

# SERMONS OF HENRY TABERNER

by Henry Taberner

---

*Taberner's sermons including thoughts on John 12 emphasizing Jesus' role in drawing hearts to Himself and revealing His power over death, demonstrating how spiritual experiences deepen faith and attach believers to Christ.*

9 Chapters

## Table of Contents

1. 00.00. Articles
2. S. A Few Thoughts on Joh\_12:1-50.
3. S. A Meditation on the Father's Love
4. S. A Virtuous Woman
5. S. Psa\_119:1-176
6. S. Psa\_145:1-21
7. S. The Golden Censer and the Fragrant Incense
8. S. The Nazarite's Vow
9. S. The Philistines

## 00.00. Articles

---

Taberner, Henry - Articles

S. A Few Thoughts on John 12:1-50

S. A Meditation on the Father's Love

S. A Virtuous Woman

S. Psa 119:1-176

S. Psa 145:1-21

S. The Golden Censer and the Fragrant Incense

S. The Nazarite's Vow

S. The Philistines

## S. A Few Thoughts on Joh\_12:1-50.

---

A Few Thoughts on John 12:1-50. On a recent Lord's Day morning a few Scriptures were read and thoughts expressed which I would like to pass on to you. The Scripture read was John 12:3; John 12:7-8 — "Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair, and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment." In the previous chapter the glory of the Son of God is displayed. Lazarus is sick, and word has been sent to Jesus by the sisters (Martha and Mary), "he whom Thou lovest is sick." Jesus, upon receiving the message, stayed in the same place until Lazarus is dead. The question could be asked, Did not Jesus care about the wrench of the hearts of the sisters upon the loss of their brother? Had He left the place where He was He could have reached Lazarus and cured him, and so spared the wrench of the sisters' hearts. Did Jesus not love them sufficiently to spare them this? Of course He did. But He sought the opportunity to attach their hearts to Him in a way unknown to them before. It could have been that their brother had first place in their affections and He would have them know Who He was, that their hearts might be set upon Him, and so it should have been.

What gain they got from it all! Never before had they known Him as the Resurrection and the Life, He Who had power on the other side of death when it had touched one of His Own, and could use such power on behalf of those whom He loved! What a joy to their poor hearts when that mighty power restored to them their brother, though dead four days!

What a happy place it must have been in chapter 12! Their brother seated at the table with Jesus and the sisters in happy fellowship and worship! What were these sisters doing in this chapter? Were they fawning over their brother? Nay, they were making a feast for JESUS; He now has their affections, and the whole scene is in perfect harmony, (different from Luk 10:38). Let us look for a moment at the brother, Lazarus, and the two sisters. One thing is noticeable, they were at perfect peace in the presence of Jesus and their hearts were full of love for Him. What they had learned in John 11:1-57 had produced a most marked effect upon them. Lazarus was in the good of Eph 2:1-22 He had been quickened with Christ, raised up and made to sit together with Christ in a word, he is in the joy of full communion, having life (in figure) on the other side of death, and enjoying all that He, the Son of God, feeds upon.

Martha is no longer occupied with her service, and so becoming weary of it, but has a deep realisation in her soul of the joy to be able to minister to Him Who is the Resurrection and the Life, while Mary, happy portion, is pouring out her ointment in adoration of His Person.

They were evidently poor in wealth — there is no mention of servants, and from where, then, had Mary the money to buy this very costly spikenard? In verse 7 we are told that she had kept it. Had she bought it to anoint her own body? Be that as it may, she held it, and the opportunity came when she could use it to show her appreciation of the One she loves. Thus she could anoint His feet with it. Note that it is not His head, but His feet, for the glory of His Person gripped her soul. He is the Son of God, so it is His feet. And what would she use as a means to wipe them again?

Why, her hair, that which a woman glories in, she would use for a towel. How she had forgotten herself! Her Lord was all to her. The best she had was not good enough, but it was all she had. How the Lord valued what she did! Amongst all His disciples this woman alone understood something of His mind and will. She understood that He must go into death Himself for the glory of God, and so, while she has the opportunity, she anoints Him.

Happy Mary, understanding her Lord's mind and using what she had saved up, what she had stored up, to pour it upon His feet! And so the odour of the ointment fills the house. How alike in all this is the bride in the Song of Solomon. Let us look for a few moments at the opposite of what we have just seen. In Luk 24:1, again we have women who loved the Lord. Surely they loved Him! Had they not watched Him on the Cross? Had they not seen that precious body taken down and laid in a sepulchre? Did they not return to their homes and spend many hours preparing spices to embalm His body? Did they not come on the first day of the week at dawn, very early, and come to the sepulchre. Why did they so return? Was it not to embalm His body? Why yes, it was, but it was too late, for in verse 3 we are told they "found not the body of the Lord Jesus." Yes, they were too late. He was risen and alive for evermore. The opportunity to anoint His body had passed. They loved Him, but they had not learned His mind.

How do these things affect us today? Much, I believe. Shall we look at Heb 2:1-18. Very shortly all the saints of God of this dispensation will be home in glory with the blessed Lord, there to take part in and swell the great anthem of praise. But does the Lord have to wait for that day to receive our praises? Nay, God values our praise down here very much. It is music to His heart that out of the scene in which we are, praise can ascend to Him, directed by His dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord says "In the midst of the assembly will I sing praise unto Thee:" and so the great Choirmaster of the universe would touch our hearts to cause them to sing praises. In the midst of all the difficulties, trials and disappointments, the Lord gathers His own together that He might sing in their midst praises to God. What can be more precious to God, that in spite of all that would hinder, (in heaven there will be no hindrance), praise and worship can ascend to Him? Mary anointed Him and poured out her heart while she had the opportunity, and had she missed the occasion she may never have had the opportunity again, for from John 13:1-38 the Lord is shut up with the disciples. May God in His grace touch the hearts of His people that we may grasp the opportunity we have today of praising Him, led by His dear Son, that we might know the sweetness of learning from Mary. We still have the privilege of singing His praises in this scene to the delight of the Father's heart. Soon this opportunity will be gone from us. Then let our hearts rise up and praise His Name. In conclusion let us remember that Israel sang praises at the Red Sea, and never sang again for thirty-eight years, till the lifting up of the brazen serpent. Some praise at their conversion but never again! Let us see to it that we are not like the women in Luke's Gospel, a heart desiring to do a good thing. but too late to practise it. May we be found with those that call on the Name of the Lord out of a pure heart, our own hearts led out in praise, and like Mary, "While the king sitteth at His table my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof" (Song of Solomon 1:12).

Henry Taberner.

## S. A Meditation on the Father's Love

---

A Meditation on the Father's Love. When we look carefully into the choice opening verses of the third chapter of John's First Epistle our hearts are thrilled with the sense of divine love. The verses referred to read, "See what love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God. For this reason the world knows us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the children of God, and what we shall be has not yet been manifested; we know that if it is manifested we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And every one that has this hope in Him purifies himself, even as He is pure" (1Jn 3:1-3 N.Tr.).

These are wonderful and precious words which demand our earnest consideration, the first word, "Behold," or "See." indicating this. We are exhorted to be engaged with the character of the Father's love, which brings us into His family as children. (The Authorised Version reads "sons," which rather speaks of the position of dignity and relationship into which we have been adopted in the grace of God; the word "children" is more correct here, where the family of God, into which we have been born, is before the writer.) As children we can consciously enjoy the knowledge of the relationship into which the Father has brought us, and in the family circle, as children we can respond to the outflowing of the Father's love towards us. This is the kind of love we are to be occupied with. A mother's love will suffer much in devotion to her child, but it is because of the relationship in which the child stands to her; but the love of God has set itself upon those who, in themselves, are unlovable, and His sovereign love has acted towards us in Christ, so as to bring us before Himself as children and into the sense of all that this term of endearment means. The world does not, and cannot, comprehend this relationship; it is outside its sphere altogether, for the world has not the nature and the life which belong to those who are born of God. When the Son of God was here, the world never understood Him; they did not know Him, for the divine life that was manifested constantly in Him was not in them. In the same way, the world does not know those in whom the same divine life is seen today, even in the children of God. But how blessed it is that the youngest child in the family of God has the conscious knowledge of the Father, and can enjoy His love. To further assure our hearts, the apostle says, "Beloved, now are we the children of God." We are not to wait for some future time for this wonderful knowledge that we have been brought into the family of God; we are children now, just as we shall be when in the Father's House. Would that our hearts had hold of this more! The Apostle John was deeply affected by the knowledge of divine love. Five times in this epistle, and three times in the third epistle, he addresses God's children as "Beloved."

What we shall be, as blessed by God, and glorified along with Christ, has not yet been manifested, although the truth of it has been unfolded to us in God's word. When Christ is manifested in glory there shall also be the manifestation of the saints, as sons of God, in glory with Him. Then it is that we shall be like Him. But we shall also "See Him as He is." When we are like Him, we shall have part with Him in the display of His glory; but we shall also see Him in His personal glory in which none can share, even as He desired of the Father, when He said, "Father, as to those whom Thou hast given me, I desire that where I am they also may be with me, that they may behold my glory

which Thou hast given me, for Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24). There is that which belongs peculiarly to the Son in which no one can have part, but how wonderful the love that has brought us so near to behold and admire this eternal glory.

"Oh, Jesus Lord, Who loved us like to Thee?

Fruit of Thy work, with Thee, too, there to see Thy glory, Lord, while endless ages roll, Thy saints the prize and travail of Thy soul."

How our hearts should look forward to the manifestation of the Son of God, to the blissful time when we shall see Him and be like Him, for His own praise and glory. If this hope is before us, it will reflect Christ in our lives; it will make us watchful, and keep us from the defilement of the world, purifying us, even as He is pure.

What kind of love then is this which has done so much for us; bringing us into such blessedness as children of God? Though children, we are still passing through this world, but we can ever be looking forward to the day of manifestation, having the present consciousness of the great love the Father has bestowed upon us, which brings deep joy and satisfaction into our hearts.

H. Taberner.

## S. A Virtuous Woman

---

### A Virtuous Woman

Pro 31:10-31. In considering this portion of Scripture there are various lessons to be learned from it, whether in its application to us individually, or as presenting the relationship of Israel and the church to Christ. The man in Scripture generally depicts the position given us by God, but the woman indicates the state or condition belonging to the position. It is also of interest to observe that these verses are given in an acrostic form, verse 10 beginning with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and the succeeding verses commencing with the other letters in alphabetical order.

Pro 31:10 (Aleph). "Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies." The word virtuous here has the sense of devoted and thrifty; she is a woman with a high regard for the position she occupies by reason of her relationship with her husband. We might well, in the light of this, ask ourselves, How much do we realize and value the high dignity conferred upon us as having been brought into association with Christ? and how much are we concerned with His interests during His absence as being completely devoted to Him? The price of one so devoted is above the price of rubies.

Pro 31:11 (Beth). "The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil." The church as a responsible witness to Christ has proved a sad failure; she has neglected His affairs; but although there has been this collective failure, Christ looks to each one of us individually to be faithful to Him, with His heart safely trusting that we shall seek only what concerns Him.

Pro 31:12 (Gimel). "She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life." Even early in the history of the church, the Apostle Paul wrote: "For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's" (Php 2:21). How much of our own interests fill our minds and occupy so much of our time; and how little we seek what is for the good and profit of His interests. And are we not sometimes associated with what brings loss to His interests and to ourselves rather than gain? It was not so with the virtuous woman.

Pro 31:13 (Daleth). "She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands." This loving service was for the whole household. Her seeking suggests the exercise to obtain what her willing hands could convert into suitable material for use in her household. Think of the amount of labour of hand and the time involved in spinning this raw material into a yarn for making garments. Oh that like her, we might ever be watchful in devoted service to others because they are Christ's, and because our service is for Him.

Pro 31:14 (He). "She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar." Food is a necessity for any household, and its variety and presentation stimulates the appetite; and the merchants' ships bring food in quantity and variety from other lands. It is by being in touch with the One who is in the glory that we can procure the rich variety of heavenly food for the saints, and the

Spirit of God enables what is thus procured to be presented in a fresh and profitable way to meet the needs and satisfy the desires of God's people.

Pro 31:15 (Vau). "She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens." Rising before the dawn, her household is fed, to commence work with the daylight. This is the opposite from the slothfulness and self-indulgence that sleeps beyond the needs of the body. Many true servants of God have, like this woman, valued each hour, spending their time in seeking food for the saints to sustain them for the Christian life. She was also concerned about her maidens, planning the day's work that they might be usefully employed. How much of our thought and energy are given regarding the things of Christ each day?

Pro 31:16 (Zain). "She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard." Are we not rebuked by the diligence of this woman? As she considers this field she discerns its possibilities as a vineyard, that which will produce fruit for the one she loves, and there is nothing spasmodic about her labour. Should our considerations on behalf of our Lord Jesus Christ be any less than this? Should we not be constantly on the watch to procure and to plant that which will bear fruit for the pleasure of the Lord? This is what saints of earlier days have done, giving up their own interests for Christ's, in affection for Him.

Pro 31:17 (Cheth). "She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms." Strength marked all her activities and service. Our blessed Lord, as recorded in John 13:1-38 girded Himself with a linen towel and washed His disciples' feet, giving them in this an example to "wash one another's feet" All our movements and service will be marked by divine strength as we are occupied with the Lord, and as we abide in Him and He in us.

Pro 31:18 (Teth). "She perceiveth that her merchandise is good; her candle goeth not out by night." We must have the conviction that what we are offering to others is good, being fully persuaded of it. It has been said that the world sets forth its fiction as though it were true, while many speak of the things of the Lord, His truth, as though they were fiction. This latter will mark us if we are not in the good of the things of which we speak. Nor can we for one moment allow the light to be obscured, the light that illumines the path of the children of light, and is to be reflected in our walk and ways.

Pro 31:19 (Yod). "She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff." How much time and labour are involved in constantly pulling out and straightening of the fibres to produce a thread in a continuous length to be used for knitting garments or weaving cloth. The distaff is a cleft stick which holds the wool or linen, and the spindle is used to produce the twist in the continuous length of thread. This is a long and painstaking occupation; but this woman, in her great love for her husband and household, was prepared to spend these long hours to have the necessary materials ready for making garments for them. How much time do we spend studying the Word of God, comparing Scripture with Scripture, so that when the occasion arises we have something that can be of service to God's people?

Pro 31:20 (Caph). "She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy." Not content with serving the needs of her household, this large-hearted woman cares also for the needs of the poor. It is so easy for us to be wholly concerned with the needs of a particular circle, and to forget the needy all around. Nor is this only a matter of temporal needs, but

also of the spiritual needs of those who have not been blessed with the blessings of the Gospel of God.

Pro 31:21 (Lamed). "She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet." Unless the body is well protected against the snows and cold winds of winter there can be serious results; but winter held no fears for this woman, for all in her household were clothed with scarlet, like those in the king's house. Often have we to face the winter, the trying times of life; and how good it is for us when loving hands have provided for us the garments that enable us to withstand the wintry blast.

Pro 31:22 (Mem). "She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple." Her own tapestries adorned the house of this virtuous woman, who cared not only for the garments of her household but for the needy. Does the moral beauty of Christ adorn our homes, and do we labour that this same moral excellence should mark those who form the house of God? Silk, as used here, is the "fine linen" of which the tabernacle was made, the practical righteousness to be manifest in the lives of all the saints. The purple in which the rich were adorned, denoted wealth and dignity; and should not we appear in this world as those whom Christ has made rich, and in the dignity of the calling wherewith we are called?

Pro 31:23 (Nun). "Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land." This dignified woman lived in the consciousness that her husband filled an eminent position, and she sought that nothing about herself or her house would reflect discredit on his honourable position. As knowing the place of glory and honour that belongs to our exalted Lord, should we not seek in all things to reflect His moral perfections in all that we say and do?

Pro 31:24 (Samech). "She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant." The product of this woman's energy reaches to those without, not only to the poor, but to the merchant. She is able to sell to those who distribute to others. Although limited in our sphere of service because of the separate path to which God has called us, we can thank God that truths given of God have been spread abroad through the writings of those who learned the truth in the path of God's will.

Pro 31:25 (Ain). "Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come." Moral strength and divine honour should mark all the saints of God in their practical walk. We should ever be marked with the strength of character that refuses anything that compromises the honoured Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and if trouble comes to us because of this, we can be assured that we shall rejoice in a time to come, for the Lord will honour those who honour Him.

Pro 31:26 (Pe). "She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness." Foolish talking and jesting were unknown to her, nor was she engaged in idle gossip or unprofitable conversation; but grace to others was ministered in her words of wisdom. There was nothing hard or stern about her, for kindness flowed from her tongue to all around.

Pro 31:27 (Tzade). "She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness." Many, with David, have had to say: "Although my house be not so with God." How often we excuse our children for things that we would not do ourselves, permitting them to enter into associations at school or at work that are contrary to the ways of the Lord. Eli remonstrated with his sons about their behaviour, but God judged him because he restrained them not. Eating the

bread of idleness gets us into mischief of different kinds; the Lord has plenty for each one of us to do for Him.

Pro 31:28 (Koph). "Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her." Many have to thank God for the care of a godly mother, and the support of a pious wife. How blessed it is for us to exercise a godly influence upon all in relationship with us, not only naturally, but also upon those to whom we are united in the household of faith.

Pro 31:29 (Resh). "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all." If Israel failed grievously, and the professing church has dishonoured the precious Name of Christ, it is always open for the individual saint to be true to Christ, and to covet His commendation. What an excellent commendation this virtuous woman received; and how excellent is the commendation of the Lord to those to whom He says: "Thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my Word, and hast not denied my Name" (Rev 3:8). May we covet and seek this commendation from the Lord.

Pro 31:30 (Shin). "Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised." The favour of the world is deceitful, like natural beauty it does not last; but the woman who, in reverential fear, seeks to please the Lord, shall have a satisfying and praiseworthy life. And this is true for us all.

Pro 31:31 (Tau). "Give her of the fruit of her hands: and let her own works praise her in the gates." Although the professing church has dishonoured the Name of Christ, the true church, the Bride of Christ will be found "arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Rev 19:8). What the grace of Christ has wrought in and through the saints will appear in this beautiful bridal garment in that day. All the material to be woven is laid at the weaver's hand, but the weaving is actually done by the weaver, who shall have full credit for what she has done.

Moreover, it will be seen in that day that the design of perfection and beauty has been woven under the skilful eye of Christ, and only what is of Himself is to be seen in the garment of fine linen. Yet how great the grace that gives credit to the saints for what is of Himself. Every exercise of heart taken up with him will have its place in the garment that is for His eye and His pleasure. And in the day of Christ's display the church will be displayed with Him in glory, "when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe" (2Th 1:10). Truly then her own works shall "praise her in the gates." From the consideration of this virtuous woman we can learn what the Lord is looking for in His own at the present time; and as we hear afresh the question, "Who can find a virtuous woman?" shall not our hearts be exercised to answer in some small way to the desire of Christ that in all things we might be for Him while waiting for His coming?

H. Taberner.

## S. Psa\_119:1-176

---

### Psa 119:1-176

There are twenty-two letters in the Hebrew alphabet, and this unusual psalm has twenty-two sections in each of which there are eight verses. The successive Hebrew letters are the headings of the successive sections, and all the verses in each particular section begin with the letter that is at the head of the section. Every verse of the first section begins with Aleph, the first letter in the Hebrew alphabet; every verse in the second section begins with Beth, the second Hebrew letter; and so on through the psalm till the last section is reached in which every verse begins with Tau, the last letter in the Hebrew. The psalm has four main divisions. From verse 1 to verse 72 the psalmist is occupied with God's word in relation to his pathway, his conditions of life, his desires, his testimony, his enemies, his companions and his affections. In verses 73-96 he speaks of the loving kindness and power of Jehovah; in verses 97-144 it is the effectual working of God's word in the soul of His servant; and in the remaining verses we have the cries of the righteous to Jehovah for His salvation, while trusting in His word.

We must ever bear in mind that the writer of the psalm had not the light of Christianity, though there is much in it for the help and delight of those with the full knowledge that the New Testament gives. This and other psalms will be particularly valuable for the godly remnant of Israel in the coming day, when in the midst of their trials and sorrows, with enemies all around.

Jehovah's Name is used throughout the psalm with one exception, for in verse 115 the psalmist says, "Depart from me, ye evildoers: for I will keep the commandments of my Elohim."

**ALEPH.** Verses 1-8. The psalm opens with the blessedness of the godly who walk in the ways of Jehovah, seeking Him with the whole heart. Those who walk in obedience to God's word will never be ashamed, they will ever be thankful to Jehovah and be kept by Him.

**BETH.** Verses 9-16. Heeding God's word will keep the young man clean, and hiding His word in the heart will keep us from straying and from sin. As taught of the Lord, the saint will be able to manifest God's word which he has learned to value, and upon which he meditates.

**GIMEL.** Verses 17-24. The knowledge of the Lord in the heart separates the godly from all that is contrary to His name. This divine knowledge makes the saint a stranger in the world, and brings him into reproach with the great down here, who speak against him. There is a great gulf between those who seek the will of the Lord and those who belong to the system of this world, for the godly seek counsel from His word, while the proud wander from His commandments.

**DALETH.** Verses 25-32. The separate soul is humble before the Lord, longing to live according to His will, being transparent in his walk, and desiring to understand His words and His ways. With falsehood all around the godly soul knows sorrow and sadness, having chosen the path of faithfulness, and cleaving to the testimonies of the Lord which enable him, with enlargement of heart, to run in His way.

HE. Verses 33-40. As taught of Jehovah, and as receiving understanding from Him, the saint is enabled to walk aright. While the natural man is only concerned with present advantage, the righteous, who seek the living way, find the word of the Lord to be good and righteous.

VAU. Verses 41-48. Loving kindness from the Lord is salvation for His people, and His answer to those who reproach them. With the word of truth in the mouth, and the feet in the path of God's will, the pious enjoy divine liberty, and with confidence can speak of His word before the great of this world, a word which he loves and in which he finds his pleasure.

ZAIN. Verses 49-56. Jehovah's word is the stay and song of His afflicted servant, yielding divine comfort when he is derided by the proud. The righteous are indignant at those who forsake the law of their God, but they have joy in their pilgrim way in the remembrance of the judgments and Name of the Lord.

CHETH. Verses 57-64. The portion of the psalmist was in keeping the words of the Lord and in seeking His favour. Walking in the path of obedience to the will of God, the godly are assailed by the wicked, but even in the darkest hours they can give God thanks. Such as fear the Lord are found together, and it is their delight to discern the loving kindness of Jehovah filling the earth.

TETH. Verses 65-72. Discernment and knowledge come from Jehovah who, in His goodness, teaches and disciplines His saints, so that they might not wander from the right way. The proud, who know not divine chastening, speak against those who are afflicted; but it is in times of trial that the godly prove how good God is and how invaluable is His word.

YOD. Verses 73-80. To learn the divine commandments, the creature needs understanding from his creator, and the knowledge acquired in this way brings joy to those who fear the Lord. In faithfulness God afflicts His servants, where there is the need, but His loving kindness comforts them, and they live by His tender mercies and delight in His law. The proud, ignorant of God's thoughts, act perversely and in false-hood against the righteous, while those who fear the Lord are united to acquire the knowledge of God. When the heart is matured in the things of God there is no need to be ashamed.

CAPH. Verses 81-88. In deep distress and exercise of soul the afflicted one looks for the Lord's salvation and the comfort of His word. Languid, like a leather bottle in the smoke, it seems as if his days are few, because of the proud persecutors who, in opposition to the will of the Lord, seek the downfall of the righteous. In these trying conditions, the righteous look to Jehovah for help in their extremity, counting on His quickening power that imparts the strength to keep His testimony.

LAMED. Verses 89-96. What comfort and rest of heart for the saints to know that the word of the Lord is unmovable and heavenly, and that He is ever faithful, everything down here being under His control and serving His will. It is this stable, heavenly word that is the preserving power of the righteous where the wicked seek their destruction, the word of Him to whom they belong and who is their Saviour. Amidst all the imperfections around, it is blessed to realise that God's word gives light and help for everything we have to meet.

MEM. Verses 97-104. Meditating on God's word, which the psalmist loved, made him wiser than his ever-present foes, and gave him more understanding than his teachers and the aged; and the divine words, which to the righteous are sweeter than honey, keep the feet from every evil and

false path.

NUN. Verses 105-112. Amidst the darkness of a world that knows not God, His word shows the path to be taken, and preserves the steps of those who trust Him. Afflictions, foes and snares may abound, but the Lord preserves His own, directing their way for His pleasure, and enabling them to praise Him.

SAMECH. Verses 113-120. Love of Jehovah's law caused the righteous to hate all given to double-mindedness and evildoing; for all who feared the Lord observed the commandments of God, and counted on Him to protect and uphold them amidst the evildoers, and to deal justly with their deceit and falsehood.

AIN. Verses 121-128. When the proud oppressed him, the servant of the Lord looked for His salvation, His loving kindness, and the knowledge of His word to give him understanding of His testimonies. Feeling the time had come for Jehovah to intervene against the lawless, the righteous pleads his love and very high valuation of the law despised by those who took their own false way.

PE. Verses 129-136. The testimonies of the Lord, so wonderful in the eyes of the saints, gave them light and understanding. Their desires were for Jehovah and His words, that they might be the recipients of His favour, be established in their goings, and be delivered from the iniquity and oppression of men. Longing for the face of the Lord to shine upon them, they had great sorrow in beholding the disobedience of those who turned from His law.

TZADE. Verses 137-144. Righteousness is prominent in this section, where Jehovah is spoken of as righteous, and His righteousness everlasting. His judgments too are righteous, and His testimonies are commanded in righteousness, being for ever. The servant of the Lord was exceedingly zealous for His word, and he loved His words which are very pure, delighting in His law, and desiring the understanding that would make life worth while for him.

KOPH. Verses 145-152. The feelings of the godly remnant of Israel are expressed by Jehovah's servant crying to Him for an answer to their pleadings, and for His salvation. In the darkness of the night they hope in God's word, and count upon His loving kindness. If the enemy has drawn nigh there is confidence that Jehovah is near, and that His word can be relied on at all times.

RESH. Verses 153-160. Here the cry is for deliverance from affliction, for the Lord to plead the cause of the righteous, and for redemption. Three times over (verses 154, 156, 159) there is the cry to be quickened, that life in the power of God's word might be practically realized. When the Lord intervenes on be-half of His people, the wicked who have persecuted, oppressed and dealt treacherously, will not be spared. The word of Jehovah, seen in its completeness, is truth; and His every righteous judgment, like His righteousness and righteous testimonies, as considered in the preceding section, is everlasting.

SHIN. Verses 161-168. The leaders of God's earthly people were found as persecutors of the just instead of being administrators of righteousness; but the hearts of the righteous rested on God's word, rejoicing in it, having great peace, praising seven times a day, and hoping for the salvation of Jehovah. Obedience and abhorrence of falsehood marked the remnant, who lived under the eye of the Lord.

TAU. Verses 169-176. Cries and supplication to Jehovah mark this closing section, for deliverance is not yet experienced. The remnant long for deliverance, divine help and salvation, and for the time when they shall praise God's righteousness, as taught of Him. In the midst of the trials there is delight in the law of the Lord, with the confession of having gone astray, and thus needing to be sought of God.

How good it is for us to consider the exercises of the godly in a past dispensation, with little light, but with confidence in the Lord and delight in His word. There is much in all this for our admiration and instruction, but we are reminded in the different sections that, however blessed their portion, there is not the light of Christianity, or the rich blessings of those who know the Father and have their part in Christ in the heavenly places. Already we know the salvation of God, and the deliverance effected for us by the work of Christ on the cross; we are before God as His sons and His children, having the Spirit of sonship, forming part of Christ's body and bride, and waiting for the coming of the Lord to bring us into all the blessedness of what God has promised.

H. Taberner.

## S. Psa\_145:1-21

---

Psa 145:1-21 In Nos. 56 and 62 of "An Outline" we have seen how the full Hebrew alphabet of twenty-two letters has been used in commencing each verse or series of verses, in Pro 31:1-31 and Psa 119:1-176 : Psa 25:1-22; Psa 34:1-22; Psa 145:1-21 are also alphabetical psalms, but in this last, the Holy Spirit has seen fit to omit the Hebrew letter Nun, so that there are only twenty-one verses in this psalm. How very fitting it is that this psalm should have the title. "David's psalm of praise," for it immediately precedes the last five psalms, each of which begins and ends with "Praise ye the Lord," or "Hallelujah." The Name of Jehovah, the covenant-keeping God of Israel, who brought His people into relationship with Himself, is used throughout by the psalmist, save in Psa 145:1, where he addresses the self-subsisting. Eternal One as "My Elohim, O King." He extols his God, blesses Him every day, looks forward to the time of His kingdom, for then he will praise His Name for ever and ever. These first two verses form the introductory section of the psalm, and express the feelings of the godly remnant of Israel in view of the coming kingdom of Messiah, the God of Israel.

Psa 145:3-7 form the second section of the psalm, and is occupied with the greatness of Jehovah, which is beyond all searching; and He is to be praised exceedingly. The works of Jehovah are praised by each generation to the one that succeeds it, and they declare His mighty acts, for "He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the children of Israel."

David could speak personally of "the glorious honour" of Jehovah's majesty, and of His wondrous works; and the remnant could join to tell of His terrible acts, and of the great deeds declared by the psalmist. In the coming day, the godly remnant of Israel will learn afresh the greatness of Jehovah's power, when the Lord Himself comes to deliver them from their foes, and to subjugate all who have opposed them. In that day there shall be the fulfilment of the words, "They shall abundantly utter the memory of Thy great goodness, and shall sing of Thy righteousness" (verse 7). In the next section, Psa 145:8-12, we have the thoughts and feelings of the remnant as they ponder the coming kingdom. They have known Jehovah as "gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger and of great mercy." Nor is His goodness confined to Israel, for He is "good to all: and His tender mercies are over all His works." When the Lord takes His kingdom, all His works shall praise Him, and all His saints shall bless Him. To the "children of men," to all who have ears to hear, the remnant, blessed of God, will find their delight in making known the power and mighty acts of their Lord, and in speaking of the glory and splendour of His kingdom. The fourth section begins in Psa 145:13 by proclaiming that Jehovah's kingdom "is a kingdom of all ages," and takes us down to verse 20, in which the psalmist speaks of Jehovah preserving those who love Him, and destroying the wicked, which He will indeed do before His millennial kingdom is introduced. Jehovah's dominion will never give place to another, for "Thy dominion is throughout all generations."

While waiting for the coming kingdom, the godly remnant prove the unfailing care of Jehovah, for He "upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down." Their eyes are waiting

upon Him, and he sustains them whatever the conditions through which they are passing. The One who meets their needs has infinite resources, from which He satisfies "the desire of every living thing." On account of the rejection of Messiah, Israel will have to pass through a time of unparalleled suffering, the "time of Jacob's trouble," but the remnant will be brought through it all by the Lord. In their sorrow they know that "the Lord is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works." They have confidence in the Lord, saying that He is near to those who in truth call upon Him, and He will grant the desire of those who fear Him, hearing their cry, and coming to save them. While the divine judgments are poured out, "The Lord preserveth all them that love Him: but all the wicked He will destroy." The features of the godly remnant are clearly marked in these verses. They wait upon the Lord, they call upon Him in truth, they fear Him, and they love Him, and they have confidence in His care for them and in His salvation.

Psa 145:21 is the closing section, and speaks of what shall mark the coming kingdom. The leader of the praise says, "My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord," then he calls upon all flesh to "bless His holy Name for ever and ever." Are we not reminded by these words of Him who says, "My praise shall be of Thee in the great congregation . . . all the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee"? (Psa 22:25; Psa 22:27). The omission of the letter Nun by the Spirit of God would surely suggest that Psa 145:1-21 could not supply the full measure of Jehovah's praise. All the praise of the five following psalms are necessary, the Hallelujahs of the beginnings and the endings, to fill up the tribute of praise on earth, and "in His sanctuary," and in the "firmament of His power." To give full measure, there is also needed the tributes of praise of Rev 5:9-14, and the Hallelujahs of Rev 19:1-6, praise that shall fill heaven, and the wide universe of God, praise to God and to the Lamb.

H. Taberner.

## S. The Golden Censer and the Fragrant Incense

---

The Golden Censer and the Fragrant Incense In Heb 9:1-28 the writer brings before us the various articles of furniture that were in the tabernacle, which Moses erected at the commandment of Jehovah. Within the holy place there were the candlestick, the table with its showbread, and the golden altar: within the second veil, in the holiest of all, there were the golden censer and the ark of the covenant, overlaid with gold. It is about this golden censer that we wish to speak particularly. The various offerings of Leviticus, fulfilled in the work of Christ, are brought before us in Heb 10:1-39; so that if in chapter 9 we have the furniture of the tabernacle speaking of the Person and life of Christ, in chapter 10 we have what specially brings before us His great work on the cross, the offering up of Himself in its varied aspects.

Looking into the Book of Exodus, we find instructions for the dimensions and materials of the different pieces of furniture, but there is no mention of the size or metal of the censer; but in Heb 9:1-28 we learn that it was made of gold, in keeping with the golden covering of the ark. The censer was normally used on the day of atonement, as recorded in Lev 16:1-34, so that the High Priest might be hidden within the cloud of incense; but it was once used abnormally, when, in Num 16:1-50, Aaron at the command of Moses brought the censer, "and he put on incense, and made atonement for the people, and he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed." On the day of atonement, the blood of the bullock and the blood of the goat was sprinkled on the mercy seat, which enabled God to go on with His people for another year; but Aaron could not do this priestly work without the censer and its fragrant incense, which burned on the fire from off the altar. While in the presence of God, Aaron's life was in jeopardy; only as covered by the cloud of incense, which was fragrant to God, could he be there. And is not our acceptance before God in Christ? Yea, "He hath made us accepted in the Beloved" (Eph 1:6). This fragrant incense, which speaks of Christ in all His perfections, had four ingredients in like proportions, stacte, onycha, galbanum and pure frankincense.

Exo 30:1-38 is the only Scripture which mentions Stacte, and the meaning of the word is "a drop." Does not this bring before us that Jesus came from heaven, the One who was rich, but for our sakes became poor. He had ever commanded; His voice in creation calling all into being, and upholding all things with the word of His power. Yet, while a Man on earth, as the truly dependent One, He waited for God's word in lowly obedience, and walked in constant dependence. What a stoop! When Satan said, "If thou be the Son of God command;" His answer was, "It is written." He would only eat in dependence on God's command.

How rich He was in glory; but how great were the depths of His poverty here below! There was room in the inn at Bethlehem for others, but for Him, only the manger. But God's pleasure was found in Him, and His angels proclaimed at His birth, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men." At the beginning of His public ministry the Father opened the heavens and declared, "Thou art my beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased"; and from the mountain top said, "This is my beloved Son, hear Him." Shortly before the cross, when Jesus said,

"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say?" He would not say, "Father save me from this hour," but rather, "Father, glorify Thy Name": then came the answer from the Father, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

There is no mention of Onycha in any other Scripture. It has been suggested that it is the operculum — the covering of the mouth; and directs our attention again to Christ, the only One who never had to recall any spoken word. His every word was perfect, fitting to the ear, disclosing to men the great secrets of the heart of God, and bringing comfort and blessing. Men marvelled at the words of grace that proceeded out of His mouth; and those who were sent to apprehend Him returned to the chief priest and Pharisees saying, "Never man spake like this man."

Galbanum, like the other two fragrant drugs already considered, is only mentioned in this passage of Scripture. Little is definitely known of these spices, but galbanum is supposed to be yellow in colour, and the meaning of its name is "fat." Would not this bring before us the Lord Jesus whose every motive was the glory and pleasure of His God and Father? How great the contrast with every other man! Paul, in his day, had to say, even of Christians, "All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's."

Frankincense was a well-known perfume, bitter to the taste, exceedingly fragrant, and which burned well and very quickly. Added to the other three spices, which it helped to burn, there was a delightful fragrance in abundance when this holy incense was put on the fire from off the altar of burnt-offering. All the frankincense of the Meat Offering went up to Jehovah on the altar; it was for Him alone, for it spoke of the perfect life of obedience of Jesus, in which every step was taken in dependence on His God and Father. The devotion of the Bridegroom and the Bride are signified in the frankincense of Song of Solomon 3:6; Song of Solomon 4:6.

How delightful a picture is this that brings before us the intense devotedness that characterized the Lord Jesus, whose will was only to do the will of God; finding His joy and pleasure in it. This devotedness surely brings out into display the other features seen in the first three spices. If obedience to God was a bitter thing to others, it was sweet to the Son of God, and its display was fragrant to the Father. The prefix "frank" denotes its free-flowing quality, for the gum was obtained from the incision made in the bark of the tree. As we contemplate the blending of all these beautiful features set forth in the spices, each found in perfection in Jesus, and all together found in harmony and in perfect expression in Him, our hearts are surely stirred within us; for if He satisfies the heart of God, should He not satisfy ours as well? A solemn warning was given that this perfume was only for God, for God alone could rightly appreciate the perfections of His Son. Nor could any other incense do for God; only the fragrant incense commanded, upon the fire from off the altar, would God accept. Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, presenting strange fire, came under the immediate judgment of God.

Before it was put on the fire, the incense had to be beaten small. The more searching the testings of the Lord Jesus in His earthly pathway, the richer the fragrance was for God. And the more we enter into the precious details of that perfect life, the richer will be our worship in the presence of God.

Returning to Heb 9:1-28 we see that the golden censer was in the holiest. Was this a mistake? Normally the censer was in the holy place; but the holiest was its true place. It was kept in the holy

place so that the high priest could take it before entering into the holiest. Now that Christ is entered into the presence of God, our Great High Priest, the censer is there with Him; and this is the reason for it being found in its true place in Heb 9:1-28. Aaron stood in the holiest, and had to come out again; Christ has forever sat down, having offered "one sacrifice for sins." May our hearts be attracted more to Christ, to realise the preciousness of His Person more, and to value more the work that He has wrought for God's glory and our blessing.

Worship in the Presence of God. In our last paper we considered the golden censer in the holiest of all, within the veil, and the sweet fragrance of the incense burning on the fire from off the altar before Jehovah. How precious is the realisation of our acceptance before God in all the virtue of the precious blood of Jesus, and in all the fragrance of His Person. Only Aaron, of the priestly family, could enter the holiest of old, and that on the Day of Atonement, but now, all believers have "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus" (Heb 10:19). And how wonderful it is we can come before God to worship, not with the gifts that Israel brought, not with material sacrifices, but with spiritual sacrifices. The offerings with which God is well pleased are shown to us in Heb 13:15-16. There are sacrifices Godward, "The sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His Name"; and the sacrifices manward, "To do good and to communicate (of your substance) forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." These are the sacrifices that we should ever bring before God for His pleasure

If we consider the exhortation of chapter 10 of Hebrews, we learn that God would have us approach His presence with boldness. We are not to come before God as if He did not wish us to be there, but as having learned something of the infinite value of the sacrifice of Jesus, and our acceptance in that work. Every barrier that would hinder our entering God's presence has been removed at the cross, and we know that God desires us to be before Him in the company of Jesus, our Great High Priest, to be occupied with all that speaks of His glory. With these thoughts in our minds, we can look at the early verses of Heb 10:1-39, and consider how the writer leads us step by step towards entering the holiest. There are four main steps which we might contemplate; first, the law as a shadow of the good things to come; secondly, the new covenant with its promised blessings; thirdly, the tabernacle and the priesthood as foretelling the present ministry of Christ; fourthly, the sacrifices of old which pointed forward to the one great sacrifice by which God's glory and the blessing of His people are secured. The legal system was not conducive to praise, for the law brought sins to remembrance, and the blood of the sacrifices of that system could not give the worshipper a purged conscience. The need of a purged conscience cannot be overstressed, for only thus can we truly worship God; and only as we have apprehended that the blood of Jesus is of infinite value in God's sight to take our guilt away can we have "no more conscience of sins." If the sacrifices of old could not purge the conscience of the worshipper, God has found the answer to this in Him who said, "Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not . . . Then said He, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." In these verses we have the four principal kinds of offerings referred to, burnt offerings, meat offerings, peace offerings and sin offerings. The consecration of the priests in Lev 8:1-36 instructs us as to how God prepares those who draw near to Him, giving them the suitability for His presence. On being presented before God, the priests are washed with water, then clothed in priestly garments. The bullock of the sin offering was slain, and the ram for the burnt sacrifice offered, then the blood of the ram of consecration was put on the right ear, the right thumb and the right great toe of each of Aaron's

sons. The blood of the sin offering takes all our guilt away; we are accepted in all the efficacy and acceptance of the true burnt offering; we have the blood upon us, claiming us for God; and like the priests of old, we have been sprinkled with the anointing oil and the blood of the ram of consecration, the One who gave Himself for us.

Into the hands of the priests was placed all that spoke of the inward excellency of the victim, the fat, the fat tail, all of the fat of the inwards, the net above the liver, the two kidneys and their fat. Besides, there was the right shoulder, that which speaks of the strength of Him who was able to glorify God even unto death, and to secure His loved ones for God by the sacrifice of Himself. Upon these were placed one unleavened cake, a cake of oiled bread, and one wafer, which bring to remembrance the perfect Manhood and life of the Lord Jesus on earth as the One conceived and anointed by the Holy Spirit, who was in all things well pleasing to God.

These were all waved by the priests before Jehovah before being burnt on the altar. And is it not our privilege as priests to come before God and wave before Him that which speaks of His own dear Son? We are able to speak in praise to God of Him who was once down here to accomplish His will, and was obedient even to death, and that the death of the cross. The first system of sacrifices, under the old economy, has now been taken away, and the will of God has been established in connection with Him who gave Himself, a willing victim, for the securing of His pleasure; and "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once." Through Christ's death we are set apart in priestly service for God's pleasure.

There was no place in the tabernacle for Aaron to sit down, for the priest's work was never finished under the Old Covenant; but the work of the Lord Jesus is a finished work, even as it is written in verse 12, "But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God." How great is the contrast with the priest of old who never sat down!

If we have been sanctified, set apart for the pleasure and service of God, as typified in the consecration of the priests in Lev 8:1-36, we have also been made perfect as to the conscience through the death of Jesus, "For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (verse 14). This great Sin Offering is of infinite value in the sight of God, and when we realise this we have the assurance in our souls that our guilt has all been removed through the work of Jesus.

Well it is then for us to heed the word, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter the holiest by the blood of Jesus . . . let us draw near." The precious blood of Jesus has met every claim of God's throne, and enables us to stand before God. We are accepted in all the virtue and efficacy of the true Burnt Offering, and, as priests, our hands are filled with what is pleasing to God, all that speaks of the beauty and perfections of our Lord Jesus Christ, as we in some little measure have been enabled to appreciate them. God alone knows the full value of Him whom we present, but He delights to find our hearts occupied with Him who fills and satisfies His own heart.

Let us seek therefore God's own thoughts of Christ, His well-beloved Son, so that as we come together into His presence, we may have something of Christ to present to God, something fresh of the preciousness of Christ that we have learned.

H. Taberner.

## S. The Nazarite's Vow

---

### The Nazarite's Vow

Samson, the son of Manoah, is the only individual among the children of Israel who is spoken of, and who speaks of himself, as a Nazarite; he was to be "a Nazarite unto God from the womb" (Jdg 13:5); and this was the secret of his great strength. Separation to God is the secret of spiritual strength, and whenever moral separation is given up there will be the loss of spiritual power and of the sense of the support of the Lord. In his Lamentations, Jeremiah bemoans the condition of Israel, the state of the nation being reflected in that of her Nazarites. He writes, "Her Nazarites were purer than snow, they were whiter than milk, they were more ruddy in body than rubies, their polishing was of sapphire;" but how very different they were in the days of declension, "Their visage is blacker than a coal; they are not known in the streets: their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick" (Lam 4:7-8). The Nazarite's vow was open to all in Israel; it was not confined to any special tribe, to the priests or the Levites, or even to the men of Israel. In its application, it is open to all the saints of God, and, indeed, should mark us all at all times. In Num 6:1-27, where the instructions for the Nazarite are given, there was no limit set to the number of days in which one could separate himself to Jehovah, but the things commanded and prohibited were for "all the days of his separation."

It is hardly needful to say that the Christian is not called upon to make a vow, for vows belong to the legal system in which God was dealing with man in the flesh; but the separation and devotion of the Nazarite are to mark the Christian in a spiritual way. Of this the Apostle writes in 2Co 5:1-21, Christ "died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again" (2Co 5:15). Our Nazariteship, like Samson's, is for the whole of our life; and although we may answer but feebly to it, the divine standard cannot be lowered. But there was One in whom all the demands made on the Nazarite were fully answered, even in the Son of God in Man-hood, here upon earth; and in this, as in all else, "leaving us an example" that we should follow His steps. In choosing his path of separation the Nazarite was not seeking to please men; his separation was "unto the Lord." Monks, nuns and hermits have had their own separate ways, and many of them have no doubt been genuinely seeking to please God; but theirs is not the character of separation indicated for us in the example of the Master, who, in all things, lived for the will and pleasure of His God and Father. The Hebrew Christians were exhorted to "go forth therefore unto Him without the camp" of Judaism, "bearing His reproach" (Heb 13:13); but the value of this separation lay in its being "unto Him." This has also its application for us today, but separation from the religion of man after the flesh has its real value when Christ is the object before the soul. The separation from the vessels of dishonour enjoined on true believers in 2Ti 2:21 is not simply ecclesiastical; it is also moral. Many boast of an ecclesiastical separation, while morally no different from those within the camp of Christendom. It is only as we are truly purged morally from vessels of dishonour that we can be "meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work." If the heart is not right with God; if Christ is not the object before us and the motive for our actions, our separation will be little different from that of Israel's which gave no real

pleasure to God.

"Wine and strong drink," from which the Nazarite was to separate himself, would indicate that which gratifies, stimulates, and excites the flesh. King Lemuel's mother evidently thought that kings should have the features of Nazarites, when she said to him, "It is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: lest they drink and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted. Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts" (Pro 31:4-6). As Nazarites we do not require the joys of men, or to be sustained by what the world provides; our joy and strength are in the Lord. The world system caters for all, providing its varied pleasures for all tastes and classes. Rich men can have their wine at all times, but the supply for the poor is limited except on special occasions. Strong drink is normally for the pleasure of the rich, and as medicine for the poor, though poor have deepened their poverty by addiction to it. Liquor of grapes are for those with means and cultured tastes, but the poor can have their moist and dried grapes. Even the outcasts of men could have the kernels and the husks, like the prodigal who fed the swine. The world endeavours to meet the cravings and desires of all in the variety of its provision in the realm of human pleasure. But the fruit of the vine in all its parts and forms was denied to the Nazarite during the days of his separation: and the word from God to the Christian is, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world" (1Jn 2:15). Men of the world may have their pleasures, according to their tastes and choice, but the believer has been called of God to a path of separation from the world to find his pleasure in and with Christ in another world.

While on earth the Lord Jesus was "a Man of sorrows," but He had joy of which the world knew nothing. In Luk 10:21 it is recorded, "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight." From Mat 11:1-30 we learn that this was the time when the Lord had been rejected by the cities in which most of His Mighty works were done. Amidst the sorrow of His rejection by Israel, the Son of God found His joy in the Father and in the knowledge of His will. This is the joy that belongs to the Nazarite today; not the pleasures of sin for a season, but the Lord's own joy. Having spoken to His disciples the wonderful secrets of His heart, He said, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (John 15:11). It was the strength that this divine joy gave that sustained Paul in his arduous labours and imprisonment for Christ's sake. He exhorted the saints at Philippi to "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice;" but he exhorted as having this joy for himself, being able to say, "But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly" (Php 4:4; Php 4:10). As a true Nazarite, Paul had refused the things in which he had pleasure as a natural man, writing, "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Php 3:7-8). Peter also writes of the Christian's joy, "joy unspeakable," (1Pe 1:8); and James writes of "all joy" (Jas 1:2); but the source of this joy is divine.

There were different ways in which any Israelite could be defiled, and no doubt these also applied to the Nazarite; but special instructions are given to the Nazarite to avoid defilement through contact with the dead. Any Israelite who became unclean through touching the dead, or by being in contact with death, required the sprinkling of the ashes of separation upon him, as prescribed in

Num 19:1-22. No doubt, in addition to what was required of a defiled Nazarite in Num 6:1-27, there would also be needed the application of the ashes of the Red Heifer to procure his cleansing; he would have to be cleansed both as an Israelite and as a Nazarite. A Nazarite could not voluntarily make himself unclean, not even for his nearest and dearest, for the claims of God were paramount, "the consecration of his God" was upon his head; and "all the days of his separation" he was "holy unto the Lord." But the Nazarite might be defiled inadvertently through a man dying "very suddenly by him," and this would bring to an end the days of his consecration. So it is with a Christian: sin is viewed as a possibility, not as necessary; even as we read, "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: and He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the whole world" (1Jn 2:1-2). There is no provision for wilful sin, but a sin offering for a sin of inadvertence.

Contacts with those who are dead in trespasses and sins, which are not according to the will of God, defile the Christian. This does not mean our refusing all inter-course with the men of this world, but, like our Master, seeking in converse with them to bring to them the grace of God. Peter would have refused to eat with the Gentiles, but God gave him a vision to take away his natural prejudice as a Jew, and Paul had to withstand him to the face when the old prejudice reasserted itself. But the Christian is not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers (2Co 6:14-18), but to be separate, "and touch not the unclean," the men of this world in their unholy associations from which God, in His grace, has called us to be His "sons and daughters."

Some Christians think lightly of worldly associations, but God does not. To be defiled by a man dying suddenly by a Nazarite might seem to some as rather harsh, but with God it was sin; and the defiled Nazarite had seven days in which to reflect on this while awaiting the day of his cleansing. God, in His grace, made provision for one defiled inadvertently, and He has made provision for our defilement by sin, even as it is written, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1Jn 1:9). To mark his consecration to Jehovah, the Nazarite was not to allow a razor to come upon his head, he was to "let the locks of the hair of his head grow" all the days of his separation unto the Lord. Scripture says, "Does not even nature itself teach you, that if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?" (1Co 11:14); but the Nazarite accepted this shame that he might be in separation for the pleasure of God. In the same part of Scripture we read that the long hair of a woman "is given her for a covering," to mark her place of subjection. The Christian, following his Master, is content with a path of reproach and shame, being in all things subject to the will of the Lord. The divine glory of the Son of God is presented to us in the Song of Songs, where His head is of "the most fine gold;" but His true Manhood is depicted in His flowing locks that are "black as the raven" (5: 11). There we see Him as the True Nazarite in Manhood, subject in all things to the will of God. As Man He willingly bore all the reproach and shame in a path of rejection by men, so that God might be glorified where every other man had dishonoured Him. There was no breakdown in His Nazariteship, for He completed His course in this world as the "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb 7:26), perfect in all His relations with men, and in every moment pleasurable to His God and Father. He could not be defiled by death: none could die suddenly by Him; indeed, death was compelled to release its victims at His word.

There were seven days before an Israelite who had come into contact with death could be cleansed, and it was the same for the Nazarite, who probably received the same double sprinkling, mentioned in Num 19:19, and also had to wash his clothes and bathe his flesh. With the Nazarite there was an "eighth day," a new beginning, when he brought his sin offering and his burnt offering to the priest at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

Each day for the Christian is an "eighth day," when the head is consecrated to the Lord, and the heart is engaged with His work for us upon the cross, which has taken away all our sins and given us perfect acceptance before God. The door of the tabernacle was the nearest place of approach for the Nazarite of old, but we have "boldness to enter the holiest by the blood of Jesus." At all times we can enter the immediate presence of God to commune with Him, and to be occupied with the glory that shines unveiled in the face of Jesus.

Although the Nazarite had failed, he was to "consecrate unto the Lord the days of his separation," for God has delight in those who seek to live for Him in this world, and that in spite of their weaknesses and failures. The lamb of the trespass offering gives the assurance before God that all His claims have been met in regard to our failures, and that our relations with Him rest on the perfection of the work of His own Son.

We are reminded in the closing words of verse 12 that our failures, though not altering God's disposition towards us, or detracting from His pleasure in anything of Christ in our lives, bring to us spiritual loss: "but the days that were before shall be lost, because his separation was defiled." There is great spiritual gain in keeping in the path of separation, with Christ as the object before us; and spiritual loss to those who give up the path of separation for some other path that does not demand the same spiritual exercise of heart before God, and constant dependence upon Him. The Law of the Nazarite

It need hardly be said that the Christian does not make vows. These belong to the legal system in which God was dealing with man in the flesh; but in the type there is precious divine teaching for our learning through which God would have us to profit. Although vows belong to the legal system of Judaism, the devotedness expressed in the vow should mark the Christian at all times, knowing that Christ died for all, "that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again" (2Co 5:15).

There came the day when the vow of the Nazarite was ended, when his path of shame was over, and when he could have his pleasure to the full. So it will be with the Christian at the coming of the Lord. During our sojourn in this world we are called upon to deny ourselves the pleasures of those around us that belong to the man after the flesh, and in subjection to God's will share the place of Christ's rejection, bearing His reproach. When the Lord comes all that will be over, and we shall have our joy with Him in the glory of His kingdom, and in the deep, eternal joys of the Father's house. Even now, while waiting for the eternal joys of heaven, our joy can be full, but as having Christ's joy, and in the circle of his own (John 15:11; 1Jn 1:4). In Num 6:13 it is written, "When the days of his separation are fulfilled." There came the time when Christ, the True Nazarite had fulfilled the days of His separation, when "the hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father" (John 13:1); and for Him it was the time of "offering Himself without spot to God" (Heb 9:14). All the offerings of the Nazarite, the he-lamb for a burnt offering, the ewe-lamb for a sin offering, and the ram "without blemish for peace offerings," had their fulfilment in the great

work of the cross. The basket of unleavened bread also speaks of Him, in all that He was for God in Manhood in this world. The fine flour mingled with oil depicting the perfection of Christ's Manhood as come into the world by the operation of the Spirit, the Spirit of God permeating all that He was in His holy nature as "the holy thing" born of the Virgin. The unleavened bread anointed with oil presenting Jesus as the anointed Man here for God's pleasure to carry out all His will. The meat offering offered with the burnt and peace offerings surely telling us that the offering up of Christ on the cross carried with it the sweet savour of all that He was for God's pleasure in His life of devotion and perfection; and the drink offerings that God had His joy in His Son at all times, whether in life or in death. In the application of this type to ourselves, our blessing, in being brought into the scene where the days of our separation are over, is based on the work of the Lord Jesus, as seen in the sin offering and the burnt offering; and our communion now, as in the coming day, is in the fellowship of God's Son, based upon His death. The burnt offering is a "he lamb of the first year," like the "continual burnt-offering," of Exo 29:38; that which so blessedly brings before us what Christ's death was for God in all its fragrance and perfections. The sin offering was not a male, as were the sin offerings on the day of atonement, but a female as in Num 19:1-22, where it is man's state that is in question rather than his position. For the peace or communion offering it was a ram, like the ram of consecration of Lev 8:1-36, which brings before us our communion with each other and with God through the work of Christ. On the day his separation was over the Nazarite was to "shave the head of his separation at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall take the hair of the head of his separation, and put it in the fire which is under the sacrifice of the peace offerings." Do we not see in this the day when the Lord Jesus finished His path of separation, and entered into the joy of His Father's presence? The long hair which denoted His path of shame is removed, and, like the peace offering, it is put in the fire that consumed the offerings "of a sweet savour unto the Lord."

How delightful to God was the path of separation of Jesus. It bore the same character as His work upon the cross; and in the cross there was not only the great work of atonement, but the perfections of Him that had glorified God in His path, even unto death. God will never forget the work of His Son in death, nor will He ever forget that He was the True Nazarite during His earthly sojourn, eschewing all of pleasure here to bring infinite pleasure and satisfaction to the heart of His God and Father. Nor does God forget the separate path of His people; the walk of those who have forsaken this world and its joys that they might bear the character of His Son, sharing the outside place with Him, "bearing His reproach," while waiting to share with Him the place into which He has entered before the face of His Father. The fire that consumed the hair was under the communion offering, the offering in which we have part, as feeding upon the death of Christ in communion with God and with each other. The offering priest had his portion as also his own part in the law of the Nazarite. He had to offer the sacrifices (5: 16, 17), and to wave the wave offering before the Lord. Normally it was the breast that was waved before Jehovah, but here it is "the sodden shoulder," of the peace offering, with an unleavened cake and an unleavened wafer. What the priest is about to feed upon is waved before God, for God finds pleasure in His priests feeding upon the Christ who glorified Him in life and death.

Christ's strength was manifested in the place where He was crucified in weakness: it was His strength that sustained Him in the hour that He bore judgment for us, and glorified God in relation to our sins. Does not the sodden shoulder tell us that that divine strength, made known in Christ's

death, is available to us through the word of God? It is as we feed upon the word that we feed upon the strength of Christ, manifested, and made available for us, upon the cross. But Christ was not only the victim, He was also the Offering Priest. He did not properly enter into His priesthood until He rose from the dead and entered heaven; it is in heaven that He is Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. Nevertheless, on the cross He had the character of the Offering Priest, when "He offered Himself without spot to God" by the Eternal Spirit (Heb 9:14). And He is also the portion of the offering priest, having the privilege to wave before His God and Father that which He knew was for His pleasure in His life and death. He too delights in what He accomplished for His father and for the blessing of those who are blessed through Him. This wave offering was "holy for the priest, with the wave breast and heave shoulder." Paul delighted to speak of the love of Christ for himself (Gal 2:20), for the saints (Eph 5:2), and for the church (Eph 5:25); and it is our privilege to wave the love of Christ in the presence of God, as we surely do when met together at the Lord's Supper; and as also to heave the shoulder speaking of the One who ascended after having descended into the lower parts of the earth, and who, in the might of His strength, led captivity captive, and will soon fill all things (Eph 4:9-11; Col 2:15).

It was not until the offerings had been offered, and the priests had waved the wave offering before Jehovah that the Nazarite was allowed to drink wine. Was not this before the Lord on the night He instituted the Supper, when He said, "I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom"? (Mat 26:29). He must enter into death, offering the offerings ordained of God, before He can have the joy with His own that belongs to another world. For himself, there is the joy of the Father's presence, even as He said in spirit in Psa 16:1-11, "In Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Psa 16:11). His joy is full as having been received by the Father with the work He gave Him to do forever accomplished. And we can have our joy even now, the joy He left with His own before He left them, and joy in communion with Him where He is in the Father's presence. But our present joy is not from this world; our joy belongs to the scene into which the Lord has entered; and we wait to have our full joy with Him in His Father's kingdom. Today, for the saints of God, there is joy and sorrow mingling; joy in the company of the Lord, and, like the disciples, "rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name" (Acts 5:41). But the days of suffering shame will soon be over; the hair of the Nazarites will be burnt, and the only joy that will be theirs will be that shared with the Lord Jesus in His kingdom, and in the kingdom of His Father.

Although the path of the Lord Jesus as the Nazarite is over; He has still chosen the place of subjection, even as it is written, "When all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all" (1Co 15:28); but this is the answer to another type, even that of the Hebrew servant in Exo 21:1-36, who said plainly, "I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free" (Exo 21:5). In love for His Father, and for those whom the Father has given to Him, the Son of God has chosen to take the subject place for evermore. May the Lord enable us to apprehend His mind regarding the Nazarite, whether as seen in its perfection in His own Son, or as applicable to ourselves; so that we may be content to walk in the path of separation marked out for us by the steps of Jesus, and to wait for our part with Him in the deep, eternal joys of His Father's House.

(Revised Notes of a Reading with H. Taberner.)

## S. The Philistines

---

### The Philistines (Substance of an Address)

It is interesting to trace the history of the Philistines in relation to God's people Israel, and instructive to learn what God has for the saints of this day in what they represent. From Gen 10:1-32 we see that the Philistines were of the sons of Ham (Gen 10:6-14), and came from Caphtor (Amo 9:7), which seems to have been in or near Egypt, and they occupied the land on the sea coast, to the west of the possessions of Dan and Simeon, extending to the north of Joppa, and a little to the south of Gaza.

They were in possession of their land before Abraham came to Canaan, and might well have disputed Israel's claim to the land in a later day, on the ground that they were there before them. Theirs was a natural claim, but Israel's rested on the call and promise of God, and on the word that "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel" (Deu 32:8). The Philistines did not worship the true God, they had their own gods (Jdg 10:6), one of whom is named as Dagon in 1Sa 5:1-12. However they came to possess their lands, they knew not what it was to be delivered out of Egypt by the hand of God, to be sheltered by the blood of the lamb that was slain, to be brought across the Red Sea by divine power, to be sustained by the bread of God and refreshed by water from the flinty rock while crossing the wilderness, to pass over Jordan dry shod because of the presence of the ark of God, and to have Jehovah fight for them in dispossessing the nations of Canaan.

What marked the Philistines in the days of Abraham and Isaac was their striving to deprive God's servants of the water He had provided for them. Abraham had to reprove "Abimelech because of a well of water, which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away" (Gen 21:25); and when Isaac dwelt in Gerar he found "all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth" (Gen 26:15). When Isaac "digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father," the Philistines strove with him, so that he called the one Esek, which means "Quarrel," and the other Sitnah, which means "Opposition." So that we have in the Philistines the religious men of this world who have no knowledge of the true God, and who seek to hinder the saints of God from obtaining the divine refreshment that God, in His goodness, has made available for us. Happy it is for us when we can remove from the influence of the religious men of this world, and, like Isaac, find true refreshment without contention in our Rehoboth, where the Lord makes room for us, and makes us fruitful (Gen 26:22). Back to the land, in separation from the Philistines, and where the Lord appeared to him, Isaac could build his altar, call upon the Name of the Lord, pitch his tent, and find abundance of refreshment from the well he digged at Beer-sheba, where his father before him had called "on the Name of the Lord, the Eternal God" (Gen 21:33; Gen 26:23-25).

There are many mentions of the Philistines in the Book of Judges, by far the most of them in connection with Samson, but the first in chapter 3 tells us that they were left in the land, along with

remnants of the Canaanites, "to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the Lord, which He commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses" (Jdg 3:3-4). God did not destroy them as He had the nations of the land of Canaan, for if in the destruction of the nations of Canaan we see the power of Satan broken, in the Philistines we see the power of Satan still active, as allowed of God, to test His people. The last four chapters of the Book of Judges show the dreadful state of Israel in the days of the Judges, for though these chapters come at the end of the book, they evidently speak of incidents quite early, for Phinehas, "the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron," was alive and ministering before the ark at the time spoken of in Jdg 20:28. Because of Israel's departure from Jehovah, He allowed them to come under the power of their oppressors, one of which was the Philistines, as is stated in Jdg 13:1.

God had marked the set time of forty years for this oppression, and had prepared a deliverer, who would "begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines" (Jdg 13:5). How very solemn it is to contemplate that God, in His government, has allowed His people, down the centuries, to be oppressed by the religious men of this world. Satan has taken the occasion of the failure of God's people to oppress them, and God has allowed him to do it so that His people might cry to Him for deliverance. Although God's saints have often been assailed by the civil powers of the world, the most bitter persecution has come from the religious men of the world.

Although there was much in Samson's relations with the Philistines to deplore, he is nevertheless named among the faithful in Heb 11:32, and the Lord's purpose in raising him up was accomplished, for he began to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines, smiting them again and again, and slaying more in his death than in his life (Jdg 16:30). God not only delivered Israel out of the Philistines' hand, but through David brought them into subjection, for it is written in 1Ch 18:1, "David smote the Philistines, and subdued them." In the reign of Jehoshaphat, the "fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah . . . also some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents, and tribute silver" (2Ch 17:10-11); but when Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat came to the throne, and walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, "the Lord stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines," and with other nations broke into Judah, "and carried away all the substance that was found in the king's house" (2Ch 21:6; 2Ch 21:16-17). As in the days of the Judges, the Lord used the Philistines for the chastening of His wayward people.

King Ahaz also followed the wicked ways of the kings of Israel, provoking the Lord, and bringing upon himself and his people God's displeasure and judgment, and the Lord allowed the Philistines to invade the country, to capture some of the cities and villages, and dwell there, for Ahaz had "made Judah naked, and transgressed sore against the Lord" (2Ch 28:1-4; 2Ch 28:18-19). From the Scriptures we have considered it must be evident that the Philistines represent the power of the enemy that the Lord allows for the discipline and chastening of His people when they transgress against Him. Satan's power has been broken in the death of Christ, but it has not yet been entirely set aside. The day will come when Satan will be bound, and cast into the bottomless pit, but till then God will allow this power to chasten His people, as He has done down the ages.

H. Taberner.

# *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)**