

# EVANGELICAL PROTESTANTISM AND THE BIBLICAL STUDIES OF M. GODET

by J.N. Darby

---

*A collection of articles and writings by J.N. Darby from Evangelical Protestantism and the Biblical Studies of M. Godet, covering various biblical topics and Christian teaching.*

6 Chapters

## Table of Contents

0. Evangelical Protestantism and the Biblical Studies of M. Godet
1. Evangelical Protestantism and the Biblical Studies of M. Godet: Part 1
2. Evangelical Protestantism and the Biblical Studies of M. Godet: Part 2
3. Evangelical Protestantism and the Biblical Studies of M. Godet: Part 3
4. Evangelical Protestantism and the Biblical Studies of M. Godet: Part 4
5. Evangelical Protestantism and the Biblical Studies of M. Godet: Part 5

## **Evangelical Protestantism and the Biblical Studies of M. Godet**

---

## Evangelical Protestantism and the Biblical Studies of M. Godet: Part

### 1

---

The following pages were hastily penned at the request of a person who was keenly affected by the teaching which M. Godet's books presented in a popular form to the Christian public. Others having read the manuscript requested that it might be printed on account of the extreme gravity of the false doctrines it exposes. It was not without some reluctance that the author yielded to this request, the evidence of which will appear in the opening lines of this little work.

Besides mentioning the imperfections attached to a work undertaken whilst traveling, and in the midst of the innumerable fatigues accompanying the ministry of the word, the author considered, that in order to form a correct idea of his system as a whole, it would have been needful for him to make himself acquainted with all M. Godet's works. He has therefore merely limited himself to noting three essential points, which will suffice in his opinion to warn the people of the Lord against a teaching that assails His word, His person, and His work.

M. Godet has many times answered the objections of rationalists, and this I acknowledge gladly. Had not the writings now before me falsified the very gospel itself, I should never have taken the pen in hand. I shall, in those writings, examine but three fundamental points relating to the gospel: The authority of the word, and inspiration: The person of Christ: and lastly, His work. I have during my life had too much of controversy to seek for it. In one's old age moral repose, Christ Himself, is that which the heart seeks beyond all else.

It is somewhat difficult to one whose thoughts have been derived from the word itself, to answer such a book as that of M. Godet, in which the author in serving himself of expressions used by that word, attaches to them some peculiar signification of his own. Thus the scriptures speak of redemption as the work of the Savior, and that according to the common acceptance of the word, although the means used to work out that redemption are not in accordance with the world's thoughts. The scriptures speak of redemption as of a deliverance effected by a ransom, and subsequently by a power producing a full result in behalf of those for whom that ransom has been paid. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of offenses." (Eph. 1:9.) "Awaiting adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." (Rom. 8:23.)

Redemption, according to M. Cadet, is but a positive interposition of God in the history of mankind—a work of education which has put on the character of a redemption. This word appears in the election of one family, and it is seen in development as that family gradually becomes transformed into a people. The manner in which M. Godet seeks to justify this definition of redemption is somewhat peculiar. He thus quotes 1 Cor. 1:21. "Since by wisdom the world has not known God in his wisdom, it has pleased God to save by the foolishness of preaching those who believe." I confess that by no efforts of reflection have I succeeded in comprehending how this passage shows redemption to be a work of education. The quotation moreover is false. It is written, "since in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom hath not known God, God hath been

pleased, by the foolishness of the preaching, to save those that believe.” One of the unpleasant things that occur in such of M. Godet's writings as I have examined is, that at least half the passages he uses are inaccurately quoted.

According to the author, promised salvation is, by Christ's advent, consummated in His person; the people, having rejected Him, perishes; and then salvation is proclaimed to the world by the elect of the nation. “And by this double result of Israel's history, the religion of redemption with all its antecedents becomes divinely sealed.” Is this the redemption of which the Bible speaks? But let us proceed. “To this primary fact, a second is necessarily attached. The work of redemption, which we have just sketched out, has been accompanied by a work of revelation.” “How has God accomplished this great work?” —that is, that of redemption— “He has made use of human agents for this work. And to effect, this, it was needful for Him to attract, to win, and to attach them to Himself. Consequently it was necessary to make known to them His projected work—to unfold the scheme, at least according to the measure in which they were to come in the execution of it. He must also make them contemplate prospectively its glorious goal; in order that they might be enabled to interest themselves by acquaintance with the purpose, and be laborers with Him in it, in a manner worthy of the work and of God Himself, with conscience and liberty.” “The phases of revelation also keep pace with those of redemption.” “At the period when God called Abraham to found with Himself the work of redemption, He revealed Himself to him.”

There are many things I might take up in the pages whence I make these quotations, but I abstain from so doing, my aim being to expose the basis of M. Godet's system. I shall, I trust, abstain from expressing my own sentiments with regard to all stated by the author. At this time, I shall occupy myself less with his manner of presenting revelation than with the views he presents in another work upon the Lord Jesus Christ. Possibly I may be wrong; but I fear offending that Savior by using expressions which might give occasion to believe I knew not by what spirit I was actuated. Therefore I shall confine myself to placing the views contained in these books in contrast with what is found in the word.

My reader might suppose that, in speaking of revelation and the work of the prophets, M. Godet occupied himself with the Bible. Not so. The Bible, as such, is to him no revelation, and this he formally avows. At page 10 he says, “The Bible therefore, notice it well, is not revelation itself; it is, properly speaking, the narrative given of revelation.” “The statement” of those truths is “the authentic document of the redemption of the human race, as well as of the revelations by which that work has been accompanied.” What then is revelation? It is “a fact which has its place between God and His agent; the place of holy scripture is between that agent and the rest of humanity.” (Ibid.) With regard to the first part of the last phrase, I should have no difficulty in accepting it, were not the definition of the word revelation in question. Whether it be applied to the immediate communication God makes to the instrument He deigns to employ, or whether it be solely applied to the fact that that instrument through the Spirit announces to others what has been revealed to him, it is equally “a revelation from God.”

But if one limits oneself to consider the communication made to the instrument employed then in that which concerns us (us, “the remainder of mankind”), the whole question remains unanswered. In fact, what have we got, we who are not the recipients of that immediate communication? We have a given statement—but given by whom? Is that given statement a correct one? “An authentic

document" is too vague a term to throw a true light on this point; moreover, this is all extremely superficial. It is, in fact, to us, no question of whether the document be authentic, but whether its entire contents be absolutely true, and given by God. The expression itself is very inaccurate. It is no given statement.

(To be continued)

## Evangelical Protestantism and the Biblical Studies of M. Godet: Part

### 2

---

#### THE BIBLICAL STUDIES OF M. GODET.

A very large part of the Bible, even on M. Godet's confession, pretends to give the words of the Lord, "All the writings and some part of the prophetic scriptures, have these words for title: Thus saith the Lord" (p. 42). Is it true or not? If that is true, there is no distinction between the revelation and the Bible. The Bible is the revelation itself set down in writing. M. Godet says, "The veracious moment of the word of salvation" (p. 46). If it is veracious, we have, in all that it contains, the revelation itself; and that does not only apply to prophecy but to law. It tells us there, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying." Is it true, or not? The history of the creation, that of Abraham, &c., are they a collection of Elohistic or Jehovistic legend; or is it a written revelation? Man should live by every word that proceeds out of the month of God. Where find these words if the account rendered and the revelation are not identical—if the Bible does not give us words from the mouth of God, that is, say, the revelation?

At the time of the temptation in the desert, all depended upon the fact that the Savior yielded not in that moment. The first Adam had yielded; thank God, the Second could not fail, while all depended upon His standing firm to conquer the strong man. How did He obtain the victory? By citing that which is written. The scripture was sufficient for the Son of God as divine authority, He referred to words which proceeded from the month of God. Scripture cited, one single passage sufficed for Satan, reduced him to silence; absolute testimony of his defeat. The Savior made use only of scripture, although Satan quoted it also—falsely if you will, but in order to cunningly avail himself of the written word of God. The Savior maintained His standing within that divine enclosure of safety, "It is written again." By those words that proceeded from the mouth of God, the victory on which our salvation depended was won. Is the Savior they possessed a divine and absolute authority—and to Satan also—and that, in such a sort that he dared not reply. Had he done so, he would openly have betrayed himself as the adversary; and to man—to one Man at least—to Christ. Blessed are all they who follow Him.

But I anticipate somewhat. Let us bear in mind that the question concerns the communication from God to man; this we all recognize. In speaking of revelation, M. Godet says (p. 14), "They who receive it receive it not solely for themselves. The work of which it unveils the meaning has the world for its object." It is clear that revelation was not given to be the property solely of him who received it. It might so happen, and has so happened; but, as a general proposition, revelation is received by an agent to be communicated to others. Revelation was not for the channel to which it was confided, but for the people of God, for the church, and for the sinful world.

We will now return to M. Godet's theory, that also of all who deny the inspiration of the scriptures, who deny it in the full, entire, ordinary, and common acceptance of that word. The Bible IS the word of God. God has revealed to certain chosen instruments His thoughts and His purposes

according as it seemed good to Him so to do, and, in thus doing, to use M. Godet's own expression, God had the world as His object. This communication was made from God Himself to the prophets. The communication is divine—partial it may be—but perfect. The communication is from God Himself, the prophet receiving it as given by God. But, although the world be His object—not the prophet—the world receives but a given statement of that revelation.) The prophet, to the best of his ability, communicates to others what he has received. Thais the world, which is the object God had in view, receives revelation only as transmitted with all the imperfections which pertain to the exercise of the human mind, and to human faculties in connection with divine things—to the memory, for instance—in fact to all the weaknesses pertaining to our poor nature. The world possesses but a transmitted statement of the complete, perfect, and divine revelation, supplied by the men who received it; nevertheless revelation was made and communicated, as having the world and its well-being for its object!

Is this a theory that bears the impress of common sense? and what is it as concerns divine goodness? God desired to communicate to the world the mighty efficacy of the truth. He revealed that troth to chosen instruments; but the world, for whom He destined it, and His beloved church, could and can only receive it spoiled and marred by the weaknesses of the channels of communication, for whom personally it was not designed! And this is called rational! Nor is this all. The question becomes yet more Serious, when the New Testament and more especially the Gospels are concerned, those given statements of events in which redemption was at least consummated, even though redemption be but the goal of the education of man. Manifestly this is of more importance than all beside& M. Godet speaks of it thus (p. 43): “The contradictions between the Gospel recitals. But our Gospels, as we have seen, are not revelation. Revelation is the fact related—it is Jesus, His work, His word. Our Evangelists describe that fact to the best of their ability; one or two among them, qualified from baying been eye-witnesses, the others from such information as they were able to obtain.”

But then, as regards the most important point, as regards redemption, there has been no revelation at all, because “revelation is a fact placed between God and His agent” (p. 16), whilst our Evangelists speak merely from their title of being eye-witnesses, or from such information as they were able to obtain. It is a matter of personal memory, and even of secondhand communication, since M. Godet relies on the legends of the primitive church, to which he often refers. Mark, for instance, according to M. Godet, has, at the request of the Roman Christians, given his own reminiscences of the remembrances of Peter Matthew has “edited the discourses,” but another has added the facts that link these discourses together as well as it could be done. Luke, having made use of documents already published, probably made some expeditions into Galilee during Paul's imprisonment at Caesarea, in order to collect together all the possible recollections which the memories of the Galileans could retain; and then from these materials Luke composed a history in the Grecian style, the only one which merited that name. (See “The origin of our four Gospels.” Biblical Studies: second series.) M. Godet also says (“M. Colani,” p. 38), “I agree to it without any difficulty. Many of M. Colani's objections appear to me weighty, and some decisive, against a certain manner of considering the Bible, which might confound it with revelation.” Thus we are left without any revelation, for we have but the Bible; and that, with such contradictions in its most important portion as to falsify the given statement, as to render it not from God but to base it upon the memories of Peter, of Mark, or of the Galileans, and thus raise positive

obstacles and hindrances to one's considering that which we have in the New Testament to be a revelation from God! And here we fall lower than ever. The greater part of the Old Testament was based upon communications from God to agents. Those communications were revelations. In the New Testament Jesus and His word are the fact, that is, revelation; and all that we get is only a matter of memory, bringing contradictions into the narrations! Our Evangelists describe the fact to the best of their ability. The Christ is a revelation, but, according to M. Godet, we have no revelation of the Christ!

It is important that I should here point out a certain method of presenting inspiration (a method common to M. Godet and to all who oppose inspiration, but which serves to lead the simple astray). He speaks thus (Biblical Studies, p. 48): "To require a Bible dictated word for word from heaven would be requiring a book that would supplant human thought instead of fertilizing it; a bookmaking a passive instrument of man, instead of calling his intelligent and free co-operation into request Would that be more divine?" We must not expect M. Godet to agree with himself. At page 44 we read: "When it is granted to a man to confer directly with Jehovah, two things simultaneously take place in him. Every creature, himself included, disappears into nothingness. God remains before him as the Being who alone is great, alone real." This has certainly some appearance of "supplanting human thought" —has it not? Now, not being inspired myself, I do not pretend to define inspiration; were I so, I do not imagine it would be possible for me to explain it to one who was not. What I seek is God's thought; I neither seek to "supplant" nor to "fertilize human thought." But to define inspiration as being "word for word dictated from heaven," is but a human idea of the subject. When it has been written, "Thus saith the Lord," or, "The Lord said unto Moses," either He has said it, or words have been put into the mouth of the Lord, words which are not His own. God Himself makes a distinction in the form, but not in the authority of revelation. (Num. 12:6-8.) Tongues were spoken which the person who used them could not understand. This was truly "supplanting human thoughts;" but Paul preferred to speak with his understanding. God could fill his heart with glorious and holy thoughts, and so keep him filled with them that nothing should be there, and consequently nothing be expressed, but that which God had placed there. These were the thoughts of God, but through the power of the Spirit became the thoughts, the joy, of a man, creating in him an intelligence, molding his heart and divinely enlightening his conscience. God could in such sort possess Himself of the intelligence, the heart, and the conscience, that nothing could either enter in or flow out but what He had put there. This is also the highest character of inspiration, because all that is revealed belongs to us; whereas the prophets in searching into their own prophecies, found it was not for themselves they ministered those things. Be it as it may, is it not wretched in the extreme to put "a Bible dictated word for word from heaven" in contrast with human thought, instead of seeing the operation of the Spirit of God, and man's mind formed by the communication of purely divine thoughts, they being adapted to man, and also received by him through the work of the Spirit of God?

Let us now examine how the word presents itself to us; for its absolute perfection as a whole, and its intrinsic power cannot be known but by those in whom it operates. In the law it is, as we have seen, "God spake unto Moses." Is this true or not? If it be true, we have the word of God, and not merely a revelation made to Moses, but the word of God such as Moses received it. Pass on to the Psalms of David. "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said." (2 Sam. 23:2, 3.) If the given statement be true, the Psalms of David are the word of

God itself; if it be false, there is even no piety in them, for it is not piety but fanaticism to say, "The word of God was upon my tongue," if it had not been there. Now, the Lord Jesus has on many occasions put His seal to the whole Book of Psalms; the prophets in their turn declare, "Thus saith the Lord." The word of the Lord was with Jeremiah. This is Zechariah's appeal to the conscience of the residue of the people who returned from Babylon (Zech. 1:4-6): "Be ye not as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Turn ye now from your evil ways, and from your evil doings: but they did not hear nor hearken unto me, saith the Lord; your fathers, where are they and the prophets, do they live forever? But my words and my statutes which I commanded my servants, the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers?" These words were the words of the Lord, and they were proved to be such. The Lord also, and the apostles, have formally put the seal to that which the prophets have spoken, and mark it well, to that which they had spoken as we have it in the scriptures, and there alone. And mark also this important point—it is not the word in the scriptures, in the Bible, but it is the scriptures themselves as such. It is not simply such and such passage acting effectually upon me (though this may be the case), but it is the authority of Him who speaks by that means. It is not my mind judging the word, it is the word, God by His word acting upon me; it is His authority established over my heart. The Samaritan woman did not say, "What thou sayest is true," but "I perceive that thou art a prophet." Thus all that He had said had authority itself as coming from God. It is the operation of the Spirit of God that imparts spiritual intelligence by the conscience, by faith—faith with regard to Him who speaks. God is known as being in it, it is divine intelligence. I do not reason to prove that the sun shines; I do not light a candle to know it: the light acts upon me and lightens me. I not only see the object on which my sight is directed, but I know that the light shines.

Let us now see what the New Testament teaches. What was it caused the Sadducees to err? They knew not the scriptures. What did the Lord quote to enlighten the two disciples of Emmaus? Moses and all the prophets. And what did He quote to the twelve? The law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms, that is, the entire scriptures of the Old Testament according to the Jewish division of them, as we possess them now. To the Lord they were authority. He founds His teaching upon them. Then He opened their understanding that they might understand the scriptures (Luke 24), which would have been perfectly incredible and unintelligible had the scriptures not been the word of God. Would God give by divine power a special understanding to understand a human given statement, which was as correct as its author could possibly render it from such information as he had been able to obtain? or is there a divine revelation for the Jew, and no divine revelation for the Christian in respect of the accomplishment of the truth as it is in Christ? Peter said (Acts 18)," God hath thus fulfilled what he had announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets." The Lord declared (John 10), "The scripture cannot be broken." These, we are told, were Jewish prejudices. Did the Lord then confirm them in their Jewish prejudices in order to deceive them? It is impossible to deny that the Lord and His apostles quote, contemplate, and in every manner encourage us to contemplate the scriptures as being altogether the word of God, and invested with His authority. They may present us the history and the words; of wicked men, even of Satan himself, but it is God who gives us them, so that we know that which is according to God. So much is this the case that Paul fears not to say, "The scripture, seeing that God would justify the nations on the principle of faith, announced beforehand the glad tidings to Abraham." The scripture to him is so thoroughly the word of God, that he personifies it, as though God Himself spoke; such in fact it was, by His Spirit. It is specially and expressly not a question of

what has been revealed to the prophet, but of that which has been revealed by the prophet.

The scriptures are in question. There may have been many communications we do not possess, as having been given only for some special occasions. That which concerns the people of God for every age is contained in the scriptures, forming a whole. "No prophecy [says Peter] of scripture is had from its own particular interpretation for prophecy was not ever uttered by [the] will of man, but holy men of God spake under the influence of [the] Holy Ghost." When the professing church bears the practical character of paganism, "having a form of piety, but denying the power of it," to what does the apostle refer us? To the holy scripture saying, "Every scripture is divinely inspired that the man of God may be complete." Divine inspiration characterized that which has the right to be called "scripture" in its ordinary sense. That which Timothy was acquainted with was doubtless the Old Testament. If I call the New Testament "scripture" the New is inspired; if not, it has no title to the name of "scripture." Peter also, speaking of Paul's epistles, says that "the untaught and ill-established wrest [them] as also the other scriptures." Paul, speaking in general of the writings addressed by the apostles to the Gentiles, calls them "prophetic scriptures," for such is the true sense of Rom. 16; 7. I know not if M. Godet would exclude the most precious portion (if one may venture to make a distinction in a whole, every detail of which is perfect in its place) of all the divine history, of the life, sufferings, and death of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us, of Him whom no human mind could portray, of Him of whom an infidel has said that it would have been as difficult to have invented as to have been Him. God has taken care, I venture to say, that He who was to reveal Him upon the earth for man's welfare and His own glory should not be falsely described, and thus could not be falsely represented before the world. He has taken care that, where alone it can be learned what God is, there should be no room for that which could have been unworthy of Him. He has taken care that that which was divinely lovely, His own Son, should be divinely and perfectly presented as He was. And who was able for this but God Himself? He was man, and, blessed be His name, He made use of man for it. He was God, and God formed men that they might present God manifest in a man who was the perfect man before God. He who is taught of God will discern God in every detail of the blessed walk of the Lord and of His expiatory death in this world.

M. Godet relates several legends on this subject, especially those of Papias, an infirm old man according to Eusebius who was a great lover of such histories. He quotes other Fathers of the church who themselves relate the legends that were current in the world one hundred or one hundred and fifty years after Christ. He quotes men who said that the church of Rome was founded by the labors of Peter and of Paul, for which M. Godet finds excuses, but which we know to be false.

He who has chiefly preserved the most ancient of these legends tells us that the church of Corinth was also founded by the two apostles. I notice this to show how little dependence can be placed on these men. I attach no importance to their legends: they may be true, or they may be false; one of them certainly is false—that which tells us that Luke edited his Gospel from what Paul had told him, for Paul did not know the Lord down here. The legends also state that Mark edited his Gospel without order, whilst in the recital of the Lord's labors in Galilee Mark presents them in order, which is also the case in Luke's Gospel. Matthew relates the whole in a single verse; then he edits his Gospel according to the subjects, not merely the discourses, but by grasping the chief points of the manifestation of Emmanuel, of the nature of the kingdom of heaven, and of that which, historically,

was to replace on earth the rejected Lord.

(To be continued.)

## Evangelical Protestantism and the Biblical Studies of M.Godet: Part

### 3

---

#### THE BIBLICAL STUDIES OF M. GODET.

IT is of the utmost importance to notice that, in the rationalistic system which seeks to render an account of all by the circumstances of the writer, GOD AND THE OPERATION OF HIS SPIRIT ARE WHOLLY EXCLUDED. The facts may be important if they be correct; but the revelation of God upon earth in the Son of His love is left to such an appreciation as we may have of the uncertain rumors which were current in Galilee, or to the feebleness of the memories of fallible men. One need but read the Gospels to discern the divine traits that abound in them; but if we study them, we shall discover unity of purpose in each, and in all combined a fullness as to the Lord's person, presenting of Him a complete idea and a perfect unity, thus affording an irrefragable testimony to the unity of the source whence all has flowed. Thus, in the four narratives of His death, we possess in each Gospel that which corresponds with its own special character, whilst all come in presenting the Lord complete in the perfect unity of His person—all. As a divine person in John, we have no sufferings in Gethsemane, nor on the cross. As Son of man in Luke, we have more of the agonies in Gethsemane, none upon the cross, but the triumph of His faith in His Father. As victim in Matthew, we see Him forsaken of God upon the cross, and find neither compassion nor anything except misery and malice in man, but Him perfect in all. Mark too much resembles Matthew for me to enter into farther details now; but certainly he who is taught of God discerns in them all the divine description of the Son of God and Son of man, the Word made flesh—Emmanuel—Jesus, in His life and death described by One only—by Him who is the Spirit of God, that God might be perfectly glorified.

Do the Gospels teach us that all had to depend on the memory of Peter, of Mark, or on the information which Luke might have obtained in Galilee? "The Comforter [says the Lord], the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and will bring to your remembrance all the things which I have said to you." (John 14:26.) He was also to bear witness to Jesus concerning heavenly things. The disciples likewise were to bear witness to Jesus, as eye-witnesses doubtless; but the Holy Spirit which had been given them held in His hand the testimony, both earthly and heavenly. He was to lead them into all truth; and what Jesus had been upon the earth "God in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" —was not the least part of that truth.

It is monstrous to give me the legends of Papias, or the imaginations of Irenaeus, in the place of the promise of the gift of the Spirit, and of His testimony to the Lord's glory, to His life, and to His sufferings; it is still more monstrous, forasmuch as the Lord had expressly spoken of that gift for that purpose.

This is Paul's remarkable declaration concerning the new truths which the Holy Spirit come down from heaven has communicated to us; it cannot be more explicit— "God hath revealed to us by

(his) Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, even the depths of God. We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which [is] of God, that we may know the things which are freely given to us of God: which also we speak, not in words taught by human wisdom [or discourses], but in those taught by the Spirit. But [the] natural man doth not receive the things of the Spirit of God.... because they are spiritually discerned.” Revelation was by the Spirit; the communication took place by means of words taught by the Spirit; and finally, the intelligence of him who received these words was given by the Spirit. Revelation, inspiration in the communication of revealed things, in fine, intelligence or comprehension—all was “by the Spirit.”

In 1 Thess. 2:13 it is again said, “For this cause we also give thanks to God unceasingly, that, having received [the] word of [the] Spirit of God by us, ye received not man's word, but, even as it is truly, God's word, which also worketh in you who believe.” Doubtless this had been proclaimed by word of mouth, but that which the Thessalonians had received was “the word of God.” It was not merely to Paul it was such, but it was such as communicated through him [παρ[ο]μ[ο]ν] to the Thessalonians.

This decides the nature of the communication. It was not a more or less faithful given statement of the word of God. The assertion, that what he wrote to them that it might remain with them, so as to permanently establish them in the truth—the assertion, that what was to subsist for the whole church in all ages was not the word of God—is a matter I leave to the appreciation of the piety and common sense of each reader.

M. Godet's system, as regards revelation, is false according to the apostle. That which he had communicated to them was so thoroughly “the word of God,” that it worked effectually in those who believed—it carried the power of God with it. It was, as Paul elsewhere states, a savor of death unto death where it was not a savor of life unto life. If his gospel were veiled, it was veiled in those that are lost, whose unbelieving minds Satan had blinded. The light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ shined not only into the heart of Paul, but before the hearts of men; that light was veiled only to those who perish; for the God who, by His word, had caused the light to shine out of darkness, had shone into the heart of the apostle, for the shining forth [απε[φ]ωτισμ[ο]ν] of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The nearness of the vessel was so far from hindering its being the word of God for others, that that word was committed to feeble vessels, in order that the excellency of the power which worked through their means in others might manifestly be of God, and not of men. In fact, everywhere, and on every point, the apostle affirms precisely the reverse of what M. Godet states.

There is, then, a redemption, but it is “by his blood” —there is a work accomplished once and for all—there is a revelation by the Spirit of God—there is a communication made in discourses [or words, λογ[ο]ις] taught by the Holy Ghost, and this given testimony is received [through the efficacious grace of the Holy Spirit] in him who hears. Divine things were revealed, communicated, and received by the operation of the Holy Spirit. The same apostle also says, “If any one think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him recognize the things that I write unto you, that it is the commandment of [the] Lord.” (1 Cor. 14:39.) So far is he indeed from confounding revelation and inspiration with the thoughts which a high, degree of spirituality might even produce in him, that he carefully distinguishes the one from the other. (1 Cor. 7:6, 10, 40.)

Before proceeding farther, it is important to notice the manner in which M. Godet uses scripture. I shall neither produce all the passages quoted by M. Godet, nor all the errors consequent upon them. This would be tedious. Just a few examples suffice to show that the reader must accept nothing without examination. Some are but of small importance, but the habit once contracted, one must be on one's guard. Thus, at page 6 of "Biblical Studies," second series, he adds, "in it;" "that we report. to you, that ye also may have fellowship with us in it;" thus entirely altering the meaning of the passage. At page 36: "Thou art Peter, and on this stone" is false; πτρω is not a stone. At page 49, "after having informed myself exactly" is a false translation, of which 1 Tim. 4:6, and 2 Tim. 3:10, are proofs. At page 49 it is not a quotation, but a false statement of what Luke says. The latter never says that his history was derived from what the first witnesses had stated. That was not the source whence he derived his history; but he says that he communicated the facts of the gospel as they were most surely believed, and as they had been delivered by the first witnesses, having himself had a perfect knowledge of these things from the beginning, which is a very different thing from M. Godet's assertion. "It is evident that he possessed more than one of those works, and that he used them to compose his own" (p. 53). Now all this is mere supposition, without the slightest foundation. Origen (if my memory does not deceive me), at all events, one of the fathers, remarks that the expression, "Many have undertaken," skewed them to be human essays, none of which was satisfactory, but that it was otherwise with Luke I quote the sense, and from memory. At all events; there is no trace whatever in Luke of what M. Cadet speaks. What Luke does say is, that others having undertaken to give a relation of those things, he desired to make known to Theophilus the truth of it all, having himself had a perfect acquaintance with it all from the beginning. He writes his relation because others did not present the same certainty. it is the reverse of what M. Godet says. Now all his system respecting the Gospels is here in question; this is my motive in thus bringing forward these carelessnesses, whilst reestablishing the facts and the passages. He seeks to replace inspiration by patristic legends, and by human means of conviction. He uses this mistake at page 54. What he says at page 52 is pure supposition, and a very serious matter to nullify divine history by such inventions. (See also p. 66.) At page 105 he makes Jesus confess [the sins of others], because others did so—a complete invention. John would not baptize Him, and only did so on the ground of the fulfillment of righteousness. "Thus it becometh us." This is that which, according to M. Godet, enabled John to discern the holy virtue in Jesus. It is altogether an invention! Moreover, Jesus did not go down into the waters of Jordan with prayer. (p. 106.) This was after His baptism, after He had in baptism publicly taken His place amongst the faithful remnant of the Jews—a difference not lacking in importance as regards the relations of man—a matter of infinite value to us. At page 106 we have also "a shining sign," "prefiguring the communication of the Spirit;" then three perceptible facts for the inward senses of John and of Jesus. All this is pure invention, contradicting the simple narrative of the Gospel, which is to us of infinite importance) I altogether reject the explanations which follow; but I must avoid entering upon controversy on the meanings of scripture, and simply declare that M. Godet does not relate scripture facts, but that he makes a romance respecting the Lord—a romance which is founded upon his own ideas. I might take up false thoughts and false doctrines at every page, but this is not here my object.

Further on I will speak of his views concerning the person of the Lord. All that is stated at page 123 is a complete invention. I shall return to that later, also to what he says at page 129 concerning His tears; I shall also notice page 131. At page 149, Ex. 3 is quoted to show that God can change, and

be what He will, translating it thus— “I shall be what I shall be.” In his reply to M. Colani, he translates it, “I am,” making use of it then to prove He is the only real existence—Existence itself. All this is inconceivable levity in solemn things. At page 151, “being found in all things as a man,” is an entirely false quotation upon a capital point, in order to serve as a basis to the author's doctrine. At page 169 he says that “St. Paul speaks of a salvation which will result from the life of Christ realized in man.” M. Godet has full liberty to interpret the passage as he understands it, but none to state that St. Paul says so. He says nothing of the sort. For my part, in reading the passage, it is evident to me that this is not in the least degree its sense. All this suffices to expose the carelessness with which M. Godet quotes passages upon important questions, and how he presents to us as facts that of which there is not a trace in the Gospels—facts that are fiction. Now, all his reasonings generally depend on those false quotations and fictitious facts.

The first thing, then, that I take up as an essential point in M. Godet's system is that, to please rationalists, he formally denies the Bible to be a revelation, that, in the history of Jesus, he replaces inspiration by the legends of the fathers, which, as regards the historical circumstances, may be true, or may be false, but which present no divine certainty concerning the facts which should reveal God, and form the basis of Christianity and salvation. He robs the Gospels of all divine authority. In the place of a divinely revealed redemption, he gives me interesting reminiscences of John or of Peter, and that at the expense of the explicit promises of the Lord. It is true he admits a revelation, but he admits it according to a wise and rational system, thus explained:—Revelation has reached agents or channels in a divine manner; these were to communicate it to the objects God had in view when He gave it (be it the world, the church, individuals, &c., &c.). But that communication has never reached them at all. The objects God had in view have had of it but a given statement, which is no revelation at all; they who were the channels of it having corrected and contradicted each other!

Now, concerning the revelations which complete the history of Jesus, Paul declares to us that he has communicated them to us in words taught by the Holy Spirit.

In common with rationalists, M. Godet denies all that. They require man, but they do not require that God should reveal Himself—at least not to us. It is a revelation which does not go beyond the agents to whom it was committed, even if those agents understood it well. I pity these rationalists for having lost it!

The other subjects I desire to treat are the person and the work of the Lord Jesus. M. Godet is opposed to the doctrine commonly called grace. He will have free-will amongst men. I have no thought of engaging in these theological controversies, nor should I have touched on his “Biblical Studies,” had not Christianity disappeared beneath his pen. Inasmuch as the author bears the reputation of orthodoxy, this becomes an imminent peril to simple souls. M. Godet truly believes that Jesus is the Eternal Son; he recognizes His divinity, though in a vague and confused manner. According to his fashion, he recognizes His humanity, but it truly is according to his fashion; he also recognizes His work of expiation in his own manner. Had M. Godet been a candid rationalist, (that is an unbeliever,) I might have spared myself the task of examining his method of seeing things. All the world knows that rationalism is latent infidelity, and presents itself as being the only intelligent Christianity. However it may be, and notwithstanding the pretensions of the author to orthodoxy, Christianity has no existence in his book. It is replaced by a system which only exists in

the thoughts of M. Godet—by a thorough romance, of which the here is Christ, but not the true Christ, the Christ of the word, “the Christ of God.” According to the word of God, “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself;” also, “Him who knew not sin he has made sin for us, that we might become God's righteousness in him.” According to M. Godet's book, Jesus is a man who, though moved by a filial sentiment toward God from the age of twelve years, had forgotten that He was Son of God, but recovered that truth by revelation at the age of thirty. He was always capable of sinning, though He never did so. Then, as man, born miraculously, and as innocent as Adam had been, He raised Himself from innocence to holiness, and in His person elevated humanity. This work was completed at the period of the transfiguration. He might have resumed His divine estate, which He had renounced; but in conversing with Moses and Elias, He communicated to them His intention not to resume it then, but to descend, in order to suffer. This He did. God's right having been recognized by Him (the right to put all mankind to death), and that right having been made good in the death of Christ alone, other men, profiting by that which He had done, and by this means placed in a position of liberty, can, if they will, attain the same divine condition into which Jesus has entered.

I ask, Is this Christianity? Is it not an infinitely solemn and serious matter to falsify truth on the subject of salvation, just where the glory of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ are in question? But is such truly M. Godet's system? I have merely put together the prominent points of this system. In examining it, we shall see whether that which I have now presented as such be not verified by quotations from his book. Other things also appear in it. My object in the preceding summing up is simply to show that by this system he sets Christianity aside, and replaces it by inventions and human doctrines. “God was in Christ, reconciling the world,” disappears. We get simply a man who sanctifies Himself during His life, in order that others may do the same, and attain the same divine condition. Moreover, after a repeated and most careful examination, I do not find from M. Godet's book that the penalty of sin is anything else than death—bodily death, or death in its physical sense. This is all that sinful man owes to God's righteousness, and Christ did not suffer beyond that in man's stead, and for man. I do not say that M. Godet believes in the restitution of all mankind, nor that he believes that the wicked shall perish utterly. That which is certain is, that, to him, the wages of sin is simply bodily death, and this was all that Christ suffered.

## Evangelical Protestantism and the Biblical Studies of M. Godet: Part

### 4

---

#### THE BIBLICAL STUDIES OF M. GODET.

(Continued from p. 255)

We must now speak of two phrases of which M. Godet makes use: "Christ learned obedience" and "I sanctify myself for them." As regards the former, it is not said, "He learned to obey." Had He not at all times been perfect in obedience, He had not been the victim without blemish. "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God," was the rule and motive of His human life and existence. At its beginning Satan sought to make Him depart from it; but Christ conquered him. At the close, Satan having returned with all that could turn Christ, from obedience, even to the prospect of being forsaken of God, all this became to Jesus but the occasion for a perfect obedience. "He was obedient even unto death, and [that the] death of [the] cross,"

He who, being in the form of God, had made Himself a servant, He had to learn what obedience was, and that in a world of sin. Now, the will of the Father was not merely a rule to Him, it was His positive motive power. "Man," He said, "lives by every word which goes out through God's mouth." Such, ever and absolutely, was His life. He was now more and more tried, deserted, despised, betrayed. The human judge delivering over innocence to the malice of His enemies; the priests, instead of pleading for those out of the way, pleading against the innocent One; the hour of man was the power of darkness; finally, Christ was there forsaken of God;—nothing had power to arrest Him in the path of obedience. His piety could but make Him desire to avoid the curse (He was made a curse for us), but His Father gave Him the cup; we ought to know what that has been in result. But obedience was then consummated. By those things that He suffered He learned what obedience, absolute obedience, was. This to Him was all He had to learn. He had ever done the Father's will, and, I repeat it, the Father's will was His motive power. Had there been no will of His Father, there had been no motive of action in Him as man. This is what is called the obedience of Christ.

As to the other phrase, "I sanctify myself for them," it is only necessary to notice the occasion when the Lord makes use of it. (John 17) He was speaking these words when about to depart. Then He could say thus, "I am no longer in the world," and it is in this manner He set's Himself apart (sanctifies Himself) in the glory, that they might become changed into the same image from glory to glory. He does not say, "I have sanctified myself," that is, during His life, but "I sanctify myself for them." Christ—a man—set apart and glorified is the pattern and source of our sanctification. The Holy Spirit takes the things of Christ, and shows them unto us. "We know.... we shall be like him.... and every one that hath this hope in him, purifies himself, even as he is pure." We are never required to be like Him down here. In Him was no flesh of sin. He who was born of Mary was holy. In us is the flesh. We are called to walk even as He walked, because we ought not to walk after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Our condition is falsified by M. Godet's system; no true

new life is communicated; it is by a free action of our own will that we appropriate to ourselves the Holy Spirit. The person and the life of the Savior are also presented in it in a false manner.

God's word presents us the Word made flesh—God in Christ; the Father so revealed in the Son, that He could say, “He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.” It presents Him to us holy from His birth—Emmanuel, God with us. It presents us man wicked, without any exception—without excuse for their sin, because the Son came and spoke, and did works such as none other could have done; but, in spite of all, they saw and hated both Him and His Father. Jehovah was there, come as man to receive the tongue of the learned, to make experience of divine life in a man, that He might know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary. But when He came, there was no man; those who have received Him, John tells us, are born, not of the will of man, but of God..

Such a Christ wholly disappears from M. Godet's system. We have merely a man, innocent (not even holy), who had to attain to holiness by self-conflicts who had to acquire spiritual life (I have sufficiently quoted his own words)—a man who, having previously had certain elementary sentiments, felt Himself to be Son, solely at the time of His baptism (p. 156)—a man, who became again Son, as regards His conditions of existence, first by His resurrection, and afterward by His ascension. The italics are M. Godet's own. Man, endowed with an absolute perfectness, and being able now (that is, since Christ) to recommence his career of perfectness, which perfectness had been interrupted by Adam's sin, and to recommence it by the free action of his own will, little by little appropriates Christ to himself by faith, and gradually banishes flesh from him. It is thus that sinful man becomes another man, and like Christ Himself. Scriptural truth, with respect to man, has disappeared in this system, as well as the precious truth concerning the person of Christ.

Notice here, that if it be true that we shall be like Christ in His glory, it is no less true that the word always vindicates the personal glory of the Son of God during His days in the flesh. Moses and Elias appeared in the same glory as Christ, but the moment Peter would place them on the same footing, both disappear, and the Father's voice declares that Christ is His well-beloved Son. The heavens are opened to Stephen as to Jesus; not only is he sealed, but filled with the Holy Spirit. But Stephen looks up, and becomes morally like Christ. Christ never looked up in order to become anything; it is the heavens which look down because Christ is there, and that the Father recognizes Him as His Son, sealed according to His own personal perfection.

If one is to believe M. Godet, Jesus recommences the career of fallen man by starting from the condition of an innocent man who acquires holiness and attains spiritual life; who, in fact, again becomes Son; in His state of existence human nature is elevated to the possession of divine life.

In the word Jesus is the Holy One of God; born holy, He has life in Himself—a life which is the light of men. He is the Son, who quickens whom He will.

M. Godet presents to us another Christ than the Christ of the word, even if we consider Him only as man. In the word He ever goes lower down, in contrast with the first man, who sought by usurpation and disobedience to be like God; whilst He who was in the form of God, and in divine estate, as the obedient man, went down even to the death of the cross. For M. Godet, it is the innocent man who rises to the state of holiness. For the word, it is God who exalts Him, because He went down to the utmost.

There is another element which we must consider in the life of Jesus. M. Godet first makes Him to have been free from sin, and secondly that there had been with Him self-conflict. That no external restraint held Him from sinning, this is true; but His liberty was that of a perfectly holy nature, entire love for His Father and for us. If it had been possible to deprive Jesus of liberty, this would have hindered Him from doing good and obeying His Father. He sought and desired nothing but that; it was His food. His liberty was the liberty of a perfectly holy nature, which was tried by everything that could hinder it from going on to the end in the accomplishment of the will of His Father. Such a trial only served to show the absolute perfection of His holiness and of His obedience. In His life, as Savior and sacrifice, there was neither leaven nor honey—salt there was. Tried in the fire of God's judgment, there was but sweet savor for God. Every morsel of that cake of fine flour was anointed with oil, as also in its origin it had been steeped with oil. (Lev. 2)

M. Godet will have that He had conflicts (p. 113). "He felt happy in the temple, as a child in His Father's house;" nevertheless "He subjected Himself to His parents, and returned with them to Nazareth, but surely not without sacrifice and conflict." But He had come to do His Father's will, and that was in this case that He should return to Nazareth. According to M. Godet, Jesus must have had conflict with His own will, which resisted the will of His Father! Is not this a complete invention of M. Godet? The same thing occurred in the desert (p. 114). Hunger is surely not sin. Jesus hungered, but He waited on God: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that goes out through God's mouth." No word had gone forth from that month, and to Him life was in that word. He lived by the Father. There is no conflict in the desert; there is but one answer to Satan, and that answer establishes the perfection of Him who was tempted. Conflict in Christ is an invention of M. Godet, as well as the "immolation" of His will, or of His legitimate tendencies, or of "His purest enjoyment" (p. 113). Hunger is not sin, nor are legitimate natural affections, but self-will is sin. To, have God's will as the motive and spring of ours, is pure, simple, and absolute obedience; it is the normal condition of a servant, of whom Christ took the form. At page 114 we read that in John 12 "another voice, that of the spirit," replies to the cry of His nature (already expressed "before all the people"), and sways the first voice in Him, Thus, then, a will was impressed in Christ which was other than the will of His Father, and contrary to it. Such is M. Godet's teaching; but if so, it was sin in Christ. Created sensibilities are not sin, but self-will mixed with them introduces sin. Such is the position this system attributes to Jesus.

This last instance is connected with another principle, more fully developed by the author at the circumstance of Gethsemane (p. 116). "The first voice, the voice of the flesh, says, 'Let this cup pass from me.'" Sensibility to suffering is, I repeat, no sin; but it is wretchedly poor to reduce the feelings of the Savior here to the fear of the suffering only. It makes a far finer testimony of the death of Stephen (and it may be said of a multitude of Christians) than of the death of Jesus. Does the mere dread of death cause man to sweat great drops of blood? One well understands the impossibility of sounding the depths of that cup given Him to drink by the Father, death, as the judgment of God. But then "fear" of that is "piety" (Heb. 5:7), and the cup of which we speak was the only one from which Jesus shrank. Never did He say of any other, "let this cup pass from me." Many a bitter cup was given Him by man, and His own. Who could not feel the curse when it was there? Who could ever have felt it as Jesus, who lived in His Father's love? (Compare Heb. 5)

Before passing on to the work itself, let us see how M. Godet presents the road to it. We have seen that, according to his system, Christ needed to progress from innocence on to holiness, and

from holiness on to glory; but a special phase exists from each of these different degrees to the other. It is true that holiness is connected with the revelation of glory to the heart; but M. Godet is very far from seeing the side of grace, namely, that eternal life is the gift of God, who has given it to us, that that life is in His Son, and that he that hath the Son hath life. He says, in fact, with regard to Jesus (p. 132), "Human nature is elevated in its normal representative to the possession of divine life." That which I am now examining is the different phases of these successive degrees of progress, and the bearings of the progress itself with the cross. Jesus, by self-conflict and against a will which was not that of God, was to raise Himself from innocence to holiness; and this was completely attained by the Savior at the moment of the transfiguration. It matters but little that the object of that remarkable event was quite different in the word; it is the system we are examining. According to that system, Christ might thus have entered into glory, having then, and not till then, been rendered fit for the glory. This system tells us that till then His holiness was imperfect; but now, at the time of the transfiguration, Christ had attained spiritual life

It is in vain that the word says; "No one has gone up into heaven save he who came down out of heaven, the Son of man, who is in heaven;" the progress made by Christ, according to M. Godet's system, rendered Him meet to enter heaven as Son of man (p. 121). "A royal road had originally been traced for Him, conducting, by, trial and moral progress; from innocence to holiness—this was the first stage; afterward by a glorious physical and spiritual transformation, from holiness to glory. The key to the narrative of the transfiguration is found in this thought." Adam, to whom this road had been traced, failed; death entered. Jesus, having recommenced this career afresh, completed it, and reached this culminating point. The transfiguration was the first step on the road to glory.

Moses and Elias were the messengers who came to conduct Him into it. M. Godet will explain it all to us (p. 122). "The light from within Him, illuminated from above, radiated through His person, making even His garments to shine" "The cloud is as the chariot" to bear Him. But now everything changes, for (p. 123) "two opposite ways of quitting this terrestrial life presented themselves to Him at this moment. One, that to which He was entitled by His holiness... the glorious transformation Jesus could have accepted this triumphant departure, and God must offer it Him; for it was the reward due to His holiness. But returning thus to heaven, Jesus must have returned alone; the door could but close after Him." Then (pp. 123, 124) "Jesus contemplated another, which accomplished itself at Jerusalem That exodus of suffering was that of which He conversed with the two great representatives of the old covenant, and which He declares to them He prefers and accepts." We had always supposed that the Son of man had come to give His life a ransom for many; that He had been made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death. It seems we were mistaken; He had acquired for Himself the title to enter heaven by holiness, and God must offer Him glory; but He converses with Moses and Elias; then, the two ways offering themselves to Him (for it was still uncertain, uncertain even up to that moment, if Jesus Himself were entitled to enter there), He declares that He prefers and accepts the road of death. What would have become of Moses and Elias had the door been closed? "for," says the author (p. 123), "the gate [of heaven] could only close behind Him;" had He departed this earthly existence by its normal exit, to which the transfiguration itself was the prelude.

I repeat these things with sorrow, but to show the folly of such inventions. Is this, I ask, Christianity? Assuredly it is not that of the Bible.

This brings us to the work of Christ. This is M. Godet's starting-point (p. 158). "God has surely not done more for guilty man than He would have done for the obedient man. He has only done differently." Can one conceive a greater absence of all ideas of grace? It is merely a question of man's deserts, those of the guilty and the obedient man. God is excluded from M. Godet's thoughts to a degree that is scarcely credible. God would show to the ages to come the unspeakable riches of His grace in His goodness towards us. To M. Godet the question merely concerns the preference given to an obedient man. And if obedience were in question, would Adam's abstaining from the forbidden fruit bear any resemblance to the obedience of Jesus, forsaken of God And as to the manner even of performing this, this result in man (as M. Godet says, p. 158), would it in any way have resembled the obedience of the Lord? Was God in Adam reconciling the world unto Himself? Was the Father revealed in the Son, in Adam? It is, says M. Godet, but another method of producing the same result!! The full development of evil in man—the perfection of good in the man—Christ—the power of Satan, prince of this world—the manifestation on the cross of God's righteous judgment against sin—the love of God, and at the same time His infinite grace—and that by the means of the perfection of obedience and love displayed in Christ, there where sin came before God, when Christ was made sin—all this become the basis and the earnest of the new heavens and new earth, wherein righteousness shall dwell—finally, a work wherein good and evil culminated, and where the question of good and evil was resolved for eternity; all this, according to M. Godet, is of no more worth, and will certainly produce no other result than would have been produced by Adam abstaining from the forbidden fruit!

Where was the righteousness of God in Adam? (Compare John 13:31, 32; 16:10.) Is it possible a Christian can be blind to such a degree? But I said I would refrain from expressing my feelings. "Hereby have we known love, because he laid down his life for us." What means could Adam have used to make known to us that divine love, a love surpassing all knowledge? The value of the work of the cross will be depreciated in Christians in proportion as they assent to M. Godet's system. Two principles constitute the importance of this system (p. 178). It was needful that the rights of God's righteousness should be recognized, manifested, exercised (pp. 174, 175). It was "order maintained in the bosom of disorder, without liberty being touched" But "mere suffering no longer sufficed...." "The wages of sin is death.' I can live without thee, and in spite of thee, says man to God, when thus acting." "Thy life is a gift; that gift is withdrawn: such is the legitimate answer of divine justice to this provocation. Immediate death, death by the shedding of the blood of the guilty, this is the punishment of sin."

## Evangelical Protestantism and the Biblical Studies of M. Godet: Part

### 5

---

(Concluded from p. 268.)

THEN (pp. 176, 178, 179) "What God required was not the satisfaction of His rights by shedding torrents of blood; it was the revelation of that right to human conscience which ignored it; it was the acquiescence granted to that right by that very conscience." "God demonstrated that great principle, that whosoever rebelled against God is worthy of death." Then "the very fact of redemption proves that what God sought has been, not the most, but, on the contrary, the least, shedding of blood, provided the same moral effect be produced. One man sufficed Him, in the bloody death of whom He has ostensibly manifested that which in reality had been merited by all; of one victim, at the sight of whom all others could say, that is the treatment which I had acquired for myself." It was also, "first, the revelation of God's right on guilty humanity; secondly, the recognition of that right by that humanity itself." Then (p. 182), "There a reparation, without default has been offered. The most bitter death has been accepted as the just chastisement of sin, the right which God possesses to inflict such a punishment on man, has been acknowledged without reserve. 'Righteous Father,' exclaimed the dying Son, in the last prayer He uttered with His own." Also (p. 192), "It was not a compensation for injustice, but a revelation presented to all of what all would have deserved to suffer, and what all they will truly suffer whom the spectacle of that expiation will not bring back repentant and believing to God." And again (p. 182), "The demonstration of righteousness which God desired to give the world has then in this case attained the character of absolute perfection. To the adequate nature of the inflicted punishment has been added the full acquiescence of Him who consented to endure it." After that (p. 185), our faith gives also our acquiescence, in acknowledging that it is we who deserve the chastisement. "It is by faith that this association of individuals, in the reparation wrought by Christ, takes place."

There are many other things to notice; but, first, if bodily death be the punishment, and God be satisfied with that which Jesus has done, why should we die? Then, if bodily death be all, then all pay already down here the penalty of their sin, be they penitents or not. That death, says M. Godet, was the adequate nature of the inflicted punishment. The demonstration of righteousness has attained the character of an absolute perfection.

Why then must I myself, if the Savior does not come in time to spare me this bodily death, undergo the full consequences of my sin, that same thing which God has already done? Such are the results of human wisdom.

Then, if I myself die, acknowledging that I have merited it, why needed it that Christ should have died? It will be said, Christ could adequately recognize it. But if it be but the death common to all, which is the wages of sin, and if I recognize that I have merited death, I recognize it adequately; then, morally in sight of the cross, I am no more advanced as regards this than otherwise. I only recognize it in proportion to my own faith, even if Christ died for me. And why, if some one had

fulfilled the career of holiness, would he not also make expiation? Nothing prevents it according to M. Godet's system. That is not all by any means. That death is the wages of sin is quite true, but it is quite another thing to understand it, as though it signified that bodily death (natural, if you will) is ALL the wages of sin. That is so far from being true, that the full effect of judgment overtakes sinners after their resurrection, when death will no longer exist. "It is reserved unto men once to die, and after that the judgment." They must rise again for that judgment; I speak of the wicked. And when the well-beloved Savior said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" this was not death. When that took place, He peacefully. resigned His spirit into His Father's hands.

That which M. Godet tells us of the propitiation is equally false (p. 184, lines 17 to 19), that faith is needed to render a victim propitiatory. The word in Greek is not propitiation, nor propitiatory victim. M. Godet adds. "victim." Christ, in Rom. 3:24, is a "mercy-seat" (the place where God is accessible) "through faith in his blood." But He is the propitiation for our sins, and not only for ours, but also for the whole world. (1 John 2:2.) The righteousness of God is now manifested to the world, in that Christ has gone to His Father, and the world sees Him no more. (John 16)

We read again (p. 185), "Nor has He accomplished this expiatory act, in which the treatment which the sinful world deserved was manifested, with the object of dispensing, as from offering to God, the reparation which we owed Him." What is the reparation we owe Him for sin? From beginning to end it is M. Godet's gospel, not that of the word of God— "which is not another."

I shall not occupy myself with M. Godet's other interpretations; I do not accept them, neither his two justifications, nor the subsequent loss of those who have been once justified; for the apostle says, "whom he justified, them he also glorified." I might have taken up a mass of things which I believe to be anti-scriptural, a crowd of entirely false interpretations. But I will not mix these things with the foundation of the truth of the gospel of God. The gospel, and the revelation of God in Christ, that of the Father in the Son, have disappeared, as well as the cup which an infinitely precious Savior had to drink for us. It is this that makes me speak. M. Godet tells us that the Savior comes ever since He went up. My pen, but for that, might remain dormant. But if another Christ than the true one is presented to souls, and another expiation than the true one as revealed to It by the word, and if this be done under the banner of orthodoxy, this concerns all the world.

M. Godet's system is the re-establishment of the first man, not the introduction of the Second Man. The first man is not only a sinner, but he is lost and condemned. God has for our instruction used every means in His power to try if man could be restored. Left without law, the world had to be destroyed. The law having been given, man could not keep it; his flesh cannot submit to it. God sends the prophets: man persecutes and kills them. God then says, "I have yet my Son." He comes, and binds the strong man; He manifests a power sufficing to remove all the consequences of sin. But God's presence having been then and thus manifested, man would not have it. Sin, enmity against God there in goodness, manifest themselves to the utmost degree; man crucifies the Son of God; they had seen and hated both Him and His Father. From that time the history of man in the flesh was closed: "Now is the judgment of this world," says the Savior. The fig-tree, man under God's special care, is condemned, never again to bear fruit. Stephen sums up his history. (Acts 7) The law violated; the prophets persecuted and killed; the Just One betrayed and put to death; the resistance of the Holy Ghost: such is man in the flesh. Nevertheless man's sin only brought about the accomplishment of God's counsels. Christ was made sin for us; there He

glorified God, and faith can say, "He bore our sins in his own body on the tree." "He hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling."

Born of the Spirit, Christ being our life, we count that we are dead to sin. Our bodies being the temples of the Holy Spirit, we live from the life of the risen Christ, whilst waiting till He comes to take us to Himself in the glory (not to be man—God, like Himself, but) to be in the same glory, so near Him as to adore Him with the knowledge of what He is, and what He has done; not "restored," but saved and glorified, not merely by the death of a holy man, as though that were all; but saved from the second death, from eternal torments, by Him who, upon the cross, ere He died, was forsaken by God that we might be brought to and ever with Him. He was far from being "the object of the displeasure and reprobation of God" (p. 190). Never was His obedience so pleasing. "On this account the Father loveth me, because I lay down my life that I may take it again." But this does not prevent that He drank the cup given by His Father, and that He bore in His soul the consequence of our sin.

I have finished. I will only direct the attention of him who reads these pages to the uncertainty and the ambiguity of M. Godet's expressions. I will quote but two examples. "The true meaning of history since Christ's appearing is expressed by 'that which is born of the Spirit is spirit'" The history of what? And again: "Christ has re-established fallen humanity." What is re-established? Has man ceased to be a sinner? Is he reconciled to God? J. N. D.

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
  - 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**