever known.

The atonement of Jesus Christ is to be summed up in these words: "Christ died for the ungodly." He was as innocent, as gentle, as spotless as a lamb; "and the LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." But He was a willing victim, for we read He loved us and gave Himself for us. His work was not in vain, for "with His stripes we are healed." But as the killing of the lamb was not enough, for it might have been slain and the blood collected in a basin and a bunch of hyssop placed by its side, and Israel still have been in danger — the blood must be applied to the lintels of the door before the family is safe; so it is not enough that our Passover Lamb has been slain — we must by faith apply His blood to our own souls.

The bunch of hyssop corresponds to faith. Hyssop was a very common thing; it grew just without the door of every Israelitish dwelling, and all could secure it if they wished. Faith is a very common thing among men. Take the faith you have in your mother, your brother, your dearest friend, and turn it upon Christ, and it will become the first step towards saving faith.

Notice that God did not say: "When *you* see the blood, I will pass over you," but: "When *I* see" it. It is not our appreciation of the blood of Christ that saves us, but God's estimate of it. We may understand very imperfectly the atonement of Christ, but it was not meant for us to comprehend; it is for God to understand, and for us to accept. Dear reader, have you settled this question?

This is not all the Christian life. There is much land to be possessed, but alas! many stop here. But to continue here is to abide still in Egypt.



Chapter 3 - The Red Sea

After the Passover, when the pillar of cloud had gone before the children of Israel, changing into a pillar of fire by night, they came to the Red Sea, and God miraculously opened a way for them through the sea, and dry shod they passed over to the other side. After them in hot pursuit came all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. In their blind rage they followed them into the path of the sea, when suddenly the waters came together, holding the Egyptians in their close embrace, and behold! these enemies of Israel lay dead upon the shore.

There must be something of typical teaching to be attached to this Red Sea experience. Beyond all question, it stands typically for the death of Christ, but not as a redemption; that is one thought of the atonement, but there is still another side to it. The Red Sea must stand for the death of Christ in its power to deliver us from the control or dominion of sin.

We had in the Passover the suggestion as to what His death means as a substitution. But that is not all the teaching to be drawn from His death. Many people stop here, and therefore they have neither peace nor power. It must be something like this. Just as Jesus was my substitute and died for me, so He is my living head, with whom and in whom I must die daily. And just as He lives to make intercession for me at the right hand of God, so He lives in me to carry out and perfect His life. I can only find out what the life is that He would live in me, when I look at His death. In that death I find He submitted His will absolutely unto God; and so if one wants to live a life of perfect peace, there must be an unconditional surrender of one's life. It

is to be like Christ when we yield everything to God. We have not a thought, we have not a wish, we have not a hope, but for God. We would not live a day except that God might be glorified in our life of that day. If you say this is impossible, my answer is: Did Jesus do it? If He did, then He waits to fill out your life and mine in the same way. But just as Israel went down into the Red Sea, so I must go down into the death of Christ for deliverance from the power of self and sin.

However, it is not to be forgotten that when Christ died upon the cross, He died *for* sin; but in the second place, it is said that He died *unto* sin. He was tempted, and He gave up His life rather than yield. In this I may have fellowship with Him as I enter into His death.

Egypt stands for the world. In it the Spirit of God found us when we were saved. Out of all the company of Egyptians certain foes pursued Israel, even to the midst of the sea. They are like the sins which have followed us since our conversion: pride, temper, lust, avarice, and many other things that have cost us no end of trouble all our Christian life through. We have always been sure of our salvation, but these foes that have beset us, have made us unutterably miserable. Is there no escape from them, and is there no hope of victory? Let us see.

You remember that the waters of the Red Sea rolled in on the Egyptians, and covered them, so that there remained not so much as one of them. We are told that they were seen dead upon the shore. The Rev. F. B. Meyer says the Israelites might have gone back and said:

"There is my old taskmaster; he will never trouble me again."

Another might have said: There is mine, he will oppress me no more."

All this beautifully illustrates what may be counted upon if we enter into the death of Christ. He died unto sin, and so we may stand in Him and say from henceforth: "I count my temper slain, my pride crucified, my lust dead, and my avarice lifeless."

But all this time, however, with these certain Egyptians slain, Egypt as a nation was still intact. So is Sin. Paul said, "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin." But he never said, "Reckon sin to be dead unto you." Some people have here made a fatal mistake. My personal *sins* I must count slain, but *Sin* back of them all is very much alive. How, then, are we to meet temptation?

Remember always that *temptation is not sin*. If it stands beckoning to you from the other side of the sea, you need not yield. *Yielding is sin*. Put Christ and His death between you and sin, and you will always gain the victory. Those were great words of Paul when he said: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither *yield* ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."

Can you subscribe to this teaching, and will you enter by a complete submission of your will into all that the death of Christ means? Will you say: "Henceforth I shall live as a man dead to sin"?

I believe it is possible for one to be saved, not only from the penalty of sin — that is the teaching of the Cross; but also from the power of sin — that is the lesson learned on the shores of the Red Sea.

There are two thoughts in Paul's lesson above referred to. We are not to yield our members as instruments of unrighteousness; but this is a negative truth, and is only half the truth. We may yield them unto God; this is positive teaching, and is the secret of deliverance.

The verb indicates that it may be done instantly. Then why not do it now? Why not write your name, as you read, to this covenant?—

"I definitely dedicate myself this day unto the Lord, to be His forever. I shall expect deliverance from sin's power only through Him.

..... [Name.]"



Chapter 4 - The Waters of Marah

From the shores of the Red Sea the children of Israel took up the line of march, but the people were soon suffering from thirst. It was a dreary journey. They had been so long in bondage that they could hardly appreciate their freedom. Their slavery had made them very dependent, and this must have added to their burdens as they marched. Suddenly away in the distance they beheld evidences of water, and soon their lips were pressed down to the spring; but to their dismay, they found that the waters were bitter.

How like the experience of the average Christian all this is! Redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, led out of Egypt, passed through the Red Sea, and yet you have been at different times perfectly disconsolate! Some friend failed you, and the waters were bitter. The world seemed cruel and unsympathetic, and the waters were bitter. God called to Himself your mother, your children, your husband, your wife, your friend, and the waters were bitter. You call yourself a Christian, and you feel that you have passed through the Red Sea, entering into the death of Christ, and laying hold upon His power to keep you from sin; but when a trial came, the waters of life seem to you bitter as the waters of Marah.

When Moses realized the condition of the spring, he threw in the wood of a certain tree, and immediately the waters became sweet and pure as a mountain stream. Here is the secret of sweetening your life! Bring to bear the principles of the Cross upon every bitterness of your life. If your heart has been embittered by unkind words of another, stand near the Cross and hear Him say, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Are you distressed because some trial has overtaken you? Listen again while you hear Him groaning in agony in the pain of crucifixion, and what are your sorrows when compared with His? Do you rebel when you hear that perfect peace is only to be found when there is perfect submission? Hear Him say, "It is finished!" and remember that these words give us the climax of His absolute submission to the will of God. The difficulty with us in our Christian life has been that we have not let our wills run parallel with the will of God. No one can make a cross so long as he keeps one piece of wood just beside another, but the moment he puts the one across the other, the cross immediately appears. No one can have a cross in this world, in the sense of a burden, if his will is parallel with the will of God; but the moment it runs contrary to that will, then there is confusion and unrest.

Apply all the principles of the Cross of Christ to your springs of bitterness, and they will in every case be sweetened.



Chapter 5 - From Marah to Elim

"And they removed from Marah, and came unto Elim."

That was a change for Israel as delightful as the change from bondage to freedom, from darkness to light, from unrest to rest. It was almost like passing from earth to heaven. It was certainly a delightful experience. Marah's waters were bitter, but Elim had twelve wells of water, and they were all sweet, and the twelve wells were surrounded by seventy palm trees.

It is a most significant thing to me that in every type of the Old Testament and in every story

of the New Testament, whenever anything is presented that may hint at the Christian's rightful experience, that life is presented as something glorious and wonderful; if any one is having a hard time in his Christian life, it is simply because he has not brought up his experience so that it may correspond to his standing in Christ.

There were twelve wells of water at Elim — that would signify a well for every month of the year for the Christian. A well means both refreshment and rest. And there were seventy palm trees about these wells. The number is suggestive, to say the least. A man's life according to the Psalmist is three score years and ten, that is, seventy, so there would be a palm tree for every year of his life.

Some one has said that this tree may be used for three hundred and sixty-five different purposes. So there is a well for every month, a palm tree for every year, and some part of the tree for every day of the life of a child of God.

But delightful as was the change from Marah to Elim, it is not for a moment to be compared with the experience which comes to the Christian, when he has gone beyond the cross of Christ, passed through the Red Sea of His death, and stands on Resurrection ground. Paul writes of the cross to the Corinthians because they had backslidden, but to the Ephesians he speaks repeatedly of the heavenly places. To the Colossians he says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." It is a sad thing that so many Christians are having a lean experience and hungry souls, when God has prepared such abundant blessings for us all in the storehouse of His grace, and offers them to us all without money and without price.

CHRIST OUR ALL

I've found a joy in sorrow,
A secret balm for pain,
A beautiful to-morrow
Of sunshine after rain.
I've found a branch of healing
Near every bitter spring
A whispered promise stealing
O'er every broken string.

I've found a glad hosanna
For every woe and wail;
A handful of sweet manna
When grapes of Eschol fail.
I've found a Rock of Ages
When desert wells are dry;
And after weary stages,
I've found an Elim nigh—

An Elim with its coolness
Its fountain and its shade;
A blessing in its fullness,
When buds of promise fade.
O'er tears of soft contrition
I've seen a rainbow light;
A glory and fruition,
So near!—yet out of sight.

My Savior, Thee possessing,
I have the joy, the balm,
The healing, and the blessing.
The sunshine, and the psalm,
The promise for the fearful,
The Elim for the faint,
The rainbow for the tearful,
The glory for the saint!

—Mrs. Jane Crewdson.



Chapter 6 - Manna

As the children of Israel journeyed on from Elim, they were very hungry, and they began to murmur. They sighed for the things of Egypt once again, and at last God sent to them from the skies heavenly manna.

"Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in My law, or no. And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily."

They gathered it each day, and the supply was never exhausted. This is surely a type of what the Christian has given to him as spiritual food.

First of all, there is God's Word; it has been a sweet morsel to us. Secondly, the Lord's Supper; it has been both meat and drink to our hungry souls. All this has been ours, but there seems to be something lacking in the lives of many. The blessings our hearts have longed for seem still to tarry. Is there not yet something to be obtained?

Could you not say, reader: "My Christian life has been like this: Jesus, my Passover Lamb, shed His blood for me, and I have accepted Him as my personal sacrifice. So far as I knew the way, I entered into His death to keep me from the power of sin. The Red Sea experience has been mine. I have been both at the bitter waters of Marah and beneath the palm trees of Elim. I have fed my soul on the heavenly manna, and the Lord's Table has been to me a perfect delight. And yet! *and yet!* I am filled with unrest, I am constantly suffering defeat, I am full of envy, I am the victim of pride, I am always inconsistent."

I doubt not but that this is the experience of many Christians. Is there anything better? YES, there remaineth yet much land to be possessed. This was true for Israel, and this leads me to the most important step of all this lesson.

I need not be miserable. God did not intend that I should be defeated. He cannot be pleased to have me discouraged. It is against His own name that I should be living in Egypt. I am like the prodigal in this. I will be like him in one thing more— "I will arise and go to my Father," and I will say unto Him: "Father, I have been a disobedient child. I now come to Thee to claim my birthright. Fill me with Thy Spirit."

Reader, can you subscribe to this?



Chapter 7 - Kadesh-Barnea

After the children of Israel had gone past Horeb, through the wilderness by the way of the mountain of the Amorites, as the Lord their God had commanded them, they came to Kadesh-barnea at which point they were actually on the borders of the land of Canaan. We would almost have expected to see them breaking their ranks to see who could be the first to enter into the Land of Promise, just as in the olden days a company of Crusaders, when they came near to the City of Jerusalem and saw stretching out before them the object of their hopes and endeavors, some fell upon their faces, others fell upon their knees, some began to pray, and some to weep, until finally at the signal from their leader, every man sprang to his feet and shouted three times, "Jerusalem! Jerusalem! City of the King! City of the King!" And then they broke their ranks to see which of them could be the first to enter into the city.

We would have expected this of the children of Israel. They had endured so many days of wandering and so many years of oppression, that you would have thought they would have hailed with delight the land of freedom. But instead they called twelve spies, and sent them across the border to look over the land and make a report to them. They awaited their return with impatience, and when they came they said that Canaan was a marvelous country; the people dwelt in cities with high walls; they were giants in size and in strength. They said it was a most fruitful country, and they bore with them the famous grapes of Eschol to prove their statement. Ten of the spies said, "Let us not go over," but two of them, Caleb and Joshua by name, said, "What if the walls be high and the men be strong and the outlook discouraging? The Lord Jehovah is our God, and with Him we shall win the victory."

Instead of listening to the two spies, they took the counsel of the ten. They turned back to their wanderings; they fell by the wayside; they were buried in the wilderness; and not one of them over twenty years of age, with the possible exception of the tribe of Levi, and certainly with the exception of Caleb and Joshua, ever saw the land of Canaan again.

Their sojourn at Kadesh-barnea for them was the time of crisis. Before them was rest, and for years they had been strangers to it. In the Promised Land there was fruit, while Egypt had given them nothing but leeks and garlic and onions. That is just the difference between the Christian's living in Egypt and in Canaan. Before them in the land of Canaan was communion and fellowship with God; they had no altar in Egypt, and they dared not erect one. If they had gone into Canaan, their communion would have been so perfect that they would almost have seen God face to face. Behind them was the wilderness. We can hardly appreciate what these wilderness wanderings were until we read the ninety-first Psalm, written by Moses during the wilderness experience:

"Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence... Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee... Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet..."

Reading this, you will have only the faintest conception as to what the children of Israel chose in preference to rest and communion with God.

We have had our Kadesh-barnea in the past. We have perhaps reached it in the death of a loved one, when God has seemed to call us out of the old life of selfishness and carnal experience into the new life of spiritual power; but many a person has heard God's voice in affliction only to harden his heart, while the Scriptures declare that whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth.

Some of us came to Kadesh-barnea at the time of a great revival. I have in mind now a young man, who in one of the meetings at J..., in the state of Illinois, was thoroughly converted, and at once began to search his heart to see if he was in the position that God wanted him to occupy. He was a young man of large means, and had devoted himself to the occupation of stock farming, and had in his possession several thousand acres of the best land of the state. Fortune seemed to smile upon him in everything that he did. But on the day of his conversion God turned his face away from the farm and gave him a longing for the ministry. For some time he was undecided, but at last he gave up his business and returned to college to take his senior year, which he had previously neglected to take. During the year he devoted himself to the most earnest Christian service. He was thrown in contact with some student volunteers, and for the first time God began to press upon him the work of a foreign missionary; but to go to the foreign field meant the breaking of some very tenderest of ties, and the sacrifice of a palatial home, and the giving up of what men count dear to themselves.

It was his Kadesh-barnea. Canaan seemed to be before him, and the wilderness was behind. For a little time he hesitated, and then at last he boldly declared himself for Christ, put his all upon the altar, and determined to go to China. When once the question had been settled, he

became restless as he thought of the thousands of souls dying without Christ, and so while he pursues his studies in this country he has placed in the control of a foreign missionary society sufficient funds to keep a worker in the place he one day hopes to occupy.

No words can describe the joy that fills his soul to-day. His face is radiant. His peace flows like a river. God has undoubtedly equipped him with wonderful power over other men. He came to Kadesh-barnea and when others would have thought the sacrifice was too great to make, he made it with joy, and God has verified His promise unto him as found in Mark, tenth chapter, verses twenty-nine and thirty:

"Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

Some reach Kadesh-barnea in the progress of a Bible conference. I do not know but that I did myself. For five years I had struggled against what I believed was God's plan for my life, but to walk in the way He had marked out was to change all the plans of my student life and my early ministerial career; it was to give up the things I had worked for years to obtain; and the fact is, I was unwilling to do it. The sacrifice was too great in my estimation, and the returns would be too small. No words can describe the unrest that filled my soul. At last one day I was sitting in my home in the country, reading the account of Mr. Meyer's address at the Northfield Conference, when my eye lighted upon this expression:

"If you are not willing to forsake everything for God, then are you ready to say, 'I am willing to be made willing?'"

That seems a very simple sentence when put into words, but it was for me a star of hope in what was midnight darkness. I felt that I could say that, and upon my knees I whispered:

"I am willing to be made willing."

In less time than I am taking to write it, God lifted the cloud that had been before me for years. He removed the mountain over which it seemed impossible for me to pass, and suddenly the way became bright with glory, and the first step taken, the next became a delight, and no words can describe the joy and the peace which have been mine since the first step was taken.

There are just two things to do when one reaches Kadesh-barnea. The first is to go back to the wilderness. And what will this mean? For Israel it meant fighting and failure, it meant lusting for that which it was not right for them to have. It meant idolatry; it meant murmuring against God.

Some one who is reading this may have come to Kadesh-barnea, and is not ready to step over the line into the Canaan of blessedness. Reader, if you should turn back, what would the wilderness mean for you? It would mean an up-and-down, hot-and-cold Christian experience. It would mean that to-day you will be in fellowship with Christ, and to-morrow you will doubtless question if you have been converted. To-day you will be so near to Him that you feel as if you can reach out your hand and touch Him, and to-morrow you will follow Him afar off, and as a result of it you will deny Him. It would mean to-day a willingness on your part to do anything He might call you to do, either to live for Him or to die for Him, and to-morrow you rebel at the least suggestion of service. It would mean that instead of being a spiritual Christian you would be a carnal Christian, and if you are a carnal believer, Paul says that first of all you are a babe, and then you are filled with envy, and then you are engaged in strife. All of which must be most unsatisfactory.

In a recent address delivered at Northfield the Rev. C. I. Scofield, D. D., made the following suggestion as to a wilderness life for a Christian. He says: "There is a proper wilderness experience, and it is sometimes necessary that a child of God shall learn to depend upon God, shall learn by an experience which may be bitter as at Marah or blessed as at Elim, that all his

springs must be found in God. This is a young convert's experience, and a proper wilderness experience. But it loses its propriety from the very day of arrival at Kadesh-barnea. A wilderness experience after we have looked over into the land, is but one prolonged disobedience.

What is it to be in the Wilderness After Kadesh-Barnea?

"The marks of it are, first of all, *restlessness*. In the wilderness the children of Israel wandered about. They had no abiding-place. The camp might be in some beautiful oasis, and it may well have been in the hearts of the people to remain there under the shade of the palm trees, and by the ever-flowing fountains of water. But in the wilderness this was never possible. Before long the pillar-cloud lifted, and then the tents must be folded and the weary journey resumed. There are no restful Christians in the wilderness. Happy moments come, indeed, but they do not stay.

"The second mark of the wilderness experience is *discontent*. The children of Israel murmured in the wilderness. They found the way hard, and they said so. They murmured against God and against Moses. They wished themselves back in Egypt. They thought regretfully of the flesh-pots of Egypt, and ceased to have any appetite for the manna which fell from Heaven. They said to Moses, 'Our soul loatheth this light bread. Just a wilderness Christians have no relish for the simple things of Christ, 'the sincere milk of the Word.'

"The third mark of a wilderness experience is *fruitlessness*. The children of Israel fought in the wilderness, but they got nothing by it but the right of way for the day's march. How different the conflicts after Israel entered the land! Then a victory meant possession.

"The fourth mark of a wilderness experience is that it is *negative*. The Israelites in the wilderness were not doing Egyptian things. Here is just where we find the majority of the people of God. With all the prevailing worldliness of our day, and conceding, as I do, that the old line of demarcation between the Church and the world is very much effaced; fully aware that there is a broad border land where one can hardly distinguish Church from world, I yet do not believe that the great majority of the real people of God in the world to-day are doing Egyptian things. The difficulty is that they are living in a poor, negative experience of *not doing* things. They do not dance, they do not play cards, they do not attend theaters; but when you inquire for the positive and aggressive side of their Christian lives, it is absent. They are simply negative.

"And another thing we need to see about that wilderness. It had two borders. There was the Egyptian side of the wilderness, and the Canaan side. A Christian lingering on the Egyptian side of the wilderness is peculiarly discontented, and in him may be found all the marks of the wilderness experience. He is continually looking over into Egypt, and wishing he might have liberty to do Egyptian things. It is on this side of the wilderness that the backsliding takes place. There is a story of a little girl who often fell out of bed, and who was finally asked by her mother to think why she was always falling out of bed. After a period of reflection, she answered, 'I think it is because I go to sleep too near where I get in.' That is just the trouble with the great majority of Christians. They do come out of the grosser forms of worldliness, but they linger so near the borders of the world that they are always rather longing to go back into the old things, and not infrequently they do slip back.

"Then there is the Canaan side of the wilderness. That is Kadesh-barnea. It is the place where weary Christians, after an experience of wilderness wandering which has made them heartsick, stand and look over into a better experience. You know how this comes. Perhaps some day you took your Bible when you were tired, so tired of unrest and sin and defeat, and you read there the great words of the Apostle Paul: 'The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death,' and you say, 'Oh that that might be true of me!' Then perhaps you read in Galatians that other great word of his, 'I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.' And again you groan and sigh and say, 'Oh that this were true of me!' Then perhaps you come to the great decisive verse, the first verse of the twelfth chapter of Romans, 'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy,

acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.' And there, just there, you are at Kadesh-barnea! It may be that sometime you have heard from the lips of some servant of the Lord strong testimony concerning an experience of rest and victory and possession here in this troubled world, and again for a moment you have been at Kadesh-barnea, and looked over into that good land, and wished, oh! so fervently, that you might be there too. Possibly sometime you have met some tranquil saint, peaceful, restful, poor perhaps in things of this world, the body racked by pain possibly, but with a great content in the heart; and you have said, 'There is something I am a stranger to.' The late Reginald Radcliffe, of Liverpool, told me that walking down a London street one day with the Rev. William Pennefather, of blessed memory, a sturdy beggar approached them. He looked for one moment into the shrewd face of Radcliffe, the able Liverpool lawyer, and then into the face of William Pennefather, and without a moment's hesitation he approached the latter, and said, 'Oh, man with Heaven in your face, give me a penny!' Maybe you have met some one with Heaven in his face, and you have longed to have Heaven in your face too; and then you were at Kadesh-barnea, just on the border land."

The thing for us to do, if we have reached Kadesh-barnea, is to cross over the line.

We have been told something of the beauty of the original Canaan, and that the land literally flowed with milk and with honey. The Bible gives us glimpses of its fruitfulness. "And they turned and went up into the mountain, and came unto the valley of Eshcol, and searched it out. And they took of the fruit of the land in their hands, and brought it down unto us, and brought us word again, and said, It is a good land which the LORD our God doth give us" (Deut. 1:24,25).

So let us send spies over into the Spiritual Canaan, that we may learn of that as a dwelling place. Moses must have had it in mind when he said: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (Psalm 91:1). And Paul must have thought of it when he said so much to the Ephesians about the heavenly places; and Jesus must have been teaching about it when He said: "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

The fact is, every description of the Christian life, as God intended we should live it, makes it a life of blessedness and glory, but the spies must also find out for us if it is a land of fruitfulness. This we learn to be true when we read: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:22,23).

You should bear in mind that the expression is not the *fruits* of the Spirit, but *fruit*: and it is never to be forgotten that we may have all of these blessings if we are but living as God intended we should live. Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance.

It is not possible for me to take up all these different blessings at this time, but we may consider briefly two or three.

Meekness is not, as some have supposed, lifelessness, but the word "meekness" as used in the Bible is the same Greek word that is used in Xenophon's "Anabasis" for the training of horses; and the Scripture idea of a meek man is a *tamed* man. If this be true, it is not discouraging if one has a fiery temper or a miserable disposition.

A fiery temper is a good thing if it is controlled, instead of controlling us. It is like the steam in an engine. It really serves to send us on to greater victories. Oh, the blessedness of putting all that we have into the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ, both to keep and control, to be tamed by Him!

It is not an easy thing to define *peace*. Webb-Peploe says that to his mind the best way to define it is to take its opposite, and contrast it with peace. It is the opposite of unrest, or confusion, or strife. Jesus certainly spake the truth when He said, "Peace I leave with you, My

peace I give unto you." It is not a peace *like* His, nor the peace between us and God which He had purchased with His blood, but His own peace; and the fact is, it has been waiting for us ever since we were converted, but we have never entered upon its possession by crossing over from Kadesh-barnea into Canaan.

It is also a difficult thing to define *love*. As a part of the fruit of the Spirit, it is not ordinary human affection; it is as far beyond it as the day is brighter than the night. It is the same in kind as that which filled the heart of God, as that which impelled the Son of God to die for us, and still impels Him to make intercession for us.

All this, and more, we would have if we had but crossed over into Canaan.

When the spies returned from Canaan and made their report to the children of Israel, they declared that there were giants there of such stature that they themselves were only like grasshoppers for smallness. I am well aware that this expression typically refers to the enemies which one meets even in the spiritual Canaan, and which Paul had in his mind when he said (Ephesians 6:12):

"We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

But it is also true that the people who dwell in Canaan are always giants in their power both Godward and man-ward. This is the place where Mr. Spurgeon dwelt in sweet fellowship with his Divine Lord. This is the land in which George Müller abides, and where he has learned so perfectly the will of God concerning him, that God never seems to say "no" to his requests; for George Müller never asks for anything but that which is in accordance with God's plan for him. This is the place where Mr. Moody dwells, and if men say that the secret of his power is not in his sermons or in his manner of delivery, then I would make reply it is in the very life of the man, in the atmosphere that surrounds him. This is the land where Hudson Taylor abides, and it is here we find the secret of the China Inland Mission. God never seems to refuse Hudson Taylor either money or men.

I one day said to Dr. McCarthy, who represents him in this country:

"Can you tell me the secret of Hudson Taylor's power?"

He made quick response that he believed it was to be largely found in this: Missionaries in China are constantly surrounded during the day by the Chinese people, so they have little time for communion with God, or for the study of His word. To overcome this difficulty, Hudson Taylor acquired the habit of rising every morning between two and three o'clock, and going alone into his room, turning the key in the door, and spending the entire time in communion and fellowship with Christ. Sometimes he would sit for a whole hour without saying a word; at other times he would be upon his knees in prayer; on other occasions he would be engaged in poring over the pages of the Bible. But sometimes he would sit with closed Bible and folded hands and open eyes, looking upward apparently into the very face of God, and saying over and over again the name of Jesus Christ.

"Sweetest name on mortal tongue,
Sweetest note of seraph's song,
Sweetest carol ever sung,
Jesus! Blessed Jesus!"

Have you ever tried this? if not, test it to-day, and you will have come to you an experience which is only granted to those who live in Canaan. I do not know that there is a better explanation of the way we may enter into Canaan than that given by Dr. Scofield in his Northfield address, "Kadesh-barnea, and Beyond," from which I now quote:

"Now it would be a poor service to you for me to leave you here. If you are indeed at Kadesh-barnea. if there is in your heart a sincere longing to enter now into this Canaan experience you will ask of me how, practically this may be done. I believe there are *four steps* which must

be taken by any who would know what it is habitually to have 'the days of heaven on earth,' in their Christian life.

"First, see in the Word of God that He has provided some better things for you than to wander in the wilderness of failure and discontent and doubt; that there is possible for you what has been realized in countless other lives — a present enjoyment of victory over known sin, of the realization of all the great promises of the Bible, and of rest from disquieting doubt and anxiety and care. See that in the Word of God.

"Secondly, see that by efforts to keep the Law you can never enter this experience, that the utmost which the Law can do for a saint is to show him his need — to place before him an ideal to which he has not attained, and in his own effort can never attain.

"Thirdly, see that there is power in Jesus Christ to give you this experience. It is your conversion over again, and in a very real sense. As a sinner you came to the Lord Jesus, because He alone had the Words of eternal life. There was none other who could possibly take away the guilt of your sin and give you eternal life. You could not gain it for yourself; you could not blot out your own transgressions; you were perfectly helpless. And the time came when you saw that, and trusted Him to do it all. Now, just as you came as a sinner to a crucified Christ, come as a weary saint to a risen and mighty Christ, and, remembering how you once knelt under the burden of your sins, kneel again under the burden of your failures as a Christian, of your doubts, of your anxieties, of your fears, of your defeats, of your weakness; and look to Him just as simply by faith to give you victory, and possession, and rest, as once you looked to Him by faith to give you pardon and peace. Cease utterly from any thought that you can by yourself, in yourself, or of yourself, cross from Kadesh-barnea into the good land. Remember that Joshua only can lead you into that land and give 'you your inheritance in it; and cast yourself just as utterly upon Jesus for this blessedness as you did in the first coming to Him cast yourself upon Him for forgiveness.

"And fourthly, when you have done that, then say by faith, 'Now I am in the land. He has given me my possession.' Just here is the point of failure, I am persuaded, in countless earnest efforts to have the life more abundant. So many take the first three steps of which I have spoken; they see in the Word the promise of a better experience, they learn by bitter failure that the Law can never make them perfect, and they believe that Jesus Christ can, as a gift of His power, bestow that which they desire; but they never take the fourth step, and say, 'I now, by faith, take this life of victory, this place of rest, and possession, and joy, and fruitfulness.'

"Will you not take these four steps to-day, if you have not already done so? For some of you are seeing in Jesus a full answer to all your need in this respect. Will you not now, in simplicity of faith, and without waiting for any feeling whatever, simply say, 'Lord Jesus, as I once took Thee as my Savior from the guilt of sin, I now take Thee as my Deliverer from the power of sin, and enter into the possession of my inheritance in Thee'? And just as surely as the joy of salvation followed that decision of yours, when as a sinner you came to Christ, just so the experiences proper to the new life of victory will, moment by moment, be yours if you take this second step of faith."

There are certain reasons why it would be best for us all *to-day* to enter in. This may be God's last call to you to enter upon the enjoyment of this life of privilege. This was true of all the children of Israel beyond a certain age, for when they realized what they had missed in failing to take advantage of God's opportunity, we find them saying to Moses (Deuteronomy 1:41-46):

"Then ye answered and said unto me, We have sinned against the LORD, we will go up and fight, according to all that the LORD our God commanded us. And when ye had girded on every man his weapons of war, ye were ready to go up into the hill. And the LORD said unto me, Say unto them, Go not up, neither fight; for I am not among you; lest ye be smitten before your enemies. So I spake unto you; and ye would not hear, but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD, and went presumptuously up into the hill. And the Amorites, which dwelt in that mountain, came out against you, and chased you, as bees do, and destroyed you in Seir,

even unto Hormah. And ye returned and wept before the LORD; but the LORD would not hearken to your voice, nor give ear unto you. So ye abode in Kadesh many days, according unto the days that ye abode there."

Some one will read this book only to say: "I am very sure there is such a life of blessing. I am quite sure that I have not entered upon it. I am perfectly confident that God intends that I should do so, and I am fully determined some day to do it — but not now"; and you may turn away for the last time. It is not a question of life with you, but a question of blessing. You will remember how Moses came to Pisgah (Deuteronomy 32: 49-52):

"Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, unto mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession: And die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people; as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people: Because ye trespassed against Me among the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah-Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin; because ye sanctified Me not in the midst of the children of Israel. Yet thou shalt see the land before thee; but thou shalt not go thither unto the land which I give the children of Israel."

It would be best for us to enter in *to-day* because if we fail to do so we may be keeping some one else out who has a right to go in. Caleb and Joshua had a perfect right to enter into Canaan directly from Kadesh-barnea, but the failure of the children of Israel put a barrier in their way. If I fail to go in, I may keep out the members of my family or the people in my church, and the responsibility of their failure may rest heavily upon me. It has been said in the pages that precede this, that there may be four steps into Canaan, but in reality the whole question is so easy of settlement that we have just to take one step, and that is to surrender the will. "If ye be *willing and obedient*, ye shall eat the good of the land."

If you should find it impossible to submit your will to God in everything, then it may be that Mr. Meyer's very significant expression may prove a star of hope to you in your darkness and despair. If you are not willing to submit everything, then (he has said) offer this prayer, "Lord, I am willing to be made willing about everything"; and the victory will be yours.



Chapter 8 - "Put That on Mine Account."

"If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account." —Philemon 1: 18

It was after Paul's eventful voyage, after the shipwreck at Melita, after the meeting with his friends at Apii Forum, and with the Roman soldier chained to his body, that this epistle to Philemon was written. Paul had appealed unto Caesar in the charges made against him, and he has now reached Rome that he might stand before the king. The Roman law was exceedingly slow of action, and so it was at least two years before his case could be presented. In all that time he tells us that he lived in his own hired house, and while he was chained to the Roman soldier, still he had liberty to speak, and great numbers of people flocked into his house to hear the story he had to tell.

What a picture it was! The little old man who was the preacher, with his heart on fire with love for God, his face bearing the marks of his suffering, and also his joy, lifting his hand for the sake of emphasis and causing the chains of his imprisonment to rattle, and yet writing the greatest letters the world has ever read. It is not to be forgotten that the four epistles of the imprisonment are counted his best effort. The letter to the Ephesians represents the body of Christ, that to the Colossians represents the head of the body which is Christ, and that to the Philippians stands for the glad experience that comes to a Christian when head and body are perfectly united. The letter to Philemon was the fourth of the imprisonment epistles.

Among his hearers one day was Onesimus, a runaway slave. His master was Philemon, a friend of Paul's, and a convert in another city. Doubtless the slave had heard the apostle at the time of his master's conversion. Running away from his bondage, he sought him out in the

city of Rome. To the music of the clanking chains, the epistle was written.

Erasmus says that Cicero never wrote anything of greater elegance. Luther says that it is a charming expression of Christian love, a real exhibition of Christian courtesy, a model of tact and delicacy. See the shrewdness of the apostle in the eighth and ninth verses:

"Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient, Yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ."

It is as if he had said: "I am an apostle, and I might have enjoined thee to receive Onesimus, but I rather appeal to thee for the sake of love, and I would awaken your sympathies because I am an aged man. Better than all, I send you this entreaty and hope to move you, because I am a prisoner in bonds." The salutation contained in the first three verses is: "Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellowlabourer, And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house: Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Philemon was a man of influence, Apphia was his wife, and it is supposed that Archippus was their son. Onesimus was their slave in bonds, and because of some hardship he had broken away and hastened to Rome.

It is a difficult thing to imagine the condition of the Roman slave. Society at its best was awful. What can we say of the dregs? If we would appreciate the text which is filled with the spirit of the gospel, it is necessary that we should bear in mind certain things concerning the Roman law. First, the Roman law gave a slave no right of asylum, but it granted him the privilege of making an appeal. Secondly, the Roman slave had the privilege of fleeing to his master's friend, not for concealment, but for intercession. Thirdly, the owner of a slave in Roman times was absolute in his possession, yet he might be besought by a friend whom he counted as a partner. It was also agreed that a Roman slave could be adopted by his master as a son, and thus alone could he be freed.

In the light of these thoughts the text begins to open up before us. We were God's property, and we ran away. Our sin was against God; for this reason it needs atonement. Resolutions can never touch this side of sin, reformation can never wipe it out, but Christ's atonement meets the case perfectly. Secondly, the law gives to the sinner no right of appeal. The standard of the law has never for a moment been lowered, but grace steps in and changes the whole matter, and every sinner under grace has the privilege of appealing for divine help. Thirdly, the sinner flees for refuge to Jesus, whom God counts a partner: "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Fourthly, through faith in Christ we are begotten as sons. It is impossible to understand this, but the Word of God, to which may be added our experience, justifies us in believing that it is true, and being sinners we are thus delivered from the bondage of sin and kept from its power. Fifthly, in this new relation we return to God, and we are not received as slaves, but beloved as Christ Himself.

At the close of a battle in the days of the war, a young man was found dying on the battle-field. A soldier stopped to render him assistance, and as he moistened his lips and made his head rest easier, the dying man said:

"My father is a man of large wealth in Detroit, and if I have strength I will write him a note, and he will repay you for this kindness."

And this was the letter he wrote: "Dear father, the bearer of this letter made my last moments easier, and helped me to die. Receive him and help him for Charlie's sake."

The war ended, and the soldier in tattered garments sought out the father in Detroit. He refused to see him at first on account of his wretched appearance, "but," said the stranger, "I have a note for you in which you will be interested." He handed him the little soiled piece of paper, and when the great man's eyes fell upon the name of his son, all was instantly changed. He threw his arms about the soldier, and drew him close to his heart, and put at his

disposal everything that wealth could make possible for him to possess. It was the name that made the difference. And thus we stand on redemption ground, and as Onesimus bore the letter to Philemon, so we stand before God in the name of Jesus Christ, and He speaks for us as did Paul for the Roman slave.

"If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account."

I. He Answers for our Sin

Romans 8:3: "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 for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."

2 Corinthians 5:21: "He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

There are some things in this world so dreadful that we cannot look upon them; some things are so horrible that the thought of them makes us sick; but there is nothing in this world so horrible as sin and the thought of sin to Jesus Christ, and yet He became sin for us.

I once heard John McNeill say that of all the people in Jerusalem he thought Barabbas had the best idea of the atonement of Jesus Christ. "You will remember," said Mr. McNeill, "that he should have been crucified, and Jesus released, but the order was exactly reversed. The door of the prison swings open, and Barabbas is free, and as he comes out into the light of the day, all the people seem to be hurrying in one direction. He hears that Jesus of Nazareth is to be crucified. He stops a moment to think, and then he exclaims:

"Why, that is the man who is dying in my stead! I will go and see him."

"He pushes his way out through the gate of the city, and up the hillside until he reaches the surging mob about the cross. He stands in the outer circle for a moment, and then pushes his way to the very inner circle, and stands so near that he can reach out his hand and touch the dying Savior. And," said my friend, "I can hear him say:

"I do not know who you are, but I know that you are there in my stead."

And said John McNeill: "Until you can give a better theory of the atonement, take that of Barabbas — Christ your substitute, dying in your place."

Sin was judged for us in Christ, and He stands before God saying, "Put that on mine account."

II. He Takes Away Sins

Galatians 1:4: "Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father."

1 Corinthians 15:3: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures."

1 Peter 2:24: "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."

Our sins were like the sands of the sea in number; they were like scarlet and crimson in their awfulness; but the Scriptures tell us that they are hurled as far as the east is from the west, which is a distance that can never be measured. They tell us that they are cast behind God's back, and that is surely comforting, for when I come to God as a sinner, my sins stand between me and God, and when I confess Jesus Christ as my Savior, God takes these same sins and puts them behind His back so that now God is between me and my sins. The Scriptures also declare that when our sins are confessed and forsaken, God remembers them against us no more forever. And when they rise at the judgment, ONE stands before God in

our behalf, with pierced hands, and thorn-marked brow, saying, "Father, put that on mine account."

III. He Answer For Our Failures

1 John 2:1: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

This is the high ideal — "that ye sin not" — but have you ever thought of the difference between Christ as the high priest, and as the advocate? As the high priest, He was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin; so that in all the temptations that come to you and to me, He stands in the position as priest, and His sympathy for us is infinite. But if for any reason we should make a mistake, and fail, then He becomes our advocate, making intercession for our forgiveness; in other words, He is the high priest up to the point of sin, and from that point He is an advocate.

1 John 1:8,9: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

I do not find any place in the New Testament, with the possible exception of the Lord's Prayer, which was given before the atoning death on Calvary, where it is said that a Christian needs to ask for forgiveness of sin. It is only said that we must confess our sins; and the moment a confession is made, He stands before God to say, "Father, put that on mine account."

IV. He Takes Our Cares

Matthew 11:28: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

God never intended that His children should be disconsolate or discouraged.

Philippians 4:7: "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

It is always well for us, when we are tempted to be discouraged, to remember the Apostle Paul. He was chained to a Roman soldier, and yet in this one letter to the Philippians again and again he exclaims: "Rejoice! rejoice! and again I say, rejoice!" He it is who says (Philippians 4:6):

"Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

I can understand how some will say that this is impossible, that a man of business has too many cares and too many anxieties to be careful for nothing; but some one has pointed out the fact that we begin to read at the wrong place — we should read the closing clause of the fifth verse: "The Lord is at hand." And this makes all the difference. If the Lord is at hand, I need not be over anxious. If the Lord is at hand, no burden shall weigh me down. Paul gives us the secret of it when he says that by prayer we shall overcome, and Payson says God gives His answers more to the habit than to the act of prayer. But there is still something more that Paul says of prayer; he calls it supplication. This is more intense. It means to bring your sins, your cares, your family, your business, and putting them all together, to bear them before God. Anything but a stilted prayer.

If our children should ask us for blessings as we ask God for help, we would think they had lost their reason. Mr. S. H. Hadley says that when he was converted, Jerry McCauley said to him:

"You pray."

Mr. Hadley said to him, with a sob:

"I cannot pray. You pray for me."

Then Jerry McCauley, putting his arms around him, offered up this prayer: "Dear Jesus, these poor fellows have gotten themselves into an awful hole. You helped me out. Please help them. Amen."

Mr. Hadley said this was the first time he had ever heard a real prayer. Scripturally, the only way to pray is unto God through Christ by the Spirit, and every such prayer Jesus receives and exclaims: "Father, answer it, and put it on mine account."

V. He Still Stands Besides Us In Death.

Hebrews 2:10: "For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

Death is still an enemy, but Jesus met him, and won the victory; and when we meet him, He shall stand beside us to say: "Put that on mine account." Death is a vanquished enemy, and Christ now uses him to put His children to sleep.

"Aren't you afeared, John?" said the wife of a Cornish miner as he was dying.

"Afeared, lass! why should I fear? I ken Jesus, and Jesus kens me.

An old pilot died not long ago in Boston. He had held the pilot's commission for nearly seventy-five years; and for almost all that time he was a follower of Jesus Christ. As he was passing away, his face brightened, and he started up with this expression:

"I see a light."

His friends thought his mind was wandering, and that he was in imagination on the sea, and they said:

"Is it the Highland light?"

He said: "No."

A moment more, and he repeated the sentence: "I see a light."

They asked him again: "Is it the Boston light?"

And he answered: "No."

For the third time he said: "I see a light."

They said again: "Is it the Minot light?"

"Ah, no," he said, "it is the light of glory! Let the anchor go!"

And they slipped the anchor, and the old pilot stood before Him who had taken him in His arms, and presented him without spot or blemish before His Father, saying:

"My Father, every weakness, every failure, every sin in all this life, put on mine account."



Chapter 9 - A Continual Allowance

"And his allowance was a continual allowance given him of the king, a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life." —2 Kings 25: 30.

This is a striking text, but the story it introduces is more striking by far. The Bible is always true to itself and its teachings, and the man who says that it is contradictory in its statements, betrays an ignorance which is inexcusable. I know of no better illustration of this fact than the story of Jehoiakim the father and Jehoiachin the son. It was this Jehoiakim who was sitting in his summer house when Jehudi came to him to read the scroll containing the words of the Lord. The king became very angry, and cut it with his penknife, and cast it into the fire. He was a destructive critic of the early school, and he was like the men of to-day who seem to think that because they cut away at the Scriptures, they shall be overthrown; but God always sustains His Word. After this scroll was destroyed, Jeremiah had only to call Baruch the scribe, and he dictated to him the whole scroll again; and some day the very ashes of that scroll shall rise in judgment against Jehoiakim.

He was a tyrant of the worst character. Notice what Jeremiah says about him:

"Woe be unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; that useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work; That saith, I will build me a wide house and large chambers, and cutteth him out windows; and it is cieled with cedar, and painted with vermilion. Shalt thou reign, because thou closest thyself in cedar? did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice, and then it was well with him? He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him: was not this to know Me? saith the LORD. But thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for violence, to do it" Jeremiah 22:13-17.

Men cannot mock God. The reckoning time is surely coming, when the oppressor shall meet the one whom he has oppressed, and the thief shall stand before the one from whom he has stolen, and the deceiver shall be face to face with the one upon whom he has practiced deception, and the books shall be opened. Line upon line, sin upon sin shall stare him in the face. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. There was something awful in the curse pronounced upon Jehoiakim:

"He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem;" and again: "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah."

In the face of all this wrath, Jehoiachin comes upon the scene, and was made king of the people of Judah. I can hear the enemies of God scoff when it seemed as if the curse was to amount to nothing. It is in vain to stand before God's providences. As well might one take his place in the way of the mountain avalanche to retard its progress as try to hinder the plan of God. In thirteen short weeks Jehoiachin was dethroned, the time was actually too short to be counted; and now we have a picture of the dethroned king as bad as it can be. Behind him the memory of his father; he had cursed God, and had murdered Urijah, and had died a horrible death; and instead of being on the throne we find Jehoiachin in the dungeon.

2 Kings 25:27: "And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin."

For three-eighths of a century he had not seen the sun rise, neither had he seen it set. All the time he had waked and slept, bound with the clanking chain. Little children became men and women, and he still suffered. Old men passed away and were forgotten, and he was in the darkness. God pity the man who has been for thirty-seven years in prison! I said to a man in the Joliet prison, who had been a prisoner for the same length of time:

"Would you like to be free?"

The tears came into his eyes as he said: "Why should I long to be free? The companions of my youth are gone, and a new generation is living. My family is scattered, I do not know where. Why should I desire to be free?"

Jehoiachin must have been like that. It was an awful picture, and yet not more terrible than may be seen upon our streets every day. There are men who walk amongst us who are bound with chains just as real. Sin is an awful taskmaster. Satan is a terrible tyrant. But in all this wretchedness of Jehoiachin, Evil-merodach, king of Babylon, comes upon the scene, and what he said and did is the text of this chapter.

1.

2 Kings 25:27: "Evil-merodach king of Babylon in the year that he began to reign did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison."

I was at a loss to understand what that expression — "lift up the head" — meant until I read in Genesis 40:13: "Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thy place: and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler."

When Joseph referred to lifting up the head of the butler, he meant that Pharaoh restored to him his place. There must have been in the work of Evil-merodach this thought of restoration, of making up all that which had been lost; the Hebrew word "accept" means to lift up the face.

It is appalling to think of the effects of sin, and the wretched condition of the sinner; but Christ has made provision for all this. In His atonement He answers before God all the demands of the law, and makes it possible for God to be just, and the justifier of all them that believe. But He will also lift us up until we stand before God as if we never had sinned. We may in our own thoughts bear the marks of our transgression, but we read in Jude that He presents us faultless before God.

The Rev. F. B. Meyer tells of a story, taken from Adelaide Procter, of a young girl who lived centuries ago in a convent in France. She was sweet and pure and admired of all who saw her. Her work was to care for the altar of Mary, and answer the portal. Wars swept over France, and brought the soldiers to the convent, and one that was wounded was given into her care. When he recovered, he persuaded her to leave the convent. She went with him to Paris, where she lost her good name and everything that made life worth living.

Years passed, and she came back to die within the sound of the convent bell. She fell fainting upon the steps, and there came to find her, not such a one as she had been, young and fair, but such a one as she would have been, a pure and noble matron. She picked her up and carried her into the convent, and placed her on her bed. All the years that she had been gone, she had faithfully done her work, and none knew of her disgrace; so she glided back into her old place, and until the day of her death, no one ever knew her sin. All this Christ has done for me. I like to think that I was chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, that He had me in mind when He suffered and died, that He has made up before God for all that I have failed to do, and when I stand before Him it will be as if I never had sinned in all my life.

2.

2 Kings 25:28: "And he spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon."

It must have been a great surprise to Jehoiachin to hear the kindly words. He had been accustomed only to the clanking of his chains and the oaths of his companions in misery. But this is the way the Master works too. You remember the woman who was taken in adultery.

The crowd hurried her into the presence of Jesus, and He said:

"He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her."

That was severe, and when they slunk away from Him and His words, He turned to her and said:

"Woman, where are thy accusers? Hath no man condemned thee?"

And she said: "No man, Lord."

And He spake kindly and said: "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." This is always His way.

Not far from my home in Indiana, just across the state line in Ohio, there lived an old woman who was the terror of all who had seen or heard of her. She was finally arrested, and sent to the Columbus Penitentiary. She broke every law of the institution, and they exhausted every form of punishment upon her. Times without number they had sent her to the dungeon, and for weeks at a time she lived on bread and water. Finally an old Quaker lady from the same part of the state asked permission to see her. The prisoner was led into her presence, with the chains upon her hands and feet. With downcast eyes she sat before the messenger of Christ. The old Quaker lady simply said:

"My sister."

The old woman cursed her, and then she said:

"I love you."

With another oath she said: "No one loves me." But she came still nearer, and taking the sin-stained face in both her hands, she lifted it up, and said:

"I love you, and Christ loves you."

She kissed her face first upon one cheek and then upon the other; and she broke the woman's heart. Her tears began to flow like rain. She rose to her feet. They took the chains off, and until the day of her death they were never put on again, but like an angel of mercy she went up and down the corridors of the prison, ministering to the wants of others. The Quaker lady had spoken kindly to her.

3.

2 Kings 25:29: "And changed his prison garments: and he did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life."

There are several ways of understanding this expression. In the one hundred and ninth psalm we read: "As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones." This would be like our habits. We are not obliged to change our habits before we come to Christ, but we must come to Him first, and the change is part of His work. A fiery temper and an impetuous disposition may be real blessings to us, for He shall turn them into new channels and make them for His glory. Peter had in him all that would make a mean man, but when the Lord took possession of him, he was all the better for his weakness.

Again, in the one hundred and fourth psalm we read: "Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment." In this case it is like the atmosphere which is about us, and Christ changes this too. Thus we become responsible for the atmosphere of our lives. There are certain people who provoke you the moment you see them, and there are others who command a benediction upon you without opening their lips. If it is not easier for people to be Christians

because they live with you, there is something the matter with either you or your religion.

But there is still another thought in the garment. After the father of the prodigal put a new robe on him, he covered over all the signs of his wandering. When David put Mephibosheth at the table, all signs of his lameness were hidden. When God clothes us with the robe of Christ's righteousness, He covers over all the marks of our sins, and every evidence of our weakness.

4.

Many persons are perfectly sure of everything that has been said up to this point, but how about the future? God has made provision for you; if any child of His is weak or hungry, it is because he has not appropriated what God intended he should have.

A man died in a poorhouse in England the other day. He had owned a little estate, but counted it worth nothing. The one who inherited the estate is to-day many times a millionaire, for upon the estate he found a copper mine. It had all the time been there, but was not discovered before.

2 Kings 25:30: "And his allowance was a continual allowance given him of the king, a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life."

It is a *daily* rate, that is the way God gives His help; manna for a day and light for a day. God will send you no more than you need, and will send you no more than you can bear. How many times have you said, "If I had had one more heartache, my heart would have broken; if I had had one more night of sorrow, my reason would have been dethroned." But you did not have another heart-ache, and the last sorrow did not come. One of my friends sent me these lines the other day; they came as a blessing:

*"Build a little fence of trust
Around to-day.
Fill up the space with loving deeds,
And therein stay.
Look not through the sheltering bars
Upon to-morrow.
God will help thee bear what comes,
Of joy or sorrow."*

He sends an allowance of trouble perhaps, but He sends an allowance of strength too, and He will never leave and never forsake us. This strength He imparts is for every day, but it is for all the days of our lives.

It is said that some years ago the king of Abyssinia took a British subject, by the name of Campbell, prisoner. They carried him to the fortress of Magdala, and in the heights of the mountains put him in a dungeon, without cause assigned. It took six months for Great Britain to find it out, and then they demanded his instantaneous release. King Theodore refused, and in less than ten days ten thousand British soldiers were on shipboard and sailing down the coast. They disembarked, and marched seven hundred miles beneath the burning sun up the mountains to the very dungeon where the prisoner was held, and there they gave battle. The gates were torn down, and presently the prisoner was lifted upon their shoulders, and carried down the mountains, and placed upon the white-winged ship, which sped him in safety to his home. And it cost the English government twenty-five millions of dollars to release that man.

I belong to a better kingdom than that; and do you suppose for a moment, that earthly powers will protect their subjects and that God will leave me without help? His ALLOWANCE IS A CONTINUAL ALLOWANCE, GIVEN TO ME EVERY DAY, AND SHALL BE ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE.



Chapter 10 - Grieving the Spirit

"Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God." Ephesians 4:30.

Of all the epistles that ever came from the heart of the great Apostle Paul, this letter to the Ephesians seems to me about the sweetest and best. It is the epistle in which we find "the heavenly places" mentioned so many times; it is the epistle in which we find so many different names applied to our Father in heaven; and I suppose it is the letter in which we find the very highest spiritual truth presented in all the Bible. But while we find the very highest idea of spiritual things, we also find the Apostle Paul turning to give us instructions concerning the most ordinary affairs of daily life. Some rules are here concerning Christian conversation. Some suggestions are made touching the relation which the husband sustains to the wife, and the wife to the husband. Indeed, if one should live in the spirit of this letter to the Ephesians, he would do nothing less than live what has been called by some "the life of surrender," and others "the victorious life," but which Paul calls "the life in the heavenly places." Paul makes all these different suggestions, and then adds: "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God," as if He could be grieved by a wrong atmosphere in the home, or by a wrong use of the lips; and this is true.

While many of us would shrink from doing things plainly inconsistent with our Christian profession, we would be astonished if we could be made to understand that the way we have used our lips has grieved the Holy Spirit.

First of all, the very fact that we may grieve Him proves by inference His *personality*. You cannot grieve an influence. It seems to me that we may grieve the Spirit by even stopping to prove that He has a personality equal to the Father and to the Son, for it is so self-evident. Yet many men and women do not seem to have grasped the truth of His personality, and thus must grieve Him. In the second place, the fact that we may grieve Him proves His *sensitiveness*. In John 1:32, it is said: "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove." The dove stands for all that is sensitive in the family of birds. I have been told that the dove has been known to tremble when there was held before it one single feather of a vulture's wing. The Spirit of God is so sensitive that that which has even the appearance of the evil in it hurts Him.

This idea of sensitiveness presents to us the thought of His love. If I do not love you, you cannot grieve me, but just in the proportion that I love you, you find it easy to grieve me. You cannot grieve an indifferent person. You may possibly hurt his feelings; you may anger him; but you grieve only the one whose heart is filled to overflowing with affection for you. The feeling that a mother must have when her offspring breaks her heart by evil-doing, is the feeling — but multiplied by infinity— which the Holy Ghost must have when we grieve Him.

There are several different expressions in the New Testament in line with my text. "Ye do always *resist* the Holy Ghost" (Acts 7:51). I believe that only the unregenerate resist Him. In his letter to the Thessalonians Paul says, "*Quench* not the Spirit." That may refer especially to the life of the Holy Ghost in the church, so that we may quench Him by ignoring Him in the government of the church. If we would have a blessing sweeping over our land from sea to sea, from north to south, I believe that we must begin by conforming the life of our churches to the teachings of the Holy Ghost.

"Grieve not the holy Spirit of God." Only a child of God may grieve the Spirit, and that is the sad part of it. How many times we have heard these words referred to and read as if they admonished us not to grieve *away* the Spirit of God! It seems to me that we must at least grieve the Spirit when we add to or take from any part of revealed truth. It would be contrary to Scripture to say that we could grieve *away* the Spirit. If the Spirit of God comes to abide in us, He comes to stay, and there is no power on earth that can separate us from Him, when once He takes possession of us. We have been born of the Spirit, and we cannot grieve Him away. That would mean a change of all God's plan for us, for we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. I believe that I am a part of God's great plan for ages to come, and if I should fall out it would mean a change of all God's plans for time and eternity. We cannot *grieve away* the Holy Spirit of God; no, but we may *grieve* Him.

1. We may grieve Him by *disobedience*. Disobedience of children always raises a barrier between them and their parents. There may be ever so much love in a father's heart, and he may have ever so much desire to pour forth that love, but he cannot do it so long as there is this barrier of disobedience between him and his child. The father of the prodigal son never ceased to love him, but the barrier of disobedience was there, higher than the highest mountain. Never until the son crossed that mountain could the father begin to pour forth his love upon him.

What does Paul mean when he says, "Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess"? We take that to be a command. "But be filled with the Spirit" is the rest of the same verse, and that is just as much a command as not to be drunk with wine. The only difference between the first command and the second is that one is negative and the other is positive. Are you filled with the Spirit? If not, you have disobeyed God's command, and there is a barrier between you and Him.

There are two tests, I think, by which we may know. First, if you are filled with the Spirit, God will give to you the testimony in His own word: "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do" (John 14:13). Have you ever asked to be filled with the Spirit? If you have prayed, believing that the infilling of the Holy Ghost would come to you, He will come. The promise of the Spirit is a promise of power, and "all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen" (2 Cor. 1:20). Then it is not a question of feeling, but of belief. Once when I was in deepest sorrow, a member of my church said to me, "I am very much afraid that you are having financial difficulties," and he gave me a little piece of paper. It was a blank check signed with his name, that I might fill in for any amount.

I said, "I think it is unsafe to give a man a check like that. I might send it back for half a million dollars."

"Well," he said, "if it would do you any good to think you had my fortune back of you, you may take the check."

I put it in my pocket, and every time I passed a man on the street I thought to myself: "I wonder if he has such a fortune back of him as I." I believed in that check simply because I believed in the name that was signed to it.

Have you asked to be filled with the Spirit, believing in Christ? Well, then, if you do not believe that you are filled, you are grieving the Holy Spirit of God.

But there is another test. "By their fruits ye shall know them." "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal. 5:22). Where there is a fulness of the Spirit, there will be a fulness of the fruit of the Spirit, but not always in perfection, of course. The fulness of the Spirit is a gift, and the fruit of the Spirit is a growth. To be drunk with wine is to be filled with a kind of wild exultation which leaves the last state of a man worse than the first. To be filled with the Spirit of God is to be filled with joy and exultation which is heavenly, and every wave of blessing that comes in upon us, wave upon wave, like the tide of the sea, carries a man nearer to the heavenly places.

2. Again, we grieve the Spirit *by failing to keep our hearts clean*. The late John MacNeil of Australia said that a new heart is not necessarily a clean heart; but many of us have been thinking that it was. David committed a great transgression, and was pardoned, and prayed: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Paul says: "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

MacNeil uses the illustration of a mother who puts a clean dress on her child in the morning, and tells her to keep it unspotted all day long. When night comes, the child's dress is so soiled that it is hard to tell whether it is white or black; but the mother cleanses it. The child had the will to keep it clean, but the nature of the child made her get it soiled. The same thing takes place every day, but if that mother could only impart some of her own spirit to that child, so that the child would not only have the will but the ability to keep clean, would not that be wonderful? That is exactly what God wants to do for us. He wants to put Himself in us, and

while we have the old nature of the flesh, He wants to give us, in all its fulness, His own blessed nature, to keep us free from sin.

Some say that is perfection. Well, what of it? As an old minister once said to me, "I wish that people were as much afraid of imperfection as of perfection." But we may forsake every known sin, and still be very imperfect in God's sight, for God may behold sin where we would be blind to it. It is not a question as to whether I can keep from sinning or not — I know that I cannot, for I have tried it many years; but the question is as to whether Jesus Christ can keep me. Who am I that I should limit the power of the Almighty? He is able to save unto the uttermost. Has He not told us in Jude that He is able to keep us from stumbling? Is anything too hard for the Lord?

What Must You Do To Be Filled?

You are the temple of God, and the Spirit dwelleth in you, so that if you want Him to fill you, the first thing to do is to get the temple clean. God does not require golden vessels, or silver vessels, but He must have clean vessels. In the days of Hezekiah, when the temple was filled with things that had no place there, it had to be cleansed before God would manifest Himself there. Again, when the court was filled with money-changers, Jesus had to drive them out with the scourge. Too many of us have allowed ourselves to be soiled by contact with the world. We may not be grossly inconsistent, and yet many times we have lost our power. A man can never be filled with electricity so long as he stands on the ground. He may touch the current, but it will pass away from him. But if he stands on a little stool with glass legs, he will be filled instantly, for glass is a non-conductor of electricity. If he touch the earth with one finger, he will lose the power. Now Paul says, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing." We have been told that if we would be filled with the Spirit, we must weep, pray, agonize; but it is all to no purpose. One minister said to me: "I believe this filling is only for a few elect persons." Another said: "I have fulfilled every command of God, and still I am not filled." Brethren, the thing to do is to stop weeping, agonizing, and just get down before God and say: "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me." Then ask Him to take it away. When you have become cleansed and set right, then God will be ready to fill you.

3. Then we may grieve the Spirit *by practically denying His word*. Was there not much of pathos in Jesus' words when He said: "Why do ye not understand my speech?" Christ has promised to be with us "alway, even unto the end of the world." With us even in disappointment and trial. Some one has said that a Christian should spell disappointment with an "H" in place of the "d," and make it His-appointment.

4. But we grieve the Spirit more perhaps *in matters of doctrine* than anything else. We grieve Him in our lack of assurance. John says, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life," and yet Christians are continually praying, "Save us at last." Do you not think that grieves the Spirit of God? We know that we are saved, not by our feelings, for they change like the waves of the sea, but because the Word of the Lord hath spoken it. To say anything else, to believe anything else, to act as if you believed anything else, grieves the Spirit. I am thankful that I believe these things, not because I feel them, not because I understand them, not because I can reconcile them with science, not because other men believe them, but because the Lord hath spoken them. A man has no right to advance his views unless he has compared scripture with scripture, and has reached his conclusions from the Word of God. Blessed Book! Laughed at, scorned, railed at; it is sweeter than ever, more powerful than ever! Heaven and earth shall pass away, but this Word, never, never, never!

One word in closing. In Ephesians 4: 31, the Apostle says, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice." This is a practical thought with which to close. Paul would seem to indicate that we grieve the Spirit by yielding to any of these things. The Spirit of God is grieved whenever we allow our old nature to triumph over our spiritual nature. For God has promised in His Word to set us free from the law of sin and death.



Chapter 11 - Bringing Back the King

"Now therefore why speak ye not a word of bringing the king back?" —2 Samuel 19: 10.

This is a part of the story of the Prodigal Son of the Old Testament, excepting that in this Old Testament story the father was driven forth instead of the son, and in this story the son was a thief of the worst character. He had not stolen either silver or gold; his sin was worse than that, for we are told that he had stolen the hearts of the men of Israel from his father. Absalom was the prodigal, and David is the father of whom I speak. A mighty man in many ways, but a perfect illustration of the law that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Absalom did it in this way. "Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city art thou? And he said, Thy servant is of one of the tribes of Israel. And Absalom said unto him, See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee. Absalom said, moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice! And it was so, that when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him. And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel."

I.

Did it ever occur to you that David in his rejection was a perfect type of Christ in His rejection? If any reader should be afraid of the word "type," I will change it and say he is a perfect "illustration." When David knew that Absalom was in rebellion, he left Jerusalem and all his friends with him. And we read:

"David said unto all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword."

This was like an experience through which Jesus passed also. When He had spoken those words which we find in John's Gospel from the fourteenth chapter through the seventeenth chapter, we read that when they had sung a hymn they went out, along the streets of the city, through the gates of the same, and Joseph Parker well says, "There never was such a going out before; there never has been such a going out since."

But the illustration is even more perfect, for when David went out he turned to Ittai.

"Then said the king to Ittai, the Gittite, Wherefore goest thou also with us? return to thy place, and abide with the king: for thou art a stranger, and also an exile. And Ittai answered the king, and said, As the LORD liveth, and as my lord the king liveth, surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be."

This was like our Savior, too, for we read that when He had gone a certain distance He turned and said to His disciples these words: "All ye shall be offended because of Me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad."

But there is still more of the illustration. David in his flight from Absalom passed over the brook Kidron, and went toward the wilderness. "And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself passed over the brook Kidron, and all the people passed over, toward the way of the wilderness."

This was exactly the same journey that was made by the Son of God. He too went over the Kidron toward the wilderness, which we know as the Garden of Gethsemane, and there never

has been a wilderness in all the world where the shadows were so dense or the darkness so deep as in that same garden. I have heard of a wilderness where the solitude was so intense that men lost their reason as they wandered in it, but it is all as nothing when compared with this Gethsemane experience through which the Son of God passed.

But we are not yet at the end of the illustration. We read again: "And David went up by the ascent of Mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot; and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up."

Jesus did the same thing. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

David had his betrayer, too, and he was found in the company of those who were called his friends, for Ahithophel was one of David's counselors. "And one told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O LORD, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness." And his end was like the end of the New Testament betrayer: "When Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to his city, and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father."

How very similar was the experience through which Jesus passed, as we find it recorded in the Gospel of Mark!

"And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with Me shall betray Me. And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto Him one by one, Is it I? and another, Is it I? And He answered and said unto them, It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with Me in the dish." And the end of His betrayer was like that of Ahithophel. "Then Judas, which had betrayed Him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself."

But there is still more to add. When they were going forth to battle, David the king suddenly hastened after them and calling them back he spoke to them most significant words. "And the king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom. And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom."

This was very much like the Son of God, for when it was getting dark about the Cross, and His heart-strings were snapping with agony, we read that He said:

"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

There is much more that could be said, but this is enough for the illustration.

Now the battle is over and Absalom is dead. Israel and Judah begin to confer as to their future plans. They finally decide to bring the king back. as we find recorded in the verse which I have chosen for my text:

"Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle. Now therefore why speak ye not a word of bringing the king back?"

The line of march is begun toward the palace and throne, and as they reached the river's brink, we read: "There went over a ferry boat to carry over the king's household, and to do what he thought good." And so the king and his household stepped in. The nation was waiting on the other side to receive them. But of all the persons that saluted him there, the king's eyes rested on Mephibosheth. All the time David had been gone, he had been inconsolable.

"And Mephibosheth the son of Saul, came down to meet the king, and had neither dressed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came again in peace. And it came to pass when he was come to Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said unto him, Wherefore wentest not thou with me, Mephibosheth? And he answered, My lord, O king, my servant deceived me: for thy servant said, I will saddle me an ass, that I may ride thereon, and go to the king; because thy servant is lame. And he hath slandered thy servant unto my lord the king; but my lord the king is as an angel of God: do therefore what is good in thine eyes. For all of my father's house were but dead men before my lord the king: yet didst thou set thy servant among them that did eat at thine own table. What right therefore have I yet to cry any more unto the king? And the king said unto him, Why speakest thou any more of thy matters? I have said, Thou and Ziba divide the land. And Mephibosheth said unto the king, Yea, let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace into his own house."

It is a most significant thing to me that when David offered to give this poor lame man an inheritance he utterly refused to receive any of it, because for him it was enough to know that the king had come back; and to my mind this is the way out of all difficulties at the present time. If we could only bring our King back, if we could only put Him upon His rightful throne, if we could only place in His hands the reins of government, we should be of all men most happy.

II.

Is Jesus Christ a King? I have an idea that very frequently we must grieve the Spirit, and possibly grieve Him of whom the Spirit speaks, by our failure to appreciate His position. Jesus is not yet a King, and if we would know what He is, it is only necessary that we should compare scripture with scripture.

This leads me to say that He was first of all a *prophet*.

Now, a prophet is one who gives revelations of things to come. In this respect He perfectly fulfilled His commission.

If you read the thirteenth chapter of Matthew, and put together the parables of the kingdom, you will find a perfect map or chart of what the church is to be until the end of the age. And if you will add to this the closing chapters of the Gospel of Matthew you will have a perfect account of all that is yet to be.

I find in the second place that He is a *priest*, and as a priest He is now performing His priestly service.

"Who is He that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Romans 8: 34).

"Wherefore in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted" (Hebrews 2: 17, 18).

We know exactly where Jesus Christ is now. It is true He is here in spirit, but it is also true that in His glorified body He is standing at this moment at the right hand of God, making intercession for us. In olden times when the high priest entered into the Holy of Holies, he wore a robe which was most beautiful. It was so perfectly wrought that it seemed as if it must have been the work of angels' fingers. The most remarkable thing about it was the adornment on the hem. It was very curious, being made of pomegranates and golden bells. There was first a pomegranate and then a golden bell, and you will notice that there was just as much fruit as there was sound; and when the high priest entered the holy of Holies, and the children of Israel heard the clashing of the bells, they knew that the high priest was still alive, and the

blessing of his intercession was to fall upon them. And we are sure that our high priest ever liveth from the fact that upon us day by day are falling mercies and blessings, the direct result of His incessant intercession. But it is not to be forgotten that He is not only there speaking for us. This would be like the chiming of the golden bells. He is qualified to speak because of what He did for us in this world upon the Cross; and this is like the pomegranates, for it is on the ground of His finished work that He has a right to speak and to intercede.

I have read the story of a soldier who lost both arms in battle, and of course was maimed for life. It is said that his brother was arrested for some misdemeanor, and was sentenced to die. Every effort was made to secure his release, but to no effect. Finally the maimed soldier went before the king, and without saying a word that was eloquent, secured the offender's pardon. All he did was just to lift his maimed arms, and say:

"My brother, my brother, release him for the sake of these!"

I think it is thus that Christ stands at the right hand of God, lifting the hands that were pierced by the nails, baring the side that was thrust through with the spear, and saying:

"My Father, my Father, for the sake of these, pass over their sins."

He will be a King. Satan once offered Him a kingdom of this world. He took Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and said unto Him:

"All these things will I give Thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me."

Then said Jesus unto him: "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

He put it all behind Him, and I am sure it was for this reason: He did not come into this world to become a king at once, but He came that He might die, and thus provide an expiation for your sins and mine. I am absolutely certain that the day will come when He shall be crowned King of Kings and Lord of Lords. "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David. And He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end."

If this be not true, then I do not understand how any other prophecy concerning Him can be of value.

III.

How, then, may we bring Him back again?

First of all, *we must want Him*. There are very many reasons why I long for Him to come back. I should like Him to come, first, for the sake of the poor Jew, who has gone wandering up and down this world without a king, without a sacrifice, without a prince. The people that have given to the world a Mozart, a Disraeli and a Mendelssohn. But there is a glad time coming for them, according to the word of the Lord, by the prophet Zechariah: "I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them; for I have mercy upon them: and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I am the LORD their God, and will hear them."

I would like Him to come for the sake of the world. Isaiah said: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Paul tells us that the whole world feels the touch of the power of sin. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."

His coming shall be in deliverance. Another has said "the day is coming when not only the

wants of one family shall be supplied, but all families; and when not only one land shall be redeemed, but all shall be glowing with the glory of God; when not only one nation shall own Him as King, but all nations shall take their place in the kingdom of God. The day is coming when the whole world shall do the will of God. For Him the cables shall flash their messages under the seas, for Him the ships shall sail the ocean on voyages of peace, for Him the manufacturers shall give forth their goods, for Him the mines shall uncover their treasures, for Him steam and electricity shall drive the trains across the land, for Him the schools shall train the minds of millions, for Him the banners of all people shall fly aloft, and for Him the kings of earth shall bow themselves." "Ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

But I want Him, in the third place, for the sake of Himself. There must have been something very charming about a man who made little children love Him; who charmed the woman's heart until she poured out upon Him the box of precious ointment; who held the disciples by the power of His words until their hearts burned within them. I want Him to come that I may see Him face to face. He has been shedding forth precious gifts upon us, His riches of grace purchased on the Cross, and His riches of glory now poured out upon Him in the skies, but we long to see Him.

I have heard of a man who won his fortune in California, and kept sending to his family precious gifts. Each year the gifts grew in value, but at last his wife wrote him saying:

"We are pleased to have your offerings, but oh, my husband, we long to see you."

And it is thus with Christ.

I feel like saying: "Oh, Thou blessed Christ of God, we want to behold Thee in all Thy beauty, and if a word will bring Thee back, we will speak it to-day. Come, come, come quickly!"

We must not only long for Him to come, but *we must work for Him* if we would hasten His appearing. In one place in the Scripture the church is called the body of Christ. This must be in its relation to the Spirit of God, for He is the animation of it, and if the Lord would come we must complete this body. Adam had dominion only when the woman was formed, and the Lord will have dominion when the church is completed.

In another place the church is called the House of God. This must be in its relation to the Father as a matter of testimony. The house must be builded if He is to come.

And in still another place the church is called the Bride. This must be in its relation to the Son of God, for it is a love relation. But the Bride must be made ready if He is to return. What then remains for us to do? Come with me through the streets of the city until we reach the lowest hovel. Stoop down beside the poor lost wretch, sunken in sin, and whisper in his ear:

"My friend, will you accept Jesus Christ?"

Come with me to the house of the richest man in all the city, salute him in his palace, and say:

"My friend, will you yield to Christ?"

Then set sail with me until we reach the shores of Africa, and say to those poor souls sitting in darkness:

"Will you receive the Son of God?"

And if the man in the hovel or in the palace or in the dark continent answers, "Yes," that may be the word that shall bring the King back, for it may be the last man to complete the church.

I rejoice to say to you that the day will come when Jesus Christ shall reign!

I shall never forget an experience in Cincinnati, listening to the rendering of the Oratorio of the Messiah, with Patti as soprano, Whitney as bass, Theodore Toedt as tenor, and Carey as alto, each supported by hundreds of trained musicians. Just before the "Hallelujah Chorus" there was a death-like stillness over all the throng, and then suddenly the bass singers sang: "For He shall reign forever and ever"; and the alto lifted it a little higher: "For He shall reign forever and ever"; and the tenors, raising it almost to the sky, sang, "For He shall reign forever and ever"; and then the sopranos, as if they were inspired, sang, "King of Kings, and Lord of Lords!" And then as if the angels were there, questioning "How long shall He reign?" with one accord they made one reply, "Forever and ever, forever and ever." And then, as if inspired, the whole choir shouted as with the voice of one man, "Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!"

I think it must be a prophecy of that day when from the dark continent the people shall announce: "He shall be King of Kings"; and the voice of Europe shall be added to it, and the shout of America shall give it power, and the deep undertone from Asia shall break out all together, "King of Kings, Lord of Lords, the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."



Chapter 12 - Kadesh-Barnea Again

"And we came to Kadeshbarnea." —Deuteronomy 1:19.

There is another interpretation of the text than the one given in the earlier part of this book; and while it would not stand as a correct explanation of the Scripture, yet to say the least it is a splendid illustration, and is a striking lesson. When the children of Israel came up to Kadesh-barnea, after the spies had made their report and the land had been wonderfully described, we find the multitudes turning away in despair, and they leave Kadesh-barnea only to fall by the wayside, and be buried in the wilderness, but never again to see the Land of Promise. This is in line with the lessons which may be drawn in such New Testament texts as these-- "One thing thou lackest," "Thou art not far from the Kingdom" "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

But the Old Testament text is more striking, and therefore may be fitly used to give to the unconverted the message of the closing chapter of this book. There was just *one thing* that kept the children of Israel out of Canaan, and that was their *unwillingness to trust God*. There is just one thing that keeps you out of the Kingdom, my unconverted reader, and that is your failure to put your trust in the Son of God.

I have always had the impression that Kadesh-barnea was a hill or a mountain, and from this point the children of Israel could see the Promised Land. But Dr. Henry Clay Trumbull, who has had the privilege of standing upon the spot, tells me that it is a depressed part of the country, and that if the children of Israel had gone into Canaan, they would have been obliged to cross over a mountain or at least a hill. This makes the illustration all the better, for between every unsaved soul and life there stands a mountain which must be crossed. It is the mountain of an unsundered will. But just as when we are traveling in the hill country in the summer days, and we see in the distance what seems to be an insurmountable barrier, and as we push on we find that the hill seems to melt away, and we are over it before we know it, so it is with this unsundered will. We simply need to be willing to be saved for God to make the way easy. The saddest thought for the children of Israel must have been that they were so near to Canaan, and after all had failed to enter in. And the saddest thought for many a man in eternity will be that he was so very near to God in the possession of eternal life; one step would have settled it, one word would have saved him; but alas! the step was not taken, the word was not spoken, and he is lost!

"So near the door, and the door stood wide,
Close to the port, but not inside,
Almost resolved to give up sin,
Almost persuaded to enter in,

Almost resolved to count the cost,
Almost a Christian, and yet *lost!*"

There are certain men in the New Testament, who may be described as having come to Kadesh-barnea. I doubt not but the names will come to you in the nature of a surprise, but if we are surprised at the first name, we may be more so at the second, and still more at the third.

I. Herod

The first man's name was Herod, and he was a murderer. I do not mean that his hands were red with his brother's blood, but in the sight of God he was just as guilty as if that had been true. Some reader may ask when Herod was ever at Kadesh-barnea, or almost persuaded. It was at the time John the Baptist was preaching his wonderful sermons as the forerunner of Christ. He was probably the greatest preacher the world has ever produced, and yet he was simply (as he said) "the voice of one crying in the wilderness." In the crowd that listened to his impassioned words was Herod, the king, and Mark tells us: "Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly."

I feel very sure if you would have gone up to the palace of the king, you would have found him trying to break away from some of his sins; and if ever you behold a man in that condition, you may rest assured that he is under the influence of the Spirit of God. But the trouble with Herod was he wanted to make a compromise with God; he was willing to give up much sin, but not all. And this is an eternal mistake. It is an unconditional surrender which God demands, and no man can ever have life until he reaches the place where he is willing, by God's help, to forsake every known sin. I used to have an idea that the trouble with men was intellectual, and therefore in the head; I am persuaded in these days that the real difficulty is SIN in the heart.

I was holding a series of meetings in a former pastorate, when one evening a man lifted his hand for prayer. One of my elders spoke to him, but came back to me saying that the case was hopeless, for the man was an infidel. I then sent one of the most consistent women to his home, and she came back with the message that she felt sure that he was converted; and we were urged to admit him to the membership of the church. I can see him now as he took his first communion. The second communion he was away, and the third he was still absent; and when I looked him up, I found that he was out of the city, and had been for several weeks. I left a message for him to call upon me, and a few days later he was at my study door. His face was deathly pale, and as he entered the room he looked around in a frightened way, and then asked if any one was within hearing. When I assured him that no one was near, and had turned the key in the door to satisfy him, he came very close to me and said:

"When I first saw you, I told you the reason that I could not be a Christian was found in the fact that I was an infidel, and this was partly true. My father was an infidel, and my grandfather before him, and the blood of infidelity courses in my veins; but somehow I got over that. But when I joined the church, I hardly felt that I was a Christian, for there was one sin I would not give up. My wife did not know about it, the best friend I had in the world was ignorant of it. I said, I can serve God, and continue that sin, and still be saved; but I could not. The other night on my knees I asked God to take it away, even if it took my life; and for all of these days I have been free! The peace of God has filled my very soul, and I have never been so happy." Then coming still nearer to me, he bent down and whispered one word to me, and that word was:

"MORPHINE."

"That," said he, "was my sin."

So in these days I have come to believe with all my heart that if one is just willing to forsake all known sin, by Christ's help, he may at once be saved.

You may come very near to the kingdom of God, and yet the holding of one sin may cause the loss of your soul.

Kadesh-barnea is a dangerous place to stop.

II. Pilate

Strangely enough, Pilate was a murderer too in the sight of God, and yet I have an idea that some reader will ask:

"When in the world was ever Pilate at Kadesh-barnea, or almost persuaded?"

I think I can make it plain. When Pilate first heard that Jesus was to appear before him in trial, he was prejudiced against Him, and I can imagine he was just longing for the time to come when he could pass sentence upon Him; but when suddenly He appeared before him, hurried on by the crowd about Him, I can see Pilate's look of wonderment as he caught the first vision of His face, and I can hear him say:

"Truly this is no ordinary man."

And as he is thus thinking, suddenly a messenger comes from his wife to say:

"Have thou nothing to do with this just person, for I have been warned in a dream concerning Him."

Then to satisfy himself, I can imagine how Pilate said to Him: "Art thou the Christ, the Son of God?"

I can also see him tremble as Jesus gives him the answer. And then comes in the weakness of Pilate, when he turned to the rabble to say: "I will release this Man, for I find no fault in Him, but I will give you Barabbas to be crucified."

But they shouted: "Away with Him! let Him be crucified!" Then Pilate's conviction seems to increase, and he calls for a basin of water, and dipping in his hands, says to the people, "I wash my hands of this whole matter; take ye Him and crucify Him"; and poor Pilate must be trying to free his hands of the blood of the Son of God to-day.

Not many years ago there came across the sea a remarkable book, bearing the strange title of "Letters from Hell." The introduction was written by the celebrated preacher, George McDonald. In this book there is a picture of Pilate in the lost world, kneeling down by a running stream, and through an endless period of time, apparently, he seems to be washing his hands. Without lifting his eyes, he keeps on with his difficult task, when some one suddenly touches him and says:

"Pilate, what are you doing?"

And as he lifts his hands they are red as the blood of the Son of God could make them; and when the other beholds them, with a shriek that echoes and re-echoes through the corridors of the lost world, Pilate exclaims, like one of Shakespeare's characters: "Will they never be clean? Will they never be clean?" Poor Pilate! they never will.

It is not a difficult matter to determine what was the cause of Pilate's failure to take his stand with Joseph of Arimathea, with Nicodemus and with the faithful everywhere. Pilate had not the courage of his convictions. When he knew that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, it would have been better for him if he had gone himself to be scourged or prostrated himself upon the cross to be crucified. He would have been heroic beyond all others in this. And many a man has lost his soul because of the same weakness. He realizes that Jesus is the Son of God, that He died to save him, but he fails to receive Him and confess Him, because he lacks courage.

The old clock in a church steeple in the city of Edinburgh was striking nine o'clock one night when a company of young men were just passing the church on their way to a place of sin. Suddenly one of them stopped and said:

"I cannot go with you."

When they pressed him for an answer, he said; "When I left my home in the country, my old mother said, 'My boy, you are going to a wicked town, and your temptations will be strong, but your father and I will pray for you without ceasing; and at 9 o'clock every evening we will be on our knees saying, Oh, God, save our boy'; and," said he, "I will not break their hearts."

They jeered at him, and mocked him, but he turned back to his room, fell upon his knees and cried out to God, for mercy; and to-day he is not only a Christian, but also one of the leading merchants in Edinburgh. Having the courage of his convictions saved him. Many a man has come to be almost persuaded, but failing in this, he has lost all. Kadesh-barnea is a dangerous place to stop.

III. Judas

I can easily understand how one would at once exclaim, How was it possible for Judas the traitor to have been "almost persuaded"? but I am certain that it is perfectly natural to suppose that there were times without number when Judas was almost ready to step over the line into the real service of the Son of God. I believe when he heard Jesus Christ preach, and saw Him in His life, a wonderful illustration of all His preaching, he must have said:

"I would to God that I were a true disciple."

I feel very sure that when he saw Him touch the eyes of the blind man, and bless them first of all with the vision of His own face, he must have said, "Oh, God, if I were only right"; and that is what will make eternity so hard for Judas. He can never forget the face of the Son of God when He said: "One of you shall betray Me." He can never be free from the clinking of the thirty pieces of silver, and throughout eternity his conscience will condemn him. I can imagine his experience to be like that described in the poem:

"I sat alone with my conscience
In a place where time had ceased,
And we talked of my former living
In the lands where the years increased.

"And I felt I should have to answer
The question it put to me,
And to face the answer and question
Throughout an eternity.

"The ghost of forgotten actions
Came floating before my sight,
And the things I thought were dead things
Were alive with a terrible might.

"And the vision of all my past life
Was an awful thing to face,—
Alone with my conscience sitting
In that solemn, silent place."

We say in this world that we forget, and we think we do. But there is coming a day when God will touch the secret spring of our memory, and say, "Son, remember"; and we will remember our rejection of every offer of mercy, and the lost world will be an awful place. We shall call to memory that we were almost persuaded, and yet lost! If I had made up my mind never to be saved, I should never again hear a sermon preached; I would positively decline to listen to the name of Jesus Christ as it might be spoken; I would flee away from the singing of a Gospel hymn; for we carry into the next world the memories of this, and the time will come when the

recollection of all our rejections will cause weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

In one of Mr. Moody's meetings a man lifted his hand for prayer, and Mr. Moody at once made his way to his side, and said he was glad he was determined to be a Christian; but said the man:

"Not so fast, Mr. Moody. Some day I will settle it, but not now."

The next time he saw him, he was very ill, and he said, "I would not settle the question now, for they would say I was frightened into being a Christian."

His next interview with him was when he was convalescent, and he said, "I am going to move into another State, and when I have new friends I will be sure to become a Christian."

The next word that came to him was to the effect that he had suffered a relapse, and was dying. Mr. Moody says he went to his home, and tried his best to talk to him, but it was useless. He said that it was "too late," and when he was told that the thief on the cross came at the last hour, he said, "Ah, yes, but he had never heard of Jesus until then, and I have always known about Him." And when he was told that the eleventh hour was not too late to repent, he replied, "This is the twelfth, and it is too late!" and while prayer was being offered for him, he passed away with the heart-breaking expression:

"The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved!"

Mr. Moody said: "We wrapped him in a Christless shroud, we put him in a Christless coffin, we bore him to a Christless tomb, he went into a Christless eternity." Kadesh-barnea, and LOST!

Felix and Agrippa

Before these two men the Apostle Paul stood and told the story of his remarkable conversion; as he pleaded with them, filled as he was with the power of God, it is said that Felix "trembled"; and as the apostle continued to plead on, he turned to him to say:

"Go thy way for this time. When I have a more convenient season, I will call for thee."

I used to have an idea that he never had that convenient season again, but this is not true. There was another time when the apostle stood before him, pleading with all the power of God; but the second appeal was absolutely powerless in its influence upon him, and he heard it without even trembling for a moment.

It is a dangerous thing for any one, when he is moved by the Spirit of God, to resist; and if to-day there is one single particle of desire in your heart to be a Christian, in the name of God I beseech you and encourage you.

It is said that during a revival at Princeton College, Aaron Burr went to the president of the college to say that he was almost persuaded to be a Christian, and asked the president's advice as to what he should do.

"Well," said the president, "if I were you, I would wait until the excitement was over and then come."

Aaron Burr bowed his head for a moment, and replied, "That is what I shall do"; and it is said that never again did he have the desire to be a Christian.

Whether this story is true or not, the principle is true, and may God keep you from resisting the Spirit of God!

Agrippa was certainly at Kadesh-barnea. I know there are those who say that when he said, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian," he was speaking in irony; but I never could

understand that, for if Paul stood before us today with his hands manacled, and his feet chained, and if he should appear to us as he did to Agrippa, and step forward with uplifted hands, saying, "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets?" I think the most natural thing would be to exclaim, "Almost thou persuadest me." But Agrippa never entered into life, and Kadesh-barnea is still to be lost.

"Almost persuaded! harvest is past,
Almost persuaded! doom comes at last.
'Almost' cannot avail; 'almost' is sure to fail.
Sad, sad, that bitter wail. 'Almost, but LOST!'"

The "Royal Charter" had been around the world. A magnificent ship she was. She had touched at every important port, and was homeward bound. She had arrived at Queenstown, and a message was received that she would touch her dock at Liverpool the next morning. One of the members of my church told me he waited on the dock all night to see her come in. The Lord Mayor of London was there, and the Lord Mayor of Liverpool. Bands of musicians and thousands of people waited to give her a welcome home. But the "Royal Charter" went down in the night time between Queenstown and Liverpool, losing almost all on board. The wife of the first mate was a member of Dr. Wm. M. Taylor's church in Liverpool, and he was told that he must tell her that her husband was lost. He said that he felt like an executioner when he reached the cottage where they lived. He touched the door bell, and a bright-faced, sunny-haired little girl sprang out and said:

"Oh, Dr. Taylor, I thought it was my papa. He is coming home to-day!"

"When I stepped into the house," said Dr. Taylor, "I found the breakfast-table spread in the sitting-room, and the wife of the first mate came forward and said:

"Dr. Taylor, you must excuse us for having the table here and at this hour, but you know my husband is coming home to-day, and if you will stay, it will make the day like heaven."

"I took both her hands in mine," said Dr. Taylor, "and held them for a moment, and then said, 'My poor woman, the "Royal Charter" went down last night, and your husband was lost, and can never come home again.'"

She looked at him just a moment, and then as she drew away her hands, she shrieked out:

"Oh, my God, so near home, and yet lost!"

I have known men nearer than that. Between them and eternal life was just one word, and they would not speak it; between them and hope there was just a line, and they would not cross it.

Kadesh-barnea is a dangerous place to stop.

Copied by Stephen Ross for WholesomeWords.org from *Kadesh-Barnea or, The Power of a Surrendered Life* by J. Wilbur Chapman. New York: Fleming H. Revell, c1897.

More Information on J. Wilbur Chapman