WRITINGS OF HARRY E FOSDICK

by Harry E. Fosdick

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by Harry E. Fosdick, compiled for study and devotional reading.

48 Chapters

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01.00. A Guide to Understanding the Bible

A Guide to Understanding the Bible by Harry Emerson Fosdick

Harry Emerson Fosdick was one of the most eminent and often controversial of the preachers of the first half of the twentieth century. Published by Harper & Brothers.in many editions in the 1930s. This material was prepared for Religion Online by Ted & Winnie Brock.

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Introduction

Biblical scholarship of the last half of the 19th century has made it possible to arrange the texts in approximate chronological order as well as develop broad chronological outlines. This book is not written by a technical scholar and not written for technical scholars but for the general public.

Chapter 1: The Idea of God From the beginnings of the Bible to the end, the advance in the idea of God was extreme: Beginning with a territorial deity who loved his clansmen and hated the remainder of mankind, it ends with a great multitude out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, worshiping one universal Father; beginning with a god who walked in the garden in the cool of the day, it ends with the God whom "no man hath seen...at any time."

Chapter 2: The Idea of Man The Old Testament starts with social solidarity so complete that the individual has practically no rights, and achieves at last profound insight into the meaning, worth, and possibility of personal life. The New Testament starts with personalities as in themselves supremely valuable, and conceives the "beloved community" in terms of their free cooperation and the social hope of the kingdom of God the crowning evidence of their faith and loyalty.

Chapter 3: The Idea of Right and Wrong

There were three main limitations on early Hebrew morals: the field of ethical obligation was tribally constricted; within the tribal circle certain classes were denied full personal rights; and the nature of moral conduct was interpreted in such external terms of custom and ritual as to make small demand on internal insight and quality. The progress made, therefore, in the later stages of the Old Testament, in the inter-Testamental period, and in the New Testament, may be interpreted as the overpassing of these three inadequacies. The thought expressed here is adverse to those who claim apocalypticism as the real creator of the new Testament’s ethic.

Chapter 4: The Idea of Suffering

All concepts of suffering found in the Old Testament are also found in the New Testament. Both saw that some human pain and torment are punitive, that some trouble is disciplinary was taken for granted, that in one way or another the cosmic process should not in the end be ethically unsatisfactory, that the whole experience of suffering remained mysterious, but that the climactic element in the New Testament’s contribution to the understanding of suffering is to be found in its treatment of vicarious self-sacrifice.

Chapter 5: The Idea of Fellowship with God The idea of the fellowship with God (prayer) development from the unapproachableness to the immediate accessibility of God, and from magical and ceremonial conditions of divine fellowship to the moral fitness of a sincere soul, represents one of the most permanently valuable contributions of Hebrew-Christian religion.

Chapter 6: The Idea of Immortality In the Old Testament even the references to life after death are few; in the New Testament from the beginning the reader is in an atmosphere of radiant hope concerning life eternal. Considered as a whole, the development of ideas in the Bible concerning the future life represents one of the most notable and influential unfoldings of thought in history.

Approximate Chronology of the Old Testament Writings Approximate Chronology of the New Testament Writings

Chapter 2

01.000. Introduction

Introduction

One major result of the last half-century of Biblical scholarship is ability to arrange the documents of Scripture in their approximately chronological order. The typical questions asked by scholars concerning Biblical writings -- Who wrote them? When, to whom, and why were they written? -- while still presenting many baffling difficulties, have been answered sufficiently to clarify the broad outlines of the Bible's chronological development. An important result of thus seeing the Biblical writings in sequence is ability to study the development of Biblical ideas. Upon this problem some of the best scholarly work in recent years has been expended. Seen as informed students now regard it, the Bible is the record of an incalculably influential development of religious thought and life, extending from the primitive faith of early Hebraism into the Christianity of the second century. Such a bald statement, however, does scant justice to the illumination which has thus fallen on the Jewish-Christian writings. The first results of critical research into the Bible seemed disruptive, tearing the once unified Book into many disparate and often contradictory documents. The final result has turned out to be constructive, putting the Bible together again, not indeed on the old basis of a level, infallible inspiration, but on the factually demonstrable basis of a coherent development. The Scriptures reflect some twelve centuries and more of deepening and enlarging spiritual experience and insight, in the written record of which nothing is without significance, and everything is illumined by its genetic relationships. In general, this view of the Scriptures has become the common property of the well-informed, but it still remains, in many minds, a mere framework without substantial content. That the Bible is the record of centuries of religious change, that its early concepts are allied with primitive, animistic faiths, that between such origins and the messages of Hebrew prophets and Christian evangelists an immensely important development is reflected in the Book -- this general view is the familiar possession of many in both synagogue and church. All too few, however, have any clear and specific conception of the ways in which the Biblical ideas unfolded from their beginnings until they became one of the most potent influences in Western culture.

One reason for this situation is that scholars, who know the fascinating story of the development of Biblical ideas, have commonly written of it in technical terms, so that while the average minister, the intelligent layman, and the college student may know by hearsay the outline of their findings, the books where the substance of the matter lies are often too recondite for general reading. Yet the story of developing Scriptural ideas ought to be popularly known. It is fascinating in itself; it throws light on every portion of the Bible; it clears up obscurities, explaining what is else inexplicable; it distinguishes the minor detours from the major highways of Biblical thought; it gives their true value to primitive concepts, the early, blazed trails leading out to great issues; and, in the end, it makes of the Bible a coherent whole, understood, as everything has to be understood, in terms of its origins and growth. This illuminating outlook on the Scriptures ought somehow to be made a more available possession than it is for the general reader. This present book is written neither by a technical scholar nor for scholars. It is written for the interested student and

endeavors to build a bridge over which available information concerning developing Biblical ideas may pass into the possession of a larger public. To be sure, no device can translate so weighty a matter into light and casual reading. The subject is serious and, at its simplest, requires serious consideration. Nevertheless, with the Bible still the world's "best-seller," there must be many whose reading of it would gain meaning and interest if the knowledge possessed by the expertly informed were more easily at their disposal.

Readers unaccustomed to think of the Biblical literature in terms of its chronological development are advised to consult the approximate dating of the documents presented in the Appendix. (Ed. -- See Chronology File) The unsolved problems in this realm are many and in some cases wide variations exist between the estimates of different scholars, but the main outline seems dependable as a basis for so general a statement as we are here attempting. Since the chronological arrangement of the Biblical writings is fundamental to this book's discussion, two thorough and readable treatments of the matter are specially recommended: The Literature of the Old Testament in Its Historical Development, by Julius A. Bewer, and The Literature of the New Testament, by Ernest Findlay Scott, both published by the Columbia University Press. In trying to achieve the object we have just described, two major methods have been used in this book.

First, six main strands of developing thought have been, so far as possible, disentangled from their mutual complications, and have been separately presented. The ideas of God, Man, Right and Wrong, Suffering, Fellowship with God, and Immortality have been traced, each by itself, as each progresses through the two Testaments. The alternative method, often used by scholars, considers one epoch of Biblical religion at a time, presenting the entire complex of ideas which characterized that era, and then moves on to study the next succeeding epoch as a whole. For the general reader, however, this method adds the confusion of complexity to the natural difficulties of the subject. I have hoped that, by driving six separate roadways through Scripture, clarity might be gained without serious sacrifice of balance and proportion, and that the very fact of repetition, as each roadway inevitably brings the traveler within sight of familiar scenes common to all six, would help rather than hinder comprehension.

Second, these lines of developing thought have been traced, one at a time, through both Testaments. The specialization of surgeons, who will not invade one another's domain, is hardly more precise than is the specialization of Biblical scholars. In particular, the Old Testament, the inter-Testamental writings, and the New Testament, represent areas of well defined and highly differentiated expertness. The result is that while the general reader may find available the story of developing thought in one era, or in the Old Testament, or in the New Testament, no first-rate scholar has written or would be likely to write a book carrying the course of thought through the Bible as a whole. Only some one with no reputation for original scholarship to maintain, free to avail himself of any scholar's work, professing only a transmissive and interpretive function, and interested not in moot details but in general results, would have the hardihood to undertake the task. Having, therefore, lived for years with Biblical scholars as my friends and colleagues and in the classroom having dealt with students, trying to gain a coherent and usable understanding of the Bible for practical purposes, I have dared the attempt to put together developments of ideas which the separate Biblical disciplines leave apart. I am under no illusion as to the adequacy of the result. This book is now published only after two of my colleagues, Professor Julius A. Bewer and Professor James E. Frame, one an authority on the Old Testament and the other on the New,

have read the manuscript with painstaking care. I may not hold them responsible for any opinion expressed in this book, but to their criticism and guidance I am unpayably indebted and only because of it dare hope that I have presented without undue distortion or prejudice a picture of the major trends of thought in the Jewish-Christian scriptures. In writing the book I have constantly encountered four difficulties, and since the author has been acutely aware of them they will probably be visible to the observant reader -- oversimplification, inadequate exposition, the chronological fallacy, and modernization.

Over-simplification is inevitable in the very process of selective attention involved in the method of this book. To disentangle from its many complications the idea of God, for example, and to follow through from early Hebraism to second-century Christianity this idea's progress, while it makes the story more easily understandable, obscures the actual confusion of cross-currents, back-eddies, stagnant shallows, whirlpools, rapids, and cataracts present in history itself. It tends toward over-clarifying the picture and, in the end, it may even draw a diagram, rather than reproduce in the reader's imagination the total struggle involved in the working out of Biblical ideas. Of this danger I have been constantly aware and have endeavored to guard against it. If the reader will do the same, he may avail himself of such simplification as has been achieved, without too serious loss of historic realism.

Inadequate exposition of the matured convictions of Scripture is also necessarily involved in the purpose and method of this book. Its major interest is not expository but genetic; it tries to trace the highroads traversed by Biblical ideas from their origin to their culmination; when they have reached their culmination it makes no endeavor to give a systematic and adequate exposition of them. It is not primarily a book on Biblical theology but a genetic survey of developing Biblical thought. To be sure, if the reader shares at all the author's experience, he will find that clear light is shed on the mature convictions of Judaism and Christianity by such a study of their origins and growth. To know where Scriptural doctrines came from is in itself an indispensable help in understanding what they mean. Nevertheless, if the reader wishes an adequate theological treatment of such a theme as Biblical monotheism, he should look elsewhere, here he will find only the story of the way in which Biblical monotheism emerged from early origins. The chronological fallacy haunts such a study as this and is difficult to avoid. The very fact that six historically influential ideas are presented in terms of development, with their later formulations on an altitude immeasurably higher than the lowlands from which they came, may produce the illusion of constant ascent, as though being posterior in time always meant being superior in quality. But truth and chronology are incommensurable terms. A poet writing in the twentieth century A.D. may be a puny figure compared with the titanic stature of a Greek dramatist five centuries before Christ, and ethical insight cannot be graded on the basis of the calendar. The fact that one Biblical book is later in time than another is in itself not the slightest indication that it is superior in quality -- Nahum is on a much lower spiritual level than Amos, and the Book of Revelation in the New Testament is morally inferior to the writings of the Great Isaiah in the Old Testament. Of this fact the reader is continually reminded in this book, and no statement, I think, denies or neglects it. I have tried to make plain the retrogressions in Biblical thought, the irregularities of change, with its ups and downs, its persistent lags, and its moral surrenders. There is no smooth and even ascent in the Book. There are, instead, long detours, recrudescences of primitivism, lost ethical gains, and lapses in spiritual insight. There are even vehement denials of nascent truth, and high visions that

go neglected for centuries. At this point I am solicitous that my desire for clarity in tracing development may not beguile any reader into the illusions of the chronological fallacy.

Modernization dogs the footsteps of any one who endeavors to make ancient developments of thought live for contemporary readers. By subtle, unnoticed gradations the presentation of old patterns of thinking slips over into twentieth-century categories and phrases. The more one perceives in ancient literature, whether of Judea or Greece, values of permanent validity, the more one tends to lift them out of their original frameworks of concept and present them in modern terms and ways of thinking. But ‘corporate personality,’ demonology, Messiahship, apocalypticism, the Logos-doctrine, and many other mental categories in the Bible are not modern. It requires a difficult thrust of historic imagination to understand at all what they meant to their original users. It may be comforting to translate them into present-day equivalents but that always involves an historic fallacy. This difficulty is everywhere present in this book and I wish the reader to be aware of it. I have honestly tried never to picture an ancient way of conceiving facts as though it were identical with modern thinking, but always to portray the Biblical writers as using their own mental forms of thought in their own way, however diverse from ours those forms may be. Such is the difficulty involved, however, in making modern language serve this purpose that in this regard the coöperation of the reader is imperative. The implications of this book with regard to theories about the Bible are not discussed in the text. Obviously, any idea of inspiration which implies equal value in the teachings of Scripture, or inerrancy in its statements, or conclusive infallibility in its ideas, is irreconcilable with such facts as this book presents. The inspirations of God fortunately have not been thus stereotyped and mechanical. There is, however, nothing in the process of development itself, whether in the organic world in general or in the realm of mind and morals, to call in question the creative and directive activity of God.

Needless to say, the author is a theist. The process of spiritual development reflected in the Bible seems to him to involve not only human discovery but divine self-disclosure. Indeed, the unfolding of ideas which the Scripture records would represent not so much discovery as illusion, were there not an objective spiritual world to be discovered. Any one, therefore, holding a religious rather than a materialistic philosophy, will think of the process of Biblical development as dual -- seen from one side, a human achievement; seen from the other, a divine self-revelation.

Nevertheless, there is no finality about it in the sense that the ideas which the Scriptures opened up were finished when the Scriptures stopped. Neither Judaism nor Christianity, despite their theories, has in practise succeeded in so treating the Book. Every one of the six lines of unfolding thought traced in this volume has had a long subsequent history of continuing development, and the end is not yet in sight. The God of the Bible has proved his quality as "the living God," who has not said his last word on any subject or put the finishing touch on any task. The supreme contribution of the Bible is not that it finished anything but that it started something. Its thinking is not so much a product as a process, issuing from a long precedent process and inaugurating an immeasurably important subsequent development. To be sure, as Copernicus achieved a finality in establishing a heliocentric universe, so the Bible represents final gains in thought and insight -- apprehensions of truth which, once laid hold on, need not be discovered all over again. The real glory of Copernicus, however, is revealed not so much in what he finished as in what he started -- initiating an insight of incalculable future promise, which modern astronomy is unfolding yet. So, the finalties of Scripture are mainly important because they are germinative. They are

misinterpreted and misused when employed to stop further development rather than to encourage it. One reason for such a study as this book presents is that one cannot understand Western thought in any era, or our own thought in this modern age, without knowing the Biblical origins of our ideas in religion and morals.

It would be less than the truth, however, if the author's interest in writing the book were represented as merely the desire to explain ideologies. I have faithfully tried to present an objective, factual picture of unfolding Biblical thought, but it will doubtless be evident that the central ideas of Scripture, in whatever changing categories they may be phrased, seem to me the hope of man's individual and social life.

One major problem in writing this book has been the difficulty of deciding when to quote the Scriptures fully in the text and when merely to refer to them in the footnotes. I have used such judgment as I possess in this matter, but obviously much of the Biblical evidence that confirms and illumines the statements made is concealed in the unquoted Scriptural references. No one, therefore, can read the book thoroughly who does not read it with a Bible at hand for constant consultation. Except when otherwise indicated, the American Standard Edition of the Revised Bible is used, save that 'Jehovah' is replaced by the more correct form, 'Yahweh.' That I am at every point indebted to the work of others is evident in the text, and in major matters this has been made explicit in the footnotes. The larger field of the book's indebtedness is indicated in the appended bibliography. As to obligations of a more personal nature I have many people to thank -- colleagues who have advised me, students at Union Theological Seminary who have stimulated me with their responsive interest, members of the congregation of The Riverside Church, New York, who, by their attentive listening to mid-week lectures on the subjects handled in this book, have kept alive my confidence that even difficult and recondite problems concerning the Bible are of vital, contemporary importance. Nor would it be fair to publish this book without acknowledging my debt to the tireless patience of my secretaries, and especially to the painstaking care of Miss Margaret Renton in correcting and preparing the manuscript.

Harry Emerson Fosdick, June 30, 1938

01.01. The Idea of God

Chapter 1: The Idea of God

Nowhere do the early documents of the Bible more obviously carry us back to the ideas of primitive religion than in dealing with the concept of God. The first chapter of Genesis reveals a confident monotheism, but that represents centuries of developing life and thought from the time the Hebrews were introduced at Sinai to their god, Yahweh. At the beginning, the distinctive deity of the Hebrews was a tribal divinity to whom the clans of Joseph first gave their allegiance at the time of the Exodus from Egypt. That previously the Israelites had not known their god, Yahweh, by his name is explicitly stated in the Bible: "God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am Yahweh: and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, as El Shaddai; but by my name Yahweh I was not known to them." (Exodus 6:2-3 [marginal reading]. The meaning of El Shaddai is dubious, and "God Almighty" a very questionable rendering.) This passage appears in the late Priestly Document and all the more because of that the probabilities favor its truth. Without a solid basis in historic fact, such a delayed beginning of Yahweh's worship would not have been invented by succeeding generations. The natural tendency of loyal devotees would be to carry back the name of their god to their most ancient patriarchal legends and to confirm his worship with the sanctions of antiquity. So, one story in Genesis, referring to the days of Seth, son of Adam, says, "Then began men to call upon the name of Yahweh." (Genesis 4:26) The statement in Exodus is more convincing than this contradictory account in Genesis, not only because of intrinsic probability but because the evidence available in the Bible clearly indicates that it was in connection with the Exodus from Egypt that Yahweh first became god of the tribes of Israel. Although, centuries afterward, the name Yahweh was commonly put upon the lips of ancestral heroes and patriarchs and was used even in the narrative of man's creation in Eden, the bona fide historic fact was too firmly set to be eliminated -- at the Exodus, for the first time, Yahweh and Israel had met and sworn mutual allegiance. The Ephraimite Document of narratives, for example, carefully avoids the name Yahweh in all the early stories until the Exodus is reached and then warns the people to "put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River [Euphrates], and in Egypt; and serve ye Yahweh.'' (Joshua 24:14.). Commonly also in the prophets, the beginning of Yahweh's relationship with Israel is associated with the Exodus, as when Hosea twice represents the deity as saying, "I am Yahweh thy God from the land of Egypt," (Hosea 12:19; Hosea 13:4) or Jeremiah places Yahweh's espousal of his people in the Mosaic period, (Jeremiah 2:1-2.) or Ezekiel represents God as calling Moses' generation "the day when I chose Israel." (Ezekiel 20:5.)

According to the available evidence, Moses first came upon Yahweh at "the mountain of God," (Exodus 3:1 ff.) called both Sinai and Horeb. (Horeb and Sinai are presumably different names for the same mountain variously located. Horeb may be the more primitive. See W. J. Phythian-Adams: The Call of Israel, pp. 131-133.) Like Zeus upon Olympus and many another primitive deity, Yahweh, at the first, was a mountain god. Indeed, he was so confined to his habitat that, when the tribesmen under Moses left Sinai the problem of believing in Yahweh's continuing

presence with them was serious. According to the oldest traditions they did not suppose Yahweh himself would go with them -- he was attached to his mountain home. Three times it is explicitly stated that not he but his angel was to accompany them on the journey to Canaan. (Exodus 23:20-23; Exodus 32:34; Exodus 33:1-3.) For centuries this special attachment of Yahweh to his wilderness mountain remained vivid in the imagination of his devotees. When Deborah won a victory far north in Palestine, she still pictured Yahweh as coming in thunderous power from Sinai to his people's help. (Judges 5:4-5) When Elijah, dismayed by the apostasy of Israel, wished to stand in the very presence of his deity, he fled to "Horeb the mount of God." (1 Kings 19:8.) Deuteronomy and Habakkuk, in the seventh century B.C., still kept in their symbolism the old picture of Yahweh coming from Sinai; (Deuteronomy 33:2; Habakkuk 3:3.) and a post-Exilic psalmist thought of God and Sinai together. (Psalms 68:7-8.) As for the train of events which led to the momentous introduction of Israel to Yahweh at the "mountain of God," the probabilities are strong. Moses, fleeing from Egypt to the wilderness, joined himself to the Kenites, a Midianite tribe of nomads living in the desert about Sinai. Into this tribe Moses married. His father-in-law was its religious head, "the priest of Midian," (Exodus 3:1.) and Moses, associating himself with his wife's clan, became a devotee of Yahweh, the Kenite god. In such an incident as is presented in Exodus 18:1-12, revealing the pride of Jethro, priest of Yahweh, in the conquests of his tribal deity, this "Kenite hypothesis" seems to fit the facts.

Far down the course of Hebrew history, the Kenites continued to appear as uncompromising devotees of Yahweh. They associated themselves with the tribes of Israel and, settling in southern Canaan, continued there on the edge of the wilderness a semi-nomadic life. (Judges 1:16.) Jael, a Kenite woman and a worshiper of Yahweh, smote Sisera; (Judges 5:24-27.) the son of Rechab, a Kenite, supported Jehu in the bloody revolt of Yahweh's devotees against the apostasies of Ahab; (2 Kings 10:15-18[cf. 1 Chronicles 2:55.]) and even in Jeremiah's time, the Rechabites, driven from their ancient nomadic ways by guerilla warfare, could in Jerusalem be used to shame the Hebrews by their uncompromising devotion to the laws of their fathers. (Jeremiah 35:1-19.) This Kenite hypothesis may be modified in detail as new evidence becomes available, (see Theophile James Meek: Hebrew Origins, pp. 86 ff.) but its core of truth seems solid and dependable. Interpreted in terms of it, the scene at Sinai gains substance and clarity. Moses, himself a convert to the worship of Yahweh, led his fellow tribesmen from their bondage and at the "mountain of God" converted them to the same allegiance. There Yahweh and the tribes from Egypt were wedded with mutual exchange of vows. The tribal deity of the Kenites took a new people as his own and a confederation of clans that never before had served Yahweh swore fealty to him as their divinity. To be sure, Yahweh was not a new god; at least the Kenites had been acquainted with him; the Judean Document, which scholars call "J," in its final form holds that the fathers had known him, and he may have been a deity of the tribe of Judah. (Exodus 3:16-18.) Even a more ancient and extensive history may have been his. "We find," says Lods, "in cuneiform documents of the pre-Mosaic age, a great number of personal names compounded with the syllables ya,yau, yami (or yawe), and even jahveh." (Adolphe Lods: Israel from its Beginnings to the Middle of the Eighth Century, translated by S. H. Hooke, p. 320.) Some, therefore, think that this god to whom Moses introduced the tribes from Egypt while new to them as their tribal deity, was not a stranger in the traditions of their race. This, however, does not affect the crucial fact, from which the subsequent development of Israel's religion proceeds, that the distinctive faith of the Hebrews began with the covenant between them and a deity new to their allegiance. Moreover, this

relationship was not determined by mere chance of locality in accordance with which a static people naturally served the god of their territory, but was an alliance voluntarily assumed by migrating tribes. Yahweh was conceived as graciously choosing a new people and the people were conceived as deliberately accepting a new god.

Thus to emphasize the fresh start initiated by the creative influence of Moses need not involve forgetfulness of the ancestral background. Religion among the Semites had had a rich history before Moses, and he and his people were the inheritors of a long and significant tradition. Doubt of Abraham's personal existence, for example, once prevalent, is surrendering to an increasing confidence in the Biblical accounts of his migration from "Ur of the Chaldees." (See Stephen L, Caiger: Bible and Spade, pp. 30 ff.) New in name, therefore, Yahweh may have been old in meaning, and into Moses' creative faith doubtless went long accumulating ideas and attitudes from his ancestral heritage. Substantial truth may lie in the Scripture's verbal anachronism which represents Yahweh as saying: "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." (Exodus 3:6, Exodus 3:15-16; Exodus 4:5.)

II Some of the major characteristics of Yahweh, the mountain god of Sinai, stand out plainly in the narrative.

1. He was a storm god, associated with violent exhibitions of nature's power. According to the written tradition, the first experiences that the liberated clans from Egypt had with him at Sinai were accompanied by thunderings and lightnings and the mountain's smoking -- "the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly." (Exodus 19:18; Genesis 20:18.) This suggests a volcano, and Sinai may have been that or legend may have exaggerated such storms of thunder and lightning as still occur about the huge granite massif of the traditional Sinai, with mist pouring up like smoke from its flanks. At any rate, as is true among all early peoples, from the beginning till far down the course of Hebrew thought, thunder and lightning were regarded as special exhibitions of superhuman power.

They that strive with Yahweh shall be broken to pieces Against them will he thunder in heaven (1 Samuel 2:10) -- so sang the devotees of Sinai's god long after they were in Pales- tine, and in specific cases they attributed victory to the interposition of his thunderbolts -- "Yahweh thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them." (1 Samuel 7:10.) When Yahweh came from Sinai to Deborah's help, he was pictured riding the storm, (Judges 5:4.) and even a psalmist saw the help of the Lord when he "thundered in the heavens," hurled "hailstones and coals of fire" and, like arrows, sent out his "lightnings manifold." (Psalms 18:13-14)

It is impossible to tell when the idea that in thunder "the Most High uttered his voice" and in lightning shot his arrows (Ibid.) ceased being literal and became symbolic. The story of Elijah's sacrifice on Carmel with Yahweh sending down his lightning to burn the altar and its offering (1 Kings 18:38.) is literal enough. Certainly at the first, the deity of Sinai was a god of storm.

2. Even more significantly, he was a god of war, battling for his people and leading them to victory. The ascription in the so-called Song of Moses, Yahweh is a man of war:

Yahweh is his name, (Exodus 15:3.) is typical of the earliest traditions. Concerning the triumph of Joshua on the day when "the sun stood still," we read, "Yahweh fought for Israel"; (Joshua 10:13-14.) David defied Goliath, crying, "I come to thee in the name of Yahweh of hosts, the God

of the armies of Israel"; (1 Samuel 17:45.) and even a psalmist wrote, He teacheth my hands to war; So that mine arms do bend a bow of brass. (Psalms 18:34.)

Indeed, one compiler quotes from a book no longer extant, "the book of the Wars of Yahweh.'' (Numbers 21:14.)

Any god, vitally believed in at any time, is conceived as the backer of man's necessary enterprises. So the early Hebrews, whose most constant activity, next to sustaining life by labor, was war, needed a "Lord of hosts," a superhuman leader of armies, and Yahweh met that need. When camp was broken and the Ark was lifted, they cried, "Rise up, O Yahweh, and let thine enemies be scattered." (Numbers 10:35.) When the captured Ark was carried into the Philistine towns, the Israelite chronicler delighted to picture the Philistines' fear as they cried: "God is come into the camp.... Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty gods?" (1 Samuel 4:7-8.) This interpretation of Yahweh's most sacred palladium, the Ark, was of one piece with the people's interpretation of Yahweh's most necessary function as their fighting chief. As another has put it, the Ark was "at one and the same time the primitive sanctuary and the battle standard." (H. Wheeler Robinson: The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament, p. 56.) A storm god, dwelling on a mountain, whose major activity was war -- such was the beginning of the development of the Jewish-Christian idea of God.

3. Involved in such a beginning is the further fact that Yahweh was a tribal god. That he loved Israel and graciously entered into covenant with his chosen people, far from implying love and grace in other relationships, involved vehement hatred of Israel's enemies. An integral part of Yahweh's covenant with Israel was his declaration, "I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries." (Exodus 23:22.) Indeed, Yahweh was represented as outdoing Israel in sustained and lethal hatred against non-Israelites, as, for example, the Canaanites -- "It was of Yahweh to harden their hearts, to come against Israel in battle, that he might utterly destroy them, that they might have no favor, but that he might destroy them." (Joshua 11:20.) This capacity in Yahweh for prolonged and violent hatred of Israel's foes is set down in the record with unashamed emphasis, whether in the traditions of the wilderness, where "Yahweh will have war with Amalek from generation to generation," (Exodus 17:16) or in the early days of the kingdom in Palestine, when Yahweh commanded Saul to "go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.'' (1 Samuel 15:33.) This god of war, with his relentless hatred of his people's enemies, was even supposed to be pleased by the sacrifice of prisoners taken in battle. In the history of primitive religions this form of human sacrifice is familiar. "It was also the custom from very early times," says Lods, "to slay adults, especially prisoners of war and criminals, with rites more or less resembling those of sacrifice. Among the pagan Arabs, captives were slain under every form of sacrifice.... Long after the slaughter of prisoners had become a purely secular act in Arabia, the term hadij, sacrificed, still denoted the slain captive. Similarly, the Carthaginians, after the defeat of Agathocles in 307 B.C., slew the prisoners of rank 'before the altar, in front of the sacred tent.'" (Adolph Lods: Israel From its Beginning to the Middle of the Eighth Century, translated by S. H. Hooke, p.287) The wonder is not that this practise obtained but that it is so seldom evident in the Hebrew records that it existed, however, is plain from an indubitable instance when Samuel, angry at the reservation of the Amalekite king from the general massacre, "hewed Agag in pieces before Yahweh in Gilgal." (1 Samuel 15:33.) In many passages, moreover,

this same usage is indicated, when the meaning of the English Version's words 'utterly destroy' is correctly given in the margin as 'devote.' That is, when "they smote the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath, and utterly destroyed it," (Judges 1:17.) what they really did was to 'devote' it to Yahweh. So Mesha, King of Moab, completely wrecking a town and killing its male inhabitants, said, "I slew all the men of the city for a spectacle to Chemosh" (The Mesha Stone II, 11-12, See Lods: op. cit., p. 288.) -- the Moabite god. Under this innocent translation in our English Versions, therefore, where 'utterly destroy' is substituted for 'devote,' there lies an idea of deity rejoicing in the human sacrifice of his people's foes. As the story in Numbers 21:1-3 reveals, one way to secure Yahweh's help in battle, so Israel believed, was to promise him the complete 'devotion, of all captured property and persons. So jealous was the god thought to be of this 'devoted'loot that when, as at Jericho, tabooed property was secreted, his wrath was ruinous, (Joshua 7:1-26) or when, as late as the ninth century, Ahab spared the life of the captured king of Syria, Yahweh was pictured as saying, "Because thou hast let go out of thy hand the man whom I had devoted to destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life.'' (1 Kings 20:42.) The long-drawn-out story of the Jewish-Christian endeavor to outgrow nationalism in theology as well as in practise began in this belligerent and ruthless tribalism of Israel's primitive war god.

4. Involved in this early idea of Yahweh was, of course, anthropomorphism. At first he was pictured with frank physical realism. It is difficult to determine when the ascription to him of hands, feet, face, eyes, ears, and nose, passes over into symbolism, but such expressions have behind them, as the records show, a thoroughly anthropomorphic idea of deity. He walked in the Garden of Eden in the cool of the day and talked familiarly with Adam; (Genesis 3:1-24) he ate and conversed with Abraham; (Genesis 18:1 ff.) he wrestled with Jacob so that the patriarch said, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." (Genesis 32:24-30.) The origins of the sacrificial system in Israel, as elsewhere, imply this physical realism in the thought of deity. Back of more sophisticated meanings, which later were seen in the temple sacrifices, and more rarefied interpretations of the effect of ritual offerings on Yahweh, was the idea of the communal meal where deity and people shared the same feast and the god of the tribe enjoyed with his devotees their sacrificial food. This is explicitly stated and indirectly implied in many passages of the Old Testament. The fat and blood of the sacrifices were reserved for Yahweh; they were his portion of the feast. At first they were rubbed upon the sacred stone or altar; later, when offerings of fat were made by fire, Yahweh partook of them only through the sense of smell -- "the priest shall burn them upon the altar: it is the food of the offering made by fire, for a sweet savor; all the fat is Yahweh's.'' (Leviticus 3:16.) The age-long persistence of outward forms of animal sacrifice along with profound changes in the interpretation of their meaning presents one of the commonest phenomena of religious history -- preservation of custom accompanied by alteration of theory. At the origin of food offerings to the god was the primitive idea that the god shared the enjoyment of them. This physical participation of Yahweh in the sacrifices was plainly implied in the prophetic reaction against such anthropomorphism. No explanation of the specific points selected by the prophets for attack seems probable except that those points constituted a continuing danger to the spiritual idea of the divine nature. When, therefore, Isaiah's Yahweh scorned "the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts,'' (Isaiah 1:11.) or the psalmist's Yahweh cried, Will I eat the flesh of bulls, Or drink the blood of goats? (Psalms 50:13.) we have not only an emphatic insistence that God is not the kind of being who partakes of physical food, but also a clear indication that the popular view, against which this protest was being made, held the contrary.

Moreover, the sublimation of actual eating and drinking into smelling the offerings was probably an endeavor to rarefy the more gross conception of the god, and it revealed in the background the primitive ideas it sought to overpass. The Deluge Tablet of Babylonia says concerning the sacrifice after the Flood: The gods smelled the odor, The gods smelled the sweet odor. The gods gathered like flies around the sacrificer. (As quoted by Morris Jastrow; Hebrew and Babylon Traditions, p. 332.) The Hebrew rendition of the same story chastens the details but retains the anthropomorphism -- "Yahweh smelled the sweet savor." (Genesis 8:21.) From being food for Yahweh's eating, sacrifice thus became what Deuteronomy called "incense in thy nostrils,"Deuteronomy and so literally was this conceived that against it also the prophets launched their protest. Isaiah's Yahweh cried, "Incense is an abomination unto me," (Isaiah 1:13.) and Amos' Yahweh declared, "I will not smell a savor in your solemn assemblies." (Amos 5:21 (marginal translation). The early narratives concerning the Sinaitic deity to whom Moses introduced Israel are outspoken in their anthropomorphism. Apart from details which are probably symbolic, such as Yahweh's writing the original tables of the law with his own finger, (Exodus 31:18 Cf. The Rosetta Stone, where hierglyphics are called "the writing of divine words, written by the god Thoth himself.") we have a physical vision of Yahweh by Moses, which must have originated in a primitive story of a man seeing his god. "Yahweh said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon the rock: and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand until I have passed by: and I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back; but my face shall not be seen." (Exodus 33:21-23)

One of the notable achievements of later Judaism was the abolition of idolatry -- the complete suppression of all pictorial and plastic representations of Yahweh and all images of man or beast associated with his worship. This, however, was not the primitive beginning. Even the later rewriting of the records, pushing back the command against images into the law of Moses and denying in every way the allowance of idols, did not destroy the plain evidence of Yahweh's physical representation in the early days. Micah, the Ephraimite, had an image of Yahweh; (Judges 17:3-4) Gideon made one out of captured gold; (Judges 8:24-27) the teraphim were household gods, human enough in appearance to supply David with a substitute when he fled from his foes; (1 Samuel 19:12-16[cf. Genesis 31:17-35])and, indeed, so customary were "graven images" that while early protests were made, as in the law of Exodus, "Thou shalt make thee no molten gods," (Exodus 34:17.) and in the story of the golden calf, (Exodus 32:1 ff.) probably dating from the time of Jeroboam's apostasy, the first prophet plainly to take his stand against them was Hosea, in the eighth century. (Hosea 11:2; Hosea 8:4-6. See Asolphe Lods: "Images and Idols, Hebrew and Canaanite," III, 2, in Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, edited by J. Hastings.) The inevitable companion of anthropomorphism was anthropopathism, ascribing human emotions to the god. Hatred, jealousy, vindictiveness, disappointment at unforeseen events, regret for mistaken decisions -- the common characteristic attitudes of man at his worst, as well as at his best, were attributed to the god. At the beginning, therefore, the god of the Bible was a person, physically embodied although superhumanly powerful, who could conceivably be seen, who in the earliest strata of the Scripture walked, talked, wrestled, dined, and smelled, and who shared with man a wide gamut of good and bad emotions.

III

One of the most important occasions of change in Israel's idea of Yahweh came when this primitive mountain god became the territorial deity of the land of Canaan. As time went on, Yahweh was detached in the imagination of his people from his exclusive residence on Sinai, and he became acclimated in Canaan as lord of the land. In this process, according to the finished tradition, the Ark -- a sacred coffer whose attendance with the wandering tribes was understood to involve either the real or deputed presence of Yahweh -- played a significant part. While, at the first, it was his angel rather than himself who went with the migrant clans, the shading between Yahweh and his angel in the early documents is so vague that in the same story both forms of representation may be used. (Genesis 16:7-14; Genesis 21:17-19.) So, as the Biblical records present the picture, Yahweh, whether in his proper person or by deputy in an angelic representative, traveled with his nomadic devotees, and of his abiding presence the Ark was the visible symbol and vehicle. Where the Ark was, he was; when the Ark was not carried into an important enterprise, his guidance and power were absent. (Numbers 14:41-45.) This identification of the Ark with the special presence of Yahweh is repeatedly shown in the narratives, until, as the most sacred palladium of the nation, it was placed in the Holy of Holies of Solomon's temple. When David was bringing it up to his capital, he and the people played and danced "before Yahweh" (2 Samuel 6:2-5, 2 Samuel 6:12-15.) and when on the first stage of its journey a helpful man tried to steady the sacred fetish as it jounced over the rough road, he fell dead because, so they thought, "Yahweh had broken forth upon Uzzah." (2 Samuel 6:6-8.) Whatever may have been the historic facts about the Ark in the wilderness, (See Louis Wallis: God and the Social Process, pp. 107-109; Elmer A. Leslie: Old Testament Religion in the light of its Canaanite Background, pp. 121ff.) the written tradition in the end pictured God as traveling with his people in this sacred chest, and while Sinai for centuries was thought of as his special home, the Ark, whether as history or legend, may well have been a bridge by which in popular imagination Yahweh passed over into Canaan. There, at any rate, he was acclimated and naturalized until Palestine became what Hosea called it, "Yahweh's land." (Hosea 9:3) This process carried with it at least two attendant results.

1. Becoming the god of Israel's land, Yahweh was limited in his sovereignty to the territory of his people. At this stage, not only were tribal deities confined in their goodwill to their own clans but, as well, they were generally imagined as confined in their presence and power to their own lands. The Philistine cities were hardly twenty-five miles from Bethlehem but, when David by Saul's jealousy was forced to take refuge there, he complained, "They have driven me out this day that I should not cleave unto the inheritance of Yahweh, saying, Go, serve other gods." (1 Samuel 26:19.) This idea of Yahweh's available presence as limited to his territory, so that only a few miles away one must worship other deities, constituted the background from which larger ideas of God emerged, and far down in Israel's history its sway was felt. Even a late and nobly international tract, the Book of Jonah recalls it, picturing Jonah as taking ship to another country that he might flee "from the presence of Yahweh." (Jonah 1:3, John 1:10.) In many ways, direct and indirect, this limitation of the Hebrew god to his own geographical demesne is revealed in the early documents of the Bible, as, for example, when Naaman, the Syrian, healed by Elisha, carried "two mules' burden of earth" from Israel's land back to Damascus, that he might have, even in a foreign country, some of Yahweh's soil on which, standing, he could worship the god of Israel. (2 Kings 5:17.) This attachment of a god to his territory obviously involved the recognition of other gods as real and powerful in their own lands. So Jephthah, claiming for Israel what Israel's god had given

her, granted to Moab the right to "possess that which Chemosh thy god giveth thee." (Judges 11:23-24.) The Hebrew records even attribute the retreat of an Israelitish army, which had been successfully invading Moab, to the "great wrath against Israel" that the Moabites aroused, presumably in their god Chemosh, by the human sacrifice of their own crown prince. (2 Kings 3:26-27.)

When, therefore, by choice or necessity one was in other lands one would naturally worship other gods, as David in Philistia felt coerced to do. Even a post-Exilic book, Ruth, pictures its heroine as changing gods when she passed from Moab to Bethlehem, although the two were scarcely thirty miles apart and could be plainly seen, one from the other, across the Jordan gorge "Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." (Ruth 1:16.) As late as Jeremiah's time, exile from the Holy Land was popularly interpreted as forcing the worship of strange deities -- "Therefore will I cast you forth out of this land into the land that ye have not known, neither ye nor your fathers; and there shall ye serve other gods day and night." (Jeremiah 16:13.) As this necessity was laid on Israelites in foreign territories, so, in reverse, foreigners in Palestine fared ill if they failed to worship Yahweh. When the Northern Kingdom fell, in 72I B.C., and the Assyrian monarch settled strangers in Samaria, it was in vain that they brought their own gods with them. "Yahweh sent lions among them," and it was only when a Hebrew priest was furnished to "teach them the law of the god of the land. . . how they should fear Yahweh," that they felt safe. (2 Kings 17:24-33.) This extension of the idea of Yahweh, until, no longer merely or mainly a storm god dwelling on Sinai and furnishing leadership in war, he became the god of the land of Canaan, was one of the first long steps out into new conceptions of deity.

2. Yahweh, becoming the territorial god of Canaan, became of necessity an agricultural deity. This he never had been in the wilderness, where agriculture and its accompanying needs, habits, and ideas did not exist. To pass, as the Hebrews did, from nomadic wanderings to a settled residence, from the exclusive tending of herds to the culture of crops, from tents to villages and walled towns, involved a profound change in the life and thought of the people, and, not least of all, in their religion. This process, the military part of which has been artificially foreshortened in the Biblical story of the conquest of Canaan, was really long- drawn-out and gradual. For generations the Israelites clung, as it were, by their eyebrows to a small section of the hill country of Ephraim amid bitter enemies -- Ammonites and Moabites, to the east; the Philistines invading the seacoast lands to the west; the Amorites still possessing a score of strong towns and the farm lands around them. At first the inveterate prejudice of the nomad against the agriculturist held its ground. Of this stage the legend of Cain and Abel is representative, in which Yahweh is pictured as welcoming the offerings of the herdsman, Abel, and refusing the offerings of the farmer, Cain. (Genesis 4:2-5.) But, after all, the Israelites and the Amorites were cousins; they came alike of Semitic stock; their traditions were rooted in a common soil; the commercial civilization of the Amorites was far more rich, varied, and advanced than that of the rough and virile adventurers under Joshua and his successors, so that, as generations passed, with the two peoples living side by side and the more robust and energetic Israelites gaining increased ascendency, an inevitable process of syncretism went on and the two cultures blended. The Canaanitish baals were gods of agriculture. As the conquering clans of Israel had needed their god chiefly as the "Lord of hosts," so the Canaanites needed their gods to give rain and bestow fertility. Each locality had its baal or baals, and the "high

places," where these ancient deities were worshiped, still have their lineal descendants in Palestine, often doubtless identically situated, in the local shrines of Mohammedan and Christian saints. The Israelites did not so much choose between Yahweh and the baals as blend the worship of Yahweh with the customs of the high places until Yahweh himself became a baal. So, long afterward, Hosea in the name of Yahweh protested: "Thou . . . shalt call me no more Baali.'' (Hosea 2:16.) This process of syncretism was doubtless greatly encouraged when David, in order to conquer the Philistines, substituted alliance with the Amorites for the traditional hostility against them and so built a kingdom which included Yahweh-worshipers and baal-worshipers together. Long before that, however, the baals, as historically established gods of the land, had exercised a profound influence on Hebrew ideas of Yahweh and on methods of worshiping him. At first Yahweh and the baals were so different in function that coördinate loyalty to both was possible. The local baals were the sources of agricultural plenty -- so wide areas of the people still believed when in the eighth century Hosea thundered against the idea (Hosea 2:5-13.) -- while Yahweh was the god of nomadic life and the leader of his clans in battle. This distinction can be pressed too far but it was real. An Israelite, therefore, might retain genuine loyalty to his tribal god, turning to him when his needs were military, and still make sacrifices to the local baal when he wanted rain. This initial division of function, however, could not last; syncretism was inevitable; alike in idea and custom, Yahweh borrowed from the baals and the baals, presumably, from Yahweh. So, in the end, while the Ark may have been the special palladium of the people and the initial pledge of Yahweh's presence, he was so far from being confined to it that he was available throughout his land in the high places where his people worshiped. Indeed, a justification of this was read back into tradition and put upon the lips of Yahweh in his conversation with Moses on Mount Sinai: "In every place where I cause my name to be remembered I will come unto thee and I will bless thee." (Exodus 20:24.) (marginal translation). As soon as this idea of the approachability of Yahweh at the local shrines was well established, the blending of Yahweh and the baals was certain to proceed apace. The powerful hold of Yahweh on the grateful memory and devotion of Israel is, indeed, made evident by the fact that they did not surrender him to the Canaanitish gods of the land, but kept him, added to him the functions, powers, and ceremonies of the baals, until the prophets rose in a desperate and magnificent attempt to conserve the good and eradicate the evil of this perilous syncretism.

Such a process as this is a commonplace in the history of religion. When Christianity moved into northern Europe, the old shrines of the pre-Christian deities, instead of being abolished, were often taken over and absorbed. Where some heathen god had been adored, now the Virgin or a saint was worshiped, and as had happened in Rome itself when the Saturnalia was transformed into the Christmas festival, old customs were given new meanings. "In like manner," says Kautzsch, "among the Arabs, long after the victory of Islam, the local cult of the pre-Islamic gods persisted, partly in the popular usages (forbidden by Islam), partly in some usages incorporated with Islam itself.'' (E. Kautzsch: "Religion of Israel," III, iii, 2, in Hastiness' Dictionary of the Bible, Extra Vol., p. 645.) If this happened in the face of a victory as complete as Islam's over Arabia, how much more would such syncretism take place when, as in Israel's case in Palestine, the Canaanites could not be utterly conquered but, sustained and empowered, so current beliefs would suggest, by their native gods, lived on with the Israelites!

One effect of this syncretism was greatly to enlarge and diversify the functions of Yahweh until, to the faithful Israelite, he became the source of agricultural plenty. Thence arose the agricultural festivals, such as the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Tabernacles, the Feast of Weeks, the Feast of Harvest, whose origin was read back into the Mosaic Law but whose existence could have had no meaning until the Israelites were in Canaan. In the end a prophet could ascribe to Yahweh the revelation of all man's knowledge concerning the technique of farming. (Isaiah 28:23-29.)

Nevertheless, the cost of such syncretism was heavy. Yahweh had always been conceived as powerful and ruthless in war -- even brutal from the standpoint of later ideals -- but he had been virile, austere, and chaste. If he had the faults of a war god he also had the virtues -- he was hard and disciplined, an inflexible sponsor of rigorous self-control and of the social solidarity of the nomads. The gods of agriculture, however, have uniformly been licentious. There never failed to exist in Israel a protestant party, holding to the primitive austerity of Yahweh's worship and resisting the encroachments of the new pollutions -- the Rechabites, for example, who would not even dwell in houses or touch wine. (Jeremiah 35:1-10) Moreover, the Israelites on the ridge of Ephraim evidently maintained in their kinship groups many basic nomadic ideas of social justice sponsored by Yahweh and were consciously and even violently at variance with the inequities of Amorite commercialism sponsored by the baals. Nevertheless, when two cultures live so closely together, mutual contagion across all barriers is inevitable and Israel was profoundly affected by ideas and customs associated with the baals. The Hebrews, for example, took over the imitative magic in accordance with which the sexual act, performed at the shrine of the god, was supposed to encourage the soil's fertility. So prostitution and sodomy crept into the worship of Yahweh and were found even in the central temple at Jerusalem as late as the reform of Josiah in the seventh century. (2 Kings 23:7; Hosea 4:13-14.) Here, too, grew up the worship of Yahweh under the likeness of bulls, such as Jeroboam set up at Dan and Bethel. (1 Kings 12:26-29.) The story of Aaron and the golden calf (Exodus 32:1 ff.) in all probability was written in this later age to help withstand the polluting identification of Yahweh's worship with the adoration of bulls.

It is not possible to trace to their origins the many factors which made up Israel's popular religion. The Yahweh tradition was only one strand in a tangled complex where old Semitic inheritances, animistic survivals, and syncretic appropriations were confusedly mingled. Israel's religion was not an individualistic faith but a social culture which affected every hour of every day and penetrated conduct at every point. In it were included curious taboos, (E.g., Exodus 23:19; Leviticus 22:28.) primitive cults such as serpent worship, (2 Kings 18:4.) the use of ordeal in judicial cases, (Numbers 5:11-31.) the power of the curse, (Numbers 22:6.) the employment of magic in battle; (Exodus 17:8-13.) and as for sacred stones, trees, waters, caves, the early records are full of them. Such common factors in primitive religion doubtless came out of Israel's background but Canaan supplied endless opportunity for their application. The Hebrews took over the sacred places, constructed patriarchal legends concerning them, absorbed their customary rituals, and wove them into the complex fabric of Yahweh's faith and worship. And, as the prophets later saw, all this presented two focal points of peril to the best traditions that had come from the desert: it substituted for the old austerity the alluring licentiousness of baal worship, and it sanctioned the commercial inequalities and tyrannies, which the baals of sophisticated Canaan sponsored against the ancient ideas of social solidarity, equality, and justice for which Yahweh stood.

IV No historic imagination can adequately canvass the varied causes and occasions which led to the gradual enlargement and elevation of the Hebrew idea of deity, but some of the process is visible.

1. Yahweh became god of the sky. (E.g., Psalms 2:4; Psalms 11:4; Psalms 103:19 2 Chronicles 6:18.) The very fact that he was a mountain god controlling thunder and lightning would associate him with the sky, and while we are dealing with legend in Jacob's vision of the celestial ladder with Yahweh above it, (Genesis 28:12-13.) and in the story of the tower of Babel, where Yahweh jealously protects from men's invasion his heavenly dwelling, (Genesis 11:1-9.) such representations reveal the extension of Yahweh's sovereignty, far above solitary mountain or earthly territory, to the sky. This idea, at the beginning, doubtless coexisted with earlier and more mundane conceptions; it was thought by a few before it was held by many; it was conceived by many before it became practically operative in their daily religion. At last, however, it occupied the minds and imaginations of the people and tended inevitably toward universalism. A god who, as Psalms 18:1-50 put it, "bowed the heavens" (Psalms 18:9.) was escaping from the limited ideas by which his earlier followers had conceived him.

Indeed, the word Elohim, the ordinary Hebrew name for God, belonging as it does to a large family of Semitic words which spring from the same stem, is thought by some to have denoted originally a sky god. So inevitably is universal dominion suggested by such a concept of deity that some even suspect a kind of primitive Semitic monotheism as a background against which the mass of lesser gods arose. (See Stephen Herbert Langdon: Semitic Mythology, p.93.) In the Bible itself, however, no evidence exists of such original monotheism, nor is any contribution made toward explaining the detailed data of Scripture by supposing it. Moreover, the word Elohim is of dubious origin and meaning; quite probably it denotes not the sky in particular but strength in general; variously translated in our English Versions, it is used in the Bible of household gods, (Judges 17:5; Genesis 31:19, Genesis 31:32.) of supernatural spirits, (1 Samuel 28:13.) even of earthly judges, (Psalms 82:1.) and to build on its higher developments a doctrine of original monotheism is not convincing. Rather, the universality of the "God of heaven" was a long postponed conviction in Israel's thinking. (On fallacy of pre-Mosaic monotheism see Adolphe Lods: Israel from its Beginnings to the Middle of the Eight Century, translated by S.H. Hooke, pp. 253-257; Theophile James Meek: Hebrew Origins, pp. 180 ff.)

2. Along with this elevation of the thought of Yahweh as god of the sky went the even more practical idea that, however geographically bounded he might be within his people's land, he still could display his power outside it. On the basis of Israel's own traditions, both historic and legendary, he long since had operated over all the known world. Had he not given an illustrious exhibition of his power in favor of his people in Egypt? As the written stories of the patriarchs stand in the "J" Document, had he not called Abraham in "Ur of the Chaldees" and dealt intimately with the patriarchs all the way from the Euphrates to the Nile? An earthly king may have his own limited territory and still be able to strike far beyond its boundaries to protect his subjects and assert his majesty. So Yahweh, while the god of the Holy Land, was conceived as possessing ever extended powers, and while this could be roughly harmonized with belief in many gods, it broke through the strictness of the earlier territorial ideas and opened the way to expectations of Yahweh's effective action, anywhere, at any time, as he might please.

3. After kingship was established in Judah and Ephraim, such enlarged ideas were given visible form and practical effect by alliances between princely houses. One of the first results of international royal marriages is to be seen in statements like this: "Then did Solomon build a high place for Chemosh the abomina- tion of Moab, in the mount that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the children of Ammon. And so did he for all his foreign wives, who burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods.'' (1 Kings 11:7-8.) The theological inference implied in such interterritorial worship is clear: gods can be served outside their own domains; they are more or less interlocking in their directorates; if Chemosh, who had been the fierce enemy of Yahweh and his people, can be worshiped on the Mount of Olives, presumably Yahweh can be worshiped in Moab. To be sure, such inferences were not generally drawn. The practise of inter-territorial worship, exhibited by Solomon in Judah or by the house of Omri in Ephraim, far from being used as a proposition from which to draw theological deductions, was abhorred by the vigorous devotees of Yahweh as sacrilege and apostasy. Nevertheless, the practise was there: gods were becoming intermingled across all boundaries; a change in lands did not, at least for royal folk, necessitate a change m deities.

Many more influences, doubtless, than the Biblical records reveal or our insight can recapture played thus on the enlarging conception of Yahweh. Obviously, however, as god of the sky, able to display his power across the known world and conceivably to be worshiped outside his own land, he was on the way toward universal sovereignty. Still he was far from it. At that stage a pious Hebrew was no monotheist. He might be a henotheist -- worshiping one god himself while not doubting the existence of others. Monolatry he might practise but monotheism he had not yet grasped.

Far more important than the influences which we have named in deepening the idea of Yahweh's character was the social conflict involved when the nomadic ethics of Israel faced the commercial civilization of the Amorites. The baals were gods not simply of agriculture but of the economic and social relationships which had developed in the comparatively sophisticated, stratified, commercialized town life of the Amorites. The struggle on the crest of Ephraim's hills, where the Israelites precariously held their ground, was not between two sets of religious ideas in the abstract, but between two economic and social cultures, one sponsored by the baals, the other by Yahweh. On the one side was a stratified society, with a few rich and many poor, with private property in land and water, with money, trade, and credit and the inequalities and tyrannies incident to a commercialized regime - - all this under the ægis of the baals. On the other side was a tribal brotherhood of nomads where, amid the penury of the wilderness, all must be for each and each for all, where land and water were never private but always communal, where none was very rich or very poor, where every one was known to all and the exigencies of desert life forced a rough but sturdy justice. So Doughty speaks of the nomad tribes as "commonwealths of brethren" and says that "in the opinion of the next governed countries, the Arabs of the wilderness are the justest of mortals.'' (Charles M. Doughty: Travels in Arabia Deserta [3d ed., 1925], Vol. I, pp. 345,249.) Of this social solidarity and fraternal fair play among the Israelite tribes Yahweh was the divine patron. A great tradition lies behind the statement in the later law, `'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am Yahweh." (Leviticus 19:18.) The crux of the struggle, therefore, between the Hebrew invaders and the Amorites was indeed between their gods, but between their gods as sanctifying two deeply antagonistic economic and social systems. The translation of economic

class struggle into terms of religious conflict is a familiar phenomenon in history. So Mr. George Henry Soule says of the Puritan revolution in the sixteenth century: "The conflict of religious ideas was indeed important, but it was important not so much because of the abstract significance of these ideas as because they represented the mechanism of attack and defense between economic and social classes who were struggling for power." (The Coming American Revolution, p. 23.) Similarly no one can understand the long conflict between the baals and Yahweh, with its story of attraction and repulsion, assimilation and revulsion, culminating in the prophetic determination, from Elijah on, to tear Yahweh's worship free from baal entanglements, unless one sees, underneath, the fierce hostility between two economic and social cultures. The Amorite lords and nobles -- called baalim like their gods -- hated and feared the equalitarian ideas and practises of the nomads, and the Israelites with similar revulsion despised the city-dominated social order with its private ownership of land and water and its bitter inequalities of station. This conflict, which existed from the first and which accounts for much of the unappeasable hostility, became explicit in the ninth century in a titanic figure, Elijah. (1 Kings 17:1-24, 1 Kings 18:1-46, 1 Kings 19:1-21) Under the royal patronage of Queen Jezebel, Melkart, Baal of Tyre, rose to such prominence and power that the party of Yahweh were in despair and Elijah towered up in protest. The greatest prophetic figure between Moses and Amos, his significance lay in his intense devotion to Yahweh as the god of the old, fair folk-ways of Israel. He himself came from Gilead, east of Jordan, and therefore close to desert life. He found, so we are given to understand, seven thousand in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal, (1 Kings 19:18.) a strong party of Yahweh's devotees, who had refused to be assimilated. They represented the old ideals; they were often, it may be, of semi-nomadic habits; they were reactionaries against the new customs and especially the new luxury and inequality represented by the nobles and the court. Their social protest took form and gained point when a foreign baal, Melkart, was introduced by Jezebel of Tyre. Here was a visible symbol of the social system which they hated. By this time the local baals had been largely absorbed, their agricultural functions had been taken over into a syncretic blend, and Elijah raised no protest against the worship of Yahweh at the high places, such as Carmel. The conflict which he led broke out over a foreign baal, supported by royal authority and symbolizing the entire system of alien customs, selfish luxury, and iniquitous commercialism that threatened not alone Yahweh's worship but Yahweh's social justice. The importance of the economic factor in this protest is apparent in Elijah's sponsorship of Naboth against Ahab. (1 Kings 21:1-29.) The motive power of Elijah lay in the indissoluble blend of his religion with social justice. He stood in vehement opposition to the modern customs, which presumably included the luxurious court, the collapse of old simplicities, the conscription of farmers and shepherds into military service, mounting taxation, the decay of old nomadic ideals of brotherhood. 'Yahweh against baal' was identical in his mind not so much with a theological discussion as with a social revolt. Yahweh stood for justice and brotherhood, against luxury for the few and want for the many, and especially against the iniquitous accretion of oppressive power by which a family heritage like Naboth's could be seized by the king even at the cost of murder. Here we run upon the most significant of all factors in the development of Israel's idea of God, and the ultimate outcome, long afterward, was not simply monotheism but ethical monotheism. That this prophetic idea of Yahweh's character and of his demand for personal and social righteousness was a development and was not to be found in full flower in the original Sinaitic deity as the later legends pictured him, is clear. Yahweh, the mountain storm god, was not ethical in any such sense as was Yahweh, 'Lord' of the prophets. To

be sure, a deeply ethical element existed in the religion of Yahweh from the start, for it was based on the mutually exchanged vows of a voluntary covenant. Yahweh, at first, was, like Chemosh, a mountain god, but a significant fact distinguished them. Chemosh was a natural god to Moab -- the lord and owner of Moabite territory and therefore the inevitable god of any folk who lived there. Yahweh, however, by free selection had of his own grace chosen a people who were strangers to him and they in turn had chosen a god whom hitherto they had not known. It was a religion by marriage rather than by birth, by grace rather than by geography, and, in so far, it was from the beginning moral, involving duties voluntarily assumed. To this basic covenantal relationship the prophets constantly appealed; into its mutual obligations they poured ever new meanings; and at the center of its tradition they had the solid virtues of nomadic life where human ties are close, interdependent and cooperative, where men exist as brothers on a fairly equalitarian level and with a strong democratic sense of personal right. Elijah, therefore, is notably important as a creative influence in the developing idea both of Yahweh's sole supremacy over Israel and of his profoundly ethical character.

VI In theology Elijah represented monolatry -- believing other gods to be existent but recognizing Yahweh as the one and only god for Israel. Monolatry, however, to a vigorous and growing faith is monotheism in the bud, and the gradual flowering out of Israel's idea of God was evident in the eighth-century prophets. Still to Hosea and Amos, Canaan was especially Yahweh's land and other lands were ''unclean.'' (Amos 7:17; Hosea 9:3.) Within Canaan Yahweh was to be worshiped at the high places; not until generations later was prophetic protest made against this custom and an idea of God developed that required one central and exclusive shrine. Still the ceremonial and ethical conflict was on between Yahweh and the baals -- a certain irreducible hostility along with an inevitable syncretism. So Hosea insisted on crediting to Yahweh the agricultural functions which once belonged to the baals, while at the same time he protested against the licentious worship that the baals had sponsored. (Hosea 2:8-9; Hosea 4:12-14.) Out from this old background, however, the first writing prophets can be seen moving, by a road familiar in the history of religion, toward monotheism. The theistic question was asked then in a way far different from ours: it did not concern primarily the origin and maintenance of the universe. The Hebrews had scientific curiosity and, as the first chapter of Genesis reveals, ascribed to their God the creation of the world. Even Amos called Yahweh "him that maketh the Pleiades and Orion." (Amos 5:8.) In the earlier prophets, however, this emphasis was rare. The vivid and imperious question then was: Among the gods of the nations, which god is most real and powerful? Sennacherib's message to the besieged people of Jerusalem touched their theology where it really was when he said: "Beware lest Hezekiah persuade you, saying, Yahweh will deliver us. Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim? and have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? Who are they among all the gods of these countries, that have delivered their country out of my hand, that Yahweh should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?" (Isaiah 36:18-20.) In answering this question about relative power among the deities, the early writing prophets moved out into practical monotheism, for they ascribed to Yahweh the successes and disasters even of their foes, and thought of him as in commanding control of all mankind. So Isaiah's Yahweh addressed the world's most powerful king: "Ho Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, the staff in whose hand is mine indignation!', (Isaiah 10:5.) and, according to Amos, Yahweh directed the migrations not only of Israel from Egypt, but of the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir. (Amos

9:7.) A god whose sovereignty thus includes all men and nations is a god whose rivals will soon cease to seem real.

Moreover, in the prophets of the eighth and seventh centuries, along with this emergence of practical monotheism went an even more astonishing development of moral ideas. Here we are faced with a contribution to human thought easier to admire than to explain. With all available theological and sociological factor in our hands, we still are thrown back in wonder upon the "abysmal depths of personality" in the great prophets. The lowest point in conceiving the moral character of Yahweh is probably to be found in a strange encysted bit of folklore in the Book of Exodus. There Yahweh is pictured as bloodthirstily wanting to kill Moses at a wayside lodging place, for no apparent reason at all, and is dissuaded by Zipporahts swift circumcision of Moses' child, at the sight of which the god "let him alone.'' (Exodus 4:24-26.) The difference between this primitive folklore and the moral dignity and quality of God in the greatest of the pre-Exilic prophets, from Hosea to Jeremiah, represents one of the most significant revelations in human history. To be sure, the prophets lost their battle; they did not succeed m preserving the social Justice of the early nomadic brotherhood. As tyrannical kingship had taken the place of paternal chieftainship and a stratified society based on slave labor had crowded out earlier equality, so the social organization of Israel continued to take form from the patterns of the day. The very sophistications and inequities against which the partisans of Yahweh had vehemently contended became acclimated in Israel. "They covet fields, and seize them; and houses, and take them away: and they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage "(Micah 2:2.) so to the end of the story the prophets fought a losing battle.

Nevertheless they won a war. They successfully prevented the identification of Yahweh with the social and economic inequities of his people. Far from allowing the Hebrew god to become mere sponsor of the Hebrew status quo they associated him with an ethical standard which judged and condemned it. That they were able to do this because the nomadic traditions of their race had come into violent conflict with a more sophisticated civilization, so that, in the name of conservatism, they could appeal to old folk-ways against the new commercialism, does not detract from their credit. They never succeeded in making the old folk-ways regnant in the new civilization but they did succeed, as no other religious teachers of antiquity ever succeeded, in elevating their god above both the nationalistic policies and the economic customs of their people. Yahweh, in their thought, became not merely a nationalistic deity or a divine patron of an existent order, but a moral judge who would throw into the discard even his chosen people if they violated his ethical standards. In this lies one of the main elements of uniqueness in the Old Testament's developing idea of God. The temptation of all believers in any kind of god is to use him as the sanctifier of the status quo. Tribal and nationalistic deities in particular have commonly been associated with the dominant customs and the ruling class, have been regarded as committed to the support of national policies, have become often gods of the powerful rather than of the weak, of the rich rather than of the impoverished, of the existent system rather than of social reformation. Thus was Yahweh conceived in Israel by many a king and priest, by many a member of the land-owning, slave-owning, creditor class, and doubtless also by wide areas of popular opinion. He was thought of as unqualifiedly committed to Israel's support, no matter what Israel might do, and as sanctioning the social system customary at the time. The prophets, however, won a victory of permanent consequence over that idea. Yahweh, as the Old Testament in the end presents him, is

supernationalistic, the judge of nations, unqualifiedly committed to social righteousness and to those who practise it. He is for the weak against the oppressive strong, for the poor against the selfish rich. He is thus a standard of social change, not a sanctifier of existent circumstance. He is a disturbing moral judge of men and nations, not a comfortable divine sponsor of their customs. And he is of this quality because he comes to us not by way of king and priest, but through insurgent prophets identifying him with an unattained social ideal.

One of the noblest figures in this great succession was Hosea. He, too, like Amos before him, pronounced an austere judgment of doom on his apostate people, (Hosea 4:1 ff.) but, in a way none before him had ever achieved, he went beyond the idea of God as judge to the idea of God as savior. Himself the victim of domestic tragedy, he loved his wife even in her faithlessness. His rage and shame at his wife's betrayal of him, his grief and anguish, and his unconquerable love for her despite her sin, seemed to him an experience like that of God himself, dealing with faithless Israel. In undiscourageable compassion he loved his false wife, "even as Yahweh loveth the children of Israel, though they turn unto other gods." (Hosea 3:1.) Far from identifying God, therefore, with the dominant customs of contemporary Israel or stopping with the divine condemnation of them, Hosea saw God with passionate earnestness refusing to give up his people and determined to save them from their evil:

How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I cast thee off, Israel?

How shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? My heart is turned within Me, My compassions are kindled together.

I will not execute the fierceness of Mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: For I am God, and not man, the Holy One in thy midst, and not mortal. (Hosea 11:8-9 as translated by Julius A. Bewer: The Literature of the Old Testament in its Historical Development, p. 96.) Of such insurgent prophecy up to the Exile Jeremiah was the consummation. In him practical monotheism, supernationalistic and thoroughly ethical, was achieved. In his eyes nothing happened anywhere without Yahweh. He is even credited with writing: "Am I a God at hand, saith Yahweh, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places so that I shall not see him? saith Yahweh. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith Yahweh." (Jeremiah 23:23-24.) The prophetic movement, as expressed in Deuteronomy, lifted the idea of Israel's god to such a point of solitary uniqueness that it is difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish the conception from theoretical monotheism. "Yahweh he is God in heaven above and upon the earth beneath: there is none else" (Deuteronomy 4:35, Deuteronomy 4:39.) -- this phrasing in Deuteronomy may mean simply that Yahweh is incomparable, but the difference between that and his sole existence is manifestly growing diaphanous. As for Jeremiah, he plainly universalized and spiritualized Yahweh and so identified him with righteousness that, in the prophet's eyes, to be unrighteous was in itself to "serve other gods." (Jeremiah 11:10; Jeremiah 16:11-13; Jeremiah 25:6.)

VII

Nevertheless, a long and tragic road lay ahead of the Hebrews before ethical monotheism became the common property of their people. The very difficulties confronting the prophetic party in teaching monotheism reveal the background of thought and imagination whose history we have been tracing. For example, they could not persuade their people that Yahweh was one God while

he was being worshiped at many local shrines. Granted that Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah conceived Yahweh as managing the movements of world empires, still the ordinary Hebrew was far from having one god. Deity was dispersed in many sanctuaries -- the Yahweh of this place and the Yahweh of that. If one starts with clear belief in the divine unity and omnipresence, one may safely worship in many places, as we do, without losing the sense of God's oneness; but when the presuppositions of thought and imagination are polytheistic, as with the early Hebrews, many shrines keep alive and vivid the tradition of many gods. The prophetic movement represented in Deuteronomy, therefore, wishing to make real to the people the doctrine, "Hear, O Israel: Yahweh our God is one Yahweh,'' (Deuteronomy 6:4.) adopted as its program the suppression of the local shrines and the establishment of an exclusive, centralized worship in the temple at Jerusalem. This program was brought into practical effect in the Josian reform, (2 Kings 23:1-25.) and the theological position which that reform attacked was stated by Jeremiah, whose ministry was then beginning: "According to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah." (Jeremiah 2:28.) This centralization of worship in one exclusive temple, which looked at from our standpoint might seem reactionary, was in fact a necessary step toward unifying the idea of Yahweh. The Hebrews never had one god in the full sense of that term until they had one central place of worship. Here the prophets were surprisingly effective in their approach to a difficult theological problem; they rightly estimated the importance of imagination to religion.

Whereas Elijah, therefore, had been in despair because the local altars of Yahweh were being cast down, the prophetic party some two centuries later were in despair because they were not cast down. So Deuteronomy, proclaiming the doctrine of Yahweh's unity, proclaimed as an indispensable accompaniment the law of one sanctuary. (Deuteronomy 12:1-18; Deuteronomy 16:5-6, etc.)

Despite lapses from the idea and infidelities to its practise, the more or less successful centralizing of Yahweh's worship in Jerusalem was a forward step. With Yahweh adored in an exclusive temple while his sovereignty extended over all the earth, many in Judah doubtless felt, to a degree not true before, the divine unity. The danger, however, involved in this method of unifying the idea of deity came on apace in the speedy and Complete destruction of the temple by the Babylonians and the exile of the Jews in Mesopotamia. The question raised by that disaster was not only practical but acutely theological: What, now, had become of their god ? With the destruction of the Northern Kingdom in 72I B.C., Yahweh's holy land had been restricted to Judah; with the exclusive unification of Yahweh's worship in Jerusalem the oneness of their god had been clearly symbolized. Now, however, this trellis on which the imagination of his unity had twined was utterly abolished. The Forty-second Psalm is a first-hand document filled with the poignant anguish not only of practical misery but of religious despair occasioned by the Exile: As with a sword in my bones, mine adversaries reproach me, While they continually say unto me, Where is thy God? (Psalms 42:10.) In history there are few instances of the transmutation of tragedy into gain so impressive as the achievement of the later prophets, using the disaster of Zion's ruin and the temple's destruction to spiritualize and universalize the idea of God. To this end Jeremiah already had blazed the trail. This prince of prophets? combining in himself the sensitiveness of a poet, the clear vision of a statesman, and the stuff of which martyrs are made, had foreseen, long before it happened, Zion's downfall and the people's exile. He had, therefore, faced in advance the problem of his religion minus land and temple, altar and cultus, and had adjusted himself to that

revolutionary situation. He had achieved for himself and vicariously for his people an idea of God and a faith in him so profoundly personal that it could operate wherever persons were, and so spiritual that, when deprived of land, temple, and altar, it could rise to new heights and possess itself of new horizons. When, therefore, in Babylonia the Jews were dismayed by the question, "Where is now thy God?" Jeremiah wrote them a letter, one of the most notable documents in our religious tradition, in which he declared the universal availability of Yahweh, to be sought and found in personal prayer, anywhere, at any time. With city and temple, altar and sacrifice gone, still Jeremiah wrote in the name of Yahweh: "Ye shall call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." (Jeremiah 29:12-13.) The full flower of the monotheistic development in the Old Testament, therefore, came from the Exile and from the influences which that disastrous experience released. Strangely symbolic though Ezekiel's pictures of deity are, one perceives in them an awed endeavor to express an ineffable vision of the unity, transcendence, spirituality, and universal availability of the one God, and in more intimate and sympathetic moods he represented Yahweh as saying: "Whereas I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them a sanctuary for a little while in the countries where they are come.'' (Ezekiel 11:16.) It is, however, to the Great Isaiah of the Exile that we must look for the most explicit statements of thoroughgoing monotheism. "Deutero-Isaiah," says H. W. Robinson, "drops the keystone of the monotheistic arch into its place." (H. Wheeler Robinson: The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament, p.60.)

One pictures him in Babylonia, facing a crucial situation in the religion of his people. On the one side was the utter ruin of the old, sustaining sacred places and customs with which their faith in God had been identified, and on the other side was the competition of the brilliant gods of Babylon, who, according to ancient theory, had proved their reality and power by the ascendency of their people. In this situation the prophet's strategy was not defensive but offensive. He asserted the absolute sovereignty of Yahweh, his sole existence and the nothingness of all other deities, with an explicit, sustained, uncompromising monotheism never hitherto found among the Hebrews. Yahweh, as the Great Isaiah understood him, could say, "Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me"; (Isaiah 43:10.) "I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God"; (Isaiah 44:6.) "My hand hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spread out the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together"; (Isaiah 48:13.) and, as for other gods, they are "of nothing" and their "work is of nought." (Isaiah 41:24.) Whether in his positive assertion of the one universal God, as in the fortieth chapter, or in his scorn of all competitors, whom he placed in the category of worthless idols, as in the forty fourth chapter, he "held his monotheism with all his mind," as Sir George Adam Smith said, and treated the gods of the nations "as things, in whose existence no reasonable person can possibly believe." (The Book of Isaiah, Vol. II, p.40.) The full significance of this is clear only as we visualize the prophet proclaiming the unity, eternity, and omnipotence, not of the deity of an ascendent and victorious people, but of a humiliated, decimated, and exiled nation, "despised, and rejected of men." Out of the depths of abysmal national ruin rose this full-orbed confidence in the sole existence and absolute power of the nation's God. It is this fact, among others, which gave to Jewish monotheism a character of its own. Monotheism was not new in the world. The Hebrews were not the first to reach it. By way of the cult of the sun god, for example, Egyptians long antedated Hebrews in ascribing to one deity sovereignty over the whole world. Even the Egyptian sun god at first was territorial; the sun hymn of the Pyramid Texts represents him as standing guard on

Egypt’s frontiers; but in the sixteenth century B.C. Thutmose III conquered the known world and became "the first character of universal aspects in human history." The theological consequence was immense, for the sun god also became universal. Said Thutmose, "He seeth the whole earth hourly." In a word, as Dr. James H. Breasted puts it, "Monotheism was but imperialism in religion" (See James H. Breasted: The Dawn of Conscience, chap. 15.) -- a fact reflected two centuries after Thutmose in an ascription to the sun, "Sole lord, taking captive all lands every day." This Egyptian monotheism long antedated the monotheism of the Hebrew prophets, and it is incredible that with Palestine often under Egyptian suzerainty it should not have affected the theological thinking of the Hebrews. (Ibid., chap. 17.) The quality of the Hebrew result, however, was very different from the Egyptian, and the reason, in part, lies in the fact that the full-orbed monotheism of the Hebrews was not "imperialism in religion" but the very reverse; it was the upthrust of a heartbroken and defeated people, defying plausibilities and, in the face of the seemingly triumphant idols of imperialistic Babylon, claiming sole existence, absolute sovereignty, and righteous character for their God. Monotheism as religious imperialism is a familiar and easily understandable phenomenon, but, so far as I know, the monotheism of the Old Testament, the defiant faith of a humiliated and crushed people in the sole reality and sovereign omnipotence of their God, is alike in its quality and consequence unique.

Such monotheism, astonishing though it is, sprang logically from the insurgent stand of the pre-Exilic prophets. They had identified their God with righteousness. Righteousness, however in its principles and demands, is not local but universal. It is no respecter of persons or nations. It lays its obligations impartially on all alike. By way of the universality of righteousness, therefore, the prophets had come to the universality of God, until against all competitors they believed in the sole existence of the one Deity, who stood for justice and would protect no nation that violated justice. When, therefore, the tragedy of the Exile came, insurgent prophecy faced not its refutation but its vindication. The prophetic school, at its best, went on proclaiming the supreme devotion of Yahweh to righteousness, above even his devotion to his chosen people. In the eyes of this prophetic school, the Exile was not an evidence of Yahweh’s defeat but an expression of his just indignation against Israel’s sin. As Dr. George Foot Moore puts it: "It was not the Babylonians in the might of their gods who had triumphed over Judah and its impotent god; it was Jehovah himself who had launched Nebuchadnezzar and his hosts against the doomed city to execute his judgment on religious treason.’’ (Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era, Vol. I, p. 222.) So the Exile produced new dimensions in the Hebrew conception of God.

VIII

Among the Hebrews the achievement of faith in one God was thus supremely a moral victory. The alternative to it was not theoretical atheism but belief in the reality and power of the gods of victorious Babylon. The dominant motive which led to it was neither curiosity about the creation of the world nor philosophic interest, as in Greece, about the divine immateriality and interior unity, but faith that the social justice for which Yahweh stood would conquer. The chief obstacle to it was not doubt springing from "science" but doubt springing from the inveterate association of nationalistic hatreds with tribal gods. The major result of it was not so much a unifying philosophy of the physical cosmos as a new, revolutionary, international outlook on human life. This is most clearly revealed in the great passages on the Servant of Yahweh now incorporated in the Book of Isaiah. (Isaiah 42:1-4; Isaiah 49:1-6; Psalms 50:4-9; Isaiah 52:13; Isaiah 53:12.) Whoever wrote

these passages won an amazing victory, not simply for the idea of one God against many, although absolute monotheism is unmistakably proclaimed; nor simply for the idea that the one God is Israel's Yahweh, although under the circumstances of the Exile that is astonishing; but, even more, for the idea that this one God cares for all mankind and mercifully purposes the salvation of the whole world. This is monotheism taken morally in earnest, and it is the glory of the Old Testament at its best. Of the Servant of Yahweh it is written, "He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles" (Isaiah 42:1.) and "He will not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set justice in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law"; (Isaiah 42:4.) and Yahweh himself says, "It is too light a thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." (Isaiah 49:6.) This is universalism in the thought of God allied with universalism in the thought of man. It is a new outreach of mind achieved only by an extraordinary expansion of moral vision and sympathy.

It would be too much to expect, however, that so great an adventure of mind and conscience as was involved in such an outlook would be shared by the nation as a whole. The practical exigencies which faced the Jews, first in Babylon and then during the wretched years when the restored community in Jerusalem struggled precariously for its existence, militated against any such lofty universalism. Looking at events in retrospect, we can see that the temple's destruction and the Exile were, humanly speaking, necessary for the spiritualizing and universalizing of Israel's faith in God. So Sir George Adam Smith says:

It was well that this temple should enjoy its singular rights for only thirty years and then be destroyed. For a monotheism, however lofty, which depended upon the existence of any shrine . . . was not a purely spiritual faith. . . . The city and temple, therefore, went up in flames that Israel might learn that God is a Spirit, and dwelleth not in a house made with hands. (The Book of Isaiah [revised ed., 1927] Vol.II, pp. 44,45.) The exiled Hebrews, however, desired nothing quite so much as the rebuilding of that destroyed city and temple; their persistent ambition centered in the restoration of the very shrine whose ruin had done so much to refine and elevate their faith.

Ezekiel's ideal, as from the Exile he dreamed the future, was a church state on Zion, centered in the temple, governed by the priests of Yahweh, and distinguished by carefully defined ceremonial peculiarities. The same Exile, which released Israel's faith from old dependences and helped to universalize it, also forced upon the Jews, in self-defense, the stressing of particularisms that would prevent their assimilation into Babylon's life. It was in the Exile that the "Holiness Code" of Leviticus (Leviticus 17:1-16, Leviticus 18:1-30, Leviticus 19:1-37, Leviticus 20:1-27, Leviticus 21:1-24, Leviticus 22:1-33, Leviticus 23:1-44, Leviticus 24:1-23, Leviticus 25:1-55, Leviticus 26:1-46) was written, emphasizing purity from the contamination of surrounding paganism. It was in the Exile that the story of creation was brought to its climax in the admonition to keep the Sabbath, made sacred from the world's foundation. (Genesis 2:1-3.) It was in the Exile that the laws were rewritten and codified stressing Jewish differentials. The returning Jews, therefore, came back to Zion in no spirit of universalism. They had been compelled to magnify their particularisms if Babylon was not to absorb them, and they had done this with such notable success that then, as now, they maintained their unconquerable distinctness. Moreover, the new community on Zion was able to maintain itself only by vehement exclusiveness, so that in the end the survival of Israel would hardly have been possible without fierce nationalism, uncompromising

racial prejudice, and bigoted devotion to religious peculiarities. If before the Exile the temple was holy, it was thrice holy and exclusive afterward, and all the national, racial, and religious differences that law and ritual could create and enforce were, more than ever before in Hebrew history, meticulously respected. At the Old Testament's end, therefore, we face contradictions, everywhere to be found in living religions, between the great insights of the prophets and the common faith and practise of the people. Even the Isaiah of the Exile, despite his vision of a worldwide salvation, was a vehement nationalist when he thought of that salvation's medium; even he had proclaimed to his people that the world's kings and queens should "bow down to thee with their faces to the earth, and lick the dust of thy feet." (Isaiah 49:23.) Post-Exilic Judaism, therefore, far from being unanimous, presents in its theology a profound variance -- monotheism, taken morally in earnest, mingled with old ideas involved in tribal deities, racial prejudices, religious bigotries, and national hatreds. In the Old Testament this variance is clearly reflected. On the one side is the Book of Esther, revealing "the fiery heart of Jewish nationalism in the third century B.c.," and on the other the Books of Ruth and Jonah with their appeals against racial prejudice and international hostility. On the one side is a god before whom men cry:

O daughter of Babylon, that art to be destroyed, Happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee As thou hast served us.

Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones Against the rock, (Psalms 137:8-9.) and on the other side is God, saying, "In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth; for that Yahweh of hosts hath blessed them, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance." (Isaiah 19:24-25.) On the one side is Yahweh the lawgiver, requiring indiscriminately both moral conduct and ritual correctness, and accepting sacrifice only at one temple, and on the other side is the Yahweh to whom a psalmist sings, Thou delightest not in sacrifice; else would I give it:

Thou hast no pleasure in burnt-offering. (Psalms 51:16.) In a word, history had brought Judaism face to face with an unavoidable antinomy -- a God at once national and universal, deity of a special people and yet God of the universe, lord of a particular temple and yet everywhere accessible to prayer, pledged to the ultimate victory of his purged and redeemed people and yet the savior of all mankind. This antinomy the Old Testament never satisfactorily resolved, save in the "poems of the Servant of Yahweh," and that solution was not accepted. Rather, Zechariah's attitude is typical. "Yahweh shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall Yahweh be one, and his name one" (Zechariah 14:9.) such is the universal outlook of his monotheism. But all this will come about with Jerusalem for its center, and with no prerogative of Judaism surrendered, when

"many nations shall join themselves to Yahweh." (Zechariah 2:10-13.) Indeed, "whoso of all the families of the earth goeth not up unto Jerusalem to worship the King, Yahweh of hosts, upon them shall there be no rain." (Zechariah 14:17.) A just appraisal of the Old Testament, however, must put its emphasis on the great insights of the prophets. The future belonged and still belongs to them. The lesser ideas were the old, inherited jungle of primitive religion; the great prophets were the road-builders laying down a highway through the jungle and out of it. From a local, tribal god they found their way through to the sovereign Creator of the universe, in whose hands were the reins of all history, and from whose control no star and no nation could escape. From being a hard hater, their God became, in their imagination and belief, a merciful lover of his people, the

depth of whose sacrificial compassions it strained their language to fathom: "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.'' (Isaiah 63:9; cf. Hosea 11:8-9.) A mountain god of war and storm they left behind, to believe at last in a universal Spirit, everywhere available to the seeking soul, the one God of all mankind, who asks for his service only justice, mercy, and humility, and from whose presence there is no escape:

Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there:

If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there.

If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

Even there shall thy hand lead me, And thy right hand shall hold me. (Psalms 139:7-10.)

IX

It is not easy for a Christian to be objective and just in describing the difference between the ideas of God in the Old Testament and those in the New. The Christian reader feels a contrast but to locate its source and describe its nature is so difficult that many popular attempts have been and are demonstrably unfair. Yet injustice to the Old Testament at this point is also ingratitude. The great prophetic tradition had gone so far in the apprehension of God before Christianity began that the first prerequisite for a true estimate of the New Testament is grateful appreciation of the Old. The fact, for example, that the idea of God in the Old Testament never entirely escaped the bondage of nationalism can easily be overstressed and misunderstood. God was always so exclusively Israel's deity, it has been said, that while Israel was to be his missionary and martyr nation to save the world, still Israel was always the chosen people not only in point of service but in point of privilege and prestige. The universalism of the Old Testament, it is claimed, did not go beyond the prayer of a nation, regarding itself as the divine favorite:

God be merciful unto us, and bless us, And cause his face to shine upon us; That thy way may be known upon earth, Thy salvation among all nations. (Psalms 67:1-2.) Not only is this true but from the standpoint of history it was unavoidable, and so far as comparison with the New Testament is concerned it is, at its best, similar to the attitude of Christians with reference to the church. Israel did regard herself as the peculiar trustee of a unique faith and conceived the protection of that faith from contamination and the propagation of it to the world as her duty, and so, thinking of her religion as a greenhouse in which to grow priceless things for later transplanting to the larger field of the world, she endured indescribable suffering on behalf of her heritage. That this attitude often involved constricting prejudices and bigotries is clear, but in its highest forms it is comparable with the loyalty of New Testament Christians, at their best, to the church as the object of God's special care and the chosen agency for the world's redemption.

It has also been commonly said that God, in the Old Testament, is primarily interested in the nation as a whole and not in persons one by one, so that he is a racial and national deity and not the God of personal religion. So far as the earlier portions of the Old Testament are concerned, this is true, but the much more considerable truth is that, starting with tribal religion, as all early peoples did, the Jews through their prophetic souls made one of the greatest contributions ever

made in the spiritual history of man, by blazing the trail out from religion as merely a national cult to religion as also a profound, inward, personal experience. In great appeals such as the one beginning, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," (Isaiah 55:1.) or in revealing statements of the divine abode as being "with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit," (Isaiah 57:15.) there is no mistaking the personal nature of the experience intended. As for Jeremiah, this is his unique distinction, making him, as Wellhausen said,

"the father of true prayer," (J. Wellhausen: Israelitische und Jüdische Geschichte [3rd ed.], p. 144.) and elevating him to be the supreme exemplar of personal faith before the coming of Jesus. When he pictures God as saying, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it,'' (Jeremiah 31:33.) he is obviously thinking of transformed individuals as the basis of a transformed nation.

Even more commonly it has been said that God in the Old Testament is a king while in the New Testament he is a father, or, in other language, that justice is his attribute in the one and love in the other. This, however, is to fly in the face of the evidence and to set up a false antithesis. Montefiore says truly: "'Our Father and King' remains for all Jews a most familiar invocation of God." (C. G. Montefiore: Some Elements of the Religious Teaching of Jesus According to the Synoptic Gospels, p. 91.) To be sure, in the Old Testament the divine fatherhood is almost always used with reference to the nation rather than to the individual, (Deuteronomy 32:6; Isaiah 63:16; Isaiah 64:8; Hosea 11:1-3; Jeremiah 3:4, Jeremiah 3:1.) but this is not exclusively so. A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, Is God in his holy habitation (Psalms 68:5.) is personal.

Like as a father pitieth his children, So Yahweh pitieth them that fear him (Psalms 103:13.) is personal. As for Jewish thought between the Testaments, this intimate, individual, fatherly love of God is so clear and so beautifully expressed that the idea involved is indistinguishable from similar passages in the New Testament. So in Ecclesiasticus stands the prayer' "O Lord, Father and Master of my life…" (Sir 23:1.) and the Book of Jubilees, written in Palestine in the second century B.c., says: "Their souls will cleave to Me and to all My commandments, and they will fulfil My commandments, and I shall be their Father and they will be My children. And they will all be called children of the living God, and every angel and every spirit will know, yea, they will know that these are My children, and that I am their Father in uprightness and righteousness, and that I love them." (The Book of Jubilees, or The Little Genesis, 1:24-25, translated by R.H. Charles, p. 7.)

X

Nevertheless, when one passes from the Old Testament into the New, one does move into the presence of fresh ideas about God and experiences with him. A major factor in producing this change in spiritual climate and scenery was the expulsion of the Christian movement from the synagogue. Just as Wesleyanism started as a phase of Anglicanism and remained so until it was coerced into separatism by the Church of England itself, so the first Christians were simply Jews who had found the Messiah and who intended remaining as the true Judaism within the larger matrix of the national faith. When they were driven out from synagogue and temple, they faced a disruption in their religious thought and practise comparable with the shock of the Exile to the Jews over six centuries before. That is, they lost the old trellis on which their faith had twined. The temple was no longer theirs; they were denied the sacrifices; they were outlawed from both cult and legal system; they were expelled from the synagogue and regarded as aliens by the Jewish

community. The theological effect of all this was immense. What had happened partially when the physical temple had been destroyed and the nation exiled in Babylon now happened thoroughly. Yahweh lost his coercive entanglements with national loyalty and racial cult, and in a new liberation, unimaginable had not the expulsion of Christianity from Judaism taken place, he became a universal God, with no local temple or chosen people to limit him, and with worshipers of all tongues and nations on equal terms -- neither Jew nor Greek, neither Scythian, barbarian, bond nor free, but one man in Christ. The New Testament as a whole comes to us out of this completed separation of church from synagogue, with Christianity rapidly becoming more Gentile than Jewish. Paul had done his work and the church was an inter-racial, international brotherhood. The God of the New Testament, therefore, is universal, not only in the sense of being cosmic, but in the deeper and more difficult sense of being God of all mankind alike and "no respecter of persons.'' (Acts 10:34.) The direct effect of this in freeing monotheism from the Old Testament's constricting particularisms was great, but perhaps even more important was its indirect effect: it opened the idea of God in Christian minds to the influence of all the theologies of the Greco-Roman world. Long before Christ, the Jews in Alexandria had felt the nobility of Plato's theistic philosophy and had labored to blend their religious traditions with the best thought of Greece. To men like Philo, a contemporary of Jesus Platonic philosophy was at one with Old Testament doctrine, and this difficult syncretism was achieved by so allegorizing even the "Books of Moses" as to find Platonic ideas there. Such acceptance of Hellenistic thought, however, while typical of Alexandrian Judaism, had little, if any, influence in Palestine and, although mildly evident in the Apocrypha, it did not affect the Hebrew Old Testament. Only after the Old Testament canon was complete and in 70 A.D. the temple was destroyed by the Romans, was Jewish thought, as a whole, finally cast out of its local matrix, and even then the legal system, with its particularistic minutiæ, was the more insisted on because the sacrificial cult was gone. The thought of the New Testament, however, had no such protection against the influential philosophies of the Greco-Roman world. To be sure, the Old Testament was at first the only Christian Bible, and Christian doctrine was validated by appeal to the sacred Book. Alexandrian Judaism, however, long since had shown that the Old Testament could be interpreted by allegory so as to abstract from it any philosophy one pleased. In the Christian thinking of the first century, therefore, the liberation of church from synagogue inaugurated a new era; the apologetic necessity of being persuasive to Gentiles overbore the tendency to be content with Hebraisms; and even in the New Testament, predominantly Jewish though it is in its backgrounds, one sees the beginning of that larger mental hospitality which led at last to the overwhelming influence of Greek thought on Christian theology. In the opening verses of the Fourth Gospel, for example, we are in the presence of the Logos -- the outgoing of eternal God in the creation of his world and the salvation of his people. Stoics and Neo-Platonists alike had their doctrine of the Logos -- the creative effluence of the transcendent God, forever going forth into his world and, above all, lighting "every man.'' (John 1:19.)The essential doctrine of the first few verses of the Fourth Gospel would not have been unfamiliar to educated people in Ephesus; only at the identification of the Logos with Jesus would difficulty have arisen. When it is said, therefore, as it commonly is said, that the New Testament simply takes over the Old Testament's theocratic idea of God, wide areas of fact are forgotten. The God of the New Testament is the eternal Spirit, God of no special nation and of no chosen race, accessible everywhere to every soul without requirement of special ritual or legalistic act, who, being spirit, can be worshiped only in spirit, who, being love, dwells wherever love

dwells, and who supremely has shined in the face of Jesus Christ.

XI In achieving this result, while the separation of church and synagogue furnished the necessary setting, the personality of Jesus was the major creative force. It was he who mainly made the difference between the ideas of God in the two Testaments. Strangely enough, he did this without saying anything new about God or even trying to. He used no new words concerning deity. He was in the lineal succession of the great prophets -- Hosea, Jeremiah, the Isaiah of the Exile. What they had tried to do in their times and fashions he tried to do in his -- take monotheism morally in earnest. Where they stopped he began, taking over from them the most expanded and ethically cogent ideas of God to which they had attained and so identifying himself with the great tradition of his people. As with the prophets, so with him, the major motive in all thinking about God was not cosmic curiosity but moral seriousness. The common statement, therefore, that Jesus took over unchanged the Jewish idea of God needs at least an initial qualification. Which Jewish idea of God did he take over? His ministry was a concentrate protest against ideas and practises that had sprung from the lower levels of Hebrew tradition. His God was the God of the supreme prophetic passages -- spiritual and universal, caring for all mankind across all boundaries of race and nation, near at hand to the humble and the contrite, a God of grace and forgiveness as well as of justice and retribution, redemptively merciful to sinners, demanding not ritualistic conformity but moral genuineness within and brotherly conduct without. Here, as everywhere in dealing with his people's heritage, Jesus practised selective attention. He picked the diamonds from the slag. Far from being negligible, such selective attention has often been one of the most creative processes in human thinking. It can so alter the entire composition of a religion or a philosophy, can so reorient and redistribute man's thinking, as to achieve, without the contribution of a single brand-new element, a startlingly new result. To say, therefore, that Jesus took the Jewish idea of God at its best but had no new idea of his own presents a false antithesis. The truth is that by taking the Jewish idea of God at its best and by treating this idea with thoroughgoing moral seriousness, sloughing off hostile adhesions and limitations, Jesus achieved a consequence so new as to be revolutionary. In this achievement two factors are prominent. The first is Jesus' insight into the moral meanings of monotheism. His struggle was not to sustain faith in one God against either polytheism or atheism, but to persuade people who already believed in God to think and live as though they did. It was because of his morally majestic idea of God that the trivial legalisms of the Pharisees seemed intolerable. It was because he took the universal sovereignty of God in moral earnest that racial exclusiveness directed, for example, against Samaritans, seemed to him inde- fensible. He even conceived God as judging men only by tests of philanthropy, (Matthew 25:34-36.) and thus universalized God's requirements so that, regardless of race or nation, they could be met by a good life anywhere. The full extent of the revolution involved in this ethical monotheism of Jesus was not at first evident even to his most ardent disciples. On the basis of certain passages, notably the one concerning the Syrophœnician woman, (Mark 7:24-30. See, e.g., Charles Guignebert:Jesus, translated by S.H. Hooker, p. 317.) some have judged that it may not have been fully evident to Jesus himself. His enemies, however, sensed in his emphasis the potential ruin of their racial and religious particularisms. They were right about that. The New Testament's later development of an international and inter-racial faith was the logical conclusion of Jesus' way of thinking about God, and so notable was this contribution that he has been credited with being the first one in history to take monotheism with thoroughgoing moral earnestness. The second factor prominent in this achievement was the

intense reality of God in the personal experience of Jesus. Words about God are, after all, only verbal counters, and in themselves alone are inadequate as tests of the religious experience they are used to reveal. Two persons calling God Father may express by that name widely divergent meanings. It is beside the point, therefore, simply to catalogue the words of Jesus about God or to count the times he used a special name. To be sure, he did not discover de novo the fatherhood of God. Only in Matthew's Gospel is the word Father, as applied to God, his distinctive and constant usage, and he is never represented as speaking of 'love' as a divine attribute. This verbal test, however, does not reach bottom. The effect which Jesus produced upon his disciples reveals a personality to whom God was overpoweringly real in spiritual experience. Austere as well as paternal, authoritative and kingly as well as merciful and gracious, terrific in judgment against selfishness, cruelty, and sham as well as forgiving to outcasts and prodigals, Jesus' God was revealed not so much in the words he used about him as in the life he lived with him. This life was of such a quality that those who knew Jesus best sought from him the secrets of prayer, (Luke 11:1.) and those who came after him called God by a new name, "God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Colossians 1:3.) So Dr. Buckham states the case:

It is not the priority of Jesus' teaching of Fatherhood that makes it so significant, but its intense realism. Priority counts for little in such a matter as this, compared to a living and confident realization and the power to convey this realization to others. It was in this that Jesus was creatively original. Upon his lips Abba meant more than any name for God ever meant before. So purely and ardently did it issue from the depths of his own experience as to communicate itself to his disciples and through them to others in such vivid reality as to make a new and transforming epoch in the life of the human spirit. This is originality. By this token Divine Fatherhood may be rightly regarded as a discovery, and Jesus as the discoverer. (John Wright Buckham: The Humanity of God; An Interpretation of the Divine Fatherhood, p. 45.)

XII

It is difficult to be accurately certain of Jesus' private ideas, as distinguished from the impressions of them reported by his disciples, just as it is difficult to be accurately certain of Socrates' own thoughts, disentangled from their rendition by Plato and Xenophon. Despite many questions in detail, however, such contributions as we have ascribed to him -- selective attention in dealing with his religious heritage, profound insight into the moral meanings of monotheism, and contagious reality in his experience of God as a towering and penetrating fact -- seem assured. The newness of the Christian idea of God, however, went deeper still. On this point the early Christians have a peculiar right to be heard. In the first instance they themselves were Jews, devoutly familiar with the Old Testament's ideas of God. So reverently did they regard their ancestral faith that, the Jewish Scripture being at first their only Bible, their new experiences and hopes were seen as the fulfilment of its prophecies. "Whatsoever things were written aforetime," said Paul, "were written for our learning." (Romans 15:4.) Nevertheless, the newness of their faith, as followers of Christ, seemed to them unmistakable. They recorded the first impression of Jesus' preaching in terms of astonished exclamation -- "What is this? a new teaching!" (Mark 1:27.) From recollections of Jesus' own words describing his gospel as new wine, not to be put into old bottles, and new cloth, not to be sewed as a patch on old garments, (Matthew 9:16-17.) the conviction runs through the New Testament that, in the faith which it records, a fresh, original creative invasion of the world by the living God had taken place. The gospel is a new covenant; (1 Corinthians 11:25; 2 Corinthians

3:6; Hebrews 8:13; Hebrews 9:15; Hebrews 12:24.)one who accepts it becomes a new man; (Ephesians 2:15; Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10.) the Christian's access to God is a new and living way, (Hebrews 10:20.) related to the old order as reality is to dim foreshadowing; newness of life (Romans 6:4.) comes to those who are united with Christ, and, indeed, "if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17.)

It stands to reason that this consciousness of creative originality in their faith could not have belonged to the early Christians apart from a fresh conception of God and experience of him. Nor does the New Testament leave in doubt the nature of this innovation in the Christian thought of deity -- "It is God, that said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Corinthians 4:6.) That is to say, the God of the early Christians was not so much the deity Jesus taught as the deity they believed him to be. He came from the divine realm, belonged to it, in his own person revealed it, and so brought to man a fresh and saving manifestation of God's nature and purpose. Paul preached "the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God''; (2 Corinthians 4:4.) John presented the Christ who could say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." (John 14:9.) To be sure, this association of Jesus with the divine realm exists in the New Testament in various gradations and is set not in one pattern of thought, but in diverse categories familiar in the ancient world. Nowhere in dealing with the faith of New Testament believers is the modernizing of early Christian thought more false and dangerous. They were thinking of Jesus not in our categories but in theirs. In the belief of the first Jewish Christians, Jesus was the Messiah -- that is, the Christ -- divinely anointed for his supreme and saving mission. This Jewish category of Messiahship was not primarily metaphysical; it did not so much concern the essential nature of the divine missioner as his vocation; it could be applied on different levels -- to one conceived as a "son of David" specially anointed to fulfil the divine purpose, or to one conceived as a preexistent being, come at last to earth to achieve God's will. By means of this category, Jesus, at the first, was associated with the divine realm.

When, however, the gospel was carried from the Jewish to the Gentile world, the idea of Messiahship lost its cogency. The Gentiles did not traditionally know its meaning. 'Christ,' as a descriptive title, containing in itself a confession of faith in the divine mission of Jesus, was not easily intelligible to Greek and Roman Christians. So it came to be no longer a title and a creed combined, but only a proper name, and 'Jesus, the Christ' became 'Jesus Christ.' In Paul's Epistles especially, another name for Jesus tends to supplant 'Messiah.' He is 'the Lord.' This title, too, associated him with the divine realm but it came from other backgrounds and suggested other connotations than 'Christ.' 'Lord' was habitually used in the Greek sacramental cults as the title of the god, the cult's supernatural head, with whom the devotees were joined through their initiatory rites. Writes Professor Lake: A 'Lord' had a supernatural nature, which may or may not be described as divinity in proportion as Greek or Jewish forms of thought are being observed. To the Jew 'God' means the Creator, an omnipotent being beside whom there is no other. To the Greek 'God' is a generic title of a whole class of supernatural beings who are neither creators of the world, nor omnipotent, nor omniscient.... In this sense, the lords of the various cults were all gods and it would be natural enough for the Greeks to interpret thus the statement that Jesus was the Lord. (Kirsopp Sake and Silva Lake: An Introduction to the New Testament, p. 238.) To be sure,

when the Jewish name of God, Yahweh, was rendered into Greek, the same word, ‘Lord,’ was used. So a fruitful source of confusion existed in the nomenclature of the early church, and probably there is no solution of the controversial problem as to the precise meaning in Paul’s mind when he called Jesus ‘Lord.’ That he himself felt the problem, as he carried out into the world of Greek cults this presentation of Jesus, seems plainly indicated in his saying, "For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or on earth; as there are gods many, and lords many; yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him." (1 Corinthians 8:5-6) At any rate, it is clear that in categories of understanding familiar to the non-Jewish mind ‘the Lord Jesus Christ’ was preached to the Gentiles as belonging to the superhuman world. This development reached its climax in the interpretation of Jesus as the Logos, the eternal Word of God. The use of this term in the prologue of the Fourth Gospel is familiar, but the basic idea behind the term is present elsewhere in the New Testament where the term itself is not used. Indeed, the idea had already passed over from Gentile to Jewish thought in works such as the Book of Wisdom, called in our Apocrypha "The Wisdom of Solomon," where Wisdom is presented as the vice-gerent of God -- "She pervadeth and penetrateth all things," "a breath of the power of God," "a clear effluence of the glory of the Almighty," "an effulgence from everlasting light," "an unspotted mirror of the working of God," and "an image of his goodness." (Wis 7:22-30) Here was a prevalent medium of thought ready for Christian use in the interpretation of Jesus and by means of it he was identified with the divine realm. He was preached as "the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation," (Colossians 1:15.) as "the effulgence of his [God’s] glory, and the very image of his substance," (Hebrews 1:3.) as the Logos who in the beginning was with God and was God. (John 1:1.)

Unquestionably something new had happened to the idea of God, not only absent from the Old Testament but contrary to some of its strongest predispositions.

XIII In this process by which Jesus was progressively reinterpreted in new patterns of thought, it is customary to see the gradual elevation of a man to the divine realm. In the simplest presentation of Jesus in apostolic preaching, he was called "a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know .... who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.’’ (Acts 2:22; Acts 10:38.) Before the New Testament writers were through interpreting him, however, the most august categories of the ancient world had been employed, and he was the Messiah, the Lord, the Logos. He had been deified. That this led Christian thinking far beyond the original historical facts concerning his life, teaching, and ministry is commonly emphasized. It is more important for our purpose, however, to observe the effect which the deifying of Jesus had, not on the Christian conception of him, but on the Christian conception of God. When Jesus, in the interpretation of his followers, became the divine Lord and Logos, not only was their thought of Jesus elevated but their thought of God was changed. Christ became the dominant factor in it. It was now in his face that they saw the light of the knowledge of God’s glory. As New Testament thinking developed, not only did Christ become more and more identified with the divine world but the divine world became more and more identified with Christ. His character became central in the idea of God and the concept of God was thereby Christianized. So profound were the changes involved in this, that, from the point of view of the New Testament believer, Paul was justified in

writing to his converts, whatever their previous religious allegiance might have been, "Now that ye have come to know God, or rather to be known by God." (Galatians 4:9.) To put the matter simply, in Christian thinking God became Christlike. The divinity of Jesus became not only an assertion about Jesus but about divinity. Still the Most High was the majestic sovereign of the universe, "who created all things," (Ephesians 3:9.) and whose invisible might is revealed "through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity.'' (Romans 1:20.) Into this inherited framework, however, Jesus was introduced as the essential portrait of the divine nature, the very "image of God." (2 Corinthians 4:4.) When the early Christians thought of the divine, therefore, they thought of Jesus, so that while their theological reinterpretations of him, often in contravention of historical accuracy, changed their ideas of his earthly life and ministry, (E.g., on the way John's Gospel changes the picture of Jesus' attitude toward sinners from that presented in the Synoptics, see Ernest Cadman Colwell: John Defends the Gospel, chap. 4.) his earthly life and ministry still exercised a profound influence on their theology. The effects of this were so pervasive that to define them is like describing a change of climate. Nevertheless, some of the fruits of the change can be identified. The individual extension of God's care to people one by one was clearly emphasized as it had never been in the Old Testament scriptures. Intimate care for individuals was characteristic of Jesus and if he was the "image of God," such must be the nature of the divine interest.

God's saving grace and mercy gained new positiveness and new dimensions, becoming more actively seeking and sacrificial than it had ever before been pictured as being. Jesus' life was love in motion, outgoing determination to save, free grace expended without regard to merit, and on the terms of the New Testament's thought of Christ, God so loved the world. (Cf., e.g., Pauline passages on the grace of God: Romans 3:23-25; Romans 5:15-21; Ephesians 1:3-7; Ephesians 2:4-8.) The special care of God for sinners was made central and emphatic. That the righteous were to be loved and the iniquitous hated by both God and good men was the natural attitude of the early Old Testament, and no development of thought was more difficult of achievement than the extension of merciful, forgiving, saving love to sinners. In Jesus, however, this became one of religion's specialties, exhibited with tireless patience in his ministry and commended by him as the evidence of godlikeness. (Matthew 5:43-48; cf. Romans 5:8.) The purpose of God was conceived as represented in and carried out by Christ. Still the "Majesty in the heavens" (Hebrews 8:1.) exercised sovereignty over the course of history, and with prevenient ordination, as well as grace, the potter had "a right over the clay," (Romans 9:20-21.) but this directive control of the Most High was now conceived as "the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Ephesians 3:11.) The dominant attribute of God, the criterion of judgment with reference to which other aspects of the divine nature were estimated, became the kind of love the New Testament writers found in Christ. The paucity of Pauline references to the earthly ministry of Jesus is commonly emphasized, but when one takes the full measure of them, and adds all the intimations of Paul's insight into Jesus' quality and character, one may reasonably decide that the apostle understood his Master very well. He besought his readers "by the meekness and gentleness of Christ"; (2 Corinthians 10:1.) he based his admonition concerning the duties of the strong toward the weak on the example of Christ, who "pleased not himself" ; (Romans 15:1-3.) he urged generosity on the Corinthians after the manner of Christ -- "Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich"; (2 Corinthians 8:9.) he pleaded for the virtues of humility, harmony, magnanimity, saying, "Treat one another with the same spirit

as you experience in Christ Jesus"; (Php 2:1-5 [Moffatt translation]) he saw the bearing of one another's burdens as the fulfilment of the "law of Christ"; (Galatians 6:2.) he urged on his readers forgiveness, "even as the Lord forgave you," (Colossians 3:13.) and considerate love, "even as Christ also loved you." (Ephesians 5:2.) This centrality of love in Paul's thought of Christ was carried up into Paul's thought of God, and as Christ's love "passeth knowledge', (Ephesians 3:18-19.) so, too, God's love is to Paul tireless, potent, holding believers in a bond so strong that nothing in the universe can separate them from it. (Romans 8:38-39.) As for John, who certainly tried to understand his Master's earthly ministry, the consequence of Christ's influence is plain: "God is love; and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him." (1 John 4:16.)

Obviously something new had entered into the idea and experience of God. This creative factor was not so much a concept as a personality. Old frameworks of thought were carried over from Jewish tradition and new ones were added from the Hellenistic world, but for Christians the portrait in all of them was "the face of Jesus Christ."

XIV

Even this, however, does not carry our thought far enough. The center of the New Testament's interest is not so much an idea as a deed. In Christ God had performed a supremely important act for the world, so climactic that prophecy found there its culmination and so determinative that all man's future was conditioned on it -- such is the Christian Scripture's dominant conviction. Like the Old Testament, the New does not move in realms of calm, philosophic discourse; all its writings have some practical intention, such as the upbuilding of the church, the defensive presentation of truth, the overthrow of gainsayers, and the winning of converts. Both Gospels and Epistles are engaged not mainly in the careful balancing of ideas but in the militant presentation of a crucial deed, the very hinge of history, on which swings the world's fate and each man's destiny. The characteristic attributes of the early Christian idea of God, therefore, cannot be fully understood apart from this consummate and creative act which he had wrought in Christ In this regard a deep difference separated the Hebrew and the Hellenistic world views. As Professor Edwyn R. Bevan puts it, (for the following antithesis see "Hellenistic Judaism," in The Legacy of Israel, edited by Edwyn R. Bevan and Charles Singer, p. 50.) the Hebraic view of the world was based on "an apprehension of God as righteous Will, Some One who does definite 'mighty acts' in the world-process"; it conceived history as "a Divine plan beginning in God's mighty act of creation and leading up to a great consummation in the future"; it associated "the Divine plan with a Divine community, a 'people of God' chosen to be the vehicle of God's purpose." In the Hellenistic world view, however, God "tended to become immovable Being, to which men might indeed strive to attain, but which did not do particular acts in the world-process"; the course of history itself "was a vain eternal recurrence, a circular movement, leading nowhere"; "deliverance was attained by the individual when he detached himself in soul from the world." (Ibid.) As between these two ways of regarding the cosmos, the New Testament is predominantly Hebraic. Many influences of Hellenism are discernible in the Christian scriptures, some of them potent in their effect, but as for the underlying idea of God and the world, the Jewish view maintained its hold. God is righteous and loving Will, a doer of mighty deeds; history is a process, under his sovereign control, in which he performs decisive acts; the church is the chosen vehicle of his purpose -- such is the New Testament's world view. As in the Old Testament, therefore, the idea of God had been progressively formulated, not so much in the light of philosophic disquisition as in the light of his

mighty acts for Israel, from the deliverance out of Egypt to the least and latest sign of his effective control over human affairs, so in the New Testament the idea of God was centered not in a concept but in a deed. God had sent his Son into the world; (John 3:16-17.) what the prophets had desired to see and hear had now come to pass; (Matthew 13:17.) of the most hopeful foresights of ancient seers it could be said, "To day hath this scripture been fulfilled;" (Luke 4:17-21.) believers had "passed out of death into life," (John 5:24.) and had been "delivered . . . out of the power of darkness, and translated . . . into the kingdom of the Son of his love." (Colossians 1:13.) A supreme and saving deed had been done, an unprecedented act of God for man's salvation, and in the light of that the ideas of God's nature, character, and purpose grew to new amplitude and bore new fruit.

It is the more important to emphasize this because of the prevalent stress in our time upon the apocalyptic hopes of early Christians as altogether centered and absorbed in a future event -- the triumphant return of Christ from heaven. Granted the dominance of this hope in the New Testament! The early disciples did live with a glowing expectation of a divine climactic act that would usher in a "new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Peter 3:13.) Nevertheless, this ardent hope cannot be adequately understood save as an integral result of a supreme event which had occurred already. God's greatest deed was not to be done; it had been done. What was to come by way of culmination was corollary and consequence. The transcendent act had already been performed: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (John 1:18.) The idea of God in the New Testament stems out from this deed. "God commendeth his own love toward us," writes Paul -- not in a philosophy but in an act -- "in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8.) The early Christians, therefore, lived not simply in expectation of the future but in glad appropriation of a deed already done. They were convinced that the kingdom of God had come upon them; (Matthew 12:28.) that "the darkness is passing away, and the true light already shineth"; (1 John 2:8.) that here and now they had entered into

"eternal life"; (John 3:36.) that already they had been "begotten again," (1 Peter 1:23.) saved "through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit," (Titus 3:5.) and given "the right to become children of God." (John 1:12.) No deed comparable with this, they were sure, had ever been done before, and to them God was primarily the kind of being who could and would do it. As the early Hebrews thought of Yahweh first of all as the one who had delivered them out of Egypt, so the early Christians thought of God as the one who had rescued them out of the power of darkness and translated them into the kingdom of his Son.

Particularly pertinent to our present theme is the fact that by this saving deed believers conceived themselves as ushered into a new experience of sonship to God. The fatherhood of God in the New Testament is most explicitly manifest, not in what is said about God, but in what is said about the Christian experience of sonship. God desires sons -- in that idea his fatherhood is most emphatically made plain. Paul says, "The earnest expectation of creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God." (Romans 8:19.) The act of God wrought in Christ had this for its aim: "When the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son . . . that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Galatians 4:4-5) In the eyes of the New Testament this deed has now been done. The right has been given "to become children of God''; (John 1:12.) "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God''; (Romans 8:14.) no longer slaves, they have become sons and heirs, and

their address to God is, "Abba, Father.'' (Galatians 4:6-7; Romans 8:15.) From Jesus' remembered admonition, "that ye may be sons of your Father", (Matthew 5:45.) to the Epistles rejoicing in the Christians, "adoption as sons through Jesus Christ,'' (Ephesians 1:5.) this idea runs. They were using an old phrase but it seemed to them packed with new meaning. Far from being wholly a postponed expectation of Christ's return, as extreme eschatologists affirm, the glory of the early Christians lay in their appropriation and exploration of the experiences already opened to them by the great deed of God in Christ --- "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ." (Ephesians 1:3.)

XV

Indeed the richness and variety involved in the developing experience and idea of God in the New Testament began to overflow the customary forms of historic theism. There was one God, but there was also one Lord, belonging to the divine world, who supremely revealed him; and, as well, there was one Spirit --"his Spirit that dwelleth in you." (Romans 8:11.) Jewish monotheism stood for the sole existence and sovereignty of the one God; Christianity was soon trying to secure new dimensions in its theism by thinking of the Father as revealed in the Son and made immediately available to every believer by the indwelling Spirit. This enrichment of the idea of God Paul expressed in a benediction, now a familiar formula, but which, at first, voiced the amazed and grateful experience of discoverers who saw theism unfolding into new dimensions -- "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all." (2 Corinthians 13:14.) The life and ministry of Christ had been divine; their own interior experience of spiritual renewal and sustentation was divine; their God was no longer a cosmic creator, father, and king only, but, as well, a revelatory character, "full of grace and truth," and an indwelling spiritual presence. All this was not yet trinitarian dogma. It was rather an expansion and enrichment of theism, an overflowing of the idea of divinity into new forms of thought. The unilinear nature of the old monotheism seemed to the new experience inadequate. The early Christians could not say about God all they wished to say in the mental patterns and terminology of traditional monotheism. Their experience had too many facets, was too rich and copious. Quite without intending to start a development that would issue in the classic creeds, they saw themselves, as a matter of fact, dealing with the Divine in three major ways as the cosmic Creator and Father, as the incarnate Savior and Character, as the interior Spirit of Power.

Far from being, as it later became, a too precise surveying of the divine nature, this trinitarian experience involved, at first, a humble and grateful acknowledgment of unfathomable mystery in the Eternal. The Bible's greatest passages concerning God, in Old and New Testaments alike, are suffused with this sense of mystery. The Book is not a good forest to cut timber in for theistic dogmatism. Not only are its ideas of God in constant process of change, but it is everywhere conscious of depth beyond depth in the divine nature, uncomprehended and incomprehensible. The questions of Zophar in the drama of Job are true to the spirit of Scripture:

Canst thou by searching find out God?

Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

It is high as heaven; what canst thou do?

Deeper than Sheol; what canst thou know? (Job 11:7-8.)

Indeed, as we might expect, it is the most confident believers who acknowledge most humbly their limited insight into what Paul called "the deep things of God," (1 Corinthians 2:10.) and say with the Great Isaiah, "There is no searching of his understanding." (Isaiah 40:28.) In the New Testament this sense of God's unfathomable profundity, "dwelling in light unapproachable," (1 Timothy 6:16.) is nowhere more plainly indicated than in the idea that while God is one, as contrasted with polytheistic ideas, this unity is diversified and copious, and not confined, as a bare monotheism implies. When Paul talked about God he used ampler language than monotheism had ever before been equipped with -- "filled unto all the fulness of God"; (Ephesians 3:19.) "Christ in you, the hope of glory"; (Colossians 1:27.) "The Lord is the Spirit." (2 Corinthians 3:17.) In all this he was not metaphysically analyzing the divine nature but was indicating the manifoldness of the divine approach to man, and was endeavoring, in the spirit of his own words, to express the ineffable -- "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out!" (Romans 11:33.)

Incredibly difficult it would have been to imagine such an outcome from the early beginnings of the theistic idea in Israel. Indeed, in retrospect, the road traveled by the idea of God through the Bible as a whole presents a fascinating spectacle.

Beginning with a storm god on a desert mountain, it ends with men saying, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:24.)

Beginning with a tribal war god, leading his devotees to bloody triumph over their foes, it ends with men seeing that "God is love; and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him." (1 John 4:16.)

Beginning with a territorial deity who loved his clansmen and hated the remainder of mankind, it ends with a great multitude out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, (Revelation 5:9.) worshiping one universal Father.

Beginning with a god who walked in a garden in the cool of the day or who showed his back to Moses as a special favor, it ends with the God whom "no man hath seen . . . at any time" (John 1:18.) and in whom "we live, and move, and have our being." (Acts 17:28.)

Beginning with a god who commanded the slaughter of infants and sucklings without mercy, it ends with the God whose will it is that not "one of these little ones should perish." (Matthew 18:14.)

Beginning with a god from whom at Sinai the people shrank in fear, saying, "Let not God speak with us, lest we die," (Exodus 20:19; cf. Deuteronomy 5:25.) it ends with the God to whom one prays in the solitary place and whose indwelling Spirit is our unseen friend.

Beginning with a god whose highest social vision was a tribal victory, it ends with the God whose worshipers pray for a worldwide kingdom of righteousness and peace.

01.02. The Idea of Man

Chapter 2: The Idea of Man The development of the Old Testament's idea of man involves two main matters: first, the relationship of the individual to his social group, and second, the nature of the individual within himself. Using modern terms, we should say that the Bible records a development of thought about human nature in both its sociological and psychological aspects. The Old Testament's early idea of man in his social relationships could be inferred on a priori grounds from the early Biblical idea of God. The conception of Yahweh as a tribal deity, caring for his clans as a group and warring against other clans as groups, implied not simply a theology but a sociology. At this level of thought, the individual man was submerged in his tribal relationships. Human beings, one by one, did not stand plainly out as having separate importance or rights. The social fabric was everything and in it the separate threads were barely distinguishable items.

Even such a comparison does scant justice to the absorption of the individual's meaning and value in the meaning and value of his tribe. We habitually think of persons, one by one, as the constituent elements of society, and we regard the social whole as made up of their enforced or voluntary blending. The primitive mind, however, in the Bible as elsewhere, thought of the social group -- family, clan, tribe -- as the original and creative fact, the continuous reality from which individuals came, to which they inseparably belonged, and apart from which they had no meaning, status, or rights. The center of worth lay not in persons, who conferred worth on the group, but in the group, which gave to persons any significance they might possess. This presupposition is so diverse from our thinking that only with difficulty can a modern mind grasp it. With us the social organization exists, or ought to exist, to serve persons; to the primitive mind persons existed as phases of the group and their meaning lay primarily in group functions. Indeed, no early Hebrew ever would have distinguished thus between the tribe as a whole and individuals as separate entities so that he could have discussed which was prior or which existed for the other. Even in his unconscious assumptions he was totalitarian. When, therefore, we think of the development of social consciousness as a distinctively modern gain, we have reversed the actual historic process. Mankind's early eras were dominated by social consciousness; to a degree difficult for us to imagine, the tribe was all. The shaking loose of the ordinary individual from this identification with his society until, as a personality, he had worth, rights, and hopes of his own, was a supreme achievement. This submergence of the individual in the social group has been called 'corporate personality' and the name accurately indicates the nature of the fact. Personal life among primitive peoples was rather the tribe's possession than the individual's. It was the tribe that corporately had plans and purposes, suffered or prospered, was punished or rewarded by the god. To be sure, the individual shared in all this, had his vivid experiences and interests as a part of it, was doubtless on occasion independently rebellious and aggressive. Moreover, while the vivid stories of the Hebrew patriarchs and their dealings with God are largely legendary, they doubtless represent a fact always true in any era, that outstanding personalities have outstanding experiences. Nevertheless, in primitive society the abiding entity was conceived to be the social group as a whole rather than its individuals.

One of the unintentional cruelties sometimes practiced by the United States Government in dealing with American Indians has sprung from failure to understand this contrast between primitive and modern culture. To a notable degree even yet, the unmodernized Indian's life is corporate, and the individual exists only in his tribal relationships and functions, so that when the Government, even with good intentions, has tried to serve the Indian on a different basis, taking him away from home for education, discouraging old folk-ways as heathenish, assuming individualistic thinking in his treatment, the result has commonly been the disintegration of the Indian's life. He could not make the adjustment swiftly enough. The chief meaning of his existence had lain in group relationships, group functions, and group purposes. He had not even pictured himself as a personality separate from the group. Treated individualistically, therefore, he felt like a branch cut from the tree; his life was gone. To him the continuous tribe was the abiding reality of which he was a phase.

II That the Old Testament's thinking began with such corporate personality is plainly indicated in the record. The early social life of Israel was centered in the patriarchal family. The master fact in the experience of the people was blood-kinship, first in the household, whose head was alike priest, owner, and judge, and then in the wider circle of clan and tribe, traced back to some progenitor whose blood was supposed to flow in the veins of all. Whatever social solidarity existed depended on the coherence of these family groups. If outsiders were admitted into the tribal relationship, they were conceived as assuming blood-brotherhood. The members of the tribe were not primarily individuals; they were the offspring and representatives of one kindred; because of that they existed, and in that they found life's meaning. They did not make the tribe but the tribe made them, and the consequent obligations of loyalty and sacrifice were absolute. They lived, yet not they; the tribe lived in them. In general such social organization was everywhere the background of the early Hebrew records and its illustrative evidences are unmistakable.

I. Vengeance was a tribal obligation. If any wrong was done to a member of the blood-brotherhood, every member was in duty bound to take up the feud. "The one great obligation upon all the members of a tribe or clan," writes Dr. John Peters, "was to avenge the shedding of the blood of any member of that tribe or clan.'' (John Punnett Peters: The Religion of the Hebrews, p. 62.) Vengeance might, indeed, be individual, as it was represented to be in Lamech's case, although probably a tribal experience was the source of the ancient folk-song:

. . . I have slain a man for wounding me, And a young man for bruising me:

If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, Truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold. (Genesis 4:23-24.)

Far beyond individual retribution, however, the duty of vengeance was an affair of social solidarity. The wrong of one was the wrong of all within the blood-brotherhood, as when Abram took to himself the harm done to his brother. (Genesis 14:14-16.) The entire tribe was in a sense a single personality, which, hurt anywhere, resented it everywhere.

2. This vengeance was directed, not necessarily against the individual who had done the wrong, but against the whole family, clan, or tribe to which he belonged or against any single member of it, however innocent himself. Far from thinking it unfair to visit on an innocent man retribution for a deed he had not done, it seemed then the essence of justice that any or all members of a kinship-group should suffer for wrong done by one of its members. As late as David's time, when a

devastating famine was blamed by the oracle on Saul's slaughter of the Gibeonites, two of Saul's sons and five of his grandsons, entirely innocent, were put to death and their bodies hung up "before Yahweh." (2 Samuel 21:1-14.) When in the ninth century Jehu's revolt avenged the death of Naboth, not only were the perpetrators of the deed, Ahab and Jezebel, slain, but also their sons. (2 Kings 9:24-26; 1 Kings 10:1, 1 Kings 10:7-11[cf. 1 Kings 21:1-29]) That is, the individual, submerged in his blood-brotherhood, had no separate rights of his own; a sin committed by one man was conceived as committed by all his kin and all were as liable to vengeance as was the guilty person.

3. This principle of vengeance was, as well, a basis for sober judicial action, as the Code of Hammurabi shows. Written at the latest between 1955 and 1913 B.C., this code of Semitic law reveals basic ideas and particular applications so akin to later Hebrew legislation that either direct influence or, more probably, a common heritage is indicated. According to Hammurabi, if a builder had constructed a house so poorly that it fell and caused the death of the occupant's son, it was not the builder, but the builder's son, who was to be killed; (The Code of Hammurabi, sec. 230, translated by Robert F. Harper, p. 81.) and if a woman's death was caused in a particular way by an evil man, not the man but his daughter was to be slain. (Ibid., sec. 210, p. 77.) Such applications of the law of retaliation in terms of a family's solidarity would have been completely at home in early Hebrew thought. In the Old Testament not cruelty but well-considered judicial procedure, based on blood-brotherhood, was responsible for the wholesale destruction of a family in punishment for the sin of a single member of it, as in the case of Achan. (Joshua 7:1-26) His special iniquity, hiding a portion of the devoted loot of Jericho, was in Yahweh's eyes -- so the story runs -- the sin of the whole people, and on the whole people Yahweh's anger fell. So, too, the leaders of Israel saw the sin of Achan not as his alone but all his family's, and on his family as a whole the death penalty was executed.

4. So profound and serious were these ideas of solidarity through kinship, together with their accompanying conceptions of justice, that they were read up into theology. The familiar passage where Yahweh calls himself "a jealous God" and threatens to visit "the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me," (Exodus 20:5.) has been commonly interpreted as an ancient prevision of the hereditary results of sin. That interpretation is an anachronism; the passage really represents tribal justice, in accordance with which the sin of one involves in guilt and penalty the entire kinship-group to which the wrongdoer belongs. Not heredity but corporate personality explains Yahweh's far-flung punishments upon even the great-grandchildren of his enemies; it was the whole tribe that sinned in any member's sin and it was the whole tribe that suffered. The total social group was conceived as an active and responsible agent, and, so far as justice in our modern sense was concerned, the individual did not stand out distinctly enough to have separate status.

5. Still another evidence of this early totalitarianism is presented in the absolute ownership of its members by the group. Jephthah, for example, was the baal, the owner, of his entire household, both property and persons. On that basis he had the right to 'devote' to Yahweh by oath "whatsoever [marginal translation, "whosoever"] cometh forth from the doors of my house to meet me." (Judges 11:30-40.) When it turned out to be his daughter, her doom was sealed. She had no rights of her own as a separate personality, just as Iphigenia had no rights when Agamemnon, for the tribe's sake, needed a sacrifice to allay the wrath of Artemis.

One important consequence of this complex of ideas associated with corporate personality appears in the Old Testament's conception of atonement. Substitutionary atonement, where one suffers in place of others and clears them by bearing the penalty that they deserve, is in view of modern ideas of justice to the individual an immoral outrage. But modern ideas of justice to the individual were not in the background of the Old Testament's thought, and nowhere in the Bible does 'atonement' mean what modern theologies, presupposing modern legal systems, have made it mean. The basis of Biblical ideas of substitution -- one bearing the sin and penalty of all -- was corporate personality, where in deepest earnest the sin of one was regarded as being the sin of all, the punishment due to one as being due to all, and the sacrifice of one, as in the case of Jephthah's daughter, as being offered by all. Biblical ideas of atonement root back in this basic soil and stem out from it; and while the development later carried them to branches far distant from the roots, there is no understanding the topmost twig -- for example, "as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive" -- (1 Corinthians 15:22.) without reference to this origin. When in unmodernized areas of Chinese life today, the legal authorities, unable to capture the real culprit in a felony, seek his son instead to be punished as his substitute, the same ideas and customs are evident with which the Old Testament began. The clear visualization of individual personality as in itself and for itself worthful and significant, with rights and hopes of its own, came only after a long development of life and thought.

6. This early absorption of the individual in the social group is made clear in the Old Testament by the further fact that, at the start, there was no such experience as would be called now 'personal religion.' Religion was of tremendous and penetrating import; nothing was proposed, undertaken, or done, even in what we would call secular affairs, without reference to the divine powers; but all this was a public, tribal concern rather than an inward, private experience. This had been true of Semitic religion, in general, long before the distinctive Hebrew development began. "It was not the business of the gods of heathenism," wrote W. Robertson Smith, "to watch, by a series of special providences, over the welfare of every individual.... The god was the god of the nation or of the tribe, and he knew and cared for the individual only as a member of the community." (Lectures on the Religion of the Semites, pp. 258, 259.) That this held true at the beginning of Israel's relationship with Yahweh is revealed in the narratives of Sinai. Moses, as representative of the tribes, dealt directly with Yahweh, but the individual tribesmen, earnestly as they desired the god's favor on the group and willingly as they might perform all necessary acts to secure it, wanted nothing intimately to do with the god himself. They were commanded not even to touch the mountain where he dwelt; and, as for their own feeling, Yahweh was so fearful in their eyes that they begged he might not speak to them directly in their assembly lest they die. (Exodus 20:19.) At the beginning of the development of the Old Testament, therefore, individual personality was largely submerged in the social mass. The fact of sin and the assurance of punishment, the sense of wrong and the practice of vengeance, the ideal of justice and the power of religion -- all were operative forces but no one of them primarily concerned the individual; he came under their sway mainly as a member of the community.

III The major factors that caused the break-up of this original solidarity and the emergence of the individual into personal worthfulness and meaning can be, at least in outline, seen and described.

1. The passage from nomadic to agricultural life, and so out into the commercialized town life of Palestine, inevitably encouraged a growing individualism. Tribal solidarity, especially in the desert,

exists in large part because it is demanded by the situation. The social arrangements of nomadic clans must of necessity be collectivist. The individual cannot escape his incorporation in the group and his never ending dependence on it; it is the master fact of his experience; his whole life, apart from his most intimate bodily aches, pains, and delights, consists in the shared life of the group. Having seen an Arab chieftain's son, who had attended the American University in Beirut, make his decision between the old nomadic life of his clan, still living in tents, and the new town life which his education made possible, one vividly understands that, choosing the former, he inevitably chose submergence in the social solidarity of his group as against emergence into the individualism of a commercial community. The very fact, therefore, that the Hebrews conquered Palestine, settled in towns, developed private property in land, broke up into economically unequal classes, chose various crafts and businesses, and, as the centuries passed, became part of the diversified international civilization of their day, meant of necessity the gradual diminution of the old tribal cohesion and its associated ideas. The individual in every aspect of his life -- economically, socially, intellectually, morally -- was increasingly thrown on his own as his nomadic forefathers never could have been. Without this underlying social factor, the emergence of the Bible's later evaluation of the individual is not conceivable; with it the way was opened for powerful forces to operate in shaking personality free from its complete incorporation in the group.

2. One of the most evident forces working to this end was the growth of moral and religious nonconformity. In a completely tribal organization of society nonconformity was intolerable. The welfare of the whole group, and especially the favor of the divine powers, were thought to depend upon unanimous respect for tribal customs and taboos and unanimous performances of religious rites. A single man's moral defection, as in Achan's case, or a single family's refusal to follow the leader, as in Korah's jealousy of Moses, (Numbers 16:1 ff.) might bring down on all the group the divine disfavor. Corporate personality, therefore, involved moral and religious uniformity, with the least possible allowance for original thought and action.

Such uniformity, however, never easy to maintain, was impossible amid the moral and religious conflicts into which the new civilization of Canaan and the new worship of the baals plunged the Hebrews. Choices of profound importance had to be made, not only by clans and tribes as a whole, but by minority groups and individuals, and nothing more imperiously calls out the sense of personal worth and dignity than the exercise of moral choice. At this point the prophets, demanding ethical and religious decisions, achieved not only direct results deliberately sought but an indirect result full of future consequence -- they put a premium on nonconformity.

Beginning with Elijah on Carmel, clearly distinguishing Yahweh from Baal and crying, "How long go ye limping between the two sides? if Yahweh be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him," (1 Kings 18:21.) the prophets, explicitly appealing to the people as a whole for decision, implicitly involved in their appeal a challenge to the moral competence of individuals. The messages of Amos, Hosea, Micah, and Isaiah, while addressed to Israel as a whole, demanded decision and action on the part of the Israelite, and this appeal to intellectual discrimination and ethical choice involved a consequence more important than the prophets probably guessed.

Isaiah, for example, based his hope for Israel not on Israel as a whole -- Israel as a whole was too corrupt and disobedient -- but on a righteous "remnant." For the first time in our religious tradition, this prophet stated the doctrine of salvation by a minority. The nation as a whole could not be

saved -- only the purged and righteous portion of it. (Isaiah 1:24-31; Isaiah 10:20-23.) The saving power lay not in the total group but in the true Israel within Israel, "the church within the church." The prophet named his own son, "A remnant shall return [i.e., to Yahweh]," (Isaiah 7:3[marginal translation.]) and looked to his band of disciples, his spiritual offspring, as the hope of the future. (Isaiah 8:16-18.) In a word, he might be said to have formed the first ecclesia, the earliest church, called out from the doomed majority to be a redeeming minority. In this true Israel within Israel, Isaiah saw the vital seed of the nation's hope -- "as a terebinth, and as an oak, whose stock remaineth when they are felled; so the holy seed is the stock thereof." (Isaiah 6:13 [The final phrase was possibly written by a later hand.]). Of this insurgent independence Isaiah's own life was an illustration. He belonged to the ruling class in Judah but he refused to be a partisan of its class interests. He attacked its misuse of prerogative, denounced its social iniquities, vigorously championed the cause of the impoverished, and became in consequence an object of hostility and ridicule. Once, when he came upon a drunken scene, probably in connection with the temple sacrifices, where priests and prophets, as he says, reeled with wine and staggered with strong drink until the tables were full of "vomit and filthiness," he was greeted with the intoxicated jeers of the people's religious leaders: "Whom will he teach knowledge? and whom will he make to understand the message? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts? For it is precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little." (Isaiah 28:9-10.) That is to say, his drunken adversaries imitated baby-talk as a caricature of the prophet's teaching, Saw lasaw saw lasaw Kaw lakaw kaw lakaw Zeir sham zeir sham.

It was because he found himself and his followers in so despised a minority that he wrote his message down that some future time might vindicate his truth against his gainsayers. "Now go," Yahweh commanded him; "write it before them on a tablet, and inscribe it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever. For it is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of Yahweh." (Isaiah 30:8-9.) Out of such moral insurgence and nonconformity grew the emerging sense of personal worth among the Hebrews.

When, in the century after Isaiah, the prophetic movement, cherishing the faith and morals which the nation as a whole had deserted or had failed to reach, came to explicit expression in the reform under Josiah, (2 Kings 23:1-25.) it necessarily involved an appeal to individual courage and cost the break-up of kinship-groups. Of this we have an illustration in Jeremiah. His loyalty to the prophetic party and to his own profound insights cost him such enmity from his own clan, whose prestige and perquisites were being hurt, that they plotted his death. (Jeremiah 11:21-23.) When the later Judaism saw in retrospect this conflict between prophetic ideals and popular religion, it was clear that the social solidarity of the nation had been on the wrong side of the issue and that Jeremiah, in his courageous and sacrificial isolation, had been right. In this regard the Bible records a significant reversal of moral values. Whereas at first nonconformity within the tribe had been an intolerable sin, it now became a necessary virtue. Unanimity with the group as a whole had been at the beginning the sine qua non of Yahweh's favor; now such submergence of moral conviction in the majority's opinion seemed to the real devotees of Yahweh to be supine apostasy. To stand with the solidly coherent group had been at first both ethics and religion; now neither ethical excellence nor the highest religious loyalty was possible without standing out from the group. And along with this appeal to, and response from, the moral competence of individuals had gone an increasing emphasis on personal rights and duties and a general collapse of old ideas

associated with solidarity. It is no accident that Deuteronomy, which sums up the ideals of the pre-Exilic prophetic party, contains an explicit denial of the ancient theory that an innocent person can rightly be punished for another's sin: "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin." (Deuteronomy 24:16.)

3. Powerful as were such pre-Exilic influences -- the rise of a complex civilization and the moral demand for nonconformity -- it was the Exile itself that forced the issue of individualism. So long as social solidarity existed as a fact in Israel and the national group was still coherent, traditional ideas of social solidarity were bound to persist. When, however, the temple was destroyed, the Holy City razed, and the Jews scattered from Babylonia to Egypt, a new and powerful influence was injected into the situation.

Jeremiah represents this influence at work in his own personal experience. Loyal to the prophetic movement of his day, his ideas at the beginning of his ministry were at one with Deuteronomy and the reform under Josiah. His clear foresight, however, soon outran the superficial success of the reform and previsioned the ultimate downfall of the nation. This forced upon him, first in his inner experience and then in his message, a profound deepening of his religious ideas. His own life was lonely -- "I sat not in the assembly of them that make merry, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of thy hand.'' (Jeremiah 15:17.) A sensitive and conscientious man, who to his own grief foresaw the destruction of his nation and could not prevent it, he was hated by his people for his foreboding and thrown inward upon his own soul for his resource. As a result, he made one of the supreme contributions in man's spiritual history to the significance of the individual as the religious unit. He was "loyal to the royal" in himself at a time when social solidarity was rapidly disintegrating. He never ceased caring primarily for the nation, but, if he was to sustain his private integrity and his public prophethood, he was compelled to fall back on God in secret and to find an inner temple when the outer temple was destroyed. That he did this is evidenced in many passages that reveal his intimate, inward struggle with God and reliance on him. "O Yahweh, thou knowest; remember me, and visit me.... Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy words were unto me a joy and the rejoicing of my heart. . . . O Yahweh, my strength, and my stronghold, and my refuge in the day of affliction" (Jeremiah 15:15-16; Jeremiah 16:19.)-- that is personal religion. No factor has been more closely associated with the sense of individual dignity and worth, whether as cause or consequence, than such personal faith. When God was conceived as caring only for the tribal group, only the tribal group was conceived as worth caring for, while the thought of God as the patron and lover of individuals was inevitably associated with the thought of individuals as clearly visualized centers of value. The experience of a personal relationship with God, of which Jeremiah was one of the creative forerunners, thus made an incalculable contribution to the emergence of the individual from the mass. Moreover, this experience with God, while in part dependent on factors of intimate temperament, was accentuated in, and urged upon, needy souls by the removal of all outward props for religion in temple and cult and by the break-up of the nation. For two generations the Jews were forced to a more personal concept of religion in order to have any vital religion at all. The Jews, therefore, outgrew the original narrowness of their tribal ideas of God, not only, as we saw in the last chapter, because of a new extensiveness of vision in the direction of an international faith, but also because of a new intensiveness of experience in the direction of an individual faith. In the end, Yahweh was no longer a tribal god in the old sense of caring solely for

the social group; he was a personal god as well, in the sense of caring for and bringing interior sustenance to individuals, one by one. Out of this new dimension in Israel's experience came such hymns of the post-Exilic temple as Psalms 139:1-24 :

O Yahweh, thou hast searched me, and known me.

Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising;

Thou understandest my thought afar off.

Thou searchest out my path and my lying down, And art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, But, lo, O Yahweh, thou knowest it altogether.

Thou hast beset me behind and before, And laid thy hand upon me. (Psalms 139:1-5.)

Obviously, any individual who thus could speak had emerged from absorption in the group into personal self-consciousness and self-respect.

4. Along with this change in the nature of religious experience, until instead of being a circle with its single center in the tribe it became an ellipse with the nation and the individual for its two foci, went a profound change in moral strategy. After the Exile, as before it, the saving of the nation, whether for its own sake or for the world's, was for all the prophets the ultimate goal. But the sin from which the nation needed to be saved was more and more located within the lives of individuals, and the hoped-for salvation was increasingly seen to depend on individual transformation. Here too, Jeremiah, following the tradition of Hosea and Isaiah, played an important role. He traced national evil back to its ultimate sources in the thoughts and attitudes of persons. If the social group as a whole was sunk in iniquity, the reason lay deep in the quality of the group's constituent individuals -- "The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is exceedingly corrupt: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9.) If on the social group as a whole Yahweh's wrath was falling, the punishment was an inevitable consequence of the way individuals were thinking -- "Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts". (Jeremiah 6:19.) And if salvation was to come, the only hope of it lay in the interior cleansing of the people's spirit -- "O Jerusalem, wash thy heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thine evil thoughts lodge within thee?" (Jeremiah 4:14.) While, therefore, as always, national reformation was the desired end, a significant deepening was going on in estimating the conditions which would make that possible, and ever more clearly it was seen that no national reformation could be permanent without individual regeneration. (E.g., Jeremiah 31:31-34.)

5. Under such influences as these, the social mass lost its indiscriminateness and the constituent persons emerged into clarity and importance, until the ideas of justice associated with the old social solidarity became intolerable. Men, one by one, now had status, each in his own right, and the sense of equity, no longer satisfied by mass judgment on mass sin, demanded fair play for every individual. The innocent ought not to suffer for the guilty; each should stand on his own feet and be responsible only for his own deeds -- such flat denial of the ideas with which the Old Testament started now became the express teaching of the later Judaism. Of this new doctrine Ezekiel was the most uncompromising spokesman. This is the more notable because Ezekiel was the advocate of a restored church state on Zion, and was one of the most effective forces in reestablishing the social structure whose breakdown had encouraged individualism. He was far

from being as profound a soul as Jeremiah, but in his youth he had been under Jeremiah's influence and he carried through to a logical extreme the doctrine of individualism that the older prophet had encouraged. The old orthodoxy, born out of tribal solidarity, Ezekiel could not tolerate. That one should suffer penalty for another's sin or for the group's sin as a whole seemed to him essentially unjust. So thoroughgoing was his revolt that he swung to the opposite extreme and in his individualism became a veritable atomist. No punishment from God, he taught, ever leaks through from a guilty man to an innocent, even in the intimate relationships of the family; each is penalized exclusively for his own iniquity. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.'' (Ezekiel 18:20.) This extreme statement of the case was called out from Ezekiel by the situation in Babylonia. The exiled Jews were blaming their disaster on their fathers. Unwilling to assume responsibility for the sin that had caused the nation's downfall, they found their defense mechanism in ascribing the guilt to their ancestors. "The fathers have eaten sour grapes," they said, "and the children's teeth are set on edge." (Ezekiel 18:2.) Such refusal to accept responsibility for the crisis was so easy a method of avoiding obligation in the crisis that Ezekiel found in the ancient orthodoxy, according to which one suffers for another's sin, a dangerous stumblingblock to the nation's reconstruction. If the earlier prophets had been forced to appeal to individuals for decision, even more was Ezekiel constrained, amid the disintegration of the nation, to arouse individual minds and consciences and to gather a responsible and convinced minority. He launched his attack, therefore, against all excuses for evading obligation and especially against the doctrine that God rewards and punishes men in masses. That never happens, the prophet taught. God deals with individuals, one by one, and each receives the just recompense of his own deeds:

What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord Yahweh, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die. But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right . . . he shall surely live, saith the Lord Yahweh.

If he beget a son that is a robber, a shedder of blood. . . he [the son] shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him.

Now, lo, if he beget a son, that seeth all his father's sins, which he hath done, and feareth, and doeth not such like . . . he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live. . . .

Yet say ye, Wherefore doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right . . . he shall surely live. The soul that sinneth, it shall die. . . .

Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord Yahweh. (Ezekiel 18:1-132)

It is difficult to imagine a more emphatic statement of thoroughgoing individualism or a more explicit denial of the old doctrine that Yahweh visits "the iniquity of the fathers upon the children." (Exodus 20:5.) So extreme was the statement that it rose later to plague Judaism. Taken by itself, without the balancing truth contained in the idea of social solidarity, Ezekiel's teaching was no

adequate account of the facts. Men do not stand, one by one, like bottles in the rain; rather, like interflowing streams, they share their fortunes. The consequences of personal goodness and badness are not confined to the individual; they spill over through multitudinous channels into other persons and into society at large. Ezekiel's extreme doctrine of individualism, therefore, far from settling the question, started a controversy which Judaism never finished, as is plain in Job's unconquerable doubt of divine justice to individuals, and Ecclesiastes' scornful denial of it.

While, however, Ezekiel's words, as now recorded, overstate the case by a wide margin, he made a necessary contribution to the emergence of personal rights. The individual now stood clear of the mass, an object of divine care, reward, and punishment, and never afterward could Judaism lose sight of him as one indispensable focus in the religious ellipse.

6. Partly as a consequence of this rise of interest in individuality, and partly as a cause of deepening concern with it, came belief in the resurrection of at least some persons from Sheol, the land of the dead. Obviously, men could not pass through the experience of death and out again into a resurrected life in masses; death in any generation is not like a wide thoroughfare but like a turnstile, through which men go one by one. The emergent belief in resurrection from Sheol, therefore, both sprang from and reacted upon the increasing importance of personality. Even when life after death was a very vague hope, held by only a few, scornfully denied by some, supposed to affect only a selected group of saints and sinners, (E.g., Daniel 12:2.) the fact that the possibility of resurrection was in Judaism's thought incalculably heightened the importance of personality. To some, at least, it had become so worthful that God cared for it intimately, dealt with it separately, and would preserve it eternally. This influence on the increasing sense of individual importance was heavily accentuated between the Testaments.

IV When one passes from the Old Testament into the New, one finds Christian thinking, in this regard as in every other, rooted in the prophetic tradition. One factor, however -- the complete separation between church and synagogue -- made possible to the early Christians a much more unimpeded treatment of the individual soul as the religious unit.

However much original insight and thought may have contributed to the high estimate of personality that is one of the chief characteristics of the New Testament, the fact remains that, until religion was disentangled from nationalism, the full meaning of personality could not stand clear. Judaism, in the centuries between the Exile and the coming of Jesus, was inextricably identified with a special race and a special national state. Indeed, after the Exile, nationalism and racialism came back with a vengeance. The evils endured by the returning exiles, the need of uncompromising separateness if they were not to be assimilated and lost, the bitter resentment aroused by the cruelty of Hellenistic and Roman conquerors, constrained Judaism not only to social solidarity but, in Palestine especially, to extreme racial, national, and religious particularism. While, therefore, the lessons of the prophets, far from being forgotten, bore fruit in great examples of personal piety, the prophetic tradition could not break through to its logical conclusion -- religion as a free, individual choice, regardless of race or nation. To be sure, from the days of the Exile on, the majority of Jews lived not in Palestine but in foreign lands, where they were played upon by alien customs and ideas, and in such a situation continued fealty to the ancestral faith was far more a matter of individual choice than it was in the homeland. Thus, among the dispersed Jews, as Dr. George Foot Moore writes, "The older ideas of national solidarity were supplemented and to

some extent superseded by personal responsibility.'' (Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era, Vol. I, pp. 224-5.) It is true, therefore, that universalistic tendencies in Judaism outside Palestine were emerging, that proselytism was active, that a relaxation of ritualistic and legalistic requirements was in process, that men of other races and nations were being drawn to the synagogue by Jewish monotheism and morality, and that profound changes were taking place in certain areas of Judaism under Hellenistic influence. Nevertheless, whatever loosening of religious demands or of theological orthodoxies may have taken place among dispersed Jews, Jewish nationalism continued unabated, and not until the highest levels of the prophetic teaching had been released from it could religion become a matter of free, personal choice, determined not by racial stock or national allegiance but by individual conviction In the Old Testament taken as a whole, the controlling and creative factor is the social group. This is the abiding reality from which individuals spring and in loyalty to which they find their meaning. In the New Testament taken as a whole, while the church is always in the forefront of attention, the dominant, creative factor is individuals. They are the primary participants in religious experience; they are the unit of value; the social group, the church -- while it is conceived to be in unbroken continuity the true "commonwealth of Israel'' (Ephesians 2:11-12.) -- is produced and sustained by their freely chosen, cooperative fidelity; and entrance into God's kingdom, whether on earth or in heaven, depends on personal quality. It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of this shift in emphasis. The Old Testament starts with social solidarity so complete that the individual has practically no rights, and achieves at last profound insight into the meaning, worth, and possibility of personal life. The New Testament starts with personalities as in themselves supremely valuable, and conceives the "beloved community" in terms of their free cooperation and the social hope of the kingdom of God the crowning evidence of their faith and loyalty. The opportunity to try this significant experiment in an inter-racial, international religion of converted individuals was given to the early Christians and indeed was forced upon them by Judaism itself when it drove them from the synagogue.

While, however, this disentangling of the Hebrew-Christian tradition from its incorporation in a special race and state provided the indispensable setting for a religion of free, personal choice, the influence of Jesus himself is needed to explain what happened. He himself never broke away from Judaism, but he did, like a greater Jeremiah or Ezekiel, carry the principle of individuality into the forefront of his faith. He found the center of all spiritual values on earth in personal lives and their possibilities. "Jesus Christ," says Harnack, "was the first to bring the value of every human soul to light.'' (Adolf Harnack: What is Christianity? translated by Thomas Bailey Saunders[2d revised ed., 1912], p.73.) By whatever road one approaches the message or ministry of Jesus, one finds this factor dominant and determining.

1. In the religious experience which Jesus wished to share with his disciples, inwardness was an essential quality. He was unashamedly subjective in his description of vital religion's nature. At its creative center was an intimate personal relationship with God; (E.g., Matthew 6:6.) its ethical fruitage came from rightness of interior disposition; (E.g., Matthew 7:16-20.) nothing outward, however worthy in itself, could be a substitute for such goodness of character and motive. (E.g., Matthew 6:1-4, Matthew 6:5-15, Matthew 6:16-18.) In this Jesus was the fulfiller of Jeremiah with his emphasis on "thoughts of naughtiness" (Jeremiah 4:14 as translated by S.R. Driver: The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah, p. 24.) as the source of outward evil and on regeneration of spiritual

quality as the basis of social reformation. (Cf. Matthew 15:19-20.) In the Jewish law, three of the main areas of legislation concerned murder, adultery, and perjury, and in the Sermon on the Mount Jesus took pains to trace all three back to intimate, personal dispositions revealed in "the angry word, the lustful look, the evasive formula." (H. Wheeler Robinson: The Christian Doctrine of Man, p. 94. Cf. Matthew 5:21 ff.) Such inwardness is inexplicable save as one sees Jesus taking the principle of individuality in thorough earnest and conceiving the religious life as rooted inside persons, one by one.

2. Along with this went Jesus' faith in the moral competence of personality. Granted his vivid recognition of the disastrous individual effects of evil social conditions, it still remains true that he believed in the ability of persons to resist environment and rise above it. He appealed confidently to man's capacity for moral choice. Repent, he said -- that is, change your mind -- in the assurance that despite outward conditions men could do that if inwardly they would. It was within the power of the Prodigal Son to say, "I will arise and go to my father"; (Luke 15:18.) it was within the power of the sinful woman to "go . . . sin no more". (John 8:11.) In Jesus' thinking, God was so committed to the support of right choices that the divine resources could be counted on by all who threw their wills on the right side. Thus the primary center of ethical decision was within the individual, and like Ezekiel Jesus would have resisted any person's endeavor to evade responsibility for his own conduct. In this regard he was fulfilling the prophetic tradition and would have agreed with the writer of the Apocalypse of Baruch: "Each of us has been the Adam of his own soul." (II Baruch 54:19.) In consequence, his moral appeal was habitually directed to individual consciences and his moral blame was visited on refractory wills. Personalities stood out, clearly visualized in his imagination, and one by one he called them, even while in the world, not to be of it.

3. Along with this went Jesus' use of ideas and language drawn from the family. In his religious heritage, fatherhood, motherhood, marriage, sonship, and brotherhood had been familiar descriptions of divine-human relationships. Nevertheless, when the Old Testament refers to God's fatherhood, it is almost always Israel as a whole rather than the individual Israelite that is the son, (E.g., Deuteronomy 32:6; Isaiah 63:16; Isaiah 64:8; Hosea 11:1-3; Jeremiah 3:4, Jeremiah 3:19; cf.Isaiah 1:2; Deuteronomy 1:31.) and when in a few instances individuals are referred to as sons of God, it is either Israelites in general (E.g.,Hosea 1:10.) or their Messiah (E.g.,2 Samuel 7:14; Psalms 2:7; Psalms 89:26.) in particular that is intended. While, therefore, as we have said, (Chap. I, p.37.) the divine fatherhood in the Old Testament is personal as well as national, it remains true that in the Hebrew Scripture the idea that God's fatherhood, whether of nations or of persons, extends beyond the borders of Jewry is nowhere explicitly stated. The universality of God is typically expressed by calling him "a great King over all the earth," (Psalms 47:2.) but his fatherhood is spoken of as the prerogative of Israel and the Israelites.

Few factors were as influential in Jesus' teaching as the seriousness with which he appropriated from his Old Testament heritage these home relationships as symbolizing divine-human kinship, and the insight with which he enlarged and deepened this use of the family. The home was normative in Jesus' thought of God and man. The divine fatherhood, true religion as filial relationship with God, God's cosmic goodwill to all his children whether deserving or not, (Luke 6:35-36; Matthew 5:45-48.) God's undiscourageable care for each child, however wayward, (Luke 15:1-32.) the ideal of human relationships as a social order where the principles of the family shall be universalized --all such conceptions, familiar in Jesus' teaching, go back to the home for their

rootage and sustenance. "The family," wrote Professor George William Knox, "is by nature the social unit, and Jesus makes its terms dominate the whole series of his conceptions.'' (The Gospel of Jesus the Son of God, An Interpretation for the Modern Man, p. 65.)

Now, the family is the one social group, so far developed in human history, in which each personality is of essential value. In a good home, no matter how many children there may be, each possesses individual status and rights, and in the eyes of all the rest has separate and inalienable meaning and worth. This conception characterized Jesus' outlook on mankind. His was the astounding faith that, in this regard, the attitude of a good home could be carried out into an evil world. His view of man, therefore, is throughout conditioned by the family and, in consequence, each person is regarded as a child of God, possessing intrinsic value.

4. Along with this went Jesus' conviction that moral destinies, here and hereafter, are personal affairs. One of the major factors in concentrating attention on the individual has always been faith in some form of immortality. Between the Testaments this belief became the assured conviction of those Jews who belonged to the dominant school of the Pharisees, and in Jesus and the Christian community after him this confidence rose into triumphant certainty.

Immortal destinies, however, are individual affairs. To be sure, under the influence of social solidarity, Hebrew hopes of the future were in the beginning centered on an undying nation upon earth, but when hope outgrew this early stage and resurrection from Sheol became a Jewish expectation, it took of necessity the form of an individual return. While at first the individual was pictured as returning to join the undying and triumphant nation on the earth, still the door, once opened to personal hope, could not be closed and the future world involved promise of individual, heavenly destinies. In the light of eternal life in its developed forms, even the most cohesive national solidarity tends to disintegrate. One need not surrender a primary loyalty to one's own race, but one tends to spiritualize the meaning of one's race, to teach, for example, as Jesus did, that to be a true son of Abraham is a matter of moral quality and that God could out of the stones of the field make Abraham's sons, if the lineal descendants of his flesh proved false. (Matthew 3:9.) In the New Testament, beginning with Jesus himself, the projection of personal destinies into the future world plainly accentuated the importance of the individual and made souls the objects of solicitude and the subjects of salvation. Exhortations to flee the wrath to come and promises of eternal life were alike addressed to individuals. In this regard the indirect results of the rising faith in immortality seem at times as important as the substance of the faith itself.

5. Of one piece with this thorough acceptance of individuality in Jesus' teaching was his faith in the care of God for persons. The contrast here between the beginning of Israel's development and the outcome in the New Testament is clear. Jesus' God was primarily the father of souls, whose will it was that not "one of these little ones should perish,'' (Matthew 18:14.) whose joy it was to see one sinner repent, (Luke 15:1-32.) whose intimate care could even be symbolized in such terms as numbering the very hairs of our heads. (Matthew 10:30; Luke 12:6-7.) This idea is so emphatic in the Gospels that it can easily be interpreted as individualistic in a narrow and imprisoning sense. As a matter of fact, the result of it was not confining but liberating; up this road early Christianity moved into a universal gospel. For if God is conceived as caring for persons as persons, and so in the end as caring for personality everywhere, no boundaries of state or race can be thought of as circumscribing his relationship with souls. Far from being individualistic in an imprisoning sense,

Jesus' exaltation of the worth of personality was an open road toward the universality both of his God and his gospel. This is clear when one interprets Jesus' thought of God's care for individuals as a reflection of his own life. He himself cared supremely for individuals. There is little chance of exaggerating the fact that the central object of Jesus' concern was persons, that in personality he found life's supreme value, that in the possibilities of personality he put his faith and invested his service. He himself thus interpreted the principle of his ministry and the secret of his divergence from current orthodoxy. (Matthew 12:11-12; Mark 2:27.) So caring for persons, he found it impossible to stop caring when faced with the artificial boundary lines of race or nation. He cared for a Roman centurion (Matthew 8:5-13.) and for a Samaritan. (Luke 10:25-37.) The logical outcome, therefore, of his type of individualism was universalism, with the center of value and the object of devotion shifted from special race or nation to personality wherever found and within whatever social group in corporated. This is an historic paradox of the first importance -- Christian universalism came out of Christian individualism. To this day the national and racial prejudices which disgrace Christendom are due to the failure of Christians to care so supremely for personality that no boundaries can confine their sense of its value.

6. Far from being a denial of such emphasis on individuality or even a limitation of its meaning, Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom of God was of one piece with what we have been saying. Jesus' message certainly was not individualistic in the sense that he put souls over against God's universal and consummated sovereignty, as though he cared for the first and neglected the second. Rather, the primary element in his preaching was the proclamation of the coming of God's righteous reign, but both the motive and the meaning of his faith in that new order of life were inseparable from his care for personality. In Jesus' thought the divine kingship is here already, to be acknowledged in the doing of God's will. God's sovereignty a present reality to be sometime consummated in his universally acknowledged reign -- such is the meaning of the 'kingdom' in Jesus' teaching. God is sovereign now de jure; sometime he will be de facto. To identify this transcendent hope with the temporal details of a new social order on the earth is to miss its full significance. Belief that the eternal sovereign would assert his universal sway in a new realm of righteousness required more superhuman and inclusive factors than any social reform could supply. Nevertheless, this coming reign of God involved the ending of social wrongs, and it is of importance to note that, so far as the records reveal, Jesus' concern about social iniquities always sprang from his indignant perception of their ill effect on individuals. The victim of the bandits on the Jerusalem-Jericho road, (Luke 10:30-37.) the widow mistreated by an unjust judge, (Luke 18:2-6[cf. Mark 12:40.) the unfortunates on whom publicans like Zaccheus practiced extortion, (Luke 19:2-10.) the destitute at a rich man's door, (Luke 16:19-31.) prisoners unvisited and hungry folk unfed (Matthew 25:42-43.) -- always it was wronged individuals who called out from Jesus a social message. To him the greatest of evils was represented by personality mistreated and unfulfilled; the greatest of good was represented by personality released into abundant life. One cannot imagine any picture of the kingdom, satisfying to Jesus, that did not involve this fulfillment of personal life. He doubtless conceived the method of the kingdom's coming in apocalyptic terms, as a dramatic overthrow of the earthly status quo by a heavenly invasion, but the meaning of the kingdom to him was centered, not in the victorious supremacy of one race and nation. but in the conferring of abundant life on human beings.

V

Passing from the ministry of Jesus into the New Testament as a whole, one finds the principle of individuality uncompromisingly stated. The teaching of the Master in this regard fitted, as hand in glove, the practical situation that the early Christians faced. Whether expelled from the synagogue or won over from Gentile faiths, they perforce became Christians as individuals. Moreover, the intrinsic value of the human soul was made central in their thought, not only by the teaching of the Master but, even more, by the doctrine of the church concerning him. Christ died for every man (2 Corinthians 5:14-15; Hebrews 2:9.) -- that conviction put the capstone on the arch. Each soul was lifted into inestimable worth as being the object of divine sacrifice. Loved of God, died for by God's Son, carrying in itself eternal destinies, the human soul became far and away the most valuable reality with which human life and thought could be concerned. To use Browning's phrase, in the thinking of the New Testament, "thy soul and God stand sure." (Robert Browning: "Rabbi Ben Ezra.")

Climactic though this is, however, to the special development we have been tracing, human life is far too complicated to be comprehended by an individualistic formula. No sooner had early Christianity thus carried the insights of great prophets, like Jeremiah and Ezekiel, through to their logical conclusion, than it found itself facing the profound and inescapable truths involved in social solidarity.

I. For one thing, the early Christians, stepping out from old social groups, were at once compelled to begin building a group of their own. The New Testament clearly reveals with what insistent certainty, as one decade followed another, the church took an ever more central and important position in the experience of Christians. Converted individuals they were, to be sure, but they found themselves engaged with increasing concentration on the task of creating a fellowship. In this "beloved community "their faith was kindled, by its consensus of opinion their thinking was directed, and in its mutual encouragement they gained stimulus and stability. Even within New Testament times, the church became the body of which individual Christians were organic members. (1 Corinthians 12:1-31.)

Indeed, at this point we stand in danger of misrepresenting what went on in the mind of an early Christian like Paul. Basic in his thought was the unbroken continuity between the old dispensation and the new. As Martin Luther, aware of the abrupt transition he was making, was even more convinced that his movement, far from deserting Christianity, represented the true Christian church, so Paul conceived his gospel as the fulfillment of the Old Testament and believers in Jesus Christ as the true Israel. In his thinking, therefore, there was no break in the continuity of the social group; the church was God's true people, inheriting the promises and carrying on the great tradition of Israel. For this idea he had support in the ancient prophetic conception of a faithful and saving remnant standing out from a disobedient and apostate people. "Even so then, "he wrote, "at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." (Romans 11:5.) To Paul, therefore, the church was the continuation of the assembly of Israel, in which the eternal purpose of God was being worked out and whose head was the Messiah. (This idea underlines such passages as Galatians 3:1-29; Galatians 4:1-31; Romans 9:1-33; Romans 10:1-21; Romans 11:1-36; Colossians 1:1-23.)

Even the very early Christians could thus conceive themselves as children of the church rather than as its creators. New though it was, in a deeper sense it was old and out of its long

accumulated heritage had come the gospel they professed. So started a development of thought that later led to the declaration that the church is the mother of all to whom God is the father. The priority of the social group over the individual naturally returned. The church could discipline its members, expel heretics, command assent. (E. g., 1 Corinthians 5:1-13, 1 Corinthians 6:1-20, 1 Corinthians 7:1-40, 1 Corinthians 8:1-13, 1 Corinthians 9:1-27, 1 Corinthians 10:1-33, 1 Corinthians 11:1-34.) According to Paul, not only did Christ die for every man, he died for the church. (Ephesians 5:25.) This group consciousness, accentuated by persecution from without, rose to such power and became so central in the thinking of Christians that, in the First Epistle of John, the test of genuine faith and life is love of the Christian brethren. (Cf. 1 John 3:14.) To suppose, therefore, that the New Testament disciples, carrying to high fulfillment the principle of individuality, escaped the problems of social solidarity is to misread the situation. They met those problems on the new level of an inter-racial, international fellowship entered by free personal choice, but all subsequent Christian history bears witness to the fact that the adjustment between society and the individual, both within the church and out of it, still remained one of the most crucial problems of mankind.

2. Moreover, by no manner of emphasis upon the importance of individuals could early Christians escape, any more than we can, the towering evils of society at large. To be sure, their hope of a "new heaven and a new earth'' (Revelation 21:1.) was cast in apocalyptic molds. By a divine invasion of the world, stopping history in mid-course and suddenly inaugurating the new age, God, not man, would bring the kingdom of heaven to earth. In the meantime, salvation was individual, not social. Paul never dreamed of gradually saving the Roman Empire; he gloried in saving souls out of the Empire, persuading them to turn "from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven." (1 Thessalonians 1:9-10.) Protected by this apocalyptic hope from any sense of obligation to reform society, New Testament Christians concentrated attention on individual quality. The end of the world was at hand, and in view of this ultimate and swiftly approaching judgment day, personal readiness to meet it was the main desideratum, and personal morals fit to meet it were described in terms of the highest idealism. As Professor Alfred Whitehead puts it: "The result was that with passionate earnestness they gave free rein to their absolute ethical intuitions respecting ideal possibilities without a thought of the preservation of society." (Adventures of Ideas, p. 19.)

Protected from undertaking the reformation of this present world, therefore, by its apocalyptic faith in the divine invasion soon to come, early Christian individualism ran headlong into the danger of being as unbalanced on its side as the ancient Hebrews had been on the side of social solidarity. Moreover, this danger was accentuated when Christian thought and Greek thought coalesced. The human soul as the supreme reality next to God was no discovery of Hebrew or of Christian faith. That idea was an organic part of the Platonic philosophy. "For six hundred years," writes Professor Whitehead, "the ideal of the intellectual and moral grandeur of the human soul had haunted the ancient Mediterranean world." (Ibid., pp. 17-18.) It is no accident that Platonic philosophy and the Christian religion readily discovered common ground, and that, in particular, Platonic ideas of the sublimity of the human soul were assimilated by Christian doctrine. Moreover, the Greek mystery religions, the influence of which on certain areas of the New Testament seems clear, were primarily means of personal salvation out of this world into the present possession and the future assurance of eternal life. So difficult is the achievement of balance in human thought

and experience that one sees even the Bible moving from an original sense of social solidarity, lacking adequate recognition of individuality, to a sense of the value of the single human soul, in danger of lacking adequate consciousness of social obligation. It is at this point that Christians should feel profoundly grateful for the Old Testament and for the persistent effect of its great prophetic tradition. From the days of Marcion in the second century, certain Christians, troubled by the anthropomorphisms of the early Old Testament and by the immoralities attributed to Yahweh, have discredited the Hebrew books and have even wished to drop them from the Christian Bible. The fact is, however, that not only is it impossible to understand the New Testament without the Old, but that the New Testament alone presents an incomplete statement of the range of moral obligation. The reason for this is patent. No Christian writer of the New Testament, so far as our records reveal, ever faced the responsibility of applying high moral principles to preserving the institutions of society, administering governments, handling international relationships, prosecuting social reforms, or even mitigating by public measures the inequities of an economic system. When we have emphasized to the full the immense gains made possible by the separation of the Christian movement from a special national state, we need also to remember that thereby the early Christian movement escaped practical administrative responsibility for the most difficult social problems that mankind faces. With these social problems the Hebrew prophets were continually concerned, and to their solution gave such creative thought that to this day all revivals of social conscience among Christians draw inspiration and direction from them.

Indeed, so integral are the Old and New Testaments to each other and so truly was Jesus a Hebrew prophet in the great succession from Amos and Hosea on, that from the beginning a powerful social conscience was injected into Christianity. In the light of its own records in the Gospels, it never could so individualize its thought as to be satisfied by subjectivism alone. The hope of the "new earth," whatever the method of its coming, was a revolutionary social expectation. Far from being secondary, it was primary -- the first element in Jesus' original preaching and the ultimate consummation of the "eternal purpose." Despite all influences to the contrary, it lifted a standard of judgment in the light of which the Christian conscience at its best could not be content with social evil. From its early days, therefore, until the present, Christianity never has been able completely to reduce itself to a circle with one center, the soul; always the great tradition has called it back to be an ellipse around two foci, the individual and society. In this regard the debt of Christians to the Old Testament's sturdy, realistic consciousness of social solidarity is immeasurable. As for the New Testament's special contribution, that too has proved to be of incalculable importance in the history of ideas. It carried to fulfillment a long development of thought, disentangling persons from submergence in the social mass and giving to each one status, meaning, and rights of his own; it concentrated attention on the spiritual value of personality and its possibilities; it created a religion to be entered by free personal choice, regardless of race or nation; it set persons to building a social fellowship for the redemption of souls; and it proclaimed as the ultimate goal of divine creation and human hope the kingdom of God in "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Peter 3:13.)

VI

Accompanying this development of thought concerning the relations between the individual and society, the Bible records another development concerning man's interior nature without tracing which the first cannot be fully understood. Words, for example, which we have been freely using,

such as ‘personality’ and ‘soul,’ require interpretation. They never have had a static meaning and their modern connotations are misleading when applied to ancient thought. Indeed, it requires a difficult tour de force of imagination for the modern mind to grasp the ideas of man’s inner nature characteristic of Biblical religion. In general it may be said that just as the early Hebrews had never in their thinking broken up the social mass so as clearly to visualize the individual, they never had broken up the individual so as to distinguish between what we should call ‘soul’ and ‘body.’ The primitive mind started with man as he visibly appeared, a physical organism, and even when primitiveness had been overpassed and ideas had begun to move out toward more adequate conceptions, alike the thoughts of men and the words they used moved still on the physical plane. For example, the idea of soul among the Hebrews, as among early peoples generally, started with the physical breath. The obvious difference between the quick and the dead lies in the presence or absence of breathing. The first ‘soul,’ therefore, that man had was not metaphysical or spiritual but material. So the Latin word for soul is anima -- breath -- from which comes our word ‘animated’; the Japanese word for soul originally meant ‘wind-ball,’ and for death, ‘breath departure’; the Hindu word for soul is atman, from which comes our word ‘atmosphere.’ Similarly, the Hebrew word nephesh may best be translated ‘breath-soul,’ as is clear, for example, in the early story of man’s creation: Yahweh shaped man from dust out of the ground, and blew into his nostrils the breath of life, so that man became a nephesh -- that is, an animated being. (Genesis 2:7.) This intriguing word cannot be translated by any single English expression without doing violence to its original meaning. Probably no instance occurs where ‘breath’ in a purely literal sense is a completely adequate translation; there is another word, neshamah, for that. The meaning of nephesh, however, ranges all the way from a significance difficult to distinguish from physical breath up to connotations clearly spiritual, so that no English word can sweep the gamut, and in consequence our English Versions are commonly misleading. When Elijah complained, "They seek my nephesh, to take it away," (1 Kings 19:10.) he doubtless meant ‘life,’ as the Revisers have rendered it; and when the psalmist cried, "Let them be put to shame and brought to dishonor that seek after my nephesh," (Psalms 35:4.) he also meant ‘life’ and not ‘soul,’ in our modern sense, as the translation suggests. When Elijah raised the son of the widow of Zarephath and "the nephesh of the child came into him again, and he revived," (1 Kings 17:22.) the rendering would be far more truly ‘breath’ than ‘soul.’ Sometimes the word connoted the seat of emotional life -- "the distress of his nephesh" ; (Genesis 42:21.) sometimes the seat of physical appetite -- "our nephesh loatheth this light bread"; (Numbers 21:5.) sometimes the seat of desire in general -- "whatsoever thy nephesh desireth.'' (1 Samuel 20:4.) But the word also ranged up until it stood for the whole inner life of man: "The law of Yahweh is perfect, restoring the nephesh"; (Psalms 19:7.) "A sojourner shalt thou not oppress: for ye know the nephesh of a sojourner, seeing ye were sojourners in the land of Egypt.", (Exodus 23:9.) Nevertheless, however wide and high its range, the word always kept the flavor of its origin. This first breath-soul of man never involved so clear a discrimination between the physical and the nonphysical that its existence apart from a physical organism was conceivable.

Indeed, the identification of what we call spirit with the material body is clearly seen in the Old Testament, as among all early peoples, in the functions ascribed to the bodily organs. Some eighty different portions of the body are named in the Hebrew books. The brain, strangely enough, is not mentioned and there are no terms for nerves, for lungs, or for diaphragm. Thinking is associated with the heart, not with the brain. (Isaiah 10:7; Matthew 9:4.) In the ancient world in general, such

ideas held sway and even Aristotle conceived no function for the brain except to cool the blood. While the Hebrews, however, had only a rough and ready knowledge of bodily functions, they experienced the intimate identification of mental and emotional life with them. A man to them was primarily a body, animated, to be sure, with a breath-soul, but still basically a body, and all his experiences, intellectual and emotional as well as physical, were conceived in bodily terms.

Three organs, in particular, were regarded by the Hebrews as the seats of what we should call psychical activity -- heart, kidneys, and bowels. Of these the heart came, in the end, to have the widest usage and the most abiding importance, so that it has passed over into modern speech and we still symbolize our emotions in terms of it. At the beginning, however, this usage was not confined to one organ, and far from being figurative, it represented the literal thinking of the people. In the Old Testament the heart is used, as we use it, to express emotional experiences, such as anxiety -- "his heart trembled"; (1 Samuel 4:13.) joy -- "the priest's heart was glad"; (Judges 18:20.) love -- "the king's heart was toward Absalom"; (2 Samuel 14:1.) even intoxicated gaiety -- "Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunken." (1 Samuel 25:36.) But it is also used to express mental activity, such as meditation -- "Thou shalt say in thy heart"; (Deuteronomy 7:17.) or the achievement of wisdom -- "an understanding heart to judge thy people." (1 Kings 3:9.) Even beyond this the word is used to express, as nephesh does, the whole inner life and character -- "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but Yahweh looketh on the heart." (1 Samuel 16:7.) The naturalness of this manner of speech in our usage should not deceive us as to its original meaning. To us it is figurative; at the beginning of our Hebrew-Christian tradition it was literal. The meaning then was not that personality, conceived somehow in metaphysical terms as a soul, had sensations and experiences mediated through or associated with its physical organism. Then the physical organism was the man and the bodily organs were the active agents of experience. 'The heart' was not a metaphor for 'the spirit,' nor was there any psychological theory to explain that the experiences of the self are associated with organic sensations. All such sophisticated thinking was still centuries ahead. It was the heart itself that felt, thought, desired, and decided. As H. W. Robinson summarily puts it: "The body, not the soul, is the characteristic element of Hebrew personality." (The Christian Doctrine of Man, p. 12.) In a word, the Old Testament began with a thoroughgoing primitive behaviorism. This is the more easily seen when we turn to the Old Testament's use of bodily organs other than the heart. So alien to our manner of speech are certain passages that when the bowels, for example, are employed to express love (Song of Solomon 5:4.) or compassion (Isaiah 16:11.) or distress, Jeremiah 4:19.) the Revised Version declines a literal rendering and disguises what the Hebrew says in euphemisms -- 'heart' or 'inward parts.' In the same way, the kidneys are used as the seat both of discontent (Psalms 73:21.) and of wise meditation, (Psalms 16:7) but in our translations we must turn to the margin to discover that the word rendered 'heart' really means 'reins.' The Old Testament, therefore, plainly begins with man as a physical being, whose emotional and intellectual life is a physical function.

Indeed, this entirely realistic view of human nature is further shown in the identification of life with blood. Not only loss of breath but loss of blood means death, and this fact was seized upon by the early Hebrews, as by other peoples, as the basis of an elaborate superstructure of religious ritual. The blood was sacred; in the sacrifices it belonged to the god; for a man to partake of it was to break an important taboo. Behind this sanctity of blood in sacrificial ceremonies stood a profoundly

influential idea concerning the nature of life: "The blood is the life''; (Deuteronomy 12:23.) "As to the life of all flesh, the blood thereof is all one with the life thereof." (Leviticus 17:14.) So basically physical was human nature as the Hebrew religion first conceived it.

Moreover, within the boundaries of the Old Testament, the Hebrew religion never outgrew the idea that man's life is indissolubly associated with his body. This is evident from the fact that when the hope of life after death emerged, it took the form of bodily resurrection. The Hebrews, prior to the days when the Neo-Platonic philosophy affected Alexandrian Judaism, never thought of life after death except in terms of a resurrected body. The Old Testament reflects not at all Platonic teaching about the soul as imprisoned in the flesh and escaping at death to the realm of pure spirit, but rather Egyptian teaching, with its hope of a physical resurrection. What the Egyptians pictured the sky goddess as doing when she raised up the departed, an early Hebrew, beginning to believe in life after death, might have pictured Yahweh as doing: "She sets on again for thee thy head, she gathers for thee thy bones, she unites for thee thy members, she brings for thee thy heart into thy body." (As quoted by James H. Breasted: The Dawn of Conscience, p. 48.) As we shall see in a succeeding chapter, so persistent was this realistic manner of thinking that, however sublimated, it still underlies and is necessary to explain the Jewish-Christian passages on immortality in the New Testament. In Paul's thought, to be sure, the resurrected body was to be spiritualized; it was to be no longer "flesh and blood," but his desire was not to be "unclothed" in the future world but "clothed upon "with a body. (1 Corinthians 15:1-58; 2 Corinthians 5:4.) The age-long and still influential Christian doctrine of bodily resurrection thus goes back to primitive Hebrew behaviorism, which always conceived soul as a function of the material organism and never, like Greek philosophy, conceived immortality as escape from the imprisoning flesh.

VII The development that took place in the Old Testament, however, was profoundly important and was achieved in characteristic Hebrew fashion. The Jews in their native estate were not given to metaphysical speculation. Their minds were practical, their interests ethical, their manner of thinking picturesque and dramatic. They did not leap to all-inclusive, abstract generalizations such as one finds in Greek or Hindu philosophy. Whether in working out their idea of God or man, one sees them thinking their way through practical situations a step at a time, and nowhere is this matter-of-fact, realistic method of making progress more evident than in their developing idea of human nature. They neither started nor ended with sweeping generalizations about a metaphysical soul; they simply became more and more concerned with, intent upon, and intelligent about those aspects of human life which we call ethical and spiritual.

One of the most interesting consequences of this is seen in the expanding meaning of one supremely important Hebrew word, ruach. Just as the word nephesh, beginning with a significance difficult to distinguish from physical breath, enlarged its horizons until it came to stand for the interior life of man as a whole, so the word ruach began its career on the physical level. In pre Exilic literature it was used mainly in two meanings: the blowing of the wind and the heavy breathing of men under strong feeling. Which was original is not certain, but probably, in view of its kinship with the word for smelling in Hebrew and some cognate languages, ruach at first signified the heavy breathing of man and later the blowing of the wind as the breath of God. In any case, the word's usage is closely associated with the more urgent and powerful emotions of men. Anger, (Judges 8:3.) restored vital energy, (1 Samuel 30:12.) extraordinary outbursts of strength, (Judges 14:6.) abnormal obsessions of feeling, (1 Samuel 16:14-15.) profound grief (Genesis 26:35.) --

such highly emotional experiences were covered by the word ruach. Moreover, it is clear that this range of meaning was suggested by the association of powerful emotion with heavy breathing, and that it came to include both the passions of men and the winds of God. (E.g., 2 Samuel 22:16; Psalms 18:15; Exodus 15:8; Job 4:9.) The journey which the Hebrews traveled by means of this word, as they pushed out its significance like an advancing roadway, could not have been foreseen but in retrospect it is clear. As their interest and care centered increasingly on man's inner life, on spiritual quality and ethical devotion, as the stronger emotions ceased being merely anger or grief and became also penitence, aspiration, moral idealism, and the love of God, the word ruach expanded its meanings to cover the case. It came to represent the interior life of man on its highest altitudes. And because in its origin the word had meant not simply man's breathing but God's wind, it became the verbal agent by which man could say that his best life is inbreathed by God -- inspired, as we say, using the same metaphor Latinized -- so that ruach at last meant the Spirit of God inspiring the spirit of man. To be sure, as is the habit of words, ruach never altogether lost its earlier significance. Both Job and a psalmist used it to mean the breath of life in their nostrils, (Job 27:3; Psalms 104:29.) and Ezekiel in one of his most splendid passages deliberately played on the word's double meaning as he pictured the spiritual resuscitation of his dead nation: "Thus saith the Lord Yahweh: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." (Ezekiel 37:9.) Moreover, ruach carried other words, such as nephesh and 'heart' up with it, so that, as is the way with words, they borrowed meaning from each other and were used together when an emphatic statement of the whole man's inner devotion was wanted. "With my nephesh have I desired thee in the night," said Isaiah; "yea, with my ruach within me will I seek thee earnestly." (Isaiah 26:9.) In the end, the loftiest experiences of man's spirit and the quickening influences of God's spirit found in ruach their congenial agent of expression. It was by means of this word that the Old Testament rose to its heights, as in the Fifty-first Psalm -- Cast me not away from thy presence; And take not thy holy Spirit from me (Psalms 51:11.) -- or in the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah -- "The Spirit of the Lord Yahweh is upon me; because Yahweh hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek." (Isaiah 61:1.) To watch this word grow from meaning 'wind' to meaning 'holy Spirit' is to watch one of the most significant developments in the Old Testament. By this method of approach, the Jews never reached, as the Greeks did, a doctrine of a metaphysical soul separable from the body. They laid no speculative foundation for anything that could be called a psychology. They took man realistically as he was -- as we should say, a psycho-physical organism -- and across many centuries profoundly deepened their insight into the supreme meaning and value of his ethical and spiritual life. To them, at their best, this became in practical fact man's real life. The body was taken for granted as the basic and necessary constituent of a man -- so much taken for granted that there is no special and distinct word for body in the Old Testament at all. But man's distinguishing characteristic, the core of his being and the meaning of his existence, lay elsewhere -- in his spirit. They had started with the individual as a physical organism animated by a breathsoul; they ended with the individual as primarily a character, his major concern moral conduct, his real value spiritual quality, the source of his power the Spirit of God.

VIII

Nowhere is our dependence on the Old Testament for the understanding of the New more evident than in this realm. The early Christians were Jewish in their conception of the interior nature of

man and they never became anything else until they fell under the influence of Greek philosophy. In this regard Jesus was a true son of his race. He never speculated about the relations of soul and body or thought theoretically about philosophies of personality. His interest was overwhelmingly ethical. The important discrimination, as he saw it, was not between material and immaterial -- a distinction with which he never dealt -- but between moral and immoral. In so far as this involved the body as a possible enemy of spiritual living, he counseled the utter subordination of the body, saying with characteristic hyperbole that hands and feet were to be amputated and eyes plucked out if they caused the higher life of a man to stumble. (Mark 9:43-47.) He never thought, after the Greek fashion, of soul as pure being, capable of disembodiment, but spoke, as his Jewish contemporaries did, of future life in terms of bodily resurrection, and on that basis he discussed life after death with the skeptical Sadducees, protesting only against the popular, contemporary ways of conceiving the raised body and its uses in the next world. (Matthew 22:23 ff.) In a word, he traveled the same road the Hebrew prophets had surveyed, making a profound ethical discrimination between the higher and the lower man, the inner and the outer man, the spiritual and the carnal man. To Jesus, as to the prophets, a man was a being with two major capacities, moral life and fellowship with God. The close kinship between the Testaments in this regard is manifest in the very words used. ‘Heart,’ in Jesus’ speech as in the Old Testament, covered man’s interior life: "pure in heart;" (Matthew 5:8.) "Where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also"; (Matthew 6:21.) "Out of the heart come forth evil thoughts"; (Matthew 15:19.) "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." (Matthew 12:34.) This usage in the Gospels reveals the development that had preceded it. Gradually through the Old Testament, reference to bodily organs as the seat of intellectual, emotional, and moral life had ceased being literal and had become metaphorical. Just as truly as Greek philosophy differentiated within the individual between the material body and the immaterial soul, Hebrew religion differentiated between the moral man and his physical organism. Conceiving the two not as separable but as distinguishable, the Old Testament put the emphasis overwhelmingly on the side of mind and character. Of this tradition Jesus was the inheritor and the fulfillment. In giving expression to it in Christian form, the New Testament uses words that cannot be adequately understood except as Greek translations of the Hebrew. Nephesh became "psyche, carrying over into the Greek word the flavor of its origin. Sometimes it signifies physical life: "They are dead that sought the young child’s psyche"; (Matthew 2:20.) "Is not the psyche more than the food?"; (Matthew 6:25.) "hazarding his psyche." (Php 2:30.) But as with nephesh, so with its Greek rendering, the word ranges up into higher meanings which leave English translators in perplexity. "He that findeth his psyche shall lose it; and he that loseth his psyche for my sake shall find it" (Matthew 10:39.) -- there is no adequate English rendering for that. ‘Life,’ ‘soul,’ and ‘self’ have all been tried, but it means more than physical life, less than metaphysical soul, and other than psychologica1 self. One has to come up to it from its Hebrew heritage and feel its significance. So one of the greatest of the sayings of Jesus, "What doth it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and forfeit his psyche?" (Mark 8:36.) may mean, What good is the possession of the whole world to a man who must die? or, What good is material gain if it cost spiritual loss? or, What good is the ownership of the world for a time to one who pays for it eternally with a forfeited soul? Probably, were Jesus to interpret his own saying, we should find that something of all three entered into its significance. At any rate, there is no understanding the New Testament’s psyche without understanding the Old Testament’s nephesh. In the later Book as in the earlier, the word sweeps the gamut from breath soul, which

was its origin, to interior spiritual life and character, which was its culmination. At one end of the gamut is Acts 20:10, where Paul, finding a supposed dead man still breathing, cries, "Make ye no ado; for his psyche is in him"; at the other is 1 Peter 2:11, where the full spiritual meaning of the term is evident -- "Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." As for ruach, that became pneuma, a Greek word which also had started by meaning wind and had come to mean spirit. In the New Testament the word's old association was not altogether lost --"The wind bloweth where it will . . . so is every one that is born of the Spirit." (John 3:8.) By this word, in the New Testament as in the Old, the noblest altitudes and attributes of the human spirit and the saving influences of the divine spirit were expressed. Especially was this true of Paul, to whom the essence of Christian living was to "walk not after the flesh, but after the pneuma." (Romans 8:4.)

IX

Indeed, it was in Paul that the development we have been tracing came to its culmination. His distinctive view of man's interior nature involved a sharp contrast between flesh and spirit. With reiterated emphasis in the eighth chapter of Romans, for example, he sets over against each other "the mind of the flesh" and "the mind of the Spirit." This has been commonly interpreted as the result of Greek influence. Certainly Paul must have been affected by contemporary Hellenism, for no man can use a language as he used Greek without carrying over in the very words meanings and mental patterns from the current thinking out of which the words come. When, therefore, along with phrases like the "old man," (Ephesians 4:22; Colossians 3:9; Romans 6:6.) "the law in my members," (Romans 7:23.) "your members which are upon the earth," (Colossians 3:5.) Paul used 'flesh' (Romans 7:18; Romans 8:6; Galatians 5:17.) as representing the seat of sin, some at once suspect the influence of Hellenism, with its immaterial, pure spirit on one side and its material, sinful flesh on the other. To grant that Paul's use of 'flesh' as the seat of sin was colored by contemporary Hellenism, however, is one thing, and to see Paul as in any important sense a Hellenist is quite another. It has long been recognized, for example, that some relationship existed between Paul and his contemporary, Seneca, the Stoic philosopher. The kinship of thought and language between them is too close in too many instances for any theory of chance to cover the case. (See J.B. Lightfoot: Saint Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, Appendix II, "St. Paul and Seneca," listing similarities of expression, pp. 287-290.) Either there was direct contact between them, which seems improbable, or else they both reflected a common area of contemporary thought and speech. While, however, the similarity between Paul and Seneca in many passages is unmistakable, this does not make Seneca a Christian or Paul a Stoic. All the presuppositions of Paul's thought were Jewish, and his kinship with Seneca lay either in special phrases, such as 'Spend and be spent,' which might easily have been in common vogue, or in large matters like the brotherhood of all men, where Paul shared a universalism long current in the Greco-Roman world. When St. Jerome in the fourth century tried to represent the Stoic philosopher as a Christian, calling him "our own Seneca," (S. Eusebius Hieronymous [St. Jerome]: Adversus Jovinianum, I, par. 49, in J.P. Migne's Patrologia Latina, Vol. XXIII, p. 279.) he was stretching the matter out of all semblance of truth. But truth is as badly stretched when one sees the fundamentally Jewish Paul as a Hellenistic or Stoic philosopher. In many Pauline passages one suspects the influence of the world in which as a boy Saul of Tarsus had lived and through which Paul the Apostle traveled widely as a man. He used the phrase 'the good' (rò ka^òv) with a Hellenistic flavor; (Romans 7:18; 2 Corinthians 13:7; Galatians 4:18; Galatians 6:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:21.) he appealed to 'nature'

as standard in a way a Stoic might have done; (1 Corinthians 11:14-15) his praise of moderation and his use of ‘virtue’ were in good current form ; (Php 4:8.) his employment of the word ‘mind’ was Greek rather than Hebrew; (Romans 7:23, Romans 7:25.) his sense of God’s immediate presence, whether shown in his ideal of being "filled unto all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:19.) or in a quotation from Aratus, "In him we live, and move, and have our being,’’ (Acts 17:28.) was excellent contemporary religion; and his contrast between ‘flesh’ and ‘spirit’ doubtless gained sharpness from Hellenistic thought.

Nevertheless, in the bases of his thinking Paul was a Jew. When he used ‘flesh’ as the seat of sin he was not, after the Hellenistic fashion, thinking of the material body as essentially evil. Traditional Hebrew that he was, his ultimate ideal was not escape from the body but "the redemption of our body." (Romans 8:23.) Meanwhile, this mortal flesh, far from being essentially evil, was potentially good -- to be dedicated, "your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." (Romans 6:13 cf.Romans 12:1; 1 Corinthians 6:13, 1 Corinthians 6:15, 1 Corinthians 6:19.) If Paul had thought of physical flesh as inherently the source of evil, he could not have; thought of Christ as perfect when incarnate or of demons as wicked when discarnate, and yet he did both. While, at times, he talked as a Greek in setting flesh and spirit in sharp opposition, he always was thinking as a Jew; he was contrasting, not material flesh and immaterial spirit, but the natural man uninspired by the divine Spirit, on one side, and the spiritual man transformed by God’s grace, on the other. ‘Flesh,’ therefore, in Paul’s usage was a metaphor for all the lower, unredeemed side of human nature and, so far from being confined to or even indissolubly connected with the material body, it might, as in the phrase ‘fleshly wisdom,’ (2 Corinthians 1:12.) refer to idle speculation, or, in the phrase ‘fleshly mind,’ (Colossians 2:18, Colossians 2:21-23.) to pagan thinking, such as Gnosticism.

All this lights up Paul’s view of man’s interior nature. Man to Paul was a twofold creature. First, as a natural being he was body-plus-soul. This does not mean ‘soul’ as we use it, a synonym for ‘spirit,’ but ‘soul’ in the old inherited sense, which carried its meaning back through the natural faculties of man to his physical life and breath. This animated being, body-plus-soul, was human nature unredeemed; it was simply what the first Adam was, a body with its nephesh. Christ, however, was more than that:

‘The first man, Adam, became an animate being, the last Adam a life-giving Spirit.’ (1 Corinthians 15:45 [Moffatt translation]). To Paul, therefore, the complete man was made possible only when this original body-soul was taken possession of by Spirit, when the divine presence invaded and controlled the "old man" and made him new. First, last, and all the time, Paul’s interest thus was in moral reclamation, not psychology, in salvation, not metaphysics, and his aim was the transformation of men, with their natural faculties of body, mind, and emotion, into spiritual persons. In pursuing this aim he developed peculiarities of thought and phrase. He made a much sharper distinction between soul and spirit than one finds elsewhere in the Bible; he associated soul with flesh and gave flesh an ethical significance quite his own; but all his ideas and verbal usages were instruments for a single purpose the creation of complete persons, body souls redeemed by the Spirit of God. The difference is obvious between such mental patterns in the New Testament and most of our accustomed Christian thinking. Commonly with us, soul and body are sharply distinguished -- soul, the immaterial, immortal part of man, and body, the material and perishable, with salvation concerning the soul, and death, the soul’s release from its physical

habitation. The explanation of this contrast lies in the fact that historic Christian thought in this regard, as in others, has been Greek rather than Hebrew. Claiming to be founded on the Scripture, it has, as a matter of fact, completely surrendered many Scriptural frameworks of thinking and has accepted the Greek counterparts instead. The Christian movement carried out into the Greek world a gospel of individual redemption from sin and death. Not only was the individual lifted out of the social mass, but within the individual a profound discrimination was made between his nature as a mere native of this earth and his nature transformed by the divine Spirit. This gospel of salvation, with its elevated estimate of human worth and possibility, possessed a close kinship with the Greek philosophy. Into the molds of that philosophy it was run, as the classic creeds bear witness, and in this process its ways of phrasing truth were altered, as they have been altered many times since. Within the New Testament, however, the controlling ways of thinking still are Hebrew. While the Greeks distinguished within the individual the immaterial soul from the material body, the Hebrews and the early Christians distinguished the natural man in his sin from the redeemed man, living "not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.'' (Romans 8:4.)

X The two lines of development in the Biblical idea of man, which we have been considering, may be combined and summarized thus: At the beginning, a physical organism, whose life-principles were breath and blood, whose mental and emotional experiences were the functions of bodily organs, the ordinary man was submerged in the corporate mass of his tribe, without individual status, separate hopes, personal rights, or claim on divine care apart from the group. In the end, an immortal being, endowed with capacity for moral living and divine fellowship, man stood distinct from the mass, possessing in personality the supreme value, having separate status and individual rights of his own, and gifted alike with the privilege of sonship to God and the responsibility of an eternal destiny. So abstract and general a statement, however, not only oversimplifies the long and complicated process it endeavors to describe but, in particular, neglects the natural human opposition which so high an estimate of personality encountered -- the endless doubts, cynicisms, and denials with which this emerging estimate of man’s value was inevitably met. The futilities and frustrations of human experience in any age are so many and so baffling that it is commonly easier to hold a high faith about God, whom we have not seen, than about man, whom we have. That the Hebrews found this to be the case is evident in their scriptures. The emergent individual, regarded as of intrinsic worth and pos- sibility, was a conception which did not so much solve problems as raise them. As we shall see, (Chap. IV.) some of the most puzzling difficulties which the later writers of the Old Testament faced grew out of the developing sense of personality’s importance. Was life just to individual persons? Did each man receive the fair recompense of his deeds? Did God treat men, one by one, as he might be expected to if he were just and men were valuable? And behind such theological and cosmic questions was always the more immediate, inescapable fact of man’s stupidity, squalor, futility, and sin, seeming to deny outright a high estimate of his worth. The development which we have been describing, therefore,’ had no easy road to travel. There were doubtless many cynics who shared the opinions of the writer of Ecclesiastes that "man hath no preeminence above the beasts"; (Ecclesiastes 3:19.) that it is not even clear "what advantage hath the wise more than the fool''; (Ecclesiastes 6:8.) and that, in general, no man knows what is good for him "all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow." (Ecclesiastes 6:12.) The candor of the Old Testament in expressing not only its emerging faith but, as well, its cynicisms and denials, is in this realm clearly exhibited. The Hebrews suffered tragically at man’s hands; they were under no optimistic illusions about man’s natural quality; just as, against

all the plausibilities, they asserted their profoundest faith in God when they were a defeated people in exile, so they wrought out a positive, triumphant faith in man, although they knew, as few peoples in history have ever known, how cruel man can be. Some Old Testament passages still reflect the moods that in multitudes of individuals must have opposed the rising faith in personal worth and possibility -- I loathe my life; I would not live alway:

Let me alone; for my days are vanity.

What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? (Job 7:16-17.)

Moreover, the Hebrews felt, as thoughtful men have always felt, the difficulty of holding a high estimate of man's worth in the face of the vast cosmos which is his dwelling. While the immense universe, humbling man into diminutive insignificance, was far smaller in early Hebrew eyes that it is in ours, still, then as now, stars were visible and man's imagination felt the disparity between the cosmos and the human individual. Frail, tenuous, and temporary was man's hold even on existence -- "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?" (Isaiah 2:22.) He is as transient as the grass; (Psalm 123:15.) he is but flesh, "a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again." (Psalms 78:39.) Above man's littleness and ignorance the universe towers overwhelmingly, so that one who takes true account of its marvels will cry, "I abhor myself." (Job 42:6; see also Job, Job 38:1-41, Job 39:1-30, Job 40:1-24, Job 41:1-34, Job 42:1-17) It was not because the Hebrew failed to feel this mood of insignificance and transiency that he wrought out his faith in man. In the same psalm he mingled confidence in human greatness with the sense of mystery that in a universe so vast man should count for so much: When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, The moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him but little lower than God, And crownest him with glory and honor. (Psalms 8:3-5.)

Despite the size of the cosmos, two elements in human nature seemed to the Hebrew more significant and more indicative o f ultimate reality than all the outer framework of the world -- man's capacities for moral living and for fellowship with the Eternal. On these facts of moral and religious experience the Hebrew took his stand; he saw the universe itself as the predestined home for their development; he told the story of cosmic creation as culminating in man; (Genesis 1:1-31, Genesis 2:1-3) and he wrought out an estimate of personality's worth and destiny which, passing by way of Christianity into confluence with Greek thought, is still part of the great tradition of the Western world. When a modern scientist says that "personality is the great central fact of the universe," (J. Scott Halkane: Mechanism, Life and Personality, p. 139.) he is in lineal descent from Paul, who, both as a Jew and as a Christian, believed that "the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God." (Romans 8:19.) The importance of this tradition is accentuated when it is compared with what had been going on in India. The Hindu-Buddhist development, starting from primitive ideas kindred with the Old Testament's early tribalism, traveled a far different road. There one feels the controlling sense of the misfortune of man's self-conscious existence, its endless transmigrations, vain illusions, and insatiable desires. There the solution was sought in a denial of individuality rather than in its affirmation, in a renunciation of man's clamorous wants rather than in their encouragement and satisfaction. In Buddhism the presupposition is that the universe contains no food for the ultimate feeding of man's many hungers, no living water for his insatiable thirsts, so that restless hunger and thirst are man's worst

enemies, to be subdued and at last eliminated, until even the desire for self-conscious existence is gone and Nirvana is attained. In the Hebrew-Christian tradition the presupposition is that the universe does contain satisfaction for man's highest desires, that those who hunger and thirst after righteousness are blessed and shall be filled, that there is living bread and water for the spirit, not, in a negative peace of renounced desire but in the positive achievement of triumphant personality, both here and in an eternal kingdom of souls. No such summary contrast can possibly be just to either side; the Buddhist would say that his Nirvana is the satisfaction of his worthiest desires and the Hebrew knew well the need of subjugating, disciplining, and eliminating clamorous wants; but with whatever qualifications, this contrast roughly indicates the far dissevered roads which the two traditions traveled. The distinction of the Hebrew-Christian development of thought about man lies in its insistent affirmation of personality as boundless in value and possibility, and in its faith that God and his universe are pledged to the satisfaction of personality's inherent promise. As for the modern scene with its contemporary problems, the New Testament's idea of man faces immense difficulties in maintaining itself. The vast enlargement of the physical cosmos, the evolutionary origin of man, materialistic theories which endeavor to explain him, brutality of social life involving low conceptions of him, the innumerable masses of men such that old cynicisms gain new force, The Eternal Sákí from that Bowl has pour'd Millions of Bubbles like us, and will pour (Omar Khayyám: "The Rubáiyát," XLVI.) -- these and other factors tend in many minds to undo what the Hebrew-Christian development did. Yet the most humane elements in our civilization are rooted in the estimate of human nature that the Jewish-Christian faith and the Platonic philosophy bequeathed to the Western world. Indeed, in a day when behaviorism as a psychological theory and coercive collectivism as a social ideal are popular, it may be salutary to recall that, far from being modern, both behaviorism and collectivism were primitive. The Hebrew-Christian tradition began with them, and for nearly two millenniums was mainly engaged in breaking free from their impoverishing effects. From this and from the further fact that mankind keeps swinging back to them, it may be fair to infer that there is indeed truth in them, but not enough truth to fit all the evidence or enough satisfaction to meet man's deepest needs.

01.03. The Idea of Right and Wrong

Chapter 3: The Idea of Right and Wrong

It is always possible to express an ideal of duty by an abstract noun and so, having used a generalized name for it, to discover that ideal in all ages and places. The primitive man depended on ‘justice’ as much as the modern man does, and the Sinais of history have as emphatically demanded it as have modern codes of ethics. Such verbal usage, however, easily produces a mistaken impression of similarity where, as a matter of fact, the differences have been profound. Justice, mishpat, was the central ethical concept of the Hebrews, but the word was an omnibus into which many meanings were packed and from which many meanings were dropped in the long traveling of the Hebrew mind.

Alike the major virtue and the major limitation of the tribal justice with which the Old Testament began are plain. The virtue lay in the strong cohesion of the group of kinsmen, in their mutual interdependence and loyalty, in their approximate equality of estate, and in the intimacy with which each was known by all. "Seldom the judge and elders err," writes Doughty with reference to modern Arab tribes, "in these small societies of kindred, where the life of every tribesman lies open from his infancy and his state is to all men well known.’’ (Charles M. Doughty: Travels in Arabia Deserta (3d ed., 1925), Vol. I, p. 249). The major limitation imposed on tribal justice by its environment lay in the narrow boundaries of blood-kinship within which it was virtuous to be just. In a society based on kinship, especially under circumstances of severe inter-tribal rivalry for the means of subsistence, one finds high ideals of just conduct within the group combined with the absence of the sense of moral obligation beyond the group. To love the clan and to hate its rivals, to feel responsibility for just dealing within it and no such responsibility beyond it, were two sides of the same thing. With such a moral heritage, combining both high value and narrow limitation, the tribes of Israel entered Palestine and, after a long conflict with the previous inhabitants, settled down to adjust and synthesize their cultural traditions in the midst of the much more complicated agricultural and urban society which they had conquered. Around the problems involved in this situation the stream of ethical thinking in the early Old Testament swirls.

One result was to have been expected. Whenever a sudden readjustment of cultural life and moral standards is forced by a fresh situation, society faces the peril of losing old safeguards and sanctions before it gains new ones. Just as in China, this last generation, the passage from a patriarchal to a political and commercial civilization has been attended by turmoil, so the Hebrews made the transition only at the cost of practical and moral confusion. As the ancient record puts it, "In those days there was no king; in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 17:6.) Despite the powerful cohesion of the tribal life, the readjustments in Palestine produced a period of comparative individualism which in retrospect looked to the narrator like moral anarchy.

Nevertheless, the old ideals of justice never died out. The resistant power of Hebrew character and the sturdy refusal of tribal morality to be assimilated gave to the early prophets a strong basis

of appeal. From Elijah on, they were not, as they commonly are pictured, progressives, but conservatives; they were contending for an ethical heritage in peril of being lost. To be sure, in thus contending for it and applying it to contemporary life, they expanded it. One never understands them, however, if one supposes that they thought of themselves as projecting a new ethic. They were consciously trying to conserve an old ethic, and are among the chief illustrations in history of the statement that all reformation is restoration. For intentionally restorative though the prophets were, they were too vigorous in their nonconformity not to be revolutionary in the end. Ideas of right and wrong were incalculably enlarged and deepened under their influence, and in this process they had to deal with certain outstanding limitations in their moral tradition.

II The most obvious of these limitations was the narrowness of the area within which moral obligation was recognized. The idea of duty involves not simply a question of quality but of quantity --To how wide a circle of persons is one under obligation to be just? In any modern society are multitudes of people in whom the sense of moral responsibility is a matter of kinship and propinquity. Beyond a constricted inner circle their imagination fails and their consciences do not function. This natural poverty of imagination and conscience in dealing with people either distant in space or not intimately connected with the group was intensified indefinitely in primitive society, where ‘stranger’ and ‘enemy’ were so similar in meaning that one word commonly covered both. Customarily the tribe was at war with all other tribes it touched except kinsfolk, and the spirit that once said in America the only good Indian was a dead Indian said in Palestine, with complete satisfaction of conscience, that the only good Amalekite was a slain one. That is to say, no moral obligations were recognized toward Amalekites, so that while within the tribal group ideals of fair play and humane dealing might rise to great heights, this vertical reach of moral responsibility was not matched by its horizontal extension. So Professor J. M. Powis Smith moderately sums up the ancient situation in Israel: "A foreigner has few rights that an Israelite is bound to respect. The ordinary claims of humanity are largely ignored in dealings with non-Israelite groups and individuals.’’ (The Moral Life of the Hebrews, p.12.) In so far as this restriction of the sense of duty to the kinship group was illustrated in war, modern life presents lamentable parallels. Hostility creates hatred and contempt; the necessity of either killing or being killed obliterates humaneness; and even those who in times of peace have been cosmopolitans, with international interest and goodwill, become under the spell of war intense group-loyalists with no sense of moral obligation to the enemy. Much more was this restriction of the area of ethical responsibility vivid and controlling in days when war was constant and internationalism had not yet dawned. The utmost cruelty was not only allowed but commanded by Yahweh against Israel’s rivals, and in the presence of habitual conflict fine ideals of humaneness had their chance to develop only within the circle of the blood-brotherhood. The oft-quoted saying of Samuel, "To obey is better than sacrifice," was associated with the idea that, along with the captured animals, the captured king of Amalek should be put to death as a human offering, ‘devoted’ to Yahweh. (1 Samuel 15:1-35) This does not imply that Samuel was an inhumane man. He may have been, as the records suggest, a high-minded, intensely conscientious, devotedly loyal, and kindly person. The area, however, within which he conceived himself as under obligation to exercise such qualities was strictly limited to his tribal confederation. This development of high moral quality within a restricted field of application is best illustrated in the Book of Deuteronomy. Written in the seventh century, a summary of the prophetic ideals leading up to the Josian reformation, it is one of the great documents of history in its expression of social goodwill. It is notable for laws to protect the poor,

mitigate the treatment of debtors, ease the lot of slaves, and in general to encourage humaneness. All this, however, was for domestic consumption within Israel, not for foreign export; such ideas of fair play and goodwill toward foreigners as are found in the book apply only to those sojourning in Israel. A distinction was made between resident and non-resident aliens, and while injustice toward outsiders living in Israel was forbidden (Deuteronomy 1:16; Deuteronomy 27:19. This distinction runs through the entire Law; cf. Exodus 20:10; Exodus 22:21; Exodus 23:9; Exodus 23:12.) and even love toward them commanded, (Deuteronomy 10:19.) no obligations to other foreigners were acknowledged. Still in this remarkable document of merciful laws, massacre and extermination are the ideal treatment of conquered enemies -- "Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them." (Deuteronomy 7:2.) The only qualification of this statement which the evidence allows is that in Deuteronomy we find the idea of relative foreignness with a consequent gradation of responsibility. If an edible beast dies of itself, that is, of disease or old age, a Hebrew might not eat it; he might, however, give it away to an alien sojourner within the Hebrew community; but in dealing with a foreigner all barriers were down and diseased meat might be sold for what it would bring. (Deuteronomy 14:21.) So in gaining admission to the Hebrew congregation, an Ammonite or a Moabite might not "enter into the assembly of Yahweh; even to the tenth generation." (Deuteronomy 23:3.) In the case of others, however, there were special mitigations: "Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for he is thy brother: thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian; because thou wast a sojourner in his land. The children of the third generation that are born unto them shall enter into the assembly of Yahweh." (Deuteronomy 23:7-8.) Indeed, as though positively fearing that growing humaneness within Israel might be carelessly applied to foreigners, the restrictions of mercy were meticulously noted. Every seven years there was to be a moratorium on all debts owed by Hebrews to Hebrews, but this neighborly provision was not binding if the debt was owed by a non-Israelite: "Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it." (Deuteronomy 15:1-3.) As for loans, it was illegal for a Hebrew to take any interest from a Hebrew, but from a foreigner he might take all that the traffic would bear. (J.M. Powis Smith: The Moral Life of the Hebrews, p. 129.)

Against this background the succeeding course of ethical development in the Bible must be seen. For centuries the area of moral obligation was limited to fellow Hebrews, and the struggle of the greater spirits to outgrow this limitation and universalize the realm of ethical responsibility was one of the most difficult and important which the Bible records.

III A second limitation of Biblical morality at the beginning concerned classes of people within the tribal group to whom full personal rights were not conceived as due. The early Hebrews, for example, were at one with their race and time in giving to woman a low social status and narrowly limited rights. In the older story of creation, she was even pictured as an afterthought, made not on an equality with man but as a by-product; and, along with the serpent, she was represented as responsible for Adam’s fall and was specially cursed with travail in childbirth as a penalty. (Genesis 2:18 ff.) In the tribal set-up of society a woman was the property first of her father and then of her husband. The word baal, used of a god as owner of the land, is commonly used in the Old Testament also for the male head of a household, and in our versions is translated ‘owner,’ ‘master,’ or ‘husband,’ according to the context. The word correctly represents the social fact of male supremacy in the Hebrew family, where the man was owner of his household --wives, children, slaves, herds, and properties. In the same code of laws a man is spoken of as ‘the baal’

of an ox and ‘the baal’ of a woman -- that is, her owner and proprietor. (Exodus 21:4, Exodus 21:28.) Since, therefore, such legal ownership inhered in the male head of a household, he could do what he would with his persons as with his properties, even selling his daughters into slavery. (Exodus 21:7.) At marriage a girl who was not a slave passed for a financial consideration from her father’s ownership to her husband’s. Indeed, so important to the father was this potential property value in a daughter that the law code carefully protected his right to it in case a girl was wronged by a man before marriage. (Exodus 22:16-17.) This conception of woman as a chattel led, of course, to grave abuses. So Lot felt free to offer his two virgin daughters to the passions of the men of Sodom in order to save his male guests from their lust. (Genesis 19:8.) He could do what he would with his own, and a woman’s rights were not comparable with a man’s. This chattel relationship in which from birth the woman stood to the male head of her family is consistently present in the background of the early Old Testament. Even in the Ten Commandments, as recorded in Exodus 20:17, woman was listed along with the house, slaves, ox, and ass, belonging to one’s neighbor, which one should not covet.

Among the Hebrews, therefore, as among early peoples generally, and, indeed, down to modern times, the process of courtship involved a commercial transaction. "Ask me never so much dowry and gift," cried one eager suitor to the girl’s father, "and I will give according as ye shall say unto me: but give me the damsel to wife." (Genesis 34:12.) The same buying of a bride is seen in the case of Rebekah’s espousal (Genesis 24:53.) and more clearly in the story of Rachel and Leah; (Genesis 29:1-30.) and everywhere it is evident that a woman was always possessed by some man who exercised over her a proprietorship which only gradually was mitigated and guarded against abuse. This picture of woman’s chattel relationship can, however, be overdrawn. For one thing, personality will out and, in a society as simply organized as the clan group, women of notable gifts could not be and were not kept down. Such names as Miriam, Deborah, Esther, and Judith in Jewish history and tradition are typical of an important fact about womanhood’s estate in Israel. Women could and did rise to leadership then as in all ages and no theory of status could prevent it.

Moreover, not only is it true that personality will out, but love will too. The romances of Isaac and Rebekah, of Jacob and Rachel, are among the most beautiful love stories in ancient literature. "Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah’s tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her"; (Genesis 24:67.) "Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her" (Genesis 29:20.) such romance is not dependent on social status and can flourish along with any custom of purchase which the existent society may have inherited. While, therefore, under the early Hebrew system a shocking absence of regard for womanhood is revealed in some narratives, so that Professor J. M. Powis Smith can even say that in the early traditions of Israel, "Chivalry is conspicuous by its almost total absence," (The Moral Life of the Hebrews, p.41.) that is not by any means the whole story. Love had its way and the traditional romances of Rebekah and Rachel were doubtless reproduced in many families.

Moreover, to overstress the chattel aspect of woman’s status neglects the fact that in her functions as wife and mother she was, in a society organized around the family, the very center of the structure. An old background of custom is doubtless represented in Yahweh’s reported remark to Moses about Miriam: "If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days?" (Numbers 12:14.) Evidently a father’s rights over the dignity of his womenfolk were very

wide. He could do what he pleased and even if, as in Jephthah's case, his vow involved the sacrifice of his daughter's life, (Judges 11:30-40.) his was the right and even the obligation to slay her. On the other hand, the exalted place of Leah and Rachel as the traditional mothers of the race and such stories as that of Hannah and Samuel (1 Samuel 1:1 ff.) indicate another line of evidence.

Moreover, the rigid laws governing women's chastity, the severe penalties meted out for harlotry, (Genesis 38:24.) for rape, (Genesis 34:1-31.) for adultery, (Genesis 26:10-11.) even in the early traditions and confirmed in the later laws, while showing a narrowly constricted interest in the sexual side of woman's meaning to the tribe, reveal also a high estimate of the social values of wifehood and motherhood. It is true that in one of the Ten Commandments woman is classed with chattel property, but in another she is raised to coordinate dignity with man --"Honor thy father and thy mother." (Exodus 20:12; cf. Exodus 21:15, Exodus 21:17.) One need only read the story of Abigail to see that then, as now, many a wife and mother had the brains and character of the family and by one device or another successfully expressed them. (1 Samuel 25:9 ff.)

Indeed, seen against the background of their time and in comparison with the customs of surrounding civilizations, the noteworthy matter is not the degree to which the Hebrews shared the prevailing depreciation of woman but the degree to which they transcended it. The story of Eve in the Garden of Eden, judged by our standards, seems shocking to the dignity of womanhood, but in comparison with its Babylonian counterpart it is, as Stade says, "as a clear mountain spring to the slough of a village cesspool.'' (D. Bernhard Stade: "Der Mythus vom Paradies Genesis 2:3 und die Zeit seiner . Einwanderung in Israel," in Zeitschrift für die alttestamenliche Wissenschaft, 1903, p.174)

Nevertheless, the early organization of society bore heavily on women. As has been the case for ages since, they were valued for their sexual uses rather than as ends in themselves. The perpetuity of the family name depended on their fertility and the levirate marriage laws, whereby when a man died without issue his brother took the widow to wife, (Deuteronomy 25:5-10.) make plain how central and controlling this test of woman's value was. Always along with this primacy of her sexual uses, the Old Testament reveals a strong sense of her worth as property, so that even in the late and beautiful description of a wife and mother in the Book of Proverbs, (Proverbs 31:1-31) the commercial method of estimate is not excluded -- "Her price is far above rubies." Never does woman escape the ownership of a proprietor, her father or husband or the patriarch of the clan, and against his will her rights are meager. Even her vows to Yahweh might be abrogated by father or husband (Numbers 30:3-16.) for, being the property of her family's head, she is not free to involve herself in any oaths conflicting with his wishes.

One of the most important corollaries of this status of woman was polygamy. If women could be bought and sold, so that a father could even sell his daughter as a slave, the only limitation on the number of wives a man possessed lay in the available supply of women and in his financial resources to procure them. Polygamy, therefore, was taken for granted in the domestic arrangements of early Israel. How thoroughly it was taken for granted is amply revealed in the Old Testament with even statistical details. "Gideon had threescore and ten sons of his body begotten; for he had many wives." (Judges 8:30.) David had eight wives individually mentioned, married more unmentioned in Jerusalem, and when he fled from Absalom left ten concubines behind him

in the city. In this regard Solomon was, of course, notorious -- "He had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines." (1 Kings 11:3.) As for more normal domestic establishments, the stories of the Hebrew patriarchs reveal households differing little in essentials from the family life of modern nomadic tribes. One who has seen a new wife welcomed to a chief's tent among the Adwan Arabs --the new arrival recommended and selected by the first wife, alike for the chief's satisfaction and to assist in the daily work now grown too onerous -- feels himself at home in the Old Testament. When Sarah bore no children, she urged Hagar on Abraham as a concubine. (Genesis 16:1-2.) Jacob had two sisters to wife at the same time. (Genesis 29:21-30.) As for the common people, their economic status doubtless limited the size of their households and, as among all polygamous peoples, any rise in affluence was accompanied by an increase of wives. The ordinary situation was probably described in the case of the home in which Samuel was born: Elkanah "had two wives." (1 Samuel 1:1-2.)

Even in the later law codes, the old status of woman was retained without substantial change, although the Deuteronomic edition of the Ten Commandments amended the edition of Exodus by lifting the wife into special mention apart from the rest of the household. (Deuteronomy 5:21.) Far from being man's equal, however, she was continually reminded of her inferiority. The legal value of a woman was only a little over half that of a man. (Leviticus 27:3-7.) A mother who bore a daughter was 'unclean' twice as long as one who bore a son. (Leviticus 12:1-2, Leviticus 12:5.) Polygamy still was taken for granted, slightly mitigated by provisions to guard against extremes. In post-Exilic times for instance, any Jacob possessing two sisters as wives at the same time would have found himself condemned. (Leviticus 18:18.) Likewise, to have a mother and daughter to wife synchronously was forbidden. (Leviticus 20:14.) The very presence of such prohibitions, however, makes clear how thoroughly polygamy in its ordinary forms must have been assumed. As for divorce, the man alone had rights. Any husband could divorce a wife for any reason -- "some unseemly thing in her"-- of which he himself was the sole judge, but no provision was made for a wife's escape from a cruel husband. (Deuteronomy 24:1-4.) The process of divorce was altogether in the man's control, at a moment's notice, without appeal to impartial arbitrament -- "He shall write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house" -- yet even this was an advance over the customs that had preceded it. In this regard the Hebrew law was far less humane and civilized than was the Code of Hammurabi drawn up centuries before. (The Code of Hammurabi, translated by Robert Francis Harper, sec. 142, p.51.)

IV

Slaves constituted another class denied full personal rights. The fact that slavery, like polygamy, was taken for granted is disguised in our English Versions by the euphemisms 'man-servant' and 'maid-servant,' but in the Hebrew there is no mistaking the established institution of slavery with its characteristic customs and consequences. Indeed, one law in Exodus, intended to make the lot of slaves more tolerable, goes only so far as to declare the owner liable to punishment if, in beating a slave, he kills him outright, whereas if the wounded slave "continue a day or two" the owner escapes penalty, "for he is his money. (Exodus 21:20-21.)

Among the Hebrews, as always where slavery has flourished, the institution presented an endless series of moral and legal problems. The constant endeavor was to make the system as humane as possible, but the very laws to that effect reveal how inhumane it was. Early codes limiting the

rights of masters concern themselves with Hebrew slaves only, implying that at first only fellow Hebrews in bondage were conceived as having rights, while foreign slaves were still regarded as having none. Hebrews became slaves to Hebrews mainly in two ways, for debt or by the sale of daughters, and the following statutes are characteristic of early endeavors to mitigate the misfortune of such bondmen and bondwomen: Hebrew male slaves were to be given their freedom after six years (Exodus 21:2.) -- an ideal law more honored in the breach than the observance; Hebrew female slaves, if used as concubines and found displeasing, might be sold to Hebrews but not to foreigners; (Exodus 21:7-8.) if a man and his wife went into slavery for debt together, they should go free together the seventh year, but if the man, entering bondage alone, was given his wife by his owner, even though children were born, only the man could go free; (Exodus 21:3-4.) a master who put out a slave's eye or knocked out a tooth must as compensation free the slave; (Exodus 21:26-27.) one who kidnapped another and sold him into slavery was to be put to death. (Exodus 21:16.) Such laws reveal a humane intention but they also disclose the inhumanity of the accepted system which they were intended to control. Doubtless the widow's desperate cry was often heard in the land: "The creditor is come to take unto him my two children to be bondmen." (2 Kings 4:1.)

How resistant to improvement the institution was is made plain when the slave laws of Deuteronomy are compared with the earlier codes. In this later rendition of the statutes under the influence of the prophetic school, the woman, equally with the man, might go free the seventh year; (Deuteronomy 15:12.) the departing slave was to be furnished with sufficient goods to give him opportunity for readjustment; (Deuteronomy 15:13-14.) an escaped Hebrew slave should not be returned to his master and should be protected from oppression. (Deuteronomy 23:15-16.) Evidently the conscience of the Hebrews was struggling with the cruel details of their slave system, but the institution itself was taken for granted as an integral part of their society. To be sure, mitigating circumstances were doubtless present in many cases. To this day inter-tribal competition for the slender means of subsistence reduces individual nomads to such need that slavery is a blessing to them. Accepted as bondsmen in some clan, they can, at least, be assured of enough to eat. Similarly, provision was made in Israel's laws of the seventh century for the kind of slave who, offered freedom the seventh year, preferred the safety of his bondage to the responsibilities of liberty. "If he say unto thee, I will not go out from thee; because he loveth thee and thy house, because he is well with thee," then, at his own request, his bondage might be made perpetual. (Deuteronomy 15:16-17.)

Indentured servants, such as were familiar in the Colonial days of America, were probably comparable to Hebrews in bondage to fellow Hebrews when conditions were at their best. In the American Colonies men and women bound themselves to several years of servitude and after that went free, their passage money from the old country and their maintenance in the meantime being provided by their masters. They were technically enslaved for debt but one of them, Alsop by name, wrote as follows concerning his condition: "The four years I served there were not to me so slavish as a two-years'servitude of a handicraft apprenticeship in London.'' (Quoted by Alice Morse Earle: Colonial Dames and Good Wives, p.11.) Doubtless many Hebrews, enslaved for debt, were in a similar case.

While, however, a sensitiveness of conscience about the bondage of fellow Hebrews can be seen developing, no such mitigation is suggested in the early Old Testament with regard to foreign

slaves. To be sure, there are exceptions even to most rigid rules, and able personality, in slavery as out of it, makes itself felt. So in the story of Abraham, unless as some think the text at this point is corrupt, the patriarch's plea for a son is based on the fact that, if he lacks a child as heir, Eliezer of Damascus, a bondman born in Abraham's house and apparently an able manager of his estate, will inherit his property. (Genesis 15:2-4; cf.1 Chronicles 2:34 ff.) Indeed, it should be noted that slavery itself was a social advance -- a substitute for massacre and exile in dealing with peoples conquered in war: "It came to pass, when Israel was waxed strong, that they put the Canaanites to taskwork, and did not utterly drive them out. . . . but the Canaanites dwelt among them, and became subject to taskwork." (Judges 1:27-33.) Whether this explanation of the servile classes of aliens in Israel be taken as adequate or not, it clearly indicates a servile class to be explained. Indeed, the excuse for holding alien bondsmen was carried back into legend, and the Canaanites, as descendants of Ham, were represented as having been cursed by Noah and so doomed to servitude -- Cursed be Canaan; A servant of servants shall he be. (Genesis 9:18-27.)

Far from being a minor matter, therefore, slavery was one of the dominant facts in the social situation that the prophets faced. A stratified society, with wealthy landowners at the top and slaves at the bottom and, in between, a mass of poor folk skirting precariously the edge of servitude for debt and in times of depression forced into it or compelled to sell sons or daughters to redeem the family's fortunes -- such a picture is revealed by a careful reading of the records. Even in the comparatively simple society of 1000 B.C., one household of which we read had at least twenty slaves, (2 Samuel 19:17.) and the rumbling of servile discontent was evidenced in Nabal's word to David: "There are many servants now a days that break away every man from his master." (1 Samuel 25:10.) As the social structure became more complicated, with increasing power in the hands of a few and increasing uncertainty in the status of the many, economic inequality became more, rather than less, pronounced and the slave system was alike more firmly established and more ethically troublesome.

V In addition to the narrowness of the tribal boundaries within which the sense of moral obligation functioned and the supression of classes, especially women and slaves, within the tribal circle itself, a third limitation affected, at the beginning, the Old Testament's ideas of right and wrong. As among early peoples generally, morals were to the ancient Hebrews what the etymology of the word suggests -- mores, 'customary behavior.' The observance of tribal taboos and ritual ceremonies, along with such restraint on daily conduct as would protect and further the interests of the tribe, constituted a man's duty, and every detail of this complicated obligation was regarded as the will of the tribal gods. Such observances and restraints, however, were almost altogether a matter of external behavior, while concern about motives and attitudes, about quality of spirit and purpose, was absent from the ethical picture. This customary morality of prohibition and taboo was inextricably associated with early tribalism. Attention was concentrated on the tribe's success and on those ways of acting that would secure the favor of the tribal gods. "Religion," as W. Robertson Smith puts it, "did not exist for the saving of souls but for the preservation and welfare of society, and in all that was necessary to this end every man had to take his part, or break with the domestic and political community to which he belonged.'' (Lectures on the Religion of the Semites, p.29) The result was that the whole duty of man was summed up in the observance of established tribal customs, and the utmost rigor was used in compelling conformity. Any irregularity was likely to bring down, not on the individual sinner alone but on the whole group, the god's ruinous disfavor,

and therefore the coercion of customary conduct and the extirpation of irregular conduct were ruthless. A typical illustration is to be found in Yahweh's supposed insistence on circumcision -- "The uncircumcised male . . . shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant." (Genesis 17:13-14.)

Far down in history such insistence on uniform custom has commonly emerged when any group, especially if it has conceived itself to be a theocracy, has faced a severe struggle for existence in which social cohesion was indispensable. So Miss Agnes Repplier says of the Massachusetts Bay Colony:

It is hardly worth while to censure communities which were establishing, or seeking to establish, "a strong religious state" because they were intolerant. Tolerance is not, and never has been, compatible with strong religious states. The Puritans of New England did not endeavor to force their convictions upon unwilling Christendom. They asked only to be left in peaceful possession of a singularly unprolific corner of the earth, which they were civilizing after a formula of their own. Settlers to whom this formula was antipathetic were asked to go elsewhere. If they did not go, they were sent, and sometimes whipped into the bargain -- which was harsh, but not unreasonable. (Under Dispute, pp.8-9.)

If the endeavor to build a strong religious state under pioneering conditions could work such consequence among notable individualists like the Puritans, much more would primitive Hebrew tribalism emphasize the necessity of conformity with custom. The idea of right, therefore, in the beginning of the Old Testament, suffered the limitation of externality, and this limitation continued to be, as Jesus found it, one of the outstanding problems of Hebrew ethics. The nature of the problem appears in two main aspects.

1. A man could observe the tribal customs outwardly without deep concern about his inner quality. Customary ethics demand at the most respectability, but they do not lead a man to pray, Create in me a clean heart, O God; And renew a right spirit within me. (Psalms 51:10.) The Old Testament came at last to such praying but it did not start there. In one of the renditions of the Decalogue, (Exodus 34:1-35.) thought by scholars to be the earliest, are such commands as these: "Thou shalt worship no other god"; "Thou shalt make thee no molten gods"; "The feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep"; "All that openeth the womb is mine"; "Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest"; "Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread"; "Thou shalt not boil a kid in its mother's milk." These and similar commands are external regulations, which can be observed with no deep searching of conscience and with no concern about personal motive and quality.

When, beyond customary behavior associated with rubric, one considers actions associated with human relationships, a similar externality obtains. Murder, adultery, false witness, the covetous seeking of a neighbor's goods -- such prohibited conduct was antisocial and could be externally refrained from by any one who was determined to respect the established customs of the tribe.

Here, then, in primitive tribal life was laid the foundation of the later legalism which at its best was the boast and at its worst the disgrace of Judaism. The idea of customary ethics kept a persistent grip on the developing morals of Israel, all the more persistent because every detail of the customary ethics was regarded as the will of God. In modern thought and parlance, ethics and

religion are separable; in Hebrew thought and parlance they were inseparable and even indistinguishable. Like heat and light in sunshine they came as one, and only later more sophisticated thinking differentiated between them. Whatever was customarily right was God's will; whatever was God's will was profoundly important and urgent. Thus the sacredness with which religion always endues whatever it touches clung even to the minutiae of duty. In order to protect the will of God from being in the least transgressed, the good life was defined and set down in laws. But laws can be expanded, interpreted, refined, evaded, and explained away, so that in the fully developed legal system the ideals of goodness were commonly externalized by the ingenuity of lawyers. As for early Hebrew legislation, it was largely absorbed in details of outward behavior, much of it entirely non moral, with much of what was moral so set in terms of customary action that the keeping of the law made only a small demand on ethical insight and personal quality.

2. This limitation of externality appeared in a second aspect. When the laws of early Israel were in process of formation, rubric and ethic were combined and, thus deposited together in the written statutes, they continued to exercise together a binding control over life. In consequence, even in the later codes, what we would call religious etiquette and humane ethic were often put upon a level, with the constant danger that the first would become a substitute for the second in the service of God. This is too obvious in the earlier codes to need special illustration. The laws about sacred seasons, Sabbath observance, details of sacrifice, clean and unclean foods, bulk much larger than legislation on ethics, and this lack of perspective and proportion, this inveterate idea that Yahweh was appeased by ceremonial behavior, obtained so firm a grip that even the prophets who contended against it never broke its hold, as orthodox Judaism today bears witness. Indeed, a great prophet, Ezekiel, lumped together adultery, idolatry, bloodshed, and the eating of meat improperly prepared, as alike displeasing to Yahweh. (Ezekiel 33:25-26.) In this regard the early Hebrews faced a problem, common not only to all primitive faiths but to all advanced faiths too, in which humane conduct has to compete for primacy with ritual observance. The task of the Hebrew prophets at their best, insisting on the absolute supremacy of righteousness as the requirement of God, has never yet been anywhere completely finished. In the Old Testament this problem took shape from current circumstance and inherited tradition and in many forms is present in the writings of Israel. Even a late rendition of Hebrew history in Chronicles ascribes a pestilence to David's presumption in taking a census of the people. (1 Chronicles 21:1-17.) The banning of a census as a presumptuous exhibition of curiosity, seeking information which only the god has a right to possess, is a familiar taboo in primitive religion, and opposition to a census on religious grounds arose even in New Jersey before the American Revolution. (See Henry Pratt Fairchild: General Sociology, p. 311.) When one considers the appalling cruelties of which David was guilty, (E.g., 1 Samuel 27:9; 1 Samuel 27:11; 2 Samuel 8:2-6.) to say nothing of his perfidy in the case of , (2 Samuel 11:1-27) one feels a profound lack of ethical perspective in associating so severe a punishment as a wide-spread pestilence with the crime of census-taking.

Legalism and ritualism, therefore, tempted the Hebrews to externality in their idea of right living, and with this temptation the great prophets and Jesus were intimately and constantly concerned.

VI

Such were the three main limitations on early Hebrew morals: the field of ethical obligation was tribally constricted; within the tribal circle certain classes were denied full personal rights; and the

nature of moral conduct was interpreted in such external terms of custom and ritual as to make small demand on internal insight and quality. The progress made, therefore, in the later stages of the Old Testament, in the inter-Testamental period, and in the New Testament, may be interpreted as the overpassing of these three inadequacies.

Considering them in reversed order, it is plain that the great prophets and Jesus insistently drove back the moral problem into the inner quality of personal life The prophetic leaders of Israel were as much interested as any members of the nation in the success of the social group; the beginning and end of their thought was Israel redeemed, purified, and fulfilling her mission in the world. Their interpretation of what this involved, however, went far beyond meticulous legalism and ritualism into ethical insight and creative moral living, saying with Micah, "What doth Yahweh require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God ?" (Micah 6:8.) The progress involved in this creative work of the Hebrew conscience was one of the supreme contributions to human life which the Old Testament records. The increasing humaneness and inwardness of moral life under the influence of the great prophets and Jesus is illustrated in the changing ideas about forgiveness of enemies: In the older strata of documents, retaliation was distinctly taught as the proper principle of legal procedure -- "Life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe." (Exodus 21:23-25.) Justice between man and man and between nation and nation was thus pictured in retaliatory terms; history was written to illustrate the principle of retaliation in God’s dealings with men, and even psalms celebrated the people’s hope of seeing it executed upon their enemies. (Psalms 137:8-9.)

Far from being inhumane, such strict adherence to the principles of retaliation represented, at first, progress in goodwill, for it put boundaries around man’s natural desire to wreak on personal and social enemies an unlimited and abandoned vengeance. In Lamech’s claim to the right of revenge "seventy and sevenfold," (Genesis 4:23-24) we have the historic starting point for a study of the growing ideal of forgiveness, and the first step up from such unrestricted vengeance was the adoption of retaliation as a substitute. The law of ‘eye for eye,’ therefore, was at first a moral advance, curbing extravagant vindictiveness and allowing only the strict return of injury for injury, no more, no less. A further enlargement of thought was associated with the idea that the requiting of evil upon enemies was not so much man’s business God’s. This idea lay behind even Paul’s argument against vindictiveness -- "Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath of God: for it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord." (Romans 12:19.) In this statement Paul showed himself a good Jew, true to his racial heritage. Human vengeance in the Old Testament was restricted, not simply by being reduced to retaliation but by being handed over to the divine executioner. By this means the outward wreaking of vengeance could be forgone without giving up the interior hope of it. So Deuteronomy rejoices in Yahweh because "he will avenge the blood of his servants," (Deuteronomy 32:43.) and a psalmist cries, Yahweh is on my side among them that help me:

Therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me. (Psalms 118:7.)

Obviously, while such methods of handling the passion of vindictiveness may be externally ameliorative, they are not inwardly curative, and they lend color to the words of Jesus, "Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy." (Matthew 5:43.)

Nevertheless, this substitution of God for man in dealing with enemies, as Paul's employment of it reveals, was capable of high usage. It could be extended and deepened to mean a deliberate willingness to forgo either vengeance or retaliation, leaving the issue with God. So the Book of Proverbs puts it:

Say not thou, I will recompense evil:

Wait for Yahweh, and he will save thee. (Proverbs 20:22.) A further advance was made when vindictiveness, or even retaliation toward a personal enemy, was under certain circumstances visited with moral disapproval. Even in the early law codes, special situations were visualized where not retaliatory justice but positive mercy toward a foe was commanded -- "If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, thou shalt forbear to leave him, thou shalt surely release it with him." (Exodus 23:4-5.) By thus calling attention to the problem of treating enemies, not when they were triumphant but when they were in distress, a path of least resistance was indicated for the progressive spirit of magnanimity. A growing humaneness, expressed in positive mercy, was first commanded toward foes when they were in misfortune; generous treatment of enemies secured its foothold by appealing to pity. So said the Book of Proverbs:

If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; And if he be thirsty, give him water to drink. (Proverbs 25:21.) To be sure, such magnanimity was far from perfect. The Book of Proverbs, in another passage, begins on a high note, Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, And let not thy heart be glad when he is overthrown, but, as for the inward motive, the passage ends on a low note, Lest Yahweh see it, and it displease him, And he turn away his wrath from him. (Proverbs 24:17-18)

Nevertheless, magnanimity, having secured a foothold in dealing with distressed foes, could not be denied its further way. The evidence of enlarged humaneness is unmistakable, as when Job pleaded his innocence of wrongdoing and revealed his detestation of vindictiveness -- If I have rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, Or lifted up myself when evil found him (Yea, I have not suffered my mouth to sin By asking his life with a curse). . . . (Job 31:29-30.)

Within the limits of the Old Testament, the most precise statement of this growing ideal of magnanimity toward enemies is found in the Exilic law: "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart: thou shalt surely rebuke thy neighbor, and not bear sin because of him. Thou shalt not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people; but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Leviticus 19:17-18.)

It is to be noted that only fellow Israelites were included within the scope of such magnanimity. This persistent constriction of developing humaneness within the racial group explains otherwise strange contrasts in the Old Testament. Joseph's forgiveness of his brethren, for example, presents one of the most moving scenes in ancient literature, (Genesis 45:1-28.) while, on the other hand, the Book of Esther with unabashed gusto enjoys the Jewish pogrom in which multitudes of alien enemies were massacred in all the provinces of the Persian Empire. (Esther 9:1-32.) This contrast in moral attitude, however, is only in appearance. Joseph forgave his brethren and the writer of Esther would have applauded that, while the writer of the Joseph stories would doubtless have agreed with the Book of Esther that alien enemies were not within the

proper scope of such generosity and that to pardon them or even to refrain from vengeance on them was not virtue but disloyalty.

Between the Testaments, despite national evils which brought vindictiveness naturally in their train, there was a notable deepening of magnanimity. Vindictiveness there was a-plenty. Nothing in the Old Testament specifically condemned it when exhibited toward foreign foes. The unlimited outreach of divine mercy even toward Nineveh, such as the Book of Jonah represents, was the faith of a few and its human counterpart the attainment of only a small number. Rather, the Book of Nahum -- a paean of joy over the downfall of Nineveh -- represented the popular attitude toward foreign foes, as it would today in Christendom under similar circumstances. Despite this, however, the wisdom of the forgiving spirit was ever more clearly seen and its statement became so universal in form as to suggest unlimited application. The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, for example, was a Hebrew book written in the second century B.C., and was probably known to Jesus. At any rate, its kinship with his spirit is unmistakable "Love ye, therefore, one another from the heart; and if a man sin against thee, cast forth the poison of hate and speak peaceably to him, and in thy soul hold not guile; and if he confess and repent, forgive him. . . . And if he be shameless and persist in his wrong-doing, even so forgive him from the heart, and leave to God the avenging"; (The Testament of Gad 6:3,7.) "If any one seeketh to do evil unto you, do well unto him, and pray for him, and ye shall be redeemed of the Lord from all evil." (The Testament of Joseph 18:2.) Indeed, everything that Jesus said on this matter (See Mark 11:25; Luke 6:27-28; Matthew 18:21-22; Matthew 5:43-45.) is to be found in germ in the Jewish literature which preceded him, sometimes with verbal resemblance so close that conscious quotation is suggested. The Book of Sirach even says, Forgive thy neighbour the injury (done to thee), And then, when thou prayest, thy sins will be forgiven. (Sirach [Ecclesiasticus] Sir 28:2.)

Here, then, was a development of moral ideal in the Bible that extended all the way from Lamech’s claim to vengeance "seventy and sevenfold "to Jesus’ plea for forgiveness of enemies "until seventy times seven." Such a development called increasingly for inward quality of spirit, for rightness of attitude and motive. Vengeance and retaliation could be outwardly administered; penal justice could be roughly managed by legality; but the more magnanimity was called for, the more inward quality was indispensable, until at last the Bible faced man with an ideal that put upon him a profound demand for interior regeneration -- "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and railing, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you." (Ephesians 4:31-32.)

VII The overpassing of the limitation of externality in early Hebrew morals involved not only the development of ethical ideals concerning special virtues such as magnanimity, but a profoundly important evolution of thought about the nature of sin in general and of what is necessary in securing salvation from it. At first, sin was transgression of tribal custom and the penalty was the displeasure of the tribal god, with its dire results. The sum and substance of sin and salvation might then have been described in such terms as these: obedience to tribal custom means Yahweh’s favor and the tribe’s prosperity; transgression of tribal custom means Yahweh’s displeasure and the tribe’s disaster; therefore, do not transgress. The negativeness and externality of this idea of wrongdoing and of salvation from it is plain and, as well, the slight demand it makes on inward, personal resources of character. At this stage no question was raised as to man’s ability to refrain from transgression if he so desired, and there was, in consequence, no conscious

need of inner assistance, much less of interior cleansing by the Spirit of God. One of the most fascinating roadways along which the Old Testament's thought traveled led from this beginning to the consciousness of sin as inner defilement and of salvation as inner cleansing and renewal. In this development Jeremiah played an eminent part. He too, an intense patriot, cared supremely for his nation's welfare but, as the nation broke up under the shock of war and exile, his experience of God became a profound, inner possession in the strength of which alone he carried on through tragic days. Moreover, along with this experience of inwardness in his own religious life went his disillusionment over the external reform imposed by royal authority in the reign of Josiah. (2 Kings 23:1-25.) The reform had seemed successful. It had achieved outwardly many of the ends the prophets sought. It had cast down the local high places, had centralized worship in Jerusalem, had eliminated the worst abominations of the heathen cults, and in the ethical realm had put in force the admirable law code of Deuteronomy. But it had remained an external reformation; the inner fountains of motive and desire had not been cleansed. So Jeremiah cried, "Wash thy heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved." (Jeremiah 4:14.)

Jeremiah's experience and ministry are chiefly notable because in him, for the first time in our religious tradition, the idea of sin emerged as inner pollution and that of salvation as inner regeneration. Still the goal sought was a righteous nation, but no social righteousness, he saw, could be achieved by external reformation only; right-minded and right-motived persons were the prerequisites of a fortunate society. In the sixth century before Christ, he understood with astonishing clarity the inward origins of public character and traced the good life back, behind taboo and custom, legality and form, to personal quality of spirit. Out of this insight came the prophet's vision of the new covenant by which alone Israel could be saved -- God's law in the people's spirit and written on their hearts. (Jeremiah 31:31-34.) This deeper current of thought in Israel made its way slowly. Before the Exile, old ideas of tribal morality withstood such inward conceptions of sin and salvation. During and after the Exile, the struggle of the Jews against being assimilated by paganism so coerced them into stressing their differentials and, as always in such a case, so led them to stress obvious peculiarities which are external, that Judaism emerged into a new era of accentuated legalism and ritualism.

Under the influence of this situation the duties of a Jew were formalized in written laws. What Deuteronomy began, Ezekiel and the Priestly Code carried on. Then the scribes arose and, by giving interpretations to, and drawing corollaries from, the Law, applied it with meticulous care to the minute affairs of daily life. Israel became a people of a book, the Torah, and the good life was defined in terms of written statutes. The trouble, however, with a written law is that, defining goodness in terms of statutory observance, it is tempted to set the standard low and to neglect the inner sources of great character and the interior need of spiritual renewal. Out of such legalism came the Eighteenth Psalm, which has seldom, if ever, been surpassed as an illustration of moral self-satisfaction, (Psalms 18:20-24.) and the remark of the complacent young ruler who said to Jesus, "All these things have I observed from my youth up. (Luke 18:21.) As morality was thus formalized in post-Exilic legalism, formalism developed in the temple worship, and all the dangers associated with ritualism and priestcraft befell Israel. The wonder is not that legalism and ritualism thus absorbed so large a share of Judaism's thought -- the same has been true in all religions, not least in Christianity but that the deeper stream of prophetic teaching still flowed on. Even Ezekiel, who contented himself too much with eddies of outward conduct rather than with main currents of

inner purpose, and who indiscriminately mixed up ethics and tribal taboos, had caught the deeper truth for which Jeremiah stood, and appealed repeatedly for "a new heart and a new spirit." (Ezekiel 18:31; Ezekiel 11:19-20; Ezekiel 36:26-27.)

Indeed, the same Psalter, the hymn book of the second temple, which contains the complacence of the Eighteenth Psalm, contains also the profundity of the Fifty-first. There sin is a deep, inward defilement; goodness is an interior fountain of spiritual quality; penitence concerns what a man is behind what he does; and the desire for a good life calls out the prayer for spiritual rebirth, Create in me a clean heart, O God; And renew a right spirit within me. (Psalms 51:10.) In this matter, once more, Jesus belonged to the great tradition of his people. Between the Testaments the stream had flowed on, whose springs in the Old Testament we have traced. The good life, being more than law and rubric, was seen to lie in moral insight, wisdom, and goodwill. As the Fifty first Psalm had said, goodness was truth in the inward parts and, in the hidden part, wisdom, and the good man was washed thoroughly from iniquity and upheld by a willing spirit. The insight of Jeremiah, tracing evil back to private thinking, was taken for granted in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs -- "Fearing lest he should offend the Lord, he [the good man] will not do wrong to any man, even in thought." (The Testament of Gad: 5:6.) This quality of inwardness was of the very essence of Jesus' ethic. He saw anger as killing, hate as murder, lust as adultery, and insincerity as perjury. In his eyes genuine philanthropy and genuine prayer alike sprang from inner quality of spirit, for which no outward deed could act as surrogate. His ultimate moral philosophy lay in such propositions as that "from within, out of the heart of men, evil thoughts proceed," (Mark 7:21.) and that "a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit." (Matthew 7:18.) In the New Testament's insistence, therefore, on the need of inner spiritual renewal and empowerment, fulfillment came to a development of life and thought which had begun in the insight of a few prophetic souls centuries before. The development began with the external observance of tribal taboos; it ended with men saying, "Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God"; (John 3:3.) "Be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind"; (Romans 12:2.) "The ordinance of the law . . . fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" ; (Romans 8:4.) "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature." (2 Corinthians 5:7.) This emphasis constitutes the essential matter in Paul's life and thought. He had been reared in a system where sin was regarded as transgression of law, and where repentance, forgiveness, and amendment of life were the cure. This legal estimate of sin's nature seemed to him utterly inadequate. Man's sin had deeper roots than willful disobedience; it was, as it were, a demonic power so that it was not Paul who did evil but "sin which dwelleth in me." (Romans 7:17.) Deep-seated and inveterate, sinfulness was now regarded as so essentially a part of human nature that no mere forgiveness of transgressions could salve its evil or volitional amendment undo its harm. A profound, interior deliverance was needed; one must pass from the dominion of the flesh into the dominion of the spirit. Short of that, the old moral cures of repentance and forgiveness were mere palliatives, failing to deal with the real disease "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing.'' (Romans 7:18.) To be sure, the experience of forgiveness is to be found in Paul, (E.g., Romans 4:6-11; Colossians 1:14; Colossians 2:13; Ephesians 1:7; Ephesians 4:32.) but only as the beginning of a far deeper and more thoroughgoing event -- the crucial passage of a man's life from being "in the flesh" to being "in the Spirit" or "in Christ Jesus.'' (Romans 8:9; Romans 6:11) The Apostle's estimate of the nature of sin and salvation, voiced in his cry, "Who shall deliver me out of this body of death?" (Romans 7:24 [marginal translation]). could not be matched by any legal transaction

whatever -- only by a profound deliverance, first, from the power of the flesh now, and second, from the very presence of the flesh in the great denouement. Then Christ "shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory." (Php 3:21.) This radical estimate of the nature of sin, with its accompanying demand for a radical deliverance, while phrased by Paul in terms uniquely characteristic of himself, is one of the major contributions of the New Testament. To be sure, Christianity could be and was interpreted as a new law, as for example in the Epistle of James. (James 1:25; James 2:8-12; James 4:11-12.) Professor E. F. Scott, however, passes a not unfair judgment on James: "Conceiving of the new message as a 'law,' and not as a power which creates a new life, he misses what is deepest, both in the Christian religion and the Christian ethic." (The Literature of the New Testament, p.216.) As for John, he had his own way of conceiving and phrasing man's need of deep, interior deliverance. He, too, saw in Jesus the one who "taketh away the sin of the world," (John 1:29.) and in a Pauline metaphor he pictured Christ's work as redeeming men from the slavery of sin to the freedom of sonship. (John 8:34-36.) There are even faint intimations in John of a Pauline contrast between flesh and spirit -- "It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing''; (John 6:63.) "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.'' (John 3:6.) Here, however, the resemblance ends and the fact emerges, as elsewhere, that there is no such thing as New Testament theology -- only New Testament theologies. Indeed, so distinctive is John's idea of salvation that it has been said it does not conceive the saving work of Christ as deliverance from sin. (Ernest Findlay Scott: The Fourth Gospel; Its purpose and Theology, p.218.) John says that men would have had no sin at all had not Christ "come and spoken unto them" (John 15:22.) and that sin essentially lies in the refusal of the light so offered. The Spirit will convict men of sin, says the Johannine Jesus, "because they believe not on me." (John 16:9.)

According to John, the evil from which Christ saves his people is not so much sin as it is an inner darkness of man's unregenerate nature, a profound privation of true light, true knowledge, and true life. Sunk and benighted in this native estate of all who are born "of the will of the flesh," (John 1:13.) man's existence is really death and salvation from it is not attainable by man's unaided will. In order to pass "out of death into life" (John 5:24.) one must be "born anew." (John 3:3 [see also marginal translation]) A divine initiative from above regenerates the man so that he passes from a state of unspiritual darkness, illusion, and privation into the higher realm of being, concerning which John uses three major words -- light, life, and love. To John, therefore, Christ is the life-giver. Coming Himself from the realm of "eternal life," he confers it on those who receive him. They are reborn into a new world of being; they become children of God, (John 1:12.) possess life "abundantly," (John 10:10; cf. John 6:40.) no longer "walk in the darkness" but "have the light of life." (John 8:12.) Christ is the vine, his disciples the branches, and in this vital union life flows inwardly to each believer so that abundant fruitage is possible. (John 15:1 ff.) This is the distinctively Johannine phrasing of salvation, and it represents the way some early Christians, deeply influenced by Hellenistic thought, described man's profound need of deliverance and conceived the inner regeneration which Christ brought in saving answer.

VIII This overpassing of the limitation of externality, however, had it stood alone, might have led to a predominantly subjective religion, whereas the development of Biblical thought emphatically retained the unity of religion and ethics that Jeremiah stressed when he identified humane conduct with knowing God. (Jeremiah 22:15-16.) In particular, one perceives in the later Old Testament

and in the New Testament a growing respect for personality wherever found, and, in consequence, a deepening concern about unjustly treated classes of people. No one acquainted with the history of slavery and of woman's status will expect to find, within the centuries covered by the Bible, either the elimination of the one or the emancipation of the other. Slavery still exists; its pressing consequences are today present in the United States and living men and women can remember the slave system in full swing. As for Greco-Roman civilization, it was based squarely on slave labor, and one of the profoundest differences between the ancient Mediterranean culture and our own is that there slavery was taken for granted along with a growing consciousness of the moral compromise it involved with man's best ideals, while with us liberty is taken for granted along with deep ethical discontent at the parallels of slavery, or worse, which exist under the wage system. As for womanhood, millions of women today have no status remotely approaching equality with man's. Throughout both the Old and the New Testaments, therefore, slavery was a recognized part of the social structure and woman was nowhere conceived as rightfully escaping from the proprietorship of father or husband. What the Bible does represent is a preparation of the moral soil for a new crop of ideas on these and kindred matters. Specifically, the Bible records a deepening sense of the value of personality wherever found and an increasing insistence on respect for it. So far as woman was concerned, it is not so much in the Old Testament's laws as in its poetry that we catch a distinctly altered tone. The Song of Songs, (Called the Song of Solomon, in the English Versions.) for example, is a love lyric often tropical in its passion, and very important as evidence that romance rather than convenience or barter was gaining recognition as the basis of marriage -- . . . Love is strong as death, A passion as resistless as Sheol.

. . . . .

Water cannot quench it, Nor do rivers drown it;

If one offer all the wealth of one's house For love, they will utterly reject it. (Song of Solomon 8:6-7 as translated by Hinckley G. Mitchell: The Ethics of the Old Testament, p. 347.) This implies the ideal of personal choice rather than family sale as the basis of marriage, and indeed, if Budde's emendation of one sentence is correct, the Song of Songs leaves no room in true love for polygamy:

Solomon had sixty queens, And eighty concubines, And maidens numberless; My dove, the faultless, is one. (Song of Solomon 6:8-9 as translated by Karl Budde [see H.G. Mitchell: op. cit., p. 348.]) At any rate, this celebrated love lyric, whose admission to the Hebrew canon was vigorously withstood and was not finally settled until about 90 A.D., (At the Synod of Jamnia, although even later Rabbi Akibah pronounced condemnation on those who sang snatches from this book in wine houses.) presents an ideal of love highly romantic and individualistic. When the idealized bridegroom found his bride the "fairest among women" and yet, in her control of his affections, "terrible as an army with banners," the relationship of marriage was plainly escaping its old tribal restrictions, the family was becoming more plastic, and the trail was being blazed from polygamy to monogamy. The Book of Proverbs gives further evidence of the same trend. No specific condemnation of polygamy is to be found, but it is impossible easily to fit polygamy into the ideas of the writer -- House and riches are an inheritance from fathers; But a prudent wife is from Yahweh. (Proverbs 19:14.) He that hath found a [good] wife hath found a blessing, And hath obtained favor from Yahweh. (Proverbs 18:22 as translated by H. G. Mitchell in op. cit., p. 330.) A

worthy woman is the crown of her husband. (Proverbs 12:4.)

Above all, in Proverbs 31:1-31 occurs the description of a wife and mother in which she is elevated to such dignity that rivals in the household are not easily imaginable.

Along with such finer estimates of woman in Hebrew poetry went an inevitable tendency to improve the laws in her behalf. So Deuteronomy marked an advance over the earlier codes, and the Priestly Document of the Exile went further yet in ordaining, for example, woman's right of inheritance. (Numbers 27:6-11.) As for the integrity of family life on a monogamous basis, Malachi's protest against divorce bears eloquent testimony to Israel's developing conscience: "And this again ye do: ye cover the altar of Yahweh with tears, with weeping, and with sighing, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, neither receiveth it with good will at your hand. Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because Yahweh hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously, though she is thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did he not make one, although he had the residue of the Spirit? And wherefore one? He sought a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For I hate putting away, saith Yahweh, the God of Israel.'' (Malachi 19:4-6.) As among ancient people generally, the actual practice of monogamy among the Hebrews came not so much by direct legislation as by the indirect influence of changed economic conditions, the increase of individual freedom, the rise of romantic love, and the deepening estimate of womanhood's worth in terms of personality. The very fact that Jesus took monogamy for granted reveals its prevalence in his day. He doubtless was appealing to the best conscience of his people when, against current looseness and especially against the injustice of husbands to wives in the matter of divorce, he stated the ideal of marriage in terms of a single, indissoluble bond -- "Have ye not read, that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh? So that they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." (Matthew 19:4-6.) The strictness of Jesus' command against divorce which immediately follows this passage, and the even stricter command in Mark's earlier account, (Mark 10:1-12.) can be understood only when set in the historic situation and seen as a defense of womanhood. The right of the husband to be judge, jury, and executioner in severing the marriage tie and expelling the wife from her home and children seemed to Jesus cruelly unjust, and with characteristic indignation against arrogant misuse of power he denied this legal right conferred on husbands by Leviticus. He granted that such a high standard as he set up was impossible as universal legislation, (Matthew 19:11-12.) but as against the prevalent practice, according to which a husband could, without appeal beyond his own wish, expel his wife from the home, Jesus pleaded for the rights of the woman and for the duty of the man, save in extreme cases, to keep his marriage indissoluble. All this is of one piece with Jesus' general attitude toward women. It is impossible to distinguish women from men in the personal respect with which Jesus treated them. Repeatedly he came to their defense as he came to the defense of children. Despite its high estimate of womanhood, even the Book of Proverbs, in the many passages where it condemns harlotry, (Proverbs 2:16; Proverbs 5:3-5; Proverbs 7:5-27; Proverbs 23:27-28.) habitually lays the initial responsibility on the woman, as though man were only the poor victim of her wiles. When Jesus, however, was presented with this problem, so the Fourth Gospel tells us, (This passage in its present form is of doubtful authenticity, as the Revised

Standard Version indicates, but it represents a bona fide tradition of Jesus' attitude.) he turned on the men as they prepared to stone an adulteress, saying, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." (John 8:7.)

Whether, therefore, one thinks of the prominence of women among the friends and followers of Jesus, or of his willingness to risk the wrath of the orthodox by dealing with sinful women as personalities in need of help, or of his spirited defense of women against the tyranny of husbands in a matter like divorce, or, in general, of his constant treatment of women as persons and, therefore, as ends in themselves, one understands the judgment that in Jesus woman found the best friend she ever had in the ancient world. It is no accident that in the movement which he originated it came soon to be understood that the distinction of sex represented no difference of spiritual status; there was "no male and female." (Galatians 3:28.)

Indeed, the fact that this particular phrase is Paul's should chasten the readiness with which many moderns, lacking an historical perspective, condemn him as an anti-feminist. He faced a perplexing practical situation. In Corinth, for example, only women of questionable reputation or of frankly public character as prostitutes commonly functioned outside the domestic circle as leaders in politics or religion. To allow the women of the Corinthian church public functions would have opened wide the door to a complete misunderstanding of Christian morals. As it was, the early Christians were generally believed to indulge in sensual orgies at their "love-feasts," and prudence was imperatively called for by the situation. His injunction against a woman's speaking in the church, therefore, must be understood with the local situation in mind. (1 Corinthians 14:34-35.)

Similarly, Paul's statement, lamentable in modern ears, that it is better to remain unmarried but that if one cannot remain unmarried without being unchaste, "it is better to marry than to burn," (1 Corinthians 7:9.) needs historic background for its understanding. Its origin was not ascetic but apocalyptic. Paul thought that the last days had come, that before his death the Messiah would appear, and that in the few remaining years there were more important tasks afoot than founding families. As in another period of crisis General Robert E. Lee said, "This is no time for marriage," (Quoted by Mrs Roger A. Pryor: Reminiscences of Peace and War, p. 327.) so Paul felt as he surveyed the current scene in the light of the new church's tremendous tasks and of the Messiah's expected return. Granted that the expectation was mistaken and that the obsession of Paul's mind by it warped his perspective, yet he should be allowed to decry marriage for the reason he really thought he had and not be accused of decrying it for another reason altogether. Far from being ascetic, he not only idealized marriage as a true figure of Christ's union with the church, but he carefully prescribed the complete satisfaction of biological needs in the marriage relationship and commanded that neither party physically defraud the other. (1 Corinthians 7:3-5.)

Nevertheless, when all allowance has been made, it remains true that Paul was limited not only by the practical situation which he faced but by the ideas which he had inherited. He never resolved the conflict between the larger vision of womanhood which he saw and the actual status of woman as man's inferior. On one side he was quaintly archaic, arguing that a man should not have his head covered in church "forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God," but that a woman should have her head veiled because she "is the glory of the man." (1 Corinthians 11:7.) He retained even the ancient inference from the story of Eden: "Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man." (1 Corinthians 11:9.) Having said this, however, he was troubled by its

inadequacy, and tried to compensate for the historic and actual subjugation of woman to man by stating an ideal equality in the relationship of both to God -- "Nevertheless, neither is the woman without the man, nor the man without the woman, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, so is the man also by the woman; but all things are of God." (1 Corinthians 11:11-12.) Nowhere is Paul more human or more like ourselves than in this confused endeavor to harmonize a spiritual ideal with an actual situation plus an inveterate set of inherited ideas concerning it. In particular, Paul never escaped the opinion that the only proper status of woman lay in the proprietorship of her husband -- "Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church. . . . But as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be to their husbands in everything." (Ephesians 5:22-24.) Doubtless if he had to legislate on this subject for the nascent churches, this was the only prudent legislation he could suggest, since any other would have wrecked the reputation of his movement. It required many centuries to prepare the race, even in its most civilized areas, for other ideas and other practices. Despite the boasted culture of Greece, Pericles in his great oration on Athenian liberality asserted that woman's glory consists in never being heard of at all, either for good or evil. Professor MacIver claims that in all his history Thucydides referred to a woman only twice -- then only casually in passing --and that "in the majority of Greek cities women filled so small a part that we cannot even obtain information about them." (R. M. MacIver: The Modern State, p. 89.) Indeed, even yet the status of womanhood is eminently unfair and the emancipation of women is attended by domestic and moral turmoil amounting at times to chaos.

Far from depreciating Paul, therefore, for attitudes that were inevitable in his time, a true historic judgment must applaud him for ideas ahead of his time. The supreme reforms of history can be traced back to ideals on the spiritual plane in direct antagonism to facts on the practical plane. Such equality in politics or before the law as man has attained began in the ideal of all men as equal before God, who is "no respecter of persons." (Acts 10:34.) Similarly, such practical equality as obtains between man and woman has sprung from an ideal equality. In Paul's eyes there was one place where man and woman stood together with no preeminence of one over the other, and that was before the face of God. "In the Lord" they were equal. (1 Corinthians 11:11.) At first this seems a poor substitute for the economic and domestic freedom of womanhood but in fact it was not so much a substitute as a creative idea, which, once set at work, could not be stayed in its leavening power. When persons are believed to be equal as God sees them, the race must try to make them equal as man treats them. In the New Testament, therefore, while we see no completed process in woman's elevation to an equal status, we do see the germinative ideas of equality, which today are still trying to grow into actualities. The New Testament presents God as "no respecter of persons" and, therefore, as no discriminator against women; it presents marriage as monogamy on a high level, comparable, as The Book of Common Prayer says, with the "mystical union that is betwixt Christ and his Church''; (Ephesians 5:25-33.) and, probably for the first time in human history, it presents a fellowship in which, so far as spiritual status was concerned, there was "no male and female." (Galations 3:28.) As James Russell Lowell said about the New Testament in general, there was dynamite enough in such ideas to blow all our existing institutions to atoms. (See his essay, "The Progress of the World.")

IX So far as slaves were concerned, nowhere in the Bible is the institution of slavery, as such, attacked or even questioned. What Professor Whitehead says about the Greeks, however, applies

in large measure to the Hebrews and to the early Christians -- "The Athenians were slave-owners: but they seem to have humanized the institution. Plato was an aristocrat by birth and by conviction, also he must have owned slaves. But it is difficult to read some of his Dialogues without an uneasy feeling about the compulsory degradation of mankind." (Alfred North Whitehead: Adventures of Ideas, p.16.)

One of the early Hebrew laws, for example, forbade the holding of a Hebrew slave for more than six years. (Exodus 21:2; Deuteronomy 15:12.) Evidently this law was widely disobeyed, for it was suddenly treated with respect, as a means of placating Yahweh, when in the days of Jeremiah the Babylonian army besieged Jerusalem. When, however, the enemy temporarily departed to meet the attacking Egyptians in the plain, the masters in Jerusalem speedily took back their slaves again and Jeremiah lashed them for their perfidy. (Jeremiah 34:8-22.) Nevertheless, despite its treacherous abrogation, the original agreement which King Zedekiah had made with the people of Jerusalem -- "that every man should let his man-servant, and every man his maid-servant, that is a Hebrew or a Hebrewess, go free; that none should make bondmen of them, to wit, of a Jew his brother" (Jeremiah 34:9.) --indicates a disturbed conscience about a Jew’s enslavement by a Jew.

Especially with reference to bondage for debt, the lot of unfortunate Jews was mitigated by successive laws (Deuteronomy 15:12-18; Leviticus 25:35-43.) and Nehemiah was "very angry" and indulged in one of his most effective outbursts of indignation over the use of debt as a means of gaining slaves. (Nehemiah 5:6 ff.) This growing sensitiveness of conscience about Hebrew slavery was doubtless responsible for the fact that, whereas according to the earlier history Solomon prepared and transported the materials for his temple by "a levy out of all Israel", (1 Kings 5:13-16.) later history reports that the 153,600 men engaged in this task were "the sojourners that were in the land of Israel," (2 Chronicles 2:17-18.) and that "of the children of Israel did Solomon make no servants for his work." (2 Chronicles 8:9.) This rewriting of the record plainly comes from a late period, when opposition to the enslavement of fellow Hebrews had won its way to general recognition and when it seemed desirable to expunge from the historical record a precedent so dangerous as Solomon’s example would provide.

Aside from this effective protest of the Hebrew conscience against the enslavement of their own brethren, the contribution of the Old Testament to the problem is mainly by indirection rather than by direct attack. Says Dr. Louis Wallis:

Indeed, we may search the pages of the literary prophets in vain to find a single instance in which the question of human slavery in the abstract is discussed. Amos passes over it in silence. Micah says nothing about it. Isaiah makes no mention of it. Hosea does not raise the subject. And so with all the prophets. (Sociological Study of the Bible, p. 157.)

What the prophets did contend for, however, was a rising estimate of human value, which, while it did not cancel slavery, affected deeply the treatment of slaves. This demand of the prophetic school for humaneness is seen in Deuteronomy’s plea for mercy to slaves because the Hebrews had themselves been slaves in Egypt, (Deuteronomy 15:15 [the same argument had already been made earlier, in the Book of the Covenant, Exodus 22:21.]) and even more in the merciful law concerning the year of jubilee in the Levitican Code: "And if thy brother be waxed poor with thee, and sell himself unto thee; thou shalt not make him to serve as a bondservant. As a hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee; he shall serve with thee unto the year of jubilee: then

shall he go out from thee, he and his children with him, and shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall he return." (Leviticus 25:39-41.) So far as the Old Testament is concerned, humane consideration for slaves is most adequately expressed in the picture of the ideal man in Job:

If I have despised the cause of my man-servant or of my maid-servant, When they contended with me;

What then shall I do when God riseth up? And when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? Did not he that made me in the womb make him? And did not one fashion us in the womb? (Job 31:13-15.) This insight and attitude of Job are continued and advanced in the New Testament. Jesus never explicitly questioned or discussed the institution of slavery. It was taken for granted in Palestine, as in the entire ancient world, as a natural part of the social structure. Jesus, therefore, assumed it as inherent in this present evil age, and in his parables slaves appear with no attack upon the economic institution that produced them. At that time no one, inside the New Testament or outside, had apparently thought of slavery as anything but inevitable or had dreamed of its eradication. What Jesus did was to elevate incalculably the status of personality as in itself intrinsically valuable. He treated all persons on that basis -- slaves and freemen, rich and poor, men and women, elders and children -- and, even if he did not foresee what this would do centuries afterward to some of the institutions of society, he made an inestimable contribution.

One of the first consequences was the admittance of slaves on equal terms with freemen into the first Christian churches. This represents the New Testament’s greatest single contribution to the solution of the problem of slavery. "In Christ Jesus" there were no slaves -- "neither bond nor free." (Galatians 3:28.) The Epistle to Philemon, far from deserving opprobrium because it takes slavery for granted without protest against the institution, represents one of the most indispensable forward steps in history toward the ultimate elimination of slavery. It presents an eloquent and persuasive plea for the welcome not only of a slave but of an "unprofitable" slave, as now converted to Christ and therefore to be regarded and treated "no longer as a bondservant, but more than a bondservant, a brother beloved." (Philemon 1:16 [marginal translation]). So far is this from being a small matter that American Christians to this day find it easier to rejoice in the historic elimination of the slave system as a whole than to welcome into churches children of ex-slaves on terms of equality, as brethren beloved. The principle of action recorded in the New Testament was profound and revolutionary; it is not yet even remotely lived up to. Certainly the ideal equality of slave and freeman as members of the Christian community was one of the major ideas presaging slavery’s ultimate downfall.

X With regard to the institution of slavery and the status of woman, the writers of the late Old Testament and of the New probably saw least clearly the implications of their growing idea of personality’s sacredness. They could no more have foreseen what the giving of full personal rights to women and slaves would involve than they could have foreseen aviation. They did, however, make an incalculable contribution to man’s ethical life by their ever deepening recognition of inherent dignity in persons and their ever more sensitive demand for humaneness toward persons. The great prophets of the Old Testament were the defenders of the poor, the solicitous protectors of all the plundered and oppressed people of the land. In Deuteronomy, which is the early endeavor of the prophetic school to put its ideals into laws, this humane sympathy with all who

suffer extends not only to the fatherless, the widow, the poor, and the stranger, but to criminals (Deuteronomy 25:1-3.) and animals (Deuteronomy 5:14; Deuteronomy 22:6-7; Deuteronomy 25:4.) as well.

Such humaneness was the direct result of the prophetic teaching -- of Amos' indignation against those who "pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor"; (Amos 2:6-7.) of Isaiah's plea to "seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow"; (Isaiah 1:15-17.) of Hosea's idea of the merciful Yahweh, who says, "My heart is turned within me, my compassions are kindled together.'' (Hosea 11:8.) Within the changing national and economic setting the prophets were constantly at work upon an underlying moral attitude. They felt the value of human life, the sacredness of brotherhood, the right of persons to justice, the shame of the plundered poor, the supreme wickedness of cruelty. Of such teaching and, as well, of the courage with which the prophets launched it in the face of the powerful, Jeremiah may well be the exemplar as he addressed a tyrannical king in his new palace "Shalt thou reign, because thou strivest to excel in cedar? Did not thy father eat and drink, and do justice and righteousness? then it was well with him. He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well. Was not this to know me? saith Yahweh." (Jeremiah 22:15-16.) In this regard the common opinion is mistaken that justice in the Old Testament is negative and in the New Testament positive. To be sure, various ancient writers stated the law of justice negatively, as Confucius did -- what ye would not that men should do to you, do ye not to them. Nevertheless, Leviticus said, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," (Leviticus 19:18.) extending this admonition to cover the resident foreigner, "Thou shalt love him as thyself", (Leviticus 19:33-34.) and in Ecclesiasticus Jesus may well have read: "Consider thy neighbour's liking by thine own." (Sir 31:15.) In Judaism the ideal of personal right and fraternal goodwill rose to great heights, involving the obligation not only of negative justice but of positive mercy, so that the virtuous man of the Book of Job is, above all, a philanthropist -- If I have withheld the poor from their desire, Or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail, Or have eaten my morsel alone, And the fatherless hath not eaten thereof (Nay, from my youth he grew up with me as with a father, And her have I guided from my mother's womb);

If I have seen any perish for want of clothing, Or that the needy had no covering;

If his loins have not blessed me, And if he hath not been warmed with the fleece of my sheep;

If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, Because I saw my help in the gate:

Then let my shoulder fall from the shoulder-blade, And mine arm be broken from the bone. (Job 31:16-22.) In this realm, as in every other, it is inconceivable that the Jews should have lived in isolation from the thinking of the world at large. In any given case, the degree to which Old Testament ideas have been affected by influences from Egypt, Babylonia, Persia, or Greece, is difficult to estimate. In general, however, Dr. James H. Breasted's statement is true: "We are all aware that Egypto-Babylonian culture set European civilisation going; but few modern people have observed the fact, so important in the history of morals and religion, that Egypto-Babylonian culture also set Hebrew civilisation going.'' (The Dawn of Conscience, p.14) Certainly, in teaching the ideal of humaneness, the Egyptians long antedated the Hebrews. Beginning with a drama originating in Memphis in the middle of the fourth millennium B.C., and containing the earliest known discussion of right and wrong in man's history, the Egyptians progressively developed high standards of social Justice and humane conduct. The lament of Khekheperre-soneb, born about

1900 B.C., "The poor man has no strength to save himself from him that is stronger than he," (Quoted by Breasted in above volume, p.179.) and the Heracleopolitan king's elevation of righteousness over sacrifice in pleasing the gods, "More acceptable is the virtue of the upright man than the ox of him that doeth iniquity," (Ibid., p.156.) represent developing ideals kindred with Hebrew thinking ages before the Hebrews reached them. Long before the Hebrew tribes reached Palestine, the Coffin Texts represented the sun god as saying:

I have made the four winds that every man might breathe thereof like his brother during his time.

I have made the great waters that the pauper like the lord might have use of them.

I have made every man like his brother, and I have forbidden that they do evil, (but) it was their hearts which undid that which I had said. (Ibid. p. 221.)

Indeed, as a parallel to Job's ideal, written about 400 B.C., one may set Ameni's ideal, put on his Egyptian tomb-chapel in the nineteenth century B.C.:

There was no citizen's daughter whom I misused, there was no widow whom I afflicted, there was no peasant whom I evicted, there was no herdman whom I expelled, there was no overseer of five whose people I took away for (unpaid) taxes. There was none wretched in my com- munity, there was none hungry in my time. When years of famine came, I ploughed all the fields of the Oryx barony (his estate) as far as its southern and its northern boundary, preserving its people alive, furnishing its food so that there was none hungry therein. I gave to the widow as to her who had a husband. I did not exalt the great (man) above the small (man) in anything that I gave. Then came great Niles (inundations), rich in grain and all things, but I did not collect the arrears of the field. (Ibid.,pp. 213-214.)

Such general similarities, however, would not indicate any necessary dependence of Hebrew ethics on the preceding Egyptian development were it not for specific evidence. There is no doubt, for example, that the late Biblical Book of Proverbs, strongly impregnated with the feeling of Egypto-Grecian Judaism in Alexandria, is largely indebted to The Wisdom of Amenemope, written about 1000 B.C. Indeed, Proverbs 22:17; Proverbs 23:11 is an almost verbatim translation of the Egyptian book, and in many other passages the similarity is too close to be mistaken. (For these parallels see above volume. pp. 372-380.) That there was effective influence, therefore, flowing from Egyptian to Hebrew thought is not only generally probable but specifically demonstrable, but how far that influence ran into the ideas of the great prophets or how important it was in shaping their teaching is uncertain. At any rate, nothing in ancient history equals the total moral quality and effect of the Hebrew prophets at their best. Of this great tradition Jesus was the inheritor. Inwardness and humaneness were the twin qualities of his ethic. Moreover, his humaneness, far from being kindly sentiment alone, was solidly grounded in a well-considered estimate of personality's worth. This indeed constituted the morally creative factor in his attitude. Whether he dealt with women, children, or slaves, whether he described the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37.) or announced the principle of service on the basis of which God judges men, (Matthew 25:31-46.) whether he vehemently condemned selfish luxury in the face of human need (Luke 16:19 ff.) or died for man because he thought man worth dying for, the common principle of outgoing, sacrificial humaneness, based on the supreme value of personality, gave unity to it all. To be sure, the self-regarding motives were prominent in Jesus' teaching and any interpretation of unselfishness

as meaning forgetfulness of the interests of one's own life found no support in him. We are to judge not, that we be not judged; (Matthew 7:1.) to forgive, that we may be forgiven; (Mark 11:25.) to be merciful, since thus we shall obtain mercy.Matthew 5:7.) Repeatedly this rebound of blessing on the good man's life was stressed in Jesus' message, and his injunction to the rich young ruler to surrender present wealth was coupled with assurance that his loss was seeming, not real, and that he should have "treasure in heaven." (Matthew 19:21.) Personality is sacred not only in the human object of the serviceable deed but in the doer of it also, and he is to love his neighbor even as he loves himself. (Matthew 19:19.) In this respect Jesus frankly cherished self-regarding motives as part of the ethical life.

Nevertheless, his ethic was centered in humane love and in the New Testament love became the cardinal virtue. In Jesus' teaching, it is important to note that love, far from being mainly emotional, was a profoundly ethical attitude capable of deliberate exercise and direction. It could be commanded. According to Matthew, when Jesus said, "Love your enemies," he added, "pray for them that persecute you"; (Matthew 5:44.) according to Luke, he added, "do good to them that hate you." (Luke 6:27.) Loving one's enemies, that is, involved both inward goodwill and outward helpfulness; it required deliberate self-discipline; any emotional tone of kindly feeling in it was subordinate to the resolute schooling of the spirit in persistent beneficence; it was predominantly ethical, not sentimental. In this regard Jesus was in the great succession of the Hebrew prophets at their best. If justice and love together were primary in the Old Testament, love and justice together were primary in the New, and in the literature between the Testaments stood parallels to many of the most characteristic sayings of Jesus in this realm. Even his principle of equivalence between the mercy a man shows to man and the mercy he receives from God (E.g., Matthew 5:7; Matthew 18:23-25.) had been stated in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs -- "In the degree in which a man hath compassion upon his neighbors, in the same degree hath the Lord also upon him." (The Testament of Zebulun 8:3.)

Nevertheless, there is no mistaking the clear emergence of the ethic of love as the dominant and unique principle of conduct in the ideals of the New Testament. Goodwill was to be exercised toward all persons, good and bad, grateful and ungrateful, friendly and hostile. It was to acknowledge no boundaries of race, nation, sex, or economic status. It was to be the sole reliance of Jesus' disciples in dealing with all sorts and conditions of men, and in Paul's thinking it was so comprehensive that the external law was displaced by it, since "love . . . is the fulfillment of the law.'' (Romans 13:10.) Many differences in situation and opinion separated Jesus and Paul but with regard to the central ethical principle of whole-hearted reliance on the power and persuasiveness of sacrificial love, Paul, as 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 shows, understood Jesus very well. The unique position which the ethic of love holds in the New Testament is made plain by the very contradictions of it that occur. For example, while man was to practise tireless love, vengeance still belonged unto God, and the inherited idea of everlasting punishment was still retained. On the one side, Christians were to exercise undiscourageable goodwill toward evil men, even praying for those who slew them when no other manner of expressing goodwill remained; but, on the other side, the new faith retained the hopeless torture chamber of Gehenna, where punishment was supposed to go on in endless agony long after moral purpose in the torture had been lost. Here was a clear contradiction in moral principle between a primitive idea of cosmic penology and a new ethic.

Moreover, the ethical teaching of the New Testament faced antagonistic elements not only in its religious tradition but, as well, in the current situation. On the growing churches fell such difficult days, full of hardship and persecution, that the ethic of love in its pure form proved impracticable. Concerning our present civilization Professor Whitehead says, "As society is now constituted a literal adherence to the moral precepts scattered throughout the Gospels would mean sudden death." (Alfred North Whitehead: Adventure of Ideas, p. 18.) Likewise in the Greco-Roman world the pure ethic of love faced a desperate trial, and the marvel is not that the New Testament contains contradictions and qualifications of it, but that such elevated and triumphant faith in it was voiced at all and has remained to chasten and guide the conscience of the world.

Any Christian tempted to condescend to the Old Testament because the Book of Nakum is there with its unabashed delight in the catastrophic downfall of Nineveh, should read the eighteenth chapter of the Book of Revelation, with its similar delight over the prophesied ruin of Rome, disguised under the title of Babylon. And any Christian, failing to see how inevitably a cruel and tragic world forced on the Jewish community a greater humaneness toward its own members than they could possibly extend to the Moabites, should read the First Epistle of John, where love is expressed with supreme beauty but is always to be understood as love of the brethren. The New Testament, that is, launched the ethic of love into a world whose inherited ideas and practical situations limited its application and denied its claims. Nevertheless, the New Testament did launch the ethic of love, and by persuasive statements of it and, above all, by the presentation of its incarnation in Christ made an incalculable impression on the world. The real contrast between Judaism and Christianity, at their best, is to be found in the fact that whereas the proper symbol of the one is the Torah, a great statute book of moral law, the proper symbol of the other is the cross, a supreme expression of adventurous, sacrificial love. This contrast is not mutually exclusive but it is characteristic and significant. Christianity has no more lived up to the meaning of the cross than Judaism has lived up to the meaning of the Torah, but the two are not identical. With the advent of the New Testament, centered in the cross, a new and revolutionary era, not even yet fairly under way, began in man’s ethical ideals.

XI

Along with the overpassing of early limitations of externality and imperfect humaneness, the Bible records a widening range of moral obligation. This increasing universality in the ethics of the Old Testament was closely associated with the development of monotheism. A growing internationalism in Israel’s life and thought furnished the necessary basis for a growing monotheism; tribal conditions had to be transcended before tribal gods could be eliminated; but when monotheism once secured a foothold, its ideal implications outran the actualities of the political situation. Faith in one God was in part the result of an increasingly cosmopolitan experience and, in part, the cause of a still more extensive vision of the range of moral duty. This interplay between developing international relationships and developing monotheism constitutes one of the most significant and fascinating aspects of the Old Testament. As early as the eighth century B.C., Amos thought of Yahweh not only as the God of Israel but as the controlling deity of other nations, who punished the sins of Damascus, (Amos 1:3-5.) Philistia, (Amos 1:6-8.) Ammon, (Amos 1:13-15.) and Moab, (Amos 2:1-3.) and who was responsible for the migrations of the Ethiopians, Philistines, and Syrians, as he was for bringing Israel out of Egypt. (Amos 9:7.) From such a theology ethical influences inevitably flowed, even amid the bitter hatreds of that early time.

Amos vehemently attacked specific cases of international cruelty and chastened the pride of his people by asserting their equality with other races in the divine care "Are ye not as the children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? saith Yahweh." (Ibid.) From this early beginning, monotheism and an international conscience grew together when they grew at all. Practical conditions, however, were hostile to both. In the eighth century Assyria utterly destroyed the Northern Kingdom and so attacked Judea that the Jews, invaded and ravaged, narrowly escaped a similar ruin. In the seventh century, Babylon destroyed Jerusalem and left the city and temple a "haunt of jackals." (Jeremiah 10:22 [Moffatt translation.]) The years from Amos' ministry through Jeremiah's were no congenial time for international goodwill, and the desire for vengeance rather than the celebration of human brotherhood represented the trend of the times. Even Jeremiah, while in contrast with his contemporaries he counseled submission to Babylon, could not draw the full inferences of universal moral obligation that were implicit in his idea of God; and his contemporary, Habakkuk, could get no further than the assurance that the terrible power of the conqueror was temporary and that his downfall would vindicate the moral order of Yahweh's world. In view of the obsessing immediacy of national disaster, it is the more amazing that the high altitude of international vision and goodwill, surpassing all that had preceded it and standing solitary long afterwards, should have been reached in the desperate years of the Exile -- "Yea, he saith, It is too light a thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." (Isaiah 49:6; Isaiah 42:1-4; Isaiah 19:23-25.) For a long time, however, this comprehensive outlook on both God and man lacked widespread appreciation. The circumstances of the returned exiles under Nehemiah and Ezra, struggling for existence against the penury of nature and the hostility of half-breed neighbors, made irresistibly for a policy of narrow exclusiveness. All mixed marriages with aliens were prohihited to Jews. Ezra even demanded that Jews put away non-Jewish wives and their children, dissolving families already established. (Ezra 9:1-15; Ezra 10:1-44.) This attitude is of one piece with the story in the Book of Numbers according to which a plague slew twenty-four thousand of the people before its cause was located in an Israelite's marriage to a Midianite and was removed by the execution of the couple. (Numbers 25:6-18.)

Here was no fertile soil for ideas of inter-racial obligation. Upon the contrary, the desire fur vengeance was commonly given free expression, as through Zechariah, who hoped for the Jews that "they shall devour all the peoples round about, on the right hand and on the left." (Zechariah 12:6; cf. Zechariah 9:1-8; Zechariah 12:1-9.) So late passages, inserted in the Book of Isaiah, predicted the coming revenge of Israel -- "That nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted." (Isaiah 60:12; cf. Isaiah 60:14-16; Isaiah 61:5; Isaiah 66:12.) And so, in general, the imprecatory psalms heaped curses on the heads of all and sundry whom the psalmist regarded as enemies of his people -- Pour out thine indignation upon them, And let the fierceness of thine anger overtake them.

Let their habitation be desolate;

Let none dwell in their tents. (Psalms 69:24-25; cf. Psalms 59:13; Psalms 83:13-18; Psalms 109:8-15.) This attitude, however, did not go unrebuked, and two books in the late Old Testament specifically represent the larger view: the Book of Ruth, written to encourage a more generous interracial policy, and the Book of Jonah, written to enforce the worldwide mission of Israel. The

Book of Ruth was apparently directed against the policy of forbidding mixed marriages. It is an historic romance recounting the way in which its heroine, Ruth, a Moabitess, became the ancestress of David. To this end the fact that Ruth was a Moabitess is repeatedly stressed. She was "of the women of Moab," "the Moabitish damsel," "a foreigner," and five times, "Ruth the Moabitess." (Ruth 1:4; Ruth 2:6; Ruth 2:10 Ruth 1:22; Ruth 2:2; Ruth 2:21; Ruth 4:5; Ruth 4:10.) Thus the story drives home the fact that she was an alien and, what is more, of a particularly hated race and nation. (Cf. Deuteronomy 23:3; Nehemiah 13:1-2.)Yet, according to contemporary standards, she was an ideal woman, unforgetable in her fidelity, and, married to a Jew, she became, so the climax of the story runs, mother of a son who was "the father of Jesse, the father of David." (Ruth 4:17.) The book, that is, presents in story form an argument against the prohibition of mixed marriages between the Jews and neighboring peoples. The Book of Jonah is a picturesque appeal for the universal mission of Israel, a plea in favor of international goodwill in place of vindictiveness and prejudice. It is thus one of the supremely important books, not only of the Old Testament but of all ancient literature, and its common caricature, as the narrative of a fish literally swallowing a man and disgorging him alive after three days, is one of the most regrettable absurdities in the Western world’s long mistreatment of the Bible. Conceivably the Book of Jonah may be an allegory. In that case, the prophet Jonah represents Israel, hating such alien peoples as Nineveh and reluctant to undertake the saving mission to the world at large which God intends. The flight of Jonah is Israel’s refusal of her world-wide mission; the swallowing of Jonah is the Exile, and his disgorging, the return; the continued surliness of Jonah is Israel’s postExilic blindness to her international obligations; the repentance of Nineveh is a prophecy of the world won to righteousness; and the sullen prophet at the allegory’s end stands for the stubbornness with which Israel retains her nationalistic ill will. This allegorical interpretation, however, is not necessary to the understanding of the book and has been almost universally given up by scholars. The story may instead be understood as a vivid, dramatic parable intended to present a single lesson -- the world-wide extension of God’s care and the folly and wickedness of Israel’s reluctance to share the divine spirit and purpose. As with the Book of Ruth so with the Book of Jonah, the lesson is made clear in the climax. The story ends with a vision of the all-merciful God, compassionate over Nineveh and calling his representative to a similar outreach of saving goodwill -- "And Yahweh said, Thou hast had regard for the gourd, for which thou hast not labored, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night: and should not I have regard for Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?" So the book ends -- bootlessly if it is supposed to be literal history, splendidly if it is seen to be an impassioned plea for Israel’s worldwide responsibility as the missioner of the universal God.

Along with this extension of Israel’s goodwill went a development of thought about war. At the beginning Yahweh himself was "a man of war" (Exodus 15:3.) and his prophets were leaders in battle. In the early days in Palestine, before outstanding individuals appeared in the prophetic succession, bands of prophets represented the most fanatic patriotism of the Hebrew tribes, and Saul’s espousal of his people’s cause against their enemies followed his falling under the spell of the prophets’ frenzy. (1 Samuel 10:9-11.) Elisha was a prophet of war and a counsellor concerning strategy, (2 Kings 3:15 ff.) and both Elijah and Elisha were praised as being "the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof." (2 Kings 2:12; 2 Kings 13:14.) One has only to read the final address of the dying Elisha to his king to see how vehement an encourager of war the prophet was and

how lusty a chaplain of the hosts of Yahweh. (2 Kings 13:14-19.) In the latter part of the eighth century, however, another note was heard. In view of the unquestioned prevalence of war, the inveterate conditions producing it, and the apparent necessity of success in it to preserve national existence, this new note was and is one of the most astonishing elements in the Old Testament. That there was an irreconcilable conflict between the practices of war and the developing humaneness of the prophets and their ideas of God is clear in retrospect, but that it should have been clear in the eighth century and that even then the hope of a warless world should have been unequivocably stated, is amazing. There is nothing to compare with it in Egyptian or Babylonian literature, and in Greek literature, even a great anti-war drama, such as Euripides' "Trojan Women" -- first performed in 415 B.C. -- issues in no such positive demand for war's elimination as the Hebrews reached centuries before. The same prophet, Micah, who summed up the divine demand as doing justly, loving kindness, and walking humbly with God, (Micah 6:8.) foresaw the consummation of such an ethic in a warless world -- "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Micah 4:3; cf. Isaiah 2:4.) Difficult as the confident dating of specific passages may be, there is no mistaking the strength of this prophetic hope in Israel. Isaiah's notable passage announcing the coming of the "Prince of Peace" is preceded by a picture of war's end -- "All the armor of the armed man in the tumult, and the garments rolled in blood, shall be for burning, for fuel of fire'' (Isaiah 9:5-6.) and the mission of Messianic Israel is portrayed as ushering in a new epoch in which "they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Yahweh, as the waters cover the sea." (Isaiah 11:1-9.) To be sure, this note was commonly drowned out in war's cacophony. The prophet Joel, probably writing during the miserable humiliations of the Persian period, left a book containing some of the most bloodthirsty passages in the Old Testament, calling for vengeance and inciting to battle. He even deliberately took the peaceful phrases of Micah and Isaiah and reversed them. "Beat your plowshares into swords," he cried,

"and your pruning-hooks into spears." (Joel 3:10.) Far from appreciating the pacifism of his predecessors and their dream of a fraternal world, his hope was in revenge "Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence done to the children of Judah." (Joel 3:19; cf.Joel 3:1-8.) The Old Testament, then, ends with no unanimous consent to the great ideas of an all-merciful God, a world-wide moral obligation, and a brotherhood of man from which war has been banished. Such ideas, however, were there; the possibility of their fruition was rooted in the deep convictions of the prophets concerning them; to change the figure, though the slag of the Book was greater in the mass, diamonds of infinite value had been formed in it.

XII On this important question of the range of moral obligation, the New Testament arrays itself on the side of the larger outlook and is unequivocal in its proclamation. "The field is the world" (Matthew 13:38.) has been the church's interpretation of Jesus' teaching from the beginning. Not only did his monotheism, taken morally in earnest, imply this, but his humane ethic likewise involved the overpassing of all national and racial restrictions. When, for example, in his dramatic portrayal of the last judgment, the nations of the world are gathered before the Messiah, the basis of estimate is a test which contains no special Judaistic adhesions but is simply humanitarian service to the needy -- caring for the hungry and thirsty, for strangers, for the naked, sick, and

imprisoned. (Matthew 25:31-46.) A Gentile, as readily as a Jew, might meet the test of so universal an ethic, and no question of race or nation is suggested by it.

Indeed, the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37.) was a deliberate attack on the limited range of moral responsibility popularly taught in Jesus' time. As Professor E. F. Scott says of the parable,

It embodies Jesus' criticism of the common Jewish attitude in his day. It was assumed that humane obligations were strictly limited. A Jew owed no duty to a Gentile; a religious Jew must think of his own associates and not of strangers and outcasts. The Law, to be sure, enjoined love to one's neighbor, -- but "who is my neighbor"? was a question warmly discussed in the Rabbinical schools, and it was answered, as time went on, in an ever narrower way. Jesus tells his parable in order to show that no restrictions can be drawn. (The Ethical Teaching of Jesus, pp. 84-85.)

Moreover, the reason why no restrictions can be drawn is plain: Jesus' ethical demands are so universally humane, evidenced in such service as the Good Samaritan rendered the needy man, that no race or nation can be picked out as singularly implied in them. Every man of every race is included in them by virtue of being human. To be sure, the Christian scriptures retain unmistakable evidence of the struggle in which the early church was involved in thus breaking free from Jewish particularism and racialism. The Gospel of Matthew, for example, presents us with ambiguous testimony. On the one side, the Torah is declared permanently valid; (Matthew 5:17-18.) while its interpreters may not be worthy of imitation in their lives, they are to be obeyed in their teachings; (Matthew 23:2-3.) and Jesus' mission is limited to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matthew 15:24.) On the other side, the universalistic prophecy, "In his name shall the Gentiles hope," is applied to Jesus; (Matthew 12:15-21; cf. Isaiah 42:1 ff.) the parable of the husbandmen teaches the substitution of the Gentile church for rejected Israel; (Matthew 21:33-43.) love to all men is presented as true imitation of the Father; (Matthew 5:43-48.) terrific denunciation is visited on Jewish leaders (Matthew 23:1 ff.) and cordial praise is bestowed on a Roman centurion; (Matthew 8:5-10.) Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom, pagan cities, are to be preferred in the judgment before Bethsaida, Chorazin, and Capernaum; (Matthew 11:21-24.) when the kingdom arrives, "many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob," while "the sons of the kingdom shall be cast forth into the outer darkness''; (Matthew 8:11-12.) at the judgment "shall be gathered all the nations"; (Matthew 25:31 ff.) and, in the meantime, the Christian mission is world-wide and inclusive -- "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations." (Matthew 28:19.) This diversity of witness in the records is an evidence of their honest adherence to their sources. There was a bitter controversy over the universalizing of the Christian movement, but in the end the larger outlook was victorious. An unlimited range of moral obligation was revealed in Jesus' teaching about the kingdom of God. This was his central message and in his thought of it there was, so far as the Gospels reveal, no nationalistic element. The coming sovereignty of God over all mankind was not hoped for by him as the victory of Israel over the world but as the arrival of a new era in which all men should live as sons of the one Father and brothers to one another; into this new kingdom men would come from east, west, north, and south, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; (Luke 13:28-29.) and the conditions of its enjoyment lay in a quality of character which had nothing to do with special race or nation --"Whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother." (Matthew 12:50.) Indeed, on this point, the comment of a Jewish scholar is relevant.

Professor Klausner of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, an ardent Zionist, criticizes Jesus for the very thing that elevates him in the estimate of his followers -- the universality of his ethic:

Judaism is a national life, a life which the national religion and human ethical principles (the ultimate object of every religion) embrace without engulfing. Jesus came and thrust aside all the requirements of the national life; it was not that he set them apart and relegated them to their separate sphere in the life of the nation: he ignored them completely; in their stead he set up nothing but an ethico-religious system bound up with his conception of the Godhead. In the self-same moment he both annulled Judaism as the life-force of the Jewish nation, and also the nation itself as a nation. For a religion which possesses only a certain conception of God and a morality acceptable to all mankind, does not belong to any special nation, and, consciously or unconsciously, breaks down the barriers of nationality. This inevitably brought it to pass that his people, Israel, rejected him. (Joseph Klausner: Jesus of Nazareth,translated by Herbert Danby, p. 390.) The New Testament as a whole represents a movement which had broken away from its original moorings in Judaism and had taken to the open sea with no restrictions of race or nation. "God so loved the world" (John 3:16.) was the essence of its gospel; "Whosoever believeth" (Ibid.) represented the inclusiveness of its fellowship; "There can be neither Jew nor Greek" (Galatians 3:28.) revealed its transcendence of racial lines; and its ultimate ideal was a kingdom of souls "of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation." (Revelation 5:9.) Such is the undisputed character of the New Testament. In its eyes God is one and mankind is one, and there are neither boundaries restricting moral obligation to a special sector of the field nor preferences of race and nation making duty to one relatively more important than to another. From the tribal ethic of the Bible’s beginning to this world-wide gospel and this universal range of moral obligation, the Scriptures record one of the most momentous developments of thought and life in all history. With regard to war, two factors prevented international conflict from being specifically dealt with in the New Testament as a pressing problem: the apocalyptic expectation of the world’s immediate end, so that the gradual reform of social institutions was not in the picture, and the further fact that the first Christians had no responsibility for governmental policies or influence in determining them. Nevertheless, there is no mistaking the conscious conflict in the morals of the New Testament between the ethic of love on one side and bloody violence on the other. Jesus, in particular, faced a situation where this conflict was explicit. His contention with Pharisaic legalism is popularly understood, but his contention with the militant Zealots is not so clearly recognized. They were the flaming patriots of his day, proclaiming revolt against Rome, in the face of whose incitement to violence Jesus counseled non-resistance, love of enemies, prayer for persecutors -- reliance, that is, on moral forces. He even went so far as to say that, when conscripted under the Roman law to go one mile in bearing a burden, a man should go two. (Matthew 5:41.) If it be said that, like Jeremiah’s policy of submission to Babylon because revolt was useless, Jesus counsel was partly prudent good sense under existent conditions, this may be granted. For the Jews to undertake bloody insurrection against Rome was folly, as the later event proved. But the ethic of Jesus, the very essence of his teaching and life, was far profounder than such a theory plumbs. It involved the idea that violence begets violence, ill will creates ill will, and that the only force adequate to stop the vicious circle is undiscourageable, sacrificial goodwill. In his eyes war meant an endless cycle of evil -- "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matthew 26:52.) In view of this total attitude of Jesus, it is an amazing piece of textual atomism to quote in support of war a sentence from one of his discourses -- "Think not that I came to send peace on the earth: I came

not to send peace, but a sword." The context is a flat denial of such an interpretation. "For," reads the following sentence, "I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law: and a man's foes shall be they of his own household." (Matthew 10:34-36.) In other words, Jesus was speaking of the division in families that would be caused when some of the household became his disciples while the rest remained orthodox Jews, and, as the parallel passage in Luke makes evident, (Luke 12:51-53.) 'sword' in this case was a symbol not of international bloodshed but of domestic strife. Indeed, the New Testament as a whole is so clearly committed to aversion against war that the thoroughgoing pacifism of the early church was in all probability a continuance of the common attitude of the first Christians. (See Cecil John Cadoux: The Early Church and the World, chap. 6, "War" pp.269-281; also The Early Christian Attitude to War.) It was only when Christians began to face public responsibilities, in the second and third centuries, that the long story of Christianity's compromise with the sword commenced. In the New Testament itself the universal fatherhood of God involves the universal brotherhood of man, and, so far as human agency is concerned, only moral forces are counted on to bring about the recognition of the one and the reformation of life to fit the other.

Inwardness, humaneness, and universality are thus the three major goals of ethical development in the thought of the Bible. At the start, external observance of tribal custom was sufficient; at the end, the good life involved being transformed by the renewing of one's mind. At first, outside one's social group ruthlessness was enjoined and within it justice was commonly denied; at the end, an ethic of love had been envisioned whose fulfillment is still the best hope of the world. At the beginning, no moral obligation extended beyond tribal boundaries; at the last, one mankind under one God claimed the sacrificial service of the good man without regard to race or nation.

Surely, all this has an important bearing on contemporary disparagement of the New Testament's ethic in general and Jesus' ethic in particular, based on the supposedly perverting effect of expecting an immediate end to the present age. Such an apocalyptic hope foreshortened the horizon and falsified the perspective, some say, so that only an impractical 'interim ethic'was left. Before one consents to such a judgment, opposing considerations should be given due weight. For one thing, in so far as the influence of apocalyptic hopes can be clearly discerned, they seem to have positively heightened and clarified moral ideas and ideals. They faced the early Christians with the absolute demands of God's realized sovereignty, confronted them with an imminent kingdom of perfect righteousness, and so called out not small prudential counsels for getting on in this world, but the highest, most unqualified insights as to eternal values. However inapplicable to immediate conditions in this present age some precepts in the New Testament may seem to be, the ethical ideals of the New Testament as a whole have gone ahead of the race like a pillar of fire by night and of cloud by day. They have been not so much proverbs of practical counsel as criteria by which all proverbs of practical counsel must ultimately be judged. In this result, apocalyptic hopes, with their challenge that Christians be prepared at once to face a kingdom of absolute righteousness, may well have played an important part. For another thing, while apocalyptic forms of hope probably did exercise this influence, it is flying in the face of the evidence to explain the New Testament's ethic, as a whole, as dependent on and everywhere fashioned by apocalypticism. What have the parables of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son, or the idea of love in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians to do with apocalypticism? Jesus' ethical

teachings, so far as tradition was involved, were rooted in the prophecies and psalms of the Old Testament, and their development can be traced directly back to these non-apocalyptic sources. Forgiveness of persecutors, (Matthew 5:43-48.) mercy toward sinners, (Luke 15:1 ff.) humaneness as true service to God, (Matthew 25:31 ff.) the surrender of life's dearest loyalties when more imperative loyalties are at stake, (Luke 14:26[cf. Matthew 10:37] .Far from being a disparagement of the family, this statement of utter devotion to God in terms of surrendering family ties, when that is called for, is evidence of Jesus' supreme estimate of the family, as the value most difficult for a man to give up.)inwardness of spiritual quality as necessary to true goodness, (Matthew 5:27 ff.) the finding of life by losing it in a high devotion, (Matthew 10:39.) the utter subjection of anxious care about transient things to care about abiding values (Matthew 6:19 ff.) -- such characteristic teachings of Jesus, even when their statement happens to be set in an eschatological framework, have another source than apocalypticism, and they are not so demonstrably fashioned by it that, without it, we can be sure they would have been very different. Indeed, if the urgent imminence of the kingdom were the real architect of the New Testament's ethic, how should one explain such similarity of ethic as exists between the Johannine writings and the rest of the Christian scriptures? For far from being Johannine, apocalypticism was fairly well read out of the record in the Fourth Gospel. (This subject will be treated more fully in chap. VI, sec.xI, p. 286 ff.) Yet many of the same emphases which are ascribed to apocalyptic influence are present in John, as well as in the Synoptics and Paul. For another thing, the criterion by which ethical teaching is to be judged is never the mental category in which it happens to arise. Moral ideals were developing throughout the ancient world -- in Egypt, Babylonia, Persia, Judea, Greece -- and effective influences were flowing back and forth among them. The mental categories in which these developments of moral idea and ideal were taking place were various -- sometimes apocalyptic, more often not -- and in no case can one judge the value of the ethical insights that emerged by the mental patterns which happened to give them temporary housing. This certainly seems to be true in the New Testament, where both apocalyptic and non-apocalyptic categories exist and yet where the major ideas that rose in the non-apocalyptic Old Testament sustain their continuous development. If some one notes, as we have already noted, the influence of early Christian hopes of Christ's immediate return on the church's aloofness from remedial civic and social tasks and from all sense of responsibility for the improvement of social institutions, the answer seems plain. The barrier to early Christian participation in the tasks of civic and cultural life was not alone the apocalyptic idea but even more the prevailing practical circumstances of social and political life. It is to be remarked that when, at last, the way was open for Christians to become potently effective in the affairs of state and society, not all the apocalyptic ideas in their scriptures or in their current thinking prevented their acceptance of the responsibility.

Finally, the course of thought we have been tracing in this chapter is adverse to those who claim apocalypticism as the real creator of the New Testament's ethic. From the beginning of the Bible to the end runs the development of inwardness, humaneness, and universality as the major qualities of the good life. This development began long before apocalyptic hopes were dreamed of; it passed through days when they were a ruling category in Christian thinking to later days when in wide areas of the church the old Jewish forms of expectation were sublimated, spiritualized, and explained away. Neither in its sources, its main channel, nor its outcome was this stream of development so dependent on any special category as to give that category a just claim to have determined the stream's direction.

01.04. The Idea of Suffering

Chapter 4: The Idea of Suffering The development of a high concept of God in terms of complete power and complete goodness necessarily involved the Biblical writers in a correlative problem concerning the explanation of suffering. John Stuart Mill made the classic statement of the modern theist's difficulty when he called it "the impossible problem of reconciling infinite benevolence and justice with infinite power in the Creator of such a world as this.'' (Essay on Theism [1904], Part II, p. 80.) So modern a phrasing of the matter, involving mature ethical monotheism, is far distant, both in mental category and in circumstantial setting, from the questions which the early Hebrews asked about trouble's meaning. Then, as now, such questions were pressing and acute men faced, not only with emotional wretchedness but with mental bafflement, the apparently senseless incidence of misery upon mankind. At first, however, the Bible represents these questions as asked by men in whose world unity, sole sovereignty, and merciful character had not been dreamed of as attributes of God. In general, the early Hebrews, like other primitive peoples, explained their happiness or misfortune as due to the favor or disfavor of the gods. Our modern, urban society, with its ubiquitous evidence of man's control over nature and his own fate, makes much less obvious than nomadic society did man's real dependence on extrahuman powers. Under primitive conditions man was so at the mercy of wind and storm, heat and cold, drought and rain, mysterious diseases and unpredictable disasters, that the first, natural explanation of his good or evil fortune was sought in the will of superhuman forces. In this sense primitive peoples were and are profoundly 'religious,' with a pervasive consciousness of constant and inescapable dependence on their divinities, quite unfamiliar to a modern city-dweller. Whatever good or evil fortune befell the individual or his social group seemed to the primitive mind a conscious expression of favor or disfavor on the part of superhuman powers, and the first explanation of prosperity or calamity was that something must have been done which either pleased or displeased the gods.

Here, as elsewhere behind the Biblical record, is visible the ancient background of the animistic ages, whose haunting ways of thinking persisted long after their specific forms had gone. To the animist the extrahuman powers were unaccountably capricious and whimsical -- uncertain wills, whose reasons for acting were commonly obscure if not inscrutable. The problem, therefore, was not to justify the gods ethically; they were not conceived in ethical terms so as to make that need apparent. The problem of evil, to the primitive mind, was more naïve what could man do so to please the capricious divinities as to win superhuman favor and support and thus insure himself against calamity?

Mainly practical though this phrasing of the problem seems, it was associated with intellectual questioning and bewilderment. Out of the Semitic background from which the Hebrews came, a Babylonian psalm has been preserved, voicing the baffled en- deavor of ancient minds to discover what kind of conduct met the whims of a god:

What, however, seems good to one, to a god may be displeasing.

What is spurned by oneself may find favor with a god. Who is there that can grasp the will of the gods in heaven? The plan of a god is full of mystery, -- who can understand it ?

How can mortals learn the ways of a god?

He who is still alive at evening is dead the next morning. In an instant he is cast into grief, of a sudden he is crushed.

(A penitential psalm attributed to Tabiutual-Enlil, King of Nippur, as quoted by Morris Jastrow, Jr.: Aspects of Religious Belief and Practice in Babylonia and Assyria, p. 333.) That the variations of human fortune were thus due to the caprice of deities and that in their favor and disfavor lay the origin of all man's happiness and misery, seemed self-evident. From this premise came the momentous corollary that if, for example, a family was fortunate, the gods were pleased with it, and if, instead, disaster befell a household, divine displeasure was the reason. This was the first simple formula in explanation of suffering, and the practical conclusion was that life's main business lay in so conducting affairs as to win the approbation and avoid the dislike of the superhuman powers. The conduct of affairs proper to this end, however, was not at first merely or mainly moral. The exigent needs of the primitive community -- rain, fertility of soil and herd, victory in war -- were not obviously associated with ethical quality and behavior. The satisfaction of such needs seemed to depend on the power of those mysterious arbiters of destiny, the gods, whose reasons for giving or withholding benefits were difficult to know. If rain was wanted, therefore, not improved moral character in the people but successful magical practice in the cult was first suggested. So the Zulus in time of drought slew a "heaven bird "that the god, melting with grief, might weep and thus cause rain. Indeed, Christians in Palermo once dumped an image of St. Joseph into a garden that he might see how dry it was, and swore to leave him there in the sun until it rained. (James George Frazer: The Golden Bough; A Study in Magic and Religion [abridged ed., 1935], p. 75) In whatever century such practices occur, we are dealing with primitive religion, and in such practices primitive religion is characteristically dealing with the problem of suffering.

While far advanced, even in its earliest documents, beyond the purely animistic stage, the Old Testament often reflects this primitive endeavor to please Yahweh by non-ethical acts and so to avoid the misery of his displeasure. Thus when Yahweh for no apparent reason sought to slay Moses at a wayside inn, the swift circumcision of Moses' son stayed the tragedy; (Exodus 4:24-26.)when Saul sought God's guidance in a campaign against the Philistines by augury and it was withheld from him, the reason turned out to be Jonathan's eating of a little honey in contravention of a taboo; (1 Samuel 14:24-30, 1 Samuel 14:36-43.) and when Saul tried to injure David, David said to him, "If it be Yahweh that hath stirred thee up against me, let him smell an offering." (1 Samuel 26:19 [Marginal translation]) Indeed, the whole complex of taboo, custom, and rite, revealed in the Old Testament, went back originally to this primitive desire to do something, however non-moral or bizarre, so to Yahweh's taste that it would ward off the troubles that he held in his control. However rationalized and sublimated they were in later usage, circumcision, laws of clean and unclean foods, various types of human and animal sacrifice, and all manner of prohibitory taboos, had in their primitive background the belief that disaster could be avoided only through Yahweh's favor, and that Yahweh's favor depended on a multitude of actions which had no ethical content whatever. Even so great a prophet as Ezekiel indiscriminately mingled moral and merely ritualistic acts as alike indispensable in the avoidance of Yahweh's wrath. (Ezekiel

18:5-9; Ezekiel 44:9; Ezekiel 33:25-26) The first phrasing of the problem of suffering in the Old Testament, therefore, might be put thus: men are afflicted because Yahweh is displeased; he is displeased because of something men have done or left undone; the only solution is to discover what has aroused Yahweh's dislike and to act accordingly.

II The collapse of this original phrasing of the problem followed of necessity from the development of monotheism in Israel and especially from the ascription of high moral quality to God. The divine powers, in Hebrew thinking, ceased being many and became one, and, no longer a being of unaccountable caprice, the one God was seen as steady and dependable character -- The Rock, his work is perfect; For all his ways are justice: A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, Just and right is he. (Deuteronomy 32:4) This concept of God as "powerful Goodness," to use Benjamin Franklin's phrase, far from solving the problem of suffering, restated it in a much more difficult form than it had had in earlier days. Then the search for ways of acting that would please the gods had indeed been baffling, but now a moral puzzle was added to man's bewilderment. How could God's powerful goodness be reconciled with the cruel injustice of man's experience? Though the thinking of our animistic ancestors may seem to us naïve, it remains true that a multitude of whimsical gods, so constituted that they are likely to be pleased or displeased by almost anything, is not incongruous with the welter of man's joys and miseries, befalling him, at least when superficially observed, with irrational capriciousness. A rapacious man prospers, a generous man suffers tragedy; needed people die young, worthless scoundrels reach a ripe old age; some children are blessed from birth, others are cursed with idiocy or disease; of two families of like quality and conduct, one experiences habitual good fortune, the other continuous adversity. Such facts perplexed the primitive, as they perplex the modern, mind. Life, then as now, often seemed a helterskelter affair of pleasure and wretchedness befalling men with no discernible relation to their moral quality. All this was not ill explained by primitive thought as due to hypersensitive, easily irritated gods, capricious in favor, the occasions of whose good and ill will were only with difficulty known to man. When, however, this diversity of gods was gathered up into monotheism and, for the whimsical nature of the divine powers was substituted the ineffable goodness and justice of the one God, how then could the inequity and cruelty of man's experience be explained? The more profoundly the Jews, therefore, believed in God as "powerful Goodness," the more baffling they found the mystery of trouble's incidence on man. In a new form the modern mind faces a similar situation, when it endeavors to hold a theistic, rather than a materialistic, philosophy. When thoroughgoing materialism is accepted -- a merely physical cosmos, lacking spiritual origin, purpose, or destiny, with man and his esthetic and ethical values only a transient fortuity -- there is no further mystery in suffering. Still difficult to endure, it is not at all difficult to explain. Rather, suffering is what we might expect in a world where all our conscious, and still more our spiritual, experiences are alien and accidental intruders. When, however, theism is accepted and the unity of the universe is conceived in terms not of physical cohesion only but of moral purpose also, then the appalling tragedies of man's personal and social life become not merely hardships difficult to bear but an intellectual problem difficult to solve. So, of old, as the Hebrews elevated their idea of the character and omnipotence of God, they found the apparent inequities of life not less but more bewildering. The persistence with which, in religion as everywhere else, old formulas are stretched to cover new situations is interestingly exhibited in the Hebrew handling of this situation. The basic idea of the earlier formula -- all good or ill fortune springs from the pleasure or displeasure of the gods -- was retained but the terms were reinterpreted: the gods became God, and what pleased or

displeased God was described in ever more emphatically ethical terms. The new formula, in consequence, was that man's happiness and misery come from God as the evidence of his favor or disfavor; that one thing supremely pleases God, moral goodness, and one thing supremely he hates, moral evil; that whenever men are fortunate they must have been virtuous and whenever they are wretched they must have transgressed; that all human suffering is thus punishment for sin -- "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right ?" (Genesis 18:25) For centuries, insistence on this formula seemed to the Hebrews their only way of maintaining faith in God's integrity. Around the formula powerful influences gathered, the like of which, in every age and among all peoples, have constituted the strength of orthodoxy. The ideas on which the formula was based came out of ancient ancestral traditions; the logic of the doctrine was unassailable once the premises were granted; great prophets, such as Amos, Micah, and Jeremiah, held stoutly to it; and the formula was confirmed and solidified by the final rewriting of the Hebrew historical narratives to illustrate the thesis that every calamity in Israel's record had been a definite punishment for Israel's transgression. From such influences came an established doctrine, the orthodoxy of a large part of the Old Testament, that all human suffering presupposes corresponding sin. God is absolutely just; his rewards and punishments are here and now equitably apportioned; all prosperity is award for antecedent goodness; all disaster is penalty for antecedent sin -- such was the Old Testament's long sustained theodicy. The modern mind stands in amazement before this thesis, which for centuries seemed to the Jews entirely certain and which seems to us entirely incredible. The backdrop of legend, which in the ancient world made life's history on the earth seem a matter of centuries, has for us been lifted, revealing a vista of uncounted millenniums of organic life, suffering unfathomable agony long before man was here to sin at all. Moreover, far from judging the major sufferers to be the major sinners, the supreme heroes of the race are in our eyes its martyrs and sacrificial servants who have drunk the hemlock or borne the cross. So obvious, therefore, does it appear to us that suffering is woven into the very fabric of creation and that the mark of rank in nature is capacity for pain, that a difficult tour de force of historic imagination is demanded if we are to understand the Old Testament's point of view. It should in fairness be said, however, that the reason for this contrast does not lie in the superiority of the modern mind but rather in the long-accumulated presuppositions with which we start and the area of human relationships within which our ideas of justice move. We are concerned about justice to the individual, and that obviously is not done here and now in such fashion that from any person's good or evil fortune we can confidently argue back to his previous good or evil conduct. Socrates drinking the hemlock, Christ on his cross, Hugh Latimer burned at the stake, Lincoln martyred when he was profoundly needed -- such events, to say nothing of commoner experience, make it impossible for us to say that all suffering is penalty for corresponding sin. In this, however, we are thinking of individual persons, each having status and rights of his own, while the early Hebrews were thinking of something else altogether. The reason for the plausibility of the orthodox formula -- all suffering is punishment for sin -- was that, at the beginning of its use, the Hebrews were thinking of justice in relation to the social group rather than to the individual. Here, once more, we run upon that determinative matter without understanding which the Old Testament is everywhere obscure, the late and gradual emergence of individual personality out of corporate personality. "It seemed eminently natural, accordingly, to the ancient Hebrew," writes Professor Paton, "that Yahweh should deal with the group rather than the individual, and should bring the punishment of the sinner, or the reward of the righteous, upon his family, his clan, or his nation, rather than upon

himself." (Lewis Bayles Paton: "The Hebrew Idea of the Future Life," in The Biblical World, "New Series," Vol.35 [1910], p 340.) Thus, when Korah and his fellow conspirators rebelled against Moses, Yahweh's first intention was to destroy the entire people. Against this Moses protested, "Shall one man sin, and wilt thou be wroth with all the congregation?" and when the penalty did fall with fatal consequence both on the rebels themselves and on "their wives and their sons and their little ones" but the rest of the people were spared, far from seeming unjust, such limitation of punishment seemed to him merciful. (Numbers 16:20-35) Similarly, when David had broken a primitive custom by taking a census of the people and a subsequent pestilence was interpreted, in accordance with the orthodox formula, as divine penalty, David prayed that the nation as a whole might be spared -- "Lo, I have sinned, and I have done perversely; but these sheep, what have they done?" -- but it did not occur to him that his clan could escape sharing his punishment, for he also said, "Let thy hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house." (2 Samuel 24:17.) So, when Pharaoh withstood Yahweh's will for Israel, all the first-born of Egypt, both of man and cattle, were slain as a penalty, (Exodus 12:29) and "the iniquity of the fathers" was conceived as justly visited "upon the third and upon the fourth generation" of their offspring. (Exodus 20:5) Reward and retribution, therefore, were to the early Hebrews not individual but social phenomena, and only upon this basis could the doctrine of happiness as always reward for virtue and trouble as always punishment for sin have rested so securely and so long. In any society taken as a whole, enough moral evil can be discovered to furnish plausible basis for interpreting the society's suffering as retribution. Granted the idea of social solidarity so complete that all members of a clan, tribe, or nation may justly be punished for what any member does, and one black sheep can furnish iniquity enough to satisfy the requirements of explanation when tragedy befalls the group. A typical Hebrew prophet of the eighth century, for example, would have explained Belgium's disaster in 1914 as God's punishment for Belgium's sin. Only so, in his opinion, could the justice of God have been maintained, for how could a righteous deity permit a people so to suffer if they did not deserve it? To doubt the existence of sufficient sin in Belgium to justify her calamity would have seemed to a Hebrew prophet denial of God's righteousness. The prophet, therefore, would have discovered sin in Belgium, perhaps lighting on King Leopold's misgovernment of the Belgian Congo, and so would have justified God in visiting on the nation the consequence of such transgression. The Kaiser accordingly, while hated as the ravisher of the people, would have seemed to the prophet, as the Assyrian king seemed to Isaiah, the appointed minister of Yahweh's wrath -- "Ho Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, the staff in whose hand is mine indignation!'' (Isaiah 10:5) Thus having found in the nation iniquity enough to deserve the national disaster, the prophet would have felt that he had vindicated God's ways to man and had confirmed Yahweh's sole sovereignty by subsuming alike the suffering of the victim and the cruelty of the invader under the divine administration of justice In this fashion the established formula -- all trouble is deserved punishment -- was stretched to cover the entire history of Israel. Always it was possible to discover enough sin in the nation as a whole to justify the punishments of Yahweh on the nation as a whole. So ran the argument and appeal of Zephaniah when the Scythians came, of Joel when the locusts came, of Jeremiah when the Chaldeans came. So Isaiah, when Judah lay desolate, saw in the disaster not disaster only but penalty for social sin, because of which "the anger of Yahweh" was "kindled against his people." (Isaiah 5:25) Granting the premise in the prophets' thought, the logic of this thesis was unassailable. All suffering comes from God -- "Shall evil befall a city, and Yahweh hath not done it?"; (Amos 3:6) God is inflexibly just and, therefore,

sends suffering only when it is deserved; all suffering must, in consequence, be deserved punishment; and the sin punished is the disobedience of the nation or of individuals within it, which brings rightful penalty upon the whole people -- such for centuries was the orthodox teaching of Hebrew religion.

III This experiment in justifying God's ways with man was bound to break down when justice to the individual became a vital matter of concern. The suffering of Belgium, as a whole, may plausibly be interpreted as punishment for national sin, but when individual personality is singled out and the character and fortunes of Cardinal Mercier, let us say, are clearly visualized and deeply cared about, then the formula, 'all suffering is deserved punishment,' becomes precarious if not incredible. Certainly his suffering was not plainly due to his sin. The development of Hebrew thought on this question, as on others, was thus profoundly affected by the emergence of individual personality out of the social mass, and this crucial phase of Hebrew thinking was associated with Jeremiah. To be sure, he found the public woes of Israel no mystery; the old formula adequately covered the case as he saw it. The national sins were so heinous and persistent that no collective retribution could be too severe to be deserved. Furthermore, Yahweh had been long-suffering and patient; more speedy and drastic punishment would have befallen Israel had not Yahweh in mercy repeatedly postponed his wrath until he was "weary with repenting." (Jeremiah 15:6) In soundly orthodox fashion Jeremiah thus used the old doctrine to explain the woes of the nation. His individual woes, however, presented to him a mystery, which in turn emphasized the mystery of personal suffering all about him. Through the experience of his own isolated and afflicted life he looked at other personalities, singly seen and individually cared about, and was far too honest not to report what he saw --prosperous sinners escaping penalty and innocent sufferers enduring tragedy. Jeremiah, therefore, who exercised a potent influence on many developments in Hebrew thinking, was among the first, if not himself the very first, to raise the problem of suffering in its new form:

Righteous art thou, O Yahweh, when I contend with thee; yet would I reason the cause with thee: wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they at ease that deal very treacherously? Thou hast planted them, yea, they have taken root; they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit: thou art near in their mouth, and far from their heart. But thou, O Yahweh, knowest me; thou seest me, and triest my heart toward thee . . . . (Jeremiah 12:1-3) Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed ? wilt thou indeed be unto me as a deceitful brook, as waters that fail? (Jeremiah 15:18)

Obviously a new factor had come upon the scene to shake confidence in the old formula. The separate individual to whom personally, apart from all questions of collective reward and retribution, justice was due but was not done, rose into Hebrew thinking with disturbing effect. The dark riddle of innocent suffering here passed into its most baffling presentment, and the unanswered "why -- ?" which centuries afterward sounded from the cross, was raised explicitly by Jeremiah. The association of this emergent problem with the break-up of the nation at the time of the Exile was further illustrated by Jeremiah's contemporary, Habakkuk:

O Yahweh, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear? I cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save. Why dost thou show me iniquity, and cause me to look upon perverseness ? for destruction and violence are before me; and there is strife, and contention riseth up. Therefore the

law is slacked, and justice goeth forth not unto victory; for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore justice goeth forth perverted. (Habakkuk 1:2-4 [Marginal translation]).

Art not thou from everlasting, O Yahweh my God, my Holy One? we shall not die. O Yahweh, thou hast ordained him [the Chaldean] for judgment; and thou, O Rock, hast established him for correction. Thou that art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and that canst not look on perverseness, wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy peace when the wicked swalloweth up the man that is more righteous than he? (Habakkuk 1:12-13.) In such passages from Jeremiah and Habakkuk we face the perennial glory of the true prophets -- their courage in acknowledging facts of experience that contradict accepted theories. Without blinking or evasion, these passages state the raw truths of experience which the current theology was inadequate to explain. Such perplexed why's and wherefore's as Habakkuk, for example, uttered concerning the problem of suffering are the more revealing because the prophet was loyally endeavoring to make the old orthodoxy work. He still could affirm that the Chaldean conqueror was acting under Yahweh's commission as the agent of divine retribution. While the old formula, however, was in his mind, the old confidence it had once inspired was not in his heart. The wide margin of mystery which it left unexplored and unexplained was to him painfully visible. In particular, he kept seeing the baffling personal injustice involved when "the wicked doth compass about the righteous," and, even when he thought of the nation's collective problem, his solution was not so much to blame present social tragedy on antecedent social sin as to believe that justice, now denied, would come in time -- "Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not delay." (Habakkuk 2:3) Even when applied to the national problem, therefore, the old formula under the shock of Exilic disaster began to prove inadequate. As the years passed, the problem of suffering thus moved into a new phase, dominated by two factors: a high, monotheistic doctrine of a just and merciful God and a growing care about the personal rights of individual people. These two factors, far from simplifying the problem, profoundly complicated it. Belief in many whimsical gods had left large leeway for capricious injustice, and collective retribution had made plausible the explanation of all suffering as punishment. When, however, the religious imagination began visualizing the divine-human relationship in terms of an all-powerful and benevolent God dealing with separate, individual lives, the problem of evil was brought to its climactic difficulty. Was God fairly administering justice to men, one by one? With that question the Old Testament was ever afterward vitally concerned. It has been said that the central problem of the religions of India is suffering, while the central problem of Hebrew religion is sin. Partially justified as such a distinction is, it can easily be exaggerated. Some of the most commanding ideas and most significant theological controversies in the Old Testament, from the days of the Exile on, were associated with the struggles of Judaism over this confusing and often agonizing problem of individual injustice in a world governed by "powerful Goodness."

IV In this endeavor to reconcile the omnipotence of a good God with the facts of personal experience, four major lines of thought were followed out.

1. Suffering on the part of the individual was explained as deserved retribution for the individual's own sin. This extension of the old formula to cover the new case was to have been expected; in one realm or another every generation subsumes new facts under venerable theories rather than change the theories to conform with the facts. Such persistence of an ancient piece of mental furniture was seldom more stubbornly illustrated than by the long continuance in Judaism of the

doctrine that, in the case of the individual as of the social group, all suffering is deserved punishment. Many faithful Jews, anxious to vindicate God's justice, saw no way of doing it if personal wretchedness were not exactly commensurate with preceding personal sin. Since Yahweh was flawlessly righteous and since -- there being as yet no confident expectation of a future life -- his justice had to be perfectly administered here and now, there seemed no solution unless all happy and prosperous people had been correspondingly good and all unhappy and afflicted people correspondingly wicked. Under duress of this theodicy, loyal Jews argued back from good fortune to good morals and from ill fortune to evil morals, and thereby found themselves at last in a position where theological theory and the facts of experience were in headlong collision. This endeavor to make the old theory fit individual suffering, as it had seemed to fit social calamity, was stoutly prosecuted by Ezekiel. His older contemporary, Jeremiah, may first have set the theme which he elaborated; certainly this is true if two verses attributed to Jeremiah were really his "In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge." (Jeremiah 31:29-30) Ezekiel's argument was a painstaking explication of this doctrine. (See chap. 11, pp. 67ff) Retribution is not transmissible; fathers cannot hand on unexpiated penalty to their sons, even within the family, every individual is so isolated from every other that punishment is strictly apportioned to each member according to his own sin -- such was the new teaching of Ezekiel. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." (Ezekiel 18:20) In this endeavor to explain all personal suffering as deserved punishment, Ezekiel desired to vindicate Yahweh's justice. The afflicted and resentful people in exile were tempted to blame their calamitous estate on God's inequity. Centuries afterwards, Jews still were rebelliously inquiring why God spares the wicked and destroys his own people -- "Are the deeds of Babylon better than those of Sion?" (2Es 3:31) This reaction to national distress Ezekiel faced in Babylon itself in the popular complaint that "the way of the Lord is not equal." (Ezekiel 18:25-30; Ezekiel 33:17-20) The prophet, therefore, rose in defense of divine fair play, and asserted that Yahweh's rewards and retributions, in dealing not only with the nation but with individuals, were exactly just. So far did this Calvin of the Old Testament carry his rigorous logic that he denied the possibility of inheriting evil's consequence and asserted that absolute justice is done to all individuals here and now in this present world. He denied that righteous lives can exercise saving power -- "Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it [the land], they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord Yahweh." (Ezekiel 14:14. On pre-Exilic story of Job, see International Critical Commentary on Job, pp. xxv-xxvi). To be sure, Ezekiel's ultimate purpose was merciful; he insisted thus on the individual's control of his own destiny in order that he might open the door to effective personal repentance and reformation. (Ezekiel 18:27-28). Nevertheless, the consequence of this extreme individualism was to make every sufferer bear not only his suffering but in addition the odium of having sinned enough to deserve it. "I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord Yahweh." (Ezekiel 18:30; Ezekiel 33:20)

Thus the new way of thinking rose vehemently in revolt against the old idea of collective punishment and collective reward as adequately explaining trouble. The individual had become a matter of concern too clamorous to be neglected, and the justice due him too important to be

denied. The resultant doctrine became post-Exilic orthodoxy in Judaism, and was with tireless repetition presented from every angle by the friends of Job. At first they tried to be comforting, interpreting Job's trouble as disciplinary rather than punitive, but soon, with the hard rigor of convinced logicians accepting an unquestioned premise, they were arguing back from Job's misery to his antecedent and corresponding sin. He must have sinned egregiously, they said, to have deserved such tragedy, and, had he not deserved it, God's justice could not have allowed it. These friends of Job furnish one of the most illustrious examples in literature of utter logic being utterly wrong.

Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? Or where were the upright cut off?

According as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, And sow trouble, reap the same. By the breath of God they perish, And by the blast of his anger are they consumed.

. . . . . Shall mortal man be more just than God? Shall a man be more pure than his Maker? (Job 4:7-9, Job 4:17) To such insistence on the complete justice of God to every individual Job's friends repeatedly returned. God, they argued, will not `'pervert justice"; (Job 8:3) he never will "cast away a perfect man," nor "uphold the evildoers"; (Job 8:20) the wicked man, therefore, "travaileth with pain all his days," (Job 15:20) terrors "chase him at his heels," (Job 18:11) and any triumph he may have "is short"; (Job 20:5) the just God allows trouble to fall exclusively on evil men, so that all trouble reveals the precedent wickedness of the sufferer, and to an afflicted person like Job the proper message is, "God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth." (Job 11:6) Indeed, so logically indispensable to sound faith seemed such confidence in God's perfect individual justice that Job, who denied it, faced the charge, "Thou art destroying religion." (Job 15:4 as translated by John Edgar McFadyen: The Problem of Pain; A study in the Book of Job, p. 100) Thus in the dramatic presentation of the Book of Job the orthodox formula was argued and reiterated against an innocent sufferer.

Aside from its literary excellence, the glory of this ancient drama lies in the intellectual honesty of Job, who, faced on one side with a venerable theory and on the other with plain facts of experience, insisted that the facts must have precedence. He punctured the complacent acceptance of the current orthodoxy with insistent questioning -- "Why ?" and "Wherefore ?" (Job 3:11-12, Job 3:20; 7:30; Job 10:2; Job 13:24; Job 21:4, Job 21:7; Job 24:1) The traditional claim that God marks the wicked for condign retribution and the good for appropriate reward Job opposed with a statement of observed fact, "He destroys the blameless and the wicked." (Job 9:22 as translated by Julius A. Bewer: The Literature of the Old Testament in its Historical Development, p. 320) His friends had, parrot-like, recited the familiar formula, Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out, And the flame of his fire shall not shine, (Job 18:5 [marginal translation]) but Job impatiently thrust into the discussion a matter of fact, How oft is it that the lamp of the wicked is put out? That their calamity cometh upon them? (Job 21:17)

Far from finding life's fortunes neatly apportioned according to moral character, Job had watched evil men "spared in the day of calamity," (Job 21:30 [Marginal translation]) and the refusal of his friends to see that fact, because they insisted on looking through an opaque theory, roused his indignation to extreme overstatement -- Why are wicked men suffered to live, To grow old and wax mighty in power? Their seed is established before them, And their offspring in sight of their eyes. Their homes are strangers to terror, No rod of God is on them. Their bull doth unfailingly gender,

Their cow never loses her calf.

Like a flock they send forth their young children; Their boys and their girls dance.

They sing to the timbrel and lyre; At the sound of the pipe they make merry.

They finish their days in prosperity, And go down to Sheol in peace -- Though they said unto God, ‘O leave us, We desire not to know Thy ways.

Why should we serve the Almighty? And what is the good of prayer?’

See! their fortune is in their own hand Nought He cares for the schemes of the wicked. (Job 21:7-16 as translated by J.E. McFadyen: op.cit., p. 147) This heretical rebellion against a venerable orthodoxy marks Job as one of the great nonconformists of history. His spirit was, indeed, subdued to a humbler and better balanced mood before the drama closed, but his mind, to the end, refused subjection to an old explanation of suffering that did not explain, and in his refusal Yahweh at last confirmed him and confounded his friends. In the outcome, therefore, the higher levels of the Old Testament rejected the formula that all personal suffering is personal punishment. That sin brings penalty in one form or another, that . . . they that plow iniquity, And sow mischief, reap the same, (Job 4:8 [marginal translation]) the sober thought of Old and New Testament alike accepted. But while the course of cause and consequence still ran from sin to suffering, it could no longer be confidently traced back from personal suffering to personal sin. All wickedness brought trouble, but not all trouble was penalty for wickedness; sinners in the end suffered, but all sufferers were not necessarily sinners --such came to be the insight of the later Judaism.

2. The persistence of the old formula, however, was revealed in a second endeavor to make sense of the relationship between wrongdoing and disaster. Before surrendering altogether the idea that one could argue not only from sin to suffering but from suffering back to sin, the device of postponed penalty was brought into play. Both with regard to individual and social experience, the old orthodoxy tried to save itself by appending to its statement of the case, "Wait and see." So Habakkuk, acknowledging the appalling injustice of the nation’s miseries, appealed to the future for the triumph of the righteous and the overthrow of the wicked -- "Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come." (Habakkuk 2:3) Thus the cracking formula was given a new lease of life. The Psalms -- whether national or springing, as even national psalms must, out of personal experience and conviction -- voice repeatedly the assurance that God’s indefectible justice in apportioning reward and retribution, while not now evident, will be revealed in time. When the wicked spring as the grass, And when all the workers of iniquity do flourish;

It is that they shall be destroyed for ever. (Psalms 92:7) Praise ye Yahweh.

Blessed is the man that feareth Yahweh, That delighteth greatly in his commandments. His seed shall be mighty upon earth: The generation of the upright shall be blessed.

Wealth and riches are in his house; And his righteousness endureth for ever.

. . . . . The wicked shall see it, and be grieved;

He shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: The desire of the wicked shall perish. (Psalms 112:1-3, Psalms 112:10) So deep-seated was the Jewish conviction that goodness and prosperity,

badness and adversity, must always travel as twins, that even when the observed facts denied the doctrine, the evidence of the doctrine's truth was confidently postponed to the future. The classic utterance of this attitude is the Thirty-seventh Psalm. The believer in God is there admonished not to fret himself over the good fortune of evil-doers, For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, And wither as the green herb. (Psalms 37:1-2)

According to this psalmist, patient righteousness will always live to see itself vindicated by prosperous circumstance, while inevitable adversity awaits the sinner -- For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be:

Yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and he shall not be. (Psalms 37:10) Indeed, the old formula, amended by the codicil of postponed award, reaches in this psalm its amazing climax, I have been young, and now am old;

Yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his seed begging bread. (Psalms 37:25)

Seldom has the truth been better exemplified that we see not only with our eyes but with our mental predispositions and prejudices. Obviously, then as now, the only way in which one could find virtue and prosperity, sin and adversity, so exactly conjoined would be by looking at the facts through the foregone conviction that the sufferer must have been evil and the successful man virtuous, no matter what appearances might indicate. The inevitable nemesis of such rationalization was popular doubt of God's justice. The formula by which the divine righteousness was defended was irreconcilable with experience, and the explanation of trouble offered by Yahweh's apologists did not explain it. Here, as has so commonly happened, the plain man was closer to the facts of life than the theologian, and the more the latter insisted on his sacred formulas, the more the former felt the urgency of his contradictory experience. Malachi found the people of his day denying any fair correspondence between quality of character and happiness of circumstance and saying, "Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of Yahweh, and he delighteth in them; or where is the God of justice?" (Malachi 2:17) The only answer Malachi had to give was the old formula with 'wait and see' appended. The righteous, he said, are in God's "book of remembrance," and the day will surely come, when Yahweh "will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Then the allocation of prosperity and adversity will make it easy to "discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not." (Malachi 3:14-18)

Malachi's indefinite extension of time for the postponed awards of God could not satisfy those who saw no justice done in their lifetime. At last, therefore, the horizons of 'wait and see' were extended farther yet, into a life after death. One of the major reasons for the emergence of the hope of resurrection in the Old Testament was its necessity as a fulfillment to the course of thinking we have been tracing. Complete justice was not done within one's lifetime; generations passed and still justice was not done; but in God's world justice must ultimately be done; and justice, according to the inveterate formula, must mean the accurate conjoining of prosperity with goodness and adversity with badness -- such was the situation in Jewish thinking out of which came the hope of a resurrected life.

Thus, Job, beating his mind against the mystery of his distress, dared hope for a vindication after death, and Daniel, amid national disaster, with no assurance of universal resurrection, still

believed that "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." (Daniel 12:2) Faith in a future resurrection, therefore, was not among the Hebrews an abstract theory, but was forged in the furnace of affliction. It was an appeal from the injustices of time to the justice of eternity.

Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small;

Though with patience he stands waiting, with exactness grinds he all -- (F. von Logau: "Retribution," from the "Sinngedichte," as translated by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow) that is excellent Old Testament doctrine, and such indefectible justice, resolutely believed in, was postponed beyond death when on this side of death it plainly was not exemplified. As a result of this development, a large area of earthly suffering was withdrawn from the application of the old formula. As any one could see, some trouble, social and personal, was deserved punishment for sin. But what of the rest?

3. In dealing with this problem, the disciplinary effect of suffering was, for some, a welcome solution. Even the friends of Job, stout protagonists of the old orthodoxy though they turned out to be, had known Job’s apparent integrity so well that at first they tried interpreting his disasters not as punitive but as educative -- Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth Therefore, despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty. (Job 5:17)

Two influences in Jewish thinking naturally converged to make this explanation of trouble acceptable. First, as the idea of God was heightened into nobler meanings, nothing for which he was responsible could be conceived as aimless and, therefore, the suffering which he brought on men and nations could readily be thought of, not as retribution merely, but as purposeful discipline and chastisement. Second, the experienced fact was, then as now, that suffering well handled adds new dimensions to character, that indeed, the noblest attributes of man are inconceivable in an untroubled life. As Henry Ward Beecher said, "Manhood is the most precious fruit of trouble." (Sermon, "Bearing but not Overborne," in The Original Plymouth Pulpit, Vol. III, p. 74) This experience the Jews also had, as witness the passage in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, celebrating the triumph of wisdom in the midst of adversity:

Get wisdom in the fear of God with diligence; For though there be a leading into captivity, And cities and lands be destroyed, And gold and silver and every possession perish, The wisdom of the wise naught can take away, Save the blindness of ungodliness, and the callousness (that comes) of sin. For if one keep oneself from these evil things, Then even among his enemies shall wisdom be a glory to him, And in a strange country a fatherland, And in the midst of foes shall prove a friend. (The Testament of Levi, 13:7-8) Such a passage reveals profound strength of character, not only unconquered but positively strengthened by adversity. To be sure, the explanation of trouhle as punishment held the center of the field. From the story of the Garden of Eden, where such natural hardships as earning one’s livelihood by the sweat of one’s brow, contending with weeds, bearing children with travail, and even wearing clothes, are interpreted as definite penalties for the sin of Adam and Eve, the Old Testament is haunted by the idea that adversity is retributive. Nevertheless, too many major achievements had been won through disaster, and too many great characters had shone out like a Rembrandt portrait from a dark background, for the educative meanings of affliction to be missed entirely. "Suffering accepted and vanquished," said Cardinal Mercier, "will place you in a more advanced position in your career, will

give you a serenity which may well prove the most exquisite fruit of your life." (Quoted by John A. Gade: The Life of Cardinal Mercier, p. 5) Such an experience was by no means unknown in Judaism and the later Old Testament gives clear expression to it: My son, despise not the chastening of Yahweh;

Neither be weary of his reproof: For whom Yahweh loveth he reproveth, Even as a father the son in whom he delighteth. (Proverbs 3:11-12) The sufferer He saveth through suffering;

Adversity opens his ear. (Job 36:15 as translated by J.E. McFadyen: The Problem of Pain; A Study in the Book of Job, p. 265; cf. Ezekiel 22:18-22)

"And some of them that are wise shall fall, to refine them, and to purify, and to make them white, even to the time of the end." (Daniel 11:35)

4. Neither the punitive nor the disciplinary idea of suffering, however, carries us to the highest altitudes of Old Testament thought. Suffering can be redemptive -- through that insight the great Prophet of the Exile made his supreme contribution and started on its influential history an idea that has been rightly called "the noblest creation of Old Testament religion." (H. Wheeler Robinson: The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament, p. 179) To be sure, Isaiah of Babylon did not give up the conviction that Israel in her disasters had been punished for her sins. "Behold, for your iniquities were ye sold," (Isaiah 50:1) he told the people, and even when he comforted them it was by no denial of punitive trouble but by its assertion -- "Jerusalem . . . hath received of Yahweh's hand double for all her sins." (Isaiah 40:2; cf. Isaiah 42:24-25) His distinctive contribution, however, lay in his change of emphasis in dealing with his people's suffering. Instead of looking back to past sins as its explanation, he looked forward to redemptive consequences as its purpose. Thus, while the national disasters were in a real sense punitive, and while, deeper yet, they were disciplinary -- a long suffering God purifying his people in the fires of affliction (Isaiah 48:10) -- the crowning fact about them was their vicariousness. Suffering endured for the sake of others God used in the redemption of the world -- this profound truth the Great Isaiah saw clearly for the first time in our Jewish-Christian tradition and stated it in the inspired "poems of the Servant of Yahweh." (Isaiah 42:1-4; Isaiah 49:1-6; Isaiah 50:4-9; Isaiah 52:13-15, Isaiah 53:1-12)

Presupposed in these poems was a fully developed, ethically serious monotheism, which included all mankind in its scope and set the redemption of all mankind as its purpose -- "Yea, he saith, It is too light a thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." (Isaiah 49:6) In this divine purpose to save mankind, the prophet saw the sufferings of Israel playing an essential part. To be sure, at the time the prophet wrote, the nations scorned Israel and the interpretation of national disaster as penalty added disgrace to the catastrophe. But, said the prophet, even the heathen will yet see in Israel's sufferings another meaning altogether and will say, "He was despised, and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and as one from whom men hide their face he was despised; and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Yahweh hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.'' (Isaiah 53:3-6) In making

possible this interpretation of suffering as redemptive, one cannot be sure what factors, in the prophet's mind, made the largest contribution. The redemptive effect of substitutionary suffering was not new, as a fact, in Israel's history, although as an idea it had never before been clearly stated. Moses was represented as identifying himself sacrificially with his people's lot until he desired no good fortune of his own apart from theirs --"Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin -- ; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written" (Exodus 32:32) -- and from such beginnings an illustrious record of vicarious suffering had brought the national history to Jeremiah, who, only a few years before Isaiah of Babylon wrote, had lived and died in voluntary self-giving for the salvation of his people. Indeed, he had consciously recognized his afflictions as serving a divine cause, so that he could say to God, "Know that for thy sake I have suffered reproach." (Jeremiah 15:15) Moreover, the saving efficacy of good lives in a community had been an implicit corollary of the old sense of social solidarity, as is picturesquely evidenced in Yahweh's consent to Abraham's argument that if there were even ten good men in Sodom it should not be destroyed. (Genesis 18:22-32) How much more saving would the lives of good men be when they suffered for others willingly and innocently! Still further, the persistent association of sin with commensurate adversity naturally suggested the idea that adversity itself was expiatory. In later Judaism it was plainly taught that suffering propitiates God, even more than burnt-offerings, since the latter are a man's property while the former are borne in his own person, and that "chastisements wipe out all a man's wickednesses." (Berakot 5a as quoted by George Foot Moore: Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era, Vol I, p. 547) If suffering is thus in itself expiatory for the individual, why may it not be so for society, especially if it is voluntarily chosen or innocently and patiently endured? Never before the Great Isaiah, however, had these facts of experience and foregleams of idea fallen together and caught fire. In him they became flamingly explicit in some of the most exultant passages in Scripture, where appalling disaster was transmuted into spiritual triumph because it was seen as redemptive.

One motive in the prophet's mind is self-evident. The national tragedy had been so dreadful and the interpretation of the tragedy as deserved punishment had added to cruel suffering a dishonor so intolerable, that the very bearing of the disaster demanded a new interpretation that would substitute constructive purpose for dour penalty, exalted meaning for disgrace. So the prophet glorified the sufferings of the true Israel; punitive they were but, as well, a martyrdom whose saving effects would redeem the world and exalt the very Israel once doomed by them. But it pleased Yahweh to crush him: if he would make his soul an offering for sin, He would see calamity for length of days, but the purpose of Yahweh would succeed through him. As a result of the travail of his soul he would see light and be satisfied with the knowledge of his vindication. (Isaiah 53:10-11 as translated by Julius A Bewer: The Literature of the Old Testament in its Historical Development, p. 210)

What this reinterpretation of Israel's tragedy did for those who understood and believed it is plain. Their minds had faced backward toward preceding sin as their disaster's cause. The Great Isaiah turned their faces forward toward redemption as their disaster's purpose. In their thought of their tragedy a primary emphasis on future outcome and meaning was substituted for the old, exclusive emphasis on past transgression. Hope instead of hopeless self-recrimination was put into the center of the picture. To be sure, the prophet did not do this lightly, speaking smooth things to comfort his people. The Suffering Servant was not the whole of Israel but the saving minority, the

faithful remnant whom opposition could not tame nor any bribe seduce, who with patient, uncomplaining willingness had taken on themselves the punishments that should have fallen upon others. The very presentation of the Suffering Servant, therefore, charged the people with guilt and faced them with shame. Seeing how the true Israel had suffered in their stead for sins which they had committed, they were called to penitence and through penitence to pardon and healing. The "poems of the Servant of Yahweh," were first of all ethically challenging and demanding. But they were comforting as well. Their moral appeal rested not so much on God's penal justice as on his redemptive power exercised through the substitutionary sacrifice of his people; their distinctive interpretation of suffering was cast into terms not of retribution but of salvation. To be sure, the prophet gave no explanation of such substitutionary sacrifice, offered no theory as to the way in which the sufferings of Yahweh's Servant operated to save the world. Of this, however, we may be sure: if we could have seen into his mind, we should have found there no such Western legal theories as have shaped and conditioned our more modern ideas of atonement, but rather should have found the persistent background of conceptions involved in social solidarity. Behind the fifty third chapter of Isaiah, in which the true Israel is personified and the Suffering Servant's willing, uncomplaining assumption of punishment due to others is dramatically described and exalted, lies the ancient concept of corporate personality. (Cf. chap. II) According to that, the sin of one could be the curse of all, and now the Great Isaiah announced that the sacrifice of one -- the Suffering Servant -- would be the redemption of all. Moreover, the Great Isaiah enlarged the corporate group to include all mankind, one inter-related human family within which the sufferings of the true Israel could be applied to the good of the whole race. The passages on the Servant of Yahweh, therefore, are poetry, expressing insight rather than formulated doctrine, but the insight has turned out to be one of the most consequential in history. If suffering, sacrificially borne for others, is redemptive, then suffering itself is redeemed. In the Old Testament pain and sorrow started as disgrace -- all adversity was the dishonorable symptom of preceding sin; but now the Great Isaiah lifted suffering out of its ignominy. It could be redemptive. Like the trespass offering upon the altar, it could be a holy and saving sacrament, (Isaiah 53:10) so that Israel's troubles needed no longer to be regarded merely as the evidence of God's punitive displeasure, but could be glorified as the agency of his saving grace toward all mankind. The amazement which the prophet felt at his own daring insight still breathes in the written word. He saw that he had had revealed to him a complete reinterpretation of his people's sufferings, which exalted what once had been merely terrible and made spiritually hopeful what at first had seemed infamous. No wonder that he wrote in poetry! No wonder that he began his mission with the resounding words, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God"! (Isaiah 40:1) No wonder that he foresaw the incredulity with which many would hear his message, and ascribed to the Eternal an idea which seemed so to outreach the mind of man ~ "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Yahweh. nor as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts!" (Isaiah 55:8-9)

V

Nevertheless, when the Old Testament had interpreted some suffering as punitive, some as disciplinary, and some as redemptive, the residue of mystery was still baffling. Why God, combining endless power with complete goodness, should have made a world in which disaster indiscriminately falls with tragic incidence on good and evil, remained in large measure an

unanswered question. In India, belief in reincarnation had already stepped into this breach. If all souls now on earth are reincarnated existences, the doctrine that personal suffering is always deserved punishment can be made to work. On the basis of transmigration, whatever befalls one here can be attributed to unknown sins committed in previous, unknown incarnations. Had Job's friends held this doctrine, their problem in explaining Job's disasters would have been simplified; they could have located the wrongdoing, for which he was being punished, in a previous existence, safely sheltered from his recollection and, therefore, from his denial. The Hebrew mind, however, was far too factual and realistic to try this easy retreat into the obscurities of preexistence. True to their racial characteristics, they could find no satisfaction in a solution so theoretically metaphysical and so entirely beyond the testing of actual experience. Rather than explain the mystery of suffering by such a method, they left it a mystery.

Toward the close of the Exile and afterwards, Persian influence powerfully affected Israel, and a dominant feature of Persian religion was the explanation of human good and evil as the reflected consequence of a profound division in the superhuman world. There, so Zoroastrianism taught, a kingdom of light and a kingdom of darkness opposed each other; while Ahura Mazda exercised sole sovereignty as the one true God, he was withstood by Angra Mainyu, a power, like God himself, without beginning, the creator of all evil and the perpetual foe of God and of good men. (See H. V. Williams Jackson: "Ahriman" in Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics, edited by James Hastings) The problem of evil was thus carried back to a precedent, continuous conflict in the cosmos, with God and his attendant hosts of angels contending against the prince of darkness and his devils. Here was an explanation of evil ready at hand for the Jews to accept, and the wonder is that, within the confines of the Old Testament, its influence is so slight. The Hebrews, like all early peoples, believed in angels and demons. To the primitive mind the world was populous with spiritual agents who gradually fell into two groups, one favorable, and the other unfavorable, to man, and these were later definitely classified as angels and devils. Before the molding influence of Persia affected Israel, however, Hebrew demonology and angelology had been inchoate and unorganized. It was only after Zoroastrianism had affected Jewish thought that angels appear, as in the Book of Daniel, in a hierarchy under ruling archangels, and demons possess in Satan a sovereign chieftain. While, however, Zoroastrian angelology and demonology thus influenced Jewish thought, so that one might almost call Satan a native of Persia naturalized in Judea, and while in later Judaism and in Christianity this influence had a florescent development, its effect within the Old Testament bulks small.

Indeed, so far as Zoroastrianism's main thesis was concerned, asserting a continuous conflict between two principles in the universe symbolized as light and darkness, we have in Isaiah of Babylon an explicit denial: "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I am Yahweh, that doeth all these things." (Isaiah 45:7) Nowhere was Jewish monotheism more uncompromising than here; it refused to explain life's moral and practical evil by limiting the sole sovereignty and responsibility of God. Whatever else might be the explanation of the mystery, it was not to be found in blaming a prince of darkness, a kind of second deity and god of evil, as though by thrusting back the problem to such a personage the problem itself could be even a little solved. Hard though it must have been to say it, the Great Isaiah, facing Zoroastrianism's division of power between Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainyu, insisted that the one God alone was the responsible creator of the world, with its light and its darkness, its good and its evil.

Accordingly, in none of the great passages where the Old Testament wrestles with the problem of suffering does demonology play a significant part. In only three connections is Satan even mentioned in the Old Testament -- once as evilly disposed to Job but doing nothing without God's permission, (Job 1:6: Job 1:12; Job 2:1-7) once as tempting David to take a census, (1 Chronicles 21:1) and once as the symbolic adversary of Israel (Zechariah 3:1-2) -- and nowhere are the tragedies of individuals or of nations fathered on him as though by that device the ultimate responsibility of God could be mitigated in the least. In the Book of Job, for example, while Satan appears as one of the dramatis personae in the prologue, the entire argument proceeds without the slightest reference to him, and the ultimate responsibility for the cosmic problem is clearly placed on God -- "If it be not he, who then is it?" (Job 9:24) Here, once more, Jewish thought refused an easy escape and faced, in its full, unqualified difficulty, the mystery of evil in a world whose God is both omnipotent and good. This unresolved residue of mystery is the ultimate problem of the Book of Job. The fact that some calamity is punitive, that some is disciplinary, and that some may be explained by a future vindication, is clearly recognized, as we have seen. That the Book of Job never speaks of suffering as possibly redemptive is typical of the neglect with which the Great Isaiah's insight was treated for centuries. Even had that insight been present in the writer's mind, however, Job still would have faced an unexplained remainder of mystery, and his virtue would still have been, not that he solved the problem but that so candidly he recognized its insolubility. Job successfully resisted the temptation to construct a complete theory of God's justice; he had the courage to stop where his evidence ended; no ingenious metaphysic, as in India, or mythology, as in Persia, beguiled his mind into a solution that solved nothing. This candid acknowledgment of insufficient light for the understanding of God's ways with man is a perpetual memorial to the intellectual honesty of the unknown writer of the ancient drama. His way of dealing with the resultant situation was typically Jewish in its religiousness. He fell back on a profound, interior experience of God. Concerning the divine administration of affairs he felt endless perplexity but of God himself he felt sure -- so sure that he could, as he said, "give free course to my complaint" and "speak in the bitterness of my soul,'' (Job 10:1) as only those can who are at home in prayer. The consequence was a profound conviction that, while he did not know all the explanation of suffering, there was an explanation, and that beyond the solutions he could see lay not chaos and aimlessness but order and purpose. In the drama this attitude is educed by a vision of the natural universe -- immense, orderly, mysterious, magnificent -- before which Job is humbled. In that experience he finds not an explanation of evil but an assurance that there is an explanation; he issues from it not with a solution of the mystery but with a confidence in God which lights him through the mystery All this is typical of the Old Testament, and in this Job is the religious Jew par excellence, resolving his difficulties by religious experience, not philosophical theory. Not the explanation that is clear to him but the God who is real to him is his final resource -- I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; But now mine eye seeth thee. (Job 42:5)

Alongside the Book of Job stands the Seventy-third Psalm -- both of them important as portrayals of personal difficulty in dealing with the problem of evil. The psalm is intimately auto biographical. In it are vividly pictured the fear and faith, the doubt and trust, the cynicism and buoyant hope, between which at least one Jewish mind was torn as it tried to believe in God's justice in an unjust world. The writer begins with the victorious confidence which in the end crowned his struggle --

Surely God is good to the upright, to such as are pure in heart -- (Psalms 73:1 as translated by Julius A. Bewer: The Literature of the Old Testament in its Historical Development, p. 388). but straightway to the psalmist's memory recurs the long and bitter conflict that preceded his spiritual triumph. His feet had almost gone out from under him, he says; envious resentment at the "prosperity of the wicked" had brought him to the rim of utter cynicism -- They are not in trouble as other men;

Neither are they plagued like other men.

Therefore pride is as a chain about their neck;

Violence covereth them as a garment. Their eyes stand out with fatness:

They have more than heart could wish.

They scoff, and in wickedness utter oppression:

They speak loftily. (Psalms 73:5-8) In the face of such rank inequity, disillusionment possessed him and he cried, Surely in vain have I cleansed my heart, And washed my hands in innocency. (Psalms 73:13)

Then he went into the sanctuary and found insight and illumination. His cynical doubt seemed to him stupid and brutish. His soul, which had been "in a ferment," (Psalms 73:21 (marginal translation) achieved peace, stability, and hope. Part of his solution lay in the ultimate ruin of the wicked, whose prosperity he had envied and whose arrogance he had resented; when he considered their "latter end," he foresaw them falling on their "slippery places,'' cast down to destruction, and "become a desolation in a moment." (Psalms 73:17-19) But deeper than this unsatisfactory solution, this mere postponement of justice to a later day, went the real answer to the psalmist's question. Unlike the wicked, he possessed the intimate and sustaining companionship of God. Why should he envy them ? Their goods could not compare with his good Even while their prosperity continues, he cries, Nevertheless I am continually with thee:

Thou hast holden my right hand.

Thou wilt guide me with thy counsel, And afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth; But God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever. (Psalms 73:23-26)

Here, as in the Book of Job, the problem of evil is left an intellectual mystery but with a triumphant soul transcending it and carrying off a victory in the face of it through the inward awareness of a divine fellowship and the experience of an unconquerable hope.

Such endeavors to interpret suffering as we have traced, however, no more met with unanimous acceptance then than they would now, and of this the Book of Ecclesiastes is the evidence. This vivid and daring essay is as much concerned with the problem of evil as is the drama of Job or the Seventy-third Psalm, but with an approach and an outcome altogether different. To every attempted explanation of suffering he had heard, this writer gave a skeptical reply. He tossed aside the formula that suffering is deserved penalty and asserted instead a senseless, indiscriminate inequity in life -- "All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous and

to the wicked; to the good and to the clean and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth and to him that sacrificeth not; as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath. This is an evil in all that is done under the sun, that there is one event unto all." (Ecclesiastes 9:2-3) He had only scorn for the hope that just awards, now denied, would be rendered in the future, whether before death or afterwards -- "For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; and man hath no preeminence above the beasts: for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. Who knoweth the spirit of man, whether it goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast, whether it goeth downward to the earth?" (Ecclesiastes 3:19-21) If ever he thought of using pain and sorrow for purposes of personal discipline or of redemptive service, cynicism smothered the idea and, instead, he "commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat, and to drink, and to be joyful." (Ecclesiastes 8:15)

Here within the canon of Jewish Scripture, as in the Rubáiyát of Omar Kháyyám, popular futilism and pessimism were given forceful and fearless utterance. Here the creed of those who cried, "Where is the God of justice?" (Malachi 2:17) found an eloquent voice, and the spiritual insights by which the seers of Israel had tried to illumine the age-long problem of evil faced derisive denial. The very search for a solution to life's problem was to the writer only "a striving after wind," (Ecclesiastes 1:13-14) and in the end, seeing wickedness in the place of justice and evil men where the righteous should have been, (Ecclesiastes 3:16) he "hated life," (Ecclesiastes 2:17) denied all moral government in the world, and concluded that although a man, in the intensity of his search, "see no sleep with his eyes day or night," he will never understand what life is all about. (Ecclesiastes 8:14-17 [quoted phrase as translated by Julius A. Bewer: The Literature of the Old Testament in its Historical Development, p. 333]. Later hands added to Ecclesiastes a few notes of positive faith.])

Here, as elsewhere, the Old Testament defeats all endeavors to force upon it interior self-consistency and harmony, and in its inclusion of many points of view, even though at odds with one another, it remains true to life. In the Old Testament's treatment of the problem of suffering are some of the most notable expressions in literature of ethical insight into the meaning of retribution, profound faith in the ultimate justice of God, personal courage in accepting trouble as self-discipline, spiritual understanding of vicarious sacrifice, and religious experience of a trustworthy God; and, accompanying all these, the refrain of the disillusioned also, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." (Ecclesiastes 1:2)

VI No line of developing thought ever ran directly from the Old Testament into the New; always the inter-Testamental period had to be traversed; and, while original contributions were not often made there, an influential redistribution of emphasis commonly occurred. With regard to the idea of suffering, the most notable effect of the era between the Testaments sprang from its accentuation of the apocalyptic hope. So vivid and obsessing did the expectation of an imminent Messianic age become, and so did the imagination of judgment day with its awards fill the popular mind, that the solution of the problem of life's injustice was seen mainly through apocalyptic hopes. Of this emphasis the Book of Enoch was typical -- Fear ye not, ye souls of the righteous, And be hopeful ye that have died in righteousness. And grieve not if your soul into Sheol has descended in grief, And that in your life your body fared not according to your goodness, But wait for the day of the Judgment of sinners And for the day of cursing and chastisement. (The Book of Enoch

102:4-5) In one form or another, every suggestion made in the Old Testament concerning the problem of suffering is to be found somewhere in the inter-Testamental books. Thus the Psalms of Solomon taught that "the Lord is gracious unto such as patiently abide chastening"; (10:1-4 as translated by H.E. Ryle and M.R. James: Psalms of the Pharisees, p. 99) Second Esdras labored over the unsearchableness of God's ways and the limitations of man's intelligence; (2Es 4:7-11; 2Es 4:13-25) and Fourth Maccabees, exalting the sacrifice of those who became "as it were a ransom for the sin of the nation," said that "through the blood of those pious men, and their propitiatory death, Divine Providence saved Israel." (IV Maccabees, 17:19-21 as translated by W..R. Churton: The Uncanonical and Apocryphal Scriptures, p. 595) Dominant, however, over the rest, and orienting them in one constant direction, was the final arbitrament of judgment day and the expected vindication of God's justice in reward and retribution. In the New Testament these ideas, which thus had run a varying course in Jewish thinking, continued still to be the reliance of those who pondered the problem of suffering. They were, however, reorganized in the New Testament, so that, for reasons not easy at first to be sure about, the total effect was distinctive and original. Ideas, like people, being more than mere individuals, must be seen socially grouped to be understood, and the principle of their grouping often brings out results not to have been predicted from the separate ideas themselves. No one in the Old Testament or in the inter-Testamental period could have guessed the consequence that would emerge when old and familiar ideas of suffering were associated with the cross.

1. That some human pain and torment are punitive the New Testament clearly saw. Long before either the idea of natural law or any word to express it was known to man, the reign of moral law, stated in terms of cause and consequence, of sowing and reaping, was plain to the insight of the Bible. There is an inevitable relationship between the beginning and the ending of any course of behavior; he who travels a road must face the outcome of it; he who picks up one end of a stick picks up the other; there is in this universe something which discovers and sits in judgment on our spiritual mistakes -- this was the clear conviction of the New Testament. In the Christian scriptures, however, the battle won in the Book of Job against the assumption that this explanation is adequate to cover all suffering was taken for granted. While the New Testament constantly argues from sin to consequent trouble, it never argues from trouble back to preceding sin as a necessary formula of explanation.

Indeed, Jesus earnestly denied that one can assume previous wrongdoing because of present calamity. When the tower of Siloam fell and killed eighteen persons, the still popular theodicy of early Hebraism marked them out as especially wicked, but Jesus protested: "Those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and killed them, think ye that they were offenders above all the men that dwell in Jerusalem ? I tell you, Nay." (Luke 13:4-5)

Far from expecting the nice adjustment of happiness to moral merit and of adversity to sin, which once had seemed the indispensable condition of faith in divine fair play, Jesus saw the vast impartiality of nature's processes -- God "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust." (Matthew 5:45) When in a parable he described two houses on which alike "the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew," (Matthew 7:24-27) one denoted a wise, and the other a foolish, life but on both of them with equal incidence the storm beat. That men face trouble with different qualities of soul and come through it to different issues was manifest but, as Jesus saw life, some trouble falls on all without regard to

moral character. This impartiality of disaster's incidence had been a stumblingblock to the writer of Ecclesiastes, and that "all things come alike to all" (Ecclesiastes 9:2) had been the bone of his contention. Jesus, however, seeing the fact as clearly as the ancient writer saw it, welcomed the unbending administration of the universe. In this regard he seemed to feel, long before men knew it, the steady inflexibility of God's cosmic method, its austere disregard of ethical considerations, its vast background of procedure without thought of human merit or demerit -- a dependable, impartial training-ground for souls. In the Fourth Gospel, written in Hellenistic Ephesus, where reincarnation was a common idea, as everywhere among the Greeks, Jesus is represented facing the old question of suffering as penalty -- "As he passed by, he saw a man blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Rabbi, who sinned, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither did this man sin, nor his parents." (John 9:1-3) As the Master saw it, life's cosmic setting was utterly unlike the old theodicy's imagination of it. Rain and sunshine, storm and flood, falling towers and tragic personal afflictions, came with equal impact upon both good and evil men. Jesus did not naïvely expect God to pay fair wages on a Saturday. In the New Testament, as a whole, the crucifixion made this attitude imperative. Three crosses were on Calvary. One bore a flagrant and blasphemous criminal, another a penitent thief, the third the Christ. Golgotha was a terrific exemplification of the pessimist's saying, "All things come alike to all." In the light of it, whatever remained of the old theodicy, which deemed all suffering just punishment for the sufferer's sin, was doomed. On the central cross a character, "holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners,'' (Hebrews 7:26) was crucified, and such suffering was obviously not retribution. While, therefore, punitive trouble was a terrific fact in early Christian thinking -- "He that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption" (Galatians 6:8) -- it never was treated as an adequate statement of suffering's cause.

2. That some trouble is disciplinary was similarly taken for granted. Even Jesus, we are told, "learned obedience by the things which he suffered." (Hebrews 5:8) The roll call of faith's martyred heroes, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, ends in an exhortation to the contemporary church (Hebrews 11:1-40, Hebrews 12:1-29) to bear gladly its afflictions, not as punishment, but as chastening. Far from being an occasion of shame, in the writer's eyes, the church's sufferings were a cause of hope, since their explanation lay not behind in past sin but ahead in future good consequence --"All chastening seemeth for the present to be not joyous but grievous; yet afterward it yieldeth peaceable fruit unto them that have been exercised thereby, even the fruit of righteousness." (Hebrews 12:11) This conviction that an untroubled life is uneducated, that to deal with tragedy is to handle reality and to deal well with it a great gain, that no softlycushioned life ever can be wise or strong or good, runs throughout the New Testament. Not sporadic and occasional, but constant and fundamental is this treatment of affliction as opportunity, not disgrace, an indispensable implement for building faith and character, rather than a means for their destruction.

Here lies one of the major reasons for the difference in mood and feeling between the Jewish and the Christian scriptures. The New Testament does not contain a single idea about suffering whose premonition, and in some cases whose classic exposition, is not to be found in the Old Testament. Taken as a whole, however --the "poems of the Servant of Yahweh"excepted -- the typical Jewish treatment of trouble looks backward to antecedent conduct as the explanation, while the New Testament habitually looks forward to the high spiritual uses of affliction. In this regard the cross

had done its work. There the most infamous torment had turned out to be the most effective agent in serving God's purpose for the world. The early Christians, therefore, intuitively treated suffering not as ignominy to be endured, but as opportunity to be used, and their typical attitude was positive and triumphant, as when Paul said, `'We know that to them that love God all things work together for good." (Romans 8:28)

However clearly, therefore, abstract ideas about suffering may be found paralleling each other in the two Testaments, the resultant seeming identity is misleading. There is throughout the Christian scriptures a positive enthusiasm in the midst of trouble -- "I overflow with Joy," Paul wrote, "in all our affliction" (2 Corinthians 7:4) -- which is distinctive. Not the negative endurance of trouble but its positive use, not its explanation in the past but its purpose in the future, occupies the center of attention. Trouble is something to be strongly seized upon, so that no matter what befalls a man the love of God being in his heart -- it will issue in his good, will discipline him, not destroy him, and will finally find him wielding as a shining sword the very weapon of affliction lifted against him.

Thus, when Paul found himself in prison, his mind turned not to queries concerning the justice of his being there, but to the uses to which his imprisonment could be positively put: "Now I would have you know, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the progress of the gospel; so that my bonds became manifest in Christ throughout the whole pretorian guard, and to all the rest; and that most of the brethren in the Lord, being confident through my bonds, are more abundantly bold to speak the word of God without fear." (Php 1:12-14) Especially characteristic of Paul though this attitude is, it is the common quality of the New Testament as a whole, from the time Jesus' beatitude rested on the persecuted and afflicted, (Matthew 5:10-12) to the later days when Peter wrote, "Insomuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, rejoice." (1 Peter 4:13)

3. The Old Testament's conviction that the ultimate issue of the human drama would be ethically satisfactory was carried over into Christian thinking, and there gained new dimensions and horizons. The one unifying factor that put sense into the strange and varied developments of Jewish apocalypticism was the urgent demand of the Jewish conscience that, one way or another, the cosmic process should not in the end be ethically unsatisfactory. What kind of outcome would be ethically satisfying was not in detail agreed upon, and one picture of it after another cluttered the apocalyptic imagination between the Testaments. In general, however, the Jews, carrying over their traditional association of goodness with prosperity and of badness with adversity, regarded as inadequate any solution that did not finally apportion endless reward to the righteous and endless retribution to sinners. That the hope of an ethically satisfying outcome to creation should reappear in the New Testament was inevitable. The early Christians did not suppose the cross, for example, to be the end of the matter. The conviction which the Great Isaiah held with reference to the suffering Servant of Yahweh, Christians held with reference to Christ -- "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." (Isaiah 53:11) That is to say, ultimately the human drama would work itself out, under the guidance of God, to a denouement which would justify the cost of the process and satisfy the claims of equity. Moreover, this belief in an equitable outcome to man's tragic experience was naturally phrased in the New Testament, as in the Old, in terms of adversity for the wicked and prosperity for the righteous in the world to come. When, therefore, the ideas of suffering as present punishment or as possible discipline failed to cover the case, the ancient appeal to patience was still in reserve -- the injustices of time would be righted in eternity, and the

scales, here unbalanced, would there hang even. In no regard is the attitude of certain passages in the New Testament more troublesome to modern minds than in this insistence that eternal bliss for the good and eternal torment for the bad would be an ethically satisfying finale for the universe. When Jesus represented Abraham in Paradise saying to Dives in torment, "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things: but now here he is comforted, and thou art in anguish," (Luke 16:25) -- as though such reversal of circumstance, issuing in a permanently divided humanity, some in bliss and some in torture, would be an ethically adequate ending to the human story -- he spoke in the traditional manner of Judaism, but the modern conscience remains unconvinced. Unless our best ethical ideas are false, such a denouement would be appallingly unsatisfying and universal anni- hilation would be far better.

Two considerations, however, tend to illumine this matter. First, in every creative thinker there are bound to be, of psychological necessity, not only his own original insights but, as well, the traditional backgrounds of idea from which his insights start their pioneering, and along with this latter element go the familiar mental patterns and phraseologies of his day. Were it not for this traditional actor in the creative thinker, he could not speak to his own generation at all. When Jesus, therefore, pictured the finale of the universe in terms of the contemporary mythology, with fire, worms, wailing, and gnashing of teeth for sinners, and bliss for the righteous, he was using an old form of imagination. That he did uncritically use it the records plainly indicate (See chap. VI) but, in every case, he employed it only as a familiar setting in which to frame an attack upon current ideas concerning the kind of conduct that was pleasing or displeasing to God. (E.g., Luke 16:19-31) Thus, in one of his most cogent pleas for humanitarian service as the test of true religion and the crucial point on which God judges man -- "I was hungry' and ye gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me to drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me" (Matthew 25:31-46) -- the scenery of the parable is the old-fashioned eschatology. How much of this was merely ad hominem and how much represented Jesus' personal conviction concerning human destiny it is difficult to be sure, just as when Plato used demonology to serve his purpose it is difficult to know how literally he took the mental pattern he employed. That apocalyptic elements, in general, and pictures of future punishment, in particular, were carried over from current Judaism into Jesus' thinking and speaking seems obvious. A second consideration is that the point at issue, in all such uses of current categories, is the substantial matter being phrased rather than the form of phrasing. What the Jews and early Christians were concerned about in their theories of final things was an ethically satisfying issue to human destiny, and the formulations of that conviction changed radically from imaginations of a restored Davidic kingdom, in early Hebraism, to Paul's picture of a universal victory of God, in which, whether in heaven, on earth, or in Sheol, "every knee should bow," and God "be all and in all.'' (Romans 14:11; 1 Corinthians 15:28. (See chap. VI.) If we are unwilling to welcome great matters, even when they come to us in obsolete vehicles of thought, it is of no use to read any ancient literature whatsoever. The vital matter in the New Testament's appeal from the injustice of the present world to the justice of the final arbitrament lies not in any special formulation, whether it be that of Jesus or of Paul but in the deep conviction that the "one far-off divine event" will be ethically adequate.

Nevertheless, the old phrasing of this ultimate vindication of righteousness is often terribly present in the New Testament. In many passages it is obvious that the idea of God inherent in Jesus'

thought has not yet found its logical conclusion; that what Jesus himself, thinking in terms of some of his own parables and of his own life-principles, could not have considered ethically satisfying endless, hopeless torture, without constructive moral purpose and therefore without moral meaning -- God is accused of inflicting, as judge of the world and arbiter of destiny. At this point some of the worst crudities of apocalyptic Judaism passed over into New Testament passages, such as one finds in the Book of Revelation. The distinctive element in the New Testament's future hope, as a resource in present trouble, does not, however, lie in such passages. They could all be eliminated and the afflicted soul's reliance on future vindication would still be unimpaired. Still there would remain the assurance of eternal life, beginning here in a quality of spirit worth permanent continuance and going on, through death, to its fulfillment. In the light of this present possession, involving endless hope, affliction was not so much endured as rejoiced in by the early Christians, and of this spiritual triumph Paul's words are representative: "Wherefore we faint not; but though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens." (2 Corinthians 4:16-18; 2 Corinthians 5:1) This inner victory of the eternal over the temporal, here and now as well as hereafter, is the original and creative element in the New Testament's use of future hope to comfort present sorrow. In Jesus' own recorded words, this emphasis appears in the spiritual nature and present accessibility of the kingdom of God an emphasis that, in view of the postponed hopes of Jewish apocalypticism, is very significant. According to Jesus, the kingdom, while future in its full consummation, is also immediately here, its doors wide open now to men of the kingdom's quality, and, far from being merely a future expectation, entrance into it is the crowning privilege of the present. Whatever Jesus may have carried over from the apocalyptic traditions of his people, he struck here a note characteristic of himself and gave his disciples not so much a quotation as a fresh insight of his own. To be sure, some students of the New Testament have been so completely commandeered by apocalypticism that they insist on interpreting all references to the kingdom in terms of its categories. The kingdom, they think, must always mean a future, imminent, catastrophic event. But in the rabbinical teaching, to become unquestioningly obedient to the Law means here and now "to take upon oneself the Kingdom of heaven." Why, then, should this same emphasis be thought strange in Jesus or its importance in his thinking be doubted when so many passages seem plainly to suggest it:

Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein. (Mark 10:15) But if I by the Spirit of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you. (Matthew 12:28; cf. Luke 11:20) But when Jesus saw it, he was moved with indignation, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me; forbid them not: for to such belongeth the kingdom of God. (Mark 10:14) And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. (Mark 12:1-44, Mark 13:1-37, Mark 14:1-72) Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:3) And being asked by the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God cometh, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, There! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you. (Luke 17:20-21) The present, therefore, in

Jesus' thought, was not simply Satanic, as current teaching claimed; the kingdom of God was an immediate experience as well as a future expectation and those who were in the kingdom, possessing, as they did, a life with eternal issues inherent in it, could triumphantly surmount affliction.

Once more we run upon the characteristic mood of the New Testament in dealing with suffering. The future life was of immense importance to the early Christians in facing suffering, but it was no longer mainly an apologetic means of vindicating the justice of God through postponed rewards and retributions. It was a singing assurance of present victory in the spirit, with all future triumphs presaged in immediate experience, and the result was positive jubilance in the face of even extreme disaster. "For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing." (2 Timothy 4:6-8) An ethically satisfying outcome to the cosmic process remained, therefore, the confidence of New Testament Christianity, as it had been the confidence of Old Testament Judaism. It gained new dimensions, however. Within the Christian scriptures it has no uniform and unanimous phrasing. It even rises in the end into a hope of universal redemption, when God will "sum up all things in Christ." (Ephesians 1:10)

4. Such developments of experience and thought no more took the sting of inexplicable mystery out of suffering in the New Testament than they did in the Old. The cry of the psalmist was echoed on the cross -- My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my groaning? (Psalms 22:1) In the New Testament, therefore, as in the Book of Job, deeply religious spirits, often unable to explain the afflictions which God permitted, fell back nevertheless on God himself. To trust God when one can clearly understand his ways has always been but a slight indication of serious religion. A scientist steadily believes in the law-abiding nature of reality even when he is baffled in his endeavor to discern the laws; so the saints have understood God well enough to maintain faith in him even when they could not understand his plans and policies. The real triumphs of the spirit have been customarily won by those who trusted God when his ways were inexplicable. Indeed, the major function of religion, in the experience of its great exemplars, has been not so much the explanation of life, as life's conquest -- the winning of spiritual triumph in the midst of mysterious adversity. Jesus is never represented as saying, "I have explained the world," but he is reported to have said, "I have overcome the world." (John 16:33) The bestowal of interior power thus to rise above trouble and carry off a victory in spite of it seemed to the early Christians a supremely vital function of religion, and this power they found through their faith in, and experience with, an availably present Spirit. Far from being driven away from God by unexplained suffering, therefore, they were driven to him. As Paul implies, trouble has a tendency to "separate us from the love of God" (Romans 8:35 [marginal translation]) but, in it, by God's grace we can be "more than conquerors," (Romans 8:37) and early Christianity was all on the side of the latter possibility. In the New Testament, what began in the Book of Job was consummated -- "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." (Job 13:15 [King James Version]) In this is revealed one of the most important of all developments in the conception of religion's meaning. Primitive religion uses its gods for ulterior purposes, seeks to gain control over them and thus to win material favors from them. Mature

religion rests in God himself as greater than any of his gifts. In primitive religion the gods are means to ends; in mature religion God is an end in himself. Such devotion to the eternal Goodness for his own sake, rather than for the sake of anything externally to be gotten from him, is therefore one of the clearest manifestations of serious faith, and in the Old Testament Habakkuk gave it typical expression: For though the fig-tree shall not flourish, Neither shall fruit be in the vines; The labor of the olive shall fail, And the fields shall yield no food; The flock shall be cut off from the fold, And there shall be no herd in the stalls:

Yet I will rejoice in Yahweh, I will joy in the God of my salvation. (Habakkuk 3:17-18)

Such an attitude was characteristic of New Testament Christians. They did not make fortunate circumstance a pre-condition of faith in God; they were not fair-weathcr saints, finding in adversity an occasion for disbelief or disillusion; they did not expect wholly to understand life but they did expect triumphantly to handle it, surmount its difficulties, and prove themselves spiritually superior to its hardships. The afflictions that their ideas of God did not enable them to explain, their inward experience of God enabled them to overcome. The New Testament itself is full of trouble. It begins with a massacre of innocent children; it is centered in the crucifixion; it ends with a vision in which the souls of the martyred saints under the altar cry, "How long, O Master?'' (Revelation 6:10) The Book was written by men whose familiar experiences were excommunications, persecutions, and martyrdoms. Their faith was not like a candle flame, easily blown out by a high wind, but like a great fire fanned into a more powerful conflagration. In consequence, while the New Testament is supremely a book of hardship and tragedy, it is far and away the most exultant and jubilant book in the literature of religion.

5. The climactic element in the New Testament's contribution to the understanding of suffering is to be found in its treatment of vicarious self-sacrifice. The Great Isaiah, with his interpretation of Israel's tragedy as redemptive martyrdom, never had a thoroughly sympathetic and understanding successor until Jesus came. Indeed, the ideas with regard to the saving office of suffering which the Great Isaiah had put into deathless song were so little grasped that Professor J. M. Powis Smith can say:

How unacceptable that message was to Deutero-Isaiah's times and how unintelligible it was is evidenced by the fact that, so far as we have any information, not a single follower of this interpretation was forthcoming among his prophetic contemporaries and successors, and no reference even is made to this substitutionary interpretation of suffering until IV Maccabees . . . . (The Moral Life of the Hebrews, p. 163. Cf. 4Ma 1:11; 4Ma 9:29; 4Ma 17:21-22) In the endeavor to understand the sacrificial experience of Jesus, however, the Great Isaiah received his long postponed coronation. To explain the resemblance between the "poems of the Servant of Yahweh" and Christ's ministry by supposing that the former contains a clairvoyant prediction of the latter, is, of course, to turn the relationship between the two upside down. What really happened was that, after five centuries of neglect, the Isaian passages on the Suffering Servant of the Lord were used by the early Christians as a means of interpreting the necessity and the significance of Christ's unmerited suffering. In the preaching of the first disciples, as recorded in Acts and made clear in the wording of the Revised Version, the title 'Servant' was applied to Jesus in a way which inevitably suggests the Isaian source. (Acts 3:26; Acts 4:27, Acts 4:30) When Philip presented the gospel to the Ethiopian eunuch, he started with Isaiah's fifty-third chapter and "beginning from this

scripture, preached unto him Jesus." (Acts 8:27-39) In Peter's great passage on Christian suffering, salient verses from the same chapter are quoted, (1 Peter 2:22-25) and the Epistle to the Hebrews refers to Christ's cross in terms of it. (Hebrews 9:28)

Some, indeed, are convinced that before the early church thus began interpreting the sacrifice of Christ in Isaian terms, Jesus himself, with his selective response to his religious heritage, saw in the prophet's Suffering Servant the real meaning of Messiahship and the directive principle of his own mission. Certainly, according to the Gospels, Jesus had pondered the writings of Isaiah. When he announced the purpose of his mission in Nazareth's synagogue, he read from the prophet's sixty-first chapter, (Luke 4:16 ff.) and when he answered the emissaries of John the Baptist he alluded to it. (Matthew 11:2 ff.; cf. also Isaiah 35:5) The very word 'gospel' -- good tidings -- apparently came from the Great Isaiah. (Isaiah 40:9; Isaiah 52:7) Only one direct quotation from the fifty-third chapter is ascribed to Jesus -- "I say unto you, that this which is written must be fulfilled in me, And he was reckoned with transgressors" (Luke 22:37; Isaiah 53:12) -- but apparent intimations that Jesus had the Suffering Servant in the center of his thought are elsewhere discoverable. The ancient prophet had told his people that they should be "redeemed without money," (Isaiah 52:3) that the "righteous servant" would "justify many" and that he "bare the sin of many"; (Isaiah 53:11-12) Jesus said that he came "to give his life a ransom for many"; (Mark 10:45) "The Son of man goeth," said Jesus at the Last Supper, "even as it is written of him." (Mark 14:21) Where else in the Old Testament, argue some, could he have found this conception of suffering saviorhood if not in the Great Isaiah? It may well be, therefore, that as Dr. James Moffatt puts it, "The suffering Servant conception was organic to the consciousness of Jesus, and that He often regarded His vocation in the light of this supremely suggestive prophecy." (James Moffatt: The Theology of the Gospels, p. 149. Cf Ernest Findlay Scott: The Kingdom and the Messiah, chap. 8; Henry Wheeler Robinson: The Cross of the Servant, chap. 3) At any rate, a redemptive idea of suffering, which had begun as an individual intuition centuries before, became in the New Testament the organizing center of the gospel. Far from being simply punitive, educative, or inexplicably mysterious, suffering was understood in terms of saviorhood. So the Fourth Gospel reports Jesus as saying, "Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit." (John 12:24) Affliction, being thus redemptive, was in consequence itself redeemed; "Christ crucified," whom Paul rightly called a stumblingblock to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, was proclaimed as the wisdom and power of God; (1 Corinthians 1:23-24) and, not stopping with any negative apologetic to explain the cross, the early Christians positively gloried in it (Galatians 6:14) and made it their ambition to know "the fellowship of his sufferings.'' (Php 3:10)

It would be difficult to exaggerate the difference in this regard between the Old and New Testaments, taken as wholes. The inveterate Jewish association of goodness with prosperity and of badness with adversity here broke down completely and the supreme sufferer became the highest revelation of God and the noblest ideal of man. No theory of the way in which vicarious sacrifice operates to redeem mankind was explicitly set forth; current forms of thought, such as those associated with animal sacrifices (E.g., Hebrews, chaps. 8-10) or with inherited concepts of corporate personality, (E.g., "as in Adam all die," etc.) were commonly in the Christian consciousness; but the power of self-sacrifice as an indispensable factor in saviorhood was none the less the orienting truth of early Christianity. The result was revolutionary. At the center of the

first church's experience was a momentous tragedy -- innocence outraged, wisdom overthrown by ignorance and bigotry, a supreme soul done to death by the hatred of little men and the ruthlessness of an inhuman government. Here were the factors which for ages had made men wish, as Job's wife advised, to curse God and die. Here was the kind of inequity that had made the Book of Ecclesiastes plausible and that seemed to justify the doubts of skeptics and the despair of pessimists. Instead, there issued from this tragedy a radiant and confident faith in God. Far from being cradled in fortunate circumstance, Christianity began in the kind of disastrous experience commonly supposed to make faith in God impossible -- the worst triumphing over the best, the needed good dying young, goodwill ground under the heel of malevolence, and no equity anywhere -- and, instead of faith meeting defeat, it achieved victory; the tragic cross proved to be so saving a force that it redeemed tragedy itself. At the beginning of the Old Testament all suffering was regarded as punishment for previous sin, but in the New Testament we read, "What glory is it, if, when ye sin, and are buffeted for it, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye shall take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps." (1 Peter 2:20-21)

Indeed, the possible uses of suffering were so far exalted and suffering itself was so clearly seen to be an integral part of the universe, not an alien intruder in it, that God himself was portrayed as the eternal Sufferer. Through the many differences that distinguish conflicting views of the divine nature in the Bible, one common strand of idea runs -- God is in earnest, he cares, he is no metaphysical abstraction but a living being with purposes, devotions, and affections. Hosea heard him say, "My heart is turned within me, my compassions are kindled together," (Hosea 11:8) and Isaiah says of him, "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." (Isaiah 63:9) In the New Testament this insight is fulfilled in a God "rich in mercy," (Ephesians 2:4) who "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son," (John 3:16) and whose seeking, sacrificial compassion is incarnate in the suffering Christ. In this regard, thought had traveled a long way from the legend of the Garden of Eden, according to which trouble first entered the world as penalty. In the New Testament suffering is carried up into the heart of God himself; it is seen as no intruder in the universe, as though by some fortuity it had slipped in, or as an afterthought had been introduced as retribution. Suffering, sacrificially assumed for the sake of saving and serving others, has in the New Testament become an attribute of the divine nature itself. So ennobled, it is both a requisite and an evidence of the divine nature in man, no longer the mark of shame but the badge of honor. So Paul is proud to bear in his body "the marks of the Lord Jesus," (Galatians 6:17 [King James Version]) and behind this personal glorying in self-sacrifice he has a cosmic outlook upon suffering as belonging to the very warp and woof of the universe -- "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." (Romans 8:22)

VII

Despite the importance of these five trends of New Testament thought with reference to suffering, it would be a mistake to regard them as covering the whole attitude of early Christians toward human affliction. Both Judaism and Christianity were, and if true to their heritage still are, aggressive faiths, not teaching resignation to life's evil but vigorous attack upon it. To picture the great Hebrew prophets as wrestling with the problem of evil as though it were mainly an affair of

apologetics, demanding intellectual explanation, is to misrepresent the prophets altogether. Human affliction, especially the monstrous inhumanity of man to man, was to them a practical, rather than a theoretical, problem; it represented not only a conflict of ideas but a conflict of individual and class interests, a struggle for justice in personal character or social organization against selfishness, ill will, and inequity. Ideas and tasks are always closely inter-related in any progressive development, but one may fairly say that the Hebrew prophets gave their conscious attention, not so much to the explication of the idea of suffering as to the task of eradicating the needless exhibitions of suffering caused by human cruelty. The problem of evil represented to them not merely something to be thought about but something to be done. Of this prophetic tradition Jesus and his early disciples were the inheritors. They thought through one of the most radical revolutions in religious theory ever achieved in human history, but they never lost sight of the centrality of their task. They had come, as their enemies said, to turn "the world upside down," (Acts 17:6) and they knew it. Their eyes were forward toward "a new heaven and a new earth." (Revelation 21:1) While their minds worked upon the problem of suffering -- exploring its retributive and disciplinary aspects, its saving power in the form of self-sacrifice, its future solutions in the eternal realm, and its inexplicable residue of mystery -- their practical devotion was given to the kind of world where man's monstrous cruelty to man would end. Where suffering is concerned, therefore, the New Testament is not only a thoughtful but a militant book. A great war is on, as the Christian scriptures see the case, between the hosts of good and evil. To be sure, the mythological paraphernalia of inter-Testamental Judaism, shaped probably by Zoroastrian influence, is often used in picturing this conflict. Satan and his devils are familiar personages in the New Testament and to their machinations is ascribed every manner of human affliction, great and small. (See the author's book, The Modern Use of the Bible, Lecture IV, sec 3.) As in the Jewish Bible, however, they never are used as a means of solving the ultimate problem of evil in the cosmos; they remain an imaginative phrasing of the malevolent forces which convulse the world, and their existence is no more taken as an explanation of the problem's origin than is the existence of evil men. Whether in terms of demonic ill will or in less picturesque phrasings, evil in the New Testament is faced not mainly as a fact to be explained but as a force to be conquered. In this militant and aggressive task, early Christians conceived themselves as "God's fellow-workers" (1 Corinthians 3:9) each striving to be "a good soldier of Christ Jesus." (2 Timothy 2:3)

Indeed, whereas at the Bible's beginning the practice of religion is in large measure a means of escaping trouble, at the Bible's end the practice of religion is a sure means of getting into trouble. The Master deliberately called his disciples to courses of action that involve suffering:

Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. (Matthew 10:16)

Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. (Matthew 5:11)

Then shall they deliver you up unto tribulation, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all the nations for my name's sake. (Matthew 24:9)

They shall put you of of the synagogues: yea, the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you shall think that he offereth service unto God. (John 16:2).

If any man cometh unto me, and hateth not his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. (Luke 14:26)

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. (Matthew 16:24)

Discipleship to Jesus, therefore, while it saved men from lower orders of suffering, such as penalty for sin, called men to the higher order of self-sacrifice.

Modern knowledge has thrown special illumination on this area of thought. Suffering, far from being in itself a curse, is an essential, integral part of sentient living, the necessary concomitant of organic experience. As life evolved from mollusk toward man, each higher range involved increased capacity for pain. Always in the organic world it is the best who can suffer most, and man outranks the lower orders of existence, not simply in range of intelligence and creativity, but in depth, expanse, and poignancy of feeling and therefore of sensitivity. One major mark of rank in the organic world is the capacity to suffer.

Indeed, out of such sensitiveness has come man’s greatness. Much of man’s thinking has been born out of his distress and bafflement in the presence of a painful problem. The aim of life, therefore, is not to abolish suffering, for that would be to abolish sensitivity, but to eliminate its cruel, barbarous, and useless forms, to elevate and sublimate its expressions and uses, to make it humane, stimulating, unselfish, and creative. Some suffering is needless, brutal, ruinous, but when Shelley speaks of a nerve o’er which do creep The else unfelt oppressions of this earth, ("Julian and Maddalo," lines 449-450) he is recognizing the hall mark of creative character. So Jesus said, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me." (Matthew 25:40) The New Testament, therefore, glories in an expansion of sensitiveness, in a keen and often suffering awareness of sins and brutalities which others take for granted, in a poignant sense of contrast between the actual and the possible, in a sacrificial assumption of vicarious toil and trouble. No story of the development of the idea of suffering in the Bible could rightly end except with this outlook on the regenerative task, both personal and social, in which all Biblical ideas culminate. The Jewish-Christian religion has always involved a philosophy but it has never been a philosophy. In its most essential nature and most continuous meaning, it was and is costly adventure for the kingdom of God.

01.05. The Idea of Fellowship with God

Chapter 5: The Idea of Fellowship with God The meaning attributed to prayer is one of the most reliable tests of any religion, and developing quality in prayer is an inevitable accompaniment and indication of religious progress. Nowhere more clearly than in this realm do we find in the Bible the record of deepening spiritual life. Alike according to the New Testament and to the later Judaism, the individual soul had immediate access to God. Whether it was a psalmist praying on his bed at night (Psalms 63:5-6) or Jesus going into his chamber and shutting the door, (Cf. Matthew 6:6) communion with God was the privilege of sincerely seeking souls anywhere and at any time. Said an ancient rabbi: "It is as when a man utters his thought in the ear of his fellow, and he hears him. Can you have a God nearer than this who is as near to his creatures as mouth to ear?" (As quoted by George Foot Moore: Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era, Vol. I, p. 369) For evident reasons, however, such praying was unthinkable in the early beginnings of Hebrew religion.

1. The primitive conceptions of Yahweh made him personally unapproachable. When first the tribes of Joseph met him at Sinai and he came down in "thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount," nothing remotely like the interior practice of the presence of God was suggested by the scene. Rather, "all the people that were in the camp trembled" (Exodus 19:16) and, far from desiring intimate fellowship with their new deity, "they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die." (Exodus 20:19) So long as such fearful awe was central in the people’s attitude toward Yahweh, approach to him would be not direct but indirect; Moses and Aaron and their successors would address him on behalf of the tribe but, one by one, the tribesmen would have as little as possible to do with so dangerous a deity.

Moreover, quite apart from the fulminating fearfulness of Yahweh, as at first conceived, he was not, even in his most gracious aspects, so much the friend of individual souls as the leader and war lord of the tribal confederation. Dealing with him, therefore, was primarily a tribal matter. To be sure, individual needs were doubtless presented to any god the tribe believed in, but the characteristic approach to Yahweh on the part of the common people was at first public, and it could become private, involving so intimate a thing as inward communion, only when, long afterwards, the individual had escaped submergence in the social group and had become in his own right a recognized object of divine care. This idea, however, is only vaguely discernible before Jeremiah, and its effective popular influence on the meaning and practice of prayer was long postponed.

2. Another negative factor, making the later conceptions of prayer at first unthinkable, was the localization of Yahweh’s worship. The animistic habit of ascribing to a god a local dwelling-place and of going to the sacred spot if one wished to deal with the god persisted in manifold forms long after animism itself had been left behind. The early strata of the Old Testament are full of intimations that, far from being spiritually available to the seeking soul at any place or time, Yahweh was to be sought only at his special shrines -- "In every place where I cause my name to

be remembered I will come unto thee." (Exodus 20:24 [marginal translation]) The Old Testament as a whole represents an era from which the cruder practices of animism had been elided, but all the more impressive are the obvious remnants of the original primitivism, such as holy trees. It was under the sacred terebinth at Moreh (Genesis 12:6-7) and at the terebinths of Mamre (Genesis 18:1 ff) that Yahweh appeared to Abraham. Gideon was called to his mission by an angel of Yahweh "under the terebinth which was in Ophrah," (Judges 6:11) and at Shechem there was a sacred tree to which references are made from the legends of the patriarchs (Genesis 35:2-4) to the story of Joshua's final charge to his people. (Joshua 24:25-29) One who has seen, all the way from Korea to Arabia, the persistent continuance of such cult practices as these references indicate cannot mistake the meaning of the tamarisk of Beer-sheba, (Genesis 21:33) the burning bush of sinai, (Exodus 3:2-5; Deuteronomy 33:16) the palm-tree of Deborah, (Judges 4:5) or the tamarisk-tree in Jabesh. (1 Samuel 31:13) Indeed, as late as the eighth century Hosea denounced the popular religion of his day for its worship "under oaks and poplars and terebinths." (Hosea 4:13) Similarly there were sacred springs (E.g., Genesis 16:7) and sacred caves, (E.g., 1 Kings 19:9 and, in general, shrines so numerous that, when the prophetic demand for the centralization of worship in Jerusalem arose, Jeremiah described his people as playing the harlot "upon every high mountain and under every green tree." (Jeremiah 3:6; cf. Deuteronomy 12:2; Isaiah 57:5; 1 Kings 14:22-23)

Such sacred places, taken over from the Canaanites, and transformed by a process of syncretism into shrines of Yahweh, were assumed without complaint in the earliest traditions of Israel. Stories grew up around the local holy places, as at Bethel, where a typical legend records the way in which the patriarch Jacob discovered Bethel to be the "house of God." (Genesis 28:10-22) Even when the cruder forms of animism and fetishism had been outgrown, this persistent localization of Yahweh's available presence long continued, not altogether surrendering its hold on the worship and popular imagination of Judaism until after the destruction of the temple in 70 A.D. From Hannah offering mental prayer without audible words before the Ark of Yahweh in Shiloh (1 Samuel 1:9-13) to Daniel in exile, praying thrice daily with his windows open toward Jerusalem, (Daniel 6:10) many doubtless used the inherited idea of a local shrine as a trellis upon which grew a devout spiritual fellowship with God and a vivid sense of his reality. The Old Testament, however, as we shall see, clearly reveals the inner perplexity and the outward conflict involved as religious thought and practice moved from primitive shrines toward the idea of Jesus: "Neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father.... God is a Spirit." (John 4:21, John 4:24)

3. A further negative influence, inhibiting the approach to God in private prayer, sprang from the external nature of the methods traditionally used for securing superhuman guidance and support. In the primitive religion from which, as from a dim hinterland, the Hebrew faith emerged, approaching any god to learn his will and get his backing involved not so much the fulfillment of inward spiritual conditions as the successful working of a magical technique. According to repeated indications in the Old Testament, for example, casting lots, Urim and Thummim, before a sacred image, the ephod, was a recognized method of securing Yahweh's judgment between two alternatives and so learning his will. David, we read, wishing divine guidance in his military strategy, "said to Abiathar the priest, . . . I pray thee, bring me hither the ephod. And Abiathar brought thither the ephod to David. And David inquired of Yahweh, saying, If I pursue after this

troop, shall I overtake them? And he [Yahweh] answered him, Pursue." (1 Samuel 30:7-8) It is clear here, as elsewhere, that the ephod was a piece of religious apparatus for ascertaining the divine will. That the ephod was a metal image which could be idolatrously used is evident from Gideon's manufacture of one out of the jewelry of the Ishmaelites, after which, said a later writer, "all Israel played the harlot." (Judges 8:24-27) Far from being reprehensible at first, however, an ephod was an indispensable instrument of a priest's technique, as when, for example, Abiathar "came down with an ephod in his hand," (1 Samuel 23:6-12) by which David "inquired of Yahweh."

Moreover, the method of such inquiry seems from the record clear. Casting lots was a familiar way of thrusting a decision back on God, as even the late Book of Proverbs shows -- The lot is cast into the lap; But the whole disposing thereof is of Yahweh. (Proverbs 16:33)

When, for example, the taboo of total abstinence from food, which Saul had announced in the midst of the battle, had been broken and Yahweh had withdrawn his guidance, lots were cast to locate the guilt. "Then said he [Saul] unto all Israel, Be ye on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other side. And the people said unto Saul, Do what seemeth good unto thee. Therefore Saul said unto Yahweh, the God of Israel, Show the right. And Jonathan and Saul were taken by lot; but the people escaped. And Saul said, Cast lots between me and Jonathan my son. And Jonathan was taken." (1 Samuel 14:38-42) In this passage, as in others, the Greek Septuagint Translation of the Old Testament, begun in Alexandria around 285 B.C., apparently goes back to an earlier Hebrew manuscript than our English Versions represent. According to the Septuagint, Saul asked Yahweh to give Urim if he or Jonathan was guilty, and to give Thummim if the guilt lay with the people. That is, Urim and Thummim were the holy lots or dice by casting which before a sacred ephod the will of Yahweh could be ascertained. So, when Saul had forfeited Yahweh's favor, "Yahweh answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets," (1 Samuel 28:6) and this method of learning Yahweh's will is reflected in Moses' command to inquire "by the judgment of the Urim before Yahweh." (Numbers 27:21) When one endeavors, therefore, to reconstruct in imagination the religious life and practice of the early Hebrews, one must visualize them as presenting to their deity questions capable of a yes or no reply and then as casting lots with a cry like Saul's, "Show the right," and as accepting the arbitrament of the dice as the revealed will of the Lord.

Later the ephod, together with the Urim and Thummim, was sublimated and rationalized, becoming part of the priest's symbolical dress and no longer functioning as at first. (Exodus 28:6-35) Even after the Exile, however, the ancient emblems possessed almost, if not quite, magical significance, (Nehemiah 7:65; Ezra 2:63) and the Hebrew word for the Law, the revealed will of God, Torah, very probably goes back to the Hebrew word for casting lots, yarah. (Adolphe Lods: Israel from its Beginnings to the Middle of the Eighth Century, translated by S. H. Hooke, p. 297)

Important as this primitive method of dealing with Yahweh was, it did not stand alone. Dreams, for example, were given a high place as media of divine revelation; (Genesis 20:3; Genesis 26:24-25; Genesis 28:10-16; Genesis 31:24; Genesis 37:5; Genesis 41:1; Genesis 46:1-4; Judges 7:13-15; 1 Kings 3:5-15 etc.) omens were trusted, such as the first word to be uttered at an expected meeting, (1 Samuel 14:8-15) or a chance action regarded as a sign, (Genesis 24:12-14) or wind in the mulberry-trees taken as Yahweh's command to join battle; (2 Samuel 5:22-24) and, in general,

dealing with the superhuman world suggested nothing so simple and spiritual as private communion in prayer, but rather a whole array of magical techniques and, from the modern point of view, incredible superstitions.

4. Interpenetrating the negative factors already mentioned was the practice of animal sacrifice as the characteristic way of approaching God. After the final destruction of the temple in Jerusalem, Jewish rabbis began teaching prayer as a substitute for the old offerings. So Rabbi Abahu said: "What shall replace the bullocks we formerly offered to Thee? ‘Our lips,’ in the prayer we pray to Thee. So long as the temple stood we used to offer a sacrifice and thus atonement was made; but now we have nothing to bring but prayer." (As quoted by George Foot Moore: Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era, Vol. II, p. 218) Such a statement correctly represents two significant historical matters: first, personal prayer had been developing within the framework; of the sacrificial system -- Let my prayer be set forth as incense before thee; The lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice; (Psalms 141:2) and second, the approach to God by way of animal offerings had been so central in Judaism that, while the sacrifices were always accompanied by supplications, they had competed with personal prayer, had furnished for many people a public substitute for it, so that when the bloody altars were gone a devout rabbi could mingle his exaltation of private communion with the lament "We have nothing to bring but prayer."

Animal sacrifice among the Hebrews was, of course, rooted far down in the primitive customs out of which their later faith emerged. The Old Testament contains clear evidence that in the earlier days not only animal but human sacrifice as well had been the common practice: "Yahweh spake unto Moses, saying, Sanctify unto me all the first-born, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine." (Exodus 13:1-2) That the actual slaying of first-born children was here intended is made evident in the fifteenth verse of the same chapter. There a special codicil is added, "but all the first-born of my sons I redeem," which doubtless represents one of the most important developments in ancient religion, the allowance of an animal substitute for a first-born human child. As enough to leave no possibility of doubting the terrible meaning of this ancient law, it is reproduced in another passage -- first, the original, absolute requirement, "All that openeth the womb is mine," and, appended, the merciful codicil, "All the first-born of thy sons thou shalt redeem." (Exodus 34:19-20; cf. Numbers 18:15) In one place, however, the original demand for the sacrifice of first-born sons, as of firstborn beasts, stands not only unmistakable in meaning but unrelieved by any exception: "The first-born of thy sons shalt thou give unto me. Likewise shalt thou do with thine oxen, and with thy sheep." (Exodus 22:29-30) The archeological evidence in Palestine reveals with pitiful adequacy the common sacrifice of little children as offerings to the gods. That the worship of Yahweh was at times associated with this ancient abomination is clear from the indignant protests of the prophets. Not only are specific instances recorded -- the children of Jephthah, Ahaz, and Manasseh, (Judges 11:30-39; 2 Kings 16:3; 2 Kings 21:6) for example but as late as the eighth century the prophet Micah pictured a devotee appeasing Yahweh by offering up his son, (Micah 6:1-8) and in the seventh century Jeremiah vehemently denied that commands to slay the first-born had been given by Yahweh. (Jeremiah 7:31; Jeremiah 19:5; Jeremiah 32:35) In the next generation Ezekiel tried another apologetic: granting both that the command to sacrifice children was in the Law, as it obviously was, and that Yahweh was responsible for its presence there, he asserted none the less that; Yahweh had given "statutes that were not good, and ordinances wherein they should not live," for

the ultimate purpose of punishing them with such desolation that they might recognize the divine hand in their tragedy. (Ezekiel 20:23-26) In the end, animal sacrifice was altogether substituted for human sacrifice, and this provision, represented as a merciful evidence of Yahweh's grace, was made picturesque in the legendary story of Abraham and Isaac. (Genesis 22:1-18) "Take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering" -- such is the command, representative of ages of primitive custom, which Yahweh lays on Abraham. A more moving portrayal of the meaning of child sacrifice to a good father could hardly have been written than this story furnishes; the profound loyalty involved in child sacrifice, holding nothing back that religious obligation might require, is recognized; and the story's obvious objective is reached when "Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-offering in the stead of his son."

Animal sacrifice, therefore, deeply rooted in traditional custom and congenial with contemporaneous Semitism, was the central act of Hebrew worship. No one idea of the meaning of such sacrifice can adequately cover the varied factors that entered into its significance. It was a gift to God, and the word commonly used to represent it, minhah, is used also of a present offered to a man or of tribute paid to a king. Such a gift might spring from varied motives -- gratitude, homage, or the desire to curry favor -- but obviously in the background of the practice of animal sacrifice was the idea that God liked this form of gift and profited by it. The fat and blood of the sacrifice were the "bread of God," (Leviticus 21:6, Leviticus 21:8, Leviticus 21:17, Leviticus 21:21; Leviticus 22:25; Ezekiel 44:7; Numbers 28:2, Numbers 28:24) and, however symbolical this idea became in later Judaism, its origin was as plainly literal as were identical ideas concerning pagan deities, Which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, And drank the wine of their drink-offering. (Deuteronomy 32:38)

Blended with such primitive conceptions was the idea of the sacred bond created between man and man and between man and deity, whether by sharing in a common feast or by having the blood of the sacrifice applied both to the sacred altar and to the persons of the devotees. (Exodus 24:4-8) And always in the hinterland of animal sacrifice lurked age-old ideas of the magical potency of blood as a powerful agency of deliverance if rightly used (E.g., Exodus 12:12-13) and a supernatural peril if wrongly handled. (E.g., 1 Samuel 14:32-35) So long as animal sacrifice, interpreted in such terms, was the major method of approaching deity, it is clear that worshipers could not conceive an approach so simple and spiritual as solitary praying to the "Father who seeth in secret."

II The fact that private prayer was not typical of the early life of Israel is disguised in the Hebrew stories of the patriarchs by their free and easy conversations with their god. Just as the Homeric heroes are on intimate speaking terms with the deities of Greece, so in the patriarchal narratives in the ancient worthies of Israel dealt with Yahweh. Abraham, in particular, is represented as entertaining Yahweh at dinner and extensively conversing with him as a familiar friend. (Genesis 18:1-33; cf. Genesis 12:1 ff; Genesis 13:14-18; Genesis 22:1 ff) That such stories represent the exceptional experience of the heroic figures only would be evident even if they were taken at their face value, whereas their actual worth lies in their revelation of later ideas and ideals, pre-Exilic to be sure, read back into early times. The true state of the case is made plain when we trace the strange and fascinating change of meaning that took place in the word 'holy' as in successive ages

it was applied to things divine. Beyond the power of anachronisms to conceal, this word moves through the Bible correctly representing in its altering significance the progress of the Hebrew-Christian idea of God and of the basic conditions of approaching him. In its primitive meaning holiness was associated with the range of ideas and practices covered by our word ‘taboo.’ That is to say, anything holy was dangerous to meddle with, and, far from having ethical connotation, holiness meant unapproachableness. Repeatedly in the early records, for example, the adjective ‘holy’ is applied to the Ark, and the significance of the attribute was revealed when Uzzah, inadvertently touching the sacred fetish, fell dead in consequence, (2 Samuel 6:6-9) or when the men of Beth-shemesh, looking into it, suffered such devastating penalty that they sent it from their borders, saying, "Who is able to stand before Yahweh, this holy God?" (1 Samuel 6:19-21) Whatever was holy was thus full of a mysterious and perilous potency with which the prudent would have as little as possible to do. The fact that Sinai was the "holy mountain" accounted for the elaborate precautions taken that the people should not touch it. (Exodus 19:12-14) Repeatedly in the early laws the command to observe some negative taboo was reinforced by the penalties of violated holiness -- "Ye shall be holy men unto me: therefore ye shall not eat any flesh that is torn of beasts in the field."(Exodus 22:31) To say that the Sabbath is sacred is to say that it is inviolable -- "Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that profaneth it shall surely be put to death." (Exodus 31:14) If bread is consecrated, it may be eaten only by the priests at the appointed time; otherwise "it shall not be eaten, because it is holy." (Exodus 29:34) As H. Wheeler Robinson puts it, "Sacred objects can be touched only under the strictest precautions; they are as dangerous to the uninitiated as the switchboard of an electrical power-house might be to a child." (The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament, p. 131)

Early stories such as the encounter with Yahweh at the burning bush, where Moses was warned to put off his shoes because the spot was "holy ground," (Exodus 3:5; cf. Joshua 5:15) reveal the way in which this dread of holy things and places and this need of insulations against their dangerous potency issued in sacred rites and customs. Wherever the attribute of holiness was present, there some one or something was hedged about with sanctity, so that contact was dangerous unless meticulous care was taken to fulfill the prescribed conditions of approach. Out of this soil grew the luxuriant crop of ceremonial laws and customs which characterized the primitive religion of the Hebrews, as of all early peoples. Taboos on eating fat and blood, (Leviticus 3:17) rules concerning clean and unclean foods, detailed directions concerning the dress of the officiating priests, insistence on ceremonial exactness in sacrifice these and similar legalisms have as part of their background and explanation the sense of sanctity and inviolability in things divine, demanding punctilious care to make human relationships with them safe and profitable. And because the priests were considered the expert initiates who alone knew the ways of the god and therefore monopolized fitness to approach him, their developing power among the Hebrews, as among all early peoples, became immense. Far from being synonymous with goodness or righteousness, therefore, ‘holiness,’ at the first, suggested the aloofness and inviolability of the god. Even when later connotations began to appear, the earlier ones persisted, as Joshua’s words reveal: "Ye cannot serve Yahweh; for he is a holy God; he is a jealous God." (Joshua 24:19) One does not go into one’s room and shut the door to commune in secret with such a diety. As the centuries passed, however, ‘holiness’ changed its meaning, and in the change can be seen the increasing possibility of private prayer. One of the ascending roads traveled by the idea carried it away from its old associations with perilous potencies in things divine into new associations with

majesty, grandeur, and transcendence as attributes of God. Still the flavor of the ancient idea was recognizable when Isaiah saw the Most High seated on his throne, with the seraphim chanting above him, "Holy, holy, holy, is Yahweh of hosts." (Isaiah 6:1-3) Such a God was not lightly to be approached; an inviolability not to be profaned lay deep in Isaiah's thought of the Eternal; but reverence had taken the place of dread as the corollary of holiness, majesty had displaced the former dangerousness of the deity, and the response demanded from man by the holiness of the Most High had become thoroughly ethical.

Up this road Jewish thought traveled as monotheism became increasingly the faith of the people. Not unapproachableness in the old sense but greatness in power and righteousness in character came to be recognized as the qualities of God -- Thy way, O God, is in holiness: Who is a great god like unto God? (Psalms 77:13 [marginal translation]) Of this changed meaning the "Holiness Code" in Leviticus (Leviticus 17:1-16, Leviticus 18:1-30, Leviticus 19:1-37, Leviticus 20:1-27, Leviticus 21:1-24, Leviticus 22:1-33, Leviticus 23:1-44, Leviticus 24:1-23, Leviticus 25:1-55, Leviticus 26:1-46) is representative. An Exilic codification of moral, ritual, and ecclesiastical usages for Jews in general and for the new temple at Jerusalem in particular, it labored with exacting care to secure ceremonial purity. There is no mistaking the flavor of the old word 'holy' in the writer's insistence on correctness of ritual in approaching Yahweh. The basis of all the rules and regulations is repeatedly stated: "I Yahweh your God am holy." (Leviticus 19:2; cf. Leviticus 20:26; Leviticus 21:18) Along with moral commands against such evils as child sacrifice, adultery, and sexual perversion are detailed injunctions concerning ceremonial observances, reminiscent of the old taboos. But to the writer God is no longer an anthropomorphic deity in the old sense; he is the one God, omnipotent and altogether righteous, transcendent in majesty and in rightful claim on man's devotion; and his holiness is expressed in his exclusive right to Israel's worship and service.

Behind this "Holiness Code" one feels the conflict of the exiles in Babylon, refusing to surrender their religious peculiarities to a contaminating heathenism, and marking off with new sharpness the distinguishing features of their faith. There is for them only one God -- he is holy, his land is holy, his nation is to be a holy people -- and while the indiscriminate mixture of moral and ceremonial elements carries over old ideas even while it ventures into new ones, there is an evident elevation of the idea of holiness into terms of the divine majesty, and of the Most High's exclusive claim on man s devotion.

More important, however, for future religious development than this translation of holiness from primitive untouchableness into majestic greatness and exclusive sovereignty was the baptism of the idea into moral meanings. This was one of the major achievements of the prophets. They took a word, with its accompanying ideas, which at first had possessed no ethical significance at all, and they made it one of the great words in the moral vocabulary of the race. Isaiah of Jerusalem is notable for the way in which, far ahead of his time, he translated the idea of holiness into ethical meanings. Again and again he returned to this matter as though deliberately trying to take a word whose cogency every one acknowledged and make it connote a range of meaning it had never suggested before. "Ah sinful nation," he cried, "a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that deal corruptly! they have forsaken Yahweh, they have despised the Holy One of Israel," (Isaiah 1:4) and then he uttered one of the most solemn and moving denunciations of moral wrong and one of the most momentous pleas for social justice in ancient literature. As though it were the nub of his message, he said, "Yahweh of hosts is exalted in justice, and God

the Holy One is sanctified in righteousness." (Isaiah 5:16) Then, in contrast with this view, having described the loose and cynical ways in which popular thought referred to "the Holy One of Israel," (Isaiah 5:18-19) he went on to announce with vehement earnestness the real meanings of holiness in terms of personal morals and social righteousness. Isaiah is thus one of the supreme examples in history of a religious teacher who, instead of discarding an ancient word, encrusted with inadequate and mistaken meanings, chose to reinterpret it. From the day when in the temple he saw the vision of the thrice-holy God and inwardly made the response of moral repentance and devotion, he saw holiness in terms of goodness.

What Isaiah of Jerusalem did so well, Isaiah of the Exile carried further-- "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite." (Isaiah 57:15) Here we find both the exaltation of the meaning of holiness into terms of transcendent greatness and, as well, the deepening of its meaning into terms of goodness and mercy. Primitive ideas of dreadful unapproachableness in deity had been left behind; the concept of divine sanctity had been sublimated into terms of transcendent purity; and instead of ‘holiness’ meaning aloofness, it could itself characterize a humble and contrite heart. The changing meanings of holiness in the Bible are thus among the most indicative signs of progress, and obviously by the time the Isaiah of the Exile wrote, some men were praying in secret to the holy God. So far as popular acceptance was concerned, however, this reinterpretation of the idea of holiness was halting and unsure. Commonly the old connotations clung to the concept of the holy, whether in gross or attenuated forms. It outgrew the crude ideas of Yahweh’s terribleness but it still retained the idea of his exclusiveness -- a jealous god, with a special land and a chosen people. Holiness still meant separateness -- sanctity in nation and in temple hedged about with ceremonial precautions. The old ideas of taboo were there, although sublimated and refined. "In general," says Dr. John Peters, "throughout the later literature the exclusive idea rather than the ethical idea is prominent." (The Religion of the Hebrews, p. 304) Indeed, to the very last, the old associations of the word were retained in the architecture of the temple. There increasing holiness was denoted by increasing remoteness from the common man, until, farthest away of all, absolutely inviolable to the ordinary worshiper, the acme of sanctity and separateness, stood the Holy of Holies, into which even the high priest went only once a year.

All the more surprising, therefore, is the ultimate association of the word with the most intimate and inward experience known to the Bible "the communion of the Holy Spirit." (2 Corinthians 13:14) No other word, used throughout the Book, so reversed in the end the most characteristic meanings with which it started as did the word ‘holy.’ At the beginning, Yahweh on Sinai protected his terrible sanctity from the approach of common men: "Yahweh said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto Yahweh to gaze, and many of them perish. And let the priests also, that come near to Yahweh, sanctify themselves, lest Yahweh break forth upon them." (Exodus 19:21-22) In the end, God dwelt not on a smoking mountain nor in temples made with hands, but through his Spirit in the inner man, and this Spirit, his renewing and sustaining presence within the soul, was designated by the adjective ‘holy,’ which once had stood for aloofness and unapproachableness. This complete alteration of meaning in a word continuously employed throughout the Book is one of the most notable evidences of the development that the Book records. In only two Old Testament passages does the phrase ‘holy Spirit’ occur: once, in a

late psalm where a devout soul prays, Cast me not away from thy presence; And take not thy holy Spirit from me; (Psalms 51:11) and once in an Isaian confession of sin, where God is described as "he that put his holy Spirit in the midst of them." (Isaiah 63:10-11) What thus barely began in the Old Testament, however, became one of the early church's most characteristic modes of thought and expression. In God, the Creator-Father, and in Christ, the revelation of the divine character, the first Christians fervently believed, but all this became inward and empowering only when the Spirit entered and possessed them. According to the New Testament, this experience of the indwelling presence of God is the essential source of the Christian's power (Acts 18:1-28) and of his peace and joy; (Romans 14:17) it is the best gift which the Father can bestow on his children; (Luke 11:13; John 14:26) it is the secret alike of moral renewal (Titus 3:5) and of practical guidance; (Acts 13:2) it furnishes the interior standards of motive and behavior which must not be violated; (Ephesians 4:30) whatever else in Christian faith is valuable, even though it be the love of God, becomes effective only when this experience makes it inwardly real; (Romans 5:5) and the temple is easily dispensable since to every Christian it can be said, "Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you?" (1 Corinthians 6:19) Moreover, in all these passages, as in many more, this most inward dealing of God with man, this climax of divine-human intimacy, is described as the work of "the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us." (2 Timothy 1:14) How long a journey this use of the adjective reveals, since the tribesmen of Israel trembled before the holy mount! That the meaning of prayer must inevitably have changed in the course of this development is obvious. At Sinai it meant the approach to Yahweh of a single representative, who spoke for all the people; in late Judaism and early Christianity it meant the immediate access of soul to Oversoul, spiritually conditioned and inwardly achieved, each man for himself "praying in the Holy Spirit." (Jude 1:20) One does not mean by this that other elements of the original tradition are not present in the New Testament's thought of holiness. A certain awe is implied in the word's use, a sense of inviolable sanctity, (E.g., Hebrews 8:2 [marginal translation; 2 Corinthians 7:1]) but always the implications are ethical. "Holiness and sincerity," (2 Corinthians 1:12) "righteousness and holiness," (Ephesians 4:24) "holy and without blemish before him in love" (Ephesians 1:4) -- such are the associations of the word. To be holy means to have "a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving each other." (Colossians 3:12-13) And when Peter, in his First Epistle, harked back to the old code in Leviticus, he lifted its meaning out of ceremonial exclusiveness into universal morality: "Like as he who called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living; because it is written, Ye shall be holy; for I am holy." (1 Peter 1:15-16; cf. 1 Thessalonians 3:13; Hebrews 12:9-11; Romans 12:1; Ephesians 5:27; etc.) This development from the unapproachableness to the immediate accessibility of God, and from magical and ceremonial conditions of divine fellowship to the moral fitness of a sincere soul, represents one of the most permanently valuable contributions of Hebrew-Christian religion. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews was historically correct when at this point he set the new dispensation in contrast with the old: For ye are not come unto a mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, and unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that no word more should be spoken unto them; for they could not endure that which was enjoined, If even a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned; and so fearful was the appearance, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake: but ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God. (Hebrews 12:18-22)

III The Old Testament indicates two main highways up which the idea and the practice of fellowship with God moved into more spiritual meanings, and, strangely enough, one of them ran not around but through the vast sacrificial system with its bloody altars and ritual observances. Indeed, the modern mind misjudges the ancient situation when it centers attention on the prophets as the creators of the dominant attributes of Judaism. They were the most notable series of ethical teachers in the ancient world and the fountainhead of the noblest moral qualities in the Hebrew faith, but the great prophetic writers were comprehended within four centuries, and not only the legal but the sacrificial system preceded, underlay, and outlived them all. Had not the sacrificial system itself, therefore, been adaptable to spiritual uses, so that devout souls could find in it ever deepening meanings, the religion of Israel would never have reached the heights that it attained. However one may prefer prophet to priest, two facts about priestly rites may not be forgotten if religious history is to be understood -- first, forms of ritual stubbornly persist while the interpretations of them fluidly change; and second, so varied may these interpretations be that the most illiterate peasant and the most erudite philosopher can devoutly observe the same ceremonial, each seeing in it what each brings eyes to see. This is true in Christianity today and, even with regard to animal sacrifices, it was true in ancient Israel.

Originally, as in all nomadic societies, the priestly offices were functions of the tribal chief. The father of the family or the patriarch of the clan slew the animal and poured or rubbed its blood upon the sacred stone or altar as the portion of the god. (Cf. 1 Samuel 14:33-35) There was no order of hereditary priests, and the sacrifices, long after the settlement in Canaan, were apparently few in kind and simple in observance principally the peace-offering, where the fat and blood were given to Yahweh and the people feasted on the flesh, and the burnt-offering, where the whole animal was burned upon the altar. With increasing complexity in Israel’s social life, however, came corresponding developments in ritual and priesthood, especially after royal families began copying, in temple architecture, modes of worship, and priestly prerogatives, the models of Phoenicia. The priesthood became hereditary, a separate, professional class, and the sacrifices so increased in number and in the complexity of their attendant rites that one scholar points to the change as "perhaps the most striking and convincing proof of development the Old Testament affords." (H. Wheeler Robinson: The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament, p. 144; cf. John Punnett Peters: The Religion of the Hebrews, chaps. 7-8)

Two new kinds of sacrifice of major importance were added after the Exile the trespass-offering, a sacrifice of restitution either for wrong done to man or as tribute due to Yahweh, and the sin-offering, an expiation for the unwitting guilt of the people. Together with the peace-offering and the burnt-offering, inherited from earlier times, these constituted the four main types of sacrifice in the second temple, and around them grew up a vast and complicated network of punctilious observance. (See George Foot Moore: "Sacrifice," in Encyclopædia Biblica, edited by T.K. Cheyne and J. Sutherland Black) In these offerings of slain beasts, whatever form they took, the mysterious efficacy of the blood was assumed. The ancient taboo continued to the end -- the blood must not be eaten. (Leviticus 7:27) Sometimes it was sprinkled on the altar; (Leviticus 1:5) sometimes it was poured out at the altar’s foot; (Leviticus 4:7) in either case it was given to God, for whom the altar stood. With such primitive, animistic ideas the sacrificial system of Israel was thoroughly impregnated, so that, if one is to understand the problem of an intelligent and ethically minded Jew in the post-Exilic era, one must imagine him, with animistic ideas no longer in his

head, bound by the ties of inheritance, tradition, and sacred custom to the animistic practice of animal sacrifice. As always in similar situations, the first solution was not the abolition of the sacred custom but its reinterpretation. In general, the method of this reinterpretation seems plain. The sacrifices stood in the Law as the command of Yahweh, ordained by his grace as a means of approach to his favor. The more definitely the written law became established as canonical and regarded as infallibly inspired, the more surely could the explanation of the sacrifices be transferred from the realm of animistic superstition, where they really started, to the realm of sacred observance ordained by God and for that reason faithfully to be maintained. They could be entered into, then, with no knowledge of or sympathy with the original ideas associated with them. They could be seen as God's provision for the confession and pardon of sins and the re-establishment of personal and national relationships with the Most High. If to sophisticated thought the irrationality of bloody altars as a means of divine placation and fellowship became troublesome, the use of symbolism could come to the aid of the devout worshiper, as it has done in every other developing religion, Christianity not least of all. So meanings could be read into the sacrifices that were not seen there at first, and what the spiritual vision of the devotee saw to be true about God and man and duty he could find pictured in the liturgies of the temple.

Obviously, even animal sacrifice, shocking to modern sensibilities but universal in the ancient world, was susceptible of such symbolical interpretation. While some, therefore, among the great prophets turned away from it as too misleading to be useful, others, like Ezekiel, clung to it and, by giving it sublimated meanings, made it a servant of their spiritual lives. Circumcision also originated in primitive, animistic ideas, but as early as the seventh century it was given an ethical significance: "Yahweh thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love Yahweh thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul." (Deuteronomy 30:6; cf. Deuteronomy 10:16) Similarly, one of the most radiant of the psalms, (Psalms 27:1-14) written con amore by a soul whose trust in God was intimate and sustaining, reveals a spiritual experience, which, far from being troubled by the temple and its smoking altars, found there delight and sustentation:

One thing have I asked of Yahweh, that will I seek after: That I may dwell in the house of Yahweh all the days of my life, To behold the beauty of Yahweh, And to inquire in his temple. In consequence, it is not alone to the prophetic tradition, with its distaste for priestcraft and animal offering, that we must look in the Old Testament to find personal prayer. Intimate, interior, spiritual communion with God flourished in association with the temple ritual; it found there encouragement and inspiration; it even used the sacrificial system as a trellis to grow upon. Today, though a Christian be as thoroughgoing as the Quakers in discarding ritual, he must none the less appreciate the often superior quality of inward spiritual life and outward social service on the part of those who in the sacrifice of the Mass see Christ verily present. So the true saints of Judaism were doubtless often to be found not with the prophets, who scorned the temple ceremonies, but with the devotees whose hearts were lifted up with the evening sacrifice. The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah, for example, represent the passionate devotion of the post-Exilic community, rebuilding the holy city and temple and restoring the sacrifices. From the inception of the enterprise in the decree of Darius, "Concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, let the house be builded, the place where they offer sacrifices," (Ezra 6:3) to the festal celebration of ultimate success -- "They offered great sacrifices that day, and rejoiced" (Nehemiah 12:43) the religious life of the restorers of Zion centered in the altar. Writes Professor George Foot Moore:

There is no doubt that the Israelites in all ages firmly believed in the efficaciousness of sacrifice to preserve and restore the favor of Yahwe. In times of prosperity they acknowledged his goodness and besought its continuance by sacrifice; in times of distress they multiplied sacrifices to appease him and make him again propitious. The worship of God by sacrifice and offering was, indeed, the central thing in their religion, we might almost say was their religion. ("Sacrifice," pars. 46:47 in Encyclopæ dia Biblica, edited by T. K. Cheyne and J. Sutherland black)

Certainly one could say this of Ezra and Nehemiah. Yet the latter especially was one of the most notable exemplars of personal prayer in the Old Testament. All his labors were "begun, continued, and ended" in prayer. His narrative is interlarded with swift, ejaculatory appeals to God, (E.g., Nehemiah 4:4; Nehemiah 5:19; Nehemiah 6:9, Nehemiah 6:14; Nehemiah 13:14, Nehemiah 13:22, Nehemiah 13:29) sometimes ethically dubious as when he calls down divine wrath on his enemies, sometimes high-minded and devout, but always revealing an intimate sense of the spiritual presence and availability of the living God. When in the royal audience he prepared to make his plea for Jerusalem's rebuilding, he inwardly "prayed to the God of heaven"; (Nehemiah 2:4) when he and his fellows labored on Zion amid bitter enemies, he reports, "We made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night"; (Nehemiah 4:9) and when he laid down his finished work, he exclaimed, "Remember me, O my God, for good.' (Nehemiah 13:31) Clearly, to men like this the sacrificial system was not a substitute for the interior practice of God's presence but rather the "outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace."

Similarly the Book of Daniel, written in the second century B.C., represents a type of Judaism in which new apocalyptic hopes were blended with the old devotion to temple and sacrifice. According to the story, indeed, it was when the heathen king was sacrilegiously dishonoring the vessels "taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem" that the king's fate was sealed and his doom announced. (Daniel 5:1-31) Daniel, however, even though pictured in exile, far from the ruined site of Jerusalem and its desolated altars, was not far from his God. Personal prayer runs through the entire book, and thrice daily, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, Daniel communed with the God of Israel. (E.g., Daniel 6:10; Daniel 2:17-18, Daniel 2:20-23; Daniel 9:3-19)

It is in the Psalter, however, that the development of personal prayer within the sacrificial system is most convincingly made evident. The Forty second and Forty-third Psalms belong together -- a moving song of inward spiritual struggle and triumph. The experience revealed was intimately personal -- My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God. The ultimate hope of peace for the psalmist's troubled soul, however, led straight to the temple and its altar -- Oh send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me:

Let them bring me unto thy holy hill, And to thy tabernacles.

Then will I go unto the altar of God, Unto God my exceeding joy.

Nothing more inwardly personal is easily imaginable than the experience represented in the 116th Psalm. The entire hymn is written on the theme of confidence in and gratitude for the privilege of prayer -- I love Yahweh, because he heareth My voice and my supplications.

Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, Therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.

Yet, here also, the climax of the psalmist's experience was reached in the "sacrifice of thanksgiving" -- In the courts of Yahweh's house, In the midst of thee, O Jerusalem.

Praise ye Yahweh.

While, as we shall see, not all the Psalter can be truly called the hymn book of the second temple, wide areas of it are correctly represented by that title. (See Julius A. Bewer: The Literature of the Old Testament in its Historical Development, pp. 347ff) Many of the psalms were sung by temple choirs as an accompaniment to animal sacrifice, as one post-Exilic description makes vivid and picturesque: "When the burnt-offering began, the song of Yahweh began also, and the trumpets, together with the instruments of David king of Israel. And all the assembly worshipped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded; all this continued until the burnt-offering was finished." (2 Chronicles 29:27-28) Such was doubtless the usage of Psalm Sixty-six, a hymn of gratitude, which, however public and national in its deliberate significance, could have been written only by a devout soul with a profound religious life. Here, as elsewhere, we find mingled together an inner experience of divine-human fellowship and a sacramental experience in the public sacrifice:

I will come into thy house with burnt offerings;

I will pay thee my vows, Which my lips uttered, And my mouth spake, when I was in distress.

I will offer unto thee burnt-offerings of fatlings, With the incense of rams;

I will offer bullocks with goats.

. . . . .

If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear: But verily God hath heard;

He hath attended to the voice of my prayer.

Blessed be God, Who hath not turned away my prayer, Nor his lovingkindness from me. (Psalms 66:13-15, Psalms 66:18-20)

Indeed, no such abbreviated statement as we here are making, with a few quotations from the Hebrew Psalms, can begin to do justice to the Psalter as a compendium of all the moods and attitudes, conflicts, desires, and aspirations of the human soul in its relationships with God. There are psalms of personal religion, craving inward fellowship with God or rejoicing in the experience of it, and there are patriotic psalms pleas for national deliverance, praise for national success, songs of battle, and pæans of victory. There are private psalms, springing from the most intimate experiences of trust and fear, of joy and woe, and there are public psalms in which the great congregation expressed the common need, hope, gratitude, and praise of all. There are royal psalms voicing the festival spirit of celebration at the court, praying for help in the king's need and for blessing on the king's rule, and there are psalms in which the common man poured out his hope and trust in God amid the ordinary happiness, suffering, and drudgery of daily life. There are teaching psalms, not so much characterized by supplication as by affirmation, and there are psalms of desperate petition and intercession, welling up out of profound need. As for spiritual quality, the Psalms range from dire, vindictive pleas for vengeance to aspirations so high and timeless that no generation can outgrow them. The Psalter comprehends all kinds of prayer.

Petition is there, penitence and confession, thanksgiving and praise, the experience of trustful serenity, the affirmation of confident faith, the enjoyment of divine companionship, the inward conquest over temptation and trouble, the rededication of the life to God, the triumphant consciousness of released power.

When, therefore, the wide ranges of the Psalter associated with the services and sacrifices of the temple are taken into account, the progressive spiritualizing of the sacrificial ritual becomes evident. Even in the early days, Hannah, the mother of Samuel, came to the shrine of Yahweh to pray concerning a personal and family matter,(1 Samuel 1:9 ff) and in the second temple, as the Psalter reveals, the individual, as such, had part in the sacrifices, not simply as a member of the nation but in the light and right of his own private needs. (See Juius A. Bewer: The Literature of the Old Testament in its Historical Development, pp. 371ff.) Come, and hear, all ye that fear God, And I will declare what he hath done for my soul (Psalms 66:16) -- that is personal gratitude.

Judge me, O Yahweh, for I have walked in mine integrity (Psalms 26:1) that is a personal protestation of innocence. So will I compass thine altar, O Yahweh; That I may make the voice of thanksgiving to be heard (Psalms 26:6-7) -- that is personal praise.

. . . I will declare mine iniquity;

I will be sorry for my sin (Psalms 38:18) -- that is personal penitence. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my groaning? (Psalms 22:1) --that is personal despair. Granted that, as in modern hymnals, expressions of religious need and aspiration originally born out of individual experience were often used in public application and became the voice of the whole people, still that very poignancy that made them thus generally applicable came from the intensely intimate experience in which they started. And when one recalls that, as Professor Bewer puts it, "Alongside of the public worship for the whole community there were certain occasions for the individual worshipper when he poured forth his thanksgiving or his petition in the temple," (Op. cit., p. 371) it is evident that the old sacrifices had been progressively spiritualized into new meanings. To multitudes the assurance of reestablished fellowship between God and his children that the liturgies of the temple brought to the worshiper deepened the interior experience of personal communion. When, therefore, the sacrifices were finally abolished with the destruction of the second temple in 70 A.D., Judaism, like Christianity, was not without resource. What had been solidly built within the ritual scaffolding remained secure, and the rabbis taught the people that "just as the worship of the altar is called worship, so prayer is called worship." (As quoted by George Foot More: Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era, Vol. II, p. 218)

IV

Long before Roman armies demolished the temple on Zion, however, the sacrificial system had been attacked by the prophets as a peril to true religion. All sacramental systems lend themselves to two uses -- they can be either supports to a genuinely spiritual faith or substitutes for moral character and conduct in seeking the divine favor. This ambiguous meaning of temple rites was obvious in Israel. The sacrifices were confided in by good men as the outward symbols of forgiven sin and reestablished fellowship with God, but they were also confided in by evil men as an

efficacious technique for placating God regardless of one's ethical life. This latter fact bulked so large in the thought of the greatest of the prophets that, even had they granted the best elements in the sacrificial system, they would still have felt that the perversion of the best was the worst.

Alongside the growth of personal prayer within the liturgical framework, therefore, went its development not only apart from the sacrifices but in opposition to them. From the standpoint of the prophetic conscience, the offering of animals as a placation of Yahweh and the punctilious rites associated with the temple's smoking and bloody altars, were either altogether an abominable superstition or else were a once meaningful tradition dangerously corrupted by misuse. The more the prophets interpreted God and his holiness in terms of goodness, the more exclusively did goodness constitute the sole path to the divine favor. And beyond moral indignation at liturgical substitutes for goodness, the scorn which some prophetic passages pour on animal sacrifices suggests intellectual contempt as well. That the holy God should have prearranged the punctilious offering of beasts as a technique by which his own feelings and attitudes were to be affected involved an imagination of God far too childishly anthropomorphic for the prophetic mind to credit or respect. Apart from the sacrificial system, therefore, and commonly in positive aversion to it, prophetic thinking blazed a new trail into the experience of prayer.

Before the Exile the written law was still plastic and uncanonical, in the making rather than set and rigid. Amos, therefore, felt free to doubt even the existence of a sacrificial system during the idealized days of Israel's pristine loyalty to Yahweh -- "Did ye bring unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?" (Amos 5:25) The negative answer expected to this question was made more explicit in the next century by Jeremiah's representation of Yahweh saying, "I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices." (Jeremiah 7:22) Clearly, then, one prophetic doctrine taught that the entire system of animal offerings was a late accretion, beginning not with Yahweh's original law but in the degenerate influences of Canaanitish baals. Even when sacrifice was not so drastically eliminated from Israel's early tradition, the prophetic conscience denied all efficacy whatever to animal offerings. They furnished no true way of approaching Yahweh, said Micah -- "Wherewith shall I come before Yahweh, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves a year old? will Yahweh be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil?" (Micah 6:6-7) Such liturgies of blood and smoke, said Amos, were the objects not of divine acceptance but of divine contempt --

I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Yea, though ye offer me your burnt-offerings and meal-offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream. (Amos 5:21-24)

If Hosea puts milder words upon Yahweh's lips, the meaning is none the less clear -- "I desire goodness, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings." (Hosea 6:6) As for Isaiah of Jerusalem, words can hardly carry a heavier weight of indignant aversion than the passage that begins -- "What unto me is the multitude of your sacrifices? saith Yahweh: I have had enough of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of

bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats." (Isaiah 1:11) The two perennial temperaments of religion -- the ethical and the liturgical -- thus had representatives in the development which the Old Testament records. Personal prayer emerged from both, but with a difference. The great prophets were inwardly laid hold on by a sense of divine compulsion. The "word of Yahweh" took possession of them with an oppressive and yet exhilarating mastery, in which a consciousness of first-hand dealing with the living God was inherent. "The Lord Yahweh hath spoken; who can but prophesy?" (Amos 3:8) said Amos. "Yahweh spake thus to me with a strong hand," (Isaiah 8:11) cried Isaiah. In such experiences nothing external stood between the soul and God; the divine Spirit was an immediate, personal presence, awesome and masterful, directing thought and compelling action. To the prophet, therefore, prayer was no appendage to a sacrificial system and required no smoking altar for its support. Rather, prayer was the immediate response of man to God’s approach, involving inward communion and ethical devotion, and was itself the fountainhead of whatever moral value any public ceremony might possess.

It is significant that with Elijah, first of the succession of outstanding prophets, is associated a story that ever since in the Hebrew-Christian heritage has represented this profoundly inward concept of prayer. At the sacred mountain, whither he had fled in desperate need of spiritual reinforcement, Elijah faced first a strong wind, then an earthquake, and then a fire, but in these outward shows of physical power God was not present. Then came "a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entrance of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him." (1 Kings 19:9-13) This ancient portrayal of a prophet’s communion with his divinity -- so impressive that even Mendelssohn’s music can hardly heighten its meaning -- represents truly the immediacy of access to God that the prophets experienced and that later, both in Judaism and in Christianity, wielded a profound influence as the highest type of prayer. In the Old Testament, Jeremiah is the chief expositor of this heritage. In his young manhood he supported the Josian reform by which local high places were abolished and sacrificial worship centered in Jerusalem. Whatever may have been his attitude at that time toward animal offerings on Zion, in the end he lost confidence in their value, discredited their origin, and denied Yahweh’s pleasure in them -- "Your burnt-offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices pleasing unto me." (Jeremiah 6:20) Even the temple itself, used as a pious substitute for social justice, he scathingly denounced, and threatened it with the same destruction that had fallen on Yahweh’s former shrine at Shiloh. (Jeremiah 7:1-26) In his own experience, prayer, associated with neither temple nor altar, was an intimate, familiar colloquy between his soul and God. To any one with stiff and formal attitudes in religion, Jeremiah’s prayers are even today positively sacrilegious. He argued with God, questioning him -- "Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper?"-- and contending with him because all they are "at ease that deal very treacherously"; (Jeremiah 12:1-2) he accused God of acting as though he were a mere wayfarer in Israel’s land instead of being one who deeply cared for it, and cried, "Why shouldest thou be as a man affrighted, as a mighty man that cannot save?"; (Jeremiah 14:8-9) he complained at God’s seeming desertion, saying, "Wilt thou indeed be unto me as a deceitful brook, as waters that fail?"; (Jeremiah 15:18) and in his despair he pleaded with God in terms that knew no restraint -- "Hast thou utterly rejected Judah ? hath thy soul loathed Zion ? why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us ? . . . Do not abhor us, for thy name’s sake; do not disgrace the throne of thy glory: remember, break not thy covenant with us."(Jeremiah 14:19, Jeremiah 14:21) With only three characters in the Old Testament are prayers like this associated -- Moses, (Exodus 5:22-23;

Numbers 11:11-15) Job, (Job 10:2-21; Job 13:24-28. Job 14:1-6) and Jeremiah -- and in each case not doubt but assurance of God is in the background, and the very intimacy with which the soul bares its complaints and carries on its struggle in prayer is testimony to the utter genuineness of the experience. Only those who know God as Jeremiah did -- "My strength, and my stronghold, and my refuge in the day of affliction" (Jeremiah 16:19) -- can so make free with him. With entire unconstraint Jeremiah found thus in solitary prayer immediate entrance into the divine presence and, sensitive, poetic spirit though he was, lacerated by national calamity and individual rejection, he was accustomed to go out from this interior resource to face the world again, having heard Yahweh say to him, "I will make thee unto this people a fortified brazen wall . . . I am with thee." (Jeremiah 15:20) It is not strange, therefore, that when temple and altar were destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, and the exiles in Babylon, bereft of their sacrificial system, were in confusion, Jeremiah's faith was expressed in a message to them concerning personal prayer --anywhere, in any land, sacrifices or no sacrifices, the God of Israel was saying to his people, "Ye shall call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith Yahweh." (Jeremiah 29:1-14) In this approach to personal prayer the influence of the prophets was by no means confined to the prophets, and of this fact the Psalter gives abundant evidence. Hymn and prayer book of the second temple it may have been, but obviously some of the psalms could never have been sung in connection with the sacrifices, and may well be grouped, as Professor Julius Bewer suggests, under the caption, "Private Worship outside of the Temple."(The Literature of the Old Testament in its Historical Development, pp. 377-394) For thou delightest not in sacrifice, else would I give it;

Thou hast no pleasure in burnt-offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise (Psalms 51:16-17) -- such a psalm is a direct reflection of the prophetic spirit, and must have been distinctly displeasing to the priests until some later hand added the incongruous anticlimax, Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion:

Build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

Then wilt thou delight in the sacrifices of righteousness, In burnt-offering and whole burnt offering:

Then will they offer bullocks upon thine altar. (Psalms 51:18-19) In this typical contrast within the present Psalms 51:1-19, the recurrent conflict of prophet and priest in the Psalter is made explicit. Devotees of the sacrificial system are well represented, as we have seen, but with catholic inclusiveness, like a true hymnal, the Psalter gives large place to the attitude of the prophets:

Sacrifice and offering thou hast no delight in;

Mine ears hast thou opened:

Burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. (Psalms 40:6) I will praise the name of God with a song, And will magnify him with thanksgiving. And it will please Yahweh better than an ox, Or a bullock that hath horns and hoofs. (Psalms 69:30-31) I will take no bullock out of thy house, Nor he-goats out of thy folds. For every beast of the forest is mine, And the cattle upon a thousand hills.

I know all the birds of the mountains; And the wild beasts of the field are mine.

If I were hungry, I would not tell thee; For the world is mine, and the fulness thereof. Will I eat the flesh of bulls, Or drink the blood of goats ?

Offer unto God the sacrifice of thanksgiving; And pay thy vows unto the Most High; And call upon me in the day of trouble:

I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. (Psalms 50:9-15) The prophetic influence, therefore, was effective far beyond the ambit of the prophets themselves and, as the Book of Proverbs shows, became part of the homely common sense of many of the people: To do righteousness and justice Is more acceptable to Yahweh than sacrifice. (Proverbs 21:3) The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to Yahweh; But the prayer of the upright is his delight.(Proverbs 15:8)

Thus, both within the sacrificial system and in antagonism to it, personal prayer developed as the characteristic approach to God, and the way was prepared for the typical attitudes and ideas of the New Testament.

V

Indeed, both the priestly and the prophetic heritage entered into early Christianity Jesus himself taught a faithful observance of the Law. (Matthew 5:18; Luke 16:17; Matthew 8:4; Luke 5:14; Luke 17:14; Matthew 23:23) He was a lover of the temple (Mark 11:15-17: Matthew 26:55) and a pilgrim to the sacrificial feasts, (Luke 2:41-42; Mark 14:1-2 and his first disciples, far from breaking with the ceremonial requirements, continued to be such thoroughgoing Jews that the ultimate surrender of circumcision and of kosher food nearly disrupted the church. (E.g, Galatians 2:1-21) Even after the inhospitality of Judaism had outlawed the Christian movement from the sacrifices and the destruction of Jerusalem had finally ended them, the Old Testament was still the Christian Bible, and some disposal had to be made of its ceremonial codes. In Judaism this problem was solved, in part, by substituting the reading of the laws of sacrifice for their outward observance. God was represented by one of the ancient rabbis as saying, "When they read before me the laws about sacrifices, I will impute it to them as if they offered the sacrifices before me, and will have mercy upon them for all their misdeeds." (As quoted by George Foot Moore: Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era, Vol. II, pp. 14-15) Christian ideas, however, soon moved too far away from either the practice or the perusal of sacrificial laws as a means of reconciliation with God for the early Christian to be content with such a solution. A typically Christian way out is offered in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Here the ancient Jewish sacrificial system is represented as the temporary foreshadowing of an eternal truth. The temple in Jerusalem was "a sanctuary of this world," (Hebrews 9:1-10) a mere preparatory symbol of "the true tabernacle" (Hebrews 8:2; Hebrews 9:11) in which God and the soul deal with each other in intimate spiritual fellowship. The offering of unwilling beasts was morally ineffective -- "For it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins" (Hebrews 10:4) -- and the only redemptive offering is voluntary self-sacrifice such as that of Christ who "offered up himself." (Hebrews 7:26-27; Hebrews 9:14) The Jewish priesthood was a temporary makeshift, bringing oblations which needed constantly to be repeated, (Hebrews 10:3) with no final efficacy in reconciling the soul and God, and so they were the dim foreshadowing of Christ’s true priesthood, who has "entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption." (Hebrews 9:12) Thus the writer moves from one element of the old system to another, interpreting each as a transient intimation of abiding spiritual experience. As a result, the literal and tangible sacrificial apparatus of the Jews became to the

Christians symbolic of another kind of religious system altogether, whose temple is heavenly, not earthly, whose high priest once for all has entered the holy place of divine communion, where believing souls may follow him, (Hebrews 10:19) whose sacrifice is voluntary self-giving, and whose consequence is an open way for all to "draw nigh unto God." (Hebrews 7:19; Hebrews 10:22)

While, however, New Testament Christianity disposed of the ceremonial laws in the Old Testament so that the ancient rites were sublimated into Christian meanings, by that very process the ancient rites were given an extended influence. A large area of historic Christian theology would have been completely altered if ideas of atonement, especially as related to the blood of Christ, had not been carried over from primitive concepts associated with animal sacrifice. (E.g., Hebrews 9:13-14 Christianity left the rubric of bloody altars far behind, but mental patterns are too stubbornly persistent to be so easily cast off, and even yet semimagical ideas concerning the potency of blood, from the earliest documents of the Old Testament, are woven into some Christian hymns, sermons, and prayers. In this regard Judaism has escaped from its own cult of sacrifice more completely than has Christianity.

Influential as the old sacrificial system continued to be in Christian thinking, it was the prophetic tradition with reference to personal prayer that more powerfully affected the New Testament. Jesus may have reverenced the ceremonial heritage of his people, but he himself was in the true succession of the prophets, especially Hosea and Jeremiah. Reared in Galilee, his spiritual life had been nourished in the synagogue. "For the vast majority of Jews, "writes Professor George Foot Moore, "not alone in the dispersion but in Palestine itself, the synagogue had become, long before the destruction of the temple, the real seat of religious worship, though so long as the temple stood they may not have used of it the word ‘worship’ historically appropriated to the sacrificial cultus." (Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era, Vol. II, p. 12) In the synagogue, therefore, as well as in the temple, Jesus prayed, but neither temple nor synagogue sufficed for his fellowship with God. Twice he quoted Hosea, on the ceremonial law, "I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,"(Matthew 9:13; Matthew 12:7) and his indignant distaste for hypocrites who "love to stand and pray in the synagogues" (Matthew 6:5) was openly expressed. Alone with the door shut, in desert places, or among the hills (Matthew 6:6; Mark 1:35; Matthew 14:23) Jesus was accustomed to pray; and even when in the Garden of Gethsemane his disciples were with him, we read, "He was parted from them about a stone’s cast; and he kneeled down and prayed." (Luke 22:41)

It is this habit of private prayer that, rather than ceremonial worship, characterizes the New Testament. The disciples were devout Jews, trained not only in the ritual of their faith but in the more mystical fellowship that could say, "The nearness of God is my good," (Psalms 73:28 as translated by J. M. Powis Smith in The Religion of the Psalms, p. 152) and He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. (Psalms 91:1)

Yet when they heard Jesus in his personal devotions, the experience seemed to them so fresh and new that they said, "Lord, teach us to pray." (Luke 11:1) From this beginning prayer moved out into the early church and so into the New Testament. With the ancient altars no longer standing, with the sacrificial cultus interpreted as a mere foreshadowing of the access to God that Christians spiritually enjoyed, with the growing rituals of the new churches still plastic and

unformed, personal prayer became the typical method of divine fellowship. Men were to pray "without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17) and "in every place." (1 Timothy 2:8) Indeed, the New Testament lives and moves and has its being in the atmosphere of informal, unconventional, spontaneous, intimate prayer. This involved the complete suppression of those limitations which at the beginning of Hebrew history had made such praying unthinkable. Far from being unapproachable, God's dwellingplace was within the spiritual life of his children. Whether this immediacy of God was described in Pauline terms as God's Spirit, carrying the divine presence and power into the Christian's inner life, (1 Corinthians 3:16) or in Johannine terms, as God himself dwelling in his people, (John 14:23; 1 John 4:12) the accessibility of the divine grace and help was everywhere proclaimed. No longer interested merely in the destinies of corporate groups, God was conceived as caring for persons one by one, so that prayer was a transfiguring individual experience -- "As he was praying, the fashion of his countenance was altered." (Luke 9:29) Instead of being localized in any shrine, the early church rejoiced in the liberation of the divine presence from all Gerizims and Jerusalems to the universality which the Fourth Gospel announces -- "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:20-24) Instead of involving bizarre and ominous signs or magical apparatus, dealing with God was an affair of interior communion, and while a few stories still reflect belief in dreams (Matthew 1:20; Matthew 2:12-13, Matthew 2:19; Matthew 27:19) as a means of divine revelation, and once the casting of lots (Acts 1:24-26) is used to secure divine guidance, the characteristic and habitual practice of early Christians in approaching God was direct and simple prayer. Instead of allowing any unethical substitutes for spiritual fellowship with God, God was so conceived in terms of goodness that there could be no companionship with him without ethical likeness to him. (1 John 4:7-8) As for the sacrificial system, that had been displaced by a moral and universally applicable substitute --"Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service. "(Romans 12:1)

VI This development of deepening meaning in fellowship with God was accompanied by significant changes in the idea of faith. Always the possibility of fellowship with God is dependent upon one's faith. As the Epistle to the Hebrews says, "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him." (Hebrews 11:6) In general the characteristic emphasis of the Old Testament is not upon belief but upon obedience, and the test of religious rightness is not one's faith but one's deeds. Indeed, in no particular is the distinction between the Testaments much more marked than in the slight stress on faith in the Old and the centrality of it in the New. Even in a familiar passage, where Habakkuk says, "The righteous shall live by his faith," (Habakkuk 2:4) the marginal rendering is doubtless correct, "in his faithfulness, "and as when Isaiah foresees `the righteous nation which keepeth faith" (Isaiah 26:2; cf. Hosea 4:2) -- this ethical significance, akin to fidelity, is the familiar meaning of faith in the Old Testament. (See, however, Genesis 15:6) In the New Testament, however, faith, meaning something other than faithfulness, is central in the religious experience, and its various phrasings furnish a valuable clue to the dominant ideas of the writers.

1. In the Synoptic Gospels -- Matthew, Mark, and Luke faith is a humble, hearty confidence in God's power and goodness and a potent laying hold on his proffered help. In Jesus' first preaching it is associated with repentance "Repent ye, and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:15) -- as though to turn from old sins were the negative, and to exercise a new faith were the positive, aspect of

becoming his disciple. Everywhere in the Synoptics, faith is the precedent necessity if any mighty work is to be done or any divine help received, (E.g., Mark 10:52: Matthew 9:22; Matthew 13:58; Matthew 15:28) and when real faith is present, even though it be "as a grain of mustard seed," it releases such power that it can move mountains. (Matthew 17:20) "All things are possible," said Jesus, "to him that believeth." (Mark 9:23)

2. In Paul's writings this meaning of faith is casually present (1 Corinthians 13:2) but he goes much further. In the background of his experience and thought is a different set of ideas and problems from those familiar in the Synoptics. The Jewish legal system, now left behind, had once been the means by obedience to which he had sought 'justification'; now faith -- the whole-hearted self-committal of a man to Jesus Christ by which the entire personality is transformed -- is the sole ground of any one's acceptance with God. (Romans 3:21-22, Romans 3:26, Romans 3:28; Romans 4:22-25; Romans 5:1-2) The cross of Christ, "unto Jews a stumblingblock, and unto Gentiles foolishness," (1 Corinthians 1:23) is to Paul the cardinal element in the divine self-revelation, and faith is the attitude toward Christ of acceptance, trust, appropriation, by which the salvation offered in the cross becomes effective in the believer. (Romans 3:24-25) Goodness had once been the work of a strenuous will endeavoring to obey God's law; now, to Paul, goodness is the overflow of an inner life which by faith has welcomed the indwelling Spirit. (Galatians 5:4-6) Religious experience had been to Paul a difficult struggle; now by faith he is so joined with Christ that there is a mutual interpenetration of the divine and the human, so that "it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me." (Galatians 2:20) At every point, therefore, faith means to Paul that vital self-committal to Christ which so opens the life to him and appropriates his spirit that by it men become sons of God. (Galatians 3:26) Far from being primarily opinionative, faith is an act of the whole personality, so appropriating the divine that a good life inevitably ensues -- "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." (Romans 10:10)

3. In the Epistle to the Hebrews the reader moves into another set of ideas altogether. There, after the Neo-Platonic fashion, are two worlds -- visible and invisible, temporal and eternal, earthly and heavenly, shadow and substance, foregleam and fulfillment. Such is the cosmic outlook that everywhere dominates the thought of the Epistle, and faith means the power by which we can live in both worlds, grasping the assurance of things hoped for ere the fulfillment has actually come, and holding a conviction of things not seen even while we are pressed upon by the visible. (Hebrews 11:1) This is the quality of all the heroes of faith in the eleventh chapter: in one world they live as though another world were real; on one level of being they grasp the surety of a higher level; amid the transient they are convinced of the permanent; and so they endure, "as seeing him who is invisible." (Hebrews 11:27)

4. In the Fourth Gospel we move into still another set of ideas which strongly affect the phrasing of faith. Throughout the Gospel, John is concerned with the persuasive presentation of the doctrine that Jesus is the Son of God, and his primary aim is to win men to believe in Christ as such. (E.g., John 1:34, John 1:49; John 3:18; John 9:35-38; John 10:35-36; John 11:4, John 11:27; John 20:30-31) This determines the principal significance of faith in the Fourth Gospel -- it means both an intellectual conviction that Christ is the Son of God and a personal self-commitment to him because of that. The Gospel, that is, reflects the kind of experience doubtless familiar in a Hellenistic city such as Ephesus, as converts were won to Christianity. First, they were attracted to Christ; going deeper in acquaintance with his life and ministry, they found in him the satisfaction of

their religious needs; through this experience they progressed in knowledge of him until at last they believed in him as the Son of God. That is to say, in John's Gospel faith is not so much the beginning as it is the end of the process of conversion. In the Synoptics, for example, faith is the precedent condition of Jesus' miracles while in the Fourth Gospel faith is the consequence of Jesus' miracles -- "Believe me for the very works' sake"; (John 14:11) "Though ye believe not me, believe the works"; (John 10:38) he "manifested his glory; and his disciples believed on him," after his first miracle; (John 2:11) and, when a nobleman's son was healed, he "himself believed, and his whole house." (John 4:53) To put the matter another way, in John's Gospel faith does not generally come before knowledge, but knowledge before faith. Men are drawn by the attraction of Christ, his works and his cross, (John 12:32) and, entering into a satisfying experience with him, come first to know him and then to believe on him as the Son of God. They "knew . . . and they believed" (John 17:8 [but see John 6:69]) is the distinctive Johannine order. Uniquely characteristic of John though this phrasing of faith is, at the heart of it is still the vital self-commitment of person to person -- "Every one that beholdeth the Son, and believeth on him"; (John 6:40) "He that believeth on me"; (John 12:44; John 14:12) "Believe in God, believe also in me." (John 14:1) Such faith is not simply doctrine; it is an intellectual connection born out of a profound, spiritual experience.

5. In some later writings of the New Testament, however, faith is primarily belief in dogma. This phrasing of faith, impossible in the first years of the Christian movement, emerged only when the convictions of the church were so well formulated that the acceptance of orthodox teaching could be a major criterion of Christian discipleship. So in the Epistle to Titus and in the Epistles to Timothy faith is primarily intellectual assent to the standard convictions of the church. The ideal is to hold "faith and a good conscience" against heretics, (1 Timothy 1:18-20) to be true to the "faith of God's elect," (Titus 1:1) not to "fall away from the faith" (1 Timothy 4:1) but to withstand contrary opinions, "which some professing have erred concerning the faith. "(1 Timothy 6:20-21) This doctrinal conception James presents negatively, disparaging faith as compared with works, on the ground that, belief being a matter of opinion, "the demons also believe, and shudder" (James 2:19-20) and Jude presents it positively, exhorting his brethren "to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints. "(Jude 1:3) So varied are the New Testament's conceptions of one of the most central and influential ideas of early Christianity. Yet through all these diversities of phrasing -- whether faith was thought of as a power-releasing confidence in God, or as selfcommitment to Christ that brought the divine Spirit into indwelling control of one's life, or as the power by which we apprehend the eternal and invisible even while living in the world of sense, or as the climactic vision of Christ as the Son of God which crowns our surrender to his attractiveness, or as assured conviction concerning great truths that underlie and constitute the gospel --always the enlargement and enrichment of faith was opening new meanings in the experience of fellowship with God and was influencing deeply both the idea and the practice of prayer.

VII

Revelatory as are such changes in the concept of worship and of the faith that underlies it, it is the content of the prayers recorded in the Bible that most plainly reveals development in thought and life. In one characteristic realm after another, changing ideas of prayer were accompanied by changing substance in the prayers themselves.

I. There was, for example, an unmistakable growth in magnanimity. Many of the early petitions are demands on God for vengeance after the manner of Samson’s dying cry, "O Lord Yahweh, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes." (Judges 16:28) Between this petition and the prayer of the dying Stephen, the first Christian martyr, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," (Acts 7:60) lies a long road of ethical ascent. This road, obvious as it is in retrospect, was not easily visible in advance, and some of the greatest souls in the Old Testament were laggards in traveling it. Jeremiah, pouring out before God everything he felt, poured out his vindictiveness: "Bring upon them the day of evil, and destroy them with double destruction"; (Jeremiah 17:18) "Deliver up their children to the famine, and give them over to the power of the sword; and let their wives become childless, and widows; and let their men be slain of death, and their young men smitten of the sword in battle.... forgive not their iniquity, neither blot out their sin from thy sight; but let them be overthrown before thee; deal thou with them in the time of thine anger." Jeremiah 18:21, Jeremiah 18:23) A notable amount of praying in the Old Testament is thus cursing, and lest Christians should assume too much credit in this regard, a similar abuse of prayer, all the more inexcusable because sinning against light, stands in the New Testament -- "How long, O Master, the holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" (Revelation 6:10) The writer of Lamentations, bewailing the miserable estate of desolated Zion, cried, "Do unto them, as thou hast done unto me"; (Lamentations 1:22) Nehemiah, rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, besought Yahweh against his foes, "Cover not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from before thee" ; (Nehemiah 4:5) and in the Psalter are outbursts of vindictiveness the singing of which in the second temple seems scarcely credible:

Let their table before them become a snare; And when they are in peace, let it become a trap.

Let their eyes be darkened, so that they cannot see; And make their loins continually to shake.

Pour out thine indignation upon them, And let the fierceness of thine anger overtake them. (Psalms 69:22-24) Let his children be fatherless, And his wife a widow.

Let his children be vagabonds, and beg; And let them seek their bread out of their desolate places.

Let the extortioner catch all that he hath; And let strangers make spoil of his labor.

Let there be none to extend kindness unto him;

Neither let there be any to have pity on his fatherless children. (Psalms 109:9-12)

Sincere praying is always a revelation of character, and generosity in prayer waited of necessity for magnanimity in spirit. When Jeremiah bade the exiles in the city of Babylon "pray unto Yahweh for it; for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace," (Jeremiah 29:7) we see the dawning of a better day, whose full light, however, did not come before Christ -- "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you"; (Luke 6:27-28) "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34)

2. The recorded prayers of the Bible disclose also a growing universality of interest and care. The tribal and national limitations of early Hebrew thought and life were necessarily reflected in Hebrew praying. Even when the petitions of the Old Testament concerning public matters are not vindictive, they are commonly nationalistic, as, for example, the Isaian plea for divine interposition

in Israel’s desperate need, (Isaiah 63:15-19; Isaiah 64:1-12) or Daniel’s great prayer for his people, (Daniel 9:4-19) or the ejaculatory supplications of Ezekiel, (Ezekiel 9:8; Ezekiel 11:13) or the elaborate petitions in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah. (Ezra 9:6-15; Nehemiah 9:6-37) Only occasionally does mankind as a whole appear as the object of intercession. In the Psalter, however, the wider outlook finds expression:

God be merciful unto us, and bless us, And cause his face to shine upon us; That thy way may be known upon earth, Thy salvation among all nations.

Let the peoples praise thee, O God;

Let all the peoples praise thee.

Oh let the nations be glad and sing for joy; For thou wilt judge the peoples with equity, And govern the nations upon earth.

Let the peoples praise thee, O God;

Let all the peoples praise thee. (Psalms 67:1-5) In this regard, Jewish prayer ranged over a wider ambit than Jewish law. To the very end the Law was particularistic -- its duties intended for Jews only, its rights fully accorded neither to foreigners outside the Jewish community nor to casual sojourners and slaves within it. The same limitation in the scope of law existed in Athens, where, in order to avail himself of legal rights, a sojourner had to secure a citizen as patron, where slaves were, generally speaking, outside the privilege of the laws altogether, and where the ‘barbarians’ beyond the borders were not within the legal purview. (R. M. MacIver: The Modern State, pp. 103-104) It was the glory of Roman jurists in the early centuries A.D. that they first conceived the jus gentium, the natural law of all peoples, as incorporating the duties and rights which belonged to human beings everywhere. In Judaism, however, prayer outran law, aspiration surpassed enactment, and the universal God was approached in intercession as . . . the confidence of all the ends of the earth, And of them that are afar off upon the sea. (Psalms 65:5 [To be sure, this may refer only to the Jews of the Dispersion]) Not only Christianity but the later Judaism was the enriched inheritor of this growing universality of interest and care. So a Jewish teacher of the fourth century A.D., Rabbi Joshua, said: "Hast thou ever seen the rain fall on the field of X who is righteous, and not on the field of Y who is wicked, or the sun shine upon Israel who are righteous, and not upon the nations who are wicked ? God makes the sun shine both upon Israel and the nations, for He is good to all." (As quoted by C. G. Montefiore in The Beginnings of Christianity, edited by F.J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake, Part I, Vol. I, p. 40) Whether this passage is a reflection of Jesus’ words (Matthew 5:45) or Jesus’ words a reflection of similar teachings in the Judaism of his day, it is a true intimation of the growing universality of the better sort of Jewish teaching, and especially in praying the outreach of intercession to all humanity was perceived by some as the corollary of monotheism -- O thou that hearest prayer, Unto thee shall all flesh come. (Psalms 65:2) In the New Testament the world as the subject of redemption is continually present either in the foreground or in the background of the recorded prayers. Paul’s description of God as the "Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named" (Ephesians 3:15) is typical. Even in the intercessory prayer of Jesus for his disciples at the Last Supper, where he is represented as saying, "I pray not for the world," the world still remains the ultimate object of his care: "As thou didst send me into the world, even so sent I them into the world . . . . that the world

may believe that thou didst send me." (John 17:18, John 17:21) From the beginning of the gospel, when Jesus taught his disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come," (Matthew 6:10) to the end of the New Testament with its dream of worshiping hosts, crying, "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord," (Revelation 11:15) the range of Christian intercession keeps the whole earth in view.

3. The prayers of the Bible plainly indicate a deepening sense of sin. In the early days of Israel with their morality of outward custom, when wickedness was the violation of tribal taboos, penalty a tribal misfortune in consequence, and the cure public reform and obedience, the prayers of confession were congruous with such ideas. It is typical of Israel's early repentances that only when the people were "sore distressed" by national defeat did they recognize that they had wickedly disobeyed Yahweh, and so cried unto him, "We have sinned against thee." (Judges 10:9-10) At the first, therefore, penitence was a public rather than a private matter, and the sense of sin concerned the violated customs of the social group rather than the inner quality of the individual. Far down in Israel's history such ideas, associated with corporate personality, deeply affected the praying of the people. The sin confessed was not so much personal unworthiness as national misdeeds, and the misdeeds were not alone the evil work of the living but of the ancestral generations whose iniquities were still involving their offspring in penalty. Out of this range of thought came the reiterated confessions of sin for both contemporaneous and historic national sin: "We acknowledge, O Yahweh, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers"; (Jeremiah 14:20) "We have sinned against Yahweh our God, we and our fathers"; (Jeremiah 3:25) they "stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers"; (Nehemiah 9:2) "For our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are round about us." (Daniel 9:16) This sense of corporate disobedience involving both present and past generations became more acute as national calamities increased. The Jews faced a difficult and momentous dilemma: either the accumulated miseries of Israel were due to Yahweh's failure as a powerful god, or else he was the one true God who, with righteous judgment, had decreed their national distress as punishment. Many a nation, facing a similar dilemma, had chosen the former and easier alternative; it was Israel's distinction that she chose the latter. In the face of abysmal wretchedness she asserted the sole sovereignty and the unfailing justice of her God, and interpreted her calamities as his appointment in punishment for her sins. In Exilic and post-Exilic times, in consequence, the sense of guilt deepened in Judaism and the prayers of confession and penitence became poignant and, at times, almost abject. When Ezra cries, "Thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve," (Daniel 9:16) or a prayer in the Book of Nehemiah says, "Thou art just in all that is come upon us; for thou hast dealt truly, but we have done wickedly," (Nehemiah 9:33) or Daniel exhausts tautology in confessing, "We have sinned, and have dealt perversely, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled," (Daniel 9:5) we see the self-accusation which resulted from the acceptance of national misfortune not as an evidence of Yahweh's weakness in protecting his people but as proof of his inflexible righteousness. It is characteristic of the worship of the post-Exilic temple, therefore, that the two forms of sacrifice added to the rubric were the trespass- and the guilt-offerings, both expiations of sin, and that, in general, the sense of public guilt in the later Old Testament is poignant and profound.

Indeed, so extreme is it that at times it seems to modern minds morbid, but this judgment is qualified when one recalls the historic setting. National self-accusation was the price paid by the

Jews for two of their most valuable possessions -- their monotheism, for only by interpreting their public misery as the just penalty for their own sins could they assert Yahweh's omnipotence and righteousness; and their social conscience, for only by thinking of Israel as a continuous community, irrefragably bound together across the generations by the eternal laws of moral cause and consequence, could they explain their fate. Those moderns who too superficially account for religion by Freudian formulas and, in particular, conceive it habitually as a mere mechanism of escape from disliked realities, should take the measure of this area of Judaism. The Jews, who might have blamed their calamities on Yahweh's failure as a god and so might have evaded a crushing sense of their own guilt, chose not this easier path but one of the most difficult ever traveled by the mind of man. They accused themselves of sin so heinous as to deserve their suffering and at their best exhibited a spirit of contrition and humility which has entered into the abiding spiritual heritage of the race. With the individual's emergence from his primitive estate as a mere item in the social whole, prayers of confession gained a new dimension -- acknowledgment of personal unworthiness was added to national penitence. Moreover, the poignancy of the sense of public guilt was reflected in private self-accusation, and the issue is seen in such prayers as the psalmist's confession of deep-seated sinfulness, Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity; And in sin did my mother conceive me, (Psalms 51:5) and in such cries as Job's, Wherefore I abhor myself, And repent in dust and ashes. (Job 42:6)

Here appears one of the major paradoxes of the spiritual life, of which the Bible gives vivid illustration -- the more self-respect men achieve, the more they are plunged into self-depreciation. Only when personality has emerged from the social mass into a high status of its own, as possessing spiritual value and possibility, can the sense of failure, in falling short of personality's promise, become acute. The more elevated the standards, the more inevitable humility becomes; only when men think highly of themselves do they begin to think humbly of themselves, so that self-respect and self-depreciation, instead of being antithetical, are two sides of the same experience. Of this paradox the later Old Testament and all the New Testament are illustrations. Instead of being a passing phase of the social group, individual, personal life was progressively gaining a distinct and profound value of its own, and the higher personality thus rose in ideal, the farther it could fall by comparison. So the Book of Job, whose hero gives a consummate portrayal of a good man's life, (Job 31:1-40) makes its hero say also, "Behold, I am of small account;" (Job 40:4) and the Fifty-first Psalm, whose writer sees that God desires "truth in the inward parts," is correspondingly penitent -- Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions; And my sin is ever before me. (Psalms 51:2-3) This juncture of high personal self-estimate and profound personal humility is a main attribute of the New Testament's thought. When Jesus set in contrast a self-righteous Pharisee, saying to God, "I thank thee, that I am not as the rest of men," and a contrite publican, praying, "God, be thou merciful to me a sinner," (Luke 18:9-14) he was both summing up the best of his race's teaching on the true spirit of confessional prayer and indicating to his disciples the self-depreciation which must follow any such estimate of personal worth and possibility as he himself believed in. Not many prayers are preserved for us in the New Testament, but one cannot read the Pauline and Johannine letters without feeling that the obverse side of such an ideal as Christ had brought was a profound humility about man's moral estate. The Prodigal's contrition -- "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy son" (Luke 15:18-19) -- is implied in many a New Testament passage. In this realm of confessional prayer, however, the New

Testament still needs the supplementation of the Old. Social penitence did not rise naturally from the individualistic conditions that faced early Christianity. The great prayers of the Bible concerning national failure and social sin are still the gift of the Old Testament.

4. With these progressive tendencies toward increased magnanimity, inclusiveness, and humility in prayer went a deepening spirituality in the content of the petitions. In the early stages of Biblical history men regarded the major good of existence as physical -- ample creature comforts, a long life, a large family, and victory in war -- and for these benefits the Hebrews besought Yahweh. The Deuteronomic ideal of a people blessed of God was summed up in such details as a multiplying population, ample harvests, plenty of wine and oil, fruitful flocks, freedom from disease, and ability to "consume all the peoples" that were hostile. (Deuteronomy 7:12-16) With these for the main objects of petition, prayer was naturally evoked by their lack, and it was typical of early Hebrew as of all immature praying that the negative rather than the positive purpose of prayer was prominent. Like the sailors in the 107th Psalm who, "at their wits' end" in a storm, "cry unto Yahweh in their trouble," or like the mariners with Jonah who, amid the "mighty tempest," "cried every man unto his god," (Jonah 1:4-5) men were driven to prayer by physical peril. So Jeremiah condemned his people for habitual neglect of Yahweh, to whom, however, "in the time of their trouble they will say, Arise, and save us." (Jeremiah 2:27) In Old Testament times the problem of subsistence was frequently so difficult and national calamities fell with such repeated dreadfulness that much of the supplication recorded was motived by crisis and was aimed at material recovery. If the New Testament contains less of such petition than the Old, an important part of the explanation lies in the difference of circumstance. When in the Book of Lamentations we read of mothers under stress of famine eating their own children, (Lamentations 2:20) of women ravished, princes "hanged up by their hand," little children stumbling under their burdens, and the mountain of Zion become a haunt of foxes, (Lamentations 5:8-18) we cannot wonder that the people poured out their hearts "like water before the face of the Lord." (Lamentations 2:19) Quality in prayer depends not alone on spiritual insight but on social circumstance. So long 'as wars are fought, prayers to the god of battle will be offered as they were in ancient Israel, (E.g., Numbers 10:35; 1 Samuel 7:8; 2 Chronicles 14:11; 2 Chronicles 20:1-37) and, so long as economic destitution remains, men who despite it believe in God will offer materialistic prayers. That men should pray for the reform of the social order is generally recognized, but it is less commonly recognized that on the reform of the social order depends in considerable measure the spiritualizing of prayer. To the credit of the later Judaism, therefore, stands the deepening spiritual quality of its petitions despite the material evils afflicting the people. The Book of Deuteronomy, which in many passages gives color to Lord Bacon's saying that "prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament," ("On Adversity," No. V of Essays or Counsels Civil and Moral) says also that "man doth not live by bread only." (Deuteronomy 8:3) The recognition of this fact is the glory of Israel's praying at its best:

Give thy servant therefore an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and evil. (1 Kings 3:9) Search me, O God, and know my heart:

Try me, and know my thoughts; And see if there be any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting. (Psalms 139:23) As the hart panteth after the water brooks, So panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God. (Psalms 42:1-2) Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and having Thee there is naught on earth that I desire. (Psalms 73:25 as translated by Julius A. Bewer in The Literature of the Old Testament in its Historical Development, p. 390)

Create in me a clean heart, O God; And renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from thy presence; And take not thy holy Spirit from me. (Psalms 51:10-11) This deepening spiritual quality in prayer is shown in the thanksgivings with which the Scripture abounds. When men receive what they have petitioned God for with an urgent sense of need, they are grateful. Typical thanksgivings in the earlier period were associated, therefore, with victory in war, (Genesis 14:19-20) or with the fertility of the land, "flowing with milk and honey." (Deuteronomy 26:5-10) The Hebrew mind was too realistic ever to outgrow the grateful sense of solid value in material blessings, and in this refusal of an ascetic spirituality showed its health. In the great psalms of thanksgiving -- Psalms 103:1-22, for example the physical basis of life was not forgotten as a cause of gratitude, but thankfulness ranged up into other areas also, such as forgiven sin, the visible execution of divine justice, and the saving experience of divine mercy. At their best the Psalms overpassed the gifts of God in gratitude for God himself -- Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, And into his courts with praise:

Give thanks unto him, and bless his name. For Yahweh is good; his lovingkindness endureth for ever, And his faithfulness unto all generations. (Psalms 100:4-5) In the New Testament the chief office of prayer, whether in petition or thanksgiving, is concerned with spiritual welfare. Bread is not forgotten and, as the symbol of life’s physical basis, is made an object of request in the Lord’s Prayer. But the predominant and almost exclusive concern of early Christian praying with moral and spiritual quality is unmistakable. That the disciples may "stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God"; (Colossians 4:12) that they may be "perfect in every good thing to do his will"; (Hebrews 13:21) that in the face of persecution they may speak their message "with all boldness"; (Acts 4:29) that they "may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, to walk worthily of the Lord unto all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Colossians 1:9-10) --such are the characteristic petitions of the New Testament. Those who make the effect of prayer on material conditions the test of its efficacy have little rootage for their ideas in New Testament soil. This is evident alike in early Christian thanksgiving and intercession. Paul thanked God for personal victory over sin, (Romans 7:25) for the church’s victory in the proclamation of its faith "throughout the whole world," (Romans 1:8) for the lives of faithful Christians, (Php 1:3; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-8) and for deliverance "out of the power of darkness" into "the kingdom of the Son of his love." (Colossians 1:12-13) When he interceded for his friends he desired for them abounding love, increasing knowledge, the fruits of righteousness, and discernment to perceive and approve moral excellence, so that they might be "sincere and void of offense." (Php 1:9-11) The great tradition of intercession, with which in the Hebrew writings the names of Moses, Samuel, and Jeremiah were chiefly associated, (Jeremiah 15:1; cf. 2Ma 15:14; The Assumption of Moses 12:2, 6) was fulfilled in the New Testament where prayer for one another was continually urged and exemplified. (E.g., 1 Thessalonians 5:25; Hebrews 13:18) Such intercession, however, uniformly concerned the spiritual estate of the church and its members, as in Paul’s petition for his Ephesian friends: For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, that ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; to the end that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may

be filled unto all the fulness of God. (Ephesians 3:14-19)

Before the quality and range of such petition much of the historic and contemporaneous practice and theory of prayer in the church should stand ashamed. Supplication for material benefits was the primitive beginning of prayer, and the development of Biblical thought in this regard is measured by the distance between two typical intercessions:

God give thee of the dew of heaven, And of the fatness of the earth, And plenty of grain and new wine:

Let peoples serve thee, And nations bow down to thee: Be lord over thy brethren, And let thy mother’s sons bow down to thee Cursed be every one that curseth thee, And blessed be every one that blesseth thee. (Genesis 27:28-29)

They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth. . . . Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me. (John 17:16-17, John 17:20-21

5. Accompanying such developments as we have noted in the substance of Biblical prayers, an even more profound change was in process: praying, employed at first as a means of persuading a god to do man’s will, grew to be used as a means of releasing through man whatever was God’s will. Primitive religion everywhere involves the endeavor, whether by sacrificial gifts or magical methods, to gain influence with superhuman powers so as to command their services. "O my Lord," said an Arab on a robber-raid, "I say unto Thee, except Thou give me a camel today with a water-skin, I would as it were beat Thee with this camel stick!" When, at evening, the raiders returned successful, the Arab said, "Now ye may know, fellows, ye who blamed me when I prayed at dawn, how my Lord was adread of me today!" (See Charles M Doughty: Travels in Arabia Deserta [3d ed., 1925], Vol. II, p. 241) At the stage of development represented by such an attitude, the value of religion was measured by the control given the devotee over superhuman powers and, so far as prayer was used, its object was to persuade a god to do the bidding of a man. In early nomadic and agricultural society, for example, when the weather was the determiner of destiny for herds and crops, religion was utilized as a means of bringing rain. Prayers for rain, as well as imitative magic to produce it, were and are a commonplace in primitive faiths. In ancient Athens the people prayed, "Rain, rain, O dear Zeus, on the cornland of the Athenians and on the plains"; in Rome one writer set the old piety of folk who prayed to Jupiter for showers, and went home from the temple streaming wet themselves with the ready answer, in contrast with the then impiety, when, as he said, "we are no longer religious, so the fields lie baking" ; in Upper Burma in recent times the people prayed to their tree-spirit, "O Lord, have pity on us poor mortals, and stay not the rain"; and wherever primitive religion is found today it includes means, magical or otherwise, of so gaining influence over superhuman powers as to control wind and rain, and even the sun and moon. (See James George Frazer: The Golden Bough; A Study in Magic and Religion [abridged ed. 1925], pp. 159, 160, 118, 78-80) This idea of prayer was obviously prevalent in early Biblical thought. In compliance with Joshua’s demand, . . . the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, Until the nation had avenged themselves of their enemies, (Joshua 10:12-13) and while this story at first was poetry it was later taken as prosaic fact. As for rain, a man of prayer, like Samuel, powerful in his influence with Yahweh, was supposed to be able to dictate its coming -- "I

will call unto Yahweh, that he may send thunder and rain; and ye shall know and see that your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of Yahweh, in asking you a king. So Samuel called unto Yahweh; and Yahweh sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly feared Yahweh and Samuel." (1 Samuel 12:17-18) In the traditional stories of Elijah, his control over rain was represented as one of the major factors in his public power, for so had the disposal of the weather been put in his hands that he could say: "As Yahweh, the God of Israel, liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." (1 Kings 17:1) Indeed, in the dramatic narrative of the contest on Mount Carmel between Elijah and the priests of Baal, Yahweh's swift answer to the prophet's prayer for lightning. decided the issue. (1 Kings 18:37-40) Primitive ideas of prayer were thus thoroughly impregnated with the hope of gaining control over superhuman powers. A less obtrusive but no less revealing evidence of this is the reluctance of any superhuman spirit to let his name be known. Possession of the name of either man or god conferred on the possessor control over him -- such was and still is the well-nigh universal belief of primitive religion. "Hence," says J. G. Frazer, "just as the furtive savage conceals his real name because he fears that sorcerers might make an evil use of it, so he fancies that his gods must likewise keep their true names secret, lest other gods or even men should learn the mystic sounds and thus be able to conjure with them." (See J. G. Frazer: op. cit., pp. 260-262) In the Old Testament, accordingly, when Jacob asked the superhuman wrestler his name, he was rebuffed; (Genesis 32:1-32; Genesis 31:1-55; Genesis 30:1-43; Genesis 29:1-35) when Manoah asked "the angel of Yahweh" for his name, the answer was, "Wherefore askest thou after my name, seeing it is secret"; (Judges 13:17-18 [marginal reading]) and when Moses sought to learn Yahweh's name, he received no clearer reply than "I AM THAT I AM." (Exodus 3:13-14) In consonance with this traditional attitude, the Jews, from reverential motives, substituted adonai, meaning 'lord,' for the sacred name in their reading of the Scriptures; as a consequence, in the thirteenth century Christian Hebraists mistakenly used the consonants of the name jhwh with the Hebrew vowels of adonai, thus getting Jehovah; but behind this later mystification lay in primitive times the recognized unwillingness of any god to surrender possession of his secret name, lest the possessor thereby gain control over him. As the centuries passed, such magical connotations of the holy name fell away; the 'name of God' became synonymous with his personality his dignity, character, and purpose; prayer in his name, which at first implied the supplicant's desire to control the divine will, came at last to mean the supplicant's submission to the divine will; and the remote and sublimated leftovers of this ancient idea still remain in prayers offered in the name of Christ. The earliest Hebrew petition, however, with its rootage deep in primitive religion, sought with unabashed desire the means of persuading or coercing God to do the bidding of a man. With this for their philosophy, men bargained with their gods as Jacob did, (Genesis 28:20-22) or argued with them, as the Hebrews from Joshua (Joshua 7:9) to Joel (Joel 2:17; cf. 2 Kings 19:16-19; Daniel 9:19) argued with Yahweh that if he did not save them his reputation would suffer loss. No development in Biblical praying is more important, therefore, than its gradual reorientation until God's will, not man's, became central and controlling. This change was bound to occur as the idea of God was elevated, until in him was seen to dwell not only power but wisdom and goodness. So Jeremiah's companions in disaster asked him to pray that "God may show us the way wherein we should walk, and the thing that we should do" (Jeremiah 42:3) With God conceived as infinitely wise and good, reasonable prayer must be conceived not as a means of forcing on God the bidding of man, but as a means of releasing through man the purpose of God. So the greater

praying of the Old Testament rose, as in the Fortieth Psalm, to say, "I delight to do thy will, O my God." (Psalms 40:8) In the New Testament this radical reorientation of prayer became controlling. Still the older usages persisted. James even illustrated the efficacy of petition by Elijah's power to prevent and produce rain, (James 5:17-18) but the characteristic and original quality of New Testament prayer is of another stuff altogether. "If we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us" (1 John 5:14) -- that is the organizing idea of typical Christian praying. God's will came first, infinitely wise and good, and prayer was intended not to change but to release it, not to gain power over it but to open the door for its complete expression. The pith of the Lord's Prayer, therefore, is "Thy will be done." (Matthew 6:10) As New Testament Christians thought that they might understand the divine will, and as they labored to give it effective application, so they prayed that nothing within themselves might impede or balk it. Prayer was a means of alignment and cooperation with God, and its effect was not the substitution of something else for the divine will but the divine will's powerful and transforming release into the world. With good reason, therefore, the essence of characteristic Christian praying has been found in the Garden of Gethsemane. There the clinging residue of primitive magic was entirely laid aside. The crude superstition of man's prayer as a means of instructing God or altering his intention was overpassed and praying became both congruous with the Christian idea of God and effectively powerful in spiritual result -- "Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; remove this cup from me: howbeit not what I will, but what thou wilt." (Mark 14:36) From vindictiveness to magnanimity; from tribalism to universality, from the regret of penalized men over broken taboos to the penitence of humble men over personal guilt; from supplications for physical benefits to prayer as the fulfilling of interior conditions of spiritual growth; from the desire to impose man's will on a god to the desire that God's will should be done through man -- such are the developments revealed in the recorded prayers of the Bible.

VIII

Such developments, however, while they immeasurably deepened and expanded the meaning of personal prayer, did not solve the problem of public worship, which the early Christians only temporarily escaped when they left the temple and the synagogue. Jesus himself was reported to have said that "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," (Matthew 18:20) and very early in the New Testament's narrative we are made aware of a strong, corporate solidarity in the nascent churches. The new disciples, whether with Jewish or Gentile backgrounds, found in the Christian community not only a transforming experience of divine grace but a sustaining experience of human fellowship, and, in whatever other ways this fellowship functioned, it was bound to express itself in corporate worship. Many a problem of inherited ritual the first Christians sloughed off in leaving the temple and synagogue, but many new ones faced them as soon as they inaugurated what the Epistle to the Hebrews called, "our own assembling together." (Hebrews 10:25) Indeed, so central were these problems to certain of the early Christians that Professor E. F. Scott can say of religion: "For some it is an inward fellowship with God, for some an inspiration to right living, for some the highest exercise of reason. There are others, and the author of Hebrews was one of them, for whom religion consists above all in worship." (The Literature of the New Testament, p. 201) The fact that the Old Testament continued to be the Christian Bible made the earliest worship of the new assemblies by no means an innovation. At the beginning, their "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" (Colossians 3:16:

Ephesians 5:19) were probably taken over and adapted from the older heritage, and while the evidence on this matter is scant, the devotional services of the early churches doubtless leaned heavily on the Old Testament, especially the Psalter, and even on the customs of the synagogue. Such data as we have suggests informality and spontaneity as characteristic of the first Christian worship, held in private houses (Colossians 4:15; Romans 16:5) and unequipped with symbolic pomp and circumstance. Indeed, in Corinth the worship was accompanied by emotional ecstasies, plunging the devotees into mysterious trances and finding utterance in enthusiastic, although unintelligible, eloquence. On this disorderly emotionalism Paul put the stamp of his disapproval, (1 Corinthians 12:1-31, 1 Corinthians 13:1-13, 1 Corinthians 14:1-40) but it indicates in how informal, spontaneous, and non-liturgical an atmosphere some, at least, of the first churches worshiped.

Such simplicity, however, was transient. The liturgical heritage of Judaism, the psychological and practical needs of the worshiping group, and the inexorable pressure of ideas and customs in the Mediterranean world, especially in the mystery religions, presaged the development in Christianity, as in other faiths, of ritual and sacrament. How specifically influential the mystery religions were in the formulation of the consequence is a moot matter. Certainly they were the most vital and popularly important religious movements in the social matrix where Christian worship took shape. At many points they were sufficiently akin to Christianity so that their prevalence furnished a favorable preparation for the gospel. They had inculcated a deep sense of sin and a conscious need of personal salvation; they had overpassed national and racial lines and had made religious faith a matter of individual conviction; they had emphasized faith in immortality and the need of assurance concerning it; they had bound their devotees together in mystical societies of brethren fired with propagandist zeal; and they had accentuated the interior nature of religious experience in terms of an, indwelling Presence, through whom human life could be ‘deicized.’ When, therefore, we find them also possessing sacraments, fairly magical in their efficacy -- especially baptisms, whether of water or of blood, and sacred meals that conferred union with the deity -- the query inevitably rises in how far in these regards they influenced Christianity. (See Samuel Angus: The Mystery-Religions and Christianity, for discussion and bibliography)

Whatever may be the solution of this difficult and perhaps insoluble problem, the evidence of the New Testament is clear that an organized cultus, with accompanying ideas of sacramental efficacy, was already in process of formation before the canon closed. Baptism was the normal, if not the indispensable, condition of membership in the church, (1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27; Acts 2:37-38; etc.) and so magical an efficacy did some ascribe to it that, at least in Corinth, there were baptisms on behalf of the dead. (1 Corinthians 15:29) The profoundest experiences of Christian conversion -- especially remission of sins, (Acts 2:38; 1 Peter 3:21) the death of the old life and the resurrection of the new, (Romans 6:2-4; Colossians 2:12) and incorporation into the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13, 1 Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 4:4-5) -- were associated with baptism. At first the ritual was doubtless figurative, a ceremonial cleansing in water, which was regarded as symbolizing, rather than effecting, the purification of the inner life, and the origin of which lay in the baptism of John and kindred customs rather than in the sacraments of the mystery religions. Paul even thanked God that he himself had baptized none of the Corinthians save two, together with the household of Stephanas, saying, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach"; (1 Corinthians 1:13-17) in the Fourth Gospel John’s baptism in water is explicitly subordinated to Christ’s baptism in the Holy Spirit; (John 1:33) and in the Epistle to the Hebrews "the teaching of

baptisms" is put among the rudimentary principles, to be accepted, indeed, but beyond which those need to go who are pressing on "unto perfection." (Hebrews 6:1-2) This, however, is not the whole story. The Fourth Gospel attributes to Jesus the words, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God"; (John 3:5) the Epistle to Titus says the same thing in other language -- "He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit"; (Titus 3:5) and in the Shepherd of Hermas, which in some of the earliest canons was included in the New Testament, the baptismal water is called "the seal of the Son of God" into which they descend "dead," and out of which they come "alive." (The Shepherd of Hermas, translated by Charles H. Hoole, "The Ninth Similitude," xvi, p. 146) Whether or not the sacramental ideas of the mystery religions directly affected Christianity, the New Testament indicates a budding sacramentalism whose rootage one would less expect to find in Judaism than in the Hellenistic cults. As for the Lord's Supper, it began so simply that at first every meal where disciples ate together was a sacred communion, and their ordinary bread and wine were memorials of their Lord's sacrifice. This led to such disorders, however, at least in the Corinthian church, where, as Paul said, "one is hungry, and another is drunken," (1 Corinthians 11:20-22) that the Eucharist was separated from common occasions and became a definite, symbolic act. As to this act's precise meaning in the first churches, evidence is scarce and decision difficult. The original associations of the Supper were with the Jewish Passover, (1 Corinthians 5:7) a corporate communion of God's people protected by the saving blood of the paschal lamb. That the Eucharist was, therefore, a commemoration (1 Corinthians 11:24) followed naturally from its origin. This, however, does not exhaust the meaning of the rite in the New Testament. Alike in the sacred meals of Judaism and of paganism, another idea had from primitive times been dominant -- by eating the sacrificed and dedicated food, union was consummated between the worshiper and his deity. Was this idea in Paul's mind when he implied that eating of the heathen feasts was a real "communion with demons," and that in the same mystical sense the "cup of the Lord" and the "table of the Lord" conferred on Christians union with Christ? (1 Corinthians 10:16-21) Was this the meaning of the Fourth Gospel also when it put on the lips of Jesus words of high sacramental import -- "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have not life in yourselves. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me, and I in him"? (John 6:53-56) At any rate, even within the New Testament the Eucharist, along with baptism, was exalted as an essential element in the new Christian cult and so mystical were some of its suggested interpretations that Principal J. G. Simpson writes, "it must be frankly admitted that . . . none of the explanations which have divided Christendom since the 16th cent., not even the theory of transubstantiation when precisely defined, can be regarded as wholly inconsistent with the language of Scripture." (Closing paragraph of "Eucharist," in Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible, One Vol. Edition, p. 246)

While the New Testament, therefore, records the development of personal prayer as the habitual maintenance of an interior spiritual communion with the Unseen Friend, it also records the beginning of a new cultus. In place of the synagogue came the church; in place of circumcision came baptism; in place of the temple altars came the acceptance of Christ's sacrifice in the Lord's Supper; and while only the first suggestions of the early Catholic rubric are within the canon, these suggestions are there, presaging, as they are seen in retrospect, the repetition of all the good and

evil fortunes that in every age and faith have attended sacramentalism. The subsequent centuries have witnessed endless conflict over the Christian cultus, but one element in the long development of Biblical experience and thought concerning fellowship with God has remained as the common and unifying gain of all -- "Thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret." (Matthew 6:6) No such statement as we have made can adequately portray the experiential meaning of such prayer to New Testament Christians. When, centuries later, Brother Lawrence described prayer as establishing oneself "in a sense of God's presence by continually conversing with Him," (The Practice of the Presence of God the Best Rule of a Holy Life, "First Conversation.") he was true to the best tradition of the Gospels and Epistles. This interior divine fellowship, when a man fulfilled its conditions, became "in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life." (John 4:14) Prayer was not instructing God concerning human wants, for "your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him." (Matthew 6:8) Prayer was not begging a reluctant deity for his best gifts, as though he were an unjust judge or a surly neighbor in bed with his children unwilling to arise and answer a call for help -- although if patience in prayer could accomplish its end even in such cases, how much more with the righteous and merciful God! (See Luke 11:5-13; Luke 18:1-8) Prayer was first of all the maintenance of an habitual spiritual companionship "I am not alone, because the Father is with me." (John 16:32) From this central fountainhead new meanings streamed into practices that had long been traditional with praying people. Prayer in the New Testament church was, in part, a form of spiritual self-discipline, associated at times with ascetic usages such as fasting. (Acts 14:23; 1 Corinthians 7:5) Prayer was a process of purification from which forgiven souls emerged cleansed from old stains of unpardoned guilt. (1 John 1:9; 1 John 5:16) Prayer was an appeal to the divine arbitrament against the condemnation and derision of the world, a protestation of innocence against the false judgment of men, an appeal to the future against the mistaken present. (Acts 4:24-31; 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2) Prayer was thanks giving and praise, the joyful overflow of gratitude and hope, even amid difficult or desperate circumstance. (Acts 16:25; Php 4:1-5; Colossians 1:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:18) Prayer was a means of securing divine guidance, so that a man, not only in general but in particular surrendering himself to superhuman direction, could know God's will and do it. (Acts 1:24-26; 1 Timothy 5:5) Prayer was the affirmation of confident trust, the centering of attention on faith, not fear, on assets rather than liabilities, on the help of God rather than the troubles of life. (Cf. Ephesians 1:3-15; Hebrews 13:6) Prayer was a potent force which released divine power not only for spiritual peace but for bodily health, and which at times wrought miracles of healing. (James 5:14-15. See Alexis Carrel: Man the Unknown, pp. 147-150, for a modern scientific confirmation) Prayer was the overflow of an unselfish love seeking the welfare of one's friends. (Colossians 4:12; James 5:16)

All such traditional usages of prayer, however, are in the New Testament illumined by a central sun. The believer lives in God and God in him; the soul has immediate access into the divine presence and is, indeed, the very temple in which God's Spirit dwells; so that, whatever else may be granted or withheld in prayer, the sustaining companionship of the Unseen Friend is constant and assured. In this regard St. Augustine truly reflected the early Christian faith at its best -- "Give me Thine own self, without which, though Thou shouldst give me all that ever Thou hast made, yet could not my desires be satisfied." (As quoted by Mary Wilder Tileston: Prayers Ancient and Modern [new and revised ed.], p. 275)

01.06. The Idea of Immortality

Chapter 6: The Idea of Immortality A modern behaviorist, holding that a human being is simply a physical organism with its various functions, draws the inevitable inference that no continued life after death is possible. The early Hebrews, starting with a similar idea, came to no such conclusion. While they believed that man was a body with breath for his soul, blood for his life, and organs whose functions were both physical and psychical, the earliest Hebrews of whom we have record were convinced that dead men were not altogether dead. What remained existent after death was not soul conceived as an immaterial reality, for no such idea dawned on the Hebrews until ages later, when Greek influence was felt in Judaism. Human beings after death were, to the early Hebrews, still bodies, attenuated leftovers and shadowy replicas of the flesh, and these existences beyond the grave the Old Testament called rephaim --that is, shadows or ghosts. That the dead were thus not sufficiently dead to cease being matters of concern to the living is made clear both by direct statement and indirect intimation in the Old Testament.

1. As among all early peoples, necromancy, dealing with the dead, was an active superstition among the Hebrews. In the background of such wizardry were doubtless the same influences, especially dreams, that have commonly persuaded primitive peoples of the continued existence and influence of the dead. Man’s mind at first did not value waking experience above sleeping as a clue to truth, and far down in history, dreams, instead of being discredited as unreliable witnesses to fact, were given supernormal importance as revelations. When, therefore, a living man dreamed, let us say, of his dead father, and in his dream conversed with his sire and saw him act, the door was opened to the conviction that the dead were not dead, and to the still further belief that the dead, being mysterious and possibly dangerous presences, needed to be rightly dealt with.

Such ideas always have given rise to a special class of people, witches and wizards, who practice necromancy, and in the Old Testament they are repeatedly mentioned in terms of denunciation. The Deuteronomic law commanded the extirpation of any one who could be called "an enchanter, or a sorcerer, or a charmer, or a consulter with a familiar spirit, or a wizard, or a necromancer." (Deuteronomy 18:10-11; cf. Exodus 22:18) Isaiah poured scorn on "them that have familiar spirits" and on "the wizards, that chirp and that mutter," (Isaiah 8:19-20) and the later law of Leviticus twice returned to the same attack. (Leviticus 19:31; Leviticus 20:6) The most picturesque passage in the Old Testament in illustration of such prevalent beliefs concerns the Witch of Endor, whom Saul consulted in order to seek counsel from the dead Samuel. One notes the weird night scene, the underground setting, the fact that only the witch is reported to have seen Samuel, the complete credulity of Saul, Samuel’s rising out of Sheol in bodily form, clothed in a robe and physically recognizable, and, implied in the whole story, the popular prevalence of such necromancy in making use of the still-existent dead. (1 Samuel 28:3-25)

2. By all analogy we should expect to find ancestor worship associated with this range of ideas about the afterworld. In the Old Testament, however, the actual practice of worshiping ancestors

had been so far overpassed that while one first rate scholar says, "There is a growing consensus of opinion that the Hebrews, like all other peoples at a certain stage of thought, worshipped these spirits," (Henry Preserved Smith: The Religion of Israel, p. 25) another first-rate scholar says, "The alleged indications of Ancestor Worship are all exposed to more or less serious objections." (E. Kautzsch: "Religion of Israel," in Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible, Extra Vol., p. 614.)

What we do have in the Old Testament is a mass of evidence that the dead were of profound importance to the living, that elaborate ceremonies and popular customs were involved in dealing with them, and that such observances were concerned both with the veneration due from the living to the departed and with the possible good or evil that might come from the departed to the living. Many mortuary customs which persist today -- putting food on graves, as in China, for example, or flowers, as with us -- are traceable to primitive endeavors to please and placate the spirits of the deceased, and similar offerings to the dead in Old Testament times should be so understood. (E.g. 2 Chronicles 16:14.) General analogies with Egyptian and Babylonian folk-ways confirm this, and in detail the kinship of Hebrew and Semitic mortuary customs is clear in such observances as offering one's cut hair to the dead or making incisions in the flesh to establish blood-covenant with the dead. (Isaiah 22:12; Jeremiah 7:29; Amos 8:10; Micah 1:16; Ezekiel 7:18; Ezekiel 27:31. See W. Robertson Smith: Lectures on the Religion of the Semites, pp. 323-326) The persistence of such rites among the Hebrews is indicated by their condemnation in both early and late codes of law. So Deuteronomy said, "Ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead," (Deuteronomy 14:1; cf. Deuteronomy 26:14) and Leviticus still found it necessary to insist, "Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead." (Leviticus 19:28.)

Indeed, it has been supposed by some that the teraphim, household gods, (Genesis 35:4; Genesis 31:19; Genesis 31:30-35; 1 Samuel 15:23; 1 Samuel 19:13, 1 Samuel 19:16; 2 Kings 23:24) were originally images of ancestors; that they were honored as such and were part of the apparatus of popular religion; (Hosea 3:4) that mortuary customs which the prophetic school later condemned grew up around them; (Cf. Deuteronomy 26:13-14) that the right of performing the necessary ceremonies for one's ancestors devolved upon a son and that this fact underlay both the sense of tragedy in being sonless and the practices of levirate marriage and of adoption to avoid such disaster; (Cf. Genesis 15:2-3; Genesis 30:3-8; Deuteronomy 25:5-10) and that this set of ideas and customs was an integral part of the whole clan organization of early Israel. "From such a mass of evidence," says Lods, "it would seem that we are warranted in the conclusion that before their entry into Canaan the Hebrew tribes must have possessed a fully organized cultus of the ancestors of families and clans." (Adolphe Lods: Israel from its Beginnings to the Middle of the Eighth Century, translated by S.H. Hooke, p. 229; cf. R.H. Charles: Eschatology; Hebrew, Jewish and Chrisitian, pp. 21-33) At any rate, there can be no doubt, in view of the evidence presented by mortuary customs, that early Hebrews felt a deep concern for dealing effectively with the influence of the still-existent dead.

II As for the dwelling-place of the rephaim, the Old Testament leaves us in no uncertainty. The Hebrew cosmos was three-storied: the sky, or heaven, above; the flat earth beneath; and, under that, Sheol, the abode of the departed. In this regard, primitive Greek and Hebrew conceptions were practically unanimous, and Sheol in the Old Testament was of one piece with Hades in Homer's poems. The dead in Hades, as the Iliad and Odyssey pictured them, were not souls, in the later Platonic sense, but vaporous bodies. Just as Samuel came up from Sheol in visible

presence, clothed as he was on earth, so the shade of Patroklos is described in the Iliad as "in all things like his living self, in stature, and fair eyes, and voice, and the raiment of his body was the same." Yet, despite this earthly verisimilitude, the difference made by death was profound, for when Achilles "reached forth with his hands" he "clasped him not; for like a vapor the spirit was gone beneath the earth with a faint shriek." (The Illiad of Homer Done Into English Verse: by Andrew Lang, Walter Leave, and Ernest Myers, Bk. 23, pp. 452, 453) So Odysseus found the shade of his mother wholly insubstantial, (Homer; The Odyssey, With an English Translation, by A. T. Murray, Vol. I, Bk. 11, pp. 401-403) and even valiant heroes were reduced in Hades to ghosts so feeble that a draught of the fresh blood of sacrificial victims was necessary to rouse them to action. (Ibid., Bk. 11, pp. 393, 397) In general conception and in many particular details the similarity between Hades and Sheol is plain. In the Hebrew underworld, the prophet still wore his ghostly mantle and kings sat on shadowy thrones. (1 Samuel 28:14; Isaiah 14:9) The dreariest words in the vocabulary were used about the dwelling of the dead and its inhabitants. It was the land of the "dark" and of "forgetfulness," (Psalms 88:12) of "silence" (Psalms 94:17) and of "destruction." (Job 26:6 [marginal translation]) Far from being consulted as "the knowing ones," its inhabitants were conceived by those who had renounced necromancy as neither knowing nor caring about anything on earth: His sons come to honor, and he knoweth it not; And they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them. Only for himself his flesh hath pain, and for himself his soul mourneth. (Job 14:1-22 [marginal translation]) As though to leave us in no doubt about this shadowy half reality of Sheol, Isaiah drew a picture of it with even its royal tenants rising to greet newcomers and saying, "Art thou also become weak as we?" (Isaiah 14:9-10)

Clearly, therefore, no hope was associated with Sheol. It was the sad, inevitable end of man, "the house appointed for all living." (Job 30:23) To go there was to lose real existence and the pious sick could pray, Oh spare me, that I may recover strength, Before I go hence, and be no more. (Psalms 39:13) The best to be said for Sheol was that life on earth might become so wretched that Sheol’s very negativeness would be a relief. Job, finding his existence intolerable, craved the unreality of the underworld, too empty of positive content to involve the sufferings of earth:

There the wicked cease from troubling; And there the weary are at rest.

There the prisoners are at ease together;

They hear not the voice of the taskmaster. The small and the great are there: And the servant is free from his master. (Job 3:17-19)

While the early Hebrews, therefore, believed in existence after death, it was so pallid and unreal, in an underworld so undesirable, that no hopes were associated with it. Until far down in their history, all the vivid and enheartening hopes of the Hebrews were concerned with the future of their nation on earth -- . . . thy seed shall be great, And thine offspring as the grass of the earth. (Job 5:25) As for those who went "down into the pit," they were . . . as a man that hath no help, Cast off among the dead. (Psalms 88:3-5) In suggesting the literal location of Sheol -- an underworld beneath the surface of the ground and as geographically real as any place on earth -- the Old Testament is clear and explicit. When, for example, Moses executed Yahweh’s wrath against the rebellious sons of Korah, they were dropped alive into Sheol through the yawning ground -- "The ground clave asunder that was under them; and the earth opened its mouth, and swallowed them up, and their households, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all

their goods. So they, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into Sheol: and the earth closed upon them.'' (Numbers 16:31-33: cf. Psalms 63:9; Psalms 86:13; Ezekiel 26:20; Ezekiel 31:14; Ezekiel 32:18, Ezekiel 32:24)

Such was the beginning of the Bible's conception of the afterworld, and the development of thought from this crude primitiveness of Sheol to the New Testament's doctrine of eternal life constitutes one of the most significant contributions of the Scriptures to religious history.

III

Among the factors that played a part in this development, the enlarging idea of God was prominent. Sheol was an inheritance in Hebrew belief from a past long antedating the introduction of the people to Yahweh. At first, therefore, Yahweh as the storm god of Sinai, or as the war god of the migrant tribes, or even as the agricultural god of Canaan, had nothing to do with Sheol; the underworld of the dead was outside his realm.

Commonly in ancient mythologies, the gods of the nether world were not the gods of the earth's surface. So it was in Greece, where Hades had its own deity; and so it was in Babylonia. The Babylonian Sheol, called Aralû, was a great cavern in the bowels of a mountain under the earth; (Cf. Jonah 2:6) it was without light, covered with dust and filth, its inhabitants eating dust save as offerings of food were received from the sacrifices of the living; and the shades who dwelt there were no longer under the domain of the gods of earth but had deities of their own, supremely Nergal. To be sure, in the Old Testament no gods of Sheol are specifically named, but Dr. Paton is probably correct in thinking that we have the faded reminiscence of them in such personifications as "Death shall be their shepherd" (Psalms 49:14) or "He shall be brought to the king of terrors." (Job 18:14) Moreover, it is not unlikely that the death angels of later Judaism were the old gods of the underworld, reduced, according to the habit of early religions, to the subordinate position of spirits. (See Lewis Bayles Paton: "The Hebrew Idea of the Future Life," in The Biblical Word, "New Series," Vol. 35 (1910), pp. 159-171, for influence of Babylonian thought on Hebrew thought of life after death.) In any case, the Old Testament repeatedly reveals that, at first, Yahweh had no control over Sheol; he was god of the earth, then god of the sky, but at the gates of the underworld relationships with him ceased. Psalms 88:1-18 is explicit on this point:

. . . My life draweth nigh unto Sheol.

I am reckoned with them that go down into the pit;

. . . .

Like the slain that lie in the grave, Whom thou rememberest no more, And they are cut off from thy hand.(Psalms 88:3-5; see also Psalms 88:11) Similarly, the sick Hezekiah shrinks from death believing that it separates from Yahweh: For Sheol cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee:

They that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. (Isaiah 38:18) Whether within the Old Testament, where the psalmist is convinced that The dead praise not Yahweh, Neither any that go down into silence, (Psalms 115:17: cf. Psalms 6:5; Psalms 30:9; Psalms 118:17) or in Jewish literature outside, as in Ecclesiasticus -- "Who shall give praise to the Most High in the grave?" (Sir 17:27) -- or in the Book of Baruch -- "The dead that are in the grave, whose breath is taken from

their bodies, will give unto the Lord neither glory nor righteousness" (Sir 2:17) -- we have the persistent tradition that death breaks off all relationships between man and Yahweh.

One of the major factors, therefore, both in redeeming Sheol itself from its original negativeness and in arousing hope of resurrection from it to full life again, was the extension of Yahweh's sovereignty to the nether world. As Yahweh overpassed early limitations in the thinking of his people until he was recognized as God of heaven and earth, the question of his power over the realm below the earth was inevitably raised, and the forces which had expanded his sway elsewhere tended to include also under his domain the abode of the rephaim. The Old Testament still retains the early evidences of this new theology, explicitly contradicting the older restriction on Yahweh's power. The first motive, of which we have expression, for thus extending Yahweh's rule to Sheol, was the desire that unpunished men might not escape justice there. So Amos represented Yahweh as saying, "Though they dig into Sheol, thence shall my hand take them,'' (Amos 9:2) and Deuteronomy pictured him in a threatening mood: For a fire is kindled in mine anger, And burneth unto the lowest Sheol. (Deuteronomy 32:22) In a word, the nether world, at first for the sake of justice, was gradually taken possession of by Yahweh's expanding power, until Isaiah could challenge Ahaz to ask a sign of God "either in the depth, or in the height above" (Isaiah 7:11) -- that is, in Sheol or in heaven.

Without understanding this gradual expansion of the divine sovereignty until, at least in the imagination of a few, the entire Hebrew cosmos with its three levels -- sky, earth, and underworld -- were under Yahweh's sway, we cannot feel the full force of one of the supreme passages in the Old Testament. It was new theology when it was written, an immortal expression of man's faith in the universal presence and availability of God, and it was phrased in terms of the threefold Hebrew cosmos with the triumphant conviction that Yahweh was inescapably present throughout the whole of it:

Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there:

If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there.

If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

Even there shall thy hand lead me, And thy right hand shall hold me. (Psalms 139:7-10)

Along this line of development hope traveled that Sheol might not be the last word in the story of man. "God," cried the psalmist, "will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol." (Psalms 49:15) Moreover, with the divine sovereignty thus extended to the dead, and with the divine character conceived increasingly in terms of righteousness, Sheol itself was bound to be transformed. It gradually ceased being inane and meaningless, a non-moral land of darkness and forgetfulness. It became ethically significant, with rewards and punishments administered to its inhabitants. And, at last, along with the transformation of Sheol itself into a morally meaningful place, came the hope of restoration from it to full life again.

IV In achieving this result, the developing idea of man was also influential. So long as man was more or less completely submerged in the social mass, his personal fortunes beyond death would be imagined and cared for dimly, if at all. The continuing social group was the reality on which

attention was centered and in which all hope inhered. This is the meaning of Hezekiah's words:

They that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day The father to the children shall make known thy truth. (Isaiah 38:18-19)

When, however, the individual as a personality with rights of his own began to stand free from social submergence, the question of his fate after death was inevitably raised

Apparently it was the demand of the individual for justice that pushed this issue to the fore. At first, justice had especially concerned the social group as a whole and Yahweh was held to be inflexibly fair in dealing with the clan or nation, thought of en masse. With the increasing discrimination of the individual, however, as a center of keen interest, it became clear that the problem of life's justice to him is a much more complicated and difficult affair. So the Book of Job wrestled with the apparently insoluble dilemma -- Yahweh just, and yet not always just to persons one by one, within their lifetime on the earth.

It is in the Book of Job, therefore, that we find what has been called "the first tentative demand for a life beyond death." (H. Wheeler Robinson: The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament, p. 94) That this demand sprang from considerations of equity to the individual is made clear in the drama. Job, a virtuous man, suffering incredible afflictions and so facing in acute form the problem of life's injustice, blazed tentative trails toward a solution. One of these was the hope of at least a temporary restoration from Sheol and a vindication of his character at the judgment seat of God. Sheol itself was to Job what it was to his contemporaries, "the land of darkness and of the shadow of death" (Job 10:21) but, all the more because of that, his demand for individual justice led him to hope that the inanity of Sheol was not God's last word to a mistreated man. Out of this situation rose Job's conviction that, in a special case like his, Sheol might turn out to be only an intermediate state with a final vindication of righteousness afterwards. At times he denied such expectation and was hopeless: As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, So he that goeth down to Sheol shall come up no more. (Job 7:9; cf. Job 14:7-12) But even in those dark hours hope rose:

Would'st thou but hide me in the nether world, concealing me until thy wrath is over, and then remember me when it is time!

If only man might die and live again, I could endure my weary post until relief arrived; thou would'st call, and I would come, when thou didst yearn for life that thou hadst made. (Job 14:13-15 (Moffatt translation) And in one passage Job's conviction was expressed with notable strength:

Still, I know One to champion me at last, to stand up for me upon earth. This body may break up, but even then my life shall have a sight of God; my heart is pining as I yearn to see him on my side. (Job 19:25-27 (Moffatt translation)

Taken in connection with the rest of the drama, this passage indicates no generally accepted doctrine of resurrection from Sheol and no widespread application of hope, but it does show that the idea of resurrection was in the air. Indeed, the Greek Septuagint Translation of the book climaxes Job's restoration to prosperity with this significant addition not in the Hebrew: "And it is written that Job will rise again with those whom the Lord doth raise." (See John Edgar McFadyen: The Problem of Pain; A Study in the Book of Job, pp. 248-249) In his realistic facing of life's

frequent injustice to individuals and in his hope, however tentative and limited, that restoration from the underworld might bring vindication, Job blazed a trail which afterward became a heavily traveled road. The more the values and rights of personality were recognized and the more the concept of divine justice was applied to individuals, the more Job's clue was followed. Even Tennyson's "In Memoriam" is to be found in the tradition which Job inaugurated:

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust Thou madest man, he knows not why, He thinks he was not made to die; And thou hast made him: thou art just.

V

Even more influential in its permanent effect on the Biblical hope of real life after death was the growing experience of personal religion as an inward, intimate relationship between the soul and God. At first Hebrew religion, being altogether tribal, involved no such interior meaning for individuals. In any powerful spiritual movement, however, such as Israel's faith involved, mysticism is bound to emerge despite all obstacles; special personalities, at first few in number but increasing by contagion, find their religious experience becoming within themselves a profound resource, a "fountain of living waters," an intimate, sustaining fellowship with God. Whenever, in any religion, this development takes place, the sense of essential timelessness in the experience is not far off and the hope is sure to rise that such a fellowship contains the prophecy of its own continuance.

When, for example, Jeremiah, thrown back on God amid the social disintegration of his time, entered into a trustful reliance on Yahweh -- "my strength, and my stronghold, and my refuge in the day of affliction" (Jeremiah 16:19) -- he was unwittingly blazing a trail toward faith in immortality. He never himself followed it to its conclusion; in his long and self-revealing book there is no indication that he thought much about Sheol or thought of it differently from his contemporaries, or had the slightest hope of resurrection out of it. Despite that, however, he made an incalculable contribution to the inwardness of the soul's relationship with God, and from that experience, at last, came the assurance that what is in quality so timeless will not come to a futile finale in the nether world. When a late Isaiah represents God as saying, "I dwell . . . with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite," (Isaiah 57:15) the question rises in the mind of one who understands from within what the implied experience means: If God so cares for persons one by one and so dwells in them with creative power, is it not impossible that the relationship will be summarily terminated at death? However many individuals in Israel may have failed to raise this question or, raising it, may have left it shrouded in doubt or negatively answered, the question was bound to be raised by some and answered affirmatively. As a whole, the Old Testament gives no clear reply to this question. The intimations of faith in the resurrection of the dead are few in number and late in date. Two of the Psalms, however, move up from a description of inward communion with God toward an expectation of release from Sheol:

Nevertheless I am continually with thee:

Thou hast holden my right hand.

Thou wilt guide me with thy counsel, And afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth;

But God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever. (Psalms 73:23-26) I have set Yahweh always before me:

Because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: My flesh also shall dwell in safety. For thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol;

Neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption.

Thou wilt show me the path of life: In thy presence is fulness of joy; In thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. (Psalms 16:8-11)

Along this road from inward, personal religion to the assurance that God's care for the soul is too eternal in quality to be stopped by death, Hebrew-Christian thought traveled to its most distinctive idea of eternal life.

VI

Another influence which raised the question of restoration from Sheol was the Hebrew expectation of a coming Messianic age, "the most striking and characteristic feature of the religion of Israel." To be sure, this expectation was social; it concerned the nation as a whole; but by indirection it brought the Jews face to face at last with the inescapable problem of individual destiny after death. The Messianic hope in a rudimentary form began with the sudden glory of David's kingdom. From a whipped and humiliated people, burdened by the Amorites among them and the victorious Philistines over them, the Hebrews under David's leadership sprang through swift conquest into an unexpected domain reaching from the borders of Egypt to the gates of Damascus. The glory of this kingdom caught the national imagination and established the first pattern of Messianic hope. David's domain was soon lost and the memory of its splendor was metamorphosed into hope of its restoration. At first this expectation was doubtless emotional in its appeal, as Mussolini stirs Italians now by pictures of a new Roman Empire, but as the centuries passed and the powerful theological conviction that Israel was a chosen people in special covenant relationship with Yahweh blended with the national dream, the coming Messianic age became increasingly a fixed idea and a cherished dogma. That the "day of Yahweh" would come, and Israel be triumphant over her enemies, thus vindicating Yahweh's choice of her and proving him to be God of gods, became a settled conviction of the nation even before the Exile.

During and after the Exile this Messianic expectation became for obvious reasons even more emphatic and assured. It furnished to a distressed nation, suffering intolerable trouble, a psychological compensation. From the humiliation and disillusionment of the present a Jew could retreat into the vivid hope of a Messianic future, when David's glory would be restored, with much more besides, and Israel would be triumphant over the world. This doctrine, which before the Exile had become orthodoxy, became during and after the Exile a psychological necessity, and its practical effect in holding together a distracted people and sustaining them through one disaster after another was incalculable. The form taken by this Messianic hope varied from age to age. Even in the eighth century B.C., while the "day of Yahweh" meant to popular expectation a nationalistic victory, to Amos it meant a day of judgment on Israel's sins. (Amos 5:18-20) By the time Greek domination was in full swing, however, the outlines of typical Jewish Messianism were

established, as the Book of Daniel makes evident. The power of heathenism, as the writer saw it, had been incarnate in one world empire after another, each of them in turn afflicting Israel, the people of God. Four imperial representatives of heathenism, in particular, he visualized -- the Babylonian, Median, Persian, and Greek -- all of them pictured as beasts which rise to power and then disappear. Israel, however, was not beast but "son of man," the people of the one true God; Israel alone had incarnated Yahweh's purpose and at a definite date in the future would sweep into world power over the ruins of the fallen heathen realms. This kingdom of God, inaugurated by Israel's victory, would be eternal, the final consummation of Yahweh's will for man. (Daniel 7:1-27) The Book of Daniel was thus the first of a long series of Jewish apocalypses which present, amid many differences, certain common characteristics. They all spring out of a background of national distress; they all are utterly pessimistic about the present, which is ruled by heathenism; they all are absorbed in expectations of a future that stands in vivid and glorious contrast with the present; they all see the possibility of this future's achievement only through the supernatural and miraculous act of God; and they all are so eager for escape from unbearable oppression that they set the time for this divine invasion of the world immediately ahead. Within this general framework the apocalyptic expectations are variously phrased. In particular, the personalization of the Messiah as an existent supernal being waiting the set hour to leave the sky and lead his hosts to victory, appears in some apocalypses but not in others. The general framework, however, outlined in the Book of Daniel remains characteristic of them all.

Obviously this Messianic hope was social rather than individual, but because it was the typical and controlling Jewish way of visualizing a worth-while future it was bound to become entangled, one way or another, with the idea of Sheol and what might come after it. The more the glorious reign of God on earth was believed in and the more vividly its splendors were imagined, the more surely the question of individual destiny was pushed to the fore: Should the beneficiaries of this divine consummation be only the fortunate persons who happened to be alive on the surface of the earth when the great day arrived? It was not they who had borne the burden of patient endurance and sacrifice, walking, as it were, in a "burning fiery furnace." The faithful servants of Yahweh, who amid untold distresses had been true to their trust and held Israel together as Yahweh's witness in the world, were in Sheol. How could the social hope of a Messianic reign on earth be ethically complete, if those who had sacrificed little or nothing enjoyed it and those who had given all for it remained unblessed in the nether world? Moreover, should not its ethical completeness be emphasized by the resurrection also, to proper punishment, of those whose cruelties had desolated the saints? A new road was opened, therefore, through the Messianic expectation into a hope that at least some of the rephaim in Sheol would be restored to life. So in the Book of Daniel we find this conviction stated: "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt,'' (Daniel 12:2) and in two late Isaian passages a similar expectation is expressed: "He hath swallowed up death for ever; and the Lord Yahweh will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the reproach of his people will he take away from off all the earth: for Yahweh hath spoken it"; (Isaiah 25:8) "Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast forth the dead." (Isaiah 26:19)

It is to be noted that in these passages the hope of resurrection is not universal. In Daniel many, but not all, shall rise, and in the Isaian hope the restoration which is joyfully proclaimed is explicitly

limited to Israelites. Of heathen oppressors it is said, "They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise." (Isaiah 26:14) Thus even in the latest documents of the Old Testament the expectation of any resurrection out of Sheol is restricted and partial and is so infrequently expressed that, beyond the few passages which we have quoted in this chapter, no others intimate belief in a future life. It is not strange that, when Jesus came upon the scene, the Sadducees, the ultraconservatives of their day, who accepted only the earlier books of the Old Testament and refused credence to the new ideas of the later literature, held "that there is no resurrection." (Acts 23:8)

VII Indeed, the factors that made headway toward Hebrew faith in immortality difficult were very powerful.

1. The prophetic movement, in its endeavor to purge Israel’s religion of its worst primitivism, waged a stout contest against the cult of the dead. As we have seen, consultation with the dead, placation of the dead, and accompanying practices of necromancy and necrolatry were firmly intrenched in the early traditions of the Hebrews. Indeed, since the Old Testament represents mainly a purified Judaism, such ideas and practices probably exercised, at the beginning, a much more predominant influence than the documents now indicate. Against this entire cult of the dead the prophetic movement waged a tireless battle. The early prophets, however, and, for the most part, the later prophets too, provided no alternative ideas to take the place of those they were destroying. They did not believe in any resurrection from Sheol; they simply attacked, as dangerous to Yahweh’s sole claim on worship and service, the tangled mass of wizardry and demonolatry associated with the dead. In a word, their message in this regard was negative, and its first effect was to take from the dead in Sheol and from Sheol itself even such significance as they had hitherto possessed. In the primitive religion that lay behind Yahweh’s introduction to Israel, the dead had been at least "knowing ones" to be consulted, vivid significance existed in the popular picture of Sheol and its inhabitants, and active commerce was carried on between the dead and the living. All this the prophets undertook to wipe out. In so far as they succeeded, they reduced the dead to even more utter deadness than primitive paganism had attributed to them. The prophetic hostility against mortuary superstition, therefore, had its first result in demolishing the only way of thinking vividly concerning the dead that the Hebrews had possessed. The consequence of this is evident in the passages where Sheol is pictured as utterly negative and the dead as utterly inactive and inane. Once the rephaim had been worth consulting; now they had been stripped of one attribute after another until they were powerless. "Thus," as Dr. Paton puts it, "the victory over necrolatry was won, but at the cost of the extinction of even a rudimentary belief in immortality." (Lewis Bayles Paton: "The Hebrew Idea of the Future Life," in The "Biblical World, "New Series," Vol. 35 [1910], p. 258)

2. By this process of negation, emptying Sheol of such positive meaning as it had possessed, the Hebrew mind was driven, even more certainly than it might otherwise have been, to picture hope in terms of physical resurrection out of Sheol. The more the nether world was denied vivid reality, the more hope, when it rose at all, was coerced into one pattern of imagination -- reëmbodiment and restoration to the surface of the earth. In Hebrew thinking, so far as any worth-while future life was concerned, it was that or nothing. So persistent has been the influence of this idea of bodily resurrection, belief in which is still affirmed by millions of Christians in their recitation of the creeds, that its origins are worth special consideration. All the major elements in Hebrew thought about the

dead conspired to make bodily resuscitation the only way of picturing hope.

Belief in the geographical reality of Sheol, as a definite place in the underground portions of the earth, worked to this end. Those who died did not, in Hebrew imagination, vaguely disappear. They went "down into the pit''; (Psalms 28:1; Isaiah 38:18) they dwelt in "the nether parts of the earth." (Ezekiel 26:20: Ezekiel 31:14) Sheol was as definitely a place beneath as the sky was a place above, (Job 11:8: Isaiah 29:4) and a synonym for dying was to say, "The earth swallowed them." (Exodus 15:12) Therefore, the dead, who were so realistically pictured as going, one might say, from one floor of the cosmos down to another, could be as realistically pictured as coming back again. This, indeed, was the characteristic Hebrew way of visualizing hope for the dead.

Moreover, the fact that in Hebrew thought the body was regarded as the essential constituent of the man worked to the same end. By Plato's time Greek philosophy had conceived the soul as immaterial, but such metaphysical generalization was alien from the realistic, dramatic, picturesque methods of the Hebrew mind. Since, therefore, man was unimaginable to the Hebrews without a body, life after death was naturally pictured as the resuscitation of the embodied life and its restoration to the land of the living. Always Hebrew hope of immortality, when it existed at all, concerned the whole man and not a disembodied wraith. When Enoch was translated or Elijah, escaping death, was raised to the sky, the whole man went. This way of thinking held firm from the beginning to the end of the Old Testament and long afterward. When, either in the Persian or the Hellenistic period, a writer said, "Thy dead shall live," he used as a parallelism, "My dead bodies shall arise," (Isaiah 26:19) and one of the familiar prayers of subsequent Judaism ends with the words, "Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who dost return souls to dead bodies." (As translated by George Foot Moore: Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era, Vol. II, p. 215, q.v.) With regard to this identification of life with body, one naturally thinks of the influence of Egypt, where a unique climate made possible the mummifying of bodies as the seat of continued life. At any rate, the Hebrew mind habitually dramatized its immortal hopes in terms of physical resurrection

Another factor which emphasized this pattern of thought was the desire of the individual Israelite, if he was to have any immortality, to have it as a member of the Messianic kingdom on earth. Greek thought of eternal life, at its higher levels, early became individualistic; it concerned the escape of the soul to the pure world of spirit, immaterial and invisible. Hebrew thought, however, while it developed a strong tradition of personal value and possibility, did it within the framework of a predominant social expectation. Always the ultimate goal and consummation of God's purpose was the divine sovereignty made manifest in the Messianic age. When, therefore, the individual hope of future life began to arise, it was phrased, as in Daniel, in terms of a commonwealth on earth, to have part in which was the highest conceivable desire of man. But if one is to join in the victorious Messianic age on earth, he must be fully restored to life, reembodied, and made a real man again.

Whether one thinks of Sheol as a literal "pit" beneath the ground, or of man as basically a body, or of the enjoyment of future life as sharing in the Messianic age on earth, bodily resuscitation is demanded, and since all three of these ideas were operative in the Hebrew mind, there was no escaping their coercion. Future hope and physical resurrection were done up in one bundle of thought. In view of the body's visible decomposition, however, such a way of picturing hope was

not easy to believe, so that one reason for the long sustained negativeness of the Old Testament on the subject of life after death may well have lain in the difficulty of imagining resurrection.

3. A further difficulty lay in the fact that the early traditions of the Semitic race were negative about return from Sheol. To be sure, there were ghosts which, in Hamlet's phrase, revisited the glimpses of the moon, (Acts I, Sc. IV) but even in English speech 'ghost' and 'gust' come from the same stem and represent something atmospheric and insubstantial. Genuine resurrection to real life does not appear in the Babylonian legends. There Aralû is often "the land of no return," (As translated by Stephen Herbert Langdon: Semitic Mythology, p. 161) and Gilgamesh, speaking of Eabani, says, "My friend whom I loved has become like clay. . . . Shall I not also like him lay me down to rest, and not arise for evermore?" (Gilgamesh Epic, VIII, v, 36 f. as translated by Lewis Bayles Paton: "The Hebrew Idea of the Future Life," in The Biblical World, "New Series," Vol. 35 [1910], p. 161) This was precisely the note of David's lament for his child, "I shall go to him, but he will not return to me." (2 Samuel 12:23) When to such influences from ancient racial tradition and from the controlling patterns of contemporary thought was added the fact that prophetic orthodoxy in Israel had held out no hope of a future life for the individual, it is not strange that even in the Old Testament's later writings we have explicit and convinced denials of such hope. The Eighty-eighth Psalm, for example, was written by an outspoken skeptic on this subject (E.g., Psalms 88:3-12) and the Book of Ecclesiastes was scornful in its denials: For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; and man hath no preëminence above the beasts: for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. (Ecclesiastes 3:19-20) For to him that is joined with all the living there is hope; for a living dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. (Ecclesiastes 9:4-5)

Nevertheless, the very scorn of such denials reveals the reality and prevalence of the ideas they disdain. The hope of future life for individuals expanded and grew strong. Between the Testaments the affirmations of it became convinced and unequivocal: "Sheol also shall give back that which it has received"; (The book of Enoch 51:1) "The earth shall restore those that are asleep in her, and so shall the dust those that dwell therein in silence." (2Es 7:32)

VIII That the influence of Persian religion, which affected Hebrew thinking from the late Exile on, encouraged the developing hope of life after death and helped to shape its form, seems probable. Indeed, in four major apocalyptic matters a close affinity exists between Zoroastrianism and the later Judaism: the separation of the righteous from the wicked at death; their distinct estates, the one blessed and the other miserable, between death and the resurrection; the general raising of all the dead at once; and the last judgment with its eternal consequences. Such affinities between two religions, however, may not hastily be interpreted as the mere unilateral influence of one upon the other. Some scholars even think that the Zoroastrians borrowed apocalyptic ideas from the Jews, and, while this is improbable, it is also improbable that the Jews came by their ideas merely by grace of Zoroastrian influence. Such conceptions were rather common property, developing by an inner logic out of the primitive background, and if the Jews borrowed largely from the Zoroastrians, as they probably did, it was because they found in Zoroastrianism a kindred set of mental categories.

Whatever may be true about the effect of Persian ideas on Judaism's thought of the future life, it is clear that between the Testaments there was a powerful swing of faith toward convinced hope. To the Judaism of that period, Sheol still remained the abode of the dead; bodily resurrection from it was the characteristic way of picturing hope; and this resurrection, associated with the coming of the Messianic kingdom, was staged, in the dramatic imagination of the people, as a general judgment day. The more orthodox party in Israel, represented later by the Sadducees, denied all this and held to the negative attitude of the Torah and the prophets. The liberal party, represented later by the Pharisees, accepted the new teaching and won to its credence and support the more religious Jews. Thus the future hope, all the more welcome because it furnished compensation for a humiliating present, became a dominant factor in Judaism. To the advancing thought involved in this process the moral meaninglessness of the primitive Sheol became intolerable, and between the Testaments we find a change taking place in the descriptions of the underworld itself. The demand for diverse fates in Sheol, corresponding with diverse character, had already been voiced by Isaiah (Isaiah 14:18-20 and Ezekiel, (Ezekiel 32:8-32) and this demand became ever more imperative. In the Book of Enoch, written in the first two centuries B.C., Sheol is divided into four parts, two each for the wicked and the righteous. One contains the wicked who in torment await the resurrection day, when final penalties will be adjudged; another contains the wicked who already have been punished and for whom there is to be no resurrection; another contains the moderately good who await their reward at the judgment; another contains the faithful saints who enjoy Paradise until their rising at the last day to eternal blessedness. (The Book of Enoch, Chap. 22) In this transformation of Sheol, as in other regards, a florescent development of Jewish thought took place between the Testaments. The details of the various books are confused and contradictory. Always in the background is the persistent idea of Sheol, but as in the Greek Orphic cults Hades became an intermediate state where souls were punished and purged until, fully cleansed, they could ascend to the blessed life with God, so Sheol among the Jews became intermediate and preparatory, leading up to the judgment day and its eternal awards. As such, the idea is still immensely influential under the guise of the Roman Catholic purgatory, for purgatory is simply Sheol developed and sublimated.

Within this general framework, however, the details of the inter-Testamental books are too varied to be reduced to harmony. Sometimes there is one resurrection, accompanied by the final judgment, sometimes two resurrections, the first partial, the second for all the dead, with a millennial reign between; sometimes only the righteous are to be raised, sometimes both righteous and wicked; in some writings the dead come back to live on earth under familiar, material conditions; in others the transcendental and supernatural quality of the resurrected life is emphasized. Throughout this confused and difficult struggle of Hebrew imagination with its intractable heritage of primitive idea, only one thing is entirely clear: a deepening certainty that death is not the end, that moral destinies include a future life, that it requires the eternal to complete the temporal. At one point there appeared an emergent idea so radical in its nature as to constitute a departure from traditional Judaism. About 100 B.C. the Messianic kingdom on earth became to some of the Jews an inadequate picture of the final consummation of God's purpose for man. The earth was seen to be no proper theater for an eternal staging of divine redemption. To give up the hope of the Messianic reign on earth would have been an impossible break with a cherished pattern of faith. The Jews, therefore, did not elide from their thinking the earthly reign of the Messiah, but limited it in time. It was to last a thousand years -- that is to say, a long time but

not endlessly. So began the idea of a millennium, which even yet in Biblical fundamentalism exercises a potent sway over the imagination of many Christians, and upon which the curiosity of the credulous has worked for centuries in an endeavor to predict "times and seasons." The millennium came into Hebrew thought as a means of putting a time limit to the hitherto endless extension of the Messianic age on earth. It sprang from a desire not to emphasize the Messianic realm but to circumscribe it; it originated in a more spiritual conception of the world's finale than could be satisfied by a nationalistic victory or by any kind of social order imaginable on earth. This limitation of the Messianic age opened the door to a notable expansion and heightening of hope. Man's destiny lay beyond Sheol, beyond bodily resurrection and judgment day, even beyond the Messianic age. All these became inherited scenery, retained, but no longer regarded as the ultimate goal. The consummation of the will of God for the righteous lay in heaven, after this earth had been utterly destroyed. This development of thought and imagination tended to escape from old nationalistic and materialistic conceptions of the Messianic reign. Its pictured rewards became heavenly rather than earthly. It lent itself to an increasing emphasis on the fate of the individual soul apart from the nation. It rose above the old geographical realism into sublimated interpretations of the future. However limited the effect of such ideas on the apocalyptic writings, their importance was very great. The New Testament stemmed out from this branch of Jewish eschatology.

Indeed, one area of Jewish thought, centering in Alexandria, was so deeply influenced by Hellenistic ideas that its Hebrew distinctiveness was well-nigh lost. The Wisdom of Solomon, in the Apocrypha, represents this submergence of Jewish apocalyptic in Greek philosophy. The writer of this book returns repeatedly to the subject of the future life, but for him Sheol has vanished, bodily resurrection has become both incredible and undesirable, and the Messianic age has so lost its dramatic staging and its vivid importance that the most explicit reference to the idea simply says that the righteous . . . shall judge nations, and have dominion over peoples; And the Lord shall reign over them for evermore. (Wis 3:8) The characteristic ideas of Hellenism, however, are present in this book in full force. The soul is immaterial and preexistent, and each soul, when born into the world, receives a body appropriate to its quality; (Wis 8:20) the body is a clog on the soul, a prison in which spirit is immured while here on earth; (Wis 9:15) the death of the body is a blessed release from imprisonment, and at death the righteous pass to an immediate reward. (Wis 4:7-15) Here we find, growing in Judaism under Greek influence, a specific idea of the immortality of the soul as distinct from the resurrection of the body, and this doctrine rises into notable expression:

. . . The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, And no torment shall touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died; And their departure was accounted to be their hurt, And their journeying away from us to be their ruin: But they are in peace. (Wis 3:1-4. Cf, Josephus: Antiquities, Bk. xviii, chap. 1, par. 5, and The Wars of the Jews, Bk, ii, chap. 8 par. 11, for similar ideas among the Essenes.)

IX In passing from pre-Christian Judaism into the New Testament, we cross a boundary line into no strange country; the same ways of thinking used by Palestinian Jews to express their future hopes were used also by the first Christians. In the teaching attributed to Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels are the five major elements characterizing the picture of life after death to which in his youth he was accustomed.

1. Sheol -- called Hades in the New Testament -- was still the place to which the soul went at death. It involved, however, no longer a listless and negative existence. It was under the sovereignty of God, and rewards and penalties were there administered. It was, in a word, recognizably the same Sheol that had developed in the imagination of later Judaism, an intermediate state between death and resurrection. When Jesus said to the thief upon the cross, "Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise," (Luke 23:43) ‘Paradise,’ as usage then current shows, meant not eternal heaven but the portion of Sheol where the righteous were rewarded even before the resurrection. So too in Jesus’ parable, the poor man, dying, went to "Abraham’s bosom," while the rich man "in Hades" was in torment, and between the two a great gulf was fixed. (Luke 16:19-31) The very words in which this scene is depicted were taken from the literature of the time (E.g., II Baruch 51:11; 4Ma 13:15; 4Ma 13:17. See William Adams Brown: The Christian Hope, p. 84) and refer not to final destinies in an eternal heaven and hell, but to the intermediate fate of the dead in the time between decease and resurrection. It should be noted, however, that Jesus is reported to have used the word Hades only three times, (Matthew 11:23; Matthew 16:18; Luke 16:23) twice with an obviously figurative significance Capernaum brought "down unto Hades" (Matthew 11:23) and "the gates of Hades shall not prevail against" the church (Matthew 16:18) -- and only once, in the parable just quoted, in any such way as to throw light on his opinions. From this one use of the word we may infer that Sheol was an inherited factor in Jesus’ thinking, with which he dealt little, if at all, so that his characteristic and original contribution to immortal hope was not phrased in terms of it.

2. The supernatural advent of the Messiah is prominent in the reported words of Jesus. Indeed, this inherited phrasing of hope is so clearly set forth that it seems impossible to read it away, to ascribe it altogether to the disciples’ misunderstanding, to poetize it or otherwise dispose of it except by taking it as a familiar, contemporary way of thinking used by Jesus when he imagined the end of the present evil age and the inauguration of the kingdom of God. Even the accent of immediacy is in Jesus’ words about the coming Messiah, (Matthew 16:27-28) and alike in direct statement and in parable his reported teaching shows the influence of the prevalent Jewish apocalypticism. (E.g., Mark 13:35-37; Matthew 25:1-13; Matthew 24:37-44. For contemporary reaction against overstressing the effect of apocalyptic ideas on Jesus’ teaching, see Charles Harold Dodd: The Parables of the Kingdom)

3. The resurrection of the body stands clear in Jesus’ reported teaching. He used the word and the idea behind it, in common with his contemporaries, as a natural vehicle for expressing hope of victory over death. Continued life after Sheol meant to him not the escape of an individual soul to the realm of ‘pure being’ or reabsorption into the eternal Spirit, but the shared life of a divine kingdom. To be readily imagined, this had to be in some sense an embodied life, however sublimated body might become. At any rate, unless the records utterly misrepresent him or his disciples completely misunderstood him, Jesus shared with his race expectation of a bodily resurrection from Sheol. In the Fourth Gospel he is explicitly quoted on this matter (John 5:28-29) but, even if this saying be read out of the record, evidence remains, especially the narrative of his conversation with the Sadducees about the nature of the resurrected body. (Luke 20:27-40) Jesus joined issue with his opponents, not on the doctrine of the Messianic age and a resurrection preceding it, but on their too gross conceptions concerning it. "They that are accounted worthy to attain to that age," he said, "and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in

marriage: for neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection." (Luke 20:35-36 [marginal translation]) Indeed, quite apart from special quotations, a reëmbodied life, however rarefied and sublimated, was involved of necessity in the whole dramatic picture of the future which Jesus shared with his race and time.

4. The final judgment is present as a dominant factor in this picture. As Jesus is reported to have spoken, there are to be not two resurrections with an earthly kingdom between, but one resurrection, after which comes a general assize, inaugurating the Messianic age. This kingdom, far from being earthly, is itself to be heavenly and eternal. Jesus' picture of the consummation of mankind's life is thus freed from popular trappings of materialism and nationalism, and the Messianic age itself becomes so spiritual that those who attain to it are conceived "as angels in heaven." (Matthew 22:30) In this regard Jesus was at one with the best tradition of his people. Both the Book of Enoch (The Book of Enoch 103:4,6; 51:4) and the Apocalypse of Baruch (II Baruch 41:10) use the same comparison with angels in giving an ethical and spiritual interpretation to Israel's hope. It is impossible, therefore, clearly to distinguish, in Jesus' thought, the kingdom on earth from the eternal destiny of the righteous in heaven, for the former idea has been so elevated and sublimated that it blends with the latter. Thus to "inherit eternal life" (Mark 10:17; cf. Mark 10:30) and to "enter into life" (Matthew 18:8; Matthew 19:17) mean the same thing as to "inherit the kingdom" (Matthew 25:34) and to "enter into the kingdom." (Mark 9:47; Luke 18:24) In a word, the idea of the kingdom of God was interpreted by Jesus in terms of spiritual quality, so that in a real sense men enter the kingdom now and find in the future age the flowering out and full release of the life with God and with one another that begins here. While, however, the Messianic age was thus deprived by Jesus of its early, crude characteristics, the picturesque inauguration of it by a last judgment was still retained, and repeatedly appears in his teaching. (E.g., Matthew 16:27; Matthew 25:31-33)

5. Hell, as the ultimate destination of the wicked, was another inherited factor in the thinking of Jesus. His word for it, Gehenna, "the Valley of Hinnom," is familiar in the writings of the later Judaism. The Valley of Hinnom (Cf. Nehemiah 11:30; Joshua 15:8; Joshua 18:1; 2 Chronicles 28:3) was a gorge outside the gates of Jerusalem where in earlier days idolaters had sacrificed their children to Molech. After Josiah's reforms and his pollution of the accursed spot, it became an object of horror to the Jews and was used for the incineration of refuse and of the bodies of animals and criminals, and in general for the disposal of anything noisome and unclean. The origin of the historic Hebrew picture of hell, therefore, may with some accuracy be located: "He defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech." (2 Kings 23:10)

Later, the Talmudic theology represented the mouth of hell as being in this valley, and drew the picture with vivid detail: "There are two palm-trees in the valley of Hinnom, between which a smoke arises.... And this is the door of Gehenna." (As quoted by J.T. Barclay: City of the Great King, p. 90) Hell itself, according to the teaching of the apocalyptic writings, was a great abyss full of fire, (The Book of Enoch 18:11-16) in the midst of the earth, and so vividly were its tortures imagined and the satisfaction of the righteous in the contemplation of them conceived that, according to Charles' understanding of the text, a notorious element in the later Christian doctrine of hell appears in a Jewish book, probably written during Jesus' lifetime:

. . . Thou wilt look from on high and wilt see thy enemies in Ge(henna), And thou wilt recognize them and rejoice And thou wilt give thanks and confess thy Creator. (The Assumption of Moses 10:10) In the first three Gospels, the word Gehenna is often used in the original Greek, (E.g., Matthew 5:22, Matthew 5:29-30; Matthew 10:28; Matthew 18:9; Mark 9:45-47)and there is nothing in its usage to distinguish its meaning from its Judaistic heritage. The "whole body" is likely to be "cast into hell"; (Matthew 5:29) there "both soul and body" may be destroyed; (Matthew 10:28) there is "eternal fire," (Matthew 25:41) "the furnace of fire"; (Matthew 13:42) there is "weeping and the gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 8:12; Matthew 13:42, Matthew 13:50; Matthew 22:13; Matthew 24:51; Matthew 25:30; Luke 13:28) and "their worm dieth not." (Mark 9:48) In all this Jesus was a pensioner on contemporary Judaism-even for the special phrases that he used. (E.g., Jdt 16:17) As for the permanence of this torture chamber, while the Greek word, a i w u i o (may mean age-long, and the corresponding Hebrew word means the same, there is no clear reason for supposing that Jesus entertained any mitigating thought about what he called "eternal punishment," (Matthew 25:46) or saw any end to its quenchless fire. To be sure, in one passage the penalties of God are said to be graded to the degree of guilt; (Luke 12:47-48) from another passage one may infer that after the "last farthing" of penalty is paid the sinner may hope for escape; (Matthew 5:25-26) from another passage one may argue that since only one sin can never be forgiven, "neither in this world, nor in that which is to come,'' (Matthew 12:32) there is the possibility of pardon for all other sins. Only by such dubious, and, in the last case, almost certainly mistaken inferences, however, can one introduce hope into Jesus' picture of Gehenna. The general statement still holds good that he took over the contemporary pattern of thought about hell, and, neither denying it nor seeming interested primarily in teaching it, he rather used it as a basis for redefining the qualities of character that are eternally disapproved by God. (Matthew 25:41-46)

These five familiar elements in the Jewish thinking of Jesus' day -- Sheol, the Messiah's coming, the resurrection, judgment day, and eternal punishment -- are present in Jesus' reported teaching. In view of this fact it is the more astonishing that his advent did, in the end, make so epochal a difference in man's outlook on immortality.

X This difference must be clear to the reader of the Scriptures as soon as he steps from the Old into the New Testament. In the Old Testament even the references to life after death are few; in the New Testament from the beginning the reader is in an atmosphere of radiant hope concerning life eternal. Moreover, when one adds to the Old Testament the later Jewish writings and moves from them into the Christian scriptures, a contrast still is evident. "When we pass from Jewish literature to that of the New Testament," one scholar says concerning future life, "we find ourselves in an absolutely new atmosphere." (R.H. Charles: Eschatology; Hebrew, Jewish and Christian, p. 306) This impression should not blind us to the continuance in the Christian scriptures of the patterns of thought and imagination which we have been describing. Indeed, the vividness with which the first Jewish Christians continued to use their inherited categories is obvious in the way they thought of Jesus' death, his intermediate stay in Sheol, and his bodily resurrection. Still in the Apostles' Creed millions of Christians confess their faith that Jesus, when he died, "descended into hell," that is, into Hades or Sheol, but the average person, making this confession, does not clearly visualize the literal, geographical significance that this idea had at the first in the New Testament. So realistically was the visit of Jesus to the nether world conceived that early Christian

tradition pictured him as preaching the gospel to the rephaim there, thus giving them an opportunity for repentance and salvation. During the intermediate state between his cross and resurrection, when Jesus was in "Paradise" -- that is, the fortunate area of the nether world -- we read that "he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, that aforetime were disobedient (1 Peter 3:19-20). . . . For unto this end was the gospel preached even to the dead, that they might be judged indeed according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." (1 Peter 4:6)

Moreover, after this realistic and active stay in the nether world, Jesus' return to life on earth and, by ascension, to life in heaven, was presented in bodily terms and was picturesquely set in the framework of the three-storied Jewish cosmos. His resurrected body, as described in the assembled narratives of the New Testament, represents alike the original, primitive belief in a resuscitation of the flesh with all its earthly functions still intact and, as well, the later tendency to rarefy and spiritualize the idea of 'body' in the risen life. On one side, Jesus' body is real "flesh and bones"; (Luke 24:39) it is the body that was laid in the tomb revivified so that the tomb is empty; it can be seen and handled; it bears still the wounds of the crucifixion; it can even eat food, and Jesus partakes of "a piece of a broiled fish" to prove it. (Luke 24:36-43; John 20:20-27) On the other side, his flesh functions in utterly unfleshly ways, appearing and disappearing, passing through closed doors, and at last ascending visibly by levitation through the clouds into the sky. (John 20:26: Luke 24:31, Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9) However one may explain the rise of these stories, with their obvious conflict in the involved ideas of 'body,' their import is plain. In the New Testament, in so far as its sources were Jewish, the old dramatic picture of the future world still held sway, including Sheol and a physical resurrection to restored vitality on earth. Without such bodily restoration, so the narrative in Luke makes clear, only a ghost might return from Sheol -- "They were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they beheld a spirit" (Luke 24:37) -- and the one satisfactory proof that the apparition was not a ghost but a resurrected man lay in the evidence of "flesh and bones." This convinced belief in a resurrected body -- howbeit full of confusion as to what 'body' meant -- was the Jewish-Christian way of phrasing life after death. The history of this idea explains the wrestling of Paul over the problem of the Christian's resurrection. To him it was not a physical affair in any fleshly sense -- "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 15:50) -- but it was a bodily affair. Throughout the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians the reader can feel Paul struggling to express his profound faith that the incorruptible part of plan eternally survives his corruptible flesh. But always his Jewish heritage and training prevented his acceptance of the Greek idea of soul as immaterial, although he must have been acquainted with it. In the story of Paul's address to the Athenians, it is at this point that conflict becomes acute between his faith and theirs: "When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked." (Acts 17:32) Paul, however, was adamant upon this point. He wished not to be "unclothed "of his body in the future world, but "clothed upon" with a new body, (2 Corinthians 5:4) a fit spiritual organ and vehicle of his risen life. It seems clear, therefore, that Paul would be on the side of the more idealized and sublimated ideas of Christ's rising from the dead, and quite out of tune with stories about "flesh and bones" and meals of fish. In Paul's eyes the new organism given to the Christian, of whose resurrection Christ's was the prototype, (1 Thessalonians 4:14; 1 Corinthians 15:12 ff) would be utterly different from this present flesh. The body, he wrote, "is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." (1

Corinthians 15:35 ff)

Furthermore, in the New Testament generally, this Jewish insistence on keeping the body, however rarefied and spiritualized, as part of the future hope, was associated with the Jewish apocalyptic drama -- the sudden arrival of the Messiah on the clouds of heaven and the resurrection to eternal destinies. (E.g., 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17) Some of the conflicts already noted in the confused apocalyptic writings of the Jews reappear in the New Testament. The Book of Revelation, for example, is at odds with the Synoptic Gospels in having not one resurrection, but two, with a millennial reign of the Messiah on earth between them. (Revelation 20:15) Only in this passage does the millennium appear in the New Testament. Starting some two centuries before, as a way of stating the long but limited extent of the Messiah's earthly reign, the millennium had been formalized and made literal in Jewish thought. So an Egyptian Jew, writing probably during the half century preceding the advent of Jesus, figured that since the world was created in six days, and each day is with the Lord as a thousand years, the world would last six thousand years, and that, since after the six days came a day of rest, the world would have a millennial 'Sabbath' when its history was over. (The Book of the Secrets of Enoch [Slavonic Enoch]. See R.H. Charles: Eschatology; Hebrew, Jewish and Christian, p. 261) Thus from clever juggling with figures and texts came the literal significance of the famous Jewish-Christian millennium, which the Book of Revelation includes in its drama of the future.

If inherited categories and patterns of thought from the Jewish heritage thus persist into the New Testament, whence came the "absolutely new atmosphere" with regard to the hope of life eternal? The profound difference between typical passages in the New Testament, such as the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, and even the most confident passages in the Old Testament is striking. Yet the contrast is not explicable, so far as the New Testament as a whole is concerned, by basic change in the formal patterns of thought.

XI

There is, however, one New Testament book, the Fourth Gospel, where the inherited Jewish categories can be seen in process of reinterpretation. The reason for this rethinking of hope lies in the same factor -- the influence of Hellenistic thought -- that had caused in certain Jewish writings such as the Apocryphal book, The Wisdom of Solomon, the submergence of apocalyptic drama. That the Fourth Gospel shows Hellenistic influence is clear. To be sure, this need not mean conscious dependence on special sources, such as Philo of Alexandria, as has been commonly thought, nor need it reveal any thoroughgoing knowledge of NeoPlatonic philosophy. The ideas of Hellenism were in the air, and in a city such as Ephesus, where the Fourth Gospel probably originated, they would impregnate the thinking and speaking of intelligent people as familiarly as general ideas of evolution and of a law-abiding cosmos do among us today. The Fourth Gospel, therefore, represents early Christianity as it moved out from its first Palestinian setting into the Hellenistic world. The book is not primarily or formally philosophy; it is preaching -- the earnest endeavor to present Christ, and the "eternal life "he came to bestow, to the mind and conscience of a world thinking in Hellenistic terms. The opening verses, based on the idea of the Logos, would be understandable by all Ephesians who knew current thought, even though their special affiliations were as far apart as Stoicism, Neo-Platonism, Alexandrian Judaism, and Persian Zoroastrianism. All such schools of thought contained the idea of the Logos. So far as future life

was concerned, the Hellenistic hope' represented of old in the Orphic cults and moving through Platonic teaching into the characteristic thinking of cultured Hellenists, was phrased in terms of an immaterial soul escaping imprisonment in a material body. It was, therefore, critically at odds with the Hebrew phrasing. The Greeks taught the immortality of the soul; the Jews taught the resurrection of the body, an idea alien to the Greek mind at its best. Moreover, along with distaste for and disbelief in the idea of physical resurrection, the Greek mind could not be at peace with the apocalyptic drama in general, so that, from the beginning, Hellenistic Christianity questioned the inherited framework we have been describing. The Book of Revelation, for example, which is probably a Jewish apocalypse rewritten in Christian terms, was utterly uncongenial to Hellenists; it was, in consequence, opposed by the Eastern church when its admission to the sacred canon was pressed; and, in the end, it was accepted only after the use of allegory had substituted spiritual meanings for its literal intention. The Fourth Gospel represents this Hellenistic attitude at work within the New Testament. As the Book of Revelation is early Christianity cast in the mold of Jewish apocalyptic, so the Fourth Gospel is early Christianity trying to commend itself to the Hellenistic mind and, in order to do this, setting itself to supersede the literal dramatics of the Jewish hope. For example, judgment day, according to the Fourth Gospel, is not so much external and future as internal and present. It is removed from the outer world of picturable events into the inner world of spiritual experience. Repeatedly the Christ of the Fourth Gospel denies that his function is to sit in judgment on men, although in Jewish Christianity that aspect of his commission was magnified: "I came not to judge the world, but to save the world''; (John 12:47) "Think not that I will accuse you to the Father" ; (John 5:45) "God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world." (John 3:17) In so far as divine judgment takes place, it is operative here and now, an inherent testing of life by its responses to opportunity, a constant interior arbitrament by which light shows up darkness -- "He that believeth on him is not judged: he that believeth not hath been judged already. . . . And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light." (John 3:18-19) In this view of divine judgment, which dominates the Fourth Gospel, Jewish dramatics have disappeared and only a spiritual residuum remains. Christ has so revealed light that God need not judge any man, because that light, by being what it is, reveals the status of men's souls: "For neither doth the Father judge any man, but he hath given all judgment unto the Son." (John 5:22; cf. John 8:15-16)

Similarly, the triumphant arrival of the Messiah, in the Fourth Gospel, loses its theatricality and becomes a present, spiritual experience. The second coming of Christ is not so much a postponed, external event -- if, indeed, any passage in the Gospel can be certainly interpreted to mean that at all -- as it is an inward coming of Christ into the heart of the believer. The fourteenth chapter contains a deliberate discussion of this new view of Christ's coming, put upon the lips of Jesus as though he were presenting in advance a Hellenistic reinterpretation of the Jewish hope as it would appear in Ephesus at the end of the first century. He will not leave his disciples comfortless and desolate, he says, but will come to them and will manifest himself unto them; this coming is of such a kind, however, that it means his being in them and making his abode with them; far from being a visible, external manifestation, the world cannot see him, and only those who love him and are loved by him will inwardly know this divine parousia. (John 14:16-24) So radical a change was involved in this Hellenized version of the Messiah's coming that the Jewish objection to it is put upon the lips of "Judas (not Iscariot)" who marveled, we are told, at a second coming so inward and spiritual that it would not be dramatically obvious to the whole world. (John

14:22) This sublimated and spiritual understanding of Christ's coming dominates the Fourth Gospel.

Out of the same manner of thinking comes the Johannine idea of eternal life. The hope which the Synoptic Gospels had phrased in terms of the kingdom of God on earth is reinterpreted in terms of life eternal. Only three times in the Fourth Gospel is the kingdom even mentioned, (John 3:3; John 3:5; John 18:36) and in all three its spiritual, unworldly nature is emphasized. The great hope of this Gospel is not any kind of reign on earth but "eternal life," and even this, far from being a post-mortem goal, is a present, interior possession of the soul. "He that believeth hath eternal life"; (John 6:47) "He that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life"; (John 5:24) "This is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ" (John 17:3) -- this conception of immortal life as a present gift, inhering in the quality of spirit that Christ bestows, is characteristic of the Fourth Gospel. The writer even reveals his conscious awareness of the old view -- physical resurrection to an earthly kingdom -- and deliberately changes its meaning: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." (John 5:25) Note the "now is"! The dramatic scene of the general resurrection is spiritualized and made a present event in the souls of men. It is within the human spirit that the voice of Christ sounds and the dead rise to a new life which is eternal; there, in quality of living, men pass "out of death into life"; there, as the first Johannine Epistle puts it, "He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life." (1 John 5:12) In consequence, for those who have received Christ, the entire issue involved in the future hope is already settled. They have been raised from the dead; they have passed through the judgment; they have been born again and entered the kingdom; they already possess eternal life. Physical death, therefore, is only an incident, so lacking in determinative power that, in a deep sense, it is no longer real: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my word, he shall never see death.'' (John 8:51) Only in the light of this range of thought can Jesus' reported words to Martha be understood: "Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (John 11:23-26) Martha represents the Jewish belief in an external, postponed, physical resurrection; the Johannine Jesus represents the Hellenistic belief that both death and resurrection are spiritual states within the man. (On Johannine conception of eternal life, see E. F. Scott: The Fourth Gospel; Its Purpose and Theology, chap. 8)

Far from being a matter of merely historic interest, this contrast in the New Testament between Jewish and Hellenistic ways of thinking about the future life has remained ever since an unresolved dilemma in Christianity. In general, the best thinking of the church has followed the Fourth Gospel, but always the old picturesque apocalyptic drama, with its intermediate state, bodily resurrection, theatrical parousia, and millennial reign, has lured the imagination of multitudes. Even within the Fourth Gospel occasional phrases suggest the older pattern of thought, such as, for example, Jesus' promise, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also," (John 14:3) and his word to Peter, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" (John 21:22. On John 5:28-29, see

R. H. Charles: Eschatology; Hebrew, Jewish and Christian, pp. 370-372) Moreover, in the Johannine thought of the future there doubtless is a consummation in time by which the quality of spirit constituting life eternal will be crowned. In this sense there is a "day of judgment," (1 John 4:17) an ultimate denouement in which "the world passeth away, and the lust thereof," (1 John 2:17) and an eternal fulfillment of the life in Christ that begins here. The wonder is not that such sublimated reminiscences of apocalypticism should be present, but that the Johannine writer should have commended so boldly to the early church so radical a rethinking of its hope.

One reason, therefore, for the "absolutely new atmosphere" in the New Testament is to be found in this vivid apprehension of eternal life as a present possession, so real that he who has it has already received Christ's second coming, passed through the judgment, and been raised from the dead.

XII The distinctive quality of the New Testament in this regard is not, however, to be explained merely by a shift of mental categories. Like everything else characteristic of the Book at its best, this also goes back to the influence of Jesus' personality. The profoundest note struck in the Old Testament in the development of a future hope came, as we have seen, from the experience of communion with God. Let the interior fellowship of a soul with God be once conceived in terms of mutual care, so that as the soul adores and trusts the Most High, the Most High values and supports the soul, and the corollary is bound to be drawn that such a relationship predicts its own continuance. Such divine friendship is, to use Johannine language, 'eternal life,' and unless the world is so topsy-turvy that its material structure abides and its spiritual meaning perishes, what is thus excellent is, as Emerson said, permanent. This has always been the implicit logic of faith in immortality when it has been most powerful and morally significant. The deepest convictions of men in favor of future hope, therefore, have come not so much from those who have framed arguments for it as from those who have heightened life's spiritual value, given it new meaning, made it wealthy with fresh significance and purpose until it has seemed as though it ought to go on. The influence of Jesus in this realm cannot be understood without the apprehension of this major fact. He never argued for immortality. He did, however, introduce his disciples into a quality of life that incalculably elevated for them the significance of living. In particular, he made filial relationship with God a vital experience, and in so doing caused a fresh, original upthrust of confidence that death is an open door through which the soul's life with God moves on.

Indeed, the most characteristic thing Jesus is reported to have said about life after death makes this explicit. No one was surprised when, in speaking of the moral tests of future judgment, he took for granted the familiar thought patterns of his race and time. Once, however, he spoke about immortality not so much out of inherited frameworks of thought as out of his own vivid experience, and "when the multitudes heard it, they were astonished at his teaching. "(Matthew 22:31-33) What he said, in effect, was that when God enters into friendship with any personality, saying, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," there is henceforth no doubt of the continued life of such friends of the Most High, for "God is not the God of the dead but of the living. "That is, after he becomes the God of any soul he will never throw that soul away; the souls for whom God cares are always living, and not dead. The major influence of Jesus himself, therefore, in the matter of endless hope, sprang from the kind of life with God into which he introduced his followers. He moved them up into a quality of experience and a faith concerning it that made expectation of an endless future persuasively real.

How persuasively real he made it is clear not alone from their hopes for themselves but from their convictions concerning his own resurrection. The central factor in creating the difference between the Testaments with reference to life after death is the disciples' confidence that Jesus himself had been raised from the dead. Whatever opinion the modern mind may arrive at with regard to the origin and validity of the stories associated with Jesus' resurrection, the historic fact is clear that the first Christianity was essentially associated with a triumphant faith, not alone that death would be overcome but that it had been overcome. In this regard Paul was typical in insisting that if Christ had not been raised, his preaching was vain. (1 Corinthians 15:14) The development of ideas and stories related with Jesus' resurrection presents one of the most tangled, if not altogether insoluble, problems faced by New Testament scholarship. The assembled documents, as they now stand, suggest that the empty tomb and the sight and handling of the risen body were the origin of confidence in the resurrection, and that the experience of the early Christians afterward went on to further visions of him, more spiritually conceived, as, for example, Paul's on the Damascus road. Careful study of the New Testament, however, throws doubt on this and suggests the possibility that the line of development may have been in precisely the opposite direction. The New Testament plainly indicates two kinds of experience as bases of faith in Jesus' continued life -- one, the empty tomb and its associated events; the other, appearances of the heavenly Christ to various people, especially to Paul at his conversion. Chronologically, the written records of these spiritual visions of the heavenly Christ are the earlier. The Epistles of Paul antedate the Gospels, so that the first written testimony we possess to the resurrection of Jesus is 1 Corinthians 15:3-8, where Paul lists his own transforming sight of Christ as on a par with, and of the same sort as, all the other appearances of the risen Lord. The question inevitably rises: What if faith in Jesus' continued life originated in such spiritual experiences and was translated afterward into stories of physical resuscitation by the inveterate Jewish-Christian idea that without such revivification no life after death was conceivable?

Certainly it must be said that such experiences as Paul had on the Damascus road are intelligible and have often been reproduced in Christian history, but that as soon as we pass to the later writings, where the empty tomb and its related events are involved, we find ourselves amid dubious evidence and irreconcilable confusion. The earliest Gospel, Mark, has lost its original ending, as the Revised Version states, so that after verse eight of the final chapter we are dealing with a late addition not present in our oldest Greek manuscripts. As the main body of the Gospel is left, the story of the resurrection is reduced to terms so simple that only the finding of an empty tomb and the word of a young man that Jesus was not there remain; Jesus himself is not seen and the three women who found the tomb empty are too terrified to tell any one. When we turn from this to the late addition to Mark's Gospel and to the narratives of the later Gospels, Matthew, Luke, and John, we find a florescent growth of story, full of irreconcilable details. In Mark one young man announces to the surprised visitors at the tomb that Jesus is risen; in Luke, two men; in Matthew, one angel; in John, two angels. In Mark, the women, coming from the tomb, say "nothing to any one"; in Luke they tell "all these things to the eleven, and to all the rest"; in Matthew, they depart quickly and run to bring the disciples word. Whereas in Mark three women visit the tomb, and in Matthew two women, and in Luke three women plus a larger group, in John only Mary Magdalene is thus early at the sepulcher and she tells the first news, not to the eleven, but only to Peter and "the other disciple whom Jesus loved." In Matthew Jesus himself meets the women as they run from the tomb to tell the disciples; in Luke he does not meet them; in John he meets only Mary

Magdalene, not as she goes to tell the disciples about the empty sepulcher but after two disciples themselves have visited it. Neither in Matthew nor in Mark, even with the late addition, is there any account that the disciples themselves saw the empty tomb; in Luke Peter ran and looked into it; in John Peter and the "other disciple" both entered the sepulcher. As for specialties in the individual narratives, Matthew alone records the sealing and guarding of the tomb and he alone introduces an earthquake; Luke expands the story of the revelation on the road to Emmaus, which Mark's addition suggests, and introduces the meal of broiled fish partaken of by Jesus to prove the reality of his resuscitation; John alone, at the end of the century, narrates at length the conversation between Jesus and Mary Magdalene and records the scene between Jesus and Thomas and the appearance by the Sea of Galilee. (Cf. Mark 16:1-20; Matthew 27:62-66; Matthew 28:1-15; Luke 24:1-43; John 20:1-31; John 21:1-23) No straightforward dealing with these and other similar facts can resolve their incompatibility into even the semblance of consistent narrative. Moreover, underlying such disharmonies is the still more substantial conflict, which we earlier noted, between two ideas of Jesus' resurrected body, one altogether fleshly, the other so spiritualized as to escape the trammels of a material organism.

It is not clear, therefore, whether within the New Testament itself the idea of Jesus' resurrection started with an empty tomb and moved on to such spiritual 'appearances' as Paul experienced, or, on the other hand, started with 'appearances,' such as Paul lists along with his own vision of the heavenly Christ, and moved on to stories of a physical disentombment, which, in Jewish-Christian thought, would be the necessary phrasing of a resurrected life. Certainly, if the idea of Jesus' risen life started with any factual element associated with an empty tomb, that element was never clearly visualized, even in the imagination of the first disciples, and is now confused for us in narratives that contradict each other on every important detail.

Moreover, when one takes the full measure of Paul's experience on the Damascus road and of his subsequent thinking about the risen life, both of the Lord and of his followers, there is a profound disparity between his spiritual conceptions and the stories of a revivified body with its physical functions intact. Paul did not believe in the resurrection of the flesh; he specifically denied that "flesh and blood" continued after death; (1 Corinthians 15:50) and the spiritual 'body' with which he wished to be clothed moved in new dimensions altogether, quite different from the Jews' resuscitated "flesh and bones." So, too, the heavenly Christ was to Paul a spiritual presence. Being "the first fruits of them that are asleep," (1 Corinthians 15:20) he had gone ahead into that new world where flesh was left behind, and the "spiritual body" was not similar to but utterly unlike the "natural body." (1 Corinthians 15:35-44) In the New Testament, therefore, our earliest written testimony to the resurrection of Jesus comes from one who devoutly believed that Christ was "raised on the third day" (1 Corinthians 15:4) but who could not, consistently with his other thinking, have conceived it as the revivification of a physical body. It is, therefore, entirely possible that the New Testament's radiant confidence in Jesus' continued life had more profoundly spiritual origins than an empty tomb. It may have begun in the ardent conviction of the disciples that they were still in communion with their Master, that death could not control him, (Romans 6:9) that he had appeared to them in self-revelations, whether outwardly visible, as psychic investigators like Dr. Frederic Myers would say, (See Frederic W.H. Myers: Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death) or inwardly spiritual as the result of their own kindled faith. This type of experience, suggested not only in Paul but in some of the Gospel narratives, (E.g., Matthew 28:16-17; Mark

16:9-12) may have been the beginning of the conviction that Jesus was not dead but alive, and the more physical representations of the disentombment may have been an aftermath, caused by the insistent belief of the Jewish-Christian mind that resurrection was of necessity involved in life after death. The acceptance of such an hypothesis, however, leaves still unanswered a host of questions. No one who knows the full extent and complexity of the problem will be dogmatic about it. The tracing of the development of faith in Christ's risen life is still and probably always will be an unfinished task. Only one thing is certain -- the towering faith of the New Testament that Jesus is alive. By whatever route the first Christians arrived at that faith, their arrival itself is clear. Their confidence in his continued life turned their dismay at Calvary into triumph, and without it some of the most characteristic elements in the New Testament -- the radiant hope and joy of the whole Book, the Christ-mysticism of Paul, the shining reality of the eternal world in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the enthusiastic acceptance of sacrificial hardship exhibited by the early church -- are inexplicable. Fortunately, the sharing of this faith that Jesus is not dead, but alive, does not depend on any hypothesis as to its origin in the New Testament.

XIII

Along with the Johannine interpretation of future hope in terms of eternal life and the victorious faith of the first Christians in their Lord's conquest of death, other elements, sometimes not easily blended into a consistent whole, contributed to the New Testament's distinctive faith in life after death. While Paul, for example, always expected the speedy advent of Christ, the old apocalyptic scheme with its dramatic details was in his thinking increasingly sublimated. The spiritualizing of the eschatological hope had its Pauline as well as its Johannine form. Already Christ dwelt in the Christian's heart by faith; (Ephesians 3:17) already the faithful enjoyed "every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ." (Ephesians 1:3) While, therefore, Paul longed for the great consummation, when at Christ's coming "the body of our humiliation" would be fashioned anew and "conformed to the body of his glory," (Php 3:21) this climactic experience became less an external and imposed event and more the fulfillment of the Christian's present blessedness. Apparently this emphasis affected Paul's imagination of the future, although how much it is difficult to say. The individual's immediate passage through death into eternal glory is even suggested, and Paul, facing life and death, was "in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better." (Php 1:23) In his thinking, apparently, to be "absent from the body" was "to be at home with the Lord," (2 Corinthians 5:8) and in the contemplation of this the external dramatics of the traditional apocalyptic tended to grow dim. Some have even thought that according to one passage Christ's second coming in glory will disclose the saints not in Sheol waiting to be raised, but in heaven with him waiting to join his triumph. (Colossians 3:4) Whether Paul ever harmonized these various elements in his thinking and, if so, how he did it, we cannot know. One thing, however, is certain: with Paul as with the Fourth Gospel, the richness of present spiritual life in Christ was such that the central meanings of the apocalyptic drama tended to be conceived as already in spirit consummated for faithful believers. They had already been raised with Christ; (Colossians 2:12; Colossians 3:1) they were already "alive from the dead"; (Romans 8:13) they already sat "in the heavenly places." (Ephesians 2:6) Death, therefore, was to them an incident, a transition from this fleshly body to being "with the Lord. " A further problem of great interest concerns Paul's attitude toward the final estate of the wicked. If one accepts the account of the Apostle's preaching in Acts, he carried over into his Christian faith the Jewish doctrine "that

there shall be a resurrection both of the just and unjust." (Acts 24:15) In Paul's Epistles, however, no such clear declaration is either made or implied. When Christ comes, Paul says in Second Thessalonians, the disobedient will "suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord," (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9) but whether this involves a prior resurrection, on the one hand, or annihilation or endless torment, on the other hand, is not evident. Indeed, almost complete reticence characterizes Paul's Epistles with reference to the final estate of the wicked. It is worth noting, however, that in one passage the privilege of being made alive again is apparently confined to those "that are Christ's"; (1 Corinthians 15:22-23) that, in another, attaining "unto the resurrection from the dead "is represented as the prize of high endeavor rather than as a universal fact; (Php 3:10-11) that, in a third, an essential relationship is announced between the indwelling "Spirit of him that raised up Jesus" and the possibility of resurrection. (Romans 8:10-11) Logically, therefore, Paul could not have believed in the resurrection of the wicked; certainly they are not clearly placed in his picture of the ultimate outcome of the cosmos; whether they pass out of existence or remain in Sheol separated from Christ and his kingdom, it is difficult to say.

Paul's positive pictures of the ultimate triumph of God over all opposing forces at times suggest universalism -- "all things" sub- jected to Christ and he in turn subjected to God, "that God may be all in all." (1 Corinthians 15:28) Whether this involved the annihilation of all opposing forces, demonic and human, or their redemption, or their reduction to utter impotence in Sheol is not made clear. In some passages the old idea of two realms, one of eternal blessedness and the other an alien one of rebellious souls in misery, seems to have been overpassed. As Christ is the Being in whom all things cohere and have their meaning, so it is God's purpose "through him to reconcile all things unto himself." (Colossians 1:19-20) At his name "every knee" shall bow, and this will be true, says Paul, in all three levels of the cosmos, "of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth." (Php 2:9-11) All antagonistic "rule and all authority and power" shall in the end be "abolished," (1 Corinthians 15:24) and God will "sum up all things in Christ." (Ephesians 1:10) The New Testament, therefore, so far as faith in immortality is concerned, does possess an "absolutely new atmosphere." This newness, however, is strangely blended with old ways of thinking and nowhere is consistency to be found, either in the imaginative pictures or the intellectual categories used. That is to say, the New Testament is a living Book, representing new thoughts emerging out of old settings, and full of contrasts as individual minds and racial traditions contribute their distinctive qualities. Nevertheless, in this diversity there is unity -- the "promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come." (1 Timothy 4:8)

Considered as a whole, the development of ideas in the Bible concerning the future life represents one of the most notable and influential unfoldings of thought in history. At the beginning, Yahweh is pictured, not only as indignant at man's eating of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (Genesis 2:9) and so becoming conscious of sin, but as being anxious lest man should "take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever," and, in order to guard against this event, man is driven from Eden and its gates are guarded by "the flame of a sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." (Genesis 3:22-24) This, in the early Old Testament, Yahweh cherishes immortality as a divine prerogative which he will not share with man. As with social regimentation and behavioristic concepts of human nature, so too with the denial of immortality, what seems to many people a modern conclusion was, in fact, the primitive beginning. From that beginning the Bible records a long development of experience and thought consummated at last in

Christ, "who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." (2 Timothy 1:10)

01.07. Approximate Chronology of the Old Testament Writings

Approximate Chronology of the Old Testament Writings 1. Before the time of David, 1000 B.C.

Songs and lyrics, such as the song of Deborah (Judges 5:1-31); the song of the well (Numbers 21:17-18); the song of Lamech (Genesis 4:23-24); the taunt against the Amorites (Numbers 21:27-30); etc.

Oracles, such as Balaam's (Numbers 23:1-30, Numbers 24:1-25); the curse of Canaan (Genesis 9:25-27); the blessing of Jacob (Genesis 49:1-27); etc.

Sayings, such as Samson's riddle (Judges 14:14); Jotham's fable Judges 9:7-15); etc.

Possibly records of ancestral traditions, of the Exodus and the conquest, and quite probably notations of legal custom, afterwards incorporated in the early books of the Bible.

2. Between 1000 B.C. and 700 B.C.

History, such as the achievements of Saul, David, and Solomon (parts of First and Second Samuel and of First Kings); begin- nings of the royal annals and of the temple records; the rise and fall of Omri's dynasty (1 Kings 20:1-43, 1 Kings 21:1-29, 1 Kings 22:1-53; 2 Kings 3:1-27, 2 Kings 6:24-33, 2 Kings 8:7-15, 2 Kings 9:1-37, 2 Kings 10:1-36); etc.

Songs and parables, such as praise of David's victories (1 Samuel 18:7); Nathan's parable (2 Samuel 12:1-4); David's lamentation over Saul and Jonathan (2 Samuel 1:19 ff.); etc.

Laws, especially the Book of the Covenant (Exodus 20:23—23:19) and the Decalogue of Exodus 34:1-35.

Narratives, such as some stories of Elijah (1 Kings 17:1-24, 1 Kings 18:1-46, 1 Kings 19:1-21); of Elisha (2 Kings 2:1-25, 2 Kings 3:1-27, 2 Kings 4:1-44, 2 Kings 5:1-27, 2 Kings 6:1-33, 2 Kings 7:1-20, 2 Kings 8:1-29 in part; 2 Kings 13:14-21); the Judean Document of early narratives (Yahwist) about 8So B.C.; the Ephraimitic Document (Elohist) about 750 B.C. The writings of prophets—Amos, about 750 B.C.; Hosea, beginning about 745 B.C.; Isaiah of Jerusalem, beginning about 738 B.C.; Micah, beginning about 725 B.C.

3. From 700 B.C. to the fall of Jerusalem, 597 B.C.

Editorial combinations and completions -- the combination of the Judean and Ephraimitic narratives; the first edition of the Books of Kings.

Laws -- the publishing of Deuteronomy, 621 B.C. The writings of prophets -- Zephaniah about 627 B.C.; Jeremiah, beginning 626 B;C.; Nahum, about 610 B.C.; Habakkuk, beginning about 600 B.C.

4. From 597 B.C. to the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, 444 B.C.

Editorial work, such as the combination of the Judean and Ephraimitic Documents with Deuteronomy in the first six books of the Bible; the second edition of the Books of Kings; the edition of the stories of Joshua, Judges, and Samuel in the Deuteronomic tradition.

Laws, especially the "Holiness Code" (Leviticus 17:1-16, Leviticus 18:1-30, Leviticus 19:1-37, Leviticus 20:1-27, Leviticus 21:1-24, Leviticus 22:1-33, Leviticus 23:1-44, Leviticus 24:1-23, Leviticus 25:1-55, Leviticus 26:1-46) and the Priestly Code. The writings of prophets -- Jeremiah, extending till after 585 B.C.; Ezekiel, 593-57I B.C.; Isaiah of Babylon (Isaiah 40:1-31, Isaiah 41:1-29, Isaiah 42:1-25, Isaiah 43:1-28, Isaiah 44:1-28, Isaiah 45:1-25, Isaiah 46:1-13, Isaiah 47:1-15, Isaiah 48:1-22, Isaiah 49:1-26, Isaiah 50:1-11, Isaiah 51:1-3, Isaiah 52:1-15, Isaiah 53:1-12, Isaiah 54:1-17, Isaiah 55:1-13), between 546 and 539 B.C.; Haggai, 520 B.C.; Zechariah 1:1-21, Zechariah 2:1-13, Zechariah 3:1-10, Zechariah 4:1-14, Zechariah 5:1-11, Zechariah 6:1-15, Zechariah 7:1-14, Zechariah 8:1-23, beginning 520 B.C.; Malachi, about 460 B,C.; Obadiah, date uncertain; and various additions to the prophetic books, such as Amos 9:8-15; Isaiah 56:1-12, Isaiah 57:1-21, Isaiah 58:1-14, Isaiah 59:1-21, Isaiah 60:1-22, Isaiah 61:1-11, Isaiah 62:1-12, Isaiah 63:1-19, Isaiah 64:1-12, Isaiah 65:1-25, Isaiah 66:1-24; Isaiah 34:1-17, Isaiah 35:1-10; Isaiah 11:10-16; etc.

Poetry -- The Lamentations, about 586-550 B.C.

5. From 444 B.C. to 100 B.C.

History -- the memoirs of Nehemiah, shortly after 432 B.C., and Ezra, shortly after 444 B.C.; the Books of the Chronicles,

300 - 250 B.C.

Poetry and general literature -- the Books of Ruth, Proverbs, Job, Esther, Song of Solomon, Jonah, Ecclesiastes, and the completed Book of the Psalms. The writings of prophets -- Joel, about 400 B.C.; Zechariah 9:1-17, Zechariah 10:1-12, Zechariah 11:1-17; additions to the prophetic books, such as Isaiah 19:1-25; Isaiah 23:1-14; Isaiah 33:1-24; etc.

Apocalypses -- Isaiah 24:1-23, Isaiah 25:1-12, Isaiah 26:1-21, Isaiah 27:1-13; Daniel, 165 B.C.; Zechariah 12:1-14, Zechariah 13:1-9, Zechariah 14:1-21.

01.08. Approximate Chronology of the New Testament Writings

Approximate Chronology of the New Testament Writings

Early collections of the sayings of Jesus and notes on his life, written shortly after his death, possibly in Aramaic, and afterwards used in the compilation of the Gospels.

First and Second Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians, 50-51 A.D. The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians, 57-58 A.D., date contested. The Corinthian correspondence, probably four letters now combined in First and Second Corinthians, 54-55 A.D. The Epistle of Paul to the Romans, 56-57 A.D. The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians, to Philemon, to the Ephesians, and to the Philippians, 59-61 A.D. The Gospel according to Mark, about 70 A.D. The Epistle to the Hebrews, 80-90 A.D. The Gospel according to Matthew, 90-95 A.D. The Gospel according to Luke, and The Acts, about 90 A.D. The Book of Revelation, about 95 A.D. The First Epistle of Peter, about 96 A.D. The Epistle of James, about 100 A.D. The Gospel according to John, and the three Epistles of John, about 100 A,D. The Epistle to Titus and the two Epistles to Timothy, about 100 A.D., with earlier genuine portions from Paul probably included. The Epistle of Jude, uncertain. The Second Epistle of Peter, about 150 A.D.

02.00. Christianity and Progress

Christianity and Progress

By HARRY EiMERSON FOSDICK Professor of Practical Theology in the Union Theological Seminary;

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New York NEW YORK CHICAGO Fleming H. Revell Company LONDON AND EDINBURGH Copyright, 1922, by FLEMING H, REVELL, COMPANY New York: 158 Fifth Avenue Chicago: 17 North Wabash Ave.

London: 21 Paternoster Square Edinburgh: 75 Princes Street THE COLE LECTURES late Colonel E. W. Cole of Nashville, Tennessee, donated to Vanderbilt University the sum of five thousand dollars, afterwards increased by Mrs. E. W. Cole to ten thousand, the design and conditions of which gift are stated as follows:

"The object of this fund is to establish a foundation for a perpetual Lectureship in connection with the School of Religion of the University, to be restricted in its scope to a defense and advocacy of the Christian religion. The lectures shall be delivered at such intervals, from time to time, as shall be deemed best by the Board of Trust; and the particular theme and lecturer will be determined by the Theological Faculty. Said lecture shall always be reduced to writing in full, and the manuscript of the same shall be the prop erty of the University, to be published or dis posed of by the Board of Trust at its discretion, the net proceeds arising therefrom to be added to the foundation funji, or otherwise used for the benefit of the School of Religion."

Preface NO one who ever has delivered the Cole Lectures will fail to associate them, in his grateful memory, with the hospi table fellowship of the elect at Vanderbilt Uni versity. My first expression of thanks is due to the many professors and students there, lately strangers and now friends, who, after the burdensome preparation of these lectures, made their delivery a happy and rewarding experi ence for the lecturer. I am hoping now that even though prepared for spoken address the lectures may be serviceable to others who will read instead of hear them. At any rate, it seemed best to publish them without change in form addresses intended for public delivery and bearing, I doubt not, many marks of the spoken style I have tried to make a sally into a field of inquiry where, within the next few years, an increasing company of investigators is sure to go. The idea of progress was abroad in the world long before men became conscious of it; and men became conscious of it in its practical effects long before they stopped to study its transforming consequences in their philosophy and their religion. No longer, however, can we avoid the intellectual issue which is involved in our new outlook upon a dynamic, mobile, pro gressive world. Hardly a better description could be given of the intellectual advance which has marked the last century than that which Renan wrote years ago : " the substitution of the category of becoming for being, of the con ception of relativity for that of the absolute, of movement for immobility." 1 Underneath all other problems which the Christian Gospel faces is the task of choosing what her

attitude shall be toward this new and powerful force, the idea of progress, which in every realm is remaking man s thinking.

I have endeavoured in detail to indicate my indebtedness to the many books by whose light I have been helped to see my way. In addition I wish to express especial thanks to my friend and colleague, Professor Eugene W. Lyman, who read the entire manuscript to my great profit ; and, as well, to my secretary, Miss Mar garet Renton, whose efficient service has been an invaluable help.

H. E. F.

New York a Renan: Averroes et L Averroisme, p. vii.

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02.01. The Idea of Progress

LECTURE I THE IDEA OF PROGRESS I THE supposition that fish do not recog nize the existence of water nor birds the existence of air often has been used to illustrate the insensitive unaware- ness of which we all are capable in the pres ence of some encompassing medium of our lives. The illustration aptly fits the minds of multitudes in this generation, who live, as we all do, in the atmosphere of pro gressive hopes and yet are not intelligently aware of it nor conscious of its newness, its strangeness and its penetrating influence. ,We read as a matter of course such charac teristic lines as these from Tennyson:

" Yet I doubt not thro the ages one increas ing purpose runs, And the thoughts of men are widen d with the process of the suns."

Such lines, however, are not to be taken as a matter of course; until comparatively recent generations such an idea as that never had dawned on anybody s mind, and the story of the achievement of that progressive interpretation of history is one of the most fascinating narratives in the long record of man s mental Odyssey. In particular, the Christian who desires to understand the in fluences, both intellectual and practical, which are playing with transforming power upon Christianity today, upon its doctrines, its purposes, its institutions, and its social applications, must first of all understand the idea of progress. For like a changed climate, which in time alters the fauna and flora of a continent beyond the power of human conservatism to resist, this progres sive conception of life is affecting every thought and purpose of man, and no at tempted segregation of religion from its in fluence is likely to succeed. The significance of this judgment be comes the more clear when we note the fact that the idea of progress in our modern * sense is not to be found before the sixteenth} century. Men before that time had lived without progressive hopes just as before Copernicus they had lived upon a stationary earfrh. Man s life was not thought of as a growth; gradual change for the better was not supposed to be God s method with man kind ; the future was not conceived in terms of possible progress; and man s estate on earth was not looked upon as capable of in definite perfectibility. All these ideas, so familiar to us, were undreamed of in the ancient and medieval world. The new as tronomy is not a more complete break from the old geocentric system with its stationary earth than is our modern progressive way of thinking from our fathers static conception of human life and history.

II

It will be worth our while at the begin ning of our study to review in outline this development of the idea of progress, that we may better understand the reasons for its emergence and may more truly estimate its revolutionary effects. In the ancient world the Greeks, with all their far-flung speculations, never hit upon the idea of progress. To be sure, clear intimations, scattered here and there in Greek literature, indicate faith that man in the past had im proved his lot. Aeschylus saw men lifted from their hazardous lives in sunless caves by the intervention of Prometheus and his sacrificial teaching of the arts of peace;

Euripides contrasted the primitive barba rism in which man began with the civilized estate which in Greece he had achieved but this perceived advance never was erected into a progressive idea of human life as a whole. Rather, the original barba rism, from which the arts of civilization had for a little lifted men, was itself a degener ation from a previous ideal estate, and human history as a whole was a cyclic and repetitious story of never-ending rise and fall. Plato s philosophy of history was typical: the course of cosmic life is divided into cycles, each seventy-two thousand solar years in length; during the first half of each cycle, when creation newly comes from the hands of Deity, mankind s estate is happily ideal, but then decay begins and each cycle s latter half sinks from bad to worse until Deity once more must take a hand and make all things new again. Indeed, so far from reaching the idea of progress, the an cient Greeks at the very center of their thinking were incapacitated for such an achievement by their suspiciousness of change. They were artists and to them the perfect was finished, like the Parthenon, and therefore was incapable of being im proved by change. Change, so far from meaning, as it does with us, the possibility of betterment, meant with them the cer tainty of decay; no changes upon earth in the long run were good; all change was the sure sign that the period of degeneration had set in from which only divine interven tion could redeem mankind. Paul on Mars Hill quoted the Greek poet Aratus concern ing the sonship of all mankind to God, but Aratus s philosophy of history is not so pleasantly quotable:

" How base a progeny sprang from golden sires ! And viler shall they be whom ye beget." 1 Such, in general, was the non-progressive outlook of the ancient Greeks. Nor did the Romans hit upon the idea of progress in any form remotely approaching our m.odern meaning. The casual reader, to be sure, will find occasional flares of ex pectancy about the future or of pride in the advance of the past which at first suggest progressive interpretations of history. So Seneca, rejoicing because he thought he knew the explanation of the moon s eclipses, wrote: "The days will come when those things which now lie hidden time and human diligence will bring to light. . . . iAratus of Soli : Phaenomena, lines 122-3. The days will come when our posterity will marvel that we were ignorant of truths so obvious." 1 So, too, the Epicureans, like the Greek tragedians before them, believed that human knowledge and effort had lifted mankind out of primitive barbarism and Lucretius described how man by the devel opment of agriculture and navigation, the building of cities and the establishment of laws, the manufacture of physical conve niences and the creation of artistic beauty, had risen, " gradually progressing," to his present height. 2 Such hopeful changes in the past, however, were not the prophecies of continuous advance; they were but inci dental fluctuations in a historic process which knew no progress as a whole. Even the Stoics saw in history only a recurrent rise and fall in endless repetition so that all apparent change for good or evil was but the influx or the ebbing of the tide in an essentially unchanging sea. The words of Marcus Aurelius are typical : " The periodic movements of the universe are the same, up and down from age to age " ; " He who has seen present things has seen all, both every- 1 Lucius Annaeus Seneca: Naturalium Quaestionum, Liber VII, 25.

2 T. Lucretius Carus : De Rerum Natura, Lib. V, 1455 "Paullatim docuit pedetentim progredienteis." thing which has taken place from all eter nity and everything which will be for time without end; for all are of one kin and of one form " ; " He who is forty years old, if he has any understanding at all, has, by^ virtue of the uniformity that prevails, seen all things which have been and all that will be." 1 When with these Greek and Roman ideas the Hebrew-Christian influences blended, no conception of progress in the modern sense was added by the Church s contribu tion.

To be sure, the Christians uncom promising faith in personality as the object of divine redemption and their vigorous hope about the future of God s people in the next world, if not in this, calcined some elements in the classical tradition. Belief in cycles, endlessly repeating themselves through cosmic ages, went by the board. This earth became the theatre of a unique experiment made once for all; in place of the ebb and flow of tides in a changeless sea, mankind s story became a drama moving toward a climactic denouement that would shake heaven and earth together in a divine cataclysm. But this consummation of all 1 Marcus Aurelius Antoninus: Meditations, IX, 28; VI, 37; XI, 1. history was not a goal progressively to be achieved; it was a divine invasion of the world expectantly to be awaited, when the victorious Christ would return and the Day of Judgment dawn. The development of this apocalyptic phrasing of hope has been traced too often to require long rehearsal here. If the Greeks were essentially philosophers and welcomed congenially ideas like endless cos mic cycles, the Hebrews were essentially practical and dramatic in their thinking and they welcomed a picture of God s victory capable of being visualized by the imagina tion. At first their national hopes had been set on the restoration of the Davidic king dom ; then the Davidic king himself had grown in their imagination until, as Mes siah in a proper sense, he gathered to him self supernal attributes; then, as a child of their desperate national circumstances, the hope was born of their Messiah s sudden coming on the clouds of heaven for their help. Between the Testaments this expec tation expanded and robed itself with pomp and glory, so that when the Christians came they found awaiting them a phrasing of hope which they accepted to body forth their certainty of God s coming sovereignty over all the earth. This expectation of com ing triumph was not progressive; it was cataclysmic. It did not offer the prospect of great gains to be worked for over long, periods of time; it offered a divine invasion of history immediately at hand. It was pictured, not in terms of human betterment to be achieved, but of divine action to be awaited. The victory would suddenly come like the flood in Noah s day, like the light ning flashing from one end of the heaven to the other, like a thief in the night. To be sure, this eager expectation of a heavenly kingdom immediately to arrive on earth soon grew dim among the Christians, and the reasons are obvious. For one thing, the Church herself, moving out from days of hardship to days of preferment and pros perity, began to allure with her inviting prospects of growing power the enthusi asms and hopes of the people, until not the suddenly appearing kingdom from the heavens, but the expanding Church on earth became the center of Christian interest. For another thing, Christ meant more to Christians than the inaugurator of a post poned kingdom which, long awaited with ardent expectation, still did not arrive; Christ was the giver of eternal life now.

More and more the emphasis shifted from what Christ would do for his people when he came upon the clouds of heaven to what he was doing for them through his spiritual presence with them. Even in the Fourth Gospel one finds this good news that Christ had already come again in the hearts of his people insisted on in evident contrast with the apocalyptic hope literally conceived. For another thing, dramatic hopes of a sud den invasion of the world are always the offspring of desperate conditions. Only when people are hard put to it do they want history catastrophically stopped in the midst of its course. The Book of Daniel must be explained by the tyrannies of Antiochus Epiphanes, the Book of Revelation by the persecutions of Domitian, the present re crudescence of pre-millennialism by the tragedy of the Great War. But when the persecution of the Church by the State gave way to the running of the State by the Church ; when to be a Christian was no longer a road to the lions but the sine qua non of preferment and power; when the souls under the altar ceased crying, " How long, O Master, the holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood

on them that dwell on the earth ? " then the apocalyptic hopes grew dim and the old desire for a kingdom immediately to come was subdued to an expectation, no longer im perative and urgent, that sometime the course of history would stop on Judgment Day. In all these Greek and Roman, Hebrew and Christian contributions, which flowed together and then flowed out into the medi eval age, there was no suggestion of a mod ern idea of progress, and in the medieval age itself there was nothing to create a fresh phrasing of expectancy. Men were aware of the darkness of the days that had fallen on the earth; even when they began to rouse themselves from their lethargy, their thoughts of greatness did not reach forward toward a golden age ahead but harked back " To the glory that was Greece And the grandeur that was Rome," and their intellectual life, instead of being an adventurous search for new truth, was a laborious endeavour to stabilize the truth already formulated in the great days of the early Church. Indeed, the Church s specific contribution of a vividly imagined faith in a future world, as the goal of the most absorbing hopes and fears of men, tended rather to confirm than to dissipate the static con ception of earthly life and history. With an urgency that the ancient world had never known the Christian world believed in im mortality and visualized the circumstances of the life to come so concretely that in a medieval catechism the lurid colour of the setting sun was ascribed to the supposi tion that " he looketh down upon hell." l Nothing in this life had any importance save as it prepared the souls of men for life to come. Even Roger Bacon, his mind flash ing like a beacon from below the sky-line of the modern world, w r as sure that all man s knowledge of nature was useful only in pre paring his soul to await the coming of Anti christ and the Day of Judgment. There was no idea of progress, then, in the medieval age. Human life and history were static and the only change to be anticipated was the climactic event " When earth breaks up and heaven expands."

Ill The emergence of modern progressive 1 Andrew D. White: A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom, Vol. I, p. 97. hopes out of this static medievalism is one of the epic occurrences of history. The causes which furthered the movement seem now in retrospect to be woven into a fabric so tightly meshed as to resist unraveling". Nevertheless, it is not difficult to see at least some of the major factors which furthered this revolutionary change from a static to a progressive world.

Among the first, scientific invention is surely to be noted. Even Roger Bacon, prophecying with clairvoyant insight far in advance of the event, foresaw one of the determining factors of the modern age: " Machines for navigating can be made so that without rowers great ships can be guided by one pilot on river or sea more swiftly than if they were full of oarsmen. Likewise vehicles are possible which with out draught-animals can be propelled with incredible speed, like the scythed chariots, as we picture them, in which antiquity fought. Likewise a flying machine is pos sible in the middle of which a man may sit, using some ingenious device by which arti ficial wings will beat the air like those of a flying bird. Also machines, small in size, can be constructed to lift and move unlim ited weights, than which in an emergency nothing is more useful." So dreamed the great friar in the thirteenth century. When, then, we find the minds of men first throw ing off their intellectual vassalage to an tiquity and beginning to believe in them selves, their present powers and their future prospects, it is this new-found mas tery over nature s latent resources which is the spring and fountain of their confidence. Cardan, in the sixteenth century, marveling at the then modern inventions of the com pass, the printing press, and gunpowder, cried, " All antiquity has nothing compa rable to these three things." 2 Every year from that day to this has

deepened the im pression made upon the minds of men by the marvelous prospect of harnessing the resources of the universe. The last one hundred and twenty-five years have seen the invention of the locomotive, the steam ship, the telegraph, the sewing machine, the camera, the telephone, the gasoline engine, wireless telegraphy and telephony, and the many other applications of electricity. As one by one new areas of power have thus iRoger Bacon: Epistola de Secretis Operibus Artis et Naturae, et de Nullitate Magiae, Caput IV, in Opera Quaedam Hactenus Inedita, edited by J. S. Brewer, p. 533.

2 Jerome Cardan: De Subtilitate, Liber Decimussepti- mus : De artibus, artificiosisque rebus. come under the control of man, with every conquest suggesting many more not yet achieved but brought within range of possi bility, old theories of cosmic degeneration and circular futility have gone to pieces, the glamour of antiquity has lost its allurement, the great days of humanity upon the earth have been projected into the future, and the gradual achievement of human progress has become the hope of man.

Another element in the emergence of the modern progressive outlook upon life is im mediately consequent upon the first: world wide discovery, exploration and intercom munication. Great as the practical results have been which trace their source to the adventurers who, from Columbus down, pioneered unknown seas to unknown lands, the psychological effects have been greater still. Who could longer live cooped up in a static world, when the old barriers were so being overpassed and new continents were inviting adventure, settlement, and social experiment hitherto untried? The theolog ical progressiveness of the Pilgrim Fathers, starting out from Leyden for a new world, was not primarily a matter of speculation; it was even more a matter of an adventurous spirit, which, once admitted into life, could not be kept out of religious thought as well. In Edward Winslow s account of Pastor Robinson s last sermon before the little company of pioneers left Leyden, we read that Robinson " took occasion also miser ably to bewaile the state and condition of the Reformed Churches, who were come to a period in Religion, and would goe no further than the instruments of their Refor mation: As for example, the Lutherans they could not be drawne to goe beyond what Luther saw, for whatever part of God s will he had further imparted and revealed to Calvin, they will die rather than embrace it. And so also, saith he, you see the Calvinists, they stick where he left them: a misery much to bee lamented; For though they were precious shining lights in their times, yet God hath not revealed his whole will to them : And were they now living, saith hee, they would bee as ready and willing to em brace further light, as that they had re ceived." Static methods of thinking are here evidently going to pieces before the impact of a distinctly unstatic world. They were looking for " more truth and light yet to breake forth out of his holy Word " 2 iRdward Winslow: Hypocrisie Unmasked, p. 97. 2Ibid. because they lived in a time when new things had been happening at an exhilarat ing rate and when pioneering adventure and general travel in a world of open avenues were already beginning to have that liberat ing effect which has increased with every passing century.

Closely allied with the two elements al ready noted is a third: the increase of knowledge, which, as in the case of astron omy, threw discredit upon the superior claims of antiquity and made modern men seem wiser than their sires. For ages the conviction had held the ground that the ancients were the wisest men who ever lived and that we, their children, were but infants in comparison. When, therefore, the Copernican astronomy proved true, when the first terrific shock of it had passed through resultant anger into wonder and from wonder into stupefied acceptance, and from

that at last into amazed exultation at the vast, new universe unveiled, the credit of antiquity received a stunning blow. So far was Aristotle from being " the master of those who know " whom the medievalists had revered, that he had not even known the shape and motion of the earth or its re lation with the sun. For the first time in history the idea emerged that humanity accumulates knowledge, that the ancients were the infants, that the moderns represent the age and wisdom of the race. Consider the significance of those words of Pascal in the seventeenth century: " Those whom we call ancient were really new in all things, and properly constituted the infancy of mankind ; and as we have joined to their knowledge the experience of the centuries which have followed them, it is in ourselves that we should find this antiquity that we revere in others." * For the first time in history men turned their faces, in their search for knowledge, not backward but for ward, and began to experience that attitude which with us is habitual standing on tip toe in eager expectancy, sure that to morrow some new and unheard of truth will be revealed.

New inventions, new discoveries, new knowledge even before the eighteenth century all these factors were under way. Then a new factor entered which has played a powerful part in substituting a progres sive for a static world: new social hopes. iBlaise Pascal: Opuscules, Preface to the Treatise on Vacuum, in The Thoughts, Letters and Opuscules of Blaise Pascal, Translated by O. W. Wight, p. 550. The medieval age had no expectation of a better social life on earth. Charity was common but it was purely individual and remedial; it did not seek to understand or to cure the causes of social maladjustment; it was sustained by no expectation of better conditions among men ; it was valued be cause of the giver s unselfishness rather than because of the recipient s gain, and in conse quence it was for the most part unregulated alms-giving, piously motived but ineffi ciently managed. In the eighteenth century a new outlook and hope emerged. If man could pioneer new lands, learn new truthi and make new inventions, why could he not devise new social systems where human life would be freed from the miseries of mis- government and oppression? With that question at last definitely rising, the long line of social reformers began whichi stretched from Abbe de Saint-Pierre to the latest believer in the possibility of a more decent and salutary social life for human kind. The coming of democracy in govern ment incalculably stimulated the influence of this social hope, for with the old static forms of absolute autocracy now broken up, with power in the hands of the people to seek as they would " life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," who could put limits to the possibilities? The medieval age was gone; the modern age had come, and its dis tinctive note was progress, with new in ventions, new discoveries, new knowledge and new social hope.

It w r ould be a fascinating task to watch these interweaving factors at their work and to trace their commingled influence as slowly their involved significance became clear, now to this man and now to that. The best narrative that has been written yet of this epochal movement is contained in Professor Bury s volume on " The Idea of Progress." There one sees- the stream of this progressive conception of life pushing its way out as through a delta by way of many minds, often far separated yet flowing with the same water. Some men attacked the ancients and by comparison praised the modern time as Perrault did with " The* Age of Louis the Great " ; some men fore saw so clearly the possibility of man s con trol over nature that they dreamed of ter restrial Utopias as Francis Bacon did in " New Atlantis " ; some men, like Descartes, sought to grasp the intellectual conditions of human improvement; and others, like Condorcet, became the fervid prophets of human perfectibility; some, like Turgot, re- examined history in terms of the new

ideas; and some, like Saint Simon and Comte, sought to discover the law by which all progress moves. This new idea of life and history came " by divers portions and in divers manners," but no one can doubt its arrival. The life of man upon this earth was no longer conceived as static; it was pro gressive and the possibilities that lay ahead made all the achievements of the past seem like the play of childhood. At last, in the nineteenth century, the climactic factor was added which gathered up all the rest and embraced them in a com prehensive philosophy of life. Evolution became a credible truth. No longer a dim conjecture, it was established in biology, and then it spread its influence out into every area of human thought until all history was conceived in genetic terms and all the sciences were founded upon the evo lutionary idea. Growth became recognized as the fundamental law of life. Nothing in the universe without, or in man s life within, could longer be conceived as having sprung full-statured, like Minerva from the head of Jove. All things achieved maturity by grad ual processes. The world itself had thus come into being, not artificially nailed to gether like a box, but growing like a tree, putting forth ever new branches and new leaves. When this idea had firmly grasped the human mind, the modern age had come indeed, and progress was its distinctive category of understanding and its exhilarat ing phrasing of human hope. Then came the days of mid-Victorian optimism with songs like this upon men s lips:

" Every tiger madness muzzled, every serpent passion kill d, Every grim ravine a garden, every blazing desert till d, " Robed in universal harvest up to either pole she smiles, Universal ocean softly washing all her war- less isles." i

IV

Any one, however, who has lived witH discerning thought through! the opening years of the twentieth century, must be aware that something has happened to chasten and subdue these wildly enthusi astic hopes of the mid-Victorian age. Others beside the " gloomy dean " of St. Paul s, whether through well-considered 1 Alfred Tennyson: Locksley Hall Sixty Years After. thought or through the psychological shock of the Great War, have come to look upon this rash, unmitigated enthusiasm about the earth s future as a fool s paradise. At any rate, no treatment of the idea of progress would be complete which did not dwell upon the limitations to that idea, now definitely obvious to thoughtful men. As early as 1879, in Saporta s " Le Monde des Plantes," we run upon one serious set back to unqualified expectations of progress. Men began to take into account the fact that this earth is not a permanent affair. " We recognize from this point of view as from others," wrote Saporta, " that the world was once young; then adolescent; that it has even passed the age of maturity; man has come late, when a beginning of physical decadence had struck the globe, his domain." * Here is a fact to give enthusi asm, over earthly progress serious pause. This earth, once uninhabitable, will be unin habitable again. If not by wholesale catas trophe, then by the slow wearing down of the sun s heat, already passed its climac teric, this planet, the transient theatre of the human drama, will be no longer the 1 Comte de Saporta: Le Monde des Plantes avant L* Apparition de L Homme, p. 109. scene of man s activity, but as cold as the moon, or as hot as colliding stars in heaven, will be able to sustain human life no more. The grandest material works of the human race," wrote Faye in 1884, " will have to be effaced by degrees under the action of a few physical forces which will survive man for a time. Nothing will remain, not even the ruins. 7 1

Every suggested clew to a possible escape from the grimness of the planet s dissolution has been followed up with careful search. The discovery of radioactivity seemed to promise endlessly

extended life to our sun, but Sir E. Rutherford, before the Royal Astronomical Society, has roundly denied that the discovery materially lengthens our estimate of the sun s tenure of life and has said that if the sun were made of uranium it would not because of that last five years the longer as a giver of heat. 2 Whether we will or not, we have no choice except to face the tremendous fact, calmly set down by von Hartmann in 1904: " The only question is whether . . . the world-process will work itself out slowly in prodigious lapse of time, 1 H. Faye: Sur L Origine du Monde. Chapitre XI p 256-7.

2 Joseph McCabe: The End of the World, p. 112. according to purely physical laws ; or whether it will find its end by means of some metaphysical resource when it has reached its culminating" point. Only in the last case would its end coincide with the fulfilment of a purpose or object; in the first case, a long period of purposeless existence would follow after the culmination of life." * In a word, men delighted at the prospect of human progress on this planet have made an idol of it, only to discover that on a transient earth it leads nowhere without God and immortality. One disciple of naturalism recently denied his desire to be lieve in God because he wanted a risky uni verse. But the universe without God is not risky; it is a foregone conclusion; the dice are all loaded. After the lapse of millions of years which, however long they be stretched out, will ultimately end, our solar system will be gone, without even a memory left of anything that ever was dreamed or done within it. That is the inevitable issue of such a " risky " universe. When scien tifically-minded men, therefore, now take a long look ahead, the Utopian visions of the mid-Victorian age are not foremost in their iEduard von Hartmann : Ansgewahlte Werke, viii, pp. 572-3 (Leipzig, 1904). thought. Rather, as one of them recently wrote :

" One is tempted to imagine this race of super men, of some millions of years hence, grimly con fronting the issue of extinction. Probably long be fore that time science will have perfectly mastered the problem of the sun s heat, and will be able to state precisely at what period the radiation will sink to a level which would normally be fatal to the liv ing inhabitants of the planets. Then will begin the greatest of cosmic events: a drama that has doubt less been played numbers of times already on the stage of the universe: the last stand of the wonder ful microcosm against the brute force of the macrocosm

" One conceives that our supermen will face the end philosophically. Death is losing its terrors. The race will genially say, as we individuals do to-day, that it has had a long run. But it will none-the-less make a grim fight. Life will be worth living, for everybody, long before that consummation is in sight. The hovering demon of cold and darkness will be combatted by scientific means of which we have not the germ of a conception." 1

If ever a river ran out into a desert, the river of progressive hopes, fed only from springs of materialistic philosophy, has done so here. At least the Greeks had their immor tality and the Hebrews their coming King dom of God, but a modern materialist, with all his talk of progress, has neither the one i Joseph McCabe: The End of the World, pp. 116- 117. nor the other, nor anything to take their place as an ultimate for hope. Whatever else may be true, progress on a transient planet has not done away with the need of God and life eternal.

Moreover, not only have our twentieth century thought and experience seriously qualified the meaning of progress on this earth by the limiting of the earth s duration ; men have come also to distrust, as a quite unjustified flourish of sentimentality, the mid-Victorian confidence in an

automatic evolution which willy-nilly lifts human ity to higher levels. Said Herbert Spencer, " Progress is not an accident, not a thing within human control, but a beneficent ne cessity." " This advancement is due to the working of a universal law; ... in virtue of that law it must continue until the state we call perfection is reached. . . . Thus the ultimate development of the ideal man is logically certain as certain as any con clusion in which we place the most implicit faith; ... so surely must the things we call evil and immorality disappear; so surely must man become perfect." l There is no

1 Herbert Spencer : Illustrations of Universal Progress, Chapter I, Progress: Its Law and Cause, p. 58; Social Statics, Part I, Chapter II, The Evanescence of Evil, Sec. 4, p. 78ff. scientific basis whatever for such a judg ment. Evolution is not an escalator which, whether or not man run in addition to its lift, will inevitably raise humanity to a heaven on earth. Potatoes in the cellar shooting out long white eyes in search of light are evolving, but they are evolving worse. Upon the basis of a scientific doc trine of evolution, no idolatrous supersti tion could be much more lacking in intel lectual support than Spencer s confidence in a universal, mechanical, irresistible move ment toward perfection. The plain fact is that human history is a strange blend of progress and regress; it is the story of the rhythmic rise and fall of civilizations and empires, of gains made only to be lost and lost only to be fought for once again. Even when advance has come, it has come by mingled progress and cataclysm as water passes, through gradual increase of warmth, from ice suddenly to liquid and from liquid suddenly to vapour. Our nineteenth century ideas of evolution tended to create in us the impression that humanity had made a smooth and even ascent. We artificially graded the ascending track of human his tory, leveled and macadamized it, and talked of inevitable progress. Such sentimental optimism has ceased even to be com forting, so utterly untenable has it become to every well-instructed mind. To such unfounded faith in automatic progress a valuable counterweight is ac quaintance with the life of a man like St. Augustine. As one reads Augustine s ser mons one can hear in the background the collapse of a great civilization. One can tell from his discourses when the barbarians began to move on Rome. One can hear the crash when Alaric and his hordes sacked the Eternal City. One can catch the accent of horror at the tidal waves of anarchy that everywhere swept in to engulf the falling empire. " Horrible things," said Augustine, " have been told us. There have been ruins, and fires, and rapine, and murder, and tor ture. That is true; we have heard it many times; we have shuddered at all this dis aster; we have often wept, and we have hardly been able to console ourselves." At last, the empire in ruins, the old civiliza tion tottering to its collapse, Augustine died in his episcopal city of Hippo, while the barbarians were hammering at the city gates. Through such scenes this generation too has lived and has had to learn again, iLouis Bertrand: Saint Augustin, p. 342. what we never should have forgotten, that human history is not a smooth and well- rolled lawn of soft ascents; that it is mountainous, precipitous, terrific a coun try where all progress must be won by dint of intelligence and toil, and where it is as easy to lose the gains of civilization as it is to fall over a cliff or to surrender a wheat field to the weeds. An archeologist in Mesopotamia talked with an Arab lad who neither read, himself, nor knew any one who did; yet the lad, when he acknowledged this, stood within a stone s throw of the site where milleniums ago was one of the great est universities of the ancient world and where still, amid the desolation, one could dig and find the old clay tablets on which the children of that ancient time had learned to write. Progress? Regress! While history as a whole, from the Cro- Magnon man to the twentieth century, does certainly suggest a great ascent, it has not been an automatic levitation. It has been a fight, tragic

and ceaseless, against destruc tive forces. This world needs something more than a soft gospel of inevitable prog ress. It needs salvation from its ignorance, its sin, its inefficiency, its apathy, its silly optimisms and its appalling carelessness.

Nevertheless, though it is true that our modern ideas of progress on this earth never in themselves can supply an adequate philosophy of life, and though it is true that they do not dispense with, but rather em- 1 phasize, our need of God and immortality I and the saving powers which Christians find 1 in Christ, yet those ideas have in them a permanent contribution to the life of man from whose influence the race cannot es cape. When we have granted the limita tions which disillusioned thoughtfulness suggests concerning progress upon this earth, it still remains true that, in our new scientific control over the latent resources of the earth without and over our own mental and moral processes within, we have a machinery for producing change that opens up exciting prospects before human ity. Never in our outlook upon man s earthly future can we go back to the end less cosmic cycles of the Greeks or the apocalyptic expectations of the Hebrews. We are committed to the hope of making progress, and the central problem which Christianity faces in adjusting her thought and practice to the modern age is the problem of coming to intelligent terms with this dominant idea.

These lectures are an excursion to spy out this land and to see, if we may, what the idea of progress through the scientific con trol of life is likely to mean and ought to) mean to Christianity. If this modern idea is not intelligently guided in its effect upon our faith and practice, it will none the less have its effect in haphazard, accidental, un- guided, and probably ruinous ways. If one listens, for example, to the preaching of lib eral ministers, one sees that every accent of their teaching has been affected by this prevalent and permeating thought. The God they preach no longer sits afar like Dante s deity in the stationary empyrean beyond all reach of change; their God is here in the midst of the human struggle, " their Captain in the well-fought fight." H. G. Wells may be a poor theologian but he is one of our best interpreters of popular thought and his idea of God, marching through the world " like fifes and drums," calling the people to a progressive crusade for righteousness, is one which modern folk find it most easy to accept. He is a God of progress who undergirds our endeavours for justice in the earth with his power; who fights in and for and with us against the hosts of evil; whose presence is a guarantee of ultimate victory; and whose effect upon us is to send us out to war against ancient human curses, assured that what ought to be done can be done. As men s thought of God has thus been molded by the idea of progress on the earth, so, too, the Christ they preach is not pri marily, as of old, the victim by whose sub- stitutionary sacrifice the race of men has found an open door from the bottomless pit of endless woe to a blessed immortality in Paradise. The modern emphasis is all an other way. Christ is the divine revealer whose spirit alone can transform individuals and save society. The sort of character he was, the life he lived, the ideas he promul gated, are the salt that can preserve human life, the light that can illumine the way to a kingdom of righteousness on earth. He himself is the leader in the fight for that kingdom, his sacrifice part of the price it costs, his spirit the quality of life that is in dispensable to its coming, and when we think of him we sing, " The Son of God goes forth to war. . . . Who follows in his train ? "

So, too, the Church, as presented by typ ical modern preachers, is no longer an ark to which, from the flood of wrath divine, the few may flee for safety. If men tried to preach in that way, the message would stick in their throats. The Church is primarily an instrument in God s hands to bring

per sonal and social righteousness upon the earth. When her massed influence over comes a public evil or establishes a public good, men find the justification of her exis tence and a first-rate weapon of apologetic argument in her behalf. When wars come, the Church is blamed because she did not prevent them; when wars are over, she takes counsel how she may prove* the validity of her message by making their re currence impossible; and the pitiful dismem berment of the Church by sects and schisms is hated and deplored, not so much because of economic waste or theological folly, as because these insane divisions prevent social effectiveness in bringing the message of Christ to bear influentially on modern life.

Likewise, hope, deeply affected by mod ern ideas of earthly progress, is not prima rily post-mortem, as it used to be. Men believe in immortality, but it seems so natu rally the continuance of this present life that their responsible concern is chiefly centered here. The hopes which waken immediate enthusiasm and stir spontaneous response are hopes of righteousness victorious upon the earth. Because men believe in God, they believe that he has great purposes for humankind. The course of human history is like a river: sometimes it flows so slowly that one would hardly know it moved at all ; sometimes bends come in its channel so that one can hardly see in what direction it in tends to go; sometimes there are back- eddies so that it seems to be retreating on itself. If a man has no spiritual interpreta tion of life, if he does not believe in God, he may well give up hope and conclude that the human river is flowing all awry or has altogether ceased to move. A Christian, however, has a spiritual interpretation of life. He knows that human history is a river not a whirlpool, nor a pond, but a river flowing to its end. Just as, far inland, we can tell that the Hudson is flowing to the sea, because the waters, when the tide comes in, are tinctured with the ocean s quality, so now, we believe that we can tell that the river of human history is flowing out toward the kingdom of our God. Al ready the setback of the divine ocean is felt among us in ideals of better life, personal, social, economic, national. That it is Chris tianity s function to believe in these ideals, to have faith in the possibility of their real ization, to supply motives for their achieve ment, and to work for them with courage and sacrifice, is the familiar note of modern Christian hope. The modern apologetic also is tinctured with this same quality. Not as of old is it a laboured working out of metaphysical propositions. Rather, a modern Christian preacher s defense of the Gospel may be paraphrased in some such strain as this: You never can achieve a decent human life upon this planet apart from the Christian Gospel. Neither outward economic comfort nor international treaties of peace can save the day for humanity. Not even when our present situation is described as " a race between education and catastrophe " has the case been adequately stated. What kind of education is meant? If every man and woman on earth were a Ph. D., would that solve the human problem ? Aaron Burr had a far keener intellect than George Wash ington. So far as swiftness and agility of intelligence were concerned, Burr far out distanced the slow-pacing mind of Washington. But, for all that, as you watch Burr s life, and many another s like him, you understand what Macaulay meant when he exclaimed : " as if history were not made up of the bad actions of extraordinary men, as if all the most noted destroyers and deceiv ers of our species, all the founders of arbi trary governments and false religions, had not been extraordinary men, as if nine tenths of the calamities which have befallen the human race had any other origin than the union of high intelligence with low de sires." Was Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon unintelligent? Caesar and Napoleon were they unintelligent? Has the most monu mental and destructive selfishness in human history been associated with poor minds? No, with great minds, which, if the world was to be saved their devastation, needed to be reborn into a new spirit. The

trans forming gospel which religion brings is in dispensable to a building of the kingdom of righteousness upon the earth.

Wherever one listens, then, to the typical teaching of modern Christians, he finds him self in the atmosphere of the idea of prog ress. Men s thoughts of God, of Christ, of the Church, of hope, their methods of apolo getic, are shaped to that mold are often thinned out and flattened down and made cheap and unconvincing by being shaped to that mold so that an endeavour to achieve an intelligent understanding of Christian ity s relationship with the idea of progress is in part a defensive measure to save the Gospel from being unintelligently mauled and mishandled by it. Marcus Dods, when he was an old man, said: "I do not envy those who have to fight the battle of Chris tianity in the twentieth century." Then, after a moment, he added, " Yes, perhaps I do, but it will be a stiff fight." It is a stiff fight, and for this reason if for no other, that before we can get on much further in a progressive world we must achieve with wisdom and courage some fundamental re constructions in our Christian thinking.

02.02. The Need For Religion

LECTURE II THE NEED FOR RELIGION I

ONE of the first effects of the idea of progress, whose development our last lecture traced, has been to increase immeasurably man s self reliance and to make him confident of humanity s power to take care of itself. At the heart of the idea of progress is man s new scientific control over life, and this new mastery, whereby the world seems ready to serve the purposes of those who will learn the laws, is the domi nant influence in both the intellectual and practical activities of our age. That relig ion, in consequence, should seem to many of minor import, if not quite negligible, and that men, trusting themselves, their knowl edge of law, their use of law-abiding forces, their power to produce change and to im prove conditions, should find less need of trusting any one except themselves, was in evitable, but for all that it is fallacious. Already we have seen that a stumbling and uneven progress, precarious and easily frus trated, taking place upon a transient planet, goes but a little way to meet those elemental human needs with which religious faith has dealt. In our present lecture we propose a more specific consideration of this abiding necessity of religion in a progressive world. How difficult it is to go back in imagina tion to the days before men grasped the meaning of natural law! We take gravita tion for granted but, when Newton first pro claimed its law, the artillery of orthodox pulpits was leveled against him in angry consternation. Said one preacher, Newton " took from God that direct action on his works so constantly ascribed to him in Scripture and transferred it to material mechanism " and he " substituted gravita tion for Providence/ That preacher saw truly that the discovery of natural law was going to make a profound difference to re ligion. For ages men had been accustomed to look for the revelation of supernatural power in realms where they did not know the laws. And as men were tempted to look for the presence of God in realms where they did not know the laws, so in those Andrew D. White: A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom, Vol. II, p. 16. realms they trusted God to do for them what they did not know how to do for themselves.

Then men began discovering natural laws, and every time they laid their hands on a new natural law they laid their hands on a new law-abiding force and began doing for themselves things of which their fathers had never dreamed. Stories of old-time miracles are overpassed in our modern days. Did Aladdin once rub a magic lamp and build a palace ? To-day, knowledge of engi neering laws enables us to achieve results that would put Aladdin quite to shame. He never dreamed a Woolworth Tower. Did the Israelites once cross the Red Sea dry- shod? One thing, however, they never would have hoped to do : to cross under and over the Hudson River day after day in multitudes, dry-shod. Did an axe-head float once when EHsha threw a stick into the water? But something no Elisha ever dreamed of seeing we see continually: iron ships navigating the ocean as though it were their natural element. Did Joshua once prolong the day for battle by the staying of the sun? Yet Joshua could never have con ceived an habitual lighting of the city s homes and streets until by night they are more brilliant than by day. Did Jericho s walls once fall at the united shout of a be sieging people? Those childlike besiegers, however, never dreamed of guns that could blast Jerichos to pieces from seventy miles away. Huxley was right when he said that our

highly developed sciences have given us a command over the course of non- human nature greater than that once at tributed to the magicians. The consequence has been revolutionary. Old cries of dependence upon God grow unreal upon the lips of multitudes. Some times without knowing it, often without wanting it, men are drawn by the drift of modern thought away from all confidence in God and all consciousness of religious need. Consider two pictures. The first is an epi demic in New England in the seventeenth century. Everybody is thinking about God; the churches are full and days are passed in fasting and agonizing prayer. Only one way of getting rid of such an epidemic is known : men must gain new favour in the sight of God. The second picture is an epi demic in New England in the twentieth century. The churches are not full they are closed by official order and popular con sent to prevent the spread of germs. Comparatively few people are appealing to God; almost everybody is appealing to the health commissioner. Not many people are rely ing upon religion; everybody is relying upon science. As one faces the pregnant significance of that contrast, one sees that in important sections of our modern life science has come to occupy the place that God used to have in the reliance of our fore fathers. For the dominant fact of our gen eration is power over the world which has been put into our hands through the knowl edge of laws, and the consequence is that the scientific mastery of life seems man s in dispensable and sufficient resource. The issue is not far to seek. Such has been public confidence in the efficacy and adequacy of this scientific control of life to meet all human needs, that in multitudes of minds religion has been crowded to the wall. Why should we trust God or concern ourselves with the deep secrets of religious faith, if all our need is met by learning laws, blowing upon our hands, and going to work? So even Christians come secretly to look upon their Christianity as a frill, some thing gracious but not indispensable, pleas ant to live with but not impossible to live without. Christian preachers lose their ability, looking first upon their spiritual message and then upon their fellow men, to feel how desperately the two need each other. Religion has become an " elective in the university of life." But religion cannot persist as a frill; it either is central in its importance or else it is not true at all. Its great days come only when it is seen to be indispensable. We may use what artificial respiration we will upon the Church, the days of the Church s full power will not come until the conviction lays hold upon her that the endeavour to found civilization upon a materialistic science is leading us to perdition; that man needs desperately the ministry of religion, its insight into life s meanings, its control over life s use, its in ward power for life s moral purposes; that man never needed this more than now, when the scientific control of life is arm ing him with so great ability to achieve his aims.

II As we try to discern wherein man s need of religion lies with reference to the scien tific control of life, let us start with the proposition that, when we have all the facts which science can discover, we still need a spiritual interpretation of the facts. All our experiences are made up of two elements : first, the outward circumstance, and second, the inward interpretation. On the one side is our environment, the world we live in, the things that befall us, the kaleidoscopic changes of fortune in the scenery of which our lives are set. On the other side are the inward interpretations that we give to this outward circumstance. Experience is com pounded of these two elements. This clearly is true in ordinary living. Two men, let us say, go to their physicians and are told that they have only a few months to live. This is the fact which faces both of them. As we watch them, however, we are at once aware that this fact is not the whole of their experience. One of the men crumples up ; he " collapses into a yield ing mass of plaintiveness and fear." Think ing of the event which he is facing, he sees nothing there but horror. That is his in terpretation of it. The other man so looks upon the

event which is coming that his family, far from having to support his spirit, are supported by him. He buoys them up ; he carries them along; his faith and courage are contagious ; and when he thinks of his death it appears in his eyes a great adventure concerning which the old hymn told the truth :

" It were a well-spent journey Though seven deaths lay between." That is his interpretation. As we regard the finished experiences of these two men, we see clearly that, while the same fact lay at the basis of both, it was the inward in terpretation that determined the quality of the experience. This power to transform facts so that they will be no longer merely facts, but facts plus an interpretation, is one of the most distinctive and significant elements in human life. The animals do not possess it. An event befalls a dog and, when the dog is through with it, the event is what it was before. The dog has done nothing to it. But the same event befalls a man and at once something begins to happen to it. It is clothed in the man s thought about it; it is dressed in his appreciation and under standing; it is transformed by his interpre tations. The event comes out of that man s life something altogether different from what it was when it went in. The man can do almost anything with that event. For our experiences do not fall into our lives in single lumps, like meteors from a distant sky of fate; our experiences always are made up of the fortunes that befall us and the interpretations that we give to them. So far as the relative importance of these two factors is concerned, we may see the truth in the application of our thought to happiness. If there is any area in human experience where the outward circumstance might be supposed to control the results, it is the realm of happiness ; yet probably nine- tenths of the problem of happiness lies, not in the outward event, but in the inward in terpretation. If we could describe those conditions in which the happiest people whom we have known have lived, can any one imagine the diversity of environment that would be represented in our accounts? Let them move in procession before the eyes of our imagination, those happy folk whose friendship has been the benediction of our lives ! What a motley company they are! For some are blind, and some are crippled, and some are invalid ; not many are rich and fortunate; many are poor a com pany of handicapped but radiant spirits whose victorious lives, like the burning bush which Moses saw, have made in a desert a spot of holy ground. If, now, we ask why it is that happiness can be so amaz ingly independent of outward circumstance, this is the answer: every experience has two factors, the fortune that befalls and the in ward interpretation of it; and, while we often cannot control the fortune, we always can help with the interpretation. That is in our power. That is the throne of our sovereignty over our lives.

Ill The deep need of a worthy interpretation of life is just as urgent in a world where the idea of progress reigns as in any other, and to supply that need is one of the major functions of religion. For religion is some thing more than all the creeds that have en deavoured to express its thought. Religion is something more than all the organiza tions that have tried to incarnate its pur poses. Religion is the human spirit, by the grace of God, seeking and finding an interpretation of experience that puts sense and worth, dignity, elevation, joy, and hope into life. A body of students recently requested an address upon the subject: " What is the use of religion anyway?" The group of ideas behind the question is not hard to guess: that science gives us all the facts, that facts and their laws are all we need, that the scientific control of life guarantees prog ress, and that religion therefore is super fluous. But in such a statement one tower ing interrogation has been neglected : what about the interpretation of the very facts which science does present? Could not one address

himself to the question of those students in some such way as this? You say that science has disclosed to us the lei- sureliness of the evolving universe. Come back, then, on the long road to the rear on which Bishop Usher s old date of creation is a way station an infinitesimal distance behind us; come back until together we stand at the universe s postern gate and look out into the mystery whence all things came, where no scientific investigation can ever go, where no one knows the facts. What do you make of it? Two voices rise in answer. One calls the world " a mechan ical process, in which we may discover no aim or purpose whatever." 1 And another voice says :

" The heavens declare the glory of God ; And the firmament showeth his handiwork." 2 1 Quoted in the Hibbert Journal, Vol. Ill, January 1905, p. 296. 2 Psalms 19:1. That is not a difference in facts, upon which we can get our hands. That is a difference in the interpretation of the facts. Or come forward together to look into that mystery ahead, toward which this uni verse and we within it are so prodigiously plunging on. Do we not often feel, upon this earth whirling through space, like men and women who by some weird chance have found themselves upon a ship, ignorant of their point of departure and of their desti nation? For all the busyness with which we engage in many tasks, we cannot keep ourselves from slipping back at times to the ship s stern to look out along its wake and wonder whence we came, or from going at times also to its prow to wonder whither we are headed. What do you make of it? Toward what sort of haven is this good ship earth sailing a port fortunate or ill? Or may it be there is no haven, only endless sailing on an endless sea by a ship that never will arrive? So questioning, we listen to conflicting voices. One says there is no future except ultimate annihilation, and an other voice sings:

" All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good, shall exist." That is not a difference in the facts, that eyes can see and hands handle ; that is a dif ference in the interpretation of the facts. Or from such large considerations come down into some familiar experience of daily life. Here is a man having a hard battle between right and wrong. There is no more impressive sight on earth to one who looks at it with understanding eyes. What do you make of this mysterious sense of duty which lays its magisterial hand upon us and will not be denied? At once various voices rise. Haeckel says the sense of duty is a " long series of phyletic modifications of the phronema of the cortex." * That is his interpretation. And Wordsworth:

" Stern Daughter of the Voice of God ! O Duty !" This sharp contrast is not a difference be tween facts, which can be pinned down as the Lilliputians pinned down Gulliver; it is a difference in the interpretation of the facts. Or let us go together up some high hill from which we can look out upon the strange history of humankind. We see its agonies and wars, its rising empires fol- iErnst Haeckel : The Wonders of Life, p. 413. lowed by their ruinous collapse, and yet a mysterious advance, too, as though man kind, swinging up a spiral, met old questions upon a higher level, so that looking back to the Stone Age, for all the misery of this present time, we would be rather here than there. What can we make of it? Haupt- mann s Michael Kramer says " All this life is the shuddering of a fever." And Paul says, " the eternal purpose which he pur posed in Christ." That is not a difference in the facts. It is a difference in the inter pretation of the facts.

Yet once more, come into the presence of death. The facts that human eyes can see are plain enough, but what can we make of it this standing on the shore, waving fare well to a friendly ship that loses itself over the rim of the world? Says Thomson of the world s treatment of man, " It

grinds him some slow years of bitter breath, Then grinds him back into eternal death." And Paul says : " This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is writ ten, Death is swallowed up in victory." That is not a contrast between facts ; that is a contrast between interpretations of facts. Is it not plain why religion has such an unbreakable hold upon the human mind? The funeral of Christianity has been pre dicted many times but each time the de ceased has proved too lively for the obse quies. In the middle of the eighteenth century they said that Christianity had one foot in the grave, but then came the amaz ing revival of religious life under the Wes- leys. In the middle of the last century one wiseacre said, " In fifty years your Chris tianity will have died out " ; yet, for all our failures, probably Christianity in all its history has never made more progress than in the last half century. If you ask why, one reason is clear: man cannot live in a universe of uninterpreted facts. The scien tific approach to life is not enough. It does not cover all the ground. Men want to know what life spiritually means and they want to know that it " means intensely, and means good." Facts alone are like pieces of irritating grit that get into the oyster shell; the pearl of life is created by the in terpretations which the facts educe. In this difference between the facts of ex perience and their interpretations lies the secret of the contrast between our two words existence and life. Even before we define the difference, we feel it. To exist is one thing; to live is another. Existence is comprised of the bare facts of life alone the universe in which we live, our heritage and birth, our desires and their satisfac tions, growth, age and death. All the facts that science can display before us comprise existence. But life is something more. Life is existence clothed in spiritual mean ings ; existence seen with a worthy purpose at the heart of it and hope ahead, existence informed by the spirit s insights and tinder- standings, transfigured and glorified by the spirit s faiths and hopes. It follows, there fore, that while existence is given us to start with, life is a spiritual achievement. A man must take the facts of his existence whether he wants to or not, but he makes his life by the activity of his soul. The facts of exis tence are like so much loose type, which can be set up to many meanings. One man leaves those facts in chaotic disarrangement or sets them up into cynical affirmations, and he exists. But another man takes the same facts and by spiritual insight makes them mean gloriously, and he lives indeed. To suppose that mankind ever can be satis fied with existence only and can be called off from the endeavour to achieve this more abundant life, is utterly to misconceive the basic facts of human nature. And this pro found need for a spiritual interpretation of life is not satisfied by an idea of temporal progress, stimulated by a few circumstances which predispose our minds to immediate expectancy.

IV

When, therefore, any one asserts the ade quacy of the scientific approach to life, one answer stands ready to our hand: science deals primarily with facts and their laws, not with their spiritual interpretations. To put the same truth in another way, science deals with one specially abstracted aspect of the facts ; it drains them of their qualitative ele ments and, reducing them to their quanti tative elements, it proceeds to weigh and measure them and state their laws. It moves in the realm of actualities and not in the realm of values. One science, for ex ample, takes a gorgeous sunset and reduces it to the constituent ether waves that cause the colour. What it says about the sunset is true, but it is not the whole truth. Ask anybody who has ever seen the sun riding like a golden galleon down the western sea ! Another science takes a boy and reduces him to his Bertillon

measurements and at the top of the statistics writes his name, "John Smith. That is the truth about John Smith, but it is not the whole truth. Ask his mother and see! Another science takes our varied and vibrant mental life and reduces it to its physical basis and states its laws. That is the truth about our mental life, but it is not the whole truth. What is more, it is not that part of the truth by which men really live. For men live by love and joy and hope and faith and spir itual insight. When these things vanish life is " a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, Signifying nothing." When a man takes that quantitative as pect of reality, which is the special province of natural science, as though it were the whole of reality, he finds himself in a world where the physical forces are in control. We, ourselves, according to this aspect of life, are the product of physical forces marionettes, dancing awhile because phys ical forces are pulling on the strings. In a word, when a man takes that quantitative aspect of reality, which natural science pre sents, as though it were the whole of real ity, he becomes a materialistic fatalist, and on that basis we cannot permanently build either personal character or a stable civiliza tion. It is not difficult, then, to see one vital significance of Jesus Christ: he has given us the most glorious interpretation of life s meaning that the sons of men have ever had. The fatherhood of God, the friendship of the Spirit, the sover eignty of righteousness, the law of love, the glory of service, the coming of the King dom, the eternal hope there never was an interpretation of life to compare with that. If life often looks as though his interpreta tion were too good to be true, we need not be surprised. Few things in the universe are as superficially they look. The earth looks flat and, as long as we gaze on it, it never will look any other way, but it is spherical for all that. The earth looks sta tionary and if we live to be as old as Me thuselah we never will see it move, but it is moving seventy-five times faster than a cannon ball! The sun looks as though it rose in the east and set in the west, and we never can make it look any other way, but it does not rise nor set at all. So far as this earth is concerned, the sun is standing still enough. We look as though we walked with our heads up and our feet down, and we never can make ourselves look other wise, but someone finding a safe stance out side this whirling sphere would see us half the time walking with our heads down and our feet up. Few things are ever the way they look, and the end of all scientific re search, as of all spiritual insight, is to get behind the way things look to the way things are. Walter Pater has a remember- able phrase, " the hiddenness of perfect things." One meaning, therefore, which Christ has for Christians lies in the realm of spiritual interpretation. He has done for us there what Copernicus and Galileo did in astronomy: he has moved us out from our flat earth into his meaningful universe, full of moral worth and hope. He has become, to us in this, our inner need, what the lumi nous phrase of the Book of Job describes, " An interpreter, one among a thousand." And in spite of all our immediate expec tancy, born out of our scientific control of life, mankind never needed that service more than now.

V

There is a second proposition to which we should attend as we endeavour to define the need for religion with reference to the scientific mastery of life. Consider why so often men are tempted to suppose that science is adequate for human purposes. Is it not because science supplies men with power? Steam, electricity, petroleum, radium with what progressive mastery over the latent resources of the universe does science move from one area of energy to another, until in the imagination of re cent generations she has seemed to stand saying: all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. With such power to bestow, is she not our rightful mistress? But who that has

walked with discerning eyes through these last few years can any longer be beguiled by that fallacious vision ? Look at what we are doing with this new power that science has given us ! The busi ness to which steel and steam and electric ity, explosives and poisons have recently been put does not indicate that humanity s problem is solved when new power is put into our hands. Even the power of wide spread communication can so be used that a war which began in Serajevo will end with lads from Kamchatka and Bombay blasted to pieces by the same shell on a French battlefield. Even the power of modern finance can be so used that nations will ex haust the credit of generations yet unborn in waging war. How some folk keep their cheap and easy optimism about humanity s use of its new energies is a mystery. |We have come pretty near to ruining ourselves with them already. If we do not achieve more spiritual control over them than we have yet exhibited we will ruin ourselves with them altogether. Once more in his tory a whole civilization will commit suicide like Saul falling on his ow r n sword. The scientific control of life, by itself, creates more problems than it solves. The problem of international disarmament, for example, has been forced on us by the fear of that perdition to the suburbs of which our race has manifestly come through the misuse of scientific knowledge. Humanity is dis turbed about itself because it has discovered that it is in possession of power enough to wreck the world. Never before did mankind have so much energy to handle. Multitudes of people, dubious as to whether disarma ment is practical, are driven like shuttles back and forth between that doubt, upon the one side, and the certainty, upon the other, that armament is even less practical. The statisticians have been at work upon this last war and their figures, like the measurements of the astronomers, grow to a size so colossal that the tentacles of our imaginations slip off them when we try to grasp their size. The direct costs of this last war, which left us with more and harder difficulties than we had at the beginning, were about $186,000,- 000,000. Is that practical? At the begin ning of 1922 almost all the nations in Europe, although by taxation they were breaking their people s financial backs, were spending far more than their income, and in the United States, far and away the richest nation on the planet, we faced an enormous deficit. Is that practical? In this situation, with millions of people unemployed, with starvation rampant, with social revolution stirring in every country not because peo ple are bad, not because they impatiently love violence, but because they cannot stand forever the social strain and economic con sequence of war what were we doing? We were launching- battleships which cost $42,000,000 to build, which cost $2,000,000 a year to maintain and which, in a few years, would be towed out to sea to be used as an experimental target to try out some new armour-piercing shell. I wonder if our children s children will look back on that spectacle and call it practical. In 1912 the naval expenses of this country were about $136,000,000. In 1021 our naval expenses were about $641,000,000 approximately five times greater in nine years. So over all the earth war preparations were pyramiding with an ever accelerating momentum. And because any man can see that we must stop sometime, we have been trying desperately to stop now; to turn our backs upon this mad endeavour to build civilization upon a materialistic basis, bulwarked by physical force; to turn our faces toward spiritual forces, fair play, reasonable conference, good-will, service and co-operation.

Yet how hard it is to make the change effective! Long ages ago in the primeval jungle, the dogs ancestors used to turn around three times in the thicket before they lay down, that they might make a com fortable spot to nestle in, and now your highbred Pekingese will turn around three times upon his silken cushion although there is no earthly reason why he should. So difficult is it to breed beasts and men out of their inveterate habits. So hard is it going to be to make men give up

the idea that force is a secure foundation for inter national relationships. Yet somehow that change must be made. They are having trouble with the housing problem in Tokyo and the reason is simple. Tokyo is built on earthquake ground and it is insecure. You cannot put great houses on unstable founda tions. One story, two stories, three stories that is about as high as they dare go. But in New York City one sees the skyscrapers reaching up their sixty stories into the air. The explanation is not difficult: Manhattan Island is solid rock. If you are going to build great structures you must have great foundations. And civilization is a vast and complicated structure. We cannot build it on physical force. That is too shaky. We must build it upon spiritual foundations.

There are those who suppose that this can be done by progress through the scien tific control of life, and who treat religion as a negligible element. Such folk forget that while a cat will lap her milk content edly from a saucer made of Wedgwood or china, porcelain or earthenware, and will feel no curiosity about the nature of the receptacle from which she drinks, human beings are not animals who thus can take their food and ask no questions about the universe in which it is served to them. We want to know about life s origin and mean ing and destiny. We cannot keep our ques tions at home. We cannot stop thinking. If this universe is fundamentally physical, if the only spark of spiritual life which it ever knew is the fitful flame of our own unsteady souls, if it came from dust and to dust will return, leaving behind no recollection of the human labour, sacrifice and aspiration which for a little time it unconsciously enshrined, that outlook makes an incalculable differ ence to our present lives. For then our very minds themselves, which have devel oped here by accident upon this wandering island in the skies, represent the only kind of mind there is, and what we do not know never was thought about or cared for or purposed by anyone, and we, alone in know ing, are ourselves unknown. The consequence of this sort of thinking, which is the essence of irreligion, is to be seen on every side of us in folk who, having thus lost all confidence in God and the real ity of the spiritual world, still try to labour for the good of men. They have kept one part of Christianity, its ideals of character and service; they have lost the other part, which assures them about God. In a word, they are trying to build an idealistic and serviceable life upon a godless basis. Now, the difficulty with this attitude toward life lies here: it demands a quality of spirit for which it cannot supply the motive. It de mands social hope, confidence, enthusiasm and sacrifice, and all the while it cuts their nerves. It tells men that the universe is fundamentally a moral desert, that it never was intended even to have an oasis of civil ization in it, that if we make one grow it will be by dint of our own effort against the deadset of the universe s apathy, that if, by our toil, an oasis is achieved, it will have precarious tenure in such alien and inhospi table soil, and that in the end it will disap pear before the onslaught of the cosmic forces; yet in the same breath it tells men to work for that oasis with hope, confidence, joy and enthusiastic sacrifice. This is a world view which asks of men a valorous and expensive service for which it cannot supply the driving power. Yet many of our universities are presenting just that outlook upon life to our young men and women. The youth are being urged to fight coura geously and sacrificially for righteousness upon the earth, and at the same time they are presented with a view of the back ground and destiny of human life similar to that which Schopenhauer expressed: Truly optimism cuts so sorry a figure in this theatre of sin, suffering, and death that we should have to regard it as a piece of sarcasm, if Hume had not explained its origin insincere flattery of God in the arro gant expectation of gain." I

What this generation, which so dispar ages religion and like the ancient Sadducee calls its good right arm its god, will ulti mately discover is that the fight for right eousness in character and in

society is a long and arduous campaign. The Bible says that a thousand years in God s sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. It certainly seems that way. It is a long and roundabout journey to the Promised Land. Generations die and fall by the way. The road is white with the bones of pilgrims who attained not the promises but saw them and greeted them

1 Arthur Schopenhauer: Die Welt als Wille und Vprstellung, Zweiter Band, Kapital 46, Von der Nichtigkeit und dem Leiden des Lebens, p. 669. from afar. Some Giordano Bruno, who gives himself to the achievement of man kind s high aims, is burned at the stake; centuries pass and on the very spot where he was martyred a monument is built with this inscription on it: " Raised to Giordano Bruno by the generation which he fore saw." This is exhilarating when the story is finished, but in the meantime it is hard work being Giordano Bruno and sacrifi- cially labouring for a cause which you care enough for and believe enough in and are sure enough about so that you will die for it. When such faith and hope and sacrifice are demanded one cannot get them by exhorta tion, by waving a wand of words to conjure his enthusiasm up. Nothing will do but a world-view adequate to supply motives for the service it demands. Nothing will do but religion.

One wonders why the preachers do not feel this more and so recover their con sciousness of an indispensable mission. One wonders that the churches can be so timid and dull and negative, that our ser mons can be so pallid and inconsequential. One wonders why in the pulpit we have so many flutes and so few trumpets. For here is a world with the accumulating energies of the new science in its hands, living in the purlieus of hell because it cannot gain spir itual mastery over the very power in which it glories. Here is a world which must build its civilization on spiritual bases or else col lapse into abysmal ruin and which cannot achieve the task though all the motives of self-preservation cry out to have it done, because men lack the very elements of faith and character which it is the business of religion to supply.

VI

We have said that when science has given us all its facts we still need a spiritual in terpretation of the facts; that when science has put all its energies into our hands we still need spiritual mastery over their use. Let us say in conclusion that, when science has given us all its power, we still need an other kind of power which it is not the busi ness of science to supply. Long ago some body who knew the inner meaning of relig ion wrote :

" The Lord is my shepherd ; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pas tures ;

He leadeth me beside still waters. He restoreth my soul." That last phrase sums up one of the deepest needs of human life. We are in constant want of spiritual repair; we are lost without a fresh influx of inward power; we desper ately need to have our souls restored. A young" British soldier once came in from the trenches where his aggressive powers had been in full employ and, having heard one of the finest concert companies that London could send out, he wrote in a letter to his family: "I have just come down from the trenches, and have been listening to one of the best concerts I ever attended. It makes one feel that perhaps there is a good God after all." The two aspects of life which that soldier discovered in himself all men possess. One takes us to life s trenches ; the other throws us back on some revelation of grace and beauty that we may be sure of God. With one we seek aggressively to master life; with the other we seek recep tively to be inspired. Every normal man needs these two kinds of influence: one to send him informed and

alert to his tasks, the other to float his soul off its sandbars on the rising tide of spiritual reassurance and power. Every normal man needs two atti tudes : one when he goes into action deter mined to do his work and to do it well, and the other when he subdues his spirit to re ceptivity and with the Psalmist cries, " My soul, wait thou in silence for God only ; For my expectation is from him." When science has given us all the power it can, we still need another kind of power which science cannot give.

Whatever else the scientific control of life may have accomplished, it has not saved mankind from the old and devastating prob lems of trouble and sin. So far as individ ual experience of these is concerned, there is little discernable difference between two thousand years before Christ and two thou sand years afterward. Still disasters fall upon our lives, sometimes as swift in their assault as wild beasts leaping from an un suspected ambush. Still troubles come, long drawn out and wearying, like the monoto nous dripping of water with which old tor turers used to drive their victims mad. Still sins bring shame to the conscience and tragic consequence to the life, and tiresome work, losing the buoyancy of its first inspi ration, drags itself out into purposeless effort and bores us with its futility. Folk now, as much as ever in all history, need to have their souls restored. The scientific control of life, however, is not adequate for that. Electricity and subways and motor cars do not restore the soul; and to know that there are millions upon millions of solar systems, like our own, scattered through space does not restore the soul; and to delve in the sea or to fly in the air or to fling our words through the ether does not restore the soul. The need of religion is perennial and would be though our scientific control over life were extended infinitely beyond our present hope, for the innermost ministry of religion to human life is the restoration of the soul. In this fact lies the failure of that type of naturalism which endeavours to keep relig ion as a subjective experience and denies the reality of an objective God. If we are not already familiar with this attempted sub stitution we soon shall be, for our young people are being taught it in many a class room now. One of the basic principles of this new teaching is belief in the spiritual life but, when one inquires where the spir itual life is, he discovers that it is altogether within ourselves there is no original, cre ative and abiding Spiritual Life from whom we come, by whom we are sustained, in whom we live. Rather, as flowers reveal in their fragrance a beauty which is not in the earth where they grow nor in the roots on which they depend, so our spiritual life is the mysterious refinement of the material out of which we are constructed, and it has nothing to correspond w r ith it in the source from which we sprang. Nevertheless, the new naturalism exalts this spiritual life within us, calls it our crown and glory, bids us cultivate and diffuse it, says about it nearly everything a Christian says except that it is a revelation of eternal reality. Moreover, it is difficult to differentiate from this outspoken group of professed natural ists another group of humanists who do re tain the idea of God, but merely as the sum total of man s idealistic life. " God," says one exponent, " is the farthest outreach of our human ideals." That is to say, our spiritual lives created God, not God our spiritual lives. God, as one enthusiastic devotee of this new cult has put it, is a sort of Uncle Sam, the pooling of the idealistic imaginations of multitudes. Of course he does not exist, yet in a sense he is real; he is the projection of our loyalties, affections, hopes.

It should go without saying that this idea of God has about as much intellectual validity as belief in Santa Claus and is even more sentimental, in that it is a deliberate attempt to disguise in pleasant and familiar terms a fundamentally materialistic interpretation of reality. The vital failure of this spiritual ized naturalism, however, lies in the inabil ity of its Uncle Sam to meet the deepest needs

on account of which men at their best have been religious. This deified projec tion of our ideals we made up ourselves and so we cannot really pray to him; he does not objectively exist and so has no unifying meaning which puts purposefulness into cre ation and hope ahead of it; he does not care for any one or anything and so we may not trust him ; and neither in sin can he forgive, cleanse, restore, empower, nor in sorrow comfort and sustain. A god who functions so poorly is not much of a god. Once more, therefore, one wonders why in a generation when, not less, but more, because of all our scientific mastery the souls of men are starved and tired, the Church is not captured by a new sense of mission. It is precisely in a day when the active and pug nacious energies of men are most involved in the conquest of the world that the spirit becomes most worn for lack of sustenance. To be assured of the nearness and reality and availability of the spiritual world is a matter of life and death to multitudes of folk to-day. There could hardly be a more alluring time in which to make the Holy Spirit real to the world. For the supreme moral asset in any man s life is not his ag gressiveness nor his pugnacity, but his ca pacity to be inspired to be inspired by great books, great music, by love and friend ship; to be inspired by great faiths, great hopes, great ideals; to be inspired su premely by the Spirit of God. For so we are lifted until the things we tried to see and could not we now can see because of the altitude at which we stand, and the things we tried to do and could not we now can do because of the fellowship in which we live. To one asserting the adequacy of the scientific control of life, therefore, the Christian s third answer is clear: man s deepest need is spiritual power, and spiri tual power comes out of the soul s deep fel lowships with the living God.

Such, then, is the abiding need of religion in a scientific age. To be scientifically minded is one of the supreme achievements of mankind. To love truth, as science loves it, to seek truth tirelessly, as science seeks it to reveal the latent resources of the universe in hope that men will use them for good and not for evil, as science does, is one of the chief glories of our race. When, however, we have taken everything that science gives, it is not enough for life. When we have facts, we still need a spiritual interpretation of facts ; when we have all the scientific forces that we can get our hands upon, we still need spiritual mastery over their use; and, beyond all the power that science gives, we need that inward power which comes from spiritual fellowships alone. Religion is indispensable. To build human life upon another basis is to erect civilization upon sand, where the rain de scends and the floods come and the winds blow and beat upon the house and it falls and great is the fall thereof.

02.03. The Gospel and Social Progress

LECTURE III THE GOSPEL AND SOCIAL PROGRESS OUR last lecture started with the propo sition that the dominant influence in the intellectual and practical activity of the modern age is man s scientific mas tery over life. This present lecture consid ers one of the consequences of this primary fact: namely, the humanitarian desire to take advantage of this scientific control of life so to change social conditions that man kind may be relieved from crushing handi caps which now oppress it. For the growth of scientific knowledge and control has been coincident with a growth of humanitarian sentiment. This movement for human re lief and social reform, in the midst of which we live, is one of the chief influences of our time. It has claimed the allegiance of many of the noblest folk among us. Its idealism, its call to sacrifice, the concreteness of the tasks which it undertakes and of the gains which it achieves, have attracted alike the fine spirits and the practical abilities of our generation. What attitude shall the Chris tian Church take toward this challenging en deavour to save society? How shall she re gard this passionate belief in the possibility of social betterment and this enthusiastic determination to achieve it? The question is one of crucial importance and the Church is far from united on its answer. Some Christians claim the w r hole movement as the child of the Church, born of her spirit and expressing her central purpose ; others dis claim the whole movement as evil and teach that the world must grow increasingly worse until some divine cataclysm shall bring its hopeless corruption to an end; others treat the movement as useful but of minor import, while they try to save men by belief in dogmatic creeds or by carefully engineered emotional experiences. Mean while, no words can exaggerate the fidelity, the vigour, the hopefulness, and the ele vated spirit with which many of our best young men and women throw themselves into this campaign for better conditions of living. Surely, the intelligent portion of the Church would better think as clearly as pos sible about a matter of such crucial import. At first sight, the devotee of social Chris tianity is inclined impatiently to brush aside as mere ignorant bigotry on the Church s part all cautious suspicion of the social movement. But there is one real difficulty which the thoughtful Christian must per ceive when he compares the characteristic approach to the human problem made by the social campaign, on the one side, and by religion, on the other. Much of the mod ern social movement seems to proceed upon the supposition that we can save mankind by the manipulation of outward circum stance. There are societies to change every thing that can be changed and, because the most obvious and easy subjects of trans formation are the external arrangements of human life, men set themselves first and chiefly to change those. We are always trying to improve the play by shifting the scenery. But no person of insight ever be lieved that the manipulation of circumstance alone can solve man s problems. Said Emer son, " No change of circumstances can re pair a defect of character." Said Herbert Spencer, " No philosopher s stone of a con stitution can produce golden conduct from leaden instincts." Said James Anthony Froude, " Human improvement is from within outwards." Said Carlyle, " Fool ! the Ideal is in thyself, the impediment too is in thyself: thy Condition is but the stuff thou art to shape that same Ideal out of." Said Mrs. Browning:

" It takes a soul, To move a body : it takes a high-souled man To move the masses even to a cleaner stye :

Ah, your Fouriers failed, Because not poets enough to understand That life develops from within."

Now, religion s characteristic approach to the human problem is represented by this conviction that " life develops from within." So far from expecting to save mankind by the manipulation of outward circumstance, it habitually has treated outward circum stance as of inferior moment in comparison with the inner attitudes and resources of the spirit. Economic affluence, for exam ple, has not seemed to Christianity in any of its historic forms indispensable to man s well-being; rather, economic affluence has been regarded as a danger to be escaped or else to be resolutely handled as one would handle fire useful if well managed but des perately perilous if uncontrolled. Nor can it be said that Christianity has consistently maintained this attitude without having in actual experience much ground for holding it. The possession of economic comfort has never yet guaranteed a decent life, much less a spiritually satisfactory one. The morals of Fifth Avenue are not such that it can look down on Third Avenue, nor is it pos sible anywhere to discern gradation of char acter on the basis of relative economic standing. It is undoubtedly true that folks and families often have their moral stamina weakened and their personalities debauched by sinking into discouraging poverty, but it is an open question whether more folks and families have not lost their souls by rising into wealth. Still, after all these centuries, the " rich fool," with his overflowing barns and his soul that sought to feed itself on corn, is a familiar figure; still it is as easy for a camel to go through a needle s eye as for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. When, therefore, the Christian, approaching the human problem, not from without in, but from within out, runs upon this modern social movement endeavour ing to save mankind by the manipulation of outward circumstance, his cautious and qualified consent may be neither so igno rant nor so unreasonable as it at first appears. As an example of manipulated circum stance in which we are asked to trust, con sider the new international arrangements upon which the world leans so heavily for its hopes of peace. Surely, he would be a poor Christian who did not rejoice in every reasonable expectation which new forms of co-operative organization can fulfil. But he would be a thoughtless Christian, too, if he did not see that all good forms of interna tional organization are trellises to give the vines of human relationship a fairer chance to grow; but if the vines themselves main tain their old acid quality, bringing out of their own inward nature from roots of bit terness grapes that set the people s teeth on edge, then no external trellises will solve the problem. It is this Christian approach to life, from within out, which causes the common misunderstanding between the social movement and the Church. The first thinks mainly of the importance of the trellis; the second thinks chiefly about the quality of the vine. The more deep and transforming a man s own religious experience has been, the more he will insist upon the importance of this in ward approach. Here is a man who has had a profound evangelical experience. He has gone down into the valley of the shadow with a deep sense of spiritual need; he has found in Christ a Saviour who has lifted him up into spiritual freedom and victory; he has gone out to live with a sense of unpay able indebtedness to him. He has had, in a word, a typical religious experience at its best with three elements at the heart of it: a great need, a great salvation, a great grati tude. When such a man considers the mod ern social movement, however beautiful its spirit or admirable its concrete gains, it seems to him superficial if it presents itself as a panacea. It does not go deep enough to reach the soul s real problems. The continual misunderstanding between the Church and the social movement has, then, this

explanation: the characteristic ap proach of the Christian Gospel to the human problem is from within out; the character istic approach of much of the modern social movement is from without in.

II

If, therefore, the Christian Gospel is go ing to be true to itself, it must carefully preserve amid the pressure of our modern social enthusiasms certain fundamental em phases which are characteristic of its genius.

It must stress the possibility and the neces sity of the inward transformation of the lives of men. We know now that a thorny cactus does not have to stay a thorny cactus; Burbank can change it. We know that a crab-apple tree does not have to stay a crab-apple tree; it can be grafted and become an astrakhan. We know that a malarial swamp does not have to stay a ma larial swamp; it can be drained and become a health resort. We know that a desert does not have to stay a desert; it can be irrigated and become a garden. But while all these possibilities of transformation are opening up in the world outside of us, the most important in the series concerns the world within us. The primary question is whether human nature is thus transform able, so that men can be turned about, hat ing what formerly they loved and loving what once they hated. Said Tolstoy, whose early life had been confessedly vile: "Five years ago faith came to me; I believed in the doctrine of Jesus, and my whole life underwent a sudden transformation. What I had once wished for I wished for no longer, and I began to desire w r hat I had never desired before. What had once ap peared to me right now became wrong, and the wrong of the past I beheld as right." * So indispensable to the welfare of the world is this experience, that we Christians need to break loose from our too narrow conceptions of it and to set it in a large horizon. We have been too often tempted to make of conversion a routine emotional experience. Even Jonathan Edwards was worried about himself in this regard. He wrote once in his diary: "The chief thing that now makes me in any measure question my good estate is my not having experi enced conversion in those particular steps wherein the people of New England, and anciently the dissenters of old England, used to experience it." Poor Jonathan ! How many have been so distraught ! But the supreme folly of any man s spiritual life is to try thus to run himself into the mold of any other man s experience. There is no regular routine in spiritual transformation. Some men come in on a high tide of feeling, like Billy Bray, the drunken miner, who, re leased from his debasing slavery and reborn into a vigorous life, cried, " If they were to put me into a barrel I would shout glory out through the bunghole! Praise the N. Tolstoi: My Religion, Introduction, p. ix.

Lord! " Some men come in like Bushnell, the New England scholar and preacher, who, when he was an unbelieving tutor at Yale, fell on his knees in the quiet of his study and said, " O God, I believe there is an eternal difference between right and wrong and I hereby give myself up to do the right and to refrain from the wrong." Some men break up into the new life suddenly like the Oxford graduate who, having lived a dis solute life until six years after his graduation from the university in 1880, picked up in his room one day Drummond s " Natural Law in the Spiritual World," and, lo! the light broke suddenly " I rejoiced there and then in a conversion so astounding that the whole village heard of it in less than twenty-four hours." Some come slowly, like old John Livingstone, who said, " I do not remember any particular time of conversion, or that I was much cast down or lift up." Spiritual transformation is infinitely various because it is so infinitely vital; but behind all the special forms of experience stands the colos sal fact that men can be transformed

by the Spirit of God. That this experience of inward enlight enment and transformation should ever be neglected or minimized or forgotten or crowded out is the more strange because one keeps running on it outside religion as well as within. John Keats, when eighteen years old, was handed one day a copy of Spenser s poems. He never had known be fore what his life was meant to be. He found out that day. Like a voice from heaven his call came in the stately measures of Spenser s glorious verse. He knew that he was meant to be a poet. Upon this mas ter fact that men can be inwardly trans formed Christ laid his hand and put it at the very center of his gospel. All through the New Testament there is a throb of joy which, traced back, brings one to the assur ance that no man need stay the way he is. Among the gladdest, solemnest words in the records of our race are such passages in the New Testament as this: Fornicators, adul terers, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revel ers, extortioners, such were some of you; but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God. One cannot find in the New Testa ment anything stiff and stilted about this experience. Paul s change came suddenly; Peter s came slowly. They did not even have, as we have come to have, a settled word to describe the experience. Ask James what it is and, practical-minded man that he is, he calls it conversion being- turned around. Ask Peter what it is and, as he looks back upon his old benighted con dition, he cries that it is like coming out of the darkness into a marvelous light. Ask Paul what it is and, with his love of superlative figures, he cries that it is like being dead and being raised again with a great resurrection. Ask John what it is and, with his mystical spirit, he says that it is being born again. See the variety that comes from vitality no stiff methods, no stiff routine of experience, but throbbing through the whole book the good news of an illuminating, liberating, trans forming experience that can make men new ! It is the more strange that this central element in the Christian Gospel should be neglected in the interests of social reforma tion because it is so indispensable to social reformation. Wherever a new social hope allures the efforts of forward-looking men, there is one argument against the hope which always rises. You cannot do that men say human nature is against it; hu man nature has always acted another way; you cannot change human nature; your hope is folly. As one listens to such skepticism he sees that men mean by human nature a static, unalterable thing, huge, inert, changeless, a dull mass that resists all transformation. The very man who says that may be an engineer. He may be speak ing in the next breath with high enthusiasm about a desert in Arizona where they are bringing down the water from the hills and where in a few years there will be no desert, but orange groves stretching as far as the eye can reach, and eucalyptus trees making long avenues of shade, and roses running wild, as plenteous as goldenrod in a New England field. But while about physical nature he is as hopeful of possible change as a prophet, for human nature he thinks nothing can be done. From the Christian point of view this idea of human nature is utterly false. So far from being stiff and set, human nature is the most plastic, the most changeable thing with which we deal. It can be brutalized beneath the brutes ; it can rise into compan ionship with angels. Our primitive fore fathers, as our fairy tales still reveal, be lieved that men and women could be changed into anything into trees, rocks, wolves, bears, kings and fairy sprites. One of the most prominent professors of sociology in America recently said that these stories are a poetic portraiture of some thing which eternally is true. Men can be transformed. That is a basic fact, and it is one of the central emphases of the Christian Gospel. Of all days in which that emphasis should be remembered, the chiefest is the day when men are thinking about social reformation.

Ill

It is only a clear recognition of the crucial importance of man s inward transformation which can prepare us for a proper appreci ation of the social movement s meaning. For one point of contact between religion s approach to the human problem from within out and reformation s approach from with out in lies here: to change social environ ments which oppress and dwarf and defile the lives of men is one way of giving the transforming Spirit a fair chance to reach and redeem them. All too slowly does the truth lay hold upon the Church that our very personalities themselves are social products, that we are born out of society and live in it and are molded by it, that without society we should not be human at all, and that the influences which play upon our lives, whether redeeming or degrading, are socially mediated. A man who says that he believes in the ineffable value of human per sonalities and who professes to desire their transformation and yet who has no desire to give them better homes, better cities, better family relationships, better health, better economic resources, better recre ations, better books and better schools, is either an ignoramus who does not see what these things mean in the growth of souls, or else an unconscious hypocrite who does not really care so much about the souls of men as he says he does. An illuminating illustration of this fact is to be seen in the expanding ideals of mis sionary work. When the missionaries first went to the ends of the earth they went to save souls one by one. They went out generally with a distinctly, often narrowly, individualistic motive. They were trying to gather into the ark a few redeemed spirits out of the wreck of a per ishing world; they were not thinking pri marily of building a kingdom of social right eousness in the earth. Consider, then, the fascinating story of the way the mission aries, whatever may have been the motives with which they started, have become social reformers. If the missionaries were to take the Gospel to the people, they had to get to the people. So they became the explorers of the world. It was the missionaries who opened up Asia and Africa. Was there ever a more stirring story of adventure than is given us in the life of David Livingstone? Then when the missionaries had reached the people to give them the Gospel, they had to give them the Bible. So they became the philologists and translators of the world. They built the lexicons and grammars. They translated the Bible into more than a hundred languages on the continent of Africa alone. Carey and his followers did the same for over a score of languages in India. The Bible to-day is available in over six hundred living languages. Everywhere this prodigious literary labour has been breaking dow r n the barriers of speech and thought between the peoples. If ever we do get a decent internationalism, how much of it \vill rest back upon this pioneer spade work of the missionaries, digging through the barricades of language that separate the minds of men ! When, then, the mission aries had books to give the people, the people had to learn to read. So the mis sionaries became educators, and wherever you find the church you find the school. But what is the use of educating people who do not understand how to be sanitary, who live in filth and disease and die needlessly, and how can you take away old supersti tions and not put new science in their places, or deprive the people of witch doctors without offering them substitutes? So the missionaries became physicians, and one of the most beneficent enterprises that history records is medical missions. What is the use, however, of helping people to get well when their economic condition is such, their standards of life so low, that they con tinue to fall sick again in spite of you? So the missionaries are becoming industrial re formers, agriculturalists, chemists, physi cists, engineers, rebuilding wherever they can the economic life and comfort of their people. The missionary cause itself has been compelled, whether it would or not, to grow socially-minded. As Dan Crawford says about the work in Africa : " Here, then, is Africa s challenge to its Missionaries. Will they allow a whole continent to live like beasts in such hovels,

millions of negroes cribbed, cabined, and confined in dens of disease? No doubt it is our diurnal duty to preach that the soul of all improvement is the improvement of the soul. But God s equilateral triangle of body, soul, and spirit must never be ignored. Is not the body wholly ensouled, and is not the soul wholly embodied? ... In other words, in Africa the only true fulfilling of your heav enly calling is the doing of earthly things in a heavenly manner." *

Indeed, if any one is tempted to espouse a narrowly individualistic gospel of regener ation, let him go to the Far East and take note of Buddhism. Buddhism in wide areas of its life is doing precisely what the indi vidualists recommend. It is a religion of personal comfort and redemption. It is not mastered by a vigorous hope of social refor mation. In many ways it is extraordinarily like medieval Christianity. Consider this definition of his religion that was given by one Buddhist teacher: "Religion," he said, " is a device to bring peace of mind in the midst of conditions as they are." Condi tions as they are settle down in them; be comfortable about them; do not try to change them; let no prayer for the King dom of God on earth disturb them; and there seek for yourselves " peace of mind in the midst of conditions as they are."

ID. Crawford : Thinking Black, pp. 444-445. And the Buddhist teacher added, " My re ligion is pure religion." But is there any such thing as really caring about the souls of men and not caring about social habits, moral conditions, popular recreations, eco nomic handicaps that in every way affect them? Of all deplorable and degenerate conceptions of religion can anything be worse than to think of it as a " device to bring peace of mind in the midst of con ditions as they are?" Yet one finds plenty of Church members in America whose idea of the " simple Gospel " comes perilously near that Buddhist s idea of " pure religion." The utter futility of endeavouring to care about the inward transformation of men s lives while not caring about their social en vironment is evident when one thinks of our international relationships and their recurrent issue in war. War surely cannot be thought of any longer as a school for virtue. We used to think it was. We half believed the German war party when they told us about the disciplinary value of their gigantic establishment, and when Lord Rob erts assured us that war was tonic for the souls of peoples we were inclined to think that he was right. When, in answer to our nation s call, our men went out to fight and all our people were bound up in a fellowship of devotion to a common cause, so stimu lated were we that we almost were con vinced that out of such an experience there might come a renaissance of spiritual qual ity and life. Is there anybody who can blind his eyes to the facts now? Every competent witness in Europe and America has had to say that we are on a far lower moral level than we were before the war. Crimes of sex, crimes of violence, have been unprecedented. Large areas of Europe are to-day in a chaos so complete that not one man in a thousand in America even dimly imagines it, with a break-down of all the normal, sustaining relationships and privi leges of civilized life, and with an accom panying collapse of character unprecedented in Christendom since the days of the Black Plague. If we are wise we will never again go down into hell expecting to come up with spirits redeemed. To be sure, there are many individuals of such moral stamina that they have come out of this experience personally the better, not the worse. There are people who would build into the fiber of their character any experience that earth could offer them. But if we are thinking of the moral stability and progress of mankind, surely there is nothing in the processes of war, as we have seen them, or the results of war, as they now lie about us, that would lead us to trust to them for help. War takes a splendid youth willing to serve the will of God in his gen eration before he falls on sleep and teaches him the skilful trick of twisting a

bayonet into the abdomen of an enemy. War takes a loyal-spirited man who is not afraid of anything under heaven and teaches him to drop bombs on undefended towns, to kill perchance the baby suckled at her mother s breast. The father of one of our young men, back from France, finding that his son, like many others, would not talk, rebuked him for his silence. " Just one thing I will tell you," the son answered. " One night I was on patrol in No Man s Land, and sud denly I came face to face with a German about my own age. It was a question of his life or mine. We fought like wild beasts. When I came back that night I was covered from head to foot with the blood and brains of that German. We had nothing person ally against each other. He did not want to kill me any more than I wanted to kill him. That is war. I did my duty in it, but for God s sake do not ask me to talk about it ! I want to forget it." That is war, and no more damning influence can be thrown around the characters of people in general or around the victims of military discipline and experience in particular than that sup plied by war. How then could inconsistency be made more extreme than by saying that Christianity is concerned about the souls of men but is not concerned about in ternational good-will and co-operation? After all, the approaches to the human prob lem from without in and from within out are not antithetical, but supplementary. This tunnel must be dug from both ends and until the Church thoroughly grasps that fact she will lead an incomplete and ineffectual life.

IV The purposes of Christianity involve so cial reform, not only, as we have said, be cause we must accomplish environmental change if we are to achieve widespread in dividual transformation, but also because we must reorganize social life and the ideas that underlie it if we are to maintain and get adequately expressed the individual s Christian spirit when once he has been transformed. Granted a man with an in wardly remotived life, sincerely desirous of living Christianly, see what a situation faces him in the present organization of our eco nomic world! Selfishness consists in facing any human relationship with the main in tent of getting from it for oneself all the pleasure and profit that one can. There are folk who use their families so. They live like parasites on the beautiful institution of family life, getting as much as possible for as little as possible. There are folk who use the nation so. To them their country is a gigantic grab-bag from which their greedy hands may snatch civic security and com mercial gain. For such we have hard and bitter names. There is, however, one rela tionship business where we take for granted this very attitude which every where else we heartily condemn. Multi tudes of folk go up to that central human relationship with the frank and unabashed confession that their primary motive is to make out of it all that they can for them selves. They never have organized their motives around the idea that the major meaning of business is public service. The fact is, however, that all around us forms of business already have developed where we count it shame for a man to be chiefly motived by a desire for private gain.

If you thought that the preacher were in love with his purse more than with his Gos pel, you would not come again to hear him, and you would be right ; if you thought that the teacher of your children cared for pay day first and for teaching second, you would find another teacher for them tomorrow, and you ought to; if you thought that your physician cared more for his fees than he did for his patients, you would discharge him to-night and seek for a man more worthy of his high profession; if you had reason to suppose that the judges of the Supreme Court in Washington cared more for their salary than they did for justice, you could not easily measure your indignation and your shame. In the development of human life few things are nobler than the growth of the

professional spirit, where in wide areas of enterprise, not private gain, but fine workmanship and public service have become the major motives. If one says that a sharp line of distinction is to be drawn between what we call professions and what we call business, he does not know history. Nursing, as a gainful calling, a hundred years ago was a mercenary affair into which undesirable people went for what they could get out of it. If nursing to-day is a great profession, where pride of work manship and love of service increasingly are in control, it is because Florence Nightin gale, and a noble company after her, have insisted that nursing essentially is service and that all nurses ought to organize their motives around that idea.

What is the essential difference between professions and business? Why should the building of a schoolhouse be a carnival of private profit for labourers and contractors alike, when the teaching in it is expected to be full of the love of fine workmanship and the joy of usefulness? Why, when a war is on, must the making of munitions here be a wild debauch of private profits, but the fir ing of them " over there " be a matter of self-forgetful sacrifice? Why, in selling a food which is essential to health, should the head of a sugar corporation say with im punity, " I think it is fair to get out of the consumers all you can, consistent with the business proposition," when the physician is expected to care for the undernourished with a devoted professional spirit utterly different from the sugar magnate s words? There is no real answer to that " why." The fact is that for multitudes of people business is still in the unredeemed state in which nursing and teaching and doctoring were at the beginning, and nothing can save us from the personal and social consequence of this unhappy situation except the clear vision of the basic meaning of business in terms of service, and the courageous reor ganization of personal motive and economic institutions around that idea.

If, then, Christianity is sincerely inter ested in the quality of human spirits, in the motives and ideals which dominate person ality, she must be interested in the economic and industrial problems of our day. To be sure, many ministers make fools of them selves when they pass judgment on ques tions which they do not understand. It is true that a church is much more peaceable and undisturbing when it tries experiments upon religious emotions with colored lights than when it makes reports upon the steel trust. Many are tempted, therefore, to give in to irritation over misdirected ministerial energy or to a desire for emotional comfort rather than an aroused conscience. One has only to listen where respectable folk most congregate to hear the cry: let the Church keep her hands off!

Let me talk for a moment directly to that group. If you mean, by your distaste for the Church s interest in a fairer economic life, that most ministers are unfitted by temperament and training to talk wisely on economic policies and programs, you are right. Do you suppose that we ministers do not know how we must appear to you when we try to discuss the details of business? While, however, you are free to say any thing you wish about the ineptitude of min isters in economic affairs (and we, from our inside information, will probably agree with you), yet as we thus put ourselves in your places and try to see the situation through; your eyes, do you also put yourselves in our places and try to see it through our eyes!

I speak, I am sure, in the name of thou sands of Christian ministers in this country endeavouring to do their duty in this trying time. We did not go into the ministry of Jesus Christ either for money or for fun. If we had wanted either one primarily, we would have done something else than preach. We went in because we believed in Jesus Christ and were assured that only he and his truth could

m.edicine the sorry ills of this sick world. And now, ministers of Christ, with such a motive, we see continu ally some of the dearest things we work for, some of the fairest results that we achieve, going to pieces on the rocks of the business world.

You wish us to preach against sin, but you forget that, as one of our leading soci ologists has said, the master iniquities of our time are connected with money-making. You wish us to imbue your boys and girls with ideal standards of life, but all too often we see them, having left our schools and colleges, full of the knightly chivalry of youth, torn in the world of business between the ideal of Christlikeness and the selfish rivalry of commercial conflict. We watch them growing sordid, disillusioned, merce nary, spoiled at last and bereft of their youth s fine promise. You wish us to preach human brotherhood in Christ, and then we see that the one chief enemy of brotherhood between men and nations is economic strife, the root of class conscious ness and war. You send some of us as your representatives to the ends of the earth to proclaim the Saviour, and then these mis sionaries send back word that the non- Christian world knows all too well how far from dominant in our business life our Christian ideals are and that the non- Christian world delays accepting our Christ until we have better proved that his principles will work. Everywhere that the Christian minister turns, he finds his clearest ideals and hopes entangled in the economic life. Do you ask us then under these con ditions to keep our hands off? In God s name, you ask too much ! In the sixteenth century the great conflict in the world s life centered in the Church. The Reformation was on. All the vital questions of the day had there their spring. In the eighteenth century the great conflict of the world s life lay in politics. The American and French revolutions were afoot. Democracy had struck its tents and was on the march. All the vital questions of that day had their origin there. In the twentieth century the great conflict in the world s life is centered in economics. The most vital questions with which we deal are entangled with economic motives and institutions. As in the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries great changes were in evitable, so now the economic world cannot possibly remain static. The question is not whether changes will occur, but how they will occur, under whose aegis and superin tendence, by whose guidance and direction, and how much better the world will be when they are here. Among all the interests that are vitally concerned with the nature of these changes none has more at stake than the Christian Church with her responsibility for the cure of souls.

V

Still another point of contact exists be tween the Christian purpose and social re form : the inevitable demand of religious ideals for social application. The ideal of human equality, for example, came into our civilization from two main sources the Stoic philosophy and the Christian religion and in both cases it was first of all a spir itual insight, not a social program. The Stoics and the early Christians both believed it as a sentiment, but they had no idea of changing the world to conform with it. Paul repeatedly insisted upon the equality of all men before God. In his early min istry he wrote it to the Galatians : " There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female ; for ye all are one man in Chfist Jesus." Later he wrote it to the Corinthi ans : " For in one Spirit were we all bap tized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free ; and were all made to drink of one Spirit." In his last imprisonment he wrote it to the Colossians: " There cannot be Greek and Jew, circum cision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scyth ian, bondman, freeman; but Christ is all, and in all." Yet it never would have occurred to Paul to disturb the social custom of slav ery or to question the divine institution of

imperial government.

Nevertheless, while this idea of human equality did not at first involve a social pro gram, it meant something real. If we are to understand what the New Testament means by the equality of men before God, we must look at men from the New Testa ment point of view. Those of us who have been up in an aeroplane know that the higher we fly the less difference we see in the elevation of things upon the earth. This man s house is plainly higher than that man s when we are on the ground but, two thousand feet up, small difference can we observe. Now, the New Testament flies high. It frankly looks from a great altitude at the distinctions that seem so important on the earth. We say that racial differences are very important a great gulf between Jew and Gentile. We insist that cultural traditions make an immense distinction that to be a Scythian or to be barbarian is widely separated from being Greek. We are sure that the economic distinction be tween bondman and freeman is enormous. But all the while these superiorities and in feriorities, which we magnify, seem from Paul s vantage point not nearly so important or so real as we think they are. He is sure about this central truth, that God asks no questions about caste or colour or race or wealth or social station. All men stand alike in his presence and in the Christian fellowship must be regarded from his point of view.

It was utterly impossible, however, to keep this spiritual insight from getting ulti mately into a social program. It appealed to motives too deep and powerful to make possible its segregation as a religious senti ment. For however impractical an ideal this thought of human equality may seem in general, and however hard it may be to grant to others in particular, it is never hard for us to claim for ourselves. If ever we are condescended to, does any assertion rise more quickly in our thought than the old cry of our boyhood, " I am as good as you are "? The lad in school in ragged clothes, who sees himself outclassed by richer boys, feels it hotly rising in his boyish heart : " I am as good as you are." The poor man who, with an anxiety he cannot subdue and yet dares not disclose, is desperately trying to make both ends meet, feels it as he sees more fortunate men in luxury: "I am as good as you are." The negro who has tried himself out with his white brethren, who wears, it may be, an honour key from a great university, who is a scholar and a gentle man, and yet who is continually denied the most common courtesies of human inter course he says in his heart, although the words may not pass his lips, " I am as good as you are." Now, the New Testament took that old cry of the human heart for equality and turned it upside down. It became no longer for the Christian a bitter demand for one s rights, but a glad acknowledgment of one s duty. It did not clamour, " I am as good as you are " ; it said, " You are as good as I am." The early Christians at their best went out into the world with that cry upon their lips. The Jewish Christians said it to the Gentiles and the Gentiles to the Jews; the Scythians and barbarians said it to the Greeks and the Greeks said it in return; the bond said it to the free and the free said it to the bond. The New Testament Church in this regard was one of the most extraordinary upheavals in history, and to-day the best hopes of the world depend upon that spirit which still says to all men over all the differences of race and colour and sta tion, " You are as good as I am." To be sure, before this equalitarian ideal could be embodied in a social program it had to await the coming of the modern age with its open doors, its freer movements of thought and life, its belief in progress, its machinery of change. But even in the stag nation of the intervening centuries the old Stoic-Christian ideal never was utterly for gotten. Lactantius, a Christian writer of the fourth century, said that God, who cre ates and inspires men, " willed that all should be equal." * Gregory

the Great, at the end of the sixth century, said that " By nature we are all equal." For ages this spiritual insight remained dissociated from any social program, but now the inevitable connection has been made. Old caste sys tems and chattel slavery have gone down before this ideal. Aristotle argued that slavery ethically was right because men iL.C.F. Lactantius: The Divine Institutes, Book V, Chap, xv, xvi.

2 Gregory the Great: Moralium Libri, Pars quarta, Lib. XXI, Caput XV "Omnes namque homines natura aequales sumus." were essentially and unchangeably masters or slaves by nature. Somehow that would not sound plausible to us, even though the greatest mind of all antiquity did say it. Whatever may be the differences between men and races, they are not sufficient to justify the ownership of one man by an other. The ideal of equality has wrecked old aristocracies that seemed to have firm hold on permanence. If one would feel again the thrill which men felt when first the old distinctions lost their power, one should read once more the songs of Robert Burns. They often seem commonplaces to us now, but they were not commonplaces then:

" For a that and a that, Their dignities, and a that; The pith, o sense and pride o worth Are higher rank than a that !" This ideal has made equality before the law one of the maxims of our civilized govern ments, failure in which wakens our appre hension and our fear ; it has made equal suf frage a fact, although practical people only yesterday laughed at it as a dream; it has made equality in opportunity for an educa tion the underlying postulate of our public school systems, although in New York State seventy-five years ago the debate was still acute as to whether such a dream ever could come true; it is to-day lifting races, long accounted inferior, to an eminence where in creasingly their equality is acknowledged. One with difficulty restrains his scorn for the intellectual impotence of so-called wise men who think all idealists mere dreamers. Who is the dreamer the despiser or the upholder of an ideal whose upheavals al ready have burst through old caste systems, upset old slave systems, wrecked old aristoc racies, pushed obscure and forgotten masses of mankind up to rough equality in court and election booth and school, and now are rocking the foundations of old racial and in ternational and economic ideas? The prac tical applications of this ideal, as, for exam ple, to the coloured problem in America, are so full of difficulty that no one need be ashamed to confess that he does not see in detail how the principle can be made to work. Nevertheless, so deep in the essen tial nature of things is the fact of man kind s fundamental unity, that only God can foresee to what end the application of it yet may come. At any rate, it is clear that the Christian ideal of human equality before God can no longer be kept out of a social program.

VI

There is, then, no standing-ground left for a narrowly individualistic Christianity. To talk of redeeming personality while one is careless of the social environments which ruin personality; to talk of building Christ- like character while one is complacent about an economic system that is definitely organ ized about the idea of selfish profit; to praise Christian ideals while one is blind to the in evitable urgency with which they insist on getting themselves expressed in social pro grams all this is vanity. It is deplorable, therefore, that the Christian forces are tempted to draw apart, some running up the banner of personal regeneration and some rallying around the flag of social reforma tion. The division is utterly needless. Doubtless our own individual ways of com ing into the Christian life influence us deeply here. Some of us came into the Christian experience from a

sense of indi vidual need alone. We needed for ourselves sins forgiven, peace restored, hope be stowed. God meant to us first of all satis faction for our deepest personal wants.

" Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee " such was our cry and such was our salva tion. If now we are socially minded, if we are concerned for economic and interna tional righteousness, that is an enlargement of our Christian outlook which has grown out of and still is rooted back in our indi vidual need and experience of God.

Some of us, however, did not come into fellowship with God by that route at all. We came in from the opposite direction. The character in the Old Testament who seems to me the worthiest exhibition of personal religion before Jesus is the prophet Jeremiah, but Jeremiah started his religious experience, not with a sense of individual need, but with a burning, patriotic, social passion. He was concerned for Judah. Her iniquities, long accumulating, were bringing upon her an irretrievable disaster. He laid his soul upon her soul and sought to breathe into her the breath of life. Then, when he saw the country he adored, the civilization he cherished, crashing into ruin, he was thrown back personally on God. He started with social passion; he ended with social passion plus personal religion. Some of God s greatest servants have come to know him so.

Henry Ward Beecher once said that a text is a small gate into a large field where one can wander about as he pleases, and that the trouble with most ministers is that they spend all their time swinging on the gate. That same figure applies to the entrance which many of us made into the Christian experience. Some of us came in by the gate of personal religion, and we have been swinging on it ever since; and some of us came in by the gate of social passion for the regeneration of the world, and we have been swinging on that gate ever since. We both are wrong. These are two gates into the same city, and it is the city of our God. It would be one of the greatest blessings to the Christian church both at home and on the foreign field if we could come together on this question where separation is so needless and so foolish. If some of us started with emphasis upon personal religion, we have no business to stop until we understand the meaning of social Christianity. If some of us started with emphasis upon the social campaign, we have no business to rest until we learn the deep secrets of personal relig ion. The redemption of personality is the great aim of the Christian Gospel, and, therefore, to inspire the inner lives of men and to lift outward burdens which impede their spiritual growth are both alike Chris tian service to bring in the Kingdom.

02.04. Progressive Christianity

LECTURE IV PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY

HITHERTO in the development of our thought, we have been considering the Christian Gospel as an entity set in the midst of a progressive world, and we have been studying the new Christian atti tudes which this influential environment has been eliciting. The Gospel has been in our thought like an individual who, finding him self in novel circumstances, reacts toward them, in ways appropriate alike to them and to his own character. The influence of the idea of progress upon Christianity, however, is more penetrating than such a figure can adequately portray. For no one can long ponder the significance of our generation s progressive ways of thinking without run ning straight upon this question: is not Christianity itself progressive? In the midst of a changing world does not it also change, so that, reacting upon the new ideas of progress, it not only assimilates and uses them, but is itself an illustration of them? Where everything else in man s life in its origin and growth is conceived, not in terms of static and final creation or revelation, but in terms of development, can religion be left out? Instead of being a pond around which once for all a man can walk and take its measure, a final and completed whole, is not Christianity a river which, maintaining still reliance upon the historic springs from which it flows, gathers in new tributaries on its course and is itself a changing, growing and progressive movement? The question is inevitable in any study of the relationship between the Gospel and progress, and its implications are so far-reaching that it de serves our careful thought.

Certainly it is clear that already modern ideas of progress have had so penetrating an influence upon Christianity as to affect, not its external reactions and methods only, nor yet its intellectual formulations alone, but deeper still its very mood and inward tem per. Whether or not Christianity ought to be a changing movement in a changing world, it certainly has been that and is so still, and the change can be seen going on now in the very atmosphere in which it lives and moves and has its being. For example, consider the attitude of resignation to the will of God, which was characteristic of medieval Christianity. As we saw in our first lecture, the medieval age did not think of human life upon this earth in terms of progress. The hopes of men did not re volve about any Utopia to be expected here. History was not even a glacier, moving slowly toward the sunny meadows. It did not move at all; it was not intended to move ; it was standing still. To be sure, the thirteenth century was one of the greatest in the annals of the race. In it the fore most European universities were founded, the sublimest Gothic cathedrals were built, some of the world s finest works of handi craft were made; in it Cimabue and Giotto painted, Dante wrote, St. Thomas Aquinas philosophized, and St. Francis of Assisi lived. The motives, however, which origi nated and sustained this magnificent out burst of creative energy were other worldly they were not concerned with an ticipations of a happier lot for humankind upon this earth. The medieval age did not believe that man s estate upon the earth ever would be fundamentally improved, and in consequence took the only reasonable at titude, resignation. When famines came, God sent them; they were punishment for sin; his will be done! When wars came, they were the flails of God to thresh his people; his will be done! Men were re signed to slavery on the ground that God had

made men to be masters and slaves. They were resigned to feudalism and abso lute monarchy on the ground that God had made men to be rulers and ruled. What ever was had been ordained by the Divine or had been allowed by him in punishment for man s iniquity. To rebel was sin; to doubt was heresy; to submit was piety. The He brew prophets had not been resigned, nor Jesus Christ, nor Paul. The whole New Testament blazes with the hope of the king dom of righteousness coming upon earth. But the medieval age was resigned. Its real expectations were post-mortem hopes. So far as this earth was concerned, men must submit. To be sure, in those inner experiences where we must endure what we cannot help, resignation will always characterize a deeply religious life. All life is not under our con trol, to be freely mastered by our thought and toil. There are areas where scientific knowledge gives us power to do amazing things, but all around them are other areas which our hands cannot regulate. Orion and the Pleiades were not made for our fingers to swing, and our engineering does not change sunrise or sunset nor make the planets one whit less or more. So, in the experiences of our inward life, around the realm which we can control is that other realm where move the mysterious provi dences of God, beyond our power to under stand and as uncontrollable by us as the tides are by the fish that live in them. Cap tain Scott found the South Pole, only to dis cover that another man had been there first. When, on his return from the disappointing quest, the pitiless cold, the endless bliz zards, the failing food, had worn down the strength of the little company and in their tent amid the boundless desolation they waited for the end while the life flames burned low, Captain Scott wrote: " I do not regret this journey. . . . We took risks, we knew we took them; things have come out against us, and therefore we have no cause for complaint, but bow to the will of Provi dence, determined still to do our best to the last." * That is resignation at its noblest.

^Leonard Huxley: Scott s Last Expedition, Vol. I, The Journals of Captain R. F. Scott, Rn., C. V. O., p. 417.

When, however, a modern Christian tries to do what the medieval Christians did make this attitude of resignation cover the whole field of life, make it the dominant ele ment in their religion, the proof of their trust and the test of their piety he finds himself separated from the most character istic and stirring elements in his generation. We are not resigned anywhere else. Every where else we count it our pride and glory to be tmresigned. We are not resigned even to a thorny cactus, whose spiky exterior seems a convincing argument against its use for food. When we see a barren plain we do not say as our fathers did : God made plains so in his inscrutable wisdom; his will be done ! We call for irrigation and, when the fructifying waters flow, we say, Thy will be done! in the way we think God wishes to have it said. We do not pas sively submit to God s will; we actively assert it. The scientific control of life at this point has deeply changed our religious mood. We are not resigned to pestilences and already have plans drawn up to make the yellow fever germ " as extinct as the woolly rhinoceros." We are not even re signed to the absence of wireless tele phony when once we have imagined its presence, or to the inconvenience of slow methods of travel when once we have in vented swift ones. Not to illiteracy nor to child labour nor to the white plague nor to commercialized vice nor to recur rent unemployment are we, at our best, resigned. This change of mood did not come easily. So strongly did the medieval spirit of resig nation, submissive in a static world, keep its grip upon the Church that the Church often defiantly withstood the growth of this un- resigned attitude of which we have been speaking and in which we glory. Lightning rods were vehemently denounced by many ministers as an unwarranted interference with God s use of

lightning. When God hit a house he meant to hit it; his will be done! This attitude, thus absurdly applied, had in more important realms a lamentable conse quence. The campaign of Christian mis sions to foreign lands was bitterly fought in wide areas of the Christian Church because if God intended to damn the heathen he should be allowed to do so without inter ference from us; his will be done! As for slavery, the last defense which it had in this country was on religious grounds : that God had ordained it and that it was blasphemous to oppose his ordination. In a word, this spirit of passive resignation has been so deeply ingrained in religious thinking that it has become oftentimes a serious reproach to Christian people.

Now, however, the mood of modern Christianity is decisively in contrast with that medieval spirit. Moreover, we think that we are close to the Master in this atti tude, for whatever difference in outward form of expectation there may be between his day and ours, when he said: " Thy king dom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth," that was not passive submis sion to God s will but an aggressive prayer for the victory of God and righteousness; it was not lying down under the will of God as something to be endured, but active loy alty to the will of God as something to be achieved. To be resigned to evil conditions on this earth is in our eyes close to essential sin. If any one who calls himself a con servative Christian doubts his share in this anti-medieval spirit, let him test himself and see. In 1836 the Rev. Leonard Wood, D. D., wrote down this interesting state ment: "I remember when I could reckon up among my acquaintances forty ministers, and none of them at a great distance, who were either drunkards or far addicted to drinking. I could mention an ordination which took place about twenty years ago at which I myself was ashamed and grieved to see two aged ministers literally drunk, and a third indecently excited." Our forefa thers were resigned to that, but we are not. The most conservative of us so hates the colossal abomination of the liquor traffic, that we do not propose to cease our fight until victory has been won. We are bel ligerently unresigned. Or when militarism proves itself an intolerable curse, we do not count it a divine punishment and prepare ourselves to make the best of its continu ance. We propose to end it. Militarism, which in days of peace cries, Build me vast armaments, spend enough upon a single dreadnaught to remake the educational sys tem of a whole state; militarism, which in the days of war cries, Give me your best youth to slay, leave the crippled and defect ive to propagate the race, give me your best to slay; militarism, which lays its avaricious hand on every new invention to make gre garious death more swift and terrible, and when war is over makes the starved bodies of innumerable children walk in its train for iKirby Page: The Sword or the Cross, p. 41. pageantry, we are not resigned to that. We count it our Christian duty to be tire lessly unresigned.

Here is a new mood in Christianity, born out of the scientific control of life and the modern ideas of progress, and, however consonant it may be with the spirit of the New Testament, it exhibits in the nature of its regulative conceptions and in its earthly hopes a transformation within Christianity which penetrates deep. Progressive change is not simply an environment to which Christianity conforms; it is a fact which Christianity exhibits.

II This idea that Christianity is itself a pro gressive movement instead of a static final ity involves some serious alterations in the historic conceptions of the faith, as soon as it is applied to theology. Very early in Christian history the presence of conflict ing heresies led the church to define its faith in creeds and then to regard these as final formulations of Christian doctrine, incapable of amendment or addition. Ter- tullian, about 204 A. D., spoke of the creedal standard of

his day as " a rule of faith changeless and incapable of reformation." 1 From that day until our own, when a Roman Catholic Council has decreed that " the definitions of the Roman Pontiff are unchangeable," 2 an unalterable character has been ascribed to the dogmas of the Church of Rome. Indeed, Pius IX, in his Syllabus of Errors, specifically condemned the modern idea that " Divine revelation is imperfect, and, therefore, subject to continual and indefinite progress, which corresponds with the progress of human reason." 3 Nor did Protestantism, with all the reformation which it wrought, attack this central Catholic conception of a change less content and formulation of faith. Not what the Pope said, but what the Bible said, was by Protestants unalterably to be re ceived. Change there might be in the sense that unrealized potentialities involved in the original deposit might be brought to light a kind of development which not only Prot estants but Catholics like Cardinal Newman have willingly allowed but whatever had iTertullian : De Virginibus Velandis, Cap. I" Regula quidem fidei una omnino est, sola immobilis et ir- reformabilis."

2 Vatican Council, July 18, 1870, First Dogmatic Con stitution on the Church of Christ, Chapter IV, Concern ing the Infallible Teaching of the Roman Pontiff.

3 The Papal Syllabus of Errors, A. D. 1864, Sec. 1, 5. once been stated as the content of faith by the received authorities was by both Cath olics and Protestants regarded as unalter ably so. In the one case, if the Pope had once defined a dogma, it was changeless; in the other, if the Bible had once formulated a pre-scientific cosmology, or used demoni acal possession as an explanation of dis ease, or personified evil in a devil, all such mental categories were changelessly to be received. In its popular forms this concep tion of Christianity assumes extreme rigid ity Christianity is a static system finally formulated, a deposit to be accepted in toto if at all, not to be added to, not to be sub tracted from, not to be changed, its i s all dotted and its t s all crossed. The most crucial problem which we face in our religious thinking is created by the fact that Christianity thus statically con ceived now goes out into a generation where no other aspect of life is conceived in static terms at all. The earth itself on which we live, not by fiat suddenly enacted, but by long and gradual processes, became habitable, and man upon it through un counted ages grew out of an unknown past into his present estate. Everything within man s life has grown, is growing, and apparently will grow. Music developed from crude forms of rhythmic noise until now, by way of Bach, Beethoven and Wagner, our modern music, still developing, has grown to forms of harmony at first undreamed. Painting developed from the rough outlines of the cavemen until now possibilities of expression in line and colour have been achieved whose full expansion we cannot guess. Architecture evolved from the crude huts of primitive man until now our cathe drals and our new business buildings alike mark an incalculable advance and prophesy an unimaginable future. One may refuse to call all development real progress, may insist upon degeneration as well as better ment through change, but, even so, the basic fact remains that all the elements which go to make man s life come into being, are what they are, and pass out of what they are into something different, through processes of continual growth. Our business methods change until the commercial wisdom of a few years ago may be the folly of to-day; our moral ideals change until actions once respectable become reprobate, and the heroes of one generation would be the con victs of another; our science changes until ideas that men once were burned at the stake for entertaining are now the com monplace axioms of every school boy s thought; our economics change until schools of thought shaped to old industrial conditions are as outmoded as a one-horse shay beside an automobile; our philosophy changes like our science when Kant, for ex

ample, starts a revolution in man s thinking, worthy, as he claimed, to be called Coper- nican; our cultural habits change until marooned communities in the Kentucky mountains, " our contemporary ancestors," having let the stream of human life flow around and past them, seem as strange to us as a belated what-not in a modern par lour. The perception of this fact of pro gressive change is one of the regnant in fluences in our modern life and, strangely enough, so far from disliking it, we glory in it; in our expectancy we count on change ; with our control of life we seek to direct it.

Indeed no more remarkable difference distinguishes the modern world from all that went before than its attitude toward change itself. The medieval world idealized changelessness. Its very astronomy was the apotheosis of the unalterable. The earth, a globe full of mutation and decay; around it eight transparent spheres carrying the heavenly bodies, each outer sphere mov ing more slowly than its inner neighbour, while the ninth, moving most slowly of all, moved all the rest ; last of all, the empyrean, blessed with changeless, motionless perfec tion, the abode of God such was the Ptole maic astronomy as Dante knew it. This idealization of changelessness was the com mon property of all that by gone world. The Holy Roman Empire was the endeav our to perpetuate a changeless idea of po litical theory and organization; the Holy Catholic Church was the endeavour to per petuate a changeless formulation of relig ious dogma and hierarchy; the Summa of St. Thomas Aquinas was the endeavour to settle forever changeless paths for the human mind to walk in. To that ancient world as a whole the perfect was the fin ished, and therefore it was immutable.

How different our modern attitude to ward change has come to be ! We believe in change, rely on it, hope for it, rejoice in it, are determined to achieve it and control it. Nowhere is this more evident than in our thought of the meaning of knowledge. In the medieval age knowledge was spun as a spider spins his web Thinking simply made evident what already was involved in an accepted proposition. A premise was drawn out into its filaments and then woven into a fabric of new form but of the same old material. Knowledge did not start from actual things; it did not intend to change actual things ; and the shelves of the libra ries groan with the burden of that endless and largely futile cogitation. Then the new knowledge began from the observation of things as they really are and from the use of that observation for the purposes of human life. Once a lad, seventeen years old, went into the cathedral at Pisa to worship. Soon he forgot the service and watched a chan delier, swinging from the lofty roof. He wondered whether, no matter how change able the length of its arc, its oscillations al ways consumed the same time and, because "he had no other means, he timed its mo tion by the beating of his pulse. That was one time when a boy went to church and did well to forget the service. He soon began to wonder whether he could not make a pendu lum which, swinging like the chandeliers, would do useful business for men. He soon began to discover, in what he had seen that day, new light on the laws of planetary mo tion. That was one of the turning points in human history the boy was Galileo. The consequences of this new method are all around us now. The test of knowledge in modern life is capacity to cause change. If a man really knows electricity he can cause change ; he can illumine cities and drive cars. If a man really knows engineering, he can cause change; he can tunnel rivers and bridge gulfs. It is for that purpose we wish knowledge. Instead of being dreaded, con trolled change has become the chief desire of modern life.

When, therefore, in this generation with its perception of growth as the universal law and with its dependence upon controlled change as the hope of man, Christianity en deavours to glorify

changelessness and to maintain itself in unalterable formulations, it has outlawed itself from its own age. An Indian punkah-puller, urged by his mistress to better his condition, replied : " Mem Sahib, my father pulled a punkah, my grand father pulled a punkah, all my ancestors for four million ages pulled punkahs, and, be fore that, the god who founded our caste pulled a punkah over Vishnu." How ut terly lost such a man would be in the dynamic movements of our modern West ern life ! yet not more lost than is a Christianity which tries to remain static in a pro gressive world.

Ill

Among the influences which have forced well-instructed minds first to accept and then to glory in the progressive nature of Christianity, the first place must be given to the history of religion itself. The study of religion s ancient records in ritual, monu ment and book, and of primitive faiths still existing among us in all stages of develop ment, has made clear the general course which man s religious life has traveled from very childish beginnings until now. From early animism in its manifold expressions, through polytheism, kathenotheism, heno- theism, to monotheism, and so out into loft ier possibilities of conceiving the divine nature and purpose the main road which man has traveled in his religious develop ment now is traceable. Nor is there any place where it is more easily traceable than in our own Hebrew-Christian tradition. One of the fine results of the historical study of the Scriptures is the possibility which now exists of arranging the manuscripts of the Bible in approximately chronological order and then tracing through them the unfolding growth of the faiths and hopes which come to their flower in the Gospel of Christ. Consider, for example, the exhila rating story of the developing conception of Jehovah s character from the time he was worshiped as a mountain-god in the desert until he became known as the " God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

We are explicitly told that the history of Jehovah s relationship with Israel began at Sinai and that before that time the Hebrew fathers had never even heard his name. 1 There on a mountain-top in the Sinaitic wilderness dwelt this new-found god, so anthropomorphically conceived that he could hide Moses in a rock s cleft from which the prophet could not see Jehovah s face but could see his back. 2 He was a god of battle and the name of an old book about him still remains to us, " The book of the Wars of Jehovah." 3 " Jehovah is a man of war: Jehovah is his name " 4 so his people at first rejoiced in him and gloried in his power when he thundered and lightened on Sinai. Few stories in man s spiritual history are so interesting as the i Exodus 6:3; Exodus 19:2 Exodus 33:22-23. ^Numbers 21:14. 4 Exodus 15:3. record of the way in which this mountain- god, for the first time, so far as we know, in Semitic history, left his settled shrine, trav eled with his people in the holy Ark, became acclimated in Canaan, and, gradually ab sorbing the functions of the old baals of the land, extended his sovereignty over the whole of Palestine. To be sure, even then he still was thought of, as all ancient gods were thought of, as geographically limited to the country whose god he was. Milcolm and Chemosh were real gods too, ruling in Philistia and Moab as Jehovah did in Canaan. This is the meaning of Jephthah s protest to a hostile chieftain: "Wilt not thou possess that which Chemosh thy god giveth thee to possess? " This is the meaning of David s protest when he is driven out to the Phi listine cities: " They have driven me out this day that I should not cleave unto the in heritance of Jehovah, saying, Go, serve other gods." 2 This is the meaning of Naaman s desire to have two mules burden of Jehovah s land on which to worship Jehovah in Damascus. 3 Jehovah could be worshiped only on Jehovah s land. But ever as the day

of fuller understanding i Judges 11:24. 2 1 Samuel 26:19. 2 Kings 5:17. dawned, the sovereignty of Jehovah wid ened and his power usurped the place and function of all other gods. Amos saw him using the nations as his pawns; Isaiah heard him whistling to the nations as a shepherd to his dogs; Jeremiah heard him cry, " Can any hide himself in secret places so that I shall not see him? . . . Do not I fill heaven and earth?" 1 ; until at last we sweep out, through the exile and all the heightening of faith and clarifying of thought that came with it, into the Great Isaiah s 40th chapter on the universal and absolute sovereignty of God, into the Priestly narrative of creation, where God makes all things with a word, into psalms which cry, " For all the gods of the people are idols ; But Jehovah made the heavens." 2

Moreover, as Jehovah s sovereignty thus is enlarged until he is the God of all creation, his character too is deepened and exalted in the understanding of his people. That noblest succession of moral teachers in ancient history, the Hebrew prophets, de veloped a conception of the nature of God in terms of righteousness, so broad in its i Jeremiah 23:24. 2 Psalms 96:1-13 : outreach, so high in its quality, that as one mounts through Amos fifth chapter and Isaiah s first chapter and Jeremiah s seventh chapter, he finds himself, like Moses on Nebo s top, looking over into the Promised Land of the New Testament. There this development flowers out under the influence of Jesus. God s righteousness is interpreted, not in terms of justice only, but of compas sionate, sacrificial love; his Fatherhood em braces not only all mankind but each indi vidual, lifting him out of obscurity in the mass into infinite worthfulness and hope. And more than this development of idea, the New Testament gives us a new picture of God in the personality of Jesus, and we see the light of the knowledge of God s glory in his face.

Moreover, this development, so plainly recorded in Scripture, was not uncon sciously achieved by the drift of circum stance; it represents the ardent desire of forward-looking men, inspired by the Spirit. The Master, himself, w r as consciously plead ing for a progressive movement in the relig ious life and thinking of his day. A static religion was the last thing he ever dreamed of or wanted. No one was more reverent than he toward his people s past; his thought and his speech were saturated with the beauty of his race s heritage; yet con sider his words as again and again they fell from his lips : " It was said to them of old time . . . but I say unto you." His life was rooted in the past but it was not im prisoned there; it grew up out of the past, not destroying but fulfilling it. He had in him the spirit of the prophets, who once had spoken to his people in words of fire; but old forms that he thought had been out grown he brushed aside. He would not have his Gospel a patch on an old garment, he said, nor would he put it like new wine into old wineskins. He appealed from the oral traditions of the elders to the written law; within the written law he distinguished between ceremonial and ethical elements, making the former of small or no account, the latter all-important ; and then within the written ethical law he waived provisions that seemed to him outmoded by time. Even when He bade farewell to his dis ciples, he did not talk to them as if what he himself had said were a finished system : " I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth." In Paul s hands the work which Jesus began went on. He dared an adventurous move that makes much of our modern pro- gressiveness look like child s play: he lifted the Christian churches out of the narrow, religious exclusiveness of the Hebrew syna gogue. He clared to wage battle for the new idea that Christianity was not a Jewish sect but a universal religion. He withstood to his face Peter, still trammeled in the nar rowness of his Jewish thinking, and he founded

churches across the Roman Empire where was neither Jew nor Greek, barbarian, Scythian, male nor female, bond nor free, but all were one man in Christ Jesus.

Even more thrilling were those later days when in Ephesus the writer of the Fourth Gospel faced a Hellenistic audience, to whom the forms of thought in which Jesus hitherto had been interpreted were utterly unreal. The first creed about Jesus pro claimed that he was the Messiah, but Mes siah was a Jewish term and to the folk of Ephesus it had no vital meaning. John could not go on calling the Master that and that alone, when he had hungry souls be fore him who needed the Master but to whom Jewish terms had no significance. One thing those folk of Ephesus did understand, the idea of the Logos. They had heard of that from the many faiths whose pure or syncretized forms made the religi ous background of their time. They knew about the Logos from Zoroastrianism, where beside Ahura Mazdah stood Vohu Manah, the Mind of God; from Stoicism, at the basis of whose philosophy lay the idea of the Logos; from Alexandrian Hel lenism, by means of which a Jew like Philo had endeavoured to marry Greek philosophy and Hebrew orthodoxy. And the writer of the Fourth Gospel used that new form of thought in which to present to his people the personality of our Lord. " In the be ginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God " so be gins the Fourth Gospel s prologue, in words that every intelligent person in Ephesus could understand and was familiar with, and that initial sermon in the book, for it is a sermon, not philosophy, moves on in forms of thought which the people knew about and habitually used, until the hidden purpose comes to light: "The Logos be came flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only be gotten from the Father), full of grace and truth." John was presenting his Lord to the people of his time in terms that the people could understand.

Even within the New Testament, there fore, there is no static creed. For, like a flowing river, the Church s thought of her Lord shaped itself to the intellectual banks of the generation through which it moved, even while, by its construction and erosion, it transfigured them. Nor did this move ment cease with New Testament days. From the Johannine idea of the Logos to the Nicene Creed, where our Lord is set in the framework of Greek metaphysics, the development is just as clear as from the category of Jewish Messiah to the cate gories of the Fourth Gospel. And if, in our generation, a conservative scholar like the late Dr. Sanday pleaded for the necessity of a new Christology, it was not because he was primarily zealous for a novel philoso phy, but because like John of old in Ephesus he was zealous to present Christ to his own generation in terms that his own generation could comprehend. 1

IV Undoubtedly such an outlook upon the fluid nature of the Christian movement will 1 William Sanday: Christologies Ancient and Modern. demand readjustment in the religious think ing of many people. They miss the old ideas about revelation. This new progres- siveness seems to them to be merely the story of man s discovery, finding God, here a little and there a little, as he has found the truths of astronomy. But God s revela tion of himself is just as real when it is con ceived in progressive as when it is con ceived in static terms. Men once thought of God s creation of the world in terms of fiat it was done on the instant; and when evolution was propounded men cried that the progressive method shut God out. We see now how false that fear was. The creative activity of God never was so nobly conceived as it has been since we have known the story of his slow unfolding of the universe. We have a grander picture in our minds than even the psalmist had, when we say after him, " The heavens declare the glory of God." So men who have been ac customed to think of revelation in static terms, now that the long leisureliness of man s developing

spiritual insight is appar ent, fear that this does away with revelation. But in God s unfolding education of his people recorded in the Scriptures revelation is at its noblest. No man ever found God except when God was seeking to be found. Discovery is the under side of the process; the upper side is revelation.

Indeed, this conception of progressive revelation does not shut out finality. In scientific thought, which continually moves and grows, expands and changes, truths are discovered once for all. The work of Copernicus is in a real sense final. This earth does move; it is not stationary; and the universe is not geocentric. That dis covery is final. Many developments start from that, but the truth itself is settled once for all. So, in the spiritual history of man, final revelations come. They will not have to be made over again and they will not have to be given up. Progress does not shut out finality; it only makes each new finality a point of departure for a new ad venture, not a terminus ad quern for a con clusive stop. That God was in Christ rec onciling the world unto himself is for the Christian a finality, but, from the day the first disciples saw its truth until now, the intellectual formulations in w T hich it has been set and the mental categories by which it has been interpreted have changed with the changes of each age s thought.

While at first, then, a progressive Christianity may seem to plunge us into unset- tlement, the more one studies it the less he would wish it otherwise. Who would ac cept a snapshot taken at any point on the road of Christian development as the final and perfect form of Christianity? Robert Louis Stevenson has drawn for us a picture of a man trying with cords and pegs to stake out the shadow of an oak tree, ex pecting that when he had marked its boundaries the shadow would stay within the limits of the pegs. Yet all the while the mighty globe was turning around in space. He could not keep a tree s shadow static on a moving earth. Nevertheless, multitudes of people in their endeavour to build up an infallibly settled creed have tried just such a hopeless task. They forget that while a revelation from God might conceivably be final and complete, religion deals with a revelation of God. God, the infinite and eternal, from everlasting to everlasting, the source and crown and destiny of all the uni verse shall a man whose days are as grass rise up to say that he has made a statement about him which will not need to be revised? Rather, our prayer should be that the thought of God, the meaning of God, the glory of God, the plans and purpose of God may expand in our comprehension until we, who now see in a mirror, darkly, may see face to face. " Le Dieu defini est le Dieu fini." This mistaken endeavour, in the interest of stability, to make a vital movement static is not confined to religion. Those of us who love Wagner remember the lesson of Die Meistersinger. Down in Nuremberg they had standardized and conventionalized music. They had set it down in rules and men like Beckmesser could not imagine that there was any music permissible outside the regulations. Then came Walter von Stol- zing. Music to him was not a convention ality but a passion not a rule, but a life and, when he sang, his melodies reached heights of beauty that Beckmesser s rules did not provide for. It was Walter von Stol- zing who sang the Prize Song, and as the hearts of the people were stirred in answer to its spontaneous melody, until all the pop ulation of Nuremberg were singing its ac cumulating harmonies, poor Beckmesser on his blackboard jotted down the rules w T hich were being broken. Beckmesser represents a static conception of life which endeavours to freeze progress at a given point and call it infallible. But Beckmesser is wrong. You cannot take things like music and religion and set them down in final rules and regula tions. They are life, and you have to let them grow and flower and expand and re veal evermore the latent splendour at their heart.

V

Obviously, the point where this progres sive conception of Christianity comes into conflict with many widely accepted ideas is the abandonment which it involves of an ex ternal and inerrant authority in matters of religion. The marvel is that that idea of authority, which is one of the historic curses of religion, should be regarded by so many as one of the vital necessities of the faith. The fact is that religion by its very nature is one of the realms to which external author ity is least applicable. In science people commonly suppose that they do not take truth on any one s authority; they prove it. In business they do not accept methods on authority; they work them out. In states manship they no longer believe in the divine right of kings nor do they accept infallible dicta handed down from above. But they think that religion is delivered to them by authority and that they believe what they do believe because a divine Church or a divine Book or a divine Man told them. In this common mode of thinking, popular ideas have the truth turned upside down. The fact is that science, not religion, is the realm where most of all we use external authority. They tell us that there are mil lions of solar systems scattered through the fields of space. Is that true? How do we know? We never counted them. We know only what the authorities say. They tell us that the next great problem in science is breaking up the atom to discover the incal culable resources of power there waiting to be harnessed by our skill. Is that true? Most of us do not understand what an atom is, and what it means to break one up passes the farthest reach of our imaginations; all we know is what the authorities say. They tell us that electricity is a mode of motion in ether. Is that true? Most of us have no first hand knowledge about electricity. The motorman calls it " juice " and that means as much to us as to call it a mode of motion in ether; we must rely on the authorities. They tell us that sometime we are going to talk through wireless telephones across thousands of miles, so that no man need ever be out of vocal communication with his family and friends. Is that true? It seems to us an incredible miracle, but we suppose that it is so, as the authorities say. In a word, the idea that we do not use authority in science is absurd. Science is precisely the place where nine hundred and ninety-nine men out of a thousand use authority the most. The chemistry, biology, geology, astronomy which the authorities teach is the only science which most of us possess.

There is another realm, however, where we never think of taking such an attitude. They tell us that friendship is beautiful. Is that true? Would we ever think of saying that we do not know, ourselves, but that we rely on the authorities? Far better to say that our experience with friendship has been unhappy and that we personally ques tion its utility! That, at least, would have an accent of personal, original experience in it. For here we are facing a realm where we never can enter at all until we enter, each man for himself.

Two realms exist, therefore, in each of which first-hand experience is desirable, but in only one of which it is absolutely in dispensable. We can live on what the authorities in physics say, but there are no proxies for the soul. Love, friendship, delight in music and in nature, parental affec tion these things are like eating and breathing; no one can do them for us; we must enter the experience for ourselves. Religion, too, belongs in this last realm. The one vital thing in religion is first-hand, personal experience. Religion is the most intimate, inward, incommunicable fellow ship of the human soul. In the words of Plotinus, religion is " the flight of the alone to the Alone." You never know God at all until you know him for yourself. The only God you ever will know is the God you do know for yourself. This does not mean, of course, that there are no authorities in religion.

There are authorities in everything, but the function of an authority in religion, as in every other vital realm, is not to take the place of our eyes, seeing in our stead and inerrantly de claring to us what it sees; the function of an authority is to bring to us the insight of the world s accumulated wisdom and the revelations of God s seers, and so to open our eyes that we may see, each man for himself. So an authority in literature does not say to his students: The Merchant of Venice is a great drama; you may accept my judgment on that I know. Upon the contrary, he opens their eyes; he makes them see; he makes their hearts sensitive so that the genius which made Shylock and Portia live captivates and subdues them, un til like the Samaritans they say, " Now we believe, not because of thy speaking: for we have heard for ourselves, and know." That is the only use of authority in a vital realm. It can lead us up to the threshold of a great experience where we must enter, each man for himself, and that service to the spiritual-life is the Bible s inestimable gift. At the beginning, Christianity was just such a first-hand experience as we have de scribed. The Christian fellowship consisted of a group of men keeping company with Jesus and learning how to live. They had no creeds to recite when they met together; what they believed was still an unstereo- typed passion in their hearts. They had no sacraments to distinguish their faith bap tism had been a Jewish rite and even the Lord s Supper was an informal use of bread and wine, the common elements of their daily meal. They had no organizations to join; they never dreamed that the Christian Gospel would build a church outside the synagogue. Christianity in the beginning was an intensely personal experience.

Then the Master went away and the tre mendous forces of human life and history laid hold on the movement which so vitally he had begun. His followers began build ing churches. Just as the Wesleyans had to leave the Church of England, not because they wanted to, but because the Anglicans would not keep them, so the Christians, not because they planned to, but because the synagogue was not large enough to hold them, had to leave the synagogue. They began building creeds ; they had to. Every one of the first Christian creeds was written in sheer self-defense. If we had been Chris tians in those first centuries, when a power ful movement was under way called Gnosti cism, which denied that God, the Father Al mighty, had made both the heaven and the earth, which said that God had made heaven indeed but that a demigod had made the world, and which denied that Jesus had been born in the flesh and in the flesh had died, we would have done what the first Chris tians did: we would have defined in a creed what it was the Christians did believe as against that wild conglomeration of Ori ental mythology that Gnosticism was, and we would have shouted the creed as a war cry against the Gnostics. That is what the so-called Apostles Creed was the first Christian battle chant, a militant proclama tion of the historic faith against the heretics ; and every one of its declarations met with a head-on collision some claim of Gnosticism. Then, too, the early Christians drew up rituals; they had to. We cannot keep any spiritual thing in human life, even the spirit of courtesy, as a disembodied wraith. We ritualize it we bow, we take off our hats, we shake hands, we rise when a lady enters. We have innumerable ways of ex pressing politeness in a ritual. Neither could they have kept so deep and beautiful a thing as the Christian life without such expression. So historic Christianity grew, organized, creedalized, ritualized. And ever as it grew, a peril grew with it, for there were multi tudes of people w r ho joined these organiza tions, recited these creeds, observed these rituals, took all the secondary and derived elements of Christianity, but often forgot that vital thing which all this was meant in the first place to express : a first-hand, per sonal experience of God in Christ. That alone is vital in Christianity; all the rest is once or twice or thrice removed from life. For Christianity is not

a creed, nor an organization, nor a ritual. These are im portant but they are secondary. They are the leaves, not the roots; they are the wires, not the message. Christianity itself is a life.

If, however, Christianity is thus a life, we cannot stereotype its expressions in set and final forms. If it is a life in fellowship with the living God, it will think new thoughts, build new organizations, expand into new symbolic expressions. We cannot at any given time write " finis " after its develop ment. We can no more " keep the faith " by stopping its growth than we can keep a son by insisting on his being forever a child. The progressiveness of Christianity is not simply its response to a progressive age; the progressiveness of Christianity springs from its own inherent vitality. So far is this from being regrettable, that a modern Christian rejoices in it and gladly recognizes not only that he is thinking thoughts and undertaking enterprises which his fathers would not have understood, but also that his children after him will differ quite as much in teaching and practice from the modernity of to-day. It has been the fashion to regard this change- ableness with wistful regret. So Words worth sings in his sonnet on Mutability:

" Truth fails not ; but her outward forms that bear The longest date do melt like frosty rime, That in the morning whitened hill and plain And is no more ; drop like the tower sublime Of yesterday, which royally did wear Its crown of weeds, but could not even sus tain Some casual shout that broke the silent air, Or the unimaginable touch of Time."

Such wistfulness, however, while a natural sentiment, is not true to the best Christian thought of our day. He who believes in the living God, while he will be far from calling all change progress, and while he will, ac cording to his judgment, withstand per verse changes with all his might, will also regard the cessation of change as the great est calamity that could befall religion. Stag nation in thought or enterprise means death for Christianity as certainly as it does for any other vital movement. Stagnation, not change, is Christianity s most deadly enemy, for this is a progressive world, and in a pro gressive world no doom is more certain than that which awaits whatever is belated, obscurantist and reactionary.

02.05. The Pereils of Progress

LECTURE V THE PERILS OF PROGRESS I IN the history of human thought and social organization there is an interest ing pendular swing between conflicting ideas so that, about the time we wake up to recognize that thought is swinging one way, we may be fairly sure that soon it will be swinging the other. Man s social organiza tion, for example, has moved back and forth between the two poles of individual liberty and social solidarity. To pick up the swing of that pendulum only in recent times, we note that out of the social solidarity of the feudal system man swung over to the indi vidual liberty of the free cities; then from the individual liberty of the free cities to the social solidarity of the absolute monarchies ; then back again into the individual liberty of the democratic states. We see that now we are clearly swinging over to some new form of social solidarity, of which tendency feder alism and socialism are expressions, and doubtless from that we shall recoil toward individual liberty once more. It is a safe generalization that whenever human thought shows some decided trend, a cor rective movement is not far away. How ever enthusiastic we may be, therefore, about the idea of progress and the positive contributions which it can make to our un derstanding and mastery of life, we may be certain that there are in it the faults of its qualities. If we take it without salt, our children will rise up, not to applaud our far-seeing wisdom, but to blame our easy going credulity. We have already seen that the very idea of progress sprang up in re cent times in consequence of a few factors which predisposed men s minds to social hopefulness. Fortunately, some of these factors, such as the scientific control of life through the knowledge of law, seem perma nent, and we are confident that the idea of progress will have abiding meaning for human thought and life. But no study of the matter could be complete without an endeavour to discern the perils in this mod ern mode of thought and to guard ourselves against accepting as an unmixed blessing what is certainly, like all things human, a blend of good and evil.

One peril involved in the popular accep tance of the idea of progress has been the creation of a superficial, ill-considered op timism which has largely lost sight of the i terrific obstacles in human nature against which any real moral advance on earth must win its way. Too often we have taken for granted what a recent book calls " a goal of racial perfection and nobility the splendour of which it is beyond our powers to con ceive," and we have dreamed about this earthly paradise like a saint having visions of heaven and counting it as won already be cause he is predestined to obtain it. Belief in inevitable progress has thus acted as an opiate on many minds, lulling them into an elysium where all things come by wishing and where human ignorance and folly, cruelty and selfishness do not impede the peaceful flowing of their dreams. In a word, the idea of progress has blanketed the sense of sin. Lord Morley spoke once of " that horrid burden and impediment upon the soul which the Churches call Sin, and which, by whatever name you call it, is a real catastrophe in the moral nature of man." The modern age, busy with slick, swift schemes for progress, has too largely lost sight of that.

Indeed, at no point do modern Christians differ more sharply from their predecessors than in the serious facing of the problem of sin. Christians of former tim.es were bur dened with a heavy sense of their transgres sions, and their primary interest in the Gospel was its promised

reestablishment of their guilty souls in the fellowship of a holy God. Modern Christianity, however, is dis tinguished from all that by a jaunty sense of moral well-being; when we admit our sins we do it with complacency and cheer fulness; our religion is generally character ized by an easy-going self-righteousness. Bunyairs Pilgrim with his lamentable load upon his back, crying, " What shall I do ! ... I am . . . undone by reason of a bur den that lieth hard upon me," is no fit sym bol of a typically modern Christian.

Doubtless we have cause to be thankful for this swing away from the morbid ex tremes to which our fathers often went in their sense of sin. It is hard to forgive Jonathan Edwards when one reads in his famous Enfield sermon: " The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect, over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked; . . . you are ten thousand times so abominable in his eyes, as the most hate ful and venomous serpent is in ours." Any one who understands human nature could have told him that, after such a black ex aggeration of human depravity as he and his generation were guilty of, the Christian movement was foredoomed to swing away over to the opposite extreme of complacent self-righteousness. Unquestionably we have made the swing. In spite of the debacle of the Great War, this is one of the most unre pentant generations that ever walked the earth, dreaming still of automatic progress toward an earthly paradise.

Many factors have gone into the making of this modern mood of self-complacency. New knowledge has helped, by which dis asters, such as once awakened our fathers poignant sense of sin, are now attributed to scientific causes rather than to human guilt. When famines or pestilences came, our fathers thought them God s punishment for sin. When earthquakes shook the earth or comets hung threateningly in the sky, our fathers saw in them a divine demand for human penitence. Such events, referred now to their scientific causes, do not quicken in us a sense of sin. New democracy also has helped in this development of self-complacency. Under autocratic kings the common people were common people and they knew it well. Their dependent com monality was enforced on them by the con stant pressure of their social life. Accus tomed to call themselves miserable worms before an earthly king, they had no qualms about so estimating themselves before the King of Heaven. Democracy, however, elevates us into self-esteem. The genius of democracy is to believe in men, their worth, their possibilities, their capacities for self- direction. Once the dominant political ideas depressed men into self-contempt; now they lift men into self-exaltation. New excuses for sin have aided in creating our mood of self-content. We know more than our fathers did about the effect of heredity and environment on character, and we see more clearly that some souls are not born but damned into the world. Criminals, in consequence, have come not to be so much condemned as pitied, their perversion of character is regarded not so much in terms of iniquity as of disease, and as we thus con done transgression in others, so in ourselves we palliate our wrong. We regard it as the unfortunate but hardly blamable conse quence of temperament or training. Our fathers, who thought that the trouble was the devil in them, used to deal sternly with themselves. Like Chinese Gordon, fighting a besetting sin in private prayer, they used to come out from their inward struggles saying, " I hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord." But we are softer with ourselves; we find in lack of eugenics or in cruel cir cumstance a good excuse.

Undoubtedly, the new theology has helped to encourage this modern mood of self- complacency. Jonathan Edwards Enfield sermon pictured sinners held over the blaz ing abyss of hell in the

hands of a wrathful deity who at any moment was likely to let go, and so terrific was that discourse in its delivery that women fainted and strong men clung in agony to the pillars of the church. Obviously, we do not believe in that kind of God any more, and as always in reaction we swing to the opposite extreme, so in the theology of these recent years we have taught a very mild, benignant sort of deity. One of our popular drinking songs sums up this aspect of our new theology:

" God is not censorious When His children have their fling."

Indeed, the god of the new theology has not seemed to care acutely about sin; certainly he has not been warranted to punish heav ily; he has been an indulgent parent and when we have sinned, a polite " Excuse me " has seemed more than adequate to make amends. John Muir, the naturalist, was accustomed during earthquake shocks in California to assuage the anxieties of per turbed Eastern visitors by saying that it was only Mother Earth trotting her children on her knee. Such poetizing is quite in the style of the new theology. Nevertheless, the description, however pretty, is not an adequate account of a real earthquake, and in this moral universe there are real earth quakes, as this generation above all others ought to know, when man s sin, his greed, his selfishness, his rapacity roll up across the years an accumulating mass of conse quence until at last in a mad collapse the whole earth crashes into ruin. The moral order of the world has not been trotting us on her knees these recent years; the moral order of the world has been dipping us in hell; and because the new theology had not been taking account of such possi bilities, had never learned to preach on that text in the New Testament, " It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," we were ill prepared for the experience.

Many factors like those which we have named have contributed to create our mod ern negligence of the problem of sin, but under all of them and permeating them has been the idea that automatic progress is inherent in the universe. This evolving cosmos has been pictured as a fool-proof world where men could make and love their lies, with their souls dead and their stom achs well alive, with selfish profit the motive of their economic order and narrow nationalism the slogan of their patriotism, and where still, escaping the consequences, they could live in a progressive society. A recent writer considers it possible that " over the crest of the hill the Promised Land stretches away to the far horizons smiling in eternal sunshine." The picture is nonsense. All the progress this world r ever will know waits upon the conquest of sin. Strange as it may sound to the ears of this modern age, long tickled by the amiable idiocies of evolution popularly misinterpreted, this generation s deepest need is not these dithyrambic songs about inevitable progress, but a fresh sense of per sonal and social sin.

What the scientific doctrine of evolution really implies is something much more weighty and sinister than frothy optimism. When a preacher now quotes Paul, " as in Adam all die/ not many of the younger generation understand him, but when we are told that we came out of low, sub human beginnings, that we carry with us yet the bestial leftovers of an animal heri tage to be fought against and overcome and left behind, well-instructed members of this generation ought to comprehend. Yet in saying that, we are dealing with the same fundamental fact which Paul was facing when he said, " as in Adam all die " ; we are handling the same unescapable experience out of which the old doctrine of original sin first came; we are facing a truth which it will not pay us to forget: that humanity s sinful nature is not something which you and I alone make up by individual

deeds of wrong, but that it is an inherited mortgage and handicap on the whole human family. Why is it that if we let a field run wild it goes to weeds, while if we wish wheat we must fight for every grain of it? Why is it that if we let human nature run loose it goes to evil, while he who would be vir tuous must struggle to achieve character?

It is because, in spite of our optimisms and evasions, that fact still is here, which our fathers often appraised more truly than we, that human nature, with all its magnificent possibilities, is like the earth s soil filled with age-long seeds and roots of evil growth, and that progress in good ness, whether personal or social, must be achieved by grace of some power which can give us the victory over our evil nature. In past generations it was the preachers who talked most about sin and thundered against it from their pulpits, but now for years they have been very reticent about it. Others, however, have not been still. Scien tists have made us feel the ancient heritage that must be fought against; novelists have written no great novel that does not swirl around some central sin; the work of the dramatists from Shakespeare until Ibsen is centrally concerned with the problem of human evil; and now the psycho-analysts are digging down into the unremembered thoughts of men to bring up into the light of day the origins of our spiritual miseries in frustrated and suppressed desire. We do not need artificially to conjure up a sense of sin. All we need to do is to open our eyes to facts. Take one swift glance at the social state of the world to-day. Consider our desperate endeavours to save this rocking civilization from the consequences of the blow just delivered it by men s iniquities. That should be sufficient to indicate that this is no fool-proof uni verse automatically progressive, but that moral evil is still the central problem of mankind.

One would almost say that the first rule for all who believe in a progressive world is not to believe in it too much. Long ago Plato said that he drove two horses, one white and tractable, the other black and fractious; Jesus said that two masters sought man s allegiance, one God, the other mammon; Paul said that his soul was the battle-ground of two forces, one of which he called spirit and the other flesh; and only the other day one of our own number told of the same struggle between two men in each of us, one Dr. Jekyll, the other Mr. Hyde. That conflict still is pivotal in human history. The idea of progress can defeat itself no more surely than by getting itself so believed that men expect automatic social advance apart from the conquest of personal and social sin.

Another result of our superficial confi dence in the idea of progress is reliance upon social palliatives instead of radical cures for our public maladies. We are so predisposed to think that the world inher ently wants to be better, is inwardly strain ing to be better, that we are easily fooled into supposing that some slight easement of external circumstance will at once release the progressive forces of mankind and save the race. When, for example, one compares the immense amount of optimistic expec tancy about a warless world with the small amount of radical thinking as to what really is the matter with us, he may well be amazed at the unfounded regnancy of the idea of progress. We rejoice over some slight disarmament as though that were the cure of our international shame, whereas always one can better trust a real Quaker with a gun than a thug without one. So the needs of our international situation, in volving external disarmament, to be sure, involve also regenerations of thought and spirit much more radical than any rear rangement of outward circumstance. To forget that is to lose the possibility of real progress; and insight into these deep-seated needs is often dimmed by our too amiable and innocent belief in automatic social ad vance waiting to take place on the slightest excuse. To take but a single illustration of a

radical change in men s thinking, difficult to achieve and yet indispensable to a decent world, consider the group of prejudices and passions which center about nationalism and which impede the real progress of interna tional fraternity. What if all Christians took Jesus in earnest in his attitude that only one object on earth is worthy of the absolute devotion of a man the will of God for all mankind and that therefore no nationality nor patriotism whatsoever should be the highest object of man s loy alty? That ought to be an axiom to us, who stood with the Allies against Germany. Certainly, we condemned Germany roundly enough because so many of her teachers exalted the state as an object of absolute loyalty. When in Japan one sees certain classes of people regarding the Mikado as divine and rating loyalty to him as their highest duty, it is easy to condemn that. When, however, a man says in plain En glish : I am an American but I am a Chris tian first and I am an American only in the sense in which I can be an American, being first of all a Christian, and my loyalty to America does not begin to compare with my superior loyalty to God s will for all man kind and, if ever national action makes these two things conflict, I must choose God and not America to the ears of many that plain statement has a tang of newness and dan ger. In the background of even Christian minds, Jesus to the contrary notwithstand ing, one finds the tacit assumption, counted almost too sacred to be examined, that of course a man s first loyalty is to his nation.

Indeed, we Protestants ought to feel a special responsibility for this nationalism that so takes the place of God. In medieval and Catholic Europe folk did not so think of nationalism. Folk in medieval Europe were taught that their highest obligation was to God or, as they would have phrased it, to the Church ; that the Church could at any time dispense them from any obligation to king or nation; that the Church could even make the king, the symbol of the na tion, stand three days in the snow outside the Pope s door at Canossa. Every boy and girl in medieval Europe was taught that his first duty was spiritual and that no nation ality nor patriotism could compare with that. Then we Protestants began our bat tle for spiritual liberty against the tyranny of Rome, and as one of the most potent agencies in the winning of our battle we helped to develop the spirit of nationality. In place of the Holy Roman Church we put state churches. In place of devotion to the Vatican we were tempted to put devotion to the nation. Luther did more than write spiritual treatises ; he sent out ringing, patri otic appeals to the German nobility against Rome. It is not an accident that absolute nationalism came to its climacteric in Ger many where Protestantism began. For Protestantism, without ever intending it, as an unexpected by-product of its fight for spiritual liberty, helped to break up western Europe into nations, where nationalism ab sorbed the loyalty of the people. And now that little tiger cub we helped to rear has become a great beast and its roaring shakes the earth. A superficial confidence in automatic progress, therefore, which neglects an ele mental fact like this at the root of our whole international problem is futile; it leads no where; it is rose water prescribed for lep rosy. The trouble with nationalism is pro found and this is the gist of it : we may be unselfish personally, but we group ourselves into social units called nations, where we, being individually unselfish with reference to the group, are satisfied with ourselves, but where all the time the group itself is not unselfish, but, it may be, is aggressively and violently avaricious. Yet to most peo ple our sacrificial loyalty to the nation would pass for virtue, even though the na tion as a whole were exploiting its neigh bours or waging a useless, unjust war. The loyalty of Germans to Germany may be rated as the loftiest goodness no matter what Germany as a whole is doing, and the loyalty of Americans to America may be praised as the very passport to heaven while America as a whole may be engaged in a nationally unworthy

enterprise. The fine spirit of men s devotion within the limits of the group disguises the ultimate self ishness of the whole procedure and cloaks a huge sin under a comparatively small unselfishness.

We can see that same principle at work in our industrial situation. We break up into two groups; we are trades unionists or associated employers. W r e are unselfish so far as our group is concerned ; we make it a point of honour to support our economic class; it is part of our code of duty to be loyal there. But while we are thus unself ish with reference to the group, the group itself is not unselfish ; the group itself is fighting a bitter and selfish conflict, ava ricious and often cruel. There is no ulti mate way out of this situation which does not include the activity of people who have a loyalty that is greater than their groups. Henry George was once introduced at Cooper Institute, New York City, by a chairman who, wishing to curry favour with the crowd, called out with a loud voice, " Henry George, the friend of the working- man." George stood up and sternly began, " I am not the friend of the workingman " ; then after a strained silence, " and I am not the friend of the capitalist " ; then after an other silence, "I am for men; men simply as men, regardless of any accidental or superficial distinctions of race, creed, col our, class, or yet function or employment." Until we can get that larger loyalty into the hearts of men, all the committees on earth cannot solve our industrial problems. Nor can anything else make it possible to solve our international problem. The curse of nationalism is that, having pooled the un selfishness of persons in one group under one national name and of persons in another group under another national name, it uses this beautiful unselfishness of patriotism to carry out national enterprises that are fun damentally selfish. One element, therefore, is indispensable in any solution: enough Christians, whether they call themselves by that name or not, who have caught Jesus point of view that only one loyalty on earth is absolute the will of God for all man kind. This last summer I spent one Sunday night in the home of Mr. Ozaki, perhaps the leading liberal of Japan, a man who stands in danger of assassination any day for his international attitude. Suddenly he turned on me and said, " If the United States should go into a war which you re garded as unjust and wrong, what would you do? " I had to answer him swiftly and I had to give him the only answer that a Christian minister could give and keep his self-respect. I said, " If the United States goes into a war which I think is unjust and wrong, I will go into my pulpit the next Sunday morning and in the name of God denounce that war and take the conse quence." Surely, a man does not have to be a theoretical pacifist, which I am not, to see how indispensable that attitude is to a Christian. There is hardly anything more needed now in the international situation than a multitude of people who will sit in radical judgment on the actions of their governments, so that when the govern ments of the world begin to talk war they will know that surely they must face a mass of people rising up to say: War? Why war? We are no longer dumb beasts to be led to the slaughter; we no longer think that any state on earth is God Almighty. If, however, we are to have that attitude strong enough so that it will stand the strain of mob psychology and the fear of consequences, it must be founded deep, as was Jesus attitude : one absolute loyalty to the will of God for all mankind. So far from hurting true patriotism, this attitude would be the making of patriotism. It would purge patriotism from all its peril, would exalt it, purify it, make of it a bless ing, not a curse. But whatever be the effect upon patriotism, the Christian is com mitted by the Master to a prior loyalty; he is a citizen of the Kingdom of God in all the earth. An easy-going belief in inherent and in evitable progress, therefore, is positively perilous in the manifoldly complex social situation, from which only the most careful thinking and the most courageous living will ever rescue us. The Christian Church is indeed entrusted, in the message of Jesus, with the basic principles of life which the world needs, but the clarity of vision which sees

their meaning and the courage of heart which will apply them are not easy to achieve. Some of us have felt that acutely these last few years ; all of us should have learned that whatever progress is wrought out upon this planet will be sternly fought for and hardly won. Belief in the idea of progress does not mean that this earth is predestined to drift into Paradise like thistledown before an inevitable wind.

Ill A third peril associated with the idea of progress is quite as widespread as the other two and in some ways more insidious. The idea is prevalent that progress involves the constant supersession of the old by the new so that we, who have appeared thus late in human history and are therefore the heirs " of all the ages, in the foremost files of time," may at once assume our superiority to the ancients. The modern man, living in a world supposedly progressing from early crude conditions toward perfection, has shifted the golden age from the past to the future, and in so doing has placed him self in much closer proximity to it than his ancestors were. The world is getting bet ter such is the common assumption which is naturally associated with the idea of progress. As one enthusiastic sponsor of this proposition puts it :

" Go back ten years, and there was no airship ; fifteen years, and there was no wireless telegraphy; twenty-five years, and there was no automobile; forty years, and there was no telephone, and no electric light; sixty years, and there was no photo graph, and no sewing machine; seventy-five years, no telegraph; one hundred years, no railway and no steamship; one]aundred and twenty-five years, no steam engine; two hundred years, no post-office; three hundred years, no newspaper; five hundred years, no printing press; one thousand years, no compass, and ships could not go out of sight of land; two thousand years, no writing paper, but parch ments of skin and tablets of wax and clay. Go back far enough and there were no plows, no tools, no iron, no cloth; people ate acorns and roots and lived in caves and went naked or clothed them selves in the skins of wild beasts." 1 Such is the picture of human history upon Barnes H. Snowden : Is the World Growing Better? pp. 41-42. this planet which occupies the modern mind, and one implication often drawn is that we have outgrown the ancients and that they might well learn from us and not we from them.

Christians, however, center their alle giance around ideas and personalities which are, from the modern standpoint, very old indeed. The truths that were wrought out in the developing life and faith of the Hebrew-Christian people are still the regu lative Christian truths, and- the personality who crowned the whole development is still the Christians Lord. They are challenged, however, to maintain this in a progressive world. Men do not think of harking back to ancient Palestine nineteen centuries ago for their business methods, their educa tional systems, their scientific opinions, or anything else in ordinary life whatever. Then why go back to ancient Palestine for the chief exemplar of the spiritual life? This is a familiar modern question which springs directly from popular interpreta tions of progress.

" Dim tracts of time divide Those golden days from me; Thy voice comes strange o er years of change ; How can I follow Thee?

" Comes faint and far Thy voice From vales of Galilee; Thy vision fades in ancient shades; How should we follow Thee ? " *

Behind this familiar mood lies one of the most significant changes that has ever passed over the human mind. The medieval age was tempted to look backward for its knowledge of everything. Philosophy was to be found in Aristotle, science in Pliny and his like. It was the ancients who were wise; it was the ancients who had under stood nature and had known God. The farther back you went the nearer you came to the venerable and the authoritative. As, therefore, in every other realm folk looked back for knowledge, so it was most natural that they should look back for their re ligion, too. To find philosophy in Aristotle and to find spiritual life in Christ required not even the turning of the head. In all realms the age in its search for knowledge was facing backwards. It was a significant hour in the history of human thought when that attitude began to give way. The scandal caused by Alessandro Tassoni s at tacks on Homer and Aristotle in the early 1 Francis Turner Palgrave: Faith and Light in the Latter Days. seventeenth century resounded through Europe. He advanced the new and aston ishing idea that, so far from having degen erated since ancient times, the race had advanced and that the moderns were better than their sires. This new idea prevailed as belief in progress grew. It met, how ever, with violent opposition, and the rem nants of that old controversy are still to be found in volumes like George Hakewill s five hundred page folio published in 1627 on " the common errour touching Nature s perpetuall and universall decay." 1 But from the seventeenth century on the idea gained swift ascendency that the human race, like an individual, is growing up, that humanity is becoming wiser with the years, that we can know more than Aristotle and Pliny, that we should look, not back to the ancients, but rather to ourselves and to our offspring, for the real wisdom which ma turity achieves. Once what was old seemed wise and established ; what was new seemed extempore and insecure : now what is old seems outgrown; what is new seems proba ble and convincing. Such is the natural and iGeorge Hakewill: An Apologia of the Power and Providence of God in the Government of the World, or An Examination and Censure of the Common Errour Touching Natures Perpetuall and Universall Decay. prevalent attitude in a world where the idea of progress is in control. Nor can the ap plications of this idea to the realm of relig ion be evaded. If we would not turn back to Palestine nineteen centuries ago for any thing else, why should we turn back to find there the Master of our spiritual life? In a word, our modern belief in progress, popu larly interpreted, leads multitudes of people to listen with itching ears for every new thing, while they condescend to all that is old in religion, and in particular conclude that, while Jesus lived a wonderful life for his own day, that was a long time ago and surely we must be outgrowing him. That this attitude is critically perilous to the integrity of the Christian movement will at once be obvious to any one whose own spiritual experience is centered in Christ. From the beginning until now the faith of Christian people has been primarily di rected, not to a set of abstract principles, nor to a set of creedal definitions, but to a Person. Christians Have been people be lieving in Jesus Christ. This abiding ele ment has put unity into Christian history. The stream of Christian thought and prog ress has never been twice the same, yet for all that it has been a continuous stream and not an aimless, sprawling flood, and this unity and consistency have existed for one reason chiefly: the influence of the person ality of Jesus. Folk may have been Roma,n- ists or Protestants, ritualists or Quakers, reactionaries or progressives, but still they have believed in Jesus. His personality has been the sun around which even in their differences they have swung like planets in varying orbits. Take the personality of Jesus out of Christian history and what you have left is chaos.

Moreover, it is the personality of Jesus that has been the source of Christianity s transforming influence on character. Ask whence has come that power over the spirits of men which we

recognize as Chris tianity at its mightiest and best, and the origin must be sought, not primarily in our theologies or rubrics or churches, but in the character and spirit of Jesus. He him self is the central productive source of power in Christianity. We have come so to take this for granted that we do not half appreciate the wonder of it. This per sonality, who so has mastered men, was born sixty generations ago in a small vil lage in an outlying Roman province, and until he was thirty years of age he lived and worked as a carpenter among his fel low townsfolk, attracting no wide consid eration. Then for three years or less he poured out his life in courageous teaching and sacrificial service, amid the growing hatred and hostility of his countrymen, un til he was put to death by crucifixion " be cause he stirred up the people." Anatole France, in one of his stories, represents Pilate in his later years as trying to remem ber the trial and death of Jesus and being barely able to recall it. That incident had been so much a part of the day s work in governing a province like Judea that it had all but escaped his recollection. Such a rep resentation of the case is not improbable. It is easy so to tell the story of Jesus life as to make his continued influence seem in credible. None would have supposed that nineteen centuries after his death, Lecky, the historian of European morals, would say, The simple record of three short years of active life has done more to regen erate and to soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers, and all the exhortations of moralists." None would have thought that sixty generations after J W. E. H. Lecky : History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne, Vol. II, p. 9. he was gone, Montefiori, a Jew, putting his finger on the source of Christianity s power, would light upon the phrase " For the sake of Jesus," and would cry: "Of what fine lives and deaths has not this motive been the spring and the sustainment ! " L None would have thought that so long after Calvary seemed to end forever the power of Jesus, one of the race s greatest men, David Liv ingstone, engaged in one of the race s most courageous enterprises, breaking his way into the untraveled jungles of Africa, would sing as he went, for so his journal says he did, "Jesus, the very thought of Thee With sweetness fills my breast " ?

Take the personality of the Master out of Christian history and we have robbed it of its central moral power.

Moreover, the personality of Jesus has always been the standard of reformation when Christianity has become recreant or laggard or corrupt. A man named John Wilkes started a political movement in England in the eighteenth century, and around him sprang up a party who called iC. G. Montefiore: Some Elements of the Religious Teaching of Jesus According to the Synoptic Gospels, p. 133. themselves Wilkites. These followers of Wilkes, however, went to extremes so wild and perilous that poor John Wilkes him self had to explain to everybody that, as for him, he was not a Wilkite. This lapse of a movement from the original intention of its founder is familiar in history and no where is it more clearly illustrated than in Christianity. The Master, watching West ern Christendom today, with all our hatred, bitterness, war, would have to say, If this is Christianity, then I am not a Christian. The Master, wandering through our ca thedrals with their masses, waxen images and votive gifts, or through our Protestant churches with their fine-spun speculations insisted on as necessary to belief if one is to be a child of grace, would have to say, If this is Christianity, then I am not a Christian. Indeed, just this sort of service the Master always has been rendering his movement; he is the perennial rebuke of all that is degenerate and false in Christian ity. Whenever reform has come, when ever real Christianity has sprung up again through the false and superficial, the move ment has been associated with somebody s rediscovery of

Jesus Christ. Saint Francis of Assisi rediscovered him, and made a spot of spiritual beauty at the heart of the me dieval age. John Wesley rediscovered him and his compassion for the outcast, and led the Church into a new day of evangelism and philanthropy. William Carey rediscov ered him and his unbounded care for men, and blazed the trail for a new era of ex pansive Christianity. And if today many of us are deeply in earnest about the appli cation of Christian principles to the social life of men, it is because we have rediscov ered him and the spirit of his Good Samari tan. In an old myth, Antaeus, the child of Earth, could be overcome when he was lifted from contact with the ground but, whenever he touched again the earth from which he sprang, his old power came back once more. Such is Christianity s relation with Jesus Christ. If, therefore, the idea of progress involves the modern man s con descension to the Master as the outgrown seer of an ancient day, the idea of progress has given Christianity an incurable wound.

Before we surrender to such a popular interpretation of the meaning of progress, we may well discriminate between two aspects of human life in one of which we plainly have progressed, but in the other of which progress is not so evident. In the Coliseum in ancient Rome centuries ago, a group of Christians waited in the arena to be devoured by the lions, and eighty thousand spectators watched their vigil. Those Christians were plain folk " not many mighty, not many noble " and every one of them could have escaped that brutal fate if he had been willing to burn a little incense to the Emperor. Turn now to our selves, eighteen hundred years afterwards. We have had a long time to outgrow the character and fidelity of those first Chris tians; do we think that we have done so? As we imagine ourselves in their places, are we ready with any glibness to talk about progress in character? Those first Christians never had ridden in a trolley car; they never had seen a subway; they never had been to a moving picture show; they never had talked over a telephone. There are innumerable ways in which we have progressed far beyond them. But character, fidelity, loyalty to conscience and to God are we sure of progress there? To hear some people talk, one would sup pose that progress is simply a matter of chronology. That one man or generation comes in time after another is taken as suf ficient evidence that the latter has of course superseded the earlier. Do we mean that because Tennyson came after Shelly he is therefore the greater poet? What has chronology to do with spiritual quality and creativeness, which always must rise from within, out of the abysmal depths of per sonality? Professor Gilbert Murray, think ing primarily in a realm outside religion altogether, chastises this cheap and super ficial claim of advance in spiritual life:

" As to Progress, it is no doubt a real fact. To many of us it is a truth that lies somewhere near the roots of our religion. But it is never a straight march forward; it is never a result that happens of its own accord. It is only a name for the mass of accumulated human effort, successful here, baffled there, misdirected and driven astray in a third region, but on the whole and in the main producing some cumulative result. I believe this difficulty about Progress, this fear that in studying the great teachers of the past we are in some sense wantonly sitting at the feet of savages, causes real trouble of mind to many keen students. The full answer to it would take us beyond the limits of this paper and beyond my own range of knowledge. But the main lines of the answer seem to me clear. There are in/ life two elements, one transitory and progressive,; the other comparatively if not absolutely non-| progressive and eternal, and the soul of man is chiefly concerned with the second. Try to compare our inventions, our material civilization, our stores of accumulated knowledge, with those of the age of Aeschylus or Aristotle or St. Francis, and the comparison is

absurd. Our superiority is beyond question and beyond measure. But compare any chosen poet of our age with Aeschylus, any phi losopher with Aristotle, any saintly preacher with St. Francis, and the result is totally different. I do not wish to argue that we have fallen below the standard of those past ages; but it is clear that we are not definitely above them. The things of the spirit depend on will, on effort, on aspiration, on the quality of the individual soul, and not on dis coveries and material advances which can be ac cumulated and added up." 1

L,et any Christian preacher test out this matter and discover for himself its truth. We are preachers of the Gospel in the twentieth century. St. Francis of Assisi was a preacher of the Gospel in the thir teenth century. We know many things which St. Francis and his generation never could have known but, when we step back through that outward change into the spirit of St. Francis himself, we must take the shoes from off our feet, for the place whereon we stand is holy ground. We may not talk in such an hour about progress in Christian character in terms of chronology, for a modern minister might well pray to touch the garment s hem of such a spirit as St. Francis had! When, then, one speaks of outgrowing Jesus, one would do well to iGilbert Murray: Tradition and Progress, Chapter I, Religio Grammatici, IV, pp. 19-20. get a better reason than simply the fact that he was born nineteen centuries ago. The truth is that humanity has been upon this planet hundreds of thousands of years, while our known history reaches back, and that very dimly, through only some four or five thousand. In that known time there has certainly been no biological develop ment in man that any scientist has yet dis cerned. Even the brain of man in the ice age was apparently as large as ours. More over, within that period of history well known to us, we can see many ups and downs of spiritual life, mountain peaks of achievement in literature and art and re ligion, with deep valleys intervening, but we cannot be sure that the mountain peaks now are higher than they used to be. The art of the two centuries culminating about 1530 represents a glorious flowering of creative genius, but it was succeeded by over three centuries of descent to the abom inations of ugliness which the late eight eenth century produced. We have climbed up a little since then, but not within distant reach of those lovers and makers of beauty from whose hearts and hands the Gothic cathedrals came. Progress in history has lain in the power of man to remember and so to accumulate for general use the dis coveries, both material and ethical, of many individuals ; it has lain in man s in creasing information about the universe, in his increasing mastery over external nature, and in the growing integration of his social life; it has not lain in the production of creative personalities appearing in the course of history with ever greater sub limity of spirit and grasp of intellect. Where is there a mind on earth today like Plato s? Where is there a spirit today like Paul s? The past invites us still to look back for revelations in the realm of creative person ality. Some things have been done in his tory, like the sculptures of Phidias, that never have been done so well since and that perhaps never will be done so w^ell again. As for the Bible, we may well look back to that. There is no book to compare with it in the realm of religion. Most of the books \ve read are like the rainwater that fell last night, a superficial matter, soon running off. But the Bible is a whole sea the accumulated spiritual gains of ages and to know it and to love it, to go down beside it and dip into it, to feel its vast expanse, the currents that run through it, and the tides that lift it, is one of the choic est and most rewarding spiritual privileges that we enjoy. As for Jesus, it is difficult to see what this twentieth century can mean by supposing that it has outgrown him. It has outgrown countless elements in his gen eration and many forms of thought which he shared with his generation, but it never will outgrow his spirit, his faith in God, his principles of life : " Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed by thy name;" "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all

thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself;" " It is not the will of your Father who is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish;" "By this shall all men know that ye are my dis ciples, if ye have love one to another;" " If any man would be first, he shall be last of all, and servant of all;" "All things there fore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them ;" " L,ove your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you;" "Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth." Take principles like these, set them afire in a flaming life the like of which has never come to earth, and we have in Jesus a revelation of the spiritual world which is not going to be outgrown. Still for the Christian he is Saviour and Lord, and across the centuries in his face shines the light of the knowl edge of the glory of God.

IV

Progress, therefore, intelligently appre hended, does not involve that flippant ir reverence for the past that so often is associated with it. It offers no encourage ment to the chase after vagaries in which so many moderns indulge, as though all that is old were belated and all that is novel were true. The idea of progress has led more than one eager mind to think that the old religions were outgrown; that they were the belated leftovers of a bygone age and were not for modern minds; that a new religion fitted to our new needs alone would do. Suppose, however, that one should say: The English language is an archaic affair; it has grown like Topsy, by chance; it has carried along with it the forms of thinking of outgrown generations ; it is not scientific; what we need is a new language built to order to meet our wants. In answer one must acknowledge that the English language is open to very serious criticism, that one can never tell from the way a word is spelled how it is going to be pronounced, nor from the way it is pro nounced how it is going to be spelled. One must agree that the English language makes one phrase do duty for many differ ent meanings. When two people quarrel, they make up; before the actor goes upon the stage, he makes up; the preacher goes into his study to make up his sermon ; when we do wrong we try to make up for it; and the saucy lad in school behind his teacher s back makes up a face. The English lan guage is fearfully and wonderfully made. But merely because the English language has such ungainly developments, we are not likely to surrender it and adopt instead a modern language made to order, like Es peranto. Say what one will about English, it is the speech in which our poets have sung and our prophets have prophesied and our seers have dreamed dreams. If any do not like it they may get a new one, but most of us will stay where we still can catch the accents of the master spirits who have spoken in our tongue. There are words in the English language that no Esperanto words ever can take the place of: home and honour and love and God, words that have been sung about and prayed over and fought for by our sires for centuries, and that come to us across the ages with accumulated meanings, like caskets full of jewels. Surely we are not going to give up the English language. Progress does not mean surrendering it, but developing it.

We shall not give up Christianity. It has had ungainly developments; it does need reformation; many elements in it are piti ably belated; but, for all that, the profound- est need of the world is real Christianity, the kind of life the Master came to put into the hearts of men. Progress does not mean breaking away from it, but going deeper into it.

Here, then, are the three perils which tempt the believer in progress: a silly un derestimate of the tremendous force of human sin, which withstands all real ad vance; superficial reliance upon social pal liatives to speed the convalescence of the world, when only radical cures will do; flippant irreverence toward the past, when, as a matter of fact, the light we have for the future shines upon us from behind. He who most believes in progress needs most to resist its temptations.

02.06. Progress and God

LECTURE VI PROGRESS AND GOD

I

WE may well begin our final lecture, on the interplay between the idea of progress and the idea of God, by noting that only faith in God can satisfy man s craving for spiritual stability amid change. The central element in the concep tion of a progressive world is that men s thoughts and lives have changed, are chang ing and will change, that nothing therefore is settled in the sense of being finally formu lated, that creation has never said its last word on any subject or landed its last ham mer blow on any task. Such an outlook on life, instead of being exhilarating, is to many disquieting in the extreme. In particular it is disquieting in religion, one of whose func tions has always been to provide stability, to teach men amid the transient to see the eternal. If in a changing world religious thought changes too, if in that realm also new answers are given to old questions and new questions rise that never have been answered before, if forms of faith in which men once trusted are outgrown, man s un- settlement seems to be complete. The whole world then is like a huge kaleidoscope turning round and round and, as it turns, the manifold elements in human experience, even its religious doctrines and practices, arrange and rearrange themselves in end less permutations. How then in such a world can religion mean to us what it has meant to the saints who of old, amid a shaken world, have sung:

" Change and decay in all around I see ; O Thou, Who changest not, abide with me !" This fear of the unsettling effects of the idea of progress accounts for most of the resentment against it in the realm of the ology, and for the desperate endeavours which perennially are made to congeal the Christian movement at some one stage and to call that stage final. Stability, however, can never be achieved by resort to such re actionary dogmatism. What one obtains by that method is not stability but stagna tion, and the two, though often confused, are utterly different. Stagnation is like a pool, stationary, finished, and without progressive prospects. A river, however, has another kind of steadfastness altogether. It is not stationary; it flows; it is never twice the same and its enlarging prospects as it widens and deepens in its course are its glory. Nevertheless, the Hudson and the Mississippi and the Amazon are among the most stable and abiding features which nature knows. They will probably outlast many mountains. They will certainly out last any pool. The spiritual stability which we may have in a progressive world is of this lat ter sort, if we believe in the living God. It is so much more inspiring than the stag nation of the dogmatist that one w r onders how any one, seeing both, could choose the inferior article in which to repose his trust. Consider, for example, the development of the idea of God himself, the course of which through the Bible we briefly traced in a previous lecture. From Sinai to Calvary was ever a record of progressive revela tion more plain or more convincing? The development begins with Jehovah disclosed in a thunder-storm on a desert mountain, and it ends with Christ saying: " God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth ;" it begins with a war-god leading his partisans to victory and it ends with men saying, " God is love; and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and

God abideth in him;" it begins with a provincial deity loving his tribe and hating its enemies and it ends with the God of the whole earth worshiped by " a great multi tude, which no man could number, out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues;" it begins with a God who commands the slaying of the Amalekites, "both man and woman, infant and suck ling," and it ends with a Father whose will it is that not " one of these little ones should perish;" it begins with God s people stand ing afar off from his lightnings and praying that he might not speak to them lest they die and it ends with men going into their inner chambers and, having shut the door, praying to their Father who is in secret. Here is no pool; here is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God.

Consider as well the course of the idea of God after the close of the New Testa ment canon. The Biblical conception of God in terms of righteous and compassion ate personal will went out into a world of thought where Greek metaphysics was largely in control. There God was conceived in terms of substance, as the on- tological basis and ground of all existence immutable, inscrutable, unqualified pure being. These two ideas, God as personal will, and God as metaphysical substance, never perfectly coalescing, flowed together. In minds like St. Augustine s one finds them both. God as pure being and God as gracious and righteous personal will St. Augustine accepted both ideas but never harmonized them. Down through Chris tian history one can see these two con ceptions complementing each other, each balancing the other s eccentricities. The Greek idea runs out toward pantheism in Spinoza and Hegel. The Biblical idea runs out toward deism in Duns Scotus and Calvin. In the eighteenth century an ex treme form of deism held the field and God, as personal will, was conceived as the Creator, who in a dim and distant past had made all things. In the nineteenth century the thought of God swung back to terms of immanence, and God, who had been crowded out of his world, came flooding in as the abiding life of all of it. As one contemplates a line of develop ment like this, he must be aware that, while change is there, it is not aimless, discontinuous, chaotic change. The riverbed in which this stream of thought flows is stable and secure; the whole development is con trolled by man s abiding spiritual need of God and God s unceasing search for man. One feels about it as he might about man s varying, developing methods of telling the time of day. Men began by noting roughly the position of the sun or the length of shadows; they went on to make sun-dials, then water-clocks, then sand-glasses; then weight-driven clocks were blunderingly tried and, later, watches, used first as toys, so little were they to be relied upon. The story of man s telling of the time of day is a story of progressive change, but it does not lack stability. The sun and stars and the revolution of the earth abide. The changes in man s telling of the time have been simply the unfolding of an abiding re lationship between man and his world. So the development of man s religious ideas from early, crude beginnings until now is not a process which one would wish to stop at any point in order to achieve infallible security. The movement is not haphazard and discontinuous change, like disparate particles in a kaleidoscope falling together in new but vitally unrelated ways.

Upon the contrary, its course is a continu ous path which can be traced, recovered in thought, conceived as a whole. We can see where our ideas came from, what now they are, and in what direction they proba bly will move. The stability is in the process itself, arising" out of the abiding re lationships of man with the eternal.

Indeed, the endeavour to achieve stability by methods which alone can bring stagna tion, the endeavor, that is, to hit upon dogmatic finality in opinion, is of all things in religion probably the

most disastrous in its consequence. Until recent times when reform movements invaded Mohammedan ism and higher criticism tackled the prob lem of the Koran, one could see this achieve ment of stagnation in Islam in all its in glorious success. The Koran was regarded as having been infallibly written, word for word, in heaven before ever it came to earth. The Koran therefore was a book of inerrant and changeless opinion. But the Koran enshrines the best theological and ethical ideas of Arabia at the time when it was written: God was an oriental monarch, ruling in heaven; utter submission to the fate which he decreed was the one law of human relationship with him; and on earth slavery and polygamy and conversion of un believers by force were recognized as right. The Koran was ahead of its day, but having been by a theory of inspiration petrified into artificial finality it became the enemy of all opinions which would pass beyond its own.

When, now, one contrasts Mohammedan ism with Christianity, one finds an im portant difference. For all our temptation, succumbed to by multitudes, to make the Bible a Koran, Christianity has had a pro gressive revelation. In the Bible one can find all the ideas and customs which Moham medanism has approved and for which it now is hated: its oriental deity decreeing fates, its use of force to destroy unbeliev ers, its patriarchal polygamy, and its slave systems. All these things, from which we now send missionaries to convert Moham medans, are in our Bible, but in the Bible they are not final. They are ever being superseded. The revelation is progressive. The idea of God grows from oriental king ship to compassionate fatherhood; the use of force gives way to the appeals of love; polygamy is displaced by monogamy; slav ery never openly condemned, even when the New Testament closes, is being under- minded by ideas which, like dynamite, in the end will blast to pieces its foundations. We are continually running upon passages like this: " It was said to them of old time, but I say unto you;" " God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son;" "The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked ; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent;" and over the door way out of the New Testament into the Christian centuries that followed is writ ten this inscription : " The spirit of truth ...shall guide you into all the truth." In a word, finality in the Koran is behind it lies in the treasured concepts of 600 A. D. but finality in the Bible is ahead. We are moving toward it. It is too great for us yet to apprehend. Our best thoughts are thrown out in its direction but they do not exhaust its meaning.

" Our little systems have their day ;

They have their day and cease to be;

They are but broken lights of thee, And thou, O Lord, art more than they."

Such is the exultant outlook of a Chris tian believer on a progressive world. If, however, one is to have this exultant outlook, he must deeply believe in the living God and in the guidance of his Spirit. What irreligion means at this point is not fully understood by most unbelieving folk be cause most unbelievers do not think through to a conclusion the implications of their own skepticism. We may well be thankful even in the name of religion for a few people like Bertrand Russell. He is not only ir religious but he is intelligently irreligious, and, what is more, he possesses the courage to say frankly and fully what irreligion really means :

"That Man is the product of causes which have no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual life beyond the grave; that all the labours of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are des tined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of Man s achieve ment must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand. Only within the scaffolding of these truths, only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair, can the soul s habitation henceforth be safely built." 1 iBertrand Russell : Philosophical Essays, II, The Free Man s Worship, pp. 60-61.

Such is the outlook on human life of a frank and thoroughgoing irreligion, and there is nothing exhilarating about it. All progress possible in such a setting is a good deal like a horse-race staged in a theatre, where the horses do indeed run furiously, but where we all know well that they are not getting anywhere. There is a moving floor beneath them, and it is only the shifting of the scenery that makes them seem to go. Is human history like that? Is progress an illusion? Is it all going to end as Bertrand Russell says? Those who believe in the living God are certain of the contrary, for stability amid change is the gift of a progressive, religious faith.

II

It must be evident, however, to any one acquainted with popular ideas of God that if in a progressive world we thus are to maintain a vital confidence in the spiritual nature of creative reality and so rejoice in the guidance of the Spirit amid change, w^e must win through in our thinking to a very much greater conception of God than that to which popular Christianity has been ac customed. Few passages in Scripture better deserve a preacher s attention than God s accusation against his people in the 50th Psalm : " Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself." The universal applicability of this charge is evident to any one who knows the history of man s religious thought. If in the be ginning God did make man in his own image, man has been busy ever since mak ing God in his image, and the deplorable consequences are everywhere to be seen. From idolaters, who bow down before wooden images of the divine in human form, to ourselves, praying to a magnified man throned somewhere in the skies, man has persistently run God into his own mold. To be sure, this tendency of man to think of God as altogether such a one as our selves is nothing to be surprised at. Even when we deal with our human fellows, we read ourselves into our understandings of them. A contemporary observer tells us that whenever a portrait of Gladstone ap peared in French papers he was made to look like a Frenchman, and that when he was represented in Japanese papers his countenance had an unmistakably Japanese cast.

If this habitual tendency to read ourselves into other people is evident even when we deal with human personalities, whom we can know well, how can it be absent from man s thought of the eternal? A man needs only to go out on a starry night with the revelations of modern astronomy in his mind and to consider the one who made all this and whose power sustains it, to see how utterly beyond our adequate comprehension he must be. As men in old tales used to take diffused super-humans, the genii, and by magic word bring them down into a stoppered bottle where they could

be held in manageable form, so man has taken the vastness of God and run it into a human symbol. This persistent anthropomorphism is re vealed in our religious ceremonies. Within Christianity itself are systems of priestcraft where the individual believer has no glad, free access to his Father s presence, but where his approach must be mediated by a priestly ritual, his forgiveness assured by a priestly declaration, his salvation sealed by a priestly sacrament. This idea that God must be approached by stated cere monies came directly from thinking of God in terms of a human monarch. No common man could walk carelessly into the presence of an old-time king. There were proprieties to be observed. There were courtiers who knew the proper approach to royalty, through whom the common folk would better send petitions up and from whom they would better look for favour. So God was pictured as a human monarch with his throne, his scepter, his ministering attendants. Here on earth the priests were those courtiers who knew the effectual way of reaching him, by whom we would best send up our prayers, through whom we would best look for our salvation. Nordau is not exaggerating when he says : " When we have studied the sacrificial rites, the incantations, prayers, hymns, and cere monies of religion, we have as complete a picture of the relations between our an cestors and their chiefs as if we had seen them with our own eyes." Our anthropomorphism, however, reaches its most dangerous form in our inward imaginations of God s character. How the pot has called the kettle black! Man has read his vanities into God, until he has sup posed that singing anthems to God s praise might flatter him as it would flatter us.

!Max Nordau : The Interpretation of History, p. 217.

Man has read his cruelties into God, and what in moments of vindictiveness and wrath we would like to do our enemies we have supposed Eternal God would do to his. Man has read his religious partisan ship into God ; he who holds Orion and the Pleiades in his leash, the Almighty and Everlasting God, before whom in the be ginning the morning stars sang together, has been conceived as though he were a Baptist or a Methodist, a Presbyterian or an Anglican. Man has read his racial pride into God ; nations have thought themselves his chosen people above all his other chil dren because they seemed so to themselves. The centuries are sick with a god made in man s image, and all the time the real God has been saying, " Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself." The unhappy prevalence of this mental idolatry is one of the chief causes for the loss of religious faith among the younger generation. They have grown up in our homes and churches with their imaginations dwelling on a God made in man s image, and now through education they have moved out into a universe so much too big for that little god of theirs either to have made in the first place or to handle now that they find it hard to believe in him. Astronomers tell us that there are a hun dred million luminous stars in our sky, and dark stars in unknown multitudes; that these stars range from a million to ten mil lion miles in diameter; that some of them are so vast that were they brought as close to us as our sun is they would fill the entire horizon; and that these systems are scat tered through the stellar spaces at distances so incredible that, were some hardy dis coverer to seek our planet in the midst of them, it would be like looking for a needle lost somewhere on the western prairies. The consequence is inevitable: a vast pro gressive universe plus an inadequate God means that in many minds faith in God goes to pieces.

Ill

One of the profoundest needs of the Church, therefore, in this new and growing world, is the achievement of such worthy ways of thinking about God and presenting him as will make the very idea of him a help to faith and not a stumbling-block to the faithful. In the attainment of that pur pose we need for one thing to approach the thought of God from an angle which to popular Christianity is largely unfamiliar, although it is not unfamiliar in the historic tradition of the Church. Too exclusively have we clung to the mental categories and the resultant phraseology which have grown up around the idea of God as an individual like ourselves. The reasons for the prevalence of this individualized concep tion of deity are obvious. First, as we have seen, the growth of the idea of God in Hebrew-Christian thought moved out from a very clearly visualized figure on a mountain-top to those expanded and spirit ualized forms which glorified the later stages of the Biblical development; and, second, every one of us in his personal relig ious experience and thought recapitulates the same process, starting as a child with God conceived in very human terms and moving out to expanded and sublimated forms of that childish conception. Whether, then, we consider the source of our idea of God in the Biblical tradition or in our own private experience, we see that it is rooted in and springs up out of a very human con ception of him, and that our characteristic words about him, attitudes toward him, and imaginations of him, are associated with these childlike origins. Popular Christian ity, therefore, approaches God with the regulative idea of a human individual in its mind, and, while popular Christianity would insist that God is much more than that, it still starts with that, and the enterprise of stretching the conception is only relatively successful. Even when it is successful the result must be a God who is achieved by stretching out a man. In this situation the only help for many is, for the time being, to leave this endeav our to approach God by way of an expanded and sublimated human individual and to ap proach God, instead, by way of the Creative Power from which this amazing universe and all that is within it have arisen. Man s deepest question concerns the nature of the Creative Power from which all things and persons have come. In creation are we dealing with the kind of power which in ordinary life we recognize as physical, or with the kind which we recognize as spir itual? ^With these two sorts of power we actually deal and, so far as we can see, the ultimate reality which has expressed itself in them must be akin to the one or to the other or to both. He who is convinceU that the Creative Power from which all things have come is spiritual believes in God. I have seen that simple statement lift the burden of doubt from minds utterly perplexed and usher befogged spirits out into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For they did not believe that the Creative Power was dynamic dirt, going it blind; they did believe that the Creative Power was akin to what we know as spirit, but so accustomed were they to the Church s narrower anthro pomorphism that they did not suppose that this approach was a legitimate avenue for the soul s faith in God.

Nevertheless, it is a legitimate avenue and in the history of the Church many are the souls that have traveled it. The basis for all mature conceptions of God lies here : that the Power from whom all life proceeds wells up in two forms. One is physical; we can see it, touch it, weigh it, analyze and measure it. The other is spiritual; it is character, conscience, intelligence, purpose, love; we cannot see it, nor touch it, nor weigh it, nor analyze it. We ourselves did not make either of these two expressions of life. They came up together out of the Cre ative Reality from which we came. When a man thinks of the Power from which all life proceeds, he must say at least this: that when it wells up in us it wells up in two forms and one of them is spirit. How, then, when we think of that Power, can we leave spirit out ? At the heart of the eternal is the fountain of that spiritual life which

in my self I know. This thought of God does not start, then, with a magnified man in the heavens; this thought of God starts with the universe it self vibrant with life, tingling with energy, where, when scientists try to analyze mat ter, they have to trace it back from mole cules to atoms, from atoms to electrons, and from electrons to that vague spirituelle thing which they call a " strain in the ether," a universe where there is manifestly no such thing as dead matter, but where everything is alive. When one thinks of the Power that made this, that sustains this, that flows like blood through the veins of this, one cannot easily think that physical- ness is enough to predicate concerning him. If the physical adequately could have re vealed that Power, there never would have been anything but the physical to reveal him. The fact that spiritual life is here is evidence that it takes spiritual life fully to display the truth about creation s reality. As an old mystic put it: " God sleeps in the stone, he dreams in the animal, he wakes in man ! "

It was this approach to God which saved the best spiritual life of the nineteenth century. For in the eighteenth century Christianity came nearer to being driven out of business than ever in her history before. She had believed in a carpenter god who had made the world and occasionally tink ered with it in events which men called miracles. But new knowledge made that carpenter god impossible. Area after area where he had been supposed to operate was closed to him by the discovery of natural law until at last even comets were seen to be law-abiding and he was escorted clean to the edge of the universe and bowed out alto gether. Nobody who has not read the con temporary literature of the eighteenth cen tury can know what dryness of soul resulted. Man, however, cannot live without God. Our fathers had to have God back again. But if God were to come back again he could not return as an occasional tinkerer; he had to come as the life in all that lives, the indwelling presence throughout his cre ation, whose ways of working are the laws, so that he penetrates and informs them all. No absentee landlord could be welcomed back, but if God came as the resident soul of all creation, men could comprehend that. And he did come back that way. His return is the glory of the nineteenth century. In the best visions of the century s prophets that glory shines.

MRS. BROWNING:

" Earth s crammed with heaven, And every common bush afire with God: But only he who sees, takes off his shoes."

TENNYSON :

" Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet."

COLERIDGE :

"Glory to Thee, Father of Earth and

Heaven !

All conscious presence of the Universe ! Nature s vast ever-acting Energy !"

WORDSWORTH :

" a sense sublime Of something far more deeply interfused, Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns, And the round ocean and the living air And the blue sky, and in the mind of man; A motion and a spirit, that impels All thinking things, all objects of all thoughts, And rolls through all things."

Then sawest thou that this fair Universe, were it in the meanest province thereof, is in very deed the star-domed City of God ; that through every star, through every grass-blade, and most through every Living Soul, the glory of a present God still beams. But Nature, which is the Time-vesture of God, and reveals Him to the wise, hides Him from the foolish."

Moreover, this idea of God as the Cre ative Power conceived in spiritual terms need not lose any of the intimate mean ings which have inhered in more personal thoughts of him and which are expressed in the Bible s names for him : Father, Mother, Bridegroom, Husband, Friend. There is in deed this danger in the approach which we have been describing, that we may conceive God as so dispersed everywhere that we cannot find him anywhere and that at last, so diffused, he will lose the practical value on account of which we want him. For we do desire a God who is like ourselves enough like ourselves so that he can under stand us and care for us and enter into our human problems. We do want a human side to God. A man who had seen in Henry Drummond the most beautiful ex hibition of God s Spirit that he had ever experienced said that after Henry Drum mond died he always prayed up to God by way of Drummond. We make our most vital approaches to God in that way and we always have, from the time we prayed to God through our fathers and mothers until now, when we find God in Christ. We want in God a personality that can answer ours, and we can have it without belittling in the least his greatness.

I know a man who says that one of the turning points of his spiritual experience came on a day when for the first time it dawned on him that he never had seen his mother. Now, his mother was the major molding influence in his life. He could have said about her what Longfellow said in a letter to his mother, written when he was twenty-one. " For me," wrote Longfellow, " a line from my mother is more efficacious than all the homilies preached in Lent; and I find more incitement to virtue in merely looking at your handwriting than in a whole volume of ethics and moral discourses." So this man would have felt about the per vasive influence of his mother. Then it dawned on him one day that he never had seen her. To be sure, he had seen the bod ily instrument by which she had been able somehow to express herself through look and word and gesture, but his mother herself, her thoughts, her consciousness, her love, her spirit, he never had seen and he never would see. She was the realest force in his life, but she was invisible. When they talked together they signalled to each other out of the unseen where they dwelt. They both were as invisible as God. Moreover, while his mother was only a human, per sonal spirit, there was a kind of omnipres ence in her so far as he was concerned, and he loved her and she loved him everywhere, though he never had seen her and never could. If spiritual life even in its human form can take on such meanings, we need not think of God as an expanded individual in order to love him, be loved by him, and company with him as an unseen friend. Let a man once begin with God as the universal spiritual Presence and then go on to see the divine quality of that Presence revealed in Christ, and there is no limit to the deepen ing and heightening of his estimation of God s character, except the limits of his own moral imagination.

IV With many minds the difficulty of achiev ing an idea of God adequate for our new universe will not be met by any such intellectual shift of emphasis as we have sug gested. Not anthropomorphic

theology so much as ecclesiasticism is the major burden on their thinking about deity. Two concep tions of the Church are in conflict to-day in modern Protestantism, and one of the most crucial problems of America s religious life in this next generation is the decision as to which of these two ideas of the Church shall triumph. We may call one the exclusive and the other the inclusive conception of the Church. The exclusive conception of the Church lies along lines like these : that w r e are the true Church ; that we have the true doctrines and the true practices as no other Church possesses them ; that we are constituted as a Church just because we have these uniquely true opinions and prac tices ; that all we in the Church agree about these opinions and that when we joined the Church we gave allegiance to them; that nobody has any business to belong to our Church unless he agrees with us ; that if there are people outside the Church who disagree, they ought to be kept outside and if there are people in the Church who come to disagree, they ought to be put outside. That is the exclusive idea of the Church, and there are many who need no further description of it for they were brought up in it and all their youthful religious life was sur rounded by its rigid sectarianism.

Over against this conception is the in clusive idea of the Church, which runs along lines like these : that the Christian Church ought to be the organizing center for all the Christian life of a community; that a Church is not based upon theological uni formity but upon devotion to the Lord Jesus, to the life with God and man for which he stood, and to the work which he gave us to do; that wherever there are peo ple who have that spiritual devotion, who possess that love, who want more of it, who desire to work and worship with those of kindred Christian aspirations, they belong inside the family of the Christian Church. The inclusive idea of the Church looks out upon our American communities and sees there, with all their sin, spiritual life unex pressed and unorganized, good-will and as piration and moral power unharnessed and going to waste, and it longs to cry so that the whole community can hear it, Come, all men of Christian good-will, let us work to gether for the Lord of all good life! That is the inclusive idea of the Church. It de sires to be the point of incandescence where, regardless of denominationalism or theol ogy, the Christian life of the community bursts into flame. As between these two conceptions there hardly can be any question that the first idea so far has prevailed. Our endlessly split and shivered Protestantism bears suf ficient witness to the influence of the ex clusive idea of the Church. The disastrous consequences of this in many realms are evident, and one result lies directly in our argument s path. An exclusive Church nar rows the idea of God. Almost inevitably God comes to be conceived as the head of the exclusive Church, the origin of its uniquely true doctrine, the director of its uniquely correct practices, so that the activ ities of God outside the Church grow dim, and more and more he is conceived as ope rating through his favourite organization as nowhere else in all the universe. In par ticular the idea grows easily in the soil of an exclusive Church that God is not opera tive except in people who recognize him and that the world outside such conscious rec ognition is largely empty of his activity and barren of his grace. God tends, in such thinking, to become cooped up in the Church, among the people who consciously have acknowledged him. What wonder that multitudes of our youth, waking up to the facts about our vast and growing universe, conclude that it is too big to be managed by the tribal god of a Protestant sect ! The achievement of a worthy idea of God involves, therefore, the ability to dis cover God in all life, outside the Church as well as within, and in people who do not believe in him nor recognize him as well as in those who do. Let us consider for a moment the principle which is here in volved. Many forces and persons serve us when we do not recognize them and do not know the truth about them. This experi ence of being

ministered to by persons whom we do not know goes back even to the maternal care that nourished us before we were born. No mother waits to be rec ognized before she serves her child. We are tempted to think of persons as minister ing to us only when the service is con sciously received and acknowledged but, as a matter of fact, service continually comes to us from sources we are unaware of and do not think about.

" Unnumbered comforts to my soul Thy tender care hestowed, Before my infant heart conceived From whom those comforts flowed." This principle applies to mankind s relationship with the physical universe. Through many generations mankind utterly misconceived it. They thought the earth was flat, the heavens a little way above; yet, for all that, the sun warmed them and the rain refreshed them and the stars guided their wandering boats. The physical uni verse did not wait until men knew all the truth about it before being useful to men and at last, when the truth came and the glory of this vast and mobile cosmos dawned on mankind, men discovered the facts about forces which, though unknown and unacknowledged, long had served them. This same principle applies also to man s relationship with social institutions and social securities that have sustained us from our infancy. If a boy knows that there is a Constitution of the United States, he does not think about it. Then maturity comes and he begins vividly to understand the sacrifices which our forefathers underwent in building up the institutions that have nourished us. He recognizes forces and factors of which he had been unconscious but whose value, long unacknowledged, he now gratefully can estimate. This same principle also applies to our unconscious indebtedness to people who have helped us but whom we have not known. This is a far finer world because of souls who have been here through whom God has shined like the sun through eastern windows, but we can go on year after year absorbing unconsciously the influence of these spirits without ever knowing them. I lived for twelve years in a community to which in its early days a young minister had come, and where for forty years he stood as the central influence in the town s life. He brought it up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. As was said of Joseph in Potiphar s prison, " Whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it." The height of his mind, the unselfishness of his spirit, the liberality of his thought, made all the people gladly acclaim him as the fore most citizen of the town. There is a qual ity in the town s life yet which never would have been there had it not been for him. Sometimes yet his spirit must brood above that community which for forty years he cherished and must say to people whom he never knew, but who are being blessed by the benedictory influence of his life, what Jehovah said to Cyrus the Persian, " I girded thee, though thou hast not known me."

So, from multitudinous sources services flow in upon us that we do not recognize. It should be impossible then to think that God never touches men until men welcome him. Some people seem to suppose that God ministers to men, saves them, trans forms them, raises them up and liberates them only when they confessedly receive him. That cannot be true of the God of the New Testament. He is too magnanimous for that. Jesus says a man is unworthy of his discipleship when he serves only the friends who are responsive, that we must serve the hostile and ungrateful, too. Can it be that God is less good than Jesus said we ought to be? We in the churches have drawn our little lines too tight. We have been tempted to divide mankind into two classes, the white and the black : in the Church the white, the saved, who recognize God; outside, the black, the unsaved, the ungodly who do not recognize him. By that division we sometimes seem to imply that those outside the Church are outside the reach of God s transforming grace

and power. We are tempted to look for God s activity chiefly, if not altogether, inside the organization that avows him. But that can not be true. He comes in like the sun through every chink and crevice where he can find a way of entrance. He does not wait to be welcomed. He does not insist on being consciously recognized before he enters a man s life. Rather, through any door or window left unwittingly ajar where he may steal in, even though unobserved, to lift and liberate a life, there the God of the New Testament will come " the light which lighteth every man coming into the world."

Consider, for illustration, the many people in this generation who have given up active relationship with the Church and assured faith in God. They may even call them selves agnostics. Would it not be true to speak to them like this: You have not suc ceeded in getting rid of God. There is a flame in your heart that will not go out. You try to say there is no God and then you go out under the stars at night and you begin to wonder how such a vast, law- abiding universe could come by accident, as if a man were to throw a font of type on the floor and by chance it should arrange itself into a play of Shakespeare. Strange universe, without God! You try to say there is no God and you pick up a book : a life of Phillips Brooks or David Livingstone or Francis Xavier, and you begin to wonder that, amid these whirling stars and solar sys tems, a race of men should have emerged with spiritual life like that which we pos sess, with ideals that beckon us, conscience that warns us and remorse that punishes us ! You cannot easily think that this long spir itual struggle and achievement of the race is an accident struck off unwittingly like sparks from falling stones in a material w r orld without abiding meaning. Or you try to say there is no God, and then you are married and your first baby is born and there wells up in your heart that purest love that man can know, the feeling of a parent for a little child. And you cannot help wondering how a man can walk about the world with love like that in the center of his life, thinking that there is nothing to correspond with it in the reality from which his heart and his baby came. You try to say there is no God, and then you begin to grow old and the friends you love best on earth pass away, as Carlyle said his mother did, like " the last pale rim or sickle of the moon which had once been full, sinking in the dark seas." You cannot help wondering whether great souls can be so at the mercy of a few particles of matter that when these are disturbed the spirit is plunged into oblivion! You never really have gotten rid of God. There is a flame in the center of your heart which you cannot put out. If there were no God it would be easier to dis believe in him than it is. You cannot get rid of him because the best in you is God in you. The flame is he and there in the cen ter of your life, recognized or unrecognized, he is burning up as best b^ can. This principle of God s unrecognized presence applies to a special group of people that has been growing rapidly in the last few years: the men and women who give themselves with high spirit to human ser vice in science or philanthropy but who never think of attributing their service or love of truth to religious motives. To this group belong many of our scientists. They give themselves no rest, seeking for truth which will help human need. In obscure and forgotten laboratories to-day they search for remedies for ancient, lamentable ills. They make it a point of professional honour not to take profit for themselves when they have succeeded, but to give freely to the world the knowledge they have achieved. The pulpit has often quarreled with the scientists. Let the pulpit honour them for their amazing outpouring of service to the world. To this group also belong many of our philanthropists, to whom sacri fice for the common weal has become the moral equivalent of war. Yet often these men and women, useful public servants of the generation as they are, do not know God. They are great spirits. Let us not pretend that they are not. They are making a deep and beneficent impress

upon their own times, and our sons and our sons sons will rise up to call them blessed; yet they do not know God. .What are we to say of such men and women? You know what some people do say about them. They use them as arguments against religion. They say, See these fine men living without God. That is an utter fallacy. They are not liv ing without God. They only think they are. They are the supreme examples of the work of the unrecognized God. One wishes that those men and women would recognize God. God can do much more through re sponsive than through unresponsive lives. But we may not say that they are living without God. There, in the center of their life, in the ideals they work for, in the ser vice they render, in the love they lavish, in the mission that has mastered them, there is God.

Some time ago I wandered down Broad way, in the small hours of the morning, with one of the prominent citizens of the com munity. At the heart of his life is the pas sion to be of use. Because his character is stalwart and his ability great, the scope of his service is far wider than the capacity of most of us. Amid the hurrying crowds and the flashing lights of Broadway we talked together hour after hour about God and im mortality. He said that he could not believe in God. He wistfully wished that he could. He was sure that it must add something beautiful to human life, but for himself he thought that there was no possibility except to live a high, clean, serviceable life until he should fall on sleep. All the way home that night I thought of other people whom I know. Here is a man who believes in God. He always has believed in God. He was brought up to believe in God and he has never felt with poignant sympathy enough the abysmal, immedicable woes of human kind to have his faith disturbed. He never has had any doubts. The war passed over him and left him as it found him. The fiercest storm that ever raged over mankind did not touch the surface of his pool of sheltered faith. How could one help comparing him with my friend who could not believe? For he, in high emotion, had spoken of the miseries of men, of multitudes starving, of the horrors of war, of the poor whose lives are a long animal struggle to keep the body alive, of the woes that fall with such terrific incidence upon the vast, obscure, forgotten masses of our human kind, and out of the very ardour of his sym pathy had cried: " How can you believe that a good Father made a world like this? "

Now, I believe in God with all my heart. But the God whom I believe in likes that man. Jesus, were he here on earth as once he was, would love him. I think Jesus would love him more than the other man who never had faced human misery with sympathy enough to feel his faith disturbed. This does not mean that we ought content edly to see men ministered to by a God whom they do not recognize. It is a pity to be served by the Eternal Spirit of all grace and yet not know him. In Jean Webster s "Daddy Long Legs," Jerusha Abbott in the orphanage is helped by an un known friend. Year after year the favours flow in from this friend whom she does not know. She blossoms out into girlhood and young womanhood and still she does not know him. One day she sees him and she does not recognize him. She has always thought of him as looking other than he does, and so even when she sees him she does not know him. Suppose that the story stopped there ! It would be intolerable to have a story end so. To be served all one s life by a friend and then not to know him when he seeks recognition is tragedy. So it is tragedy when God is unrecognized, but behind that is a deeper tragedy still people w T ho believe in God but who have thoughts of him so narrowly ecclesiastical that they themselves do not perceive his presence, acknowledged or unacknowledged, in all the goodness and truth and beauty of the universe.

Such an enlargement of the idea of God to meet the needs of this new world is one of the innermost demands of religion to-day. When a man believes in the living God as the Creative Power in this universe, whose character was revealed in Christ and who, recognized or unrecognized, reveals him self in every form of goodness, truth and beauty which life anywhere contains, he has achieved a God adequate for life. To such a man the modern progressive outlook upon the world becomes exhilarating; all real advance is a revelation of the purpose of this living-God; and, far from being hostile to religion, our modern categories furnish the noblest mental formulae in which the relig ious spirit ever had opportunity to find ex pression. We who believe this have no business to be modest and apologetic about it, as though upon the defensive we shyly presented it to the suffrages of men. It is a gospel to proclaim. It does involve a new theology but, with multitudes of eager minds in our generation, the decision no longer lies between an old and a new theol ogy, but between new theology and no theology. No longer can they phrase the deepest experiences of their souls with God in the outgrown categories of a static world. In all their other thinking they live in a world deeply permeated by ideas of prog ress, and to keep their religion in a separate compartment, uninfluenced by the best knowledge and hope of their day, is an en terprise which, whether it succeed or fail, means the death of vital faith. To take this modern, progressive world into one s mind and then to achieve an idea of God great enough to encompass it, until with the little gods gone and the great God come, life is full of the knowledge of him, as the waters cover the sea, that is alike the duty and the privilege of Christian leadership to-day. In a world which out of lowly beginnings has climbed so far and seems intended to go on to heights unimagined, God is our hope and in his name we will set up our banners.

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03.00. Christianity and Progress

The Assurance of Immortality by Harry Emerson Fosdick

The Macmillan Company

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2. The Possibility of Immortality .

3. The Assurance of Immortality .

" If this life be not a real fight, in which something is eternally gained for the universe by success, it is no better than a game of private theatricals from which one may with draw at will. But it feels like a real fight. 11

WILLIAM JAMES.

PREFACE IN publishing this essay upon immortal ity, it is useless, and in most cases impossible, for me to indicate in detail my indebtedness for the lines of thought which here are inter woven. The general considerations which support faith in everlasting life have been canvassed so often that extensive originality in arguing for immortality is out of the question. Whatever freshness of thought this essay may possess will be found in the fact that the problem of life after death is viewed from the standpoint of the twentieth century and is discussed in terms of the special difficulties and the prevailing atti tudes which exist to-day. Old arguments must take new direction from the banks of the generation s thought between which they flow. In particular I have had in mind the man, conscientious about his daily work, with whom the words honor and friendship, fidelity and courage, weigh heavily, but who, occasionally lifting his thought to the problem of life everlasting, speedily turns away, saying : What difference does it make ? At least I can do my present task well, and if there be any world beyond the grave, I will face it, when it comes." This prevalent attitude is often maintained in admirable spirit and is accompanied by an honorable and useful life. But there are considera tions which such an attitude leaves out of account, and to these the attention of this essay is specially directed. The reader will find the understanding of the argument easier if he keeps in mind the general outline of the thought. In the first chapter, I try

simply to point out the real and present importance of the problem which we are considering ; in the second chapter, I try to show the inconclusive nature of the arguments commonly urged against a future life ; and in the third chapter, I try to pre sent the positive reasons for a modern man s assurance that death does not end all.

HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK. August 6, 1913,

03.01. The Significance of Immortality

CHAPTER I THE SIGNIFICANCE OF IMMORTALITY

ONE of the most noticeable contrasts between this generation and those imme diately preceding it, is the relative unim portance of the future life in the thought of the present age. When our forefathers were at all religious, and often when they were not, they not only took for granted the fact of continued existence beyond the grave, but they regarded it as a matter of supreme concern. When in the eigh teenth century Butler constructed his im pressive argument for revealed religion, he used the soul s deathlessness, not as a conclusion to be established, but as a premise to be assumed. Even with rad ical thinkers outside the churches, faith in the future life could then be presupposed as a common point of agreement, while within the churches men s hopes and fears of immortality dominated their religious thought, and made this present life signifi cant largely because it was preparatory to the glories or the terrors of the life to come. . Our fathers; therefore, hardly could have understood the present generation s scep ticism about the truth of immortality ; much less could they have comprehended that modern nonchalance which speaks and acts as though it made but little dif ference whether or not men live beyond the grave. A recent writer tells us that in our unwillingness to die and have that the end of us, "We have not passed far beyond the attitude of peevish children who refuse to come in at nightfall after they have played outdoors all day." This cavalier belittling of the significance of life to come is prevalent to-day even among religious men. They do not so much dis believe in immortality ; their scepticism lies deeper ; they do not care. With some such phrase as "One world at a time," they commonly dismiss consideration of the future life, regarding immortality as indeed a possibility, but a possibility whose import is postponed until they die. To insist, therefore, that the persistence of personality beyond the grave involves tre mendous issues for our present life, is to day not by any means superfluous. . The reasons for this decline of emphasis upon the importance of the world to come are easily discernible. For one thing, the impact of new scientific information con cerning the evolutionary origin of man and the intricate relationship between the mind and brain has shattered confidence in the certainty of life to come. The manifold causes which in our day have unsettled old religious beliefs, and have cast doubt upon or utterly discredited supposed bases of faith that had gone unquestioned for two thousand years, have made unstable the hopes of immortality. With that ad mirable power of adaptation, therefore, which is one of the noblest elements in human character, men, finding their con fidence in a future life vanishing, have set themselves to make the best of the new situation, and have stoutly asserted that the change makes little difference. Even a Robinson Crusoe looks for compensations in his condition, when he finds himself upon a solitary island, and men, at their best, believing that this life is all they have, will resolutely make the most of that, and as an armor against the malice of their fate, will courageously affirm that they do not care, that one life is enough, and that the difference is inconsiderable after all. In addition to this initial cause for the decline of emphasis upon the importance of immortality, is an even nobler reason. Men have gathered new hopes of racial progress in our day, and, at their best, are increasingly inclined to sink their indi vidual prospects in their expectations for humanity. The

social passion finds voice in pulpits as well as on secular platforms, and proclaims there what our fathers would not have thought of saying, that our mission is not to get men into heaven, but somehow to bring heaven to earth. What Narodny said of Russia, "I am nothing; personal success, happiness, they are nothing ; exile, Siberia, the Czar s bullet, they are nothing ; there is just one thing, that Russia must be free," men in a larger sense are saying of the human race. Hope of a future life, with its rewards and possibilities, has a mean look in the light of such self-forgetful passion, and as new discoveries open new hopes of progress for mankind, one hears scores of men wish that they could see America a hundred years from now, for one man who, after the old fashion, longs for heaven. What difference does it make whether another life awaits us after death, so long as here we play our part like men, and hand down the heritage of the past, so purified and furthered by our thought and sacrifice that our children will rise up to call us blessed ?

Another reason for the decline of emphasis upon the importance of the life to come is not so creditable as the other two. In the present age, this life has been made vivid and interesting in an unexampled way. Old isolations have been overcome, so that the whole world is now the province of any mind that chooses to be cosmopolitan, and rapidity of communication has made possible world-wide enterprises on such a scale as no previous age has ever known. New knowledge has consumed the thoughts of men, and new avenues of wealth have engaged their ambitions, until the contemplation of eternal destiny has paled before the immediate brilliance of this present world. For men are like auditoriums ; they can hold so many occupants and no more ; and when the seats are filled and even the Standing Room Only" sign has been removed, the next comer, though he be a prince, must cool his heels upon the curb. The minds of men have been pre empted by the immediate and fascinating interests of this vigorous, exciting age. The fact is not so much that they through reasoned disbelief have discarded faith in immortality, as that through preoccupation they have lost interest in anything beyond the grave.

Even a deeper reason, in the realm of serious thought, helps to explain the modern depreciation of immortality. Eternal life is a matter of quality and not of time, men say. Justice and goodness, beauty and truth exist eternally in God and may be incarnate in our transient human lives. Let the individual die ; the value of his spiritual quality, which alone is worth pre serving, is perpetuated in the life of God. From God came all the worth of our characters, to him it shall return and in him it shall never die. Not in our small individ ualities, but in his persistent Being, " All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist." The only Eternal is God; of him we are but broken lights ; and our flickering lives, luminous with his quality, may be eternal in this sense only, that we can mean what he means, we can incarnate in time the spiritual values that in him are absolute and timeless. Must every little candle burn forever, that so light may persist ? Must each separate breeze be perpetual in order that the air may still enswathe the earth ? Shall the special waves insist on perpetuity when they but represent the ocean that abides behind them, and in them and millions like them is expressed ? These are four outstanding reasons for the modern doubt, not only of the fact, but of the importance of personal immortality. There are other reasons, operative in all generations the pessimistic mood that does not want to live again, the worldling s hatred of the hopes and fears that would deprive him of comfort in self-indulgence but these four causes, not by any means dishonorable, lead even the best of men to-day to wonder how much difference it makes whether belief in immortality be accepted or denied. To be sure, one value for our present life which faith in immortality possesses is evident to all. It comforts men in the hour when

bereavement comes, when human hearts discover that by as much as love is great, by so much must grief be deep. But men are not assured that they have any right to expect comfort from the universe. They do not propose to find solace in a lie. They do not want the opium of a dream to ease them of their heart s distress. If the only value for life which faith in immortality possesses is the value of comfort, folk for that very reason will mistrust their right to it, will fear lest their desire for consolation may drive them to seek it in a hope that is not true. Even though a man has cried with Tennyson :

"Ah, Christ ! if it were possible For one short hour to see The souls we loved, that they might tell us Where and what they be," he has not drawn appreciably nearer to confidence about the future, nor has he even dimly seen the deepest issues which are implied in the acceptance or denial of immortality.

II The directest way by which we may perceive what difference to life is made when we believe or disbelieve in the con tinuance of personality beyond the grave, is to give free range to all our doubts and let them carry us into a frank and full denial of everlasting life. The affirmation that death ends all is a creed as clearly as is the assertion of immortality. Let that creed be asserted, and let all the implications of annihilation be followed to their logical results. In what sort of world do we then find ourselves? What difference to life does that assertion make ?

However superficial his first impression may prove to be, the ordinary man who, after believing in immortality, now turns to consider a world from which the hope of a future life has been obliterated, feels an unavoidable sense of injustice to the race.

What Professor Palmer of Harvard wrote, with fine restraint, when he recorded his wife s decease, we instinctively feel about the whole prospect of personality s annihila tion : "Though no regrets are proper for the manner of her death, who can contem plate the fact of it and not call the world irrational, if out of deference to a few par ticles of disordered matter it excludes so fair a spirit?" If death ends personality, the universe seems to be throwing away with utter heedlessness its most precious possessions. Whatever evaluations of the world may be questioned, no one doubts that personality, with its capacities for thought, for character, for love and for creative work is the crown of all existence. Out of what travail, age-long and full of agony, has personality been born ! By what vast struggles, admirable in their sacrificial heroism, has the moral life of man been attained and preserved ! A reasonable person does not build a violin, with infinite labor gathering the materials and shaping the body of it, until upon it he can play the compositions of the mas ters, and then in a whim of chance caprice smash it into bits. Yet just this the uni verse seems to be doing if immortality is false. Longer ages than our minds can con ceive she has been at work upon those forces which underlie our personalities, and now when Jesus and Augustine and Luther and Lincoln are possible, when at last a spiritual man can be the residence of poets dreams and martyrs consecrations, when the mind can think truth and the heart can love righteousness, are these supreme triumphs of the age-long, universal toil thrown utterly to ruin ?

Before a man, however, surrenders him self to this instinctive revolt against the unreasonableness and injustice of a world that creates personality only to destroy it, he must face the mitigating considera tions which have been suggested, the alter natives to personal immortality which have displaced in many minds the hope of individual continuance. Many take refuge from the malice of an obliterated life in the hope, already mentioned, that the worth of personality, in terms of its

goodness, its justice and its love, is made perpetual in the life of God. What we lay down, he gathers up and makes eternal, and so the spiritual gains of our human struggle are perpetuated even though human individ uals do not persist. But just what does this mean? It is easy to speak of justice as a quality in God, of which we may be the temporary representatives and the value of which we, dying, may know to be perpetual in him, but does not this in the face of searching thought turn out to be merely a form of words? Justice cannot exist in a solitary being whether he be God or man ; justice is a quality impos sible except in social relationships ; and God himself cannot be just without being just to some one. So, all the moral values that we know, truth, goodness, love, are forms of personal activity that never would have existed without social life, and that have no meaning whatsoever apart from relationships between persons. To imag ine God, therefore, in some sublime and timeless solitude after the race is gone, hoarding within himself the values of the justice, truth and goodness, which have been wrought out in the experience of the race, is to conceive an absurdity. When this earth has come to its inevitable dis solution and the persons who lived upon it have vanished utterly, will God indeed pre serve within himself the spiritual gains of our human struggles, just without being just to any one, true yet true to no one, perpetuating all our love, yet loving no person save himself? Then the justice, truth and love which are eternal in God have no imaginable likeness to the quali ties which we mean by the words. The moral gains of the race are all social in their genesis and in their expression. What can altruism mean in a universe without sepa rate personalities ; or honor, or sincerity, or loyalty, or faithfulness ? These are all terms applicable only to individuals sus taining a mutual relationship. The obvious fact is that the only hope of preserving the moral gains of humanity lies in the per sistence of a community of human per sons. Love, righteousness, fidelity, in an absolute and unrelated Being, are incon ceivable.

Moreover, spiritual quality in the very nature of the case cannot be detached from a man to be appropriated and preserved by God. All spiritual quality is simply personality in action, and when the person ality perishes, the action ceases as well. The human mind has been able to con ceive this reabsorption into God, to whom in some mysterious way, we, with our dying gasp, hand over all our moral gains, only by translating it into physical terms. The ocean can reabsorb and merge its separate drops, that lose their identity and give their substance to the sea. So our bodies can commingle with the earth, and dissolving can give their elements to the common stock. But the essence of personality is self-conscious separateness. That men, on becoming extinct as persons, can hand over their qualities, abstracted from them, to swell the general sum of spirit in the universe, is inconceivable. A man s goodness is as inalienably his possession as greenness is the possession of the tree, and only when the greenness can persist after the tree is gone, can righteousness, ab stracted from the personality whose func tion it is, fly unattached to be assimilated by another. Such detached spiritual qual ities are as impossible as the grin of the Cheshire cat in "Alice in Wonderland/ that stayed after the cat was gone. The philosophy of reabsorption offers no hope of preserving the values which humanity has attained ; it promises no future save endless cycles of recurrent existence, as the central Being sends out emanations and reabsorbs them in unintermittent and meaningless succession. If ever there shines a gleam of hope in a thinker of the pantheistic school, it is because in spite of all his words, he has kept at least the shadow of persistent personality, in whose endless increase the spiritual gains of experience can be preserved. The plain fact is that moral qualities are forms of personal energy, and cannot persevere apart from the persons whose attributes they are.

Another mitigating consideration that is often urged to defeat the malice of per sonality s annihilation, is that no good life can be in vain, because its influence goes on. But George Eliot s " Choir invisible Of those immortal dead who live again, In minds made better by their presence," while it has a literary and emotional value, has little value for thought. One of our leading American astronomers has elabo rated in a stirring lecture seven ways, in one of which our present solar system must come to its final cataclysm. Whether or not he has canvassed all the possibilities, it is obvious that the earth on which we live is not a permanent affair. The influence, therefore, which follows in the train of a Christ or a Lincoln is essentially as tran sient as the personality that first created it, if death ends all. For on a planet which is but a temporary stage, as sure to dis appear in time as night is to follow day, we use a few years of dwindling influence as a blanket to cover the tragedy of an an nihilated life, when we plead that what Lincoln did will last after what Lincoln was has perished. Both what Lincoln was and what he did, in a world where death is the end, come at last to a like inglorious conclusion.

Moreover, the essential unreasonableness of the universe in carelessly destroying its most precious possessions, when with infi nite sacrifice they have been created, concerns not so much the influence of a man as it concerns the man himself. What Christ was is far more significant than what Christ did, and the latter, like a stream, gains all its quality from the spring of personal wealth and power out of which it flowed. Granted that the influence of Jesus for a few aeons will go on, what has become of the creative source of that influence ? Does the world build a character like that, which has held now sixty generations in its spirit ual mastership, and then throw it utterly away ? Is God blowing soap-bubbles ? Did he dip the pipe of his power in the suds of matter and blow the character of Jesus, that it might entertain him with its iridescence, burst to his satisfaction and be gone ? Then in the end the whole race is but a conglomerate bubble, such as children love, in which one lobe adds to the iridescent beauty of another, but in which each in time will break and all at last will disappear. This is the universe without immortality. The words reasonableness and purposefulness, in any connotation known to man, can hardly be applied to such a world.

If, therefore, neither by the perpetuation of our influence, which on a perishable planet is impossible, nor by the assimilation of our spiritual values by God, which is a form of words without conceivable content, can the moral gains of humanity be pre served, we face this consequence to the denial of immortality, that the universe has no way at all of perpetuating the moral gains which our race achieves. Men do not commonly feel that so great a consequence can be involved, when they believe their annihilation. But let a man give wings to his thought ; let him rise above all care for his individual destiny, and at an altitude where no selfish desire for hope, no eager ness for personal comfort can deflect his judgment, let him look down upon the earth, and with the creed of annihilation in his thought consider its origin and destiny. What summary of them is possible but this ? The planet forms itself gradually from mysteriously whirling star dust, cooling and condensing as it whirls ; on the earth so formed life appears, growing in plants, swimming in fish, crawling in reptiles, and at last walking erect in man ; in man life evolves into those mystic functions which we call mind and character, - - pre ferring, with Moses, service to ease, learning with Ruth to cry, "The Lord do so to me and more also if aught but death part thee and me," praising God in David, in Jesus dying on Calvary for men, and on innu merable altars giving itself in sacrifice for honor s sake and truth s. At last, the planet, its atmosphere devitalized, its heat and light all gone, having come from chaos to chaos must return. After that, not even the memory shall

be left of any good that has been done under the sun, but with the death of the last man who falls in a world of graves, all the toil and sacrifice of the race come to their futile end. That is the world without immortality. The same process may be going on in Mars, but there too the race will work and pray, aspire and sacrifice, only at last to vanish, with not a vestige of memory to hand down and not a moral gain to be pre served. In a world without immortality it would seem that the only permanent forces are physical. They build themselves into solar systems and resolve themselves again, while life and character, knowledge and spiritual quality, the pride and glory of the race, are as transient as though like smoke rings they had been blown for a moment and had been dissolved. Without immortality physical force alone persists, the builder and destroyer of spirit, and at last the sole survivor and victor over all.

Ill

It has been customary to enlarge upon the blighting effects which such a concep tion of the world must have on character. Unquestionably this can be greatly over done. Huxley is clearly right when in his famous letter to Charles Kingsley, he speaks with restrained indignation of the collect which was read at his son s funeral. 11 As I stood beside the coffin of my little son the other day," he writes, "with my mind bent on anything but disputation, the officiating minister read, as a part of his duty, the words, If the dead rise not again, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die. I cannot tell you how inexpres sibly they shocked me. I could have laughed with scorn. What! because I am face to face with irreparable loss, because I have given back to the source from which it came, the cause of a great happiness, still retaining through all my life the blessings which have sprung and will spring from that cause, I am to renounce my manhood, and, howling, grovel in bestiality? Why, the very apes know better, and if you shoot their young, the poor brutes grieve their grief out and do not immediately seek dis traction in a gorge." In many a hectic description of the ethical results of dis belief in immortality, preachers have run into danger of such condemnation. "If you believe in no future life," said Luther, "I would not give a mushroom for your God. Do, then, as you like ! For if no God, so no devil, no hell ; as with a fallen tree, all is over when you die. Then plunge into lechery, rascality, robbery and mur der." Such a description of the conse quences of doubting life to come is folly. To be sure, a German philosopher, not a preacher, has pictured in its most des perate terms the meaning of a hopeless world. Men have entertained three kinds of hope, he tells us, and all of them have failed : first, that they might find happiness in the material comforts of life ; second, that they might dwell in bliss in a future heaven ; and, third, that they might be queath to their children a social state on earth where ultimate satisfaction could be found. And now that all these hopes have failed, nothing is left but a univer sal compact of suicide. That is absurd. Though we all believed that we were bodies only, with a spiritual aspect, and that we were working on a transient task that must come to its finale in a planet s ruin, we would not commit suicide. There are sanctions for right conduct that do not depend upon the outcome of the universe, and values in living, that inhere in every day s experience and do not ask ultimate questions about eternity. Nevertheless, when, believing in annihilation, one takes ac count of the long travail of the ages, weighs in his imagination all the agony of struggle and misfortune there, and perceives the inevitable end, when, like a burned-out cin der, the earth whirls back to its primeval chaos, he can understand the meaning of the philosopher who wrote: " Considering the immense and protracted sorrows of mankind, it would have been better if the earth had remained like the moon, a mass of slag, idle and without a tenant."

It is impossible to suppose that this view of the world, to which we are introduced by the denial of immortality, can be with out effect upon moral motives and ideals of character. To say that some special man has disbelieved all forms of personal permanence, and yet has lived a life notable for its loftiness of aim and its integrity, is not proof that belief in life to come has a negligible influence on the characters of men. For men everywhere and always have cherished beliefs in some kind of im mortality, however undesirable ; in Chris tianity especially, moral motives have ever been associated with affirmations of eternal issues to spiritual life ; so that an individual, in achieving his lofty character, may be a pensioner on the accumulated faith of the race, even while he himself denies the faith. Upon the other side, to imagine the sud den breakdown of all belief in immor tality, so that the characters of men are deprived of old sanctions and supports before new ones have been found to take their places, is no fair test of the moral con sequences of denying immortality. For all such sudden changes, whether in the end their influence will prove a benefit or bane, must cause an immediate disturbance, easily picturable in desperate terms. If fairly we are to test the moral results of affirming that death ends all, we must grant that affirmation to be true, and then we must conceive the race as gradually discovering the sort of world in which it lives, until at last all men have been convinced that this is the only world there is, that death means annihilation, that in the end the universe throws away its most priceless possessions, and has no way of preserving finally its moral gains. How will the characters of men be affected by such a conclusion, universally believed ?

Many a modern man, not altogether thoughtless in his nonchalance about immor tality, answers this question with an asser tion both familiar and full of noble meaning. "Virtue is its own reward," he says. "Our goodness at its best does not depend for inspiration on the pay it may receive.

Spiritual quality is its own recompense, and does not, like a Moslem beggar, with outstretched palms, ask God for bak sheesh." That this affirmation of the self- sufficiency of character is true and elevated is clear to a man in proportion as he is free from spiritual sordidness and is sensitive to the intrinsic worth of moral excellence. Even a little thought, however, reveals the fact that the assertion that virtue is its own reward is based upon a deeply spiritual idea of life s significance. Virtue is its own reward, but for whom ? If it be true of all of us, as Tennyson sang of the dead Wellington, "We doubt not that for one so true, There must be other nobler work to do Than when he fought at Waterloo," then it is plain that spiritual quality car ries with it its own recompense. For then character is eternally progressive, and what ever may be the reaction of the world upon us, whether in gratitude or gibes, in praise or malediction, spiritual life, growing, deepening, forever hopeful of climbing heights of quality yet unattained, of ren dering service hitherto beyond our reach, is a possession so intrinsically and superla tively valuable, that to him who has it no outward recompense is needed as a motive for the love of goodness. But when you take hope from character, when its pos sibility of progress is seen to end in a blind alley, how is virtue its own reward then ? When in some Cherry Hill mine disaster the rescuers leap into the lift and, with eyes wide open to their imminent danger, plunge down into the burning mine intent on saviourhood, and when they straight way are hauled up again, charred corpses every one, in just what sense, if death ends all, was virtue its own reward to them? The recompense of scholarship is the capac ity for increasing scholarship ; the reward of spiritual life is the hope of the good man to-day that to-morrow he may be better ; and without this hope the saying that virtue carries in its bosom its own remuneration has a vastly diminished significance. The pay of goodness is the opportunity to

be come better.

When, therefore, a man of insight demands a life to come, it is not because he seeks outward recompense for a good life here ; it is because his goodness here, if it is to be passionate and earnest, must have the eternal chance of being better. His value lies in what he may become not in what he has or does or is, but in his possibilities and by as much as hope is stolen from him, until he clearly sees that his character is a seed which the frost of accident may nip to-day and which the winter of death will surely kill to-morrow, in so far the heart is taken from the saying that virtue is its own reward. Of course this does not mean that in a world without immortality an ethical life is impossible. To say that would be pre posterous. If the world, long looked upon as a ship whose captain knows the course and outcome of the journey and whose passengers have a destination worthy of the cruise, is now to be regarded as a raft, drifting aimlessly upon the high seas of ex istence, the temporary home of beings that are born to die, this changed conception will not do away either with the necessity or the possibility of morals. Upon the raft, the worst men will seize what they can for them selves ; but the best men, moved by pity for the plight of their fellows, will establish rules and regulations adapted to the wel fare of the whole, will punish offenders, and in many a beautiful self-sacrifice will prefer the good of others to their own. "Pity," says Schopenhauer, the pessi mist, "is the only source of unselfish actions and the true basis of morality." More over, on the raft, quite apart from ques tions of the future, fortitude, honor and friendliness may well be recognized as the most worthy attributes of character; scales of moral value may be accepted in which the noblest stoical virtues are made pre eminent ; and courage and kindliness may be admirably exhibited. From such motives an ethical life may result, hopeless, but under the circumstances far from ignoble. To be sure, when Haeckel, who counts God and immortality delusions, declares that a man has an "unquestioned right to put an end to his own sufferings by death" ; when he says, "We have a right, if not a duty, under such conditions to put an end to the sufferings of our fellow-men" ; when he admires the ancient Spartan habit of strangling new-born children if they are weakly, and urges its general adoption, he is making explicit the logical morality of the raft. When Nietsche rails upon all hos pitals, orphanages and every kind of saving agency by which we seek to help the unfortunate, and so perpetuate the weak, when the world is needed for the strong, he is clearly stating his vision of the moral ity of the raft. Tenderness, sympathy, self-sacrifice and love, doubtless would persist, but their tone would certainly be changed. They would be the old qualities which we have known, no longer motived by any eternal value in personality, by any endless possibility of development in char acter, by any conviction that the spiritual life has everlasting issues which make its failure or success man s chief concern. When one endeavors to picture to himself the noblest sentiments that could find resi dence in men, in a world where no one dreamed of immortality and all had seen the implications of their disbelief, he can rise no higher than the compassionate spirit which Whittier s sonnet shows :

"My heart was heavy, for its trust had been Abused, its kindness answered with foul wrong :

So, turning gloomily from my fellow-men, One summer Sabbath-day, I strolled among The green mounds of the village burial place ; Where, pondering how all human love and hate Find one sad level, and how, soon or late, Wronged and wrongdoer, each with meekened face, And cold hands folded over a still heart, Pass the green threshold of our common grave, Whither all footsteps tend, whence none depart, Awed for myself and pitying my race, Our common sorrow, like a mighty wave, Swept all my pride away, and, trembling, I forgave." So on the raft, for pity s sake men could

be kind and serviceable, and even could forgive their enemies. But it is to be remarked that when we seek an expression of this compassionate pity, we must look for it to a man like Whittier, who believes in God and immortality. No Haeckel or Nietsche, who really does think the world a raft and deeply sees the meaning of that creed, has ever left on record any expression of such compassionate regard for men.

IV The reason for the difference which the universal denial of immortality would make to the motives and ideals of character is not difficult to see. The attainment of an honorable and useful life costs sacrifice. Present pleasures must be foregone or subordinated for the sake of a central moral purpose, and this fact, which looks simple and unimpassioned in print, in life involves a sacrificial struggle whose depth and intensity the novelists and dramatists of the race have tried in vain adequately to describe. Now, man s willingness to sac rifice for anything depends on his evaluation of its worth. Theprincipal effectof Christian faith upon man s moral life is to be found neither in the scruples which it induces regarding certain sins, nor in the positive duties which it enjoins, but in the tran scendent value it places on personality. The New Testament is a treatise upon self- respect. The central theme around which all its harmonies are composed is the spirit ual nature, the permanent continuance, the infinite value, the boundless possibility of man. The great affirmations of the Chris tian Gospel that God created men and loves them, that they are immortal and that God needs them to perfect his work, merge their influence in raising man s evaluation of himself. In the New Testament men are sons of God, if sons, heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ ; all things are theirs, whether life or death, or things present or things to come ; neither life nor death, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature can separate them from the love of God ; and being now sons of God, they cannot imagine what they shall be, save that their destiny is exceeding abundantly above all they can ask or think. Men had never thought so highly of themselves before. Celsus, the great opponent of the Christians in the early centuries, goes to the heart of the matter when he says, "The root of Christianity is its excessive valuation of the human soul, and the absurd idea that God takes interest in man." Aristotle had said that some men are born savages, no more changeable than dogs; that artisans are living machines, incapable of virtue ; that women are nature s failures in the attempt to make men. The ancient laws had encouraged the slaying of infants as a measure of household economy and had looked upon slaves in the arena with the beasts as we look upon a hunt. Man kind had known benevolence in fraternal orders, public charity, and the beautiful meaning of sacrificial friendship, but phi lanthropy, the love of man as man, the conception of personality in child or slave or woman or king as a priceless spiritual treasure, this is peculiarly the outcome of those faiths in the Fatherhood of God and in eternal life which made Jesus say, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own self? " Emer son is authority for the statement that "Jesus alone in history estimated the greatness of man."

Even when this principal emphasis of the Christian faith has been poorly appre hended, even when it has been mangled by gloomy theology or despoiled of its effect by ecclesiastical folly, it has exercised an incalculable influence on the characters of men. It has made those who deeply understood it feel that no sacrifice can be too great for the preservation of spiritual quality and the service of the personalities of other men. Self-respect, that inward soul of the greatest motives for character, is by it raised to loftiest terms.

When, therefore, the opposite creed is asserted, how is it conceivable that motives and ideals of character shall not suffer a tremendous change ? The denial of immor tality leads a man by an inevitable drift toward the affirmation that we essentially are flesh, not spirit. When a man is asked if he has a soul, even though he is a Christian, he is likely to declare that he has one ; and if it be inquired whether he has a body, he will doubtless assert that he has a body too. Such is our habit of colloquial speech, but even to casual thought how palpably absurd it is ! Who is this third party, this holding corporation, this tertium quid, who on the one side owns a body and on the other side, a soul ? A man is not so divided into three parts, one of which is possessor of the other two. A man has two aspects. One aspect of him is physical; it can be seen and touched, weighed and measured ; its chem ical constituents can be analyzed and reduced to formulae. The other aspect of him is invisible, intangible ; it cannot be weighed or measured ; it is his world of loves, hates, thoughts, ambitions ; in it are resident his sense of duty and his aspirations after God, and at the centre is that mystical, self-conscious memory, which survives the passage of the years, outlasts the building and break-down of the flesh and gives con tinuity to all his personal experience.

Concerning this strangely divided nature of man, the body and the soul, the central question upon whose answer all interpreta tion of life s meaning waits is this : Are we bodies that have spirits, or are we spirits that have bodies ? Which is essen tially the man ? The Christian affirmation is not that we have souls, but that we are souls ; that we substantially are spirit, as invisible as God, since no one ever saw himself or saw another man. The affirma tion of the materialist is not that we have bodies, but that we are bodies ; that flesh is the essence of us, and that all our intellec tual and moral life, like the peal of a bell, is a transient result of physical vibrations, and ceases when the cause is stopped. Between these two affirmations the deci sion lies : either we are bodies that for a little time possess a spiritual aspect, or else we are spirits using an instrument of flesh.

Long ago in an Athenian death-cell, where Socrates awaited the poisoned hemlock, this question was discussed. Some there com pared man to a harp, and thought his intellectual and moral life the harmony that comes from the vibrating strings. Since, therefore, he essentially is the in strument, which gives being to the music, the music cannot outlast the destruction of the harp. But Socrates insisted that man is neither harp nor harmony ; that he is a harper who plays upon the physical strings, dependent upon them for the quality of music he produces, but inde pendent of them for his existence, since the player may leave one instrument and find another. So to-day the assertion of our immortality involves the faith that we are invisible, spiritual personalities ; but belief in annihilation is coupled with the thought that we are the physical instruments, which, perishing, bring to an end the harmony they caused.

If we are thus transient beings, funda mentally physical, shall we long make the great sacrifices which spiritual character demands ? Does Ictinus pick out a quick sand on which to build the Parthenon and lavish on it there the genius of his art, knowing that every stroke of his mallet is making a beauty that to-day is and to morrow will be gone ? Does Raphael choose cotton cloth, whose slender and loosely woven fibres will hardly bear the strokes of his brush, on which to paint a Sistine Madonna ? And will a man develop passionate moral enthusiasms and aspiring virtues on any other basis than spiritual permanence ? The value of the object of sacrifice always determines the willing ness of men to pay the cost, and immortality is that affirmation of the eternal worth of character which alone can make reasonable the devotion, aspiration and self-denial

which great character requires. No man will work hard sewing diamonds on tissue paper.

If the devaluation of personality which inevitably follows the assertion that death ends all so affects the struggle for spiritual quality in the individual, it must neces sarily affect those enthusiasms for social service on which the future of philan thropy and democracy depends. Professor Hyslop can hardly be suspected of a prej udiced interest in evangelical theology; yet he affirms without qualification : The ideals of democracy will live or die with the belief in immortality." His meaning clearly is that only moral permanence can furnish the necessary basis for those devo tions which the perpetuation of democracy requires. If they are to be in earnest, men must feel when they invest their sacrifices in society that they are investing in a bank that will not fail. To such a statement the reply continually is made that though the individual does die, humanity goes on, and that personal im mortality has nothing to do with the con tinuance of those social causes which, persisting, may well come to their victory on earth, whether life beyond the grave be true or false. In May, 1865, a triumphal procession moved down Pennsylvania Ave nue in Washington. The victors of a great war were coming home amid the acclamations of their fellow-citizens. But their comrades who had marched with them to the front, who had borne with them the danger and adventure of the great cam paign, were lying buried under the sod at Antietam or at Gettysburg. So, say the men who cannot see the crucial import of immortality to social service, let us die, and some day the survivors of the war will celebrate a triumph for our cause and will gratefully remember our share in making the consummation possible. Noble as this exhortation is, it depends for its apparent validity upon a short look into the future. A long look negatives the force of its appeal. The polar ice-caps now hold undisputed sway over territory where, so scientists inform us, the most luxurious fauna and flora once were flourishing. Whether the planet tarries until the polar ice-caps seize it all, or whether some swifter cataclysm wrecks it, the earth is as temporary as any other sphere, that, slowly built out of spirals of revolving dust, in the end must dis appear. The race is not immortal if the individuals are not. A limited succession of transient men does not make a permanent society. A long look into the future does not show us a triumphant humanity, rejoic ing because the war is over. In the end some solitary survivor of mankind must hold alone his triumphal procession down the Pennsylvania Avenue of the earth, and, if he can, cry "Victory" when he dies.

Without immortality, therefore, the long struggle of humanity has no consummation in which harmony comes at last out of the present discord of inequity. Behind all the labor of saints and martyrs has been the hope, held in innumerable forms, that some worthy end would crown their toil, that when Paul planted and Apollos watered, God would give the increase. In the old poem on the Battle of Blenheim, where little Peterkin climbs on Caspar s knee to hear the thrilling tale of brave fighting and bloody sacrifice, the boy interrupts the narrative to ask, "What good came of it at last?" That has always been humanity s question about life s bat tle, and one of the distinctive ministries of religious faith to social service has been the affirmation of a coming Kingdom, "toward which the whole creation moves," and in which justice shall at last be done. Some such hope is fundamental to undis- courageable social sacrifice.

Emerson, indeed, in the seclusion of his academic study may inveigh against thus appealing to the future for justice, against trusting the arbitrament of eternity to level the scales of judgment on sin, and may insist that with indefectible exactitude justice is rendered every hour. He may even affirm that the thief who steals sil ver steals more from himself than from the man he robs, since from his

victim he pilfers only material wealth, while from him self he takes character. But when from the quiet of philosophic study into the thick of life we carry the idea that justice is done every hour, the assertion grows less clear and certain. The problem is not solved by balancing the theft of silver spoons against the despoiling of the thief s own character. When, rather, some Phar isee robs widows houses and for a pre tence makes long prayers, or some human beast sells girls to shame while still so young that they cry for their dolls, and when at last the despoilers grow fat, revelling in their gain, while their victims starve in desolation or slay themselves to escape from their despair ; if that is the finale of the matter, to be left there an enigma of injustice, it is impossible by any smooth words to cover the fact of utter inequity. Striking and true though Emerson s fig ure be that we cannot have sin without immediate punishment, any more than we can have positive magnetism at one end of a needle without negative magnetism at the other, the analogy does not cover the case. When Roman soldiers take the loftiest soul that ever blessed the earth, and mock him, spit upon him, crown him with thorns and crucify him ; when the scene ends with a scribe wagging his head and calling, "Save thyself," while from the cross the cry comes down, "My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me?" and when we believe that to be the last of the matter, scribe and Christ alike annihilated, and in a few aeons their influence even, good or bad, brought inconsequentially to an end in the planet s dissolution, a profound injustice is there asserted which no glozing words can hide. The demand for justice is not a cry for vengeance, nor, as Emerson suggests, a desire that the oppressed shall share at some future time the sort of pleasure in which their oppressors revelled here. The demand for justice requires that a solution shall be reached, in which the oppressors, brought to their senses by the reforming influence of punishment or by the con quering power of love, shall join with the oppressed, redeemed from their disasters, and that together both shall bear a part in some universal consummation that is ade quate to explain and justify the strife and suffering of earth. Without that, reason ableness and justice, in any connotation known to man, cannot be affirmed of the world.

"Right forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne," how all the vicarious servants of humanity bear witness to it ! Only of a universe that preserves its moral gains, and resolves to harmony the dissonance of its inequities, can justice be asserted "But that scaffold sways the future, And behind the dim unknown Standeth God within the shadow, Keeping watch above his own."

Without immortality all such hopeful outlook on the future becomes impossible. Society itself, then, has a limited existence. As another put it, the social task of humanity, with all its cost in blood and tears that righteousness may reign, is, from the standpoint of the everlasting ages, as unenduring as Michael Angelo s, when Pietro, the tyrant, commissioned him to scoop up snow in the Via Larga, and with painstaking art model a statue that before evening would melt in the Italian sun. That this thought of the consummation of the long, sacrificial struggle of humanity, when it is fully and universally believed and understood, will blight the deepest incentives for social service, has been the fear even of those who were convinced that such a consummation is the inevitable end. Professor Goldwin Smith in a nota ble essay, published in 1904 in the North American Review, speaks frankly of his apprehension that when all men believe, as he does, that immortality is false, the soul of public-mindedness will die and the great inspirations perish that have motived our social service and our passion for democracy. "A man of sense (disbeliev ing in immortality)," he concludes, "will probably be satisfied to let reforms alone, and to consider how he may best go

through the journey of life with comfort and, if possible, with enjoyment to himself." Such is the testimony of a great man to the con sequences of his own creed.

If it be asserted that the truth of immor tality does not prevent a lamentable end to humanity s long, sacrificial toil, the answer is evident at once. The purpose of all social service is man s progress in character. The horrors of the white slave traffic, of tenements in city slums, and of corruption in city government, the evils of war and drunkenness and tyranny, all lie in this, that they debase, demoralize and in the end utterly ruin the characters of men. The exhaustless motive for philanthropy is not that we are toning down life s worst iniquities until our ultimate dissolution comes, but that we are altering the environ ments that are inimical to personal charac ter, and that personal character is an eternal matter, the one means by which the uni verse can preserve its moral gains. The infinite value of personality, which immor tality asserts, makes any fight for social justice worth while. When the modern man, therefore, is nonchalant about the affirmation or denial of a future life, he is nonchalant about all the deepest problems of humanity. The denial of immortality introduces us into a world where men are flesh with a transient spiritual aspect; where there are no per manent elements save the physical forces which build solar systems and destroy them; where earth throws away with utter carelessness its most precious treas ures, never resolves to harmony the dis sonance of its inequities and has no way of preserving its moral gains; where no eternal value in personality motives sacri fice for spiritual quality in the individual or furnishes basis for passionate and hope ful service to the race. If life eternal is not true, that is our world, and sooner or later men will find it out. To such a world we must accommodate ourselves as best we can, if immortality is false. This plain issue to the creed of annihila tion induces many a thoughtful man, who has traced to their last blind alley the hopes of humanity in a world where death ends all, to assert the truth of immortality, not because he can prove it, as he can the multiplication table or the expanding power of heat, but because he finds it necessary, as an adventure of faith, to make the uni verse reasonable.

03.02. The Possibility of Immortality

CHAPTER II THE POSSIBILITY OF IMMORTALITY IN spite of all that we have said about the nonchalance of modern men concerning life to come, the possibility of immortality is far more in question with many of them than is its significance. While they may not have traced through all its implications the meaning of annihilation, they have felt instinctively the difference that is involved for personal hope in the affirmation or denial of life to come. Facing their own death or enduring bereavement in the loss of others, they have found their apathetic attitude dissolved in grief and in unquench able desire for hope ; and when, in addition to this natural reaction in the presence of death, they come to see the baneful mean ing for the whole of life involved in the creed that the grave ends all, they do not ask whether immortality makes a difference to life, but whether it is at all possible for their belief reasonably to follow their desire for immortality. Huxley, although he was ag nostic concerning life to come, wrote to John Morley in 1883: "It flashes across me at all sorts of times with a sort of horror that in 1900 I shall probably know no more of what is going on than I did in 1800. I would sooner be in Hell a good deal, at any rate in one of the upper circles where the climate and company are not too trying. I wonder if you are plagued in this way." Sooner or later, either by personal experi ence of bondage to the fear of death or by insight into the sort of world which dis belief in immortality creates, most men reach the place where the possibility of believing in life to come is an urgent question with them.

When, therefore, we insist, as we have done, that the denial of personal permanence makes a vast difference to the whole mean ing of human life, many a man will turn on us to say : "No one need tell me that the question of immortality involves great con sequences for me now. I have stood beside my dead; I know. With increasing years I have thought of my own mortality and have considered with what irreversible steps I walk to my certain end. It is not easy to think of my loves vanquished, my ideals unattained, my memory quite extinct, and I as though I had never been at all. At times I, too, have brooded over our race, its mysterious birth, its long travail, its strange fight with sin and cir cumstance, and have wondered whether it can be that in the end there will be nothing to show for all this struggle, aspi ration, hope and sacrifice, except new worlds built from the ruins of the old, and in those new worlds no memory even of all that here was attempted, partially achieved, and at last utterly undone. No one need tell me that this makes a difference. I want to believe in immortality, but can I ? Is immortality possible ? What weighty arguments range themselves against it ! Just because I want so to believe it, I will not sell my reason out to my desire. Show me that it is possible." When one sets himself to answer this deeper question and endeavors clearly to discern whether the objections to belief in immortality are conclusive, he faces at the beginning this impressive fact, that plenty of men to-day, thoroughly familiar with all arguments against faith in the world to come, and able to weigh their full sig nificance, still cherish hopes, quite undis mayed, of everlasting life. The fact that men like Sir Oliver Lodge in natural science, Professor William James in Psychology, Professor Hermann Lotze in Philosophy, Dr. William Osier in Medicine have thought it reasonable to cherish hopes of immortality, suggests at once that while immortality may not be proved, it certainly has not been disproved. It is evident in

view of such men s faith that nothing which science or philosophy has ever discovered necessarily prevents a man from a reasonable hope of life to come. Personal permanence is possible. This is well worth emphasizing because so often the reverse is urgently insisted on ; because continually we are reminded that no satisfactory demonstration of life beyond the grave has ever yet been found. There are weighty considerations, positive and assuring, which can be adduced to strengthen hope in immortality, but in the nature of the case it cannot be proved with the certainty of a mathematical proposi tion or with the verifiable accuracy of a scientific hypothesis concerning tangible affairs. This, every believer in the world to come must readily admit, but coupled with it is the companion fact that if men have found it difficult satisfactorily to prove immortality, they have found it absolutely impossible to disprove it. When Goldwin Smith concludes his essay in which he surrenders for himself all faith in life beyond the grave, he justly adds these closing sentences: "All this is said on the hypothesis that scientific scepticism suc ceeds in demolishing the hope of a future life. After all, great is our ignorance, and there may be something yet behind the veil." Many men to-day labor under the delusion that to the illumined and initiated man s mortality has now become a certain fact, and for the sake of such it needs to be affirmed that nobody, whose words are to be taken seriously, claims to have dis proved life to come. Although there are many considerable objections, they are admittedly inconclusive.

One more preliminary matter, worth remarking, is that in the nature of the case we may well expect belief in immortality to be beset by countless difficulties. Grant ing that we are to live beyond the grave, is it to be supposed that we readily can con ceive it possible ? Must not our minds be thwarted in the attempt to understand the continuance of life under circumstances so alien from those in which life has always been experienced, and must not our imag ination quite break down in the endeavor to conceive how thought and love can still persist, when the conditions which have made thought and love a possibility here have been removed ? An unborn child, even though he were a philosopher, would have no easy time making clear to himself the facts of our earthly life. He lives without air ; how can he live with it ? He never saw light ; how can he conceive it ? He is absolutely dependent upon the cherishing environment in which he finds himself, and he cannot well imagine him self living without it. The crisis of birth would seem like death to an unborn child, if he could foresee himself wrenched from all the conditions which have hitherto sustained his life. If in his unremembered embryonic days, " the days before God shut the doorways of his head," a man had philosophies of hope or hopeless ness, they must have been strikingly like his scepticisms and his hardly cherished expec tations, when now he dreams of life to come. So difficult must we expect to find the task of understanding the possibility of person ality s continuance after death.

II

One difficulty in believing in life eternal does not arise from the nature of the case, but has been created for us by the ignorance, the dogmatism and the superstition of men. In how many minds is life beyond the grave so intimately associated with special ideas of the nature of the future world, that, by a lamentable non sequitur, men deny immortality because they can no longer hold their old ways of conceiving it I The setting is rejected and with it the diamond is thrown away. A cheap and easy method of arguing against life to come is to insist upon some obsolete conception of heaven or hell, and then rail at so absurd a faith. The history of human thought upon the future world lends itself to such derision. There are terrible passages in Christian writers where the desire

for ven geance, in most abhorrent forms, gives itself vent, the more unrestrained because the excuse of piety is present. "How shall I admire, * cries Tertullian, "how laugh, how rejoice, how exult, when I behold so many proud monarchs and fancied gods groaning in the lowest abyss of darkness; so many magistrates, who persecuted in the name of the Lord, liquefying in fiercer fires than ever they kindled against the Chris tians ; so many sage philosophers blush ing in red-hot flames, with their deluded scholars ; so many celebrated poets trem bling before the tribunal, not of Minos, but of Christ ! " If immortality involves such a belief, then immortality cannot longer be considered seriously by any man of reason able mind. We may well insist, therefore, that immortality may be true, and yet every form of thought in which mankind has hitherto conceived it may be false. Indeed, when one considers how necessarily we use the symbols of our earthly life in every endeavor to portray the life to come ; how in our loftiest flights of descriptive language we have streets of gold and gates of pearl, rivers of water and trees with healing leaves ; how music itself, the most natural symbol of ecstasy, becomes so appallingly tedious when we conceive the joy of heaven in terms of it, that, as Doctor Jowett says, "To beings constituted as we are, the monot ony of singing psalms would be as great an affliction as the pains of hell and might even be pleasantly interrupted by them " ; when one considers the utter inconceivability of a world in which we have never been, whose circumstances by the necessity of the case are alien from anything that we can dream, it is not simply probable, it is inevitable, that all our thoughts of the future are more unlike the facts than a child s house of blocks is unlike the Taj Mahal. Wooden blocks and marble minarets are at least in the same plane of existence, but this world and the next are unimaginably different. No one but a charlatan pretends to know the circumstances of the world to come. The best description of the future life yet written is to be found in the New Testa ment, What eye hath not seen, what ear hath not heard, and what hath not entered into the heart of man." The truth of immortality, therefore, does not depend upon the acceptance of any thoughts of it which ever have been believed by men. The tides are no less facts because mankind once thought that they were caused by a leviathan who swallowed up the sea and gulped it out again ; nor are the eclipses a delusion because the Chinese beat tom toms to scare the dragon that devours the sun. No truth depends upon the accept ance of man s inadequate ideas of it. The permanence of personality may involve the continued memory of all that has happened here on earth, or it may involve no more recollection than we have of our own embry onic days or of our earliest infancy. Our best imaginations of the soul s adventure, when through death we pass into another world, are surely all inadequate, perhaps so inadequate that not a detail of them is true, and yet immortality may be a fact, and the soul s adventure no delusion. No objection to a future life, therefore, based upon aversion to some special conception of the nature of the world to come, can hold its ground.

Ill

Perhaps the most familiar difficulty in the way of belief in immortality is that appearances are against it. Whoever has seen a man grow gradually old, his mind failing as his body drooped, until, the mind a blank, the body slept itself away, under stands the insistent argument of appearance against immortality. All that we can see dies, and because to us the most convincing evidence is the direct testimony of our senses, there is interposed between our minds and faith in personality s continuance the obstacle of looks. Our eyes bear wit ness to the dead and crumbling body; our ears bear witness to the fact that the voice is still ; our hands bear witness that no longer can

response be won, even by a hand clasp, to our most urgent and affec tionate appeals. All our senses rise up and cry that our friend has perished. For most men, this simple fact is the greatest single difficulty in the way of faith. This obstacle, however, even to casual thought is manifestly inconclusive. If we were to live by looks, we should live in grossest ignorance of all the most important facts, not only of the spiritual, but of the physical world. The sun looks as though it were moving, but it is not ; the earth looks as though it were flat, when it is round, and as though it were standing still, when it is moving over a thousand miles a minute. At noon the stars seem to be gone, but they are there. Put a straight stick in a calm pool and it appears to be crooked, while it still is straight. Put a blue glass upon one eye and a yellow glass upon the other and, going into a white room, you will see it all as green. All prog ress in knowledge of the physical universe has been won through criticism of the senses testimony, by going behind the way things look to the way things are. When first the new astronomy proposed its revolutionary conception of the world, endeavoring to persuade men of a spherical earth describing ellipses about the sun, the traditional view took refuge in manifest appearance, as in an impregnable citadel.

Said Melanchthon, in condemnation of Copernicus, "The eyes are witnesses that the heavens revolve in the space of twenty-four hours. But certain men, either from love of novelty or to make a display of ingenuity, have concluded that the earth moves." All men of common sense arose in contemptuous certainty to assert the plain evidence of sight. So persistent is the power of appearance over the minds of men that even within the last half century the old arguments have been countless times presented, in a famous sermon, to applauding audiences. In the morning the sun is on one side of the house, said the preacher, and in the afternoon it is on the other side, and since the house has not moved, the sun has. So valuable is the argument of looks. The substitution of judgment for sight, of verified realities for the appearance of things, is an achievement involved with every step of progress in the knowledge of the world. No more in physical science than in the search for spiritual truth, may a man walk by sight ; he must walk by insight. Sight says that a man grows smaller as he recedes into the distance ; insight says he does not. Sight sees only unconnected series of events ; insight perceives governing laws, dominant and irreversible. Sight sees a flat earth, circled by planets, and all that science teaches does not change the looks one whit ; but insight knows that all the looks are false. So universal is this criticism of sight by insight that the presumption always is that the superficial appearance of anything is inadequate or quite untrue. The analogy of all our other knowledge would be fulfilled, if sight said that man dies and insight declared that he lives beyond the grave. This general consideration gains point for our problem, when we perceive that, grant ing the truth of immortality, it stands to reason that we cannot see the truth with our physical eyes. In a great observatory, when the clock that moves the telescope in time with the movement of the earth chances to stop, it is possible to see the earth go round. For then the stars and planets in a stately march move across the face of the lens, and as one watches, the truth of insight is made clear even to physical vision. By such ingenuity of invention can the movement of the earth be seen, but who can hope by any means to carry the function of the eye out of the realm where it properly belongs, and expect it to bring him witness of the life to come? Save possibly in the realm of psychic inves tigation, he must admit the utter inappli cability of sight to the problem of immor tality. The only valuable testimony in any mooted matter is the testimony of those powers of perception and of understanding which are appropriate to the case in hand. The truth of immortality is a matter of thought not of appearance, of reason not of looks ; the organ of perception fitted to deal with

immortality is the mind and not the eye. Looks, therefore, are an utterly inconclusive argument, and he who dis believes immortality because of appearances is essentially in the same intellectual class as the young child, who, after the fashion of Alice in Wonderland, supposes that folks really grow small or large in proportion to their distance from the eye of the beholder, because it looks that way.

IV

Another obstacle in the way of accepting immortality, not so common as the fore going, but full of impressiveness for many minds, is the lowly origin of man s belief in the future world. A primitive savage, safely housed in his home village, goes forth in dreams at night to visit hunting- grounds or to wage war in countries far removed from the place where his body lies. How inevitable, then, is his assump tion that he has a soul, separable from his body, which can leave the house of flesh at will, traverse great distances and return again ! Such, says Herbert Spencer, is the lowly origin of the idea of soul. To many it is a disconcerting thought that man s belief in his invisible self takes its rise so superstitiously in an assumption which now is negatived by the psychology of sleep. And even more disconcerting is it when, upon this basis, the rise of belief in immortality is circumstantially described. For when the primitive savage loses his chief in battle, and on the very night after the funeral sees in his dreams the honored warrior return, hears him speak and speaks to him in answer, how inevitable is the as sumption that the soul, absent from the body in death as in sleep, still exists and pos sesses the powers which here belonged to it ! Therefore, among all primitive people, the abode of the dead was definitely imagined, and from that place of shadows the friends who had gone came back in dreams to warn and counsel their descendants. To the North American Indian the abode of the dead was a happy hunting-ground away in the west ; to the Maori it lay at the base of a great precipice ; to the Finns and Australians the dead inhabited a distant island ; to the Polynesians they dwelt in the moon ; to the Mexicans and Peruvians in the sun ; and, most popular idea of all, to the ancient Teutons, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans and Hebrews a subterranean cavern, from which mysterious, well-guarded passages led to the surface of the earth, was the destina tion of the dying. From these residences, the shades of the deceased could sometimes be summoned as the Witch of Endor summoned Samuel ; from them resurrec tions oftentimes occurred, with which the records of all religions are replete ; and continually in dreams the living were counseled by the dead. Such, say the anthropologists, is the origin and early history of man s belief in immortality. Among all people everywhere such ideas of a future world have arisen, and all our hopes of immortality are the lineal descend ants of these early superstitious dreams. "It is true," says Max Muller, "and I believe has never been contested, that even the lowest savages now living possess words for body and for soul. If we take the Tas-manians, a recently extinct race of savages, we find that, however much different observ ers may contradict each other as to their intellectual faculties and acquirements, they all agree that they have names for soul and souls ; nay, that they all believe in the im mortality of the soul." What confidence can we place in a faith that has arisen among all primitive savages through the mistaking of dreams for realities ?

It is true, to be sure, that there are many differences of opinion among scholars regarding this fascinating story of man s growing belief in immortality, but it is clear that along some path, however hard now to trace, we must follow the faith of man in life eternal back to lowly origins. Al though like a butterfly, with gorgeous wings, our hope may now be free to fly, it was once a

crawling worm. Of that, the facts of history, the evidences of litera ture and custom, the testimony of psychol ogy definitely assure us. The reasons on account of which mankind first began to believe in life beyond the grave are reasons that we would count the grossest supersti tions. When, however, this patent fact is urged, as in many minds it is, as a cause for distrusting immortality, how clearly inconclusive the objection is ! All things have a lowly origin. Conscience itself which so imperiously commands us now ; capacity for thought by which our scien tific investigations are themselves made pos sible ; all our faculties and endowments have lowly origins. Are ethical ideals to be e valued, and their validity to be deter mined, in the light of the earliest stages of them which can be discovered ? Though each stage in the development of ethical responsibility be exquisitely traced, until from the most rudimental form of moral feeling to the loyalty of Savonarola or the patient self-sacrifice of Lincoln not a fibre is missing in the reconstruction of the pro cess, the real problem has not thus been touched. Can a man explain an oak by tracing it back into the acorn ? Does he not rather have the task of explaining how an acorn came to be an undeveloped oak ? The interpretation of any process must be sought in its issue, not in its genesis, for the outcome only makes manifest what was involved in the germ. Therefore, could the most rudimental moral consciousness be discovered, its appreciation must always be in terms of that imperious sense of obli gation, which was inherent in it and which now, developed from it, has become the chief est concern of the world. No tracing of origins can effect the real significance of anything. We do not judge the man by the embryo ; we judge the embryo by the man. When we perceive that with the first dawning of intelligence men question about the sun, whether it is the same orb to-day that was here yesterday, or is some different body created anew daily by the gods, we do not, because this is the beginning of astronomy, rule out of court our Galileos and Keplers, taunting them with the abo riginal beginnings of their science. Rather we watch with pride the dawning mind of man, dimly perceiving problems on which the intelligence of the wisest of the race shall yet exert itself, and vaguely reaching for solutions, which, however primitive, are prophetic of centuries of growing knowl edge. When cathedrals are outlawed be cause our aboriginal ancestors built only straw huts ; when Bach and Mozart are laughed at because early music was coaxed from conch-shells or beaten sticks ; when poetry and love, science and education, are railed at because of their crude origins, - then man s faith in immortality may trem ble before the undeveloped ways in which the earliest men we know conceived it. We must not compel larks to live under water because their forefathers were fishes.

V The doctrine of evolution has its more discouraging effect on man s belief in immor tality, not when it traces the rise in the human mind of faith in the future world, but when it traces the rise of the human mind itself. When science discloses to us a vast physical universe, unfolding in unimaginable ways through age-long cos mic changes, and, in one corner of this immeasurable expanse, puts man upon a world so small that its total conflagration would be invisible to the strongest telescope upon the nearest star, it prepares us for a disparagement of man that makes his ultimate annihilation seem entirely reason able. An angel commissioned by God to discover the earth amid the innumerable hosts of stars, says an astronomer, would be like a child sent out upon a vast prairie, to find a speck of sand at the root of some blade of grass. When on this insignificant planet science pictures a process of growth that has lifted inorganic matter into organic life, has moved organic life from plants through ascending series of animal forms to the erect mammals, and has at last raised this organic life in man to the functions of thought and speech and character, science, so emphasizing our kinship with the brutes and our personalities intimate dependence on

our physical structure, has made immor tality seem to multitudes utterly impos sible. Here we face an objection to faith in the future life, in comparison with which the obstacles which we have hitherto con sidered are superficial. Man is a lineal descendant of the beasts; as they are dependent on their bodies for life and all its functions, so is he ; and his capacity for thought, however far-ranging and exalted, has grown like a blossom out of that won derfully organized stalk, his brain. Such is the picture which in many minds to-day creates an insuperable objection to faith in immortality. In mitigation of the effect of this idea of man s origin, it is worth noting that the evolution of the race does not create a sin gle difficulty in the way of believing in a self, separable from the body, that is not really present in the evolution of each indi vidual. Whatever may be the facts about the race, every one of us evolved from a primal cell. All the mystery of the race s origin, and all the difficulties in the way of believing in an immortal self, are present in the familiar facts of each man s development from his conception to his maturity. From an original cell, through the compli cated building of physical structure, until at last the capacity for thought emerges, and personality is slowly gained as the brain is organized, such is the life-story of each individual and of the race. In any text -book on theology one will find the pos sibility of a separable soul discussed, in view of the evolution not of the race but of the individual. Four theories have been ad vanced to explain the presence of the spirit ual element in man, and its relationship with his growing physical organism: that the soul is preexist ent, and that when the body is prepared the soul inhabits it ; that God creates the soul complete and places it in a body prepared for its residence; that soul and body together grow, the first developing as the second gives it opportu nity ; and last, that the body creates the soul and functions mentally on one side as it does physically upon the other. Such are the speculations with which men have endeavored to explain the mysterious co ordination of mind and brain. "When did the race become immortal?" asks the materialist in derision, as he points out the imperceptible gradations by which animal existence has passed into human life. But that same question has always been appli cable to the growing embryo or the new born babe. When does any man become immortal ? Such difficulties, immense and elemental, are all present in the plain fact of each individual s growth from a primal* cell, and the evolution of the race adds not a single essential factor to the problem. The gradual development of all mankind from lowly forms of life simply presents in general the same question which in par ticular the mind of man has always faced, when he has considered the relation of his invisible self to his mysteriously evolving body.

When, therefore, we grant all that scien tists affirm concerning the evolution of the race, we are facing the same elemental facts, in the light of which immortality has always been discussed. Personality and body, whether in single men or in mankind as a whole, grow in intimate correlation. They mutually condition each other. The wisdom of the sage is not expected in a child because the brain is not yet organized to make it possible, and in the newly born we know that there is nothing to be looked for save capacity for sensation and response to simple outward stimuli. Some form of mutual dependence exists between the mind and brain, and upon the nature of that de pendence rests the possibility of immortal life. Does the organization of the brain produce personality, or does personality endeavor to express itself through brain? The effect of the doctrine of evolution upon the problem of immortality is simply to drive home with more urgent emphasis the ancient question upon the answer to which belief in life everlasting always waits : what is the nature of the mind s dependence upon the brain ?

Indeed, so far are the facts of racial evo lution from being conclusive against life to come, that many of our most scholarly and thoughtful men have found in the impli cations of evolution a strong argument for immortality. The manifest trend of the whole creative process is toward the build ing of personality. The story of humanity s evolving life, traced backward from the present toward the unknown beginnings, presents a record of successive derivations from forms of existence ever simpler and less complicated ; but the same story traced from the remotest origins onward toward to-day, presents a record of ascent, in which all physical changes seem to be intended for a psychical result. God in evolution no less than in Genesis, appears to be taking the dust of the earth, and breathing into it the breath of life until man becomes a living soul. If a man insists that there is no purpose in the universe at all, that the entire process means nothing, he must do it now not alone in the face of an opposing theology, but in the face of an evolutionary science which presents an ascending series of physical forms, ending with a being in whom evolution has changed from progress in physical structure to growth in intelli gence and character. If, on the other hand, a man believes that the universe means anything, he must, in the light of manifest facts, believe that it has been aiming at personality. If, then, the entire labor of the universe, culminating in spiritual per sons, is to be thrown away and nothing come of it, we indeed are "put to permanent intellectual confusion." Such considera tions as this have made evolution the strong ally of belief in immortality to many minds. At least it is evident that the facts of evolution are not conclusive against immortality. Professor Fiske, one of Amer ica s leading evolutionists, states the truth with less restraint. "The materialistic as sumption," he says, "that the life of the soul ends with the life of the body, is per haps the most colossal instance of baseless assumption that is known to the history of philosophy."

VI

We come, therefore, in our discussion of the possibility of life beyond the grave, to that difficult question in which all other ob jections to immortality have their culmina tion : is not the mind absolutely dependent on the brain ? Not the evolutionary doc trine, but the modern laboratory study of the physical basis of personality, most urges this query on us. There is no longer any doubt about the facts to be interpreted. A continuous layer of gray matter, varying in thickness from one-twelfth to one-eighth of an inch, and folded upon itself "as one would crumple up a handkerchief," forms the outer surface of our brains. No think ing is ever done by men without the cooperation of this delicate and highly or ganized nervous tissue. Each psychical function has some special lobe or convolution in the gray matter, without which the cor responding mental activity is utterly impos sible. In many cases the exact location of the sensitive surface, where the special forms of intellectual activity are carried on, is known to the psychologists. They know the area in the brain with which we hear, the area with which we see ; they know the lobes by which we move our arms and legs, our lips and tongues and eyes ; they know the convolution where the function of speech is carried on and without which abstract thinking is impossible. They can even distinguish the surface with which we hear words from the surface with which we read them. Nothing is clearer than that for every functioning of the minds of men there is a corresponding molecular activity in the gray matter of the brain. The conelusion at first seems inevitable, that the mind is absolutely dependent on the physi cal structure and is inseparable from it.

It is well to note that as the doctrine of racial evolution only makes more urgent a problem always faced by those who watched the development of any individual, so here the discoveries of

physiological psychology only assert with greater particularity and assurance what is the common experience of every man. We know that we are de pendent on our brains. Every fever that congests our nervous systems ; every para lytic stroke that attacking the right hemis phere of the brain cripples the left side of the body ; every illness that reduces our power of thought by disabling the machin ery with which our thinking must be done, says in popular speech what the psycholo gists assert in scientific terms, that we are dependent on our brains. When a good character is altered by a blow upon the skull, and is restored again by surgeons who trephine the bone and relieve the press ure upon the convolution underneath, that fact only makes more vivid and explicit what every ordinary man has known, that the healthy condition of his nervous system is prerequisite to a healthy personality. The essential problem has not been altered by the modern discoveries of the physio logical investigators ; it has only been made more manifest, more circumstantial and more urgent. The intimate relationship between the mind and the brain has been so illustrated in detail, so proved by experi ments verifiable and clear, that the modern man has come to say with a definiteness and an assurance which his own experience never would have wrought in him, that his per sonality is absolutely dependent on his brain. How can we be separable selves, when we and our nervous systems are so intermeshed and apparently indissoluble ? Our initial fear that the dependence of our minds upon our brains must conclu sively banish the hope of immortality is mitigated somewhat when we turn to books, such as Doctor Thompson s work on "Brain and Personality." Here is a man who knows the facts, and in the elucidation of them and the practice of the inferences drawn from them, has played no inconsider able part. So far, however, is he from being convinced that they imply the anni hilation of a man at death, that to him the details of the brain s organization and the way in which the centres of psychical func tioning are built up in the gray matter of its surface, seem clearly to indicate, not that the brain makes the person, but that the person is using the brain as his instrument and is educating it to serve his will. If the gray matter made the person, he argues, the more gray matter the more possibility of personal power. But on the contrary, not only are many of the greatest minds asso ciated with brains of less than medium weight, but in every brain only one hemis phere is used for thinking, as one eye may be used for seeing, so that a paralytic stroke may utterly destroy one hemisphere, and the man still think on as clearly as he thought before. The gray matter does not make the person, he asserts, the person organizes a small portion of the gray mat ter, and uses it as an instrument for think ing. However one may disagree with special aspects of this argument, or however one may be unable to comprehend the argu ment at all, when one considers the eminent investigators whose knowledge of the facts is comprehensive and exact, and whose hope of immortality is yet unshaken, he sees that there must be a possible inter pretation of the mind s dependence on the brain, which does not necessarily negative the hope of life eternal. That the present contingency of a living being upon a physical structure does not by itself argue that such a relationship must exist forever, is clear. The worm in the cocoon, or the babe in the womb, or the bird in the egg, depends on the warm and nourishing environment in which he is enclosed, and with which he is connected by ties that condition the possibility of his existence. But this present relation ship is not permanent. A life is being wrought in the temporary matrix which some day will outgrow the old necessities. Such an analogy is no argument at all for the immortality of man, but it is a clear dis closure of the fact that the absolute depen dence of life upon a physical structure may be of such a nature that the dependence is a temporary preparation for a future independence. This suggestion is entirely pertinent to the problem of man s future life.

The present contingency of mind on brain nega tives the hope of immortality only under one condition : that the brain creates the mind. If the man s invisible self is conditioned by his physical structure as the blossom is by its stalk and cusp, then his annihilation is assured ; but what if the dependence of his personality upon his nervous system were like the dependence of a telegrapher upon his instruments ? Every fact known to science is at least as satisfactorily explained by the latter idea as by the former. In either case any injury to the physical structure means a corresponding disability to the life that is dependent on it for its expression. A man cannot see with out eyes, but the eyes are not the man; he cannot see without the optic nerve, but the nerve is not the man ; he cannot see without the visual lobe of the brain, but the lobe is not the man. Why are they not alike instruments which the man uses, upon which his present activities are con tingent, but apart from which he can still exist ? For all that any investigation ever has ascertained, such may be the case. Science has discovered only that for every activity of the mind there is a corresponding molecular change in the brain, and that is equally true whether we regard the brain as an agent that creates the mind, or as an instrument on which the mind is playing. If a man is riding in his limousine, he is dependent on the windows for his impression of the outside world. If the glass is cov ered by curtains or besmeared with mud, he cannot see. All that happens to the windows affects his power either to receive impressions from without or to signal to his friends. Yet the man is not thereby proved to be the glass, nor is it clear that he may not some day leave his limousine and see all the better because the old mediums are now discarded. A man s dependence on his instruments can never be used to prove that he is his instruments or is created by them. Every man who is acquainted with the exact discoveries of physiological psy chology, understands that they leave the question of immortality where they found it, unanswered still. Science is sure that thought and the brain s activity now go hand in hand ; but whether the brain is the creator of the mind or is simply the tem porary instrument of mind, must be deter mined by considerations with which the physiological laboratory cannot deal. All objections to eternal life, based upon the present dependence of the mind upon the body, are admittedly inconclusive. "How much does this argument amount to," asks Professor Fiske, "as against the belief that the soul survives the body? The answer is, Nothing ! absolutely nothing ! It not only fails to disprove the validity of the belief, but it does not raise even the slightest prima facie presumption against it."

VII

Many men compelled by the testimony of the experts and the obvious evidence of the facts, to acknowledge that even this strongest argument against immortality is indecisive, take final refuge, as an expla nation of their disbelief, in the incon ceivable mysteriousness of an invisible self using a visible body. The unimaginable nature of such a relationship between the mind and brain urges them to deny its possibility. Granted that, as a matter of theory, science never has proved, and in the nature of the case never can prove, the indissoluble connection between the body and the self ; yet the ties that bind the two are so obviously close and intimate that one cannot easily conceive them torn asun der. A disembodied self is an unpictur- able thing. What I would be without my instruments of perception and my nervous organism, is beyond my power to appre hend, and what is unimaginable can only with difficulty be believed. But if the brain conceived as the instrument of personality is an enigma, what is the mystery of the brain, conceived as the creator of person ality ! That is the alternative. Either mind uses brain or is produced by it. If our physical structure is not the instru ment on which we play, our physical struc ture is our originator, and we are creatures

whose builder and maker is brain. If, therefore, the difficulty of conceiving a mind that uses gray matter as a means of thinking seems insuperable, it is well to face the alternative, and see the mystery which we necessarily prefer when we, denying that personality uses flesh, thereby assert that flesh produces personality. How much less mysterious is gray matter creating mind, than is mind making an instrument of gray matter ? The lobe of the brain with which the function of thought is associated is made up of a definite number of physical cells, reticulated by innumerable nervous av enues of communication. How can these cells be pictured as conspiring to write " Hamlet" or to compose the sonatas of Beethoven ? Has each cell a mental aspect ? If each cell has, how can it com municate its mental power, and arrange with its neighbors so to contribute theirs, that altogether they shall produce an Emancipation Proclamation or a deter mination to die on Calvary rather than be untrue ? The thing is inconceivable. It is not the brain as a whole that is associated with thinking ; it is a special lobe in one hemisphere of the brain ; and because that lobe is compounded of distinguishable cells, the function of the lobe must be a sum made up of the functions of the parts. In the last analysis, therefore, we have a single cell, made out of subtile matter and infin- itesimally minute, and in the physical vi bration of this cell and others like it, lies the potency that has written all our literature, achieved all our knowledge, composed all our music, dreamed all our ideals, and attained all our spiritual character. How incredible a mystery is this!

It is sufficiently strange that man should build a violin and play upon it, but that a violin should fortuitously build itself, organ ize its atoms, shape its body and make taut its strings, and then with no one to play upon it, should play upon itself Joachim s "Hungarian Concerto," how shall a man make that seem reasonable ? Just such an unimaginable thing must one believe, who asserts that brain creates the mind. This affirmation of materialism is the one unbe lievable mystery. A mobile cosmic ether, as Haeckel calls it, that can arrange itself into mothers and music and the laughter of children at play: a "mobile cosmic ether * that can compose itself into Isaiah and Jesus and Livingston and Phillips Brooks ; a "mobile cosmic ether" that can organize itself into the Psalms of David and the dramas of Shakespeare, into Magna Chartas and Declarations of Independence ; what intellectual gymnastics must a man per form to make such a process thinkable ? And this materialistic explanation of per sonality nowhere appears so incompre hensible as when from vague generalities like Haeckel s ether it is driven to the plain assertion that a visible, ponderable, gray tissue with its little cells is the transient creator of all the character and intelligence of the race. If one desires to avoid mystery, he does ill to deny that mind uses brain, in order that he may assert that brain creates mind.

Indeed, the consequences of affirming that flesh, however finely organized, is the producer of personality, are far wider than the comparatively insignificant matter of mystery. Everything physical always tends to act along the path of least resist ance. In a world, therefore, where mind is the creature of nervous organization, when a man asserts a universal truth, such as that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line joining them, he is not saying this because it is true, but because the molecules of his brain al ways find that the path of least resistance leads them to function towards such an affirmation. If truth is thus a matter of the physical paths of least resistance in the brain, one can readily understand the suspended judgment of the man, of whom Macaulay tells, who was inclined to think that parallel lines would never meet, but who would not be dogmatic on the subject. A man may well suspend his judgment on every axiom, if axioms are simply nervous discharges along lines of least resistance. This unaccountable enigma confronts

us in a world where mind is made by brain, that everybody who can think at all believes that three times three make nine. How did it happen in a universe where no one ever thought this truth until man thought it, that the material substance of human brains has so organized itself that it always finds the path of least resistance leading to this conclusion ? For in such a world, all truth, as well as all beauty and goodness, is reduced to a question of brain avenues and cellular functions. When Haydn composed "The Creation," saying, "Not from me, but from above it all has come," he was mistaken about the source of his inspiration, for the fact was that his gray matter had merely executed a neurosis along the lines of least resistance in the brain ; when John Napier discovered the process of logarithms, it was because his unusually agile brain cells achieved a for tunate manoeuvre whereby they reached an unforeseen result ; and when Latimer, burning at the stake in Oxford Square, said to his companion in martyrdom, "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle, by God s grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out," the cause was that by a happy conspiracy among the molecules in his Brocca convolution, they had succeeded in pooling their psychical aspects and producing the heroic words. Perhaps most strange of all, the hope of immortality itself, that has made men die singing, that has inspired poems like "In Memoriam" and music like Christendom s Easter hymns and anthems, and that into the commonplace endurance of innumerable humble men has put cheer and courage, is at bottom nothing but an explosion of excitable nerve cells. This interpretation of the beauty, knowledge, goodness and faith of mankind cannot be disproved. As Paulsen says, "The proposition that thoughts are in reality nothing but move ments in the brain, that feelings are nothing but bodily processes in the vaso-motor system, is absolutely irrefutable ; not be cause it is true, however, but because it is meaningless. The absurd has this advan tage in common with truth, that it cannot be refuted." At any rate, the old fable of the fish that leaped from the frying-pan into the fire, because the pan was hot, is a mild simile for the estate of the man who gives up belief in immortality and accepts its alternative, because immortality is mys terious. One is reminded, in this wild attempt to escape mystery, of George Sand s character, Gribouille, "who threw herself into the river at the approach of rain, for fear of getting wet ! " When thus a man has canvassed all the standard objections to belief in personal permanence, he finds them manifestly inconclusive. So far as anything that science has discovered is concerned, immortality is as possible as it is significant. The as surance of its truth must rest on consider ations that overpass the boundaries of scientific investigation, but when the stream of a human life turns the great bend in its banks which we call death, and passes out of sight, there is no fact known to man which negatives our right to seek those further reasons which may assure us that the stream flows on.

03.03. The Assurance of Immortality

CHAPTER III THE ASSURANCE OF IMMORTALITY THE bare possibility that after death we may continue to exist falls far short of satisfying the interest of men in immor tality. There may be some, indeed, whose desires for life eternal are so strong that when the arguments against it are proved inconclusive, their hearts, like coiled springs released, leap out in confident affirmation that the possible is true. Such an attitude is not altogether unreasonable, for when a great life, pulsating with energy and hope, bur dened with powers but half-expressed, aspir ing with a reach that is larger than its grasp, suddenly passes from our sight, the respon sibility of proof seems to rest with those, who, in the face of mankind s universal hope, assert that the life has been anni hilated. If, therefore, such proof is quite impossible, if all the nooks and crannies of the mental universe hide not a single fact that demonstrates the dissolution of the personality, a man may well feel the strong presumption of probability that the life goes on. More cautious minds, however, will not be greatly influenced by this consideration. If the bare possibility of life eternal is all that they can affirm, their resultant attitude will be not positive confi dence but agnosticism. However much they may desire to be convinced of immortality, they will feel themselves in honor bound not to go beyond the evidence.

Moreover, the bare possibility that man may live through death is insufficient, because the profoundest meanings which faith in immortality possesses for the lives of men cannot belong to one who, perceiv ing that existence beyond the grave is pos sible or even probable, is yet not positively convinced that it is true. If belief in per sonal permanence concerned only a myste rious future, uncertainty about it would be of no great moment, and the possibility of its truth might serve most of the needs which could be met by confident assurance. Life beyond the grave, however, is not an artificial addition to this present existence, but a natural continuation of it ; if a man is immortal at all, he is immortal now. Eternal life, to those who are destined to live forever, is not a possession conferred at death, but a present endowment, the full appreciation of which incalculably deepens, beautifies and solemnizes the meaning of our most common days. For if a man is immortal, he now has entered on an endless course of spiritual growth with limitless possibilities latent in it ; he has now begun a journey in which death is an incident, a life story which the grave will simply punctuate to more exalted mean ing. If this faith in life eternal as a present possession is to be so apprehended that it will make a vital difference to character, if a man to-day is to take advantage of the comforts, sanctions, motives and hopes which properly belong to an immortal per sonality, until, aware that he is deathless, he begins now to live the kind of life that it will be worth his while to live forever, immortality must be to him not a proba bility but an assured conviction. Confident belief in immortality is important for this fundamental reason, that upon it depends the practice of immortality now. No man will really live as though he were an eternal person until he is assured that such an interpretation of his life is true.

Now, when a man seeks positive and assuring reasons for faith in personal per manence, he may well be discouraged at the beginning by the unanimity with which men agree, sometimes triumphantly and some times reluctantly, that immortality cannot be proved. To be sure, some

psychic in vestigators, with more or less confidence, assert that they have held communion with the dead. Facts which suggest spiritual intercourse between the other world and this, and which have been impressive enough tentatively to convince Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, and men of like scientific temperament and training, may not cavalierly be laughed out of court, but such evidence is too difficult of access, too dubious at present in its impli cations, to assure any considerable number of people that the world to come is true. It may be that great light will break upon us from this quarter, and that, as Frederick Myers prophesied, a few generations hence it will be impossible for any man to doubt the appearances of Jesus to his disciples after Calvary, but at present, the evidence, whether of our own immortality or of the Master s, must move for most men in a realm quite other than that of psychic phenomena. There are, to be sure, multi tudes, who take their faith in immortality, without evidence, on the dictum of an ex ternal authority, but such a credulous atti tude is increasingly impossible. If the as sertion of immortality in book and church cannot find positive support in discoverable facts, mankind s conviction of its truth will surely wane. Men to-day demand proof. Because, therefore, belief in immortality seems to be amenable to no scientific processes of thought, and to allow no veri fiable confirmation, man s faith in it natu rally tends to grow unsure, to become a tentative and uncertain hope, until at last the future world for him pales into a dim possibility.

II The common statement, therefore, that immortality cannot be proved, must be subjected to searching analysis. As a matter of fact, it is untrue that the assertion of immortality and the assertion of a scientific law involve radically different intellectual processes, and the popular idea that they do is based upon an utter misunderstanding of the methods which scientists continually employ. The fundamental assumption of all science is that the universe is truly a universe, consistent in its regularity of pro cedure, not erratic and whimsical, but uni form, dependable and law-abiding. With out this faith, which never has been and never can be fully demonstrated, science would be impossible. Huxley calls him self an agnostic with reference to God s being and character, but in regard to the consistency and regularity of the universe he could not be agnostic and still be a scien tist. He must make that leap of faith, and he makes it with gladness and confidence. "As for the strong conviction," he says, "that the cosmic order is rational, and the faith that, throughout all duration, unbroken order has reigned in the universe, I not only accept it, but I am disposed to think it the most important of all truths." Exactly ! Than this there are few more amazing ventures of faith for a man to make, and yet this lies at the basis of all science. For this assumption that the universe always has been and always will be a reason able and law-abiding whole, is, in the nature of the case, not amenable to complete verification. So many confirming facts, however, indicate, and within limited spheres strictly demonstrate, the depend- ableness of nature, that the assertion of a universal cosmic order is a reasonable con viction, as certain as it is supremely im portant. Men discovered the laws of the ellipse and found afterwards that the plan ets in their courses observe them per fectly. The chemical conditions and qual ities of fire, whether on earth or in the stars, are found to be identical. In special sci ences the dependableness of nature is so completely verified that the exultant asser tion of a professor in chemistry is readily transferred to the whole cosmic order : "Ask nature the same question in the same way, and she will always give you the same answer." The universe is everywhere amenable to thought ; it can be understood ; it is trustworthy, not capricious, this is the conviction which, proved in segments, is confidently affirmed as the faith of science concerning the entire cosmic process. A notable consequence is involved in this affirmation that the universe is rational. What does this assertion

mean, if not that the world acts as it might be expected to act, had it been thought through by Mind. When Charles Darwin exclaims, "If we consider the whole universe, the mind refuses to look at it as the outcome of chance," he is saying that the cosmic pro cess is rational and that nothing rational ever comes by accident. Reasonableness is the work of mind. Can a man read sense into a printed page that bears the impress of type which, haphazard, has pied itself ? Type must express previous thought before any man can discover thought there. When, therefore, as Dar win says, the mind refuses to believe that the planets accidentally arranged them selves, and that the story of evolving human life comes from the pied type of a fortuitous creation, we are compelled to the alternative, that the cosmic order has reasonableness inherent in it, discovered, not created by the thought of man. The only way we have of asserting the reason ableness of the world involves the assertion that the world has been thought through, that there is mind behind it and in it, that it did not come by chance, and that the human mind studying it, discovers thought already there. When Kepler, sweeping the heavens with his telescope, cried : "O God, I think Thy thoughts after Thee," he was affirming the logical result of believing that the universe is rational.

Because science starts with this funda mental assumption of the cosmic order s rationality, it goes on to affirm as true all propositions, whether they can be com pletely verified or not, that are necessary to make intelligible and reasonable the facts of experience. The scientist notes the facts first, and then makes a venture of faith, which in ordinary parlance is con cealed under various names, doctrine, as in the " doctrine of evolution," law, as in the "law of gravitation," theory, as in the "theory of electrons,"- -but all of which have this in common, that they are sciences attempts to frame a proposition that will make intelligible and reasonable the facts of experience. Every statement of scien tific law is a venture of faith in disguise as a hypothesis. The Copernican astron omy was at first a sublime guess, and the conservation of energy, still incapable of universal proof, was an enormous assump tion, but since without them the data of the physical world are not understandable, they are confidently affirmed as true. He who does not go beyond the facts," says Huxley, "will seldom get as far as the facts" ; and even Haeckel adds, " Scientific faith fills the gaps in our knowledge of natural laws with temporary hypotheses." Take away this privilege of faith, and from the foundation to the topmost pinnacle the elaborate structure of science falls apart into unrelated, inchoate elements. As the president of the Massachusetts Insti tute of Technology expresses it, " Science is grounded in faith just as is religion, and scientific truth, like religious truth, consists of hypotheses, never wholly veri fied, that fit the facts more or less closely." Without the exercise of faith, therefore, the world of knowledge would be reduced to factual elements, disparate and unorgan ized by law, a topsy-turvy jumble of units without sequence or relation. But even this sort of world is too rich and copious to be obtained without faith. Indeed, let a man once begin to be a thoroughgoing agnostic, to refuse utterly to go beyond the facts, and he speedily reduces the universe to absurdity. To believe at all in the existence of an outer world or in the reality of other persons is a gigantic venture of con fidence. To trust as veracious one s sen sations of things and people is prerequisite to thinking that things and people exist at all, so that if by proof is meant the achieve ment of undoubtable certainty, Tennyson s sage is strictly correct :

"Thou canst not prove the Nameless, O my son, Thou canst not prove the world thou movest in, Thou canst not prove that thou art body alone, Nor canst thou prove that thou art spirit alone, Nor canst thou prove that thou art both in one: Thou canst not prove that thou art immortal, no, Nor yet that thou art mortal nay, my son, Thou canst not prove that I, who speak with thee, Am not thyself

in converse with thyself, For nothing worthy proving can be proven, Nor yet disproven."

Indeed, such unmitigated scepticism, not to be evaded except by faith in those per ceptions which assure us of an outer world of things and persons, forces us even to dis believe our own identity. That I myself am the same person whose experiences are transmitted in the flow of my memory is an unprovable conviction. My recollection is assumed for true on faith, and my sense of personal identity is the result of trust in the veracity of my remembrance. If a man decides to have done with faith, from its largest and most comprehensive exercise to its most simple functioning, this vast and complicated world will be reduced for him to the luminous pin-point of his immediate sensation. This is the only strictly demon strable experience which we can know, and even while we are knowing it, it is gone. Everything in the universe beyond that momentary flash of consciousness, our per sonal identity, the existence of an objective world, the reality of other persons, and our scientific laws, are creations saturated thor oughly with faith. That this is a reduc-tio ad absurdum is obvious, but it is agnos ticism readily reduced to absurdity because, in its essential nature, agnosticism is absurd. No one has ever really practised it, save as a tentative confession of embarrassment, in the attempt to push to its limit the construc tion of a world out of chaos. The plain fact, therefore, is that every man must and does build up by faith the conception of the world in which he lives, and the regulating principle of this scien tific process, by which a man "sees life steadily and sees it whole," is the assump tion that those propositions are true which are necessary to make the facts of life intel ligible and reasonable. On this principle man believes in his personal identity, the existence of an objective world and the reality of other persons ; on this principle he constructs theories in astronomy to explain the stars, in geology to explain the rocks and in psychology to explain the mental processes ; and on this same principle he affirms the truth of God and immortality. To be sure, the facts involved in this last affirmation are spiritual, not material, are more subtile, less tangible, and lend them selves with greater difficulty to confident verification, than the facts of the physical world, but so far as the fundamental intel lectual processes are concerned, the reli gious interpretation of life, affirming God and immortality, is a venture of faith, like the law of gravitation, to explain the facts. The desires of men, the necessities of their intellectual and moral life, their loves, faiths, hopes and spiritual possibilities, are not only facts, but are facts incomparably more significant than subhuman things, rocks, flowers, fossils, stars, on which the natural sciences are founded. Must not hypotheses be advanced to make these greater facts intelligible? When one re members that all science is based upon the fundamental assumption that the universe is reasonable, when one considers that all propositions are affirmed as true which are necessary to rationalize the facts of experi ence, it is clear that if personal permanence is necessary to the reasonableness of human life, which is the most important part of the universe, we have proof of immortality, in which essentially the same intellectual pro cess used by science in asserting the con servation of energy, is applied to the loftier ranges of the spiritual life of man.

III The necessity of personal permanence to the reasonableness of human life may be, perhaps, most clearly seen when we consider the essentially limitless possibilities which inhere in knowledge and in character. If death ends all, these possibilities are involved in man s very nature only that without excuse they may be brusquely and abruptly snatched away. The body has its cycle of existence, like a tree ; it is born, reaches its climacteric, withers and dies, but the mind consciously walks an ascending avenue, widens its horizons, deepens its insight, and is ever

aware that there are no limits to the possibilities of growing knowledge. The world of mind is an illimitable realm ; thought amid all its achievements is ever a pioneer that hears the call of undiscovered countries over the next range of hills ; and the intellect of man, conscious of these exhaustless potentialities, dies, as Goethe did, crying in his last moments, "More light!" To feel the endless lure of truth yet unattained is the essential nature of the intellectual life. If Huxley prefers Hell to the stoppage of his growing power to know, he is but feeling that elemental passion whose most notable expression Milton puts into the mouth of his mag nificent Satan, writhing in the agonies of the pit:

"For who would lose, Though full of pain, this intellectual being, Those thoughts that wander through eternity, To perish rather, swallowed up and lost In the wide womb of uncreated night, Devoid of sense and motion? " Not the small men, but the men of largest mental life most have felt the unforgiv able cheat which the universe practises on us, if it opens to us the endless possibility of knowing, only to refuse us its fruition. What is thus true of mind, is true of character, for there is no conceivable limit to the potentiality of spiritual life. A traveller in Switzerland tells us that, uncer tain of his way, he asked a small lad by the roadside where Kandersteg was, and received, so he remarks, the most signifi cant answer that was ever given him. do not know, sir," said the boy, "where Kandersteg is, but there is the road to it." That is an epitome of the spiritual experi ence of mail. The ideal is beyond our ken, it is a goal that never can be located, but always in the progressive achievement of character, we are conscious that we are on an endless road that leads toward unknown perfection. While death, there fore, seems logically the portion of the body, it comes as an impertinent intruder, a meddling interloper into the progress of a spiritual life. Death resides in the body from the beginning ; but death is a thief who breaks into the character and steals from it its essential nature of endless aspiration. Not small souls, but the great men of spirit have most been conscious of the illimitable realm into which they are introduced by even the faint beginnings of moral character, and are most aware of the fraud which life practises on them, if it creates, only to disappoint, what Words worth calls, "That most noble attribute of man, Though yet untutored and inordinate, That wish for something loftier, more adorned, That is the common aspect, daily garb Of human life."

Now the argument for immortality has always included the fact which we have just been stating, that human life on the plane of earth alone promises more than it attains, aspires beyond its grasp, and is left at death an unfinished and disappointing frag ment, truncated, partial, incomplete, expir ing like Moses on Nebo s top, vainly look ing towards the lands that he dreamed of conquering but that he never reached. This argument, however, is often stated so that it seems to say in language more or less learned and grandiloquent, that men want to live after death and that, therefore, immortality must be considered true. But this is an utter perversion and caricature of the bearing which the incompleteness of human life at death has upon the problem of life everlasting. The persuasive con sideration is not that men want to live after death, but that now after countless ages of painful evolution, the creative process has brought into existence beings who have set their feet upon endless avenues of knowledge and of character. They are the crown of creation ; no mother could insist that her babe is worth more than all the Alps with greater assurance than reason insists on evaluing personalities above un conscious and unmoral rocks and stars. And now when the universe has so achieved a creature in whom evolution has ceased being physical and has become psychical, in whom exhaustless possibilities are at last begotten, does the

universe in utter unconsciousness of her achievement toss the potentialities of mind and spirit into Sheol with the refuse of the flesh, and caring no more for one than for the other, bring all alike to a dismal and inconsequential end ? Then human life, as we know it, is utterly unreasonable. The most hopeful attitude which we can take towards it is that of the King of Hearts in " Alice in Wonderland," when he examines the cryptic document introduced at the historic trial. "If there is no meaning in it," he says, "that saves a world of trouble, as we needn t try to find it." One generation of incom plete, aspiring persons is wiped off the earth, as a child erases unfinished problems from his slate, that another generation of incomplete, aspiring persons may be created created and then annihilated. Nothing ever is finished anywhere. God, like a half-witted artist, amusing himself with tasks that have no meaning, paints pictures in which he barely outlines forms of beauty, full of promise, only to erase them and begin again. Aspiring characters, as an agnostic said, are "trying to get music out of sackbuts and psalteries, that never were in tune and seemingly never will be," and our social labors simply build tran sient oases in a desert world, empty of spiritual meaning oases that in the end the desert will consume in burning sand. To say that the loftiest aspects of our human life in such a universe are unintelligible and unreasonable is surely far within the boundaries of the obvious.

When, therefore, we assume, as science always does in the physical realm, that this is a reasonable world, we have a positive and assuring argument for immortality. Of course, this may be an utterly erratic universe, not in the least to be depended on to furnish reliable clews to truth, but such a conception makes science as impossible as it makes immortality unlikely. When ir regularities in the orbit of Uranus were discovered, for which there was no visible explanation, science did not throw up her hands in hopelessness, consenting that the heavens were capricious and whimsical. Rather, Leverrier computed the size, po sition and orbit of a planet which, if the per turbations of Uranus were to be made intelligible, must be in the heavens. Be cause of her fundamental faith that the uni verse is not irrational, science knew that the planet must be there, although unseen, and when sight consummated insight, and Nep tune was discovered, less than one degree from the spot indicated in the prophetic affirmations of Leverrier, the faith of sci ence in the dependableness of the world was justified. Not otherwise is personal permanence essential to the reasonableness of human life ; the orbits of aspiring mind and character demand it to make them intelligible ; and the faith that insight, so based upon the reasonableness of creation, shall some day be turned to sight, when we have eyes to see the unseen world, is a faith built on foundations firm and deep.

IV

If the basal assumption of science that the universe is reasonable supplies so strong a foundation for faith in immortality, how much more does the basal assumption of religion that the universe is beneficent argue, of necessity, the permanence of personality ! If God is good in any sense imaginable to man, then he cares for his creatures, has a purposeful meaning in them, and regards them with solicitous concern. A just and fatherly God cannot have brought into being children, capable of endless growth, aspiring after perfect knowledge and character, only to toss them one by one into oblivion, until at last, tired even of the house he built for them, he burns it up. As the seers have always felt, the goodness and honor of God are at stake in the question of immortality,

"Thou wilt not leave us in the dust : Thou madest man, he knows not why, He thinks he was not made to die ; And thou hast made him: thou art just." Of course the confident affirmation that God is good has always met the amazed and jeering accusation of anthropomor phism. Your God is your lengthened shadow, men say ; you have taken the coin of the realm universal and stamped your own visage on it. What the accuser obviously means is that a man has com mitted an astonishing blunder when he goes down into his own experience, and there takes the best and highest that he knows for his interpretation of God. The suggestion is that when a materialist takes rocks and stars, or a monist takes abstract notions like energy and law, for his idea of Deity, he has performed the sublimely ingenious feat of overleaping the boundaries of human experience and finding a symbol of God that is not anthropomorphic. Of course he has done no such thing. Can a man leap outside himself and look at the world through other than human eyes or con ceive it in other than human terms ? All the rocks and stars I know and can use in thought, are rocks and stars which, in the form I know them, have been made inside my experience ; all the abstract ideas of energy and law I have are those of my own mind s construction ; the entire world in which I live and from which I can pick symbols by which to interpret God is the world of my own consciousness an an thropomorphic world, because conformed to the laws of my own thinking. I have no pool other than my own consciousness in which to fish for my ideas of anything. The question is never whether or not a man will interpret God by some element in his experience, he cannot help that ; the question is only whether he will interpret God at all, and if so, what elements of his experience he will use, the low or the high. Physical energy is just as much our expe rience of body read out into the world as personality is our experience of self-con sciousness. Materialist though a man be, down into his own experience he must plunge like the veriest Christian, however he tries to escape it ; only if he chooses, he may bring up body instead of soul, the lowest instead of the highest, for his inter pretation of Deity. It is faith in either case, however, and it is anthropomorphism too. Christianity s method, therefore, is not one whit different from the materialist s or the monist s save in this, that instead of choosing a lower part of experience, or a by-product of experience, Christianity, ranging over the hierarchy of elements there, from the vassal serf of physical energy to the spiritual king, self-conscious per sonality, hungering for righteousness and ablaze with love, takes this last, this highest form of life it knows, and that too with lofty and undiscourageable optimism ex tended to the farthest boundaries of imag ination, as the only adequate highway to travel toward the truth about God. The Christian is anthropomorphic, as every one has to be, but being under such necessity, he thinks that the whole of man is not too big nor too good to be the symbol of God. "But," says some one, now no longer able to contain impatience with such an exultant idea of God, "do you mean that by interpreting God in terms of the hu manly best you can imagine, you have comprehended absolute Deity, the omnip otent, omnipresent, omniscient God, the philosophic world-ground, the ontological essence of the universe?" To which the Christian, likewise impatient, answers, "Do you think that I go hunting for the sun at noon with a butterfly net, that I seek to imprison the Most High in a hu man symbol ? Who am I that I should talk about absolute Deity or seek to grasp the Infinite with a finite mind ? Only this is my faith, that through all eternity, with all new disclosures of God, never will a man who starts with the best he knows have to stop, turn around, come back, and begin again on a road toward God that is less than that best. Never will he have to take a path that is lower than personal, or that negatives holiness and love. The road leads what distance beyond my gaze I cannot guess, but it is the same road and not another." Sir Oliver Lodge has given in one sentence a complete summary of the Christian s

method of approach to the idea of God: "I will not believe that it is given to man to have thoughts, nobler or loftier than the real truth of things."

When, therefore, to the Christian the old taunt is flung, The lions, if they could have pictured God, would have pictured him in fashion like a lion," the answer is ready at once : Good for the lions ! For if they had been gifted with a faith superb enough to do so worthy and exalted a thing as to take the best they had and think out toward God along the pathway of it, they would have been in so far Christian in their philosophy of life. It were certainly nobler and truer to be a lion interpreting God in terms of the best lion he could imagine, than to be a man interpreting God in terms of dirt. But if God is good in any such way as this, then death does not end all. Not only in general is an unreasonable world utterly incompatible with a just and benef icent God, but in particular, a God of good will must care for his creation. What, then, in all the universe can be the object of the divine solicitude ? Is God vain about his sun and stars ? Is he twirling them about his thumb and finger, like a child, proud of their scintillating revolutions, until transposing them and caring nothing that the transposition incidentally anni hilates the transient race of beings on the earth, he will twirl them in some other way ? Such a conception of God is impossible. If God exists at all, he must care for his creation, and if he cares at all, he must care for the crown of creation, personality. Charles Darwin tells us that at times he had a warm sense of a friendly God, but that at other times this feeling vanished. Yet even with so fugitive a faith in a uni verse that cared for its creatures, he wrote, It is an intolerable thought that man and all other sentient beings are doomed to complete annihilation, after such long-con tinued slow progress." To one who is deeply convinced that Darwin s occasional and evanescent sense of a friendly God may be a man s reasonable and constant faith, such a conception of the world is not only intolerable ; it is impossible. To talk about the fatherhood of a God, who begets chil dren, only to annihilate them, is absurd. The goodness of God is plainly at stake when one discusses immortality, for if death ends all, the Creator is building men like sand houses on the shore, caring not a whit that the fateful waves will quite obliterate them all. If death ends all, the struggle and aspiration of humanity have meant no more to him than the mist that rests in the morning on the Alps and at noon is gone. If death ends all, there is no God of whom goodness, in any conno tation imaginable to man, can be predi cated.

How indissolubly faith in immortality is interwoven with faith in a beneficent Deity is plain when one considers the venerable objection to belief that God is good, which has always made acceptance of Christian optimism difficult. The pres ent evils of human life, its miseries, dis eases and sins, its Lisbon earthquake that caused Goethe even when six years old to doubt the justice of the universe, and its San Francisco fire that made more atheists than preachers will convert in many a year, - - these are the standard and colossal arguments against the honor and benefi cence of God. To this objection only one answer ever has been possible. Those who in spite of the injustice and evil of our present life have still believed that God is good have insisted that there is no more reason to interpret human existence evilly in terms of its woes, than to interpret it happily in terms of its amazing story of spiritual growth, and that while it is impos sible to account for goodness in man if there is no goodness at the heart of the world, it is entirely possible that the inci dental evils of a process, leading toward a worthy consummation, may be explicable when the process is complete. The asser tion of the beneficence of God has always depended for its full support upon this appeal to the arbitrament of the future. Like Gladstone, defeated in the House of Commons, the man of faith has returned undismayed to face his enemies, wearing a boutonnire of defiance

on his coat, and saying, "I appeal to time !"

If, therefore, all worthy consummation to human life is denied, if men, seeing their present inexplicable woes, are convinced that no resultant future will ever show the reason for a process that here was mys terious and hard, as a vase might under stand in retrospect the deft and strenuous fingering of the potter and the overwhelm ing heat of the furnace, then the basis is removed on which man can rest his faith in a friendly universe. The universe dis tinctly is not friendly, if it has reared with such pain the moral life of man, only to topple it over like a house of cards.

While a man, therefore, may believe in immortality without believing in the good ness of God, he cannot reasonably believe in the goodness of God without believing in immortality. Indeed, the Buddhist pas sion to escape continued existence bears impressive witness that without a benefi cent Deity, life everlasting, while believ able, is positively undesirable. The noble, eightfold path" of Buddha, by which a man shall reach Nirvana, and become "like a flame that has been blown out," has been preached to men with a mis sionary enthusiasm that can find its equal, if at all, only in Christianity, not because Buddhists do not believe in immortality, but because they do believe in it, and because, conceiving God not as beneficent, but as unconscious, unmoral Being, devoid of character and purpose, immortality to them is so undesirable that to escape it is their supreme ambition. The wheel of continuous existence is their terror. They proclaim as a gospel that to become here a passionless sepulchre in which all desires are dead is the way to that reabsorp- tion into unconscious Being which is the great salvation of the race, the passionately desired escape from the neces sity of living. "Let, therefore, no man love anything!" says Buddha. "Loss of the beloved is evil. Those who love nothing and hate nothing have no fetters. * Continuous life in a universe that is not friendly is a bane to be abhorred. When, however, a man positively believes in a God of good will and purpose, eternal life to him is not only inevitable ; it is desirable. The difference between Buddha s attitude towards immortality and the New Testament s is not that one believes in existence after death, while the other is unsure or disbelieving ; both alike are positively convinced of the soul s continuance. But one, conceiving ever lasting life in terms of a Fatherless world, dreads it as a mediaeval Christian dreaded Hell ; while the other, crying that death cannot separate us from the love of God, claims it as an inspiration and a glorious hope. One strength of Buddhism lies in the fact that the idea of a perpetual, self- conscious existence, which through everlast ing ages trails after it the full memory of all previous experience and from itself never can escape, causes to the man who endeavors to imagine it what Professor Goldwin Smith calls "mental vertigo." The human mind finds it as impossible to handle this concep tion as in mathematics it finds it impossible to make infinity a member of an equation without invalidating the result. Absolute infinity in any realm cannot be dealt with by the human mind. What God may mean by personal permanence beyond our present power to picture or to compre hend, the thought of man may not usefully inquire, but with the faith that the uni verse is friendly comes the faith that it purposes endless progress for us, and this is sufficient, without knowing more, for the deepest human needs.

Whether one starts, therefore, from the scientific affirmation that the universe is reasonable or from the religious faith that the universe is friendly, he comes inevi tably to the conviction that death does not end all. The assurance of immortality is grounded on great foundations. The rea sonableness and beneficence of creation are pledged against the annihilation of man.

V No other reasons for faith in immortality compare in fundamental importance with those which have been mentioned, but there are at least two further considerations which tend greatly to confirm belief in everlast ing life. That the universe is reasonable and beneficent and so will certainly pre serve its moral gains, is a judgment of value, in making which the single individual, un supported by his fellows, might well feel insecure. The main facts of Beethoven s life may be so clearly ascertained by one investigator that, whether any one agrees with him or not, he is convinced ; but that Beethoven s music is beautiful would be exceedingly difficult for a single critic to maintain, if all those most competent to judge in the aesthetic realm insisted that the sonatas were miserable music. If one inquires the nature of the proof demanded when men seek to demonstrate that the Sistine Madonna is glorious, or that the Prize Song in " Die Meistersinger " is superb, he sees that it depends in no small degree upon the consensus of opinion among those most competent to judge. If, therefore, a man, feeling that the reasonableness and friendliness of the cosmic order are worthy foundations for his faith in a future life, should find himself alone in such an esti mate, while ranged against him the seers of the race marshalled their contrary judg ments, it would require an almost unattain- ably heroic obstinacy of opinion to insist that he is right. Who, upon the other hand, can calculate the confirming influence on our faith, if the judgment which we have reached is not withstood, but with aston ishing unanimity is supported by the author ity of those spiritual seers who have seen most deeply the significance of life ? This use of authority is not by any means irrational. Even science, from whose realm authority in the old sense of dictatorial dogmatism has been banished, welcomes authority in the opinions of able and disinterested experts. Few men of all the millions who believe the facts have ever measured the 92,000,000 miles to the sun, or for themselves have fathomed the secrets of the scientific theories which, taken for granted on expert authority, are used in daily business. If a man refused to make use of any knowledge save that which he personally had proved, he would live in a universe painfully meagre and desiccated. When a man believes Mr. Edison s assertions in the realm of elec tricity, it is generally not because he him self has demonstrated them, but because he trusts Mr. Edison s ability and honesty, finds what he himself knows of electricity not negatived, but illustrated and com pleted by the opinions of the specialist, and is confirmed in his faith by the prac tical results which Mr. Edison manifestly attains on the basis of his truths. Even in science one cannot easily exaggerate the practical importance of the expert s authority. This use of authority in science, however, is insignificant in comparison with its use in those higher ranges of man s life where judg ments of worth are necessary. There, as Browning says, " One wise man s verdict outweighs all the fools ! "

If in the establishment of some scientific theory all Asia and Africa count for noth ing, and the masses of unqualified men protest and disbelieve in vain, because the specialists who really know have seen the truth and spoken it, how much more in the rating of beautiful music, painting and architecture, do men of dull eyes shrug their shoulders to no effect, and insensitive minds seek in vain to turn appreciation into cynicism ! The seers are the demonstrators of the value- judgments of the world. Not in religious truth alone, but in all spiritual concerns of beauty and goodness, we ordi nary men stand upon the slope and cry to those upon the summit, that with their wider vision they must interpret to us the real truth of life.

Men s faith in immortality, therefore, is immeasurably confirmed by the testimony of the spiritual seers. With overwhelming unanimity they bear witness to their faith in a reasonable world that "will

not leave us in the dust." If we seek counsel of the most comprehensive spirit outside the range of the Jewish-Christian development, we hear Socrates saying through Plato : Then beyond question the soul is immor tal and imperishable and will truly exist in another world." If we seek counsel of that spiritual Master, who most seems to include in himself the ideals of all centuries, all races, both sexes, all ages, as the pure white light gathers up and blends the split and partial colors of the spectrum, we hear him saying with perfect confidence: "In my Father s house are many mansions." The argument is often urged that the universal belief in immortality, held by all men in all ages, makes strong presumption of im mortality s truth ; that if the analogy of physical life holds good, no universal human functioning exists without an objective fact to call it into being ; so that without the stimulus of the existence of another world, it is inconceivable that all races would have believed in it. But this argument, founded on the faith of the vast, obscure masses of mankind, while it has its place, does not compare in persuasive power with the con sideration of those elevated souls, who, rising far above the common levels of our human life, have from their altitude assured us, not with less confidence, but ever with more positiveness as they stood higher in the spiritual scale, that everlasting life is true. Unless Germany denies that men like Kant are her deep-seeing prophets ; unless England chooses lesser souls than her Wordsworth, Browning, and Tennyson to represent her loftiest spiritual insight ; un less America says to Emerson, to Whittier, and to their like that they are not our seers ; men must confess that with marvellous una nimity the most elevated and far-seeing spirits of the race have most believed in immortality. Not the small souls, but the men of "a lordly great compass within" have felt most keenly the necessity, reason ableness and assured certainty of life eternal. Now this appeal to the seers is not in its deepest significance an appeal to an exter nal authority. What the greatest men ordinarily feel is what ordinary men feel in their greatest moments. The appeal to the seers is an appeal to the plain man s best hours. In a singularly revealing sen tence, Professor Tyndall says: "I have noticed during years of self-observation that it is not in hours of clearness and of vigor that this doctrine (of materialism) commends itself to my mind ; for in the presence of stronger and healthier thought it ever dissolves and disappears, as offering no solution of the mystery in which we dwell and of which we form a part." So every man is aware of his self-evidencing high moments, when the ground rises under his feet and he reaches for a time a spiritual eminence, from which horizons are visible and vistas stand clear that are not within his ken on ordinary days. The arbitra ment of the great spirits of the race gets its authority for us because they but confirm the vision of our own elevated hours. The most significant choice which in the end every man makes, is between his own low and his own high moments, as inter preters of life s true meaning. When then a man appeals from himself at his worst to himself at his best, is there any question what the decision is upon the matter of eternal life and all its implications ? Does a man at his best tend to think that he is flesh with a transient mental aspect, that there are no permanent forces save the physical powers that build the solar systems and destroy them ; that the earth throws away with utter carelessness personality, her most precious treasure, and never resolves to harmony the dissonance of her inequities ? Does a man at his best feel in human life no intrinsic and eternal value to inspire sacrifice for spiritual quality in the individual and to furnish basis for pas sionate and hopeful service to the race ? Above all, does any man in his sanest, wor thiest moments, consent to think that the universe preserves none of the moral gains, which have cost such an incalculable price in blood and tears and toil ? Is he willing to accept as his view of the cosmic mean ing Thompson s portrayal of a world that throws away with heedless hand the spirit ual

achievements it has wrought ?

"The world rolls round forever like a mill, It grinds out life and death, and good and ill, It has no purpose, heart, or mind, or will.

While air of space and Time s full river flow, The mill must blindly whirl unresting so, It may be wearing out, but who can know ?

Man might know one thing were his sight less dim, That it whirls, not to suit his petty whim, That it is quite indifferent to him:

Nay, doth it use him harshly, as he saith ?

It grinds him some slow years of bitter breath, Then grinds him back into eternal death." Is that the truth of the universe, as in a man s best hours, it appeals to him? Rather a wholesome mind must finally protest against a useless creation, that as Professor James put it, could as well, like a reversed cinematograph, run one way as another, because it means nothing and issues nowhere. Platonic dialectics to prove the immateriality of the soul and hence its necessary immortality no longer interest the human mind ; the bare con tinuance of a spiritual substance, deathless because it essentially is uncompounded and therefore indestructible, is not even desired; but desire for the preservation of the race s active, spiritual values no generation can outgrow. The passing of special arguments and of whole philo sophical systems leaves that problem still central and dominant. Here, after all, is the crux of the whole question, that no man in those hours when he is intellectually and spiritually at his best can consent, without violence to his profoundest instincts, to believe in a world that loses all its gains, a world in which nothing that we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist. Without some form of personal permanence that issue to the cosmic pro cess seems inevitable.

VI The underlying reason for the seeming inadequacy of all proofs of the life to come is that their absolute verification is impos sible. Hypotheses in geology can be veri fied beyond a peradventure by putting them to the test of facts visible and tangi ble. But hypotheses about the future life, in the nature of the case, cannot be con firmed by an appeal to experiences beyond the grave. When, in answer to this objec tion, it is said that to require a kind of proof which necessarily is out of the ques tion is an unreasonable demand, this, obviously, does not better the case. The really fruitful consideration in this regard is that verification of the hypothesis of everlasting life is not altogether impos sible. Immortality does not concern the future world alone ; it concerns this present existence, for, as we have said, if a man is immortal at all, he is immortal now. Whenever a man, therefore, begins now to live as though he were immortal, he is putting the truth to the test of life, and seeking verification of its validity in terms of its practical consequences. A world in which poison made men strong and foods destroyed them would be no more unreason able than a world in which falsehood made great characters while truth applied issued in ignoble spirit and unworthy life. Indeed, we call arsenic poison just because it does destroy us, and good bread we call food, because it builds us up. So in practical life we count those things true which, taken for true, prove useful, and those things false which will not verify themselves by the difference that they make to life. The engineer, who, engaged in the construction of a bridge, first plots his plans according to the laws of mathematics, then submits them to experts for corroboration, and then building his structure, looks for the ul timate confirmation of his judgment in the completed work, standing the

test of use, indicates by his method of procedure the road to all verification of truth. Let a man so test the affirmation of immortality. Let his best judgment decide that it is true, and this judgment be substantiated by the verdict of the seers, and then let him start to live now as though he were immortal. What confirming consequences are sure to come ! The man who lives as though he were immortal lives in a universe where the highest spiritual values are permanent, outlasting the growth and dissolution of the stars ; where personality, whether in himself or others, is infinitely precious and has everlasting issues ; where character is the supreme concern of life, in behalf of which all else may reasonably be sacrificed ; where no social service ever can be vain, if it reg isters itself in even one man made better, and where, in all public-minded devotion to moral causes on the earth, we are not dig ging artificial lakes to be filled by our own buckets, in hopeless contest with an alien universe, but are rather building channels down which the eternal spiritual purpose of the living God shall flow to its "far-off divine event." The truth of immortality makes great living.

It is just here that Jesus gives his most substantial contribution to faith in life everlasting. His teaching of immortality has the authoritative value of a verdict from a spiritual seer, but his life has a veri fying value, exhibiting to us once for all the sort of character resultant from living as though immortality were true. At least once, in him, we have seen what assurance of eternal life means to character. For Jesus differs even from Socrates in this, that while Socrates argued for immortality and believed it, Jesus never stopped to argue, but taking it for granted, as an immediate and unquestionable intuition, lived as though it undoubtedly were true. Others have analyzed the reasons for believ ing in life everlasting, as one might analyze a score of Mozart and discuss arguments to prove its beauty ; but Jesus lived immor tality, as one might play Mozart perfectly. When one considers, therefore, the character of Jesus, in which faith in God was the warp and certainty of life eternal was the woof, he is seeing the consummate verification of faith in immortality. This is the result in human life when personal permanence passes from theory into the verifying test of char acter. Let a man begin to live as though he were not going to die, and his tone of spiritual quality rises by sure degrees towards Christlikeness ; let a man begin to live as though death were the end of all, and even those who themselves have held this creed confess that the deepest motives for character grow dim, and that social ser vice is blighted by disillusionment. Before a man gives himself to disbelief in personal permanence, let him consider this result, that in such a world falsehood makes the best character and truth destroys it. No man, therefore, need stop with the vague possibility of life to come. Immor tality is a hypothesis, if you will, but so is gravitation, and around them both con siderations weighty and assuring gather in support. The reasonableness of the uni verse is pledged to the immortality of man : the beneficence of God is unthinkable with out it; the verdict of the spiritual seers confirms it ; and when it is put to the veri fying test of life it builds the loftiest charac ter.

Death is a great adventure, but none need go unconvinced that there is an issue to it. The man of faith may face it as Columbus faced his first voyage from the shores of Spain. What lies across the sea, he cannot tell ; his special expectations all may be mistaken ; but his insight into the clear meanings of present facts may per suade him beyond doubt that the sea has another shore. Such confident faith, so founded upon reasonable grounds, shall be turned to sight, when, for all the dismay of the unbelieving, the hope of the seers is rewarded by the vision of a new continent.

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04.00. The Meaning of Faith

The Meaning of Faith

By Harry Emerson Fosdick In this 12 chapter work on Faith by Fosdick, he examines different aspects of faith. He looks at faith's relationship to life, and its relationship to God (as foundational). He also compares it to science, the moods, etc.

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12. The Fellowship of Faith

Author of "The Manhood of the Master," "The Meaning of Prayer, "The Challenge of the Present Crisis," etc.

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DEDICATION To MY MOTHER IN MEMORIAM

"Tis human fortune's happiest height to be A spirit melodious, lucid, poised, and whole; Second in order of felicity To walk with such a soul."

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PUBLISHERS NOTE The complex subject of Faith has required an extended treatment, which has made the present volume much longer than the author's previous works. Every item of expense connected with publishing has greatly increased even within the past few months, and, to the regret, alike of publisher and author, it has been found necessary to charge more for this volume than for "The Meaning of Prayer" and "The Manhood of the Master."

PREFACE A book on faith has been for years my hope and intention. And now it comes to final form during the most terrific war men ever waged, when faith is sorely tried and deeply needed. Direct discussion of the war has been purposely avoided; the issues here presented are not confined to those which the war suggests; but many streams of thought within the book flow in channels that the war has worn. Since the conflict had to come, I am glad for this book's sake that it was not written until it had Europe's holocaust for a background.

Against one misunderstanding the reader should be guarded. If anyone approaches these studies, expecting to find detailed and special views of Christian doctrine, he will be disap pointed. The perplexities of mind and life and the affirma tions of religious faith, with which these studies deal, lie far beneath sectarian doctrinal controversy. I have tried to make clear a foundation on which faith might build its thoughts of Christian truth. And while I have spoken freely of God and Christ and the Spirit, of the Cross and life eternal, I have not intended or endeavored a complete the ology. I have had in mind that elemental matter of which Carlyle was thinking when he wrote : "The thing a man does practically lay to heart, and know for certain concerning his vital relations to the mysterious Universe, and his duty and destiny there, that is in all cases the primary thing for him, and creatively determines all the rest. That is his. religion." As in "The Meaning of Prayer," the Scripture has been used for the basis and interpretation of the daily thought. The Bible is our supreme record of man's experience with faith; it recounts in terms of life faith's sources and results, its successes and failures, its servants and its foes. And because faith is not a tour dc force of intellect alone, but is an act of life, prayers have been used for the expression of aroused desire and resolution. My indebtedness to many helpers is very great. But to my friend and colleague, Professor George Albert Coe, my gratitude is so definitely due for his careful reading of the manuscript, that the book should not go out lacking an acknowledgment.

H. E. F.

December 15, 1917.

04.01. Faith and Life’s Adventure

CHAPTER I. Faith and Life’s Adventure

DAILY READINGS

Discussion about faith generally starts with faith’s reasonableness; let us begin with faith’s inevitableness. If it were possible somehow to live without faith, the whole subject might be treated merely as an affair of curious interest. But if faith is an unescapable necessity in every human life, then we must come to terms with it, understand it, and use it as intelligently as we can. There are certain basic elements in man which make it impossible to live without faith. Let us consider these, as they are suggested in the Epistle to the Hebrews, which, better than any other book in the Bible, presents faith as an unavoidable human attitude.

First Week, First Day Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen. Hebrews 11:1. As Moffatt translates: "Now faith means we are confident of what we hope for, convinced of what we do not see." When faith is described in such general terms, its necessity in human life is evident. Man cannot live without faith, be cause he deals not only with a past which he may know and with a present which he can see, but with a future in whose possibilities he must believe. A man can no more avoid looking ahead when he lives his life than he can when he sails his boat, and in one case as in the other, his direction is determined by his thought about what lies before him, his "assurance of things hoped for." Now, this future into which continually we press our way can never be a matter of demonstrable knowledge. We know only when we arrive, but meanwhile we believe I and our knowledge of what is and has been is not more necessary to our quest than our faith concerning what is yet to come. As Tennyson sings of faith in "The Ancient Sage", "She sees the Best that glimmers thro the Worst, She feels the sun is hid but for a night. She spies the summer thro the winter bud, She tastes the fruit before the blossom falls, She hears the lark within the songless egg. She finds the fountain where they wail d Mirage!"

However much a man may plan, therefore, to live without faith, he cannot do it. When one strips himself of all convictions about the future he stops living altogether, and active, eager, vigorous manhood is always proportionate to the scope and power of reasonable faith. The great spirits of the race have had the aspiring, progressive quality which the Scripture celebrates, These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things make it manifest that they are seeking after a country of their own. And if indeed they had been mindful of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city. Hebrews 11:13-16.

Almighty God, let Thy Spirit breathe upon us to quicken in us all humility, all holy desire, all living faith in Thee. When we meditate on the Eternal, we dare not think any manner of similitude; yet Thou art most real to us in the worship of the heart. When in the strife against sin we receive grace

to help us in our time of need, then art Thou the Eternal Rock of our salvation. When amid our perplexities and searchings, the way of duty is made clear, then art Thou our Everlasting Light. When amid the storms of life we find peace and rest through submission, then art Thou the assured Refuge of our souls. So do Thou manifest Thyself unto us, O God! Our Heavenly Father, we give Thee humble and hearty thanks for all the sacred traditions which have come down to us from the past for the glorious memories of ancient days, concerning that Divine light in which men have been conscious of Thy presence and assured of Thy grace. But we would not content ourselves with memories. O Thou who art not the God of the dead, but the God of the living, manifest Thyself unto us in a present communion. Reveal Thy self unto us in the tokens of this passing time. Give us for ourselves to feel the authority of Thy law: give us for our selves to realize the exceeding sin fulness of sin: give us for ourselves to understand the way of salvation through sacrifice. Teach us, by the Spirit of Christ, the sacredness of common duties, the holiness of theties that bind us to our kind, the divinity of the still small voice within that doth ever urge us in the way of righteousness. So shall our hearts be renewed by faith; so shall we ever live in God. Amen. John Hunter.

First Week, Second Day By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out unto a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he became a sojourner in the land of promise, as in a land not his own, dwelling in tents, with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Hebrews 11:8-10. By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather to share ill treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; accounting the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he looked unto the recompense of reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. Hebrews 11:24-27.

Man cannot live without faith because his relationship with the future is an affair not alone of thought but also of action; life is a continuous adventure into the unknown. Abraham and Moses pushing out into experiences whose issue they could not foresee are typical of all great lives that have adventured for God. "By faith" is the first word necessary in every life like Luther’s and Wesley’s and Carey?. By faith John Bright, when his reforms were hard bestead,- said: "If we can t win as fast as we wish, we know that our opponents can t in the long run win at all." By faith Gladstone, when the Liberal cause was defeated, rose undaunted in Parliament, and said, "I appeal to time!" and by faith every one of us must undertake each plain day’s work, if we are to do it well. Robert Louis Stevenson said that life is "an affair, of cavalry," "a thing to be dashingly used and cheerfully hazarded." But so to deal with life demands faith. The more one sees what venturesome risks he takes every day, what labor and sacrifice he invests in hope of a worthy outcome, with what great causes he falls in love until at his best he is willing for their sakes to hazard fortune and happiness and life itself, the more he sees that the soul of robust and serviceable character is faith.

O God, who hast encompassed us with so much that is dark and perplexing, and yet hast set within us light enough to walk by; enable us to trust what Thou hast given as sufficient for us, and steadfastly refuse to follow aught else; lest the light that is in us become as darkness and we wander from the way. May we be loyal to all the truth we know, and seek to discharge those duties

which lay their commission on our conscience; so that we may come at length to perfect light in Thee, and find our wills in harmony with Thine.

Since Thou hast planted our feet in a world so full of chance and change that we know not what a day may bring forth, and hast curtained every day with night and rounded our little lives with sleep; grant that we may use with diligence our appointed span of time, working while it is called today, since the night cometh when no man can work; having our loins girt and our lamps alight, lest the cry at midnight find us sleeping and the door fast shut.

Since we are so feeble, faint, and foolish, leave us not to our own devices, not even when we pray Thee to; nor suffer us for any care to Thee or for any pain to us to walk our own unheeding way. Plant thorns about our feet, touch our hearts with fear, give us no rest apart from Thee, lest we lose our way and miss the happy gate. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

First Week, Third Day

Man cannot live without faith because the prime requisite in life’s adventure is courage, and the sustenance of courage is faith. And what shall I more say? for the time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah; of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faithsubdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, waxed mighty in war, turned to flight armies of aliens. Women received their dead by a resurrection: and others were tortured, not accepting their deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted, they were slain with the sword: they went about in sheep-skins, in goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated (of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves, and the holes of the earth. And these all, having had witness borne to them through their faith, received not the promise, God having provided some bet ter thing concerning us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect. Hebrews 11:32-40. When in comparison with men and women of such admirable spirit, one thinks of weak personalities, that ravel out at the first strain, he sees that the difference lies in courage. When a man loses heart he loses everything. Now to keep one’s heart in the midst of life’s stress and to maintain an undiscourageable front in the face of its difficulties is not an achievement which springs from anything that a laboratory can demonstrate or that logic can confirm. It is an achievement of faith, "The virtue to exist by faith As soldiers live by courage."

Consider this account of Havelock, the great English general: "As he sat at dinner with his son on the evening of the 17th, his mind appeared for the first and last time to be affected with gloomy forebodings, as it dwelt on the probable annihilation of his brave men in a fruitless attempt to accomplish what was beyond their strength. After musing long in deep thought, his strong sense of duty and his confidence in the justice of his cause restored the buoyancy of his spirit; and he exclaimed, If the worst comes to the worst, we can but die with our swords in our hands! " No man altogether escapes the need for such a spirit, and, as with Havelock and the Hebrew heroes, confidence in someone, faith in some thing, is that spirit’s source.

O God, who hast sent us to school in this strange life of ours, and hast set us tasks which test all our courage, trust, and fidelity; may we not spend our days complaining at circumstance or fretting

at discipline, but give ourselves to learn of life and to profit by every experience. Make us strong to endure.

We pray that when trials come upon us we may not shirk the issue or lose our faith in Thy goodness, but committing our souls unto Thee who knowest the way that we take, come forth as gold tried in the fire.

Grant by Thy grace that we may not be found wanting in the hour of crisis. When the battle is set, may we know on which side we ought to be, and when the day goes hard, cowards steal from the field, and heroes fall around the standard, may our place be found where the fight is fiercest. If we faint, may we not be faithless; if we fall, may it be while facing the foe. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

First Week, Fourth Day Man cannot live without faith, because the adventure of life demands not only courage to achieve but patience to endure and wait, and all untroubled patience is founded on faith. When the writer to the Hebrews speaks of those who "through faith and patience inherit the promises" (Hebrews 6:12), he joins two things that in experience no man successfully can separate. By as much as we need patience, we need faith. But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were enlightened, ye endured a great conflict of sufferings; partly, being made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, becoming partakers with them that were so used. For ye both had compassion on them that were in bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your possessions, knowing that ye have for yourselves a better possession and an abiding one. Cast not away therefore your boldness, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, having done the will of God, ye may receive the promise. Hebrews 10:32-36. The most difficult business in the world is waiting. There are times in every life when action, however laborious and sacrificial, would be an unspeakable relief; but to sit still because necessity constrains us, endeavoring to live out the admonition of the psalmist, "Rest in the Lord, and wait:: patiently for him," is prodigiously difficult. No one can do it without some kind of faith. "In your patience," said Jesus, "ye shall win your souls" (Luke 21:19), but such an achievement is no affair of logic or scientific demonstration; it is a venture of triumphant faith. The great believers have been the unwearied waiters; faith meant to them not controversial opinion, but sustaining power. As another has phrased it, "Our faculties of belief were not primarily given to us tot make orthodoxies and heresies withal; they were given us to! live by."

We beseech of Thee, O Lord our God, that Thou wilt grant to every one of us in Thy presence, this morning, the special mercies which he needs strength where weakness prevails, and patience where courage has failed. Grant, we- pray Thee, that those who need long-suffering may find them selves strangely upborne and sustained. Grant that those who wander in doubt and darkness may feel distilling upon their soul the sweet influence of faith. Grant that those who are heart-weary, and sick from hope deferred, may find the God of all salvation. Confirm goodness in those that are seeking it. Restore, we pray Thee, those who have wandered from the path of rectitude. Give every one honesty. May all transgressors of Thy law return to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls with confession of sin, and earnest and sincere repentance. Amen. Henry Ward Beecher.

First Week, Fifth Day Man cannot live without faith because he exists in auniverse, the complete explanation of which is forever beyond his grasp, so that whatever he thinks about the total meaning of creation is fundamentally faith. By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear.

Hebrews 11:3. Not only is this true, but if we think that there is no God, that also is faith; and if we hold that the basic reality is physical atoms, that is faith; and whatever anybody believes about the origin and desting of life is faith. When Haeckel says that the creator is "Cosmic Ether," and when John says that "God is love," they both are making a leap of faith. This does not mean that faith can dispense with reason. In these studies we shall set ourselves to marshal the ample arguments that support man’s faith in God. But when the utmost that argument can do has been achieved, the finite mind, dealing with the infinite reality, is forced to a sally of faith, a venture of confidence in Goodness at the heart, of the world, not opposed to reason but surpassing reason. Faith always sees more with her eye than logic can reach with her hand. And especially when men come to the highest thought of life’s meaning and believe in the Christian God, they face the fact which the writer to the Hebrews presents, And without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him. Hebrews 11:6. Indeed, in all stout conviction about the meaning of life there is a certain defiant note, refusing to surrender to small objections. Cried. Stevenson, "I believe in an ultimate decency of things; ay, and if I woke in hell, should still believe it!"

O Thou Infinite Spirit, who needest no words for man to hold his converse with Thee, we would enter into Thy presence, we would reverence Thy power, we would worship Thy wisdom, we would adore Thy justice, we would be gladdened by Thy love, and blessed by our communion with Thee. We know that Thou needest no sacrifice at our hands, nor any offering at our lips; yet we live in Thy world, we taste Thy bounty, we breathe Thine air, and Thy power sustains us, Thy justice guides, Thy goodness preserves, and Thy love blesses us forever and ever. O Lord, we cannot fail to praise Thee, though we cannot praise Thee as we would. We bow our faces down before Thee with humble hearts, and in Thy presence would warm our spirits for a while, that the better we may be prepared for the duties of life, to endure its trials, to bear its crosses, and to triumph in its lasting joys... In times of darkness, when men fail before Thee, in days when men of high degree are a lie, and those of low degree are a vanity, teach us, O Lord, to be true before Thee, not a vanity, but soberness and manliness; and may we keep still our faith shining in the midst of darkness, the beacon-light to guide us over stormy seas to a home and haven at last. Father, give us strength for our daily duty, patience for our constant or unaccustomed cross, and in every time of trial give us the hope that sustains, the faith that wins the victory and obtains satisfaction and fulness of joy. Amen. Theodore Parker.

First Week, Sixth Day Man cannot live, lacking faith, because without it life’s richest experiences go unappropriated. Opportunities for friendship lie all about us, but only by trustful self-giving can they be enjoyed; chances to serve good causes continually beckon us, but one must have faith to try; superior minds offer us their treasures, but to avail oneself of instruction from another involves teachable humility. A man without capacity to let himself go out to other men in friendly trust or to welcome new illumination on his thought with grateful faith would be shut out from the priceless treasures of humanity. A certain trustful openheartedness, a willingness to venture in personal relationship and in attempts at service is essential to a rich and fruitful life. And what is true of man’s relationship with man is true of man’s relation ship with God. So Prof. William James, of Harvard, states the case: "Just as a man who in a company of gentlemen made no advances, asked a warrant for every concession, and believed no one’s word without proof, would cut himself off by such churlishness from all the social rewards that a more trusting spirit would earn so here,

one who should shut himself up in snarling logicality and try to make the gods extort his recognition willy-nilly, or not get it at all, might cut himself off forever from his only opportunity of making the gods acquaintance." Wherever in life great spiritual values await man's appropriation, only faith can appropriate them. Let us fear therefore, lest haply, a promise being left of entering into his rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it. For indeed we have had good tidings preached unto us, even as also they: but the word of hearing did not profit them, because it was not united by faith with them that heard! Hebrews 4:12.

O Infinite Source of life and health and joy! the very thought of Thee is so wonderful that in this thought we would rest and be still. Thou art Beauty and Grace and Truth and Power. Thou art the light of every heart that sees Thee, the life of every soul that loves Thee, the strength of every mind that seeks Thee. From our narrow and bounded world *we would pass into Thy greater world. From our petty and miserable selves we would escape to Thee, to find in Thee the power and the freedom of a larger life We recognise Thee in all the deeper experiences of the soul. When the conscience utters its warning voice, when the heart is tender and we -forgive those who have wronged us in word or deed, when we feel ourselves upborne above time and place, and know ourselves citizens of Thy everlasting Kingdom, we realize, O Lord, that these things, while they are in us, are not of us. They are Thine, the work of Thy Spirit brooding upon our souls.

Spirit of Holiness and Peace! Search all our motives; try the secret places of our souls; set in the light any evil that may lurk within, and lead us in the way everlasting. Amen. Samuel McComb.

First Week, Seventh Day Man cannot live without faith, because in life's adventure the central problem is building character. Now, character is not a product of logic, but of faith in ideals and of sacrificial devotion to them. What is becomes only the starting point of a campaign for what ought to be, and in the prosecution of that campaign what ought to be must be believed in with passionate intensity. Faith of some sort, therefore, is necessarily the dynamic of character; only limp and ragged living is possible without faith; and the greatest characters are girded by the most ample faith in God and goodness. The writer to the Hebrews saw this intimate relationship between quality of faith and quality of life, and challenged his readers to judge the Christian faith by its consequence in character.

Remember them that had the rule over you, men that spake unto you the word of God; and considering the issue of their life, imitate their faith. Hebrews 13:7.

Such are the basic elements in human experience that make faith necessary: we deal with a future, about which we must think, with reference to which we must act, and adventuring into which we need courage and patience; this venture of life takes place in a world the meaning of which can be grasped only by a leap of faith; and in this venture the best treasures of the spirit are obtainable only through openheartedness, and character is possible only to men of resolute conviction. Plainly the subject to whose study we are setting ourselves is no affair of theoretical interest alone; it affects the deepest issues of life. No words could better summarize this vital idea of faith which the Epistle to the Hebrews presents than Hartley Coleridge's, Think not the faith by which the just shall live Is a dead creed, a map correct of heaven, Far less a feeling, fond and fugitive, A thoughtless gift, withdrawn as soon as given. It is an affirmation and an act That bids eternal truth be present fact."

How great are the mercies, O Lord our God, which Thou hast prepared for all that put their trust in Thee!... Thou hast comfort for those that are in affliction; Thou hast strength for those that are weak;... Thou hast all blessings that are needed, and standest ready to be all things to all, and in all. And yet, with bread enough and to spare, with raiment abundant, and with all medicine, how many are there that go hungry, and naked, and sick, and destitute of all things! We desire, O Lord, that Thou wilt, to all Thine other mercies, add that gift by which we shall trust in Thee faith that works by love; faith that abides with us; faith that transforms material things, and gives them to us in their spiritual meanings; faith that illumines the world by a light that never sets, that shines brighter than the day, and that clears the night quite out of our experience. This is the portion that Thou hast provided for thy people. We beseech of Thee, grant us this faith, that shall give us victory over the world and over ourselves; that shall make us valiant in all temptation and bring us off conquerors and more than conquerors through Him that loved us. Amen. Henry Ward Beecher.

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK When Donald Hankey, who died in the trenches in the Great War, said that "True religion is betting one’s life that there is a God," he not only gave expression to his own virile Christianity, but he gave a good description of all effective faith whatsoever. Faith is holding reasonable convictions, in realms beyond the reach of final demonstration, and, as well, it is thrusting out one’s life upon those convictions as though they were surely true. Faith is vision plus valor. Our study may well begin by recognizing that, as it is exercised in the religious life, such faith is the supreme use of an attitude which we are employing in everything. No man can live without vision to see as true "what as yet he cannot prove, or without valor to act on the basis of his insight. Our vocabulary in ordinary relationships, quite as much as in religion, is full of words involving faith. I believe, I feel sure, I am confident, I venture such phrases. express our common attitudes in work and thought. Each day we act on reasonable probabilities, hold convictions not yet verified, take risks whose outcome we cannot know, and trust people whom we have barely met. We may pride our selves that our twentieth century’s life is being built on scientifically demonstrable knowledge, but a swift review of any day’s experience shows how indispensable is another attitude, without which our verifiable knowledge would be an unused instrument. In order to live we must have insight and daring. It is not alone the just who live by faith; lacking it, there is no real life anywhere. To be sure, we may not leap from this general necessity of faith to the conclusion that therefore our religious beliefs are justified. Many men use faith in business and in social life who cannot find their way to convictions about God. But our desire to understand faith’s meaning is quickened when we see how indispensable a place it holds, how tre mendous an influence it wields, whether it be religiously applied or not. All sorts of human enterprise bear witness to its unescapable necessity. Haeckel, the biologist, describing science’s method, says: "Scientific faith fills the gaps in our knowledge of natural laws with temporary hypotheses." Lincoln, the statesman, entreating the people, cries: "Let us have faith that right makes might and in that faith let us to the end dare to do our duty." Stevenson, the invalid, trying with fortitude to bear his trial, writes: "Whether on the first of January or the thirty-first of December, faith is a good word to end on." And the Master states the substance of religion in a single phrase: "Have faith__in God" (Mark 2:22). Scientific procedure, social welfare, personal quality, religion the applications of our subject are as wide as life. Vision and valor are the dynamic forces in all achievement, intellectual as well as moral, and as for man’s spiritual values and satisfactions, "It is faith in something," as Oliver Wen dell Holmes put it, "which makes life worth living."

II

One major reason for this necessary place of faith in our experience is clear. Life is an adventure and adventure always demands insight and daring. That "Chinese" Gordon, on his hazardous expedition into the Soudan, should be thrown back on undiscourageable faith in himself, in the justice of his cause, in the bravery of his men, and in God; that he should even speak of praying his boats up the Nile, seems to us natural; for some kind of faith is obviously necessary to any great adventure. But men often forget that all ordinary living is essentially adventurous and that by this fact the need of faith is woven into the texture of every human life.. It is an amazing adventure to be born upon this wandering, island in the sky and it is an adventure to leave it when death calls. To go to school, to make friends, to marry, to rear children, to face through life the swift changes of circumstance that no man can certainly predict an hour ahead, these are all adventures. Each new day is an hitherto unvisited country, which we enter, like Abraham leaving Ur for a strange land, "not knowing whither he went" (Hebrews 11:8), and every New Year we begin a tour of exploration into a twelvemonth where no man’s foot has ever walked before. If we all love tales of pioneers, it is because from the time we are weaned to the time we die, life is pioneering. Of course we cannot live by verifiable knowledge only. Imagine men, equipped with nothing but powers of logical demonstration, starting on such an enterprise as the title of Sebastian Cabot’s joint stock company suggests: "Merchants Adventurers of England for the discovery of lands, territories, isles and seignories, unknown."

Indeed no knowledge of the sort that our scientific inductions can achieve ever will take from life this adventurous element. Scientific knowledge in these latter decades has grown incalculably; yet for all that, every child’s life is a hazardous experiment, every boy choosing a calling takes his chances, every friendship is a risky exploration in the province of personality, and all devotion to moral causes is just as much a venturesome staking of life on insight and hope as it was when Garrison attacked slavery or Livingstone landed in Africa. To one who had acquired not only all extant but all possible knowledge, as truly as to any man who ever lived, life would be full of hazard still. He could not certainly know in advance the outcome of a single important decision of his life. He could not at any moment tell in what new, strange, challenging, or terrific situation the next hour might find him. With all his science, he must face each day, as Paul faced his journey to Rome, "not knowing the things that shall befall me there" (Acts 20:22). The reason for this is obvious. Our systematized knowledge is the arrangement under laws of the experiences which we have already had. It furnishes invaluable aid in guiding the experiments and explorations which life continuously forces on us. In every enterprise, however, we must use not only legs to stand on, but tentacles as well with which to feel our way forward intuitions, insights, hopes, unverified convictions, faith. We project our life forward as we build a cantilever bridge. Part of the structure is solidly bolted and thoroughly articulated in a system; but ever beyond this established portion we audaciously thrust out new beginnings in eager expectation that from the other side something will come to meet them. Without this no progress ever would be possible.

Every province of life illustrates this necessity of adventure. In science, the established body of facts and laws is only the civilized community of knowledge from whose frontiers new guesses and intuitions start. Says Sir Oliver Lodge about the great Newton: "He had an extraordinary faculty for guessing correctly, sometimes with no apparent data as for instance, his intuition that the mean density of the earth was probably between five and six times that of water, while we now know it is

really about five and one half." In personal character, our habits are basic, but our ideals in which, despite ourselves, we must believe, are pioneers that push out into new territory and call our habits after them to conquer the promised land. In social advance, some Edmund Burke, statesman of the first magnitude, basing his judgment on the established experience of the race, can call slavery an incurable evil and say that there is not the slightest hope that trade in slaves can be stopped; and yet within eighty-two years the race can feel its way forward to Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. As for daily business, adventurous daring is there the very nerve of enterprise. Says a modern newspaper man: "There are plenty of people to do the possible; you can hire them at forty dollars a month. The prizes are for those who perform the impossible. If a thing can be done, experience and skill can do it; if a thing cannot be done, only faith can do it." Great in human life is this adventurous element, and, therefore, great in human life is the necessity of faith. To chasten and discipline, to make reasonable and stable the faiths by which we live is a problem unsurpassed in importance for every man.

III

One result of special interest follows from this truth. It is commonly suspected that as mankind advances, the function of faith proportionately shrinks. It is even supposed that the place of faith in human life has sensibly diminished with our growing knowledge, and that Matthew Arnold told the truth,

"The sea of faith

Was once, too, at the full,

and round earth's shore

Lay like the folds of a bright girdle

furl d. But now I only hear

Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,

Retreating, to the breath

Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear

And naked shingles of the world."

Accordingly by custom we call the mediaeval centuries the "Age of Faith." But even a cursory comparison between the mediaeval people and ourselves reveals that among the many differences that distinguish us from them, none is more marked than the diversity and range of our faiths. One considers in surprise the things which they did not believe. That the world would ever grow much better, that social abuses like political tyranny and slavery could be radically changed, that man could ever master nature by his inventions until her mighty forces were his servants, that the whole race could be reached for Christ, that war could be abolished and human brotherhood in some fair degree established, that common men could be trusted with responsibility for their own government or with freedom to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences none of these things did the mediaeval folk believe. One of the most distinguishing characteristics of the so-called "Age of Faith" was its lack of faith. It lived in a static world; it was poor in

possibilities except in heaven; it pitiably lacked those most certain signs of vital faith, the open mind eager for new truth and the ardent, vigorous life seeking new conquests. In comparison with such an age our generation's faiths are rich and manifold. To call our time an "Age of Doubt" be cause of its free spirit of critical inquiry, is seriously to misunderstand its major drift. Bunyan's Pilgrim found Doubting Castle kept by Giant Despair and his wife Diffidence and in any Doubting Castle these two always dwell. But who. considering our generation's life as a whole, would call it diffident or desperate? It is rather robust and confident; its social faiths, at least, are unprecedented in their sweep and certainty. Even the Great War is the occasion of such organized faith in a federated and fraternal world as man kind has never entertained before. The truth is that with the progress of the race the adventure of life is elevated and enlarged, and in consequence faith grows not less but more necessary. The faiths of a savage are meager compared with a modern man's. The Australian bushman never dreams of laboring for social ideals even a few years ahead. What can he know of those superb faiths in economic justice and international brotherhood, which even in the face of overwhelming difficulty, master the best of modern men? The primitive mind was not curious enough to wonder whether the sun that rises in the morning was the same that set the night before. What could such a mind understand of modern science's faith in the universal regularity of law? Put a Moro head hunter beside Mr. Edison, and see how incalculable the difference between them, not simply in their knowledge, but in their faith as to what it is possible for humanity to do with nature! Or put a fetish worshipper from Africa beside Phillips Brooks and compare the faith of the one in his idol with the faith of the other in God. Faith does not dwindle as wisdom grows; vision and valor are not less important. The difference be tween the twentieth century man and the savage is quite as much in the scope and quality of their faith as in the range and certainty of their knowledge.

Faith, therefore is not a transient element in human life, to be evicted by growing science. For whatever life may know, life is adventure; and as the adventure widens its horizons, the demand for faith is correspondingly increased. If one tries to imagine the world with all faith gone knowledge supposedly having usurped its place he must conceive a world where no conscious life and effort remain at all. Take trust in testimony away from courts of law, and unsure experiments from the physician's practice; refuse the teacher his confidence in growing minds and the business man his right to ventures that involve uncertainty; abstract from civic reforms all faith in a better future, from science all unproved postulates, from society all mutual trust and from religion all belief in the Unseen, and life would become an "inane sand heap." A man who tries to live without faith will die of inertia. A society that makes the attempt will be paralyzed within an hour. The question is not whether or no we shall live by faith. The question is rather By what faiths shall we live? What range and depth and quality shall they have? How reasonable and how assured shall they be?

IV

Among all the faiths which mankind has cherished and by which it has been helped in life's adventure, none have been more universally and more passionately held than those associated with religion. In the daring experiment of living, men naturally have sought by faith interpretation not only of life's details but of life itself its origin, its meaning, and its destiny. Australian bushmen, unable to count above four on their fingers, have been heard discussing in their huts at night whence they came, whither they go, and who the gods are anyway. And when one turns to

modern manhood in its finest exhibitions of intelligence and character, he sees that Professor Ladd, of Yale, speaks truly: "The call of the world of men today, which is most insistent and most intense, if not most loud and clamorous, is the call for a rehabilitation of religious faith." For it does make a prodigious difference to the spirit of our adventure in this world, whether we think that God is good or on the other hand see the universe as Carlyle's terrific figure pictures it "one huge, dead, immeasurable Steam-engine, rolling on, in its dead indifference, to grind me limb from limb." It does make a difference of quite in calculable magnitude whether we think that our minds and characters are an evanescent product of finely wrought matter which alone is real and permanent, or on the contrary with John believe that "Now are we children of God and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be" (1 John 3:2).

How great a difference in life's adventure religious faith does make is better set forth by concrete example than by abstract argument. On the one side, how radiant the spirit of the venture as the New Testament depicts it! The stern, appealing love of God behind life, his good purpose through it, his victory ahead of it, and man a fellow worker, called into an unfinished world to bear a hand with God in its completion here is a game that indeed is worth the candle. On the other side is Bertrand Russell's candid disclosure of the consequences of his own scepticism: "Brief and power less is man's life; on him and all his race the slow sure doom falls pitiless and dark. Blind to good and evil, reckless of destruction, omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way; for Man condemned today to lose his dearest, tomorrow him self to pass through the gate of darkness, it remains only to cherish, ere yet the blow falls, the lofty thoughts that ennoble his little day proudly defiant of the irresistible forces that tolerate for a moment his knowledge and his condemnation, to sustain alone, a weary but unyielding Atlas, the world that his own ideals have fashioned despite the trampling march of unconscious power."

Man's life, interpreted and motived by religious faith, is glorious, but shorn of faith's interpretations life loses its high est meaning and its noblest hopes. Let us make this state ment's truth convincing in detail. When faith in God goes, man the thinker loses his great est thought. Man's mind has ranged the universe, has woven atoms and stars into a texture of law; his conquering thoughts ride out into every unknown province of which they hear. But among all the ideas on which the mind of man has taken hold, incomparably the greatest is the idea of God. In sheer weight and range no other thought of man compares with that. Amid the crash of stars, the reign of law, the vicissitudes of human history, and the griefs that drive their ploughshares into human hearts, to gather up all existence into spiritual unity and to believe in God, is the sublimest venture of the human mind. When faith in God goes, man the worker loses his greatest motive. Man masters nature until the forces that used to scare him now obey; in society he labors tirelessly that his chil dren may have a better world. Wars come, destroying the achievements of ages; yet when war is over, man rebuilds his cities, recreates his commerce, dreams again his human brotherhoods, and toils on. Many motives, deep and shallow, fine and coarse, have sustained him in this tireless work, but when one seeks the fountain of profoundest hope in man kind's toil he finds it in religious faith. To believe that we do not stand alone, hopelessly pitted against the dead apathy of cosmic forces which in the end will crush us in some solar wreck and bring our work to naught; to believe that we are fellow-laborers with God, our human purposes comprehended in a Purpose, God behind us, within us, ahead of us this incomparably has been the master-faith in man's greatest work. When faith in God goes, man the sinner loses his strong est help. For man is a sinner. He tears his spiritual

heritage to shreds in licentiousness and drink. He wallows in vice, wins by cruelty, violates love, is treacherous to trust. His sins clothe the world in lamentation. Yet in him is a protest that he cannot stifle. He is the only creature whom we know whose nature is divided against itself. He hates his sin even while he commits it. He repents, tries again, falls, rises, stumbles on and in all his best hours cries out for saviorhood. No message short of religion has ever met man's need in this estate. That God himself, is pledged to the victory of righteousness in men and in the world, that he cares, forgives, enters into man's struggle with transforming power, and crowns the long endeavor with triumphant character such faith alone has been great enough to meet the needs of man the sinner. When faith in God goes, man the sufferer loses his securest refuge. One who has walked with families through long illnesses where desperate prayers rise like a fountain day and night, who has seen strong men break down in health or lose the fortune of a lifetime, who has stood at children's graves and heard mothers cry, "How empty are my arms!" does not need long explication of life's tragic suffering. The staggering blows shatter the hopes of good and bad alike. Whether one's house be built on rock or sand, on both, as Jesus said, the rains descend and the floods come and the winds blow. In this experience of crushing trouble nothing but religious faith has been able to save men from despair or from stoical endurance of their fate. To face the loom of life and hopefully to lay oneself upon it, as though the dark threads were as necessary in the pattern as the light ones are, we must believe that there is a purpose running through the stern, forbidding process. What men have needed most of all in suffering, is not to know the explanation, but to know that there is an explanation. And religious faith alone gives confidence that human tragedy is not the meaningless sport of physical forces, making our life what Voltaire called it, "a bad joke," but is rather a school of discipline, the explanation of whose mysteries is in the heart of God. No one who has lived deeply can ever call such faith a "matter of words and names." To multitudes it is a matter of life and death. When faith in God goes, man the lover loses his fairest vision. When we say our worst about mankind, this redeeming truth remains, that each of us has some one for whose sake he willingly would die. The very love lyrics of the race are proof of this human quality, from homely folk songs like "John Anderson, My Jo, John" to great poetry like Mrs. Browning's sonnets. We call them secular, but they are ineffably sacred. And when one seeks the faith that has made these loves of men radiant with an illumination which man alone cannot create, he finds it in religion. Love is not a transient fragrance from matter finely organized so men have dared believe; love is of kin with the Eternal, has there its source and ground and destiny; love is the very substance of reality. "God is love, and he that abideth in love, abideth in God, and God abideth in him" (1 John 4:16). Man the lover is bereft of his finest insight and love's inner glory has departed, when that faith has gone. When faith in God goes, man the mortal loses his only hope. Man's nature, like a lighthouse, combines two elements. At the foundation of the beacon all is stone; as one lifts his eyes, all is stone still; but at the top is something new and wonderful. It is the thing for which the rock was piled. Its laws are not the laws of stone nor are its ways the same. For while the stolid rock stands fast, this miracle of -light with speed incredible hurls itself out across the sea. Two worlds are here, the one cold and stationary, the other full of the marvel and mystery of fire. So man has in him a miracle which he cannot explain; he "feels that he is greater than he knows"; and he never has been able to believe that the mystery of spirit was given him in vain, had no reality from which it came, and no future beyond death. The finest, thing ever said of Columbus is a remark of his own country man, "The instinct of an unknown continent burned in him." That is the secret of Columbus greatness. All the arguments by which he attempted to "convince the

doubters were but afterthoughts of this; all the labors by which he endeavored to make good his hopes were but its consequence. And if we ask of man why so universally he has believed in life to come, the answer leaps not superficially from the mind, but out of the basic intuitions of man's life. We know that something is now ours which ought not to die; the instinct of an unknown continent burns in us. But all the ^nopes, the motives, the horizons- that immortality has given man must go, if faith in God departs. In a godless world man dies forever.

One, therefore, who is facing loss of faith may not regard it as a light affair. To be sure, some denials of religion, even a Christian must respect Huxley, for example, at the death of his little boy, wanting to believe in immortality as only a father can whose son lies dead, yet, for all that, disbelieving, wrote to Charles Kingsley, "I have searched over the grounds of my belief, and if wife and child and name and fame were all to be lost to me one after another as the penalty, still I will not lie." One respects that. When George John Romanes turned his back for a while on the Christian faith, he wrote out of his agnosticism, "When at times I think, as think at times I must, of the appalling contrast be tween the hallowed glory of that creed which once was mine, and the lonely mystery of existence as now I find it at such times I shall ever feel it impossible to avoid the sharpest pang of which my nature is susceptible." One respects that. But some discard religion from their life's adventure with no such serious understanding of the import of their denial. They are pert disbelievers. They toss faith facilely aside in a light mood. Such frivolous sceptics indict their own intelligence. Whoever discards religious faith should appoint a day of mourning for his soul, and put on sackcloth and ashes. He must take from his life the greatest thought that man the thinker ever had, the finest faith that man the worker ever leaned upon, the surest help that man the sinner ever found, the strongest reliance that man the sufferer ever trusted in, the loftiest vision that man the lover ever saw, and the only hope that man the mortal ever had. So he must deny his faith in God. Before one thus leaves himself bereft of the faith that makes life's adventure most worth while he well may do what Carlyle, under the figure of Teufelsdrockh, says that he did in his time of doubt: "In the silent night-watches, still darker in his heart than over sky and earth, he has cast himself before the All- seeing, and with audible prayers cried vehemently for Light."

If minimizing the importance of religious faith is unintelligent, so is avoiding some sort of decision about religious faith impossible. Most of those into whose hands these studies fall will grant readily faith's incalculable importance. Some, however, will be not helped but plunged into deeper trouble by their consent. For they feel themselves unable to decide about a matter which they acknowledge to be the most important in the world. Asked whether they believe in God, they would reply with one of Victor Hugo's charac ters, "Yes No Sometimes." They grant that to be steadily assured of God would be an invaluable boon, but for them selves, how can they balance the opposing arguments and find their way to confidence? All our studies are intended for the help of such, but at the beginning one urgent truth may well be plainly put. However undecided they may appear, men cannot altogether avoid decision on the main matters of religion. Life will not let them. For while the mind may hold itself suspended between alternatives, the adventure of life goes on, and men inevitably tend to live either as though the Christian God were real or as though he were not.

Some questions allow a complete postponement of decision As to which of several theories about the Northern Light may be true, a man can hold his judgment in entire suspense. Life does not require from him any action that depends on what he thinks of the Aurora Borealis; and whether a

man think one thing or another, no conceivable change would be the consequence in anything he said or did. But there is another kind of question, where, however much the mind may waver between opinions and may resolve on indecision, life itself compels decision. A man cannot really be agnostic and neutral on a question like the moral law of sexual purity, for, by an irrevocable necessity, he has to act one way or an other. He may stop thinking, but he cannot stop living. With tremendous urgency the adventure of life insistently goes on, and it never pauses for any man to make up his mind on any question. Therefore while a man may theoretically suspend his judgment as to the requirements of the moral law, his life will be a loud, convincing advertisement to all who know him that he has vitally decided. A man can avoid making up his mind, but he cannot avoid making up his life.

Quite as truly, though, it may be, not quite as obviously, religious questions belong to this second class. Not all questions that are called religious belong there. With fatal pettiness religious men have reduced the great faiths to technicalities and some beliefs called religious a man may hold or not, with utter indifference to anything he is or does. But on the basic attitudes of religion such as we have just rehearsed, a man cannot be completely neutral, no matter how he tries. Bernard Shaw’s remark, "What a man believes may be ascertained not from his creed, but from the assumptions on which he habitually acts," should be taken to heart by any one trying to remain religiously neutral. For- one cannot by any possibility avoid "assumptions on which he habitually acts." He tends to undertake social service either as confident cooperation with God’s purpose or as an endeavor to make one corner of an unpurposed world as decent as possible. He tends to follow his ideals, either as the voice of God calling him upward, or as the work of natural selection, adjusting him to a temporary environment. He tends to face suffering either hopefully as a school of moral discipline, in a world presided over by a Father, or grimly as a hardship in which there is no meaning. He tends to face death either as the supreme adventure, full of boundless hope, or as a final exit that leads nowhere. He may never consciously formulate his ideas on any of these matters, he may maintain an intellectual agnosticism, genuine and complete, but his lying" subtly involves the confession of some faith. A man’s action," said Emerson, "is only the picture-book of his creed." And the more thoughtful he is, the more he will be aware of that unescapable tendency to confess in his living an inward faith about life.

One practical result of this urgent truth is too frequently seen to be doubtful. Those who in religion do not decide, thereby decide against religion. Religious faith is a positive achievement, and he who does not deliberately choose it, loses it. A man who, rowing down Niagara River, debates within himself whether or not he will stop at Buffalo, and who cannot decide, thereby has decided. His irresolution has not for a moment interfered with the steady flow of the river, and if he but debate long enough concerning his stop at Buffalo, he will awake to discover that he has finally decided not to stop there. As much beyond the control of man’s volition is the steady flow of life. It pauses for no man’s indecision, and if one is irresolute about any positive, aspiring faith in any realm, his indecisiveness is decision of a most final sort.

This, then, is the summary of the matter. Life is a great adventure in which faith is indispensable; in this adventure faith in God presents the issues of transcendent import; and on these issues life itself continuously compels decision. Our obligation is obvious since willy-nilly the decision must be made to make it consciously, to reach it by reason, not by chance, by thinking, not by drifting. If a man is to be irreligious, let him at least know why, and not slip into this estate, as most irreligious

men do, by careless living and frivolous thought. If a man is to be religious, let him have reason for his choice; let his faith be founded not on credulity and chance, but on real experience and reasonable thought. So his faith shall be good not only for domestic consumption, but for export too clear in his own mind and convincing to his friends. The forms of thought shift with the centuries and old situations cannot be repeated in detail, but one crisis in its essential meaning is perennial: "Elijah came near unto all the people, and said, How long go ye limping between the two sides? if Jehovah be God follow him; but if Baal then follow him" (1 Kings 18:21).

04.02. Faith a Road to Truth

CHAPTER II. Faith a Road to Truth

DAILY READINGS

Many minds are prevented from even a fair consideration of religious faith by prejudices which spring, not from reasoned argument, but from practical experience. They are biased before argument has begun; they feel that faith means credulity, and that religious faith in particular is a surrender of reason. Before we positively present faith as an indispensable means of dealing with reality in any realm, let us, in the daily readings, consider some of the practical experiences and attitudes that thus prejudice men against religion.

Second Week, First Day Many men are biased in advance by the unwise treatment to which in their childhood they were subjected. Paul pictures the home life of Timothy as ideal, I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers in a pure conscience, how unceasing is my remembrance of thee in my supplications, night and day longing to see thee, remembering thy tears, that I may be filled with joy; having been reminded of the unfeigned faith that is in thee; which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and, I am persuaded, in thee also. 2 Timothy 1:3-5.

"Unfeigned faith" is often thus a family heritage, handed down by vital contagion. But in many homes religion is not thus beautifully presented to the children; it is a hard and rigorous affair of dogma and restraint. "Oh, why," said a young professional man, whom Professor Coe quotes, "why did my parents try to equip me with a doctrinal system in childhood? I supposed that the whole system must be believed on pain of losing my religion altogether. And so, when I began to doubt some points, I felt obliged to throw all overboard. I have found my way back to positive religion, but by what a long and bitter struggle!" If, however, one has been so unfortunate as to be hardened in youth by unwise training, is it reasonable on that account forever to shut him self out from the most glorious experience of man? This complaint about mistreatment in youth is often an excuse, not a reason for irreligion. Says Phillips Brooks: "I have grown familiar to weariness with the self-excuse of men who say, Oh, if I had not had the terrors of the law so preached to me when I was a boy, if I had not been so confronted with the woes of hell and the awfulness of the judgment day, I should have been religious long ago. My friends, I think I never hear a meaner or a falser speech than that. Men may believe it when they say it I suppose they do but it is not true. It is unmanly, I think. It is throwing on their teaching and their teachers, or their fathers and their mothers, the fault which belongs to their own neglect, because they have never taken up the earnest fight with sin and sought through every obstacle for truth and God. It has the essential vice of dogmatism about it, for it claims that a different view of God would have done for them that which no view of God can do, that which must be done, under any system, any teaching, by humility and penitence and struggle and self-sacrifice. Without these no teaching saves the soul. With these, under any teaching, the soul must find its Father."

O Thou, who didst lay the foundations of the earth amid the singing of the morning stars and the joyful shouts of the sons of God, lift up our little life into Thy gladness. Out of Thee, as out of an overflowing fountain of Love, wells forth eternally a stream of blessing upon every creature Thou hast made. If we have thought that Thou didst call into being this universe in order to win praise and honor for Thyself, rebuke the vain fancies of our foolish minds and show us that Thy glory is the joy of giving. We can give Thee nothing of our own. All that we have is Thine. Oh, then, help us to glorify Thee by striving to be like Thee. Make us just and pure and good as Thou art. May we be partakers of the Divine Nature, so that all that is truly human in us may be deepened, purified, and strengthened. And so may we be witnesses for Thee, lights of the world, reflecting Thy light.

Help us to make religion a thing so beautiful that all men may be won to surrender to its power. Let us manifest in our lives its sweetness and excellency, its free and ennobling spirit. Forbid that we should go up and down the world with melancholy looks and dejected visage, lest we should repel men from entering Thy Kingdom. Rather, may we walk in the freedom and joy of faith, and with Thy new song in our mouths, so that men looking on us may learn to trust and to love Thee. Amen. Samuel McComb.

Second Week, Second Day Many men are prejudiced against religion during their youthful period of revolt against authority. Listen to an ancient father talking with his sons, Hear, my sons, the instruction of a father,

And attend to know understanding:

For I give you good doctrine;

Forsake ye not my law. For I was a son unto my father,

Tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother.

And he taught me, and said unto me:

Let thy heart retain -my words; Keep my commandments, and live;

Get wisdom, get understanding;

Forget not, neither decline from the words of my mouth;

Forsake her not, and she will preserve thee; Love her, and she will keep thee.

Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom;

Yea, with all thy getting get understanding.

Exalt her, and she will promote thee; She will bring thee to honor, when thou dost embrace her.

She will give to thy head a chaplet of grace;

A crown of beauty will she deliver to thee.

Proverbs 4:1-9. No father can read this urgent, anxious plea without under standing the reason for its solicitude. Every boy comes to the time when he breaks away from parental authority and begins to take his life into his own hands. It is one of youth’s great crises, and the spirit of it is

sometimes harsh and rebellious. So Carlyle describes his own experience: "Such transitions are ever full of pain: thus the Eagle when he moults is sickly; and, to attain his new beak, must harshly dash-off the old one upon rocks." For religious faith this period of life is always critical. Stevenson in his revolt, when he called respectability "the deadliest gag and wet- blanket that can be laid on man," also became, as he said, "a youthful atheist." How many have traveled that road and stopped in the negation! Stevenson did not stop, and years afterward wrote of his progress: "Because I have reached Paris, I am not ashamed of having passed through Newhaven and Dieppe." Surely if anyone has* been "a youthful atheist," it was an experience to be "passed through."

O God, we turn to Thee in the faith that

Thou dost understand and art very merciful.

Some of us are not sure concerning Thee;

not sure what Thou art; not sure that Thou art at all.

Yet there is something at work behind our minds,

in times of stillness we hear it, like a distant song;

there is something in the sky at evening-time;

something in the face of man.

We feel that round our incompleteness

How’s Thy greatness, round our restlessness Thy rest.

Yet this is not enough.

We want a heart to speak to,

a heart that understands;

a friend to whom we can turn,

a breast on which we may lean.

O that we could find Thee!

Yet could we ever think these things unless Thou hadst inspired us,

could we ever want these things unless Thou Thyself wert very near?

Some of us know full well;

but we are sore afraid.

We dare not yield ourselves to Thee,

for we fear what that might mean.

Our foolish freedom, our feeble pleasures,

our fatal self-indulgence suffice to hold us back from Thee,

though Thou art our very life,

and we so sick and needing Thee.

Our freedom has proved false,

our pleasures have long since lost their zest, our sins, oh how we hate them!

Come and deliver us,

for we have lost all hope in ourselves. Amen.

W. E. Orchard.

Second Week, Third Day

Some men often the precocious, clever ones are biased against religion because in youth they accepted an immature philosophy of life and have never changed it. The crust forms too soon on some minds, and if it forms during the period of youthful, revolt, they are definitely prejudiced against religious truth. The difference between such folk and the great believers is not that the believers had no doubts, but that they did not fix their final thought of life until more mature experience had come. They fulfilled the admonition of a wise father to keep up a tireless search for truth, My son, if them wilt receive my words,

And lay up my commandments with thee;

So as to incline thine ear unto wisdom,

And apply thy heart to understanding; Yea, if thou cry after discernment,

And lift up thy voice for understanding;

If thou seek her as silver,

And search for her as for hid treasures, Then shalt thou understand the fear of Jehovah,

And find the knowledge of God.

Proverbs 2:1-5.

Mrs. Charles Kingsley, for example, says of her husband that at twenty "He was full of religious doubts; and his face, with its unsatisfied, hungering, and at times defiant look, bore witness to the state of his mind." At twenty-one Kingsley himself wrote: "You believe that you have a sustaining Hand to guide you along that path, an Invisible Protection and an unerring Guide. I, alas! have no stay for my weary steps, but that same abused and stupefied rea son which has stumbled and wandered, and betrayed me a thousand times ere now, and is every moment ready to faint and to give up the unequal struggle." If Kingsley had framed his final philosophy then, what a loss to the world of an inspiring life transfigured by Christian faith! He cried after discernment, lifted up his voice for understanding, and he found the knowledge of God. Many a man ought to revise in the light of mature experience and thought a hasty irreligious guess at life’s meaning which he made in youth.

O Father, we turn to Thee because we- are sore vexed with our own thoughts. Our minds plague us with questionings we cannot answer; we are driven to voyage on strange seas of thought alone. Dost Thou disturb our minds with endless questioning, yet keep the answers hidden in Thy heart, so that away from Thee we should always be perplexed, and by thoughts derived from Thee be ever drawn to Thee? Surely, our God, it must be so. But still more bitter and humbling, O Father, is our experience of failure, so frequent, tragic, and unpardonable. We have struggled on in vain, resolves are broken ere they pass our lips; we can see no hope of better things, we can never forgive ourselves; and after all our prayers our need remains and our sense of coming short but deepens. Yet, at least we know that we have failed, and how, if something higher than ourselves were not at work within? Our desperate desires have driven us at last to Thee, conscious now, after all vain effort, that it is Thyself alone can satisfy, and now at peace to know that Thou it is who art desired, because Thou it is who dost desire within us. Beyond our need reveal Thyself, its cause and cure; in all desire teach us to discern Thy drawing near. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

Second Week, Fourth Day Men are often prejudiced against religion because the churches which they happened to attend in youth urged on them an irrational faith. Some men never recover from the idea that all religion everywhere must always be the same kind of religion against which in youth their good sense rose in revolt; they are in perpetual rebellion against religion as it was when they broke with it a generation ago. But if one thing more than another grows, expands, be comes in the intelligent and pure increasingly pure and intelligent, it is religion.

Consider an early Hebrew idea of God, And it came to pass on the way at the lodging-place, that Jehovah met him, and sought to kill him. Then Zipporah took a flint, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet; and she said, Surely a bridegroom of blood art thou to me. So he let him alone. Then she said, A bridegroom of blood art thou, because of the circumcision. Exodus 4:24-26.

Over against so abhorrent a picture of a deity who would have committed murder, had not a mother swiftly circumcised her son, consider a later thought of God: How think ye? if any man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and go unto the mountains, and seek that which goeth astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth over it more than over the ninety and nine which have not gone astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish. Matthew 18:12-14. So religion grows with man’s capacity to receive higher, finer revelations of the divine. And in no age of the world has so great a change passed over the intellectual framework of faith as in the generation just gone. To live in protest against forms of belief a generation old is fighting men of straw; the vanguard of religious thought and life has pushed ahead many a mile beyond the point of such attack. Men who threw away the living water of the Gospel because they disliked the water-buckets in which their boyhood churches presented it, are living spiritually thirsty lives when there is no reasonable need of their doing so. There is many an unbeliever with a "God-shaped blank" in his heart, who could be a confident and joyful believer if he only knew what religion means to men of faith today.

O God, who hast formed all hearts to love Thee, made all ways to lead to Thy face, created all desire to be unsatisfied save in Thee; with great compassion look upon us gathered here. Our presence is our prayer, our need the only plea we dare to claim, Thy purposes the one assurance

we possess.

Some of us are very confused; we do not know why we were ever born, for what end we should live, which way we should take. But we are willing to be guided. Take our trembling hands in Thine, and lead us on.

Some of us are sore within. We long for love and friend ship, but we care for no one and we feel that no one cares for us. We are misunderstood, we are lonely, we have been disappointed, we have lost our faith in man and our faith in life. Wilt Thou not let us love Thee who first loved us?

Some of us are vexed with passions that affright us; to yield to them would mean disaster, to restrain them is beyond our power, and nothing earth contains exhausts their vehemence or satisfies their fierce desire. And so because there is no answer, no end or satisfaction in ourselves; and because we are what we are, and yet long to be so different; we believe Thou art, and that Thou dost understand us. By faith we feel after Thee, through love we find the way, in hope we bring ourselves to Thee. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

Second Week, Fifth Day Many minds are prejudiced against religion because, having gone so far as to feel the credulity of religious belief, they have never gone further and seen the credulity of reli gious unbelief. Irreligion implies a creed just as surely as religion does; and many a man’s return to faith has begun when his faculties of doubt, which hitherto had been used only against belief in God, became active against belief in no-God. Mr. Gilbert Chesterton, with his characteristic vividness and exaggeration, narrates such an experience: "I never read a line of Christian apologetics. I read as little as I can of them now. It was Huxley and Herbert Spencer and Bradlaugh who brought me back to orthodox theology. They sowed in my mind my first wild doubts of doubt. Our grandmothers were quite right when they said that Tom Paine and the free-thinkers unsettled the mind. They do. They unsettled mine horribly. The rationalist made me question whether reason was of any use whatever; and when I had finished Herbert Spencer I had got as far as doubting (for the first time) whether evolution had occurred at all. As I laid down the last of Colonel Ingersoll’s atheistic lectures the dreadful thought broke across my mind, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian/ I was in a desperate way." Lest Mr. Chesterton’s whimsicality may hide the seriousness of such an experience, we may add that Robert Louis Stevenson’s first break with his "youthful atheism" came when, under the influence of Professor Fleeming Jenkin, he too began to have his "first wild doubts of doubt." He began thinking, as he says, that "certainly the church was not right, but certainly not the anti-church either." Many a man has played unfairly with his doubts; he has used them against religion, but not against irreligion. When he is thorough with his doubts he may join the many who under stand what the apostle meant when he wrote to Timothy: O Timothy, guard that which is committed unto thee, turning away from the profane babblings and oppositions of the knowledge which is falsely so called; which some professing have erred concerning the faith.

Grace be with you. 1 Timothy 6:20-21?

O God, too near to be found, too simple to be conceived, too good to be believed; help us to trust, not in our knowledge of Thee, but in Thy knowledge of us; to be certain of Thee, not because we feel our thoughts of Thee are true, but be cause we know how far Thou dost transcend them. May we not be anxious to discern Thy will, but content only with desire to do it; may we not strain our

minds to understand Thy nature, but yield ourselves and live our lives only to express Thee.

Shew us how foolish it is to doubt Thee, since Thou Thy self dost set the questions which disturb us; reveal our unbelief to be faith fretting at its outworn form. Be gracious when we are tempted to cease from moral strife: reveal what it is that struggles in us. Before we tire of mental search enable us to see that it was not ourselves but Thy call which stirred our souls.

Turn us back from our voyages of thought to that which sent us forth. Teach us to trust not to cleverness or learning, but to that inward faith which can never be denied. Lead us out of confusion to simplicity. Call us back from wandering without to find Thee at home within. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

Second Week, Sixth Day Many men are biased in favor of their habitual doubt be cause they do not see that positive, faith is the only normal estate of man. We live not by the things of which we are uncertain, but by the things which we verily believe. Columbus doubted many of the old views in geography, but these negations did not make him great; his greatness sprang from the positive beliefs which he confidently held and on which he launched his splendid adventure. Goethe is right when he makes Mephistopheles, his devil, say, "I am the spirit of negation," for negation, save as it paves the way for positive conviction, always bedevils life. The psalmist reveals the ideal experience for every doubter. First, uncertainty, But as for me, my feet were almost gone; My steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at the arrogant, When I saw the prosperity of the wicked. Psalms 73:2-3.

Then vision, When I thought how I might know this, It was too painful for me; Until I went into the sanctuary of God, And considered their latter end. Psalms 73:16-17.

Then, positive assurance: Thou wilt guide me with thy counsel, And afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth; But God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever. Psalms 73:24-26.

Doubt, therefore, does have real value in life; it clears away rubbish and stimulates search for truth; but it has no value unless it is finally swallowed up in positive assurance. So Tennyson pictures the experience of his friend, Arthur Hallam, "One indeed I knew In many a subtle question versed, Who touch d a jarring lyre at first, But ever strove to make it true, Perplext in faith, but pure in deeds, At last he beat his music out.

There lives more faith in honest doubt, Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gather d strength, He would not make his judgment blind, He faced the spectres of the mind And laid them: thus he came at length To find a stronger faith his own."O Most Merciful, whose love to us is mighty, long-suffering, and infinitely tender; lead us beyond all idols and imaginations of our minds to contact with Thee the real and abiding; past all barriers of fear and beyond all paralysis of failure to that furnace of flaming purity where falsehood, sin, and cowardice are all consumed away. It may be that we know not what we ask; yet we dare not ask for less. Our aspirations are hindered because we do not know our selves. We have tried to slake our burning thirst at broken cisterns, to comfort the crying of our spirits with baubles and trinkets, to assuage the pain of our deep unrest by drugging an accusing conscience, believing a lie, and

veiling the naked name that burns within. But now we know Thou makest us never to be content with aught save Thyself, in earth, or heaven, or hell.

Sometimes we have sought Thee in agony and tears, scanned the clouds and watched the ways of men, considered the stars and studied the moral law; and returned from all our search no surer and no nearer. Yet now we know that the impulse to seek Thee came from Thyself alone, and what we sought for was the image Thou hadst first planted in our hearts.

We may not yet hold Thee fast or feel Thee near, but we know Thou holdest us. All is well. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

Second Week, Seventh Day Men are often prejudiced against religion or any serious consideration of it, because they never have felt any vital need of God. To study wireless telegraphy in the safe seclusion of a college laboratory is one thing; to hear the wire less apparatus on a floundering ship send out its call for help across a stormy sea is quite a different matter. Many folk have never thought of faith in God save with a mild, intellectual curiosity; they do not know those deep experiences of serious souls with sin and sorrow and anxiety, with burden for great causes and desire for triumphant righteousness in men and nations experiences that throw men back on God as their only sufficient refuge and hope. Men never really find God until they need him; and some men never feel the need of him until life plunges them into a shattering experience. Even in scientific research new discoveries are made because men want them, and Mayer, lighting on a theory that proved to be of great value, says, "Engaged during a sea voyage almost exclusively with the study of physiology, I discovered the new theory, for the sufficient reason that I vividly felt the need of it." How much more must the vital discovery of God depend on life’s conscious demand for him! And how certainly a shallow, frivolous nature,unstirred by the deep concerns of life, is biased against any serious interest in religious faith! Great believers have first of all thirsted for God.

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live: and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David... Seek ye Jehovah while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto Jehovah, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. Isaiah 55:1-3, Isaiah 55:6-7.

Grant unto us, we pray Thee, the lost hunger and thirst after righteousness the longing for God. Grant unto us that drawing power by which everything that is in us shall call out for Thee. Become necessary unto us. With the morning and evening light, at noon and at midnight, may we feel the need of Thy companionship... Though Thou dost not speak as man speaks, yet Thou canst call out to us; and the soul shall know Thy presence, and shall understand by its own self what Thou meanest. Grant unto us this witness of the Spirit, this communion of the soul with Thee and not only once or twice: may we abide in the light.

Thou hast come unto Thine own; and even as of old, Thine own know Thee not, and believe Thee not. How many are there that have learned Thy name upon their mother's knee, but have forgotten it! How many are there that grew up into the happiness of a childhood in which piety presided, hut have gone away, and have not come back again to their first love and to their early faith! How many are there marching on now In the Sahara of Indifference and in the wilderness of unbelief!... Lord, look upon them; have merciful thoughts toward them, and issue those gracious infaiences of power by which what is best in them shall lift itself up and bear witness against that which is worst. Amen. Henry Ward Beecher.

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

We are to deal in this chapter with one of the most common experiences of doubt and are to attempt the statement of a truth useful in meeting it. Many minds are undone at the first symptoms of religious uncertainty, because they sup pose that their doubt is philosophical, and they feel a paralyzing inability to deal with philosophy at all. As men have been known to take to their beds at hearing the scientific names of illnesses which hitherto they had patiently endured, so minds are sometimes overwhelmed by an unsettlemerit of faith that takes the name of philosophic doubt. It is well, then, early in our study, to note the homely, familiar expe rience, which in most cases underlies and helps to explain the problem of theological unrest.

We all began, as children, with an unlimited ability to believe what we were told. We were credulous long before we became critical. God and Santa Claus, fairy stories and life after death in what beautiful, unquestioning confusion we received them all! Our thinking was altogether imitative, as our talking was. From the existence of Kamchatka to the opinion that it was wrong to lie, we had no independent knowledge of our own. Reliance on authority was our only road to truth. One prescription was adequate for every need of information: ask our parents and be told. This situation was the occasion of our first unsettlement of faith: we discovered the fallibility of our parents. They failed to tell us what we asked, or we found to be untrue what they had said, or they themselves confessed how much they did not know. To some this was a shock, the memory of which has never been forgotten. Edmund Gosse, the literary critic, tells us that up to his sixth year he thought that his father knew everything. Then came the fateful crisis when his father wrongly reported an incident which Edmund himself had witnessed. "Nothing could possibly have been more trifling to my parents," he writes, "but to me it meant an epoch. Here was the appalling discovery never suspected before that my father was not as God and did not know every thing. The shock was not caused by any suspicion that he was not telling the truth, as it appeared to him, but by the awful proof that he was not, as I had supposed, omniscient." By most of us, however, the transfer of our faith from our parents authority to some other basis of belief was easily accomplished. We found ourselves resting back on the priest or the church or the creed or the Bible. Still our convictions were not independently our own; we had never fought for them or thought them through; they were founded on the say-so of authority. What we wished to know we asked an other, and what was told us we implicitly believed. The time inevitably comes, however, to a normally developing mind, when such an attitude of unquestioning credulity becomes impossible. The curious "Why?" of the growing child, that began in early years to besiege all statements of fact, now ranges out to call in question the propositions of religious faith. For long-accepted truths, from the rotun dity of the earth to the existence of God, the enlarging intel lect wants reasons rather than dogmas. So normal is this period of interrogation that it is regularly

slated on the time tables of psychological development. Starbuck fixes the aver age age of the doubt period at about eighteen years for boys and about fifteen for girls. At whatever time and in whatever special form this period of doubt arises, the characteristic quality of its outcome is easily described. In the end the fully awakened mind is ill content to accept any authoritative statements that he dare not question or deny. He resents having a quotation from any source waved like a revolver in his face with the demand that he throw up his intellectual hands. No more in religion than in politics does he incline to stand before infallibility, like the French peasants before Louis XI, saying, "Sire, what are our opinions?" He claims his right to question every thing, to make every truth advance and give the countersign of reasonableness, to weigh all propositions in the scales of his own thinking, and if he is to love the Lord his God at all, to do it, not with all his credulity, but, as Jesus said, with all his mind. Biography reveals how many of the great believers have passed through this youthful period of rebellion against accepted tradition and have suffered serious religious unsettlement in the process. Robert Browning tells us that as a boy he was "passionately religious." When his period of questioning and revolt arrived, however, it carried him so far that he was publicly rebuked in church for intentional misbehavior, and in his sixteenth year, under the influence of Shelley's "Queen Mab," he declared himself an atheist. But in his "Pauline," written when he was twenty-one, the direction in which his quest was leading him was plain, "I have always had one lode-star; now As I look back, I see that I have halted Or hastened as I looked towards that star A need, a trust, a yearning after God." And when he grew to his maturity, had left his early credulousness with the revolt that followed it far behind and had used his independent thinking to productive purpose, from what a height of splendid faith did he look back upon that youthful period of storm and stress which he called "the passionate, impatient struggles of a boy toward truth and love"!

Henry Ward Beecher's intellectual revolution was postponed until he had entered the theological seminary. "I was then twenty years old," he writes, "and there came a great revulsion in me from all this inchoate, unregulated, undirected experience. My mind took one tremendous spring over into scepticism, and I said: I have been a fool long enough I will not stir one step further than I can see my way, and I will not stand a moment where I cannot see the truth. I will have something that is sure and steadfast. Having taken that ground, I was in that state of mind for the larger part of two years." A wholesome restraint upon the wild perversions, the anarchic denials, the abysmal despairs of this period of life is the clear recognition that in some form it is one of the commonest experiences of man.

II The treatment accorded to a youth who is passing through this difficult adjustment often determines, in a fine or lamentable way, his subsequent attitude towards religion. Negative repression of real questions is of all methods the most fatal, whether it be practiced on the youth by others or by the youth upon himself. "I have not been in church for twenty years," said a college graduate. "Why?" was the inquiry. "Because in college I learned from geology through how many ages this earth was slowly being built. Troubled by the conflict between this new knowledge and my early training, I went to my minister. He said that the Bible told us the earth was made in six days and that I must accept that on faith. That's why." Thousands of men are religious wrecks today be cause, when the issue was raised" in their thinking between their desire for a reason and their traditional beliefs, they were told that to ask a reason is sin. George Eliot's experience unhappily is not unique. Just when in girlhood her mind was waking to independent thought, a

book now long unread, Hennell’s "Inquiry Concerning the Origin of Christianity," convinced her immature judgment that her early credulity had been blind. No one was at hand to state the faith in a reasonable way or to meet, not by denying but by using her right to think, the attacks of Hennell, which now are forgotten in their futility. She never came through her youthful unsettlement. Years after, F. W. H. Myers wrote: "I remember how at Cambridge I walked with her once in the Fellows Garden of Trinity, on an evening of raing May, and she, stirred somewhat beyond her wont, and taking as her text the three words which have been used so often as the inspiring trumpet calls of men the words God, Immortality, Duty pronounced with terrible earnestness, how inconceivable was the first, how unbelievable was the second, and how peremptory and absolute the third. Never, perhaps, had sterner accents affirmed the sovereignty of impersonal and unrecompensing law. I listened and night fell; her grave, majestic countenance turned toward me like a Sibyl’s in the gloom; it was as though she withdrew from my grasp one by one the two scrolls of promise, and left me the third scroll only, awful with inevitable fate." In this period of readjustment, whether one is the youth in the midst of the struggle or the solicitous friend endeavoring to help, one most needs a clear perception of the ideal out come of such intellectual unrest. Let us attempt a picture of that ideal. The youth who long has taken on his parents say-so the most important convictions that the soul can hold, or who, with no care to think or question for himself, has looked to Book or Church for all that he believed about God, now feels within him that intellectual awakening that cannot be quieted by mere authority. He long has taken his truth preserved by others hands; now he desires to pick it for himself, fresh from the living tree of knowledge. His declaration of independence from subjection to his parents or his Church is not at first irreverent desire to disbelieve; it is rather desire to enter into the Samaritans experience when they said to the woman who first had told them about Jesus: "Now we believe, not because of thy speaking; for we have heard for ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Savior of the world" (John 4:41). The youth turns from second-hand rehearsal of the truth to seek a first-hand, original acquaintance with it. As he began in utter financial dependence on his father, then made a bit of spending money of his own, and at last moved out to make his living, ashamed to be a pensioner and parasite when he should be carrying himself, so from his old, intellectual dependence the youth passes to a fine responsibility for his own thinking and belief. He knows that such transitions, whether financial or intellectual, generally mean stress and perplexity, but if he is to be a man the youth must venture. In this transition beliefs will certainly be modified. Not only do forms of religious thinking shift and change with the passing generations, but individuals differ in their powers to see and understand. Religious faith, like water, takes shape from the receptacles into whose unique nooks and crannies it is poured. If the truth which the youth possesses is to be indeed his own, it will surely differ from the truth which once he learned, by as much as his mind and his experience differ from his father s. Even in the New Testament one can easily distinguish James thought from Paul’s and John’s from Peter s. But change of form need not mean loss of value. To pass by fine gradations from unquestioning credulity to thoughtful faith is not impossible. Thus a boy learns to swim with his father’s hands beneath him and passes so gradually from reliance upon another to independent power to swim alone that he cannot tell when first the old support was quietly withdrawn.

Thus ideally pictured, this transition is nothing to be feared; it is one of life’s steps to spiritual power. This period of questioning and venture we have called the passage from, credulity to independence, but its significance is deeper than those words imply. It is the passage from

hearsay to reality. Of all inward intimate experiences, religion reaches deepest and is least transferable. It is as incommunicable as friend ship. A father may commend a comrade to his son and lay bare his own deep friendship with the man, but if the son himself does not see the value there nor for himself in loyalty and love make self surrender, the father can do nothing more. Friendship cannot be carried on by proxy. One can as easily breathe for another as in another's place be loyal to a friend or trust in God.

When, therefore, the youth moves out from mere dependence on his father, his Bible, or his Church to see and know God in his own right, he is fulfilling the end of all religion. For this his father taught him, for this the Book was written and the Church was founded. As George Macdonald put it, "Each generation must do its own seeking and finding. The father's having found is only the warrant for the children's search." Said Goethe: "What you have inherited from your fathers you must earn for yourself before you can call it yours." This individual experience makes religion real, and the "awkward age" of the spirit when the old security of credulous belief has gone and the new assurance of personal conviction has not yet fully come, is a small price to pay for the sense of reality that enters into religion when a man for himself knows God. Such is the ideal transition from credulity to independence, from hearsay to reality.

III

One fallacy which disastrously affects many endeavors after this ideal transition is the prejudice that, since faith has hitherto in the youth's experience meant credulous acceptance of another's say-so, faith always must mean that. Faith and credulity appear to him identical. In "Alice through the Looking Glass" the Queen asserts that she is a hundred and one years, five months, and one day old. "I can t believe that," said Alice. "Can t you?" said the Queen. "Try again, draw a long breath and shut your eyes." So blind, irrational, and wilful does faith seem to many! So far from being an essential part of all real knowledge, therefore, faith seems to stand in direct contrast with knowledge, and this impression is deepened by our common phraseology. Tennyson, for example, sings, "We have but faith: we cannot know; For knowledge is of things we see."

Before there can be any profitable discussion of religious belief, therefore, we need to see that faith is one of the chief ways in which continually we deal with reality; it is a road to truth, without which some truth never can be reached at all. The reason for its inevitableness in life is not our lack of knowledge, but rather that faith is as indispensable as logical demonstration in any real knowing of the world. Behind all other words to be said about our subject lies this fundamental matter: faith is not a substitute for truth, but a pathway to truth; there are realities which without it never can be known. For one thing, no one can know persons without faith. The world of people, without whom if a man could live, he would be, as Aristotle said, either a brute or a god, is closed in its inner meaning to a faithless mind. Entrance into another life with insight and understanding is always a venture of trust. We cry vainly like Cassim before the magic cave, "Open, Barley," if we try to penetrate the secrets of a human personality without sympathy, loyalty, faith. These alone cry "Open, Sesame."

Surely this knowledge of persons, impossible without faith, is as important as any which we possess. While the physical universe furnishes the general background of our existence, the immediate world in which we really live is personal, made up of people whom we fear or love, by whom we are cheered, admonished, hurt, and comforted. "The world is so waste and empty," cried

Goethe, "when we figure but towns and hills and rivers in it, but to know that someone is living on it with us, even in silence this makes our earthly ball a peopled garden." A solitary Robinson Crusoe would give up any other knowledge, if in return he could know even a benighted savage like Friday. But even a savage cannot be known by logical demonstration. Crusoe could so have learned some things, but when he wanted to know Friday, he came by way of adventures in confidence, personal trust and self-commitment, growing reliance and appreciative insight, assured loy alty and faith. He knew whom he had believed.

Moreover, such knowledge of persons is as solid as it is important. That two plus two make four cannot be gain said, and doubtless no other kinds of information can be quite so absolute as mathematical theorems. But when one thinks of a comrade, long loved and trusted until he is known through and through, for practical purposes one can think of nothing more stable than his knowledge of his friend. The plain fact is that we do know people, know them well, and that this knowledge never has been or can be a matter of logical demonstration. By taking Arthur Hallam to pieces and analyzing him, the inductive mind might work out all the laws that are involved in Arthur Hallam’s constitution; but that mind with all its knowledge would not know Arthur Hallam. Tennyson’s "In Memoriam," however, makes clear that knowledge of a friend is not interdicted because scientific demon stration cannot supply it. Tennyson knew Hallam well, and this knowledge, far more solid and significant than most other information he possessed, was not achieved by grinding laws out of facts; it came, as all such knowledge comes, by faith. As one considers what this understanding of the personal world, seen with the open eyes of trust and loyalty, means to us, how assured it is, how it enriches and deepens life, he perceives that here at least faith is something far more than a stop-gap for ignorance, a dream, a fantasy. It is positively a pathway to truth.

There is another realm where faith is our only way of dealing with reality; by it alone can we know the possibilities of individuals and of society. We are well assured now in the United States that the nation can be economically prosperous without slavery. But sixty years ago plenty of people were assured of the contrary, were convinced that if the abolitionists succeeded we could not economically endure. How did we come by this significant knowledge that the immoral system was dispensable? Not by logical demonstration. The economists of most of our universities logically demonstrated that slavery was essential. Faith was the path way to the truth. Faith that a new order minus slavery was possible gained adherents, grew in certainty with access of new believers, fed its followers on hopes unrealized but passionately believed in, until faith became experiment, and experiment became experience, and experience brought fort/i knowledge. The nation trusted and tried. This is the only way to truth in the realm of moral possibilities. If the world were finished, its i’s all dotted and its t’s all crossed, we might exist on that sort of descriptive science that finds the facts and plots their laws. But the world is in the making; what is actual is not quite so important to us as what is possible; we live, as Wordsworth sings, in "Hope that can never die, Effort and expectation and desire, And something evermore about to be." To endeavor to satisfy man, therefore, with descriptions of the actual is preposterous. The innermost meaning of personal and social life lies in the contrast between what we are and what we may become. Beyond the achieved present and the demonstrable future, stands the ideal, whose possibility we can never know as a truth without faith enough to try.

When, therefore, one hears disparagement of faith as a poor makeshift for knowledge, he may be pardoned a sharp rejoinder. When has man ever found solid knowledge in this most important realm of human possibilities, without faith as the pioneer? We do not know first and then supply by belief what knowledge lacks. We believe first, as Colum bus did, and then find new continents because what faith first suggested a great venture has confirmed. When Stephenson proposed to run a steam car forty miles an hour, a host of wise-acres proved the feat impossible on the ground that no one could move through the air so rapidly and still survive. If now we know that one easily survives a speed of over a hundred miles an hour in an aeroplane, it is because a faith that saw and dared introduced us to the information. We know now that democracy is not a futile dream, nor the conquest of the air by wireless and of the land by electricity a madman’s frenzy; we know truths of highest import and certainty from the usefulness of radium to the wisdom of religious liberty, and all this knowledge existed as belief in possibility before it became truth in fact. Faith was "assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). Faith is no makeshift. Its power is nowhere felt more effectively than in the achievement of knowl edge.

IV So far is faith, then, from being blind credulity, that it alone deserves to be called the Great Discoverer. Every where faith goes before as a pioneer and the more prosaic faculties of the mind come after to civilize the newly opened territory. In the evolution of the senses touch developed first. All the knowledge that any creature had, concerned the tangible. But in time other senses came. Dimly and uncertainly creatures discerned by hearing and seeing the existence of distant objects. They became aware of presences which as yet they could not touch; they were furnished with clues, in following which they found as real what at first had been in tangible. Such a relation faith bears to knowledge. Faith, said Clement of Alexandria, is the "ear of the soul." Said Ruskin, faith is "veracity of insight." By it we hear what as yet we cannot touch and see what the arms of our logic are not long enough to reach.

All the elemental, primary facts of life are faith’s discover ies; we have no other means of finding them. By faith we discover our selves. We do not hold back from living until we can prove that we exist. We never can strictly prove that we exist. The very self that we are trying to demonstrate would have to be used in the demonstration. We have no other way of getting at ourselves except to take ourselves for granted accepting "This main miracle that you are you, With power on your own act and on the world." As Mr. Chesterton remarked, "You cannot call up any wilder vision than a city in which men ask themselves if they have any selves." By faith all men go out to live as though their selves were real. By faith we accept the existence of the outer world. We do not restrain ourselves from acting as though the physical world were really there, until we can prove it. We never can strictly prove it; perhaps it is not there at all. When through a microscope an Indian was shown germs in the Ganges water, to convince him of the peril of its use, he broke the instrument with his cane, as though when the microscope was gone, the facts had vanished too. In his philosophy all that we see is illusion. Perhaps this is true the world a phantasm and our minds fooling us. But none of us believes it. And we do not believe it because we live by faith the elemental faith on which all common sense and science rest and with out which man’s thought and work would halt that our senses and our minds tell us the truth. "It is idle to talk always of the alternative of reason and faith. Reason itself is a matter of faith. It is an act of faith to assert that one’s thoughts have any relation to reality at all." By faith we even discover the universe. We cannot think of the world as a multiverse; we always think of it as having unity, and we do so

whether as scientists we talk about the uniformity of nature, or as Christians we speak of one Cre ator. Not only, however, can no one demonstrate that this is a universe; it positively does not look as though it were. Opposing powers snarl at each other and clash in a disorder that gives to the casual observer not the slightest intimation that any unity is there. Thunder storms and little babies, volcanoes and Easter lilies, immeasurable nebulae in the heavens and people getting married on the earth what in describable contrasts and confusions! Still we insist on thinking unity into this seeming anomaly, and out of it we wrest scientific doctrines about the uniformity of law. As Professor James, of Harvard, put it, "The principle of uniformity in nature has to be sought under and in spite of the most rebellious appearances; and our conviction of its truth is far more like religious faith than like assent to a demonstration."

One might suppose that beliefs so assumed and so incapable of adequate demonstration would make the knowledge based upon them insecure. But the fact is that all our surest knowl edge is thus based on assumptions that we cannot prove. "As for the strong conviction," Huxley says, "that the cosmic order is rational, and the faith that throughout all duration, unbroken order has reigned in the universe, I not only accept it, but I am disposed to think it the most important of all truths." Faith then, in Huxley's thought, is not a makeshift when knowledge fails. Rather by faith we continually are getting at the most important realities with which we deal. As Prof. Ladd, of Yale, impatiently exclaims: "The rankest agnostic is shot through and through with all the same fundamental intellectual beliefs, all the same unescapable rational faiths, about the reality of the self and about the validity of its knowledge. You cannot save science and destroy all faith. You cannot sit on the limb of the tree while you tear it up by the roots."

If faith is thus the pioneer that leads us to knowledge of persons and of moral possibilities; if by faith we discover our selves, the outer world's existence and its unity, why should we be surprised that faith is our road to God? Superficial deniers of religion not infrequently seek the discredit of a Christian's trust by saying that God is only a matter of faith. To which the Christian confidently may answer: Of course God is a matter of faith. Faith is always the Great Discoverer. A man finds God as he finds an earthly friend. He does not go apart in academic solitude to consider the logical rationality of friendship, until, intellectually convinced, he coolly arms himself with a Q. E. D. and goes out to hunt a comrade. Friendship is never an adventure of logic; it is an adventure of life. It is arrived at by what Emerson called the "untaught sallies of the spirit." We fall in love, it may be with precipitant emotion; our instincts and our wills are first engaged; the whole personality rises up in hunger to claim the affection that it needs and without which life seems unsupportable; faith, hope, and love engage in a glorious venture, where logic plays a minor part. But to make friend ship rational, to give it poise, to trace its origins and laws, to clarify, chasten, and direct this is the necessary work of thought. Faith discovers and reveals; reason furnishes criticism, confirmation, and discipline. So men find God. They are hungry for him not in intellect alone, but with all their powers. They feel with Tolstoi: "I remembered that I only lived at those times when I believed in God." They need him to put sense and worth and hope into life. As with the reality of persons, the -validity of knowledge, the unity of the world, so in religion the whole man rises up to claim the truth without which life is barren, meaningless. His best convictions at the first are all of them insights of the spirit, affirmations of the man. But behind, around and through them all play clarifying thoughts, and reasons come to discipline and to confirm. But the reasons by themselves could not have found God. Faith is the Great Discoverer.

"Oh! world, thou choosest not the better part, It is not wisdom to be only wise, And on the inward vision close the eyes; But it is wisdom to believe the heart. Columbus found a world and had no chart Save one that Faith deciphered in the skies; To trust the soul’s invincible surmise Was all his science and his only art. Our knowledge is a torch of smoky pine That lights the pathway but one step ahead Across the void of mystery and dread. Bid then the tender light of Faith to shine By which alone the mortal heart is led Into the thinking of the thought Divine." [Professor Santayana, of Harvard]

04.03. Faith in the Personal God

CHAPTER III. Faith in the Personal God

DAILY READINGS

We are to consider this week the Christian faith that God is personal. Before, however, we deal with the arguments which may confirm our confidence in such a faith, or even with the explanations that may clarify our conception of its meaning, let us, in the daily readings, consider some of the familiar attitudes in every normal human life, that require God’s personality for their fulfilment. Men have believed in a personal God because their own nature demanded it.

Third Week, First Day Men have believed in a personal God because of a deep desire to think of creation as friendly. F. W. Myers, when asked what question he would put to the Sphinx, if he were given only one chance, replied that he would ask, "Is the universe friendly?" Some have tried to think of creation as an enemy which we must fight, as though in Green land we strove to make verdure grow, although the soil and climate were antagonistic. Some have tried to think creation neutral, an impersonal system of laws and forces, which we must impose our will upon as best we can, al though in the end the system is sure to outlast all our efforts and to bring our gains to naught. But at the heart of man is an irresistible desire to think creation a friend, with whose good purposes our wills can be aligned, and whose power can carry our efforts to victorious ends. Says Gilbert Murray, of Oxford University, "As I see philosophy after philosophy falling into this unproven belief in the Friend behind phenomena, as I find that I myself cannot, except for a moment and by an effort, refrain from making the same assumption, it seems to me that perhaps here too we are under the spell of a very old ineradicable instinct." But friends are always persons, and if creation is friendly then God is in some sense personal. This faith is the radiant center of the Gospel. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee. And in praying use not vain repetitions, as the Gentiles do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. Matthew 6:6-14.

O Lord, we would rest in Thee, for in Thee alone is true rest to be found. We would forget our disappointed hopes, our fruitless efforts, our trivial aims, and lean on Thee, our Comfort and our Strength. When the order of this world bears cruelly upon us; when Nature seems to us an awful machine, grinding out life and death, without a reason or a purpose; when our hopes perish in the grave where we lay to rest our loved dead: O what can we do but turn to Thee, whose law underlieth all, and whose love, we trust, is the end of all? Thou fillest all things with Thy presence, and dost press close to our souls. Still every passion, rebuke every doubt, strengthen every

element of good within us, that nothing may hinder the outflow of Thy life and power. In Thee, let the weak be full of might, and let the strong renew their strength. In Thee, let the tempted find succor, the sorrowing consolation, and the lonely and the neglected their Supreme Friend, their faithful Companion.

O Lord, we are weary of our old, barren selves. Separate us from our spiritual past, and quicken within us the seeds of a new future. Transform us by the breath of Thy regenerating power, that life may seem supremely beautiful and duty our highest privilege, and the only real evil a guilty conscience. Let us be no longer sad, or downcast, or miser able, or despairing, vexed by remorse, or depressed by our failures. Take from us the old self. Give us a new self, beautiful, vigorous, and joyous. Let old things pass away and let all things become new. Kindle within us a flame of heavenly devotion, so that to us work for Thee shall be come a happiness, and rest in Thee shall become an energy, unchecked by fears within and foes without. Give us love, and then we shall have more than all we need, for Thou art Love, Thyself the Giver and the Gift. Amen. Samuel McComb.

Third Week, Second Day Bless Jehovah, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless his holy name.

Bless Jehovah, O my soul, And forget not all his benefits, Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; Who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy desire with good things, So that thy youth is renewed like the eagle. Psalms 103:1-5.

Such an attitude of thankfulness as this psalm represents is native to man’s heart When he is glad he feels grateful; he has an irrepressible impulse to thank somebody. As be tween a boastful Nebuchadnezzar "This great Babylon which I have built... by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty" (Daniel 4:30) and the Master, grateful for the dawning success of his cause "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth" (Matthew 11:25) we can have no doubt which is the nobler attitude. Man at his best always looks upon his blessings as gifts, his powers as entrustments, his service. as a debt which he owes, and his success as an occasion of gratitude rather than pride. But we cannot be really thankful to impersonal power. Little children blame chairs for their falls and thank apple trees for their apples, but maturity outgrows the folly of accusing or blessing imper sonal things. Thankfulness, in any worthy interpretation of the term, can never be felt except toward friendly persons who intended the blessing for which we are glad. A thoughtful man, therefore, cannot be grateful to a godless world machine, even though it has treated him well, for the world- machine never purposed to treat him well and his happiness is a lucky accident, with no good will to thank for it. Haeckel says that there is no God only "mobile, cosmic ether." Imagine a congregation of people, under Haeckel’s leader ship, rising to pray, "O Mobile Cosmic Ether, blessed be thy name!" It is absurd. Unless God is personal, the deepest meanings of gratitude in human hearts for life and its benedictions have no proper place in the universe.

O God above all, yet in all; holy beyond all imagination, yet friend of sinners; who inhabitest the realms of unfading light, yet leadest us through the shadows of mortal life; how solemn and uplifting it is even to think upon Thee! Like sight of sea to zvearied eyes, like a walled-in garden to the troubled mind, like home to wanderer, like a strong tower to a soul pursued; so to us is the sound of Thy name. But greater still to feel Thee in our heart; like a river glorious, cleansing,

healing, bringing life; like a song victorious, comforting our sadness, banishing our care; like a voice calling us to battle, urging us beyond ourselves. But greater far to know Thee as our Father, as dear as Thou art near; and ourselves begotten of Thy love, made in Thy image, cared for through all our days, never beyond Thy sight, never out of Thy thought. To think of Thee is rest; to know Thee is eternal life; to see Thee is the end of all desire; to serve Thee is perfect freedom and everlasting joy. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

Third Week, Third Day Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving- kindness, According to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions; And my sin is ever before me.

Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, And done that which is evil in thy sight. Psalms 51:1-4.

Penitence is one of the profoundest impulses in man’s heart. And man at his deepest always feels about his sin as the Psalmist did: he has wronged not only this individual or that, but he has sinned against the whole structure of life, against whatever Power and Purpose may be behind life, and his penitence is not complete until he cries to the High est, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned." While men, therefore, have always asked each other for forgiveness, they have as well asked God for it. But such an attitude is utterly irrational if God is not personal. Persons alone care what we do, have purposes that our sins thwart, have love that our evil grieves, have compassion to forgive the penitent; and to confess sin to a world-machine careless, purposeless, loveless, and without compassion is folly. Yesterday we saw how impossible it was really to feel grateful to a material ist’s god; today imagine congregations of people addressing to the Cosmic Ether any such penitent confessions as Christians by multitudes continually address to their Father: "We have erred and strayed from Thy ways like lost sheep." Plainly in a world where creative power is impersonal the deepest meanings of penitence have no place. Read over the prayer that follows, considering the futility of addressing such a penitent aspiration to anything impersonal; and then really pray it to the God whom Christ revealed, We beseech Thee, Lord, to behold us with favor, folk of many families and nations gathered together in the peace of this roof, weak men and women subsisting under the covert of thy patience. Be patient still; suffer us yet awhile longer with our broken purposes of good, with our idle endeavors against evil, suffer us awhile longer to endure and (if it may be) help us to do better. Bless to us our extraordinary mercies; if the day come when these must be taken, brace us to play the man under affliction. Be with our friends, be with ourselves. Go with each of us to rest; if any awake, temper to them the dark hours of watching; and when the day returns, return to us, our sun and comforter, and call us up with morning faces and with morning hearts eager to labor eager to be happy, if happiness shall be our portion and if the day be marked for sorrow, strong to endure it.

We thank Thee and praise Thee; and in the words of him to whom this day is sacred, close our oblation. Amen. Robert Louis Stevenson. [1] Third Week, Fourth Day

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13. For in hope were we saved: but hope that is seen is not hope: for who hopeth for that which he seeth? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Romans 8:24-25.

Hope is no fringe on the garment of human life; it is part of the solid texture of our experience; without it men may exist, but they cannot live. Now some minds live by hope about tomorrow, or at the most, the day after tomorrow, and do not take long looks ahead. But as men grow mature in thoughtfulness, such small horizons no longer can content their minds; they seek a basis for hope about the far issue of man's struggle and aspiration. They cannot bear to think that creation lacks a "far-off divine event"; they cannot tolerate a universe that in the end turns out to be "An eddy of purposeless dust, Effort unmeaning and vain." But it is obvious that if God is not in control of creation, with personal purpose of good will, directing its course, there is no solid basis for hope. If the universe is in the hands of physical forces, then a long look ahead reveals a world collapsing about a cold sun, and humanity annihilated in the wreck. Some such finale is the inevitable end of a godless world. As another pictures it, mankind, like a polar bear on an ice floe that is dfifting into warmer zones, will watch in growling impotence the steady dwindling of his home, until he sinks in the abyss. All optimistic philosophies of life have been founded on faith in a personal God, who purposes good to his children, and without such faith no hope, with large horizons, is reasonable. Paul is fair to the facts when he says, "Having no hope and without God in the world" (Ephesians 2:12). When one asks why men have be lieved in a personal God, this clearly is part of the answer: only a personal God can be "the God of hope."

O God of heaven above and earth beneath! Thou art the constant hope of every age the reliance of them that seek Thee with thought fulness and love. We own Thee as the guardian of our pilgrimage; and when our steps are weary we turn to Thee, the mystic companion of our way, whose mercy will uphold us lest we fall. Thou layest on us the bur den of labor throughout our days; but in this sacred hour Thou dost lift off our load, and make us partakers of Thy rest. Thou ever faithful God, our guide by cloud and fire! without this blest repose our life were but a desert path; here we abide by the refreshing spring, and pitch our tents with joy around Thy holy hill. Yet when we seek to draw nigh to Thee, Thou art still above us, like the heavens. O Thou that remainest in the height, and coverest Thyself with the cloud thereof! behold, we stand around the mountain where Thou art; and if Thou wilt commune with us, the thunder from Thy voice of love shall not make us afraid. Call up a spirit from our midst to serve Thy will; and take away the veil from all our hearts, that with the eye of purity we may look on the bright and holy countenance of life. And when we go hence to resume our way, may it be with nobler spirits, with more faithful courage, and more generous will. For life and death we trust ourselves to Thee as disciples of Jesus Christ. Amen. James Martineau.

Third Week, Fifth Day Jehovah is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup, Thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; Yea, I have a goodly heritage.

I will bless Jehovah, who hath given me counsel; Yea, my heart instructeth me in the night seasons.

I have set Jehovah always before me, Because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth, My flesh also shall dwell in safety. For thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol; Neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption.

Thou wilt show me the path of life, In thy presence is fulness of joy; In thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Psalms 16:5-11.

Many things in human life bring joy. From the sense of a healthy body and the exhilaration of a sunshing day to the deep satisfactions of home and friends there are numberless sources of happiness. But man has always been athirst to find joy in thinking about the total meaning of life. Lacking that, the details of life lose radiance, for, in spite of him self, man "Hath among least things An undersense of greatest; sees the parts As parts, but with a feeling of the whole."

If when he thinks about God, he can, like this psalmist, rejoice in. the love behind life, the good purpose through it, the glorious future ahead of it, then all his other bless ings are illumined. Not only are there happy things in life, but life itself is fundamentally blessed. But if when he raises his thought to the Eternal, he has no joyful thoughts about it, sees no love or purpose there, then a pall falls on even his ordinary happiness. Alas for that man who does not like to think about life's origin and desting and meaning, because he has no joyful faith about God! Some men have what Epictetus called "paralysis of the soul" every time they think of creation, for to them it is a huge physical machine crashing on without reason or good will. But some men have such a joyful faith in the divine that their gladness about the whole of life redeems their sorrow about its details. So Samuel Rutherford in prison said, "Jesus Christ came into my room last night and every stone flashed like a ruby." For the thought of God in terms of friendly personality is the most joyful idea of him that man has ever had. Man's thirst for joy is one of the sources of his faith in a personal God. He has wanted what Paul called "joy and peace in believing" (Romans 15:13).

We rejoice, O Lord our God, not in ourselves nor in the firm earth on which we tread, nor in the household, nor in the church, nor in all the procession of things where mankind moves with power and glory. We rejoice in the Lord. We rejoice in Thy strength. A strange joy it is. Day by day we find ourselves breaking out into gladness through the ministration of the senses, and by the play of inward thought; but Thou art never beheld by us... Thou never speakest to us, nor do we feel Thy hand, nor do we discern Thy face of love and glory and power. We break away from all other experiences, and look up into the emptiness, as it seems to us, which yet is full of life; into that which seems cold and void, but wherein moves eternal power; into the voiceless and inscrutable realm where Thou dwellest, God over all, blessed forever... O Lord our God, how near Thou art to us! and we do not know it. How near is the other life! and we do not feel it. It clothes us as with a garment. It feeds us. It shines down upon us. It rejoices over us*... Thither, out of narrow and anguishful ways) out of sorrows, out of regrets, out of bereavements, we look; and already we are rested before we reach it.

Grant unto us, today, we beseech Thee, this beatific vision. Amen. Henry Ward Beecher.

Third Week, Sixth Day For when one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Applies; are ye not men? What then is Apollos? and what is Paul? Ministers through whom ye believed; and each as the Lord gave to him. I planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: but each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are God's fel low-workers: ye are God's husbandry, God's building. 1 Corinthians 3:4-9.

One of the profoundest motives that can grip man’s heart is the conviction that he is a fellow-worker with the Divine. To feel that there is a great Cause, on behalf of which God himself is concerned, and in the furtherance of which we can be God’s instruments and confederates, is the most exhilarating outlook on life conceivable. Even people who deny God try to get this motive for themselves. One such man hopes for the success of his favorite causes in "the tendency of the universe"; another talks about "the nature of things taking sides." But nothing save personality has moral tendencies, and only persons take sides in moral issues. If the guidance of the world is personal, then, and then only, can we rejoice with confidence in a great Ally, who has moral purposes and who has committed to us part of his work. This was the Master’s motive when he said, "My Father worketh even until now, and I work" (John 5:17). But one clearly sees that such an inspiring consciousness of cooperation with the Eternal depended on the certainty with which the Master called the Eternal by a personal name Father. When men like Livingstone have gone out in sacrificial adventure for the saving of men they have not banked on the "tendency of the universe," nor trusted in any abstract "nature of things taking sides"; they have been servants of a personal God, under orders from him, and they have counted on personal guidance in the service of a cause whose issue was safe in God’s hands.

O God, we pray Thee for those who come after us, for our children, and the children of our friends, and for all the young lives that are marching up from the gates of birth, pure and eager, with the morning sunshine on their faces. We remember with a pang that these will live in the world we are making for them. We are wasting the resources of the earth in our headlong greed, and they will suffer want. We are building sunless houses and joyless cities for our profit, and they must dwell therein. We are making the burden heavy and the pace of work pitiless, and they will fall wan and sobbing by the wayside. We are poisoning the air of our land by our lies and our uncleanness, and they will breathe it.

O God, Thou knowest how we have cried out in agony when the sins of our fathers have been visited upon us, and how we have struggled vainly against the inexorable fate that coursed in our blood or bound us in a prison-house of life. Save us from maiming the innocent ones who come after us by the added cruelty of our sins. Help us to break the ancient force of evil by a holy and steadfast will and to endow our children with purer blood and nobler thoughts. Grant us grace to leave the earth fairer than we found it; to build upon it cities of God in which the cry of needless pain shall cease; and to put the yoke of Christ upon our business life that it may serve and not destroy. Lift the veil of the future and show us the generation to come as it will be if blighted by our guilt, that our lust may be cooled and we may walk in the fear of the Eternal. Grant us a vision of the far-off years as they may be if redeemed by the sons of God, that we may take heart and do battle for rhy children and ours. Amen. Walter Rauschenbusch.

Third Week, Seventh Day

I will extol thee, my God, O King; And I will bless thy name for ever and ever.

Every day will I bless thee; And I will praise thy name for ever and ever.

Great is Jehovah, and greatly to be praised; And his greatness is unsearchable.

One generation shall laud thy works to another, And shall declare thy mighty acts.

Of the glorious majesty of thine honor, And of thy wondrous works, will I meditate.

And men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts; And I will declare thy greatness.

They shall utter the memory of thy great goodness, And shall sing of thy righteousness.

Jehovah is gracious, and merciful; Slow to anger, and of great lovingkindness.

Jehovah is good to all; And his tender mercies are over all his works.

All thy works shall give thanks unto thee, O Jehovah; And thy saints shall bless thee. Psalms 145:1-10.

Adoration springs from the deeps of man’s spirit. We never can be content with looking down on things beneath us, nor with looking out on things that find our level. We always must look up to things above us. As a mediaeval saint said, "The soul can never rest in things that are beneath itself." Worship, therefore, is an undeniable impulse in man’s heart. Poets worship Beauty; scientists worship Truth; every man of honor worships Right. That is, the good, true, and beautiful stand above us calling out our adoration, and all the best in us springs from our worshipful response to their appeal. But this impulse to adore is never fulfilled until we gather up all life into spiritual unity and bow down in awe and joy before God. That is adoration glorified, worship crowned and consummated. And the only God whom man can adore with awe and joy is personal. No impersonal thing is worshipful; however great a thing may be it still lies beneath our soul. No abstract Idea is worshipful; we still are greater than any idea that we can hold. Only God, thought of in personal terms but known to be greater than any terms which human life can use, is adorable. Men have believed in Him because worship is man’s holiest impulse. Such are the experiences of man, with which faith in a personal God is inseparably interwoven. Our demand for a friendly creation, our deepest impulses to thanksgiving, peni tence, hope, joy, cooperation with the Eternal, and adoration of the highest all require personality in God. As Professor William James said, "The universe is no longer a mere It to us, but a Thou if we are religious."

O Lord our God, Thy greatness is unsearchable, and the glory of Thy presence has overwhelmed us. Thou art hidden in excess of light; and if we were to behold Thee in the great sphere in which Thou art living, none of us would dare to draw near to Thee. Our imperfections, our transgressions, our secret thoughts, our wild impulses, that at times come surging in upon us, are such that we should be ashamed to stand before the All-searching Eye. Our lives are before Thee, open as a book, and Thou readest every word and every letter thereof. Blessed be Thy name, Thou hast taught us to come to Thee through the Lord Jesus Christ as through a friend, and thou hast taught us to draw near to Thee in person through the familiar way of Fatherhood; from our childhood we have said, Our Father, and in this way we are not afraid; in this way we come familiarly and boldly: not irreverently, but with the familiarity which love gives. Thou hast poured the light of Thy love upon the path which we tread, and Thou hast taught us to come rejoicing before Thee... Open Thy hand and Thy heart, and say to every one of us, Peace be unto you! Amen. Henry Ward Beecher.

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

I

We have been using freely the most momentous word in human speech as though we clearly understood its meaning. We have been speaking of God as though the import of the term were plain. But most of us, asked to state precisely what we mean by "God," would welcome such a refuge from our confusion as Joubert sought. "It is not hard to know God," said he, "provided one will not force oneself to define him." Many people who stoutly claim to believe in God live in perpetual vacillation as to what they mean by him. Writes one "God to my mind is an impersonal being, but whether for convenience or through sheer impotence I pray to him as a personal being... I know I talk on both sides of the fence, but that. is just where I am." At times, indeed, some question whether there is any need to think or say what "God" may signify. They call him by vague names the All, the Infinite. In moods of exalted feeling, impatient of definition, they wish to be left alone with their experience of the Eternal; they resent the intrusion of theology, as a poet, lost in wonder at a landscape, might resent the coming of surveyors with their clanking chains. So Walt Whitman wanted to see the stars rather than hear the astronomer, and after listening to the learned lecture, with its charts and diagrams, he says, "I became tired and sick, Till rising and gliding out I wandered off by myself, In the mystical moist night air, and from time to time Looked up in perfect silence at the stars."

But, for all that, we well may be thankful for astronomers. At times the "mystical, moist night air" is absent; we do not wish to "look up in perfect silence at the stars"; and, even though we know in advance that they are bound to be inadequate, we do want as clear and worthy ideas as possible about the universe. Moreover, when such ideas are ours, looking up in perfect silence at the stars is more impressive than it ever was before. No more can men content themselves with a vague consciousness of God. Spirits like Wordsworth have raptures of which they sing, "In such access of mind, in such high hour Of visitation from the living God, Thought was not in enjoyment it expired." In communion with nature, in love for family, in fellowship with God, such hours may come, but nature, family, and God must also be the objects of understanding thought. Days of vital need, if not of mental doubt, inevitably come when it is impossible any longer to use a term like "God" without knowing what we mean. The special urgency of this is felt by most of us because as children we were taught to picture the Divine in terms of personality. The God of the Bible is personal. Little that persons do, save sinning, is omitted from the catalogue of God’s activities as he is pictured for us in the Scripture. He knows, loves, purposes, warns, rebukes, allures, rewards, and punishes, as only persons can. And all our relationships with him are clearly personal. When we pray we say "Our Father"; when we seek our duty we ask, "What wilt thou have me to do?" God is He and Thou, not It, and friendship is the ideal relation of all souls with him.

Moreover, in our maturity we are not likely to be interested in a God who is not personal. Whoever curiously asks why he believes in God, will find not simply reasons but causes for his faith, and will perceive that the causes of faith lie back of the reasons for it. Vital need always precedes the arguments by which we justify its satisfaction. A man eats one thing and shuns another on principles of dietetics that can be defended before his intelligence; but behind all such sophisticated reasons stands the vital cause of eating hunger. So back of intellectual arguments for belief in God lies the initial cause of faith: men are hungry. Men believe in Hod because they hunger for a world that is not chance and chaos: but that is guide by a Purpose. They believe in God, b cause in their struggles after righteousness they hunger for a Divine Ally in whom righteousness has its origin, its ground and destiny. They believe in God because they hunger for

confidence that Someone cares about our race in its conflicts and defeats and because in their individual experience they want a friend. Without such faith man feels himself to be, in Goethe's phrase, "a troubled wanderer upon a darkened earth." Plainly this elemental human hunger for purpose, righteousness, and friendship calls for something akin to personality in God. Only persons have purpose, character, and friendliness. The vital motives which lead men to seek God's comfort, forgiveness, guidance, and cooperation plainly imply his personality. Things do not forgive us, love us, nor purpose good concerning us, nor can any thing be imagined so subtle and so powerful as to satisfy the needs on account of which men come to God. If God is not personal, he can. feel no concern for human life and a God of no concern is of no consequence. The philosophers of India, with a well-reasoned pantheistic system and centuries to make their philosophy effective, have failed to quell this deathless thirst for a God who counts. Every wayside shrine of Hinduism incarnates the old faith in gods conceived as friends, not things; and Buddha, who taught impersonal deity, is now himself adored as the Personal Lord of Love and Blessedness. Wherever one finds vital religion one finds that God is no dry impersonal abstraction, but man's friend. Boscamen, speaking of the Egyptian Book of the Dead and of the Chaldean Tablets, says: "Six thousand years ago in Egypt and Chaldea it is not dread, but the grateful love of a child to his father, of friend to friend, that meets us in the oldest books of the world." And when one turns from the oldest to the newest books this inner demand of man's religious life has not ceased; it has been refined and confirmed. The All would not be the All unless it contained a Personality," said Victor Hugo. "That Personality is God."

Biography is lavish in illustrations of this need in man's religious life. The biographer of Theodore Parker, the free lance preacher of Boston, remarks: "In his theology God was neither personal nor impersonal, but a reality transcending these distinctions. In his devotions God was as personal as his own father or mother, and he prayed to him as such, daringly indifferent to the anthropomorphisms of his unfettered speech." When one passes from speculation to religion, he always comes into a realm where only a personal God will do. On this point even confessed unbelievers furnish confirmation. One who calls himself an agnostic writes: "At times in the silence of the night and in rare lonely moments, I experience a sort of communion of myself with Something Great that is not myself. Then the Universal Scheme of things has on me the effect of a sympathetic Person, and my communion therewith takes on a quality of fearless worship. These moments happen, and they are to me the supreme fact in my religious life." Always for the purposes of vital religion, God must have on us the "effect of a sympathetic Per^ son."

II When one. however, subjects this need of his religious life to searching thought, what difficulty he encounters 1 Multitudes, if they were candid, would confess what a coliege senior wrote: "When I am just thinking about God in a speculative or philosophical way, I generally think of him as impersonal, but for practical purposes I think of him as per"sonal." Many folks feel thus distraught; at the heart of their religious life is the paralyzing doubt, that in a universe like this to think of God as personal is absurd. If a train moving a mile a minute should leave the earth, it must travel 40, 000, 000 years before it would reach the nearest star. The Creator of such a world is not readily reduced to the similitude of human life. Once men lived on a flat earth, small in compass and cosily tucked beneath the sky's coverlet, but now the world's vastness beggars imagination. As an astronomer remarked, coming from a session with his telescope, "This does away with a six-foot god; you cannot shake hands with the Creator of this." Men used to suppose that Arcturus

was a single star, but now new telescopes reveal Arcturus as a galaxy of stars, thousands in number, with interstellar spaces so immense that thought breaks down in spanning them and imagination even cannot make the leap. Is the God of such a universe to be conceived in terms of a magnified man? So to picture deity seems at first sight a survival of mere childishness. Professor John Fiske, of Harvard, has told us that when he was a boy God always conjured up in his imagination the figure of a venerable bookkeeper, with white flowing beard, standing behind a high desk and writing down the bad deeds of John Fiske. How many of us can recall such early crude and childish thoughts of God! A mother asked her young daugher what she was drawing. "A picture of God," was the answer. "But no one knows what God looks like," the mother said. "They will," came the rejoinder, "when I get through." We all began with some such primitive idea of deity. Indeed, these early conceptions long persist in many minds, as the following statements, written by college students, indicate: "I think of God as real, actual skin and blood and bones, something we shall see with our eyes some day, no matter what lives we lead on earth." "It may be a remnant of youth, but anyhow, every time I think of God there appears a vague image of a man, with all members of the body, just enormously large." "I have always pictured him according to a description in Paradise Lost as seated upon a throne, while around are angels playing on harps and singing hymns." "I think of God as having bodily form and being much larger than the average man. He has a radiant countenance beaming with love and compassion. He is erect and upright, fearless and brave." "No one of us may be contemptuous of such crude ideas; we all possessed them once. Indeed the loss of them, with their picture of deity, clear in feature and distinct in outline, has been to some a shock from which faith has not recovered. When increasing knowledge discredited our immature theol ogy, and our world immeasurably widened, the very human God of our first imaginations was lost among the stars. We learned that this is a universe where the light that falls upon our eyes tonight left the far heavens when Abraham was shepherding on Syrian hills. The Christian Gospel of the personal Father which once was good news became a serious problem. We still may cling to the old meanings of our religious faith; still we may pray in hours of need as though our childhood’s God were really there; but at times we suspect that we are clinging to the beauty of an early memory while reluctantly we lose conviction of its truth. Many modern men and women can understand the plight of the famous Dr. Jowett of Oxford, who, so runs the tradition, inserted "used to" in a muffled voice, when he recited the creed: "I used to believe in God the Father Almighty." With such misgivings, whether as habitual disturbers of our faith or as occasional moods of unbelief that come and go, most of us must be familiar. What Charles Darwin is reported to have said about himself, many if they spoke frankly would say too: "Sometimes I feel a warm sense of a personal God, and then" with a shake of his head "it goes away."

III

Whatever may be our theology, the fact is plain that the denial of a personal God solves no problem. For if we may not think of God in terms of personality, the query still remains, which was there before in what terms shall we conceive of the Eternal? In a discussion on the nature of the sky, one boy, denying the idea of a solid canopy, exclaimed, "There ain t any sky." Said the other, seeing how little this negation solved the problem, "Well, what is it that ain t?" Some such inquiry one must put to his doubts about God’s 2 From a questionnaire, "Belie* in God and Immortality," by Prof. James H. Leuba. personality. Though we may deny a personal God, nevertheless in the

place where he once stood, creator and sustainer of all existence, is Something that we do think of somehow. We may have but little of Carlyle's sublime imagination; may not easily transport ourselves to stand with him on the far northern cliff, "behind him all Europe and Africa fast asleep, except the watchmen, and before him the silent Immensity and Palace of the Eternal, whereof our sun is but the porch-lamp." Yet who of us, regarding the illimitable universe, on the far outskirts of which our little earth is whirling, so minute that through the strongest telescope from the nearest star its conflagration would be quite invisible, has escaped the sense of a Universal Power? And the human mind cannot so keep itself at home in little tasks and pleasures as to evade the question: How shall we think of the Power that made the universe? In what terms? By what analogies? Hours of revelation come in every serious life when no desire compares in urgency with the desire to know the character of the Eternal. It does make a prodigious difference what hands hold the leash of the universe. This second fact is also clear, that if we are to think of the Eternal at all, we must think in terms of something drawn from our experience. When we sing of Paradise we speak of golden streets and gates of pearl, and Thoreau remarks that, arriving in heaven, he expects to find pine trees there. Such words we do not take literally, but such words we can not utterly avoid, for if we are to speak at all of the unknown glory, we must use pictures from the known. So we think of God in human symbols. We cannot catch him in an abstract definition as though a boy with a butterfly net should capture the sun at noon. Our minds are not fitted for such enterprise. Of necessity we take something homely, familiar, close at hand, and lifting it up as far as we can reach, say God is most like that. No one who thinks at all of the Eternal es capes this necessity. By this method the materialist reaches his philosophy. Haeckel laughs to scorn the opening clause of the "Apostles Creed." "I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth" for such faith no words are contemptuous enough. This denial does not mean however that Haeckel has no faith; he deliberately offers a creedal substitute which runs in part: I believe in a "chemical substance of a viscous character, having albuminous matter and water as. its chief constituents." In such terms does Haeckel think of the Eternal. A professor of medicine has remarked that suck a theory reduces all reality to "phosphorus and glue." When some Psalmist cries, "Bless the Lord, O my soul," nothing substantial is speaking or is being spoken to save phosphorus and glue! When an Italian patriot cries, "The time for dying comes to all, but the time for dishonoring oneself ought never to come," nothing is real and causal save phosphorus and glue! And every gracious and redeeming deed in history from the love of mothers to the cross of Christ has been a complicated working out of phosphorus and glue! In what ever labored phrases he may state his case, the materialist's method there is obvious; he has taken physical energy, of whose presence in his own body he is first assured, and whose reality he has then read out into the world, and this homely and familiar experience he has lifted up as far as he can reach to say, the Eternal is most like that. So far as method is concerned, the theist of necessity travels the same road; only he insists on a nobler symbol than physical energy in terms of which to think of God. He takes mind. He says in effect: There may be wide stretches of the universe where our intellects meet no answer and find no meaning. But in much of the universe we do see meaning; and how can intelligence find sense where intelligence has not put sense? A few scratches on a cliff's face in Assyria, after centuries of neglect, rendered up their meaning to the mind of Rawlinson. They were themselves the work of intelli gence, and intelligence could read them. So, the theist contin ues, the universe is in part at least intelligible. Our minds fit into it and are answered by it. We can trace its laws and predict its movements. Man first worked out the nature

of the ellipse in theoretical geometry, and then telescopes later showed the gigantic ellipses of planetary orbits in the heavens. Can it be that this intelligible world, readable by mind, is itself essentially mindless? As easily believe that the notes of Wagner’s operas were accidentally blown together by a whirlwind and yet are playable by man! Therefore the theist believes the universe to be rational; he takes mind as he has known it in himself, and lifting it as high as he can reach, cries, God is most like that. So far as the general method of approach is concerned, the Christian travels the same road to his idea of God. Only he cannot believe that the best he knows is too good or too great to be a symbol in terms of which to think of the Eternal. Therefore he will not take a byproduct of experience such as physical energy, nor a section of personality such as mind; he takes the full orb of personality, self-conscious being that knows and purposes and loves, and he affirms that God is most like this. Such in its simplest form is the Christian assertion of God’s personality. In one of his noblest passages Martineau has put into classic form this necessity, which we have been discussing, of thinking about God in terms of human experience: "God, being infinite, can never be fully comprehended by our minds; whatever thought of him be there, his real nature must still transcend: there will yet be deep after deep beyond, within that light ineffable; and what we see, compared with what we do not see, will be as the raindrop to the firmament. Our conception of him can never correspond with the reality, so as to be without omission, disproportion, or aberration; but can only represent the reality, and stand for God within our souls, till nobler thoughts arise and reveal themselves as his interpreters. And this is precisely what we mean by a symbolical idea. The devotee who prostrates him self before a black stone, the Egyptian who in his prayers was haunted by the ideal form of the graceful ibis or the monstrous sphinx the Theist who bends beneath the starry porch that midnight opens to the temple of the universe the Christian who sees in heaven a spirit akin to that which divinely lived in Galilee, and with glorious pity died on Cal vary all alike assume a representation of him whose immeasurable nature they can neither compass nor escape. And the only question is, whether the conception they portray upon the wall of their ideal temple is an abominable idol, or a true and sanctifying mediatorial thought."

IV In their endeavor thus to think of God in terms of personality, some are perplexed because in their imagination a person is inseparable from flesh. "I think of God as a personal being," writes a college student. "A personal being would have a form that you could see or touch." But this would be true only if the grossest materialism were accepted, and the spiritual life declared to be the product of brain as digestive fluids are of salivary glands. On any other basis, personality is not indissolubly bound to body nor by it necessarily delimited. A man cannot hear without his ear, but he is not his ear; he cannot hear without the auditory nerve, but he is not the auditory nerve; he cannot hear without the temporal lobe of the brain, but he is not the brain nor any portion of it. These may be the instruments which he uses; he is free when they are well, hampered when they are brokers and at last he is separable from them all. John Quincy Adams at the age of eighty met a friend upon a Boston street. "Good morning," said the friend, "and how is John Quincy Adams today?" "Thank you," was the ex-president’s reply, "John Quincy Adams himself is well, quite well, I thank you. But the house in which he lives at present is becoming dilapidated. It is tottering upon its foundation. Time and the seasons have nearly destroyed it. Its roof is pretty well worn out. Its walls are much shattered and it trembles with every wind. The old tenement is becoming almost uninhabitable and I think John Quincy Adams will have to move out of it soon. But he himself is quite well, quite well." Such a conception of man as being a permanent personality and having a

temporary body is essential to any worthy meaning when we use personal terms about God. With such an elevated thought, however, of what personality does mean, it soon is evident that no other reality with which we deal is so worthy to be the symbol of an Eternal Spirit. Is one perplexed that God, who is invisible, should be pictured in the similitude of human persons? But we are invisible. The outward husks and fleshly garment of our friends we indeed have seen, but upon the friend himself consciousness, love, purpose, ideal, and character no ye has looked. No mirror ever has been strong enough to show us to ourselves. In every homely conversation this ineffable mir acle is wrought: out of the unseen where I dwell, I signal by word and gesture to you back in the unseen where you dwell. We are inhabitants now of the intangible and unseen world; we are as invisible as God.

Indeed, personality is essentially the most unlimited reality with which we deal; in comparison a solar system is a little thing. Consider memory, by which we can retrace our youthful days, build our shanties once again at brooksides, replay our games, and recapitulate the struggles and the joys of the first days at school. Nothing in all the universe can remember except persons. Were we not so familiar with this element in human greatness, we would more often pause to exclaim, as did Augustine, fifteen centuries ago, "Great is the power of memory. Amazement overcomes me when I think of it. And yet men go abroad to gaze upon the mountains, the broad rivers, the. wide ocean, the courses of the stars, and pass themselves, the crowning wonder, by consider imagination, by which, sitting still in body we can project ourselves around the world, can walk down Princes Street in Edinburgh, or stand in mingled awe and condemnation before the tomb of Napoleon in Paris, or rise uncovered before the majesty of the Matterhorn. Nothing in all the universe can do that except persons. Were full power to act wherever we cay. think added to our gifts, we should come so near to incipient omnipresence as to be in dread of our responsibility. Consider love, by which we live not so much where our bodies are as where our friends and family may be. Love expands the individual until his real life is independent of geography. Says one lover to another, "The widest land Doom takes to part us, leaves thy heart in mine With pulses that beat double."

Many a mother in America has lived in the trenches of France; many a man has found that what might happen to him where his body was could not be compared with what might happen to him where his friendships were; and as we grow in love and loyalty we find ourselves scattered all over creation. How far such an expansion of life may go our Lord revealed when he said, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these, my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me." (Matthew 25:40.) Nothing in heaven above or on the earth beneath can so extend itself in love save persons.

Finally, consider creative power by which human beings project themselves into the future, and, with masterful ideals in mind, lay hold on circumstance and bend it to their will. As if he shared creative power with the Eternal, an engineer summons nature’s forces to his bidding and lays his will upon them, until where nothing was a structure stands that mankind may use for centuries. Nothing in all the universe can so create except persons. In that essentially creative act where deathless ideas and harmonies are given being by poets and musicians, so that something out of nothing is brought to pass by personality, man faces a mystery as abysmal as God’s making of the world. "Paradise Lost" is wonderful; but not half as wonderful as the creative personality itself who years before projected it. "An inward prompting," Milton says, "which now grew daily upon me, that by labor and intense study, joined with the strong propensity of nature, I might perhaps leave

something so written to after times as they should not willingly let it die." Nothing can so create save personality.

Personality is not so limited that we should be ashamed to think of God in terms of it. Rather, of all realities with which we deal, personality alone, invisible, reaching back in memory, reaching out in imagination, expanding itself in love, and laying hold upon the future with creative power, is a worthy symbol of the Eternal Spirit.

Even when the meaning of personality has been so enlarged and elevated, we should not leave our statement of belief in God as though our experience of personality were a mould into which our thought of him is poured and so delim ited. We are not presumptuous Lilliputians, running out with verbal stakes and threads, to pin down the tall, majestic Gulliver of the Eternal and dance in theological exultation round our capture. We know better than that. We under stand how insufficient is every human name for God. We know that when we have said our best "How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past tracing out!" (Romans 11:33).

Nothing more has marred the Christian message and discredited the Christian faith than the unwise presumption that has forced its definitions into the secrets of the Infinite. "It is enough to say," exclaims Leslie Stephen, "that they defined the nature of God Almighty with an accuracy from which modest naturalists would shrink in describing the genesis of a black beetle." The antidote to. such vain pride of theology is found in the wholesome modesty of the Bible. There man enquires, "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst, thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is high as heaven; what canst thou do? Deeper than Sheol; what canst thou know?" (Job 11:7). There God replies: "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:9). Scripture bears abundant testimony to the symbolic nature of our human terms for God. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so Jehovah pitieth them that fear him" (Psalms 103:13). "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you" (Isaiah 66:13). "I will betroth thee unto me" (Hosea 2:20). "Return,... saith Jehovah, for I am a husband unto you" (Jeremiah 3:14). "The Lord spake unto Moses... as a man speaketh unto his friend (Exodus 33:11). Father, Mother, Bridegroom, Husband, Friend these are symbols of God. Men, endeavoring to frame some worthy thought of the Eternal, lift up their best in phrases such as these, and in them enshrine their noblest concepts of the divine. They have no better, truer thing to say of God, no wiser way in which to say it. But when they think of the Eternal as he must be, and of their human words, infinitesimal in comparison, they know that all their best names for God are like small measures of water dipped from an immeasur able sea. For all that, so much of God as they can grasp and understand is the most important truth that mankind knows. Let even a tea-cup of water be taken to a laboratory and it will tell the truth about the sea; that one tea-cup will reveal the quality of the ii hole ocean. Yet it will not reveal all the truth about the ocean. When one considers the reach of the sea over the rim of the world; thinks of the depths that no eye can pierce, the distances that no mind can imagine; remembers the currents that sweep through the sea, the tides that rise there, and the storms that beat it to its nether wells, he dare not try to put these into a tea-cup. So God sweeps out be yond the reach of human symbols. At once so true and so inadequate are all our words for him. So we might speak to one. who incredulously looks upon our faith, but for one who whole-heartedly approaches God as Christianity suggests, no negative and cautionary word is adequate. The Christian method of conceiving God brings the most exhilarating thought of him that man has ever had. It says in brief:

Take your best and think of God as most truly symbolized in that. As to what our best is, not even the agnostics doubt. The physical universe belittles us on one side only; it makes a pigmy of the body. In our spirits we still tower above the physical; we are greater than the world we know. Our supreme good, the divinest reality with which we deal, is personality. Then lift that up, says Christianity; it is your best, and you dare not think of God in terms of less; you have Christ's example in arguing from the human best to the divine: "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more... your Father." (Matthew 7:11.) The Christian faith asserts that when a man thus thinks of God in terms of the best he knows he is on the road toward truth. How many billion spiritual miles he may have to travel to the end, no man can tell. Only he will never need to stop, retrace his steps, and start upon a lower path than personality, a road that lies beneath righteousness and love. The road leads on and up beyond our imagination, but it is the same road and not another. God is personality plus, or else he alone is completely personal and we are but in embryo.

If God so is personal, then all the deep meanings of reli gious life and faith that the saints, our spiritual sires, have known are open to us modern men and women. Forms of thought indeed have changed, but if God is thus our Father and our Friend, the essentials of Christian experience are waiting for us all. Life then is not purposeless; all creation is bound into spiritual unity by personal Will; and in sacrificial labor we are serving one who is able to guard that which we "have committed unto him against that day" (2 Timothy 1:12). Old hymns of confidence in time of trial, we too can sing, "Still will we trust, though earth seem dark and dreary, And the heart faint beneath His chastening rod; Though steep and hard our pathway, worn and weary, Still will we trust in God." And we can pray, not indeed with clamorous beggary as though the grace of God were a wayside stall where every greedy hand can pluck what passing whim may wish, but we can commune with God as the real saints have always prayed with humility and gratitude and confident desire for good. Most of all, that priceless privilege is open to us which is the center and sun of Christian thought and life. For if among all realities in our experience, we have dared take the best, personality, as a symbol in terms of which to think of God, how should we not, among all personalities, take the best we know as the highroad of approach to him. Therefore our real symbol of God shall be no man among us, frail and sinful, but our Lord himself "fairest among ten thousand" "the one altogether beautiful." We shall think of God in terms of. him. We shall see "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Corinthians 4:6.)

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04.04. Belief and Trust

CHAPTER IV. Belief and Trust

DAILY READINGS

We have tried to explain our faith in the personal God, and to see the transfiguring influence of that faith on life. But is belief in God always such a blessing as we have pictured? Rather faith, like every other experience of man, has its caricatures and burlesques. Many men are prevented from appreciation of faith in God, with its inestimable blessings, because they have so continually seen faith’s perversions. The fact is that belief in God may be an utterly negligible matter in a man’s experience or may even become a positively pernicious influence. Let us, in the daily readings, consider some of the familiar travesties on faith.

Fourth Week, First Day

Praise ye Jehovah.

Praise Jehovah, O my soul.

While I live will I praise Jehovah:

I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.

Put not your trust in princes,

Nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.

His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth;

In that very day his thoughts perish.

Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help,

Whose hope is in Jehovah his God. Psalms 146:1-5. No one can mistake the note of reality in this psalmist’s experience of God, But every one of us knows people who, if asked whether they believed in God, would readily assent, yet to whom faith makes no such difference in life as this psalm expresses. Their faith is nothing but an opinion about God, lightly held, a formal consent that what church or family tradition says must be correct. They have what Luther used to call "the charcoal burner’s faith." A man of that occupation, when asked what he believed, said, "What Holy Church believes"; but, questioned further, he could not tell what it was that Holy Church did believe. So formal, vitally unpossessed, and practically unreal is much of our religious opinion that passes for faith. Dean Swift was a churchman of high rank, and yet his biographer is compelled to say of him: "He clung to the doctrines of his church, not because he could give abstract reasons for his belief, but simply because the church happened to be his." Vital religious faith is a very different thing from such dry conventionality. A man may assent to the contents of a college catalogue and yet never have experience of college life; he may agree that a menu is dietetically

correct and yet never grow strong from the food; and he may believe in every creed in Christendom and not know what faith in God really means. Opinions about God are a roadway to God, but the end of the journey is a personal fellowship that transfigures life; and to seize opinions as though they were the object of faith is, to use Tagore's figure, "like a man who tries to reach his destination by firmly clutching the dust of the road."

O Thou great Father of us all, we rejoice that at last we know Thee. All our soul within us is glad because we need no longer cringe before Thee as slaves of holy fear, seeking to appease Thine anger by sacrifice and self-inflicted pain, Ind may come like little children, trustful and hap. py, to the God of love. Thou art the only true Father, and all the tender beauty of our human loves is the reflected radiance of Thy loving kindness, like the moonlight from the sunlight, and testifies to the eternal passion that kindled it.

Grant us growth of spiritual vision, that with the passing years we may enter into the fulness of this our faith. Since Thou art our Father, may we not hide our sins from Thee, but overcome them by the stern comfort of Thy presence. By this knowledge uphold us in our sorrows and make us patient even amid the unsolved mysteries of the years. Reveal ttf us the larger goodness and love that speak through the unbending laws of TJiy world. Through this faith make us the willing equals of all Thy other children. As Thou art ever pouring out Thy life in sacrificial father- love, may we accept the eternal law of the cross and give ourselves to Thee and to all men. We praise Thee for Jesus Christ, whose life has revealed to us this faith and law, and we rejoice that he has become the first-born among many brethren. Grant that in us, too, the faith in Thy fatherhood may shine through all our life with such persuasive beauty that some who still creep in the dusk of fear may stand erect as free sons of God, and that others who now through unbelief are living as orphans in an empty world may stretch out their hands to the great Father of their spirits and find Thee near. Amen. Walter Rauschenbusch.

Fourth Week, Second Day

Faith is travestied in many lives not so much by the substitution of opinion for experience, as by making religion consist in certain devout practices, such as church-going. Ceremonialism, instead of being an aid in making God real, takes the place of fellowship with God. How scathing were the attacks of the prophets on this distortion of religion!

Hear the word of Jehovah, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah. What unto me is the multitude of your sacrifices? saith Jehovah: I have had enough of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to trample my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; new moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies I cannot away with iniquity and the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me; I am weary of bearing them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Isaiah 1:10-17.

Many young people, watching conventional observances in religious worship and perceiving no real life active there, come to the conclusion that religious faith is a decent and negligible formality. So William Scott Palmer, tracing his progress from agnosticism to Christianity, describes the religion of his boyhood: "Religion as a personal matter, religion as a life, did not exist for me or for my family. The border land of my native village went to church at eleven o clock on fine Sundays, and I went in and with it. There were unlucky Sundays when the Litany was said, and the service prolonged by its unmeaning length; the lucky Sundays were wet ones that cleared up later... I did not know that there was any vital meaning in religion." And even Sir Wilfred Grenfell, whose work in Labrador is one of this generation’s outstanding triumphs of Christian faith, says of his young manhood: "The ordinary exponents of the Christian faith had never succeeded in interesting me in any way, or even in making me believe that they were more than professionally concerned themselves. Religion appeared to be a profession, exceedingly conventional, and most unattractive in my estimation the very last I should have thought of selecting." No travesty on faith is more deadly in its effects than this substitution of conventional observance for life.

O Jesus, we thy ministers bow before Thee to confess the common sins of our calling. Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that we love Thee and that our hearts desire is to serve Thee in faithfulness; and yet, like Peter, we have so often failed Thee in the hour of Thy need. If ever we have loved our own leadership and power when we sought to lead our people to Thee, we pray Thee to forgive. If we have been engrossed in narrow duties and little questions, when the vast needs of humanity called oloud for prophetic vision and apostolic sympathy, we pray Thee to forgive. If in our loyalty to the Church of the past we have distrusted Thy living voice and have suffered Thee to pass from our door unheard, we pray Thee to forgive. If ever we have been more concerned for the strong and the rich than for the shepherdless throngs of the people for whom Thy soul grieved, we pray Thee to forgive.

O Master, amidst our failures we cast ourselves upon Thee in humility and contrition. We need new light and a new message. We need the ancient spirit of prophecy and the leaping fire and joy of a new conviction, and Thou alone canst give it. Inspire the ministry of Thy Church with dauntless courage to face the vast needs of the future. Free us from all entanglements that have hushed our voice and bound our action. Grant us grace to look upon the veiled sins of the rich and the coarse vices of the poor through Thine eyes. Give us Thine inflexible sternness against sin, and Thine inexhaustible compassion for the frailty and tragedy of those who do the sin. Make us faithful shepherds of Thy Hock, true seers of God, and true followers of Jesus. Amen. Walter Rauschenbusch.

Fourth Week, Third Day And he spake also this parable unto certain who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and set all others at nought: Two men went up into the temple. to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I get. But the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote his breast, saying, God, be thou merciful to me a sinner. I say unto you, This man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Luke 18:9-14. The men against whom the Master directed this parable were bigots. Self-opinionated, self-conceited, dogmatic, and contemptuous they wore all the attributes of

bigotry. And bigotry is a very familiar perversion of faith. Vital fellow ship with God ought to make men gracious, magnanimous, generous; it ought to make life with God seem so incomparably important that when anyone has that, his opinions about God will be tolerantly regarded, however mistaken they may appear to be. Dr. Pritchett, when President of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, passed through a classroom where a young instructor was conducting a chemical experiment. "The reaction itself," says Dr. Pritchett, "was going on in a retort on the table, while on a blackboard was written the conventional formula, which in the science of chemistry is used to describe the reaction. It so happened that the instructor had made a mistake in writing the formula; instead of CO2 he had written COs. But this made not the slightest difference in the reaction which was going on in the flask." So, a man may live his life with an admirably Christian spirit, although he describes it with a mistaken formula. His error is theoretical, not vital. But a bigot is so sure that he alone knows the true formula, that a man without that formula is altogether wrong, and that he must either set him right or condemn him utterly, that he grows bitter, hard, unlovely. His opinions may be right, but his spirit is wrong. The faith that should make his life radiant is perverted to make it narrow, harsh, contemptuous. He renders hateful the very faith he seeks to commend and ruins the reputation of the God whom he is zealous to exalt. So the Pharisee of the parable missed all the beauty of the Publican’s life because he thought the Publican’s formula was wrong. No "one can estimate the irreparable damage which zealous bigots have done to true faith.

O Thou who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, canst Thou bear to look on us conscious of our great transgression? Yet hide not Thy face from us, for in Thy light alone shall we see light.

Forgive us for the sins which crowd into the mind as we realize Thy presence; our ungovernable tempers, our shuffling insincerities, the craven fear of our hearts, the pettiness of our spirits, the foul lusts and fatal leanings of our souls. Not for pardon only, but for cleansing, Lord, we pray.

Forgive us, we beseech Thee, our unconscious sins; things which must be awful to Thy sight, of which we yet know nothing. Forgive by giving us in fuller measure the awakening of Thy presence, that we may know ourselves, and lose all love of sin in the knowledge of what Thou art.

Forgive us for the things for which we can never forgive ourselves; those sad turned pages of our life which some chance wind of memory blows back again with shame; for the moment of cruel passion, the hour beyond recall, the word that went forth to poison and defame, the carelessness that lost our opportunity, the unheeded fading of bright ideals.

Forgive us for the things that others can never forgive; the idle tale, the cruel wrong, the uncharitable condemnation, the unfair judgment, the careless criticism, the irresponsible conduct.

Forgive us for the sins of our holy things; that we have turned the sacred page without a sigh, read the confessions of holy men and women and never joined therein, lived in Thy light and never prayed to be forgiven or rendered Thee thanksgiving; professed to believe in Thee and love Thee, yet dared to injure and hate..

Naught save being born again, nothing but a miracle of grace, can ever be to us forgiveness. Cleanse our hearts, renew our minds, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from us. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

Fourth Week, Fourth Day Of all perversions of faith none is more fatal than the substitution of opinions about God for integrity of character and usefulness of life. With what scathing vehemence

does James, as Dr. Moffatt renders him, attack this travesty on faith.

"My brothers, what is the use of anyone declaring he has faith, if he has no deeds to show? Can his faith save him? Suppose some brother or sister is ill-clad and short of daily food; if any of you says to them. Depart in peace! Get warm, get food, without supplying their bodily needs, what use is that? So faith, unless it has deeds, is dead in itself. Someone will object, And you claim to have faith! Yes, and I claim to have deeds as well; you show me your faith without any deeds, and I will show you by my deeds what faith is! You believe in one God? Well and good. So do the devils, and they shudder. But will you understand, you senseless fellow, that faith without deeds is dead? When our father Abraham offered his son Isaac on the altar, was he not justified by what he did?" James 2:14-21. An American business man not long dead, who hated any word from the pulpit about social righteousness, used to complain: "Preachers are talking so everlastingly about this earth. I ve done my best to get them to stick to the Gospel, and not allow worldliness to get into the teachings of the Church; but the good old preachers have gone to glory." Yet this pious zealot helped wreck the finances of a great railroad system, and with part of the proceeds built a theo-logical seminary. There was no vital, intelligent connection between his faith in God and his ideals of character and serv- ice. One verse should be made to flame in Christian pulpits: "If any provideth not for his own, and specially his own household, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever" (1 Timothy 5:8). Domestic fidelity is here only typical of all basic moral obligations. What this verse says in principle is clear: theoretical unbelief is not the worst sin in God’s sight; any man who fails in the fundamental duties of rectitude and service has thereby denied the faith and is worse than an atheist.

O thou holy One and just! if alone the pure in heart can see thec, truly we must stand afar off, and not so much as lift up our eyes unto heaven. Were it not that thou hast help and pity for the contrite spirit, lue could only cry, "Depart from us, we are sinful men, O Lord!" For idle words, for proud thoughts and unloving deeds; for wasted moments and reluctant duties, and too eager rest; for the wandering desire, the vain fancy, the scornful doubt, the untrustful care; for impatient murmurs, and unruly passions, and the hardness of a worldly heart; thou, Lord, canst call us unto judgment, and we have naught to answer thee. But, O thou Judge of men, thou art witness that we do not love our guilty ways; make our conscience true and tender that we may duly hate them, and refuse them any peace as enemies to thee. Stir up within us a great and effectual repentance that we may redeem the time which we have lost, and in the hours that remain may do the work of many days. Thou knowest all our secret snares; drive from us every root of bitterness: with thy severity pluck out, O Lord, the thorns of sin from our entangled souls, and bind them as a crown of contrition around our bleeding brozvs; and having made our peace with thee may we henceforth watch and pray that we enter not again into temptation, but bear our cross with patience to the close. Amen. James Martineau.

Fourth Week, Fifth Day

Some of the most lamentable perversions of religious faith arise from inadequate ideas of God. Consider, for example, the way Manasseh thought that the Divine ought to be worshiped. For he built again the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; and he reared up altars for Baal, and made an Asherah, as did Ahab king of Israel, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them. And he built altars in the house of Jehovah, whereof Jehovah said, In Jerusalem

will I put my name. And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of Jehovah. And he made his son to pass through the fire, and practised augury, and used enchantments, and dealt with them that had familiar spirits, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of Jehovah, to provoke him to anger. 2 Kings 21:3-6.

Then compare the thought of the Master on the same subject. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true wor shippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth. John 4:23-24.

There is no reason to suppose that Manasseh was insincere; he is one of an innumerable company in whom the religious motive has been harnessed to warped and ignorant ideas of God. Religious faith, like any other tremendous power, is terrific in evil consequences when it goes wrong. Men, under its subtle and prevailing influence, have waged bloody wars, worshiped with licentious rituals, carried on pitiless persecutions, and in bigotry, cruelty, and deceit have grown worse than they would have been with no religion whatsoever. And men, in its inspiring light, have launched missionary movements, founded great philanthropies, built schools, hospitals, orphanages, and in sacrifice, courageous service, and hope of human brotherhood have made man's history glorious. Religion needs intelligence to save it from becoming a ruinous curse; like all power of the first magnitude it is a disaster if ignorantly used. Since religious faith will always be a major human motive, under what obligations are we to save it from perversion and to keep it clean and right!

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we are most unworthy to be called Thy children; for when light and darkness have been set before us, we have often chosen darkness rather than light. Conscious that within us are the elements of a nobler and a meaner life, we have yet given way to the meaner appetites, and have not obeyed the inspiration Thou hast kindled within us. We entreat Thee now of Thy grace to call us back from the ways of temptation and sin into that higher life which Thou dost breathe upon us, and which is manifested in Jesus Christ our Lord. Give us the self- knowledge, the humility, the repentance, the aspiration which draw us to the Cross of Christ, that worshiping there in lowliness, we may see the weakness of falsehood and the strength of truth, the exceeding sinfulness of selfishness, and the beauty of love and sacrifice.

O Thou whose secret is with them that fear Thee, inspire us with that loyalty of soul, that willingness to do Thy will to which all things are clear. Darkness, we know, cometh upon the proud and disobedient; confusion is ever attendant upon self-will; while to the humble, the earnest, and the pure- minded, the way of duty and spiritual health is made clear. O Spirit of the Eternal, subdue within us all pride, all vain glory, all self-seeking, and bring every thought and every desire into obedience to the law of Christ our Lord.

Almighty Father, to Thee would we consecrate these earthly days from infancy to age. Thee would we remember in childhood and youth. Thee would we serve in all the relations and activities of middle age. Thee would we teach our children to love and serve. Be Thou our stay and hope when health and strength shall fail. And when we are summoned hence, do Thou, O Life of our life, illumine the mystery of the invisible world with Thy presence and love. We ask these blessings in the spirit of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. John Hunter.

Fourth Week, Sixth Day The perversions of religious faith, working pitiable in stead of benevolent consequences, are often seen on mission fields. Consider Paul’s address in Athens, And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus, and said, Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive that ye are very religious. For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this I set forth unto you. The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is he served by men’s hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Acts 17:22-28.

Paul did not need to plead for religion with the Athenians; they were already "very religious." Only religion was not doing for them what it ought; it was a power used "in ignorance"; and Paul, valuing all that was good there, quoting their own poets with appreciation, nevertheless longed to take their strong religious motives and so clarify and direct them that faith might mean unqualified benediction. Is not this always the right missionary method? The people of India are intensely religious; no tribe in Africa lacks its gods; and everywhere the faith-motive is immensely powerful. But often it makes mothers drown their babies in sacred rivers, it consecrates caste systems as holy things, it centers man’s adoration around unworthy objects, its powers, gone wrong. are a curse and not a blessing. If in Jesus Christ religious faith has come to us, through no merit of our own, as an unspeakable benediction, ought we not, humbly, without dogmatism or intolerance, and yet with passionate earnestness, to share our best with all the world? Religious faith may either depress or lift a people’s life; it is forever doing one or the other in every nation under heaven; and there is no hope for the world until this master-motive is lifting every where.

Almighty God, our Father in heaven, who hast so greatly loved the world that Thou hast given Thine only-begotten Son, the Redeemer, communicate Thy love to the hearts of all believers, and revive Thy Church to preach the Gospel to every creature. O Thou who rulest by Thy providence over land and sea, defend and guide and bless the messengers of Christ; in danger be their shield, in darkness be their hope; enrich their word and work with wisdom, joy, and power, and let them gather souls for Thee in far fields white unto the harvest.

O Thou who by Thy Holy Spirit workest wonders in secret, open the eyes that dimly look for light to see the day-star in Christ; open the minds that seek the unknown God to know their Heavenly Father in Christ; open the hearts that hunger for righteousness to find eternal peace in Christ. De liver the poor prisoners of ignorance and captives of idolatry, break down the bars of error, and dispel the shadows of the ancient night; lift up the gates, and let the King of glory and the Prince of Peace come in.

Thy kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting kingdom! Strengthen Thy servants to pray and labor and wait for its appearing; forgive our little faith and the weakness of our endeavor; hasten the day when all nations shall be at peace in Thee, and every land and every heart throughout the world shall bless the name of the Lord Jesus, to the glory of God the Father. Amen. Henry van Dyke.

Fourth Week, Seventh Day The sad perversions of religious faith are not a matter for foreign missions only. At home, too, we find people who seem to be rather worse than better because they are religious. Just as power in any other form may be abused, so may religious faith. Some in the name of religion become censorious and intolerant, some superstitious, some slaves to morbid fears; and ignorance, self-conceit, pride, and worldly ambition when driven and enforced by a religious motive are infinitely worse than they would have been without it. To ward this fact two attitudes are possible. One is to throw over religion on account of its abuses; which is as reason able as to deny all the blessings of electricity because in ignorant hands it is a dangerous power. The other is to take religious faith more seriously than ever, to see how great a force for weal or woe it always is in human life, and to strive in ourselves and in others for a high, intelligent, and worthy understanding and use of it. For religion can mean what Amiel said of it: "There is but one thing needful to possess God. Religion is not a method: it is a life a higher and supernatural life, mystical in its root and practical in its fruits; a communion with God, a calm and deep enthusiasm, a love which radiates, a force which acts, a happiness which overflows." From our study of the perversion's and travesties of faith, we turn therefore in the weekly comment to consider faith's vital meanings. So Paul, writing to the Galatians, rejoices in religion as a gloriously transforming power in life. But I say, Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would. But if ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, envyings, drunkenness, revel- lings, and such like; of which I forewarn you even as I did forewarn you, that they who practise such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness* self-control; against such there is no law. And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof. Galatians 5:16-23.

Thou, O God, hast exalted us so that no longer we walk with prone head among the animals that perish, Thou hast ordained us as Thine own children, and hast planted within us that spiritual life which ever seeks, as the flame, to rise upward and mingle with Thee. Every exaltation, every pure sentiment, all urgency of true affection, and all yearning after things higher and nobler, are testimonies of the divinity that is in us. These are the threads by which Thou art drawing us away from sense, away from the earth, away from things coarse and unspiritual, and toward the ineffable. We rejoice that we have in us the witness of the Spirit, the indwelling of God. For, although we are temples defiled, though we are unworthy of such a Guest, and though we perpetually grieve Thee, and drive Thee from us, so that Thou canst not do the mighty work that Thou wouldst within us, yet we rejoice to believe that Thou dost linger near us. Even upon the outside, Thou standest knocking at the door until Thy locks are wet with the night dews, and dost persuade us with the everlasting importunity of love, and draw us upward, whether with or without our own knowledge. Thou art evermore striving to imbue us with Thyself, and to give us that divine nature which shall triumph over time and sense and matter; and we pray that we may have an enlightened understanding of this Thy work in us and upon us, and work together with Thee. Amen. Henry Ward Beecher.

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

One might be tempted by the last chapter to suppose that, if he could accept the proposition that God is personal, he would be well upon his way toward Christianity. But in theory at least Plato accepted this proposition four hundred years before Christ, when he said: "God is never in any way unrighteous He is perfect righteousness; and he of us who is most righteous is most like Him." He, too, used personality as a symbol of God. When, however, one compares Plato with Jesus, how incalculably greater is the religious meaning of our Lord! There is something more in the Master's experience and thought than the belief that God is personal. Evidently our quest must be followed further than the last chapter carried us. In Scripture two kinds of faith in the persona! God are clearly indicated. On the one side stand verses such as this: "Thou believest that God is one; thou doest well; the demons also believe and shudder" (James 2:19). On the other, one finds through both the Testaments witness and appeal for a kind of faith that plainly differs from the first: "O my God, in thee have I trusted" (Psalms 25:2). It is not difficult to guess the terms in which many would describe this difference. In the first, so the familiar explanation runs, we are dealing with the mind's faith in God; the man's intellect assents to the belief that God is and that He is one. In the second we are dealing with the heart's faith in God; the whole man is here involved in an adoring trust that finds in reliance upon God life's stimulus and joy. This distinction between the faith of the intellect and of the heart is valid, but it does not go to the pith of the truth. When a professor in the class-room, discussing conflicting theories of life's origin, concludes that theism is the reasonable interpretation of the universe, the listener understands that the lecturer believes in God's existence. But if the professor could be followed home and overheard in a private prayer, like Fenelon's: "Lord, I know not what I ought to ask of Thee; Thou only knowest what I need; Thou lovest me better than I know how to love myself. O Father! give to Thy child that which he himself knows not how to ask," something incalculably more than the classroom talk disclosed would be revealed about the meaning of the teacher's faith. And as the classroom lecture and the private prayer stand so contrasted, the gist of the difference is plain. In the one, faith was directed toward a theory; in the other faith laid hold upon a Person. That the intellect was more involved in the first and the emotions in the second is incidental to the main matter, that tivo differing objects zvere in view. Toward these two objects we continually are exercising faith ideas and people, propositions and persons.

Now faith in a proposition we conveniently may call be lief; and faith in a person, trust. We believe that gravitation and the conservation of energy universally apply, that democracy will prove better than absolutism, and that prison systems can be radically reformed; these and innumerable other propositions that cannot be demonstrated we confidently believe. But in quite another way we daily are exercising faith; we have faith in our friends. How profound a change comes over the quality and value of faith when it thus finds its objective in a person! Our beliefs in propositions are of basic import and without them we could not well exist, but it is by trust in persons that we live indeed. Belief in monogamy, for all its importance, is a cold abstraction, and few could be found to die for it. Men do not lay down their lives for abstract theories, any more than they would suffer martyrdom, as Chesterton remarked, for the Meridian of Greenwich. But when monogamy is translated from theory into personal experience, when belief in the idea becomes trust in a life-long comrade of whom one may sing, "What I do And what I dream include thee, as the wine Must taste of its own grapes," faith has taken a form for which men do live and die in glad surrender. Although the same word, faith, be applied to both, trust in persons reaches deeper than belief in propositions and supplies a warmth and power that belief cannot attain. In religion these two

aspects of faith continually are found and both are indispensable. Trust in a person, for example, presupposes belief in his existence and fidelity. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a re- warder of them that seek after him" (Hebrews 11:6). Trust cannot exist without belief, but when one seeks the inner glory of the religious life that has overflowed in prayer and hymn, supplied motive for service and power for character, he finds it not in belief, but in the vital relationships involved in trusting a Person. Men often have discussed their particular beliefs with cool deliberation, have stated them in formal creeds, have changed them with access of new knowledge and experience. But trust, the inner reliance of the soul on God and glad self-surrender to his will, has persisted through many changes, clothing itself with beliefs like garments and casting them aside when old. Trust has made rituals and churches and unmade them when they were ineffectual, it has been the life behind the theory, the experience be hind the explanation; and -its proper voice has been not creed and controversy, but psalm and song and sacrifice. Men have felt in describing this inward friendship that their best words were but the "vocal gestures of the dumb," able to indicate but unable to express their thoughts. For while belief is theology, trust is religion.

II This central position of trust in the Christian life is evident when one considers that in its presence or absence lies the chief point of difference between a religious and an irreligious man. The peculiarity of religion is not that it has beliefs; everybody has them. As we have seen, Huxley, who called himself an agnostic, said that he thoroughly believed the universe to be rational, than which only a few greater ventures of faith can be imagined. A man may not want to have beliefs. He may say that knowledge is wool, warm to clothe oneself withal, that belief is cotton, and that he will not mingle them. But for all that he still does have beliefs and he cannot help it. When, therefore, a Christian and an atheist converse they can match belief with belief. "I believe/ says one, "in God the Father"; and "I believe," says the other, "in the eternal physical universe, without spiritual origin or moral purpose." Says the Christian, "I believe in the immortality of persons," and the atheist replies, "I believe that the spirit dies with the body as sound ceases when the bell’s swinging iron grows still." Says the Christian, "I believe in the ultimate triumph of righteousness"; and the atheist replies, "I believe that all man’s aspiration after good is but the endless sailing of a ship that never shall arrive." So the two may play battledore and shuttlecock, but if, so having paired beliefs, they part with no more said, they have missed the real point of their difference. The irreligious man can match the Christian’s belief with his own, but one thing he cannot match the Christian’s trust. He has nothing that remotely corresponds with that. The Christian always has this case to plead with an unbelieving man: Do not suppose that the difference between us is exhausted in a conflict of contrasting propositions. Great indeed is the divergence there! But the issue of all such difference lies in another realm. When you face life’s abysmal mysteries that your eyes can no more pierce than mine, you have no one to trust. When misfortunes fall that send men to their graves, as Sydney Smith said, with souls scarred like a soldier’s body, you have no one to trust. When you face the last mystery of all and whether going say farewell to those who stay, or staying bid farewell to those who go, you have no one to trust. You can match my belief with your belief, but for one thing you have no counterpart. "Jehovah is my shepherd, I shall not want" (Psalms 23:1). You cannot match that! "My heart hath trusted in him, and I am helped" (Psalms 28:7). You cannot match that! "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Genesis 18:25) > "We have our hope set on the living God" (1Ti. 4:10); "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Luke 23:46). That trust you cannot match!

III In the light of this distinction between belief and trust some mistaken types of faith can be easily described. There, for example, is the faith of formal creedalism. We cannot have trust without some belief, but we may unhappily have belief without any trust. Now a man who believes the doctrines that underly the Christian life but who does not vitally trust the Person whom those doctrines present, has missed the heart out of faith's meaning. He is like one who cherishes a letter of introduction to a great personality, but has never used it; he has the formal credentials, but not the transforming experience. It follows that we cannot estimate a man merely by knowing his beliefs. I believe in all the Christian truths, says one; and the curious question rises, how did these beliefs of his come into his possession? They may have been handed to him by his forbears like a set of family jewels, a static and external heritage, which now he keeps in some ecclesiastical safe-deposit vault and on state days, at Christmas or at Easter, goes to see. Still he may claim that they are his beliefs; he may even quarrel about their genuineness, not because he ever uses them but because they are his. He may repeat the creed with the same unquestioning assent that he gives to the conventional cut of his clothes. His beliefs are not the natural utterance and explanation of his inner life with God and man, but are put on as they were handed to him, like the fashions of his coats. So easy is it to be formally orthodox!

Over against such conventional believers one thinks of other folk whom he has known. They have no such stereotyped, clear-cut beliefs. They are very puzzled about life. It seems to them abysmally mysterious. And when they speak they talk with a modesty the formal creedalist has never felt: My be liefs are most uncertain. Confused by many voices shouting conflicting opinions about truths which I once accepted with out thinking, I cannot easily define my thoughts. But I do trust God. That assent of the mind which I cannot give to propositions, I can give to him. Life is full of mystery, but I do not really think that the mystery is darkness at its heart. My faith has yet its standing ground in this, that the world's activities are not like the convulsions of an epileptic, unconscious and purposeless. There is a Mind behind the universe, and a good purpose in it.

"Yet in the maddening maze of things, And tossed by storm and flood, To one fixed trust my spirit clings; I know that God is good." Say as one may that such an attitude is far from adequate, yet as compared with the merely formal acceptance of inherited opinions how incomparably superior its religious value is! The people of placid, stiff beliefs are not the successors of the real saints. When one reads George Matheson's books of devotion, for example, or sings his hymn "O Love, that wilt not let me go," or learns of his great work in his church in Edinburgh, one might suppose that he never had a doubt. Yet listen to his own confession: "At one time with a great thrill of horror, I found myself an absolute atheist. After being ordained at Innellan, I believed nothing; neither God nor immortality. I tendered my resignation to the Presbytery, but to their honor they would not accept it, even though an Highland Presbytery. They said I was a young man and would change. I have changed." One need only read such books of his as "Can the Old Faith Live with the New?" to see through what a searching discipline of strenuous thought he passed in the regaining of his faith. But if one would know what held his religious life secure while he was working out his beliefs from confusion to clarity, one must turn to Matheson's poem, "Couldst thou love Me When creeds are breaking Old landmarks shaking With wind and sea?

Couldst thou refrain the earth from quaking And rest thy heart on Me?"

Many a man has been held fast by his trust in God while in perplexity he thought out his beliefs about God.

Indeed, within the Scripture, whatever word is used to describe the attitude of faith, this vital personal alliance with God is everywhere intended. For convenience we have called faith in propositions belief, but that does not mean that when the Scriptures use "believe" they are urging the acceptance of propositions. Not often in the Bible are we invited merely to agree with an opinion; we are everywhere called to trust a Person. "Trust in the Lord" in the Old Testament, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ" in the New, are neither of them the proclamation of a theory, but the exaltation of a personality. Wherever in Scripture doctrines are insisted on the unity of God, the deathlessness of the spirit, the divinity of Christ they are never doctrines for their own sakes; they are either commendatory truths about a Friend, that we may not fail to trust him, or they are ideas about life that have come to men because they did trust him. Trust in a Person is either the source or the goal of every Christian doctrine. The Gospel at its center is not a series of propositions, but a concrete, personal relationship opened between the soul and the Divine, out of which new powers, joys, possibilities flow gloriously into human life. When out of this experience of divine fellowship Paul, for example, speaks of faith he means by it the alliance that binds him to his friend. He fairly sings of the peace that comes from such believing (Romans 15:13), of the love that is its motive power and chief expression (Galatians 5:6), and of "the sacrifice and service" which are its issue (Php 2:17). He enthusiastically commends to everyone this divine alliance through which moral defeat is changed to victory in the "righteousness which is of God by faith" (Php 3:9); and his prose slips over into poetry when he describes his new transfigured life as "access by faith into that grace wherein we stand" (Romans 5:2). Plainly he is not talking here about a set of propositions; he is rejoicing in a transforming personal relationship. Some faith is nothing but an inherited set of opinions and it gives a cold light like an incandescent bulb; some faith, like sunshine, is brighter for seeing than any incandescence can ever be, but warm too, so that under its persuasive touch new worlds of life spring into being. The faith of the New Testament and of the real saints is not the cold brilliance of a creed in whose presence one can freeze even while he sees; it is the warm, life-giving sunshine of a trust in God that makes all gracious things grow, and puts peace and joy, hope and love into life. Belief in propositions is there, but the crown and glory of it are trust in a Person.

IV In the light of this distinction between belief and trust, the inadequacy of another typf of faith can easily be understood. Many would protest that they have not accepted their beliefs as an external heritage from the past, but rather have thought them through, and hold them now as reasonable theories to explain the facts of the spiritual life. They would say that as a geologist observes the rocks and constructs an hypothesis to account for their origin and nature, so the mind, observing man’s contacts with invisible powers, constructs religious be liefs as explanations of experience. They would insist that their theology is not merely traditional, but in large degree is independently appropriated and original. They hold it as an hypothesis to make intelligible man’s experiences of the spir itual world.

There is significant truth in this view of faith. Man’s ideals, his loves, hopes, aspirations, his unescapable sense of moral obligation, his consciousness of Someone other than himself, are facts, as solidly present in experience as stars and mountains. To explain these facts by theology is as rational as to explain the stars by astronomy. Every believer in religious truth should welcome

this confirming word from Dr. Pritchett, written when he was President of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology: "Science is grounded in faith just as is religion, and scientific truth, like religious truth, consists of hypotheses, never wholly verified, that fit the facts more or less closely." But when one turns from such a statement to inquire what faith has actually meant to religious men, he does not find that their experience could easily be defined as belief in an hypothesis. The prophets, standing their ground through national disaster, undiscourageable in their conviction of God’s good purpose for His people, would have been surprised to hear their faith so described. When the Sons of Thunder were swept out into a new life by the influence of Jesus, or the seer of Patmos was ravished with visions of eternal victory, or Paul was made conqueror in a fight for character that had been his despair, they would hardly have spoken of their experiences as belief in an hypothesis. Real religion has always meant something more vital than holding a theory about life. When Robert Louis Stevenson says of his transformation of character, "I came about like a well-handled ship. There stood at the wheel that unknown steersman whom we call God"; when Tolstoi cries: "To know God and to live are one and the same thing"; when Professor William James, of Harvard, writes of his consciousness of God, "It is most indefinite to be sure and rather faint, and yet I know that if it should cease, there would be a great hush, a great void in my life"; one sees what conversion of character, what increase of life’s value, what spiritual reenforcement religion has meant even* to such unconventional believers. When they speak of it, they are evidently thinking of a vital power and not a theory. The most obscure Christian to whom religion has become a necessity in living, knows how far short the plummet of hypothetical belief comes from reaching bottom. In sin, bur dened by a sense of guilt that he could not shake off and unable to forgive himself, he has cried to be forgiven, and the Gospel that has been his hope was no injunction to hold hard by his hypothesis! In sorrow, when the blows have fallen that either hallow or embitter life, he has sought for necessary fortitude, and the Gospel which established him certainly was not, Cast thy care on thine hypothesis! And when, more than conqueror, he faces death, his confidence and hope will rest on no such prayer as this, O Hypothesis, guide me! The word of religion is of another sort, Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me." Not belief in propositions, but trust in a Person has been the heart of the Gospel, and to make any hypothesis, however true, do duty as religion is to give the soul a stone when it asks for bread. The futility of seeking contentment in faith as an hypothesis alone is especially manifest in our time. This is an age of swiftly changing ideas in every realm. As in science, so in religion, today one theory holds the field to be displaced to morrow by another. A man in theology, as much as in politics or psychology, goes to bed supposing he has settled his opin ions, and wakes up to find a new array of evidence that disturbs his confidence. When, therefore, religious faith has meant no more to its possessor than theory, there is no security or rest. Each day the winds of opinion shift and veer, and minds at the beginning obstinate in their beliefs, at last, dismayed by the reiterated uncertainties of thought, give up their faith.

Where, then, have the men of faith found the immovable center of their confidence? Paul revealed the secret. On the side of his particular opinions he frankly confessed his limited and uncertain knowledge. "Now we know in fragments," he wrote, "now we see through a glass darkly." "How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past tracing out!" But on the side of his trust he is adamant: "I know him whom I have believed." The certainty of his life was his relation ship with a person, and his beliefs were the best he yet had thought in the explication and establishment of that trust. The great believers of the Church continually have exhibited this dual aspect of their

faith. Even St. Augustine, facing the profound mysteries involved in his trinitarian belief, complains that human speech is pitiably futile in trying to explain what "Three persons" means, and that if he uses the familiar phrase, he does so not because he likes it, but because he may not be silent and knows no better thing to say. But when Augustine prays to the God whose nature is so unfathomable that no man can see it fully or express it ade quately, he reveals no such uncertain thought: "Grant me, even me, my dearest Lord, to know Thee and love Thee and rejoice in Thee... Let the love of Thee grow every day more and more here, that it may be perfect hereafter; that my joy may be great in itself and full in Thee. I know, O God, that thou art a God of truth; O make good Thy gracious promises to me!" So children do not fully understand an earthly father and often hold conceptions grotesquely insufficient to do justice to his life and work. But they may have for him well-founded trust. Even in the years of infancy an ennobling personal relationship begins, despite the inadequacy of their beliefs, and that trust yearly deepens while mental concepts shift and change with access of new knowledge. The abiding core of a child’s life with his father is not belief but trust.

Such has always been the secret of faith’s stability in men who have entered into personal fellowship with God. Even of the first disciples it has been said "They would have had difficulty sometimes to tell you what they believed, but they could always have told you in whom they believed." The truth of which we have been speaking has pertinent bearing on the main object of our studies. We shall be considering the difficulties which Christians have with their be liefs, and the arguments which may clarify and establish our minds confidence in God. But many problems in the realm of intellectual belief cannot be solved by any arguments which the mind devises. The trouble often lies not in our theories about the religious life, but in our religious life itself. The deeper difficulty is not that our thinking is unreasonable, but that our experience is unreal. To a man who never had seen the stars or felt the wonder of their distances, astronomy would be a lifeless topic and his endeavors to think about it a blundering and futile operation. Our theories about anything depend for their interest and worth upon the vividness with which we experience the thing itself and care to understand its meaning. This is true about matters like the stars; how much more true about the intimate affairs of man’s own life! Democracy vs. autocracy is a crucial problem. But plenty of men are So careless about human weal, think so little of their country and the world as objects of solicitude and devotion, that to discuss in their presence democratic and autocratic theories of state is a waste of time. The trouble is not with their minds; they may be very clever and acute. The trouble is with their lives. They need to experience patriotism as a vital motive; they need to care immensely what happens to mankind. Only then will the problems of government grow vivid, and the need of a solution become so critical that thinking will be urgent and productive. We never think well about anything for which we do not care.

Plenty of people today discuss theology as an academic pastime. It is a speculative game at which they play, as they do at golf, for its fun and lure. They do not really care about God; they feel no crucial need of him. Of little use is all their ingenuity in argument, clever and astute though it may be. Blind men might so discuss the color scheme of an Italian landscape and deaf men debate the harmonies of Handel’s oratorios. What is lacking is experience. For our theories are only the explanations of experience, and an emptier game cannot be played than debating explanations of experiences which we have not had.

Everyone in difficulty with his faith should give due weight to this important truth. Our intellectual troubles are not all caused by the bankruptcy of our spiritual lives, but many of them are. Men live with drained and unreplenished spirits, from which communion with God and service of high causes have been crowded out. God grows unreal. The self-evidencing experiences that maintain vital confidence in the spiritual life grow dim and unimperative. Men pass years without habitually thinking as though God really were, without making any great decisions as though God's will were King, with out engaging in any sacrificial work that makes the thought of God a need and a delight, without the companionship of great ideas or the sustenance of prayer. Then, when experience js denuded of any sense of God's reality, some intellectual doubt is suggested by books or friends, or fearful trouble shatters happiness. What recourse is there in such a case? The arguments of faith have no experience to get their grip upon; they can appeal to no solid and sustained fact of living. Religious confidence goes to pieces and men tell their friends that modern philosophy has been too much for faith. But the underlying difficulty was not philosophical; it was vital. The insolvency of "belief" was due to the bankruptcy of "trust." Personal fellowship with God failed first; the theory about him lapsed afterward.

Throughout our endeavor to deal with intellectual perplexity, this fundamental truth should not be forgotten. The peril of religion is that vital experience shall be resolved into a formula of explanation, and that men, grasping the formula/ shall suppose themselves thereby to possess the experience. If one inquires what air is, the answer will probably be a formula stating that oxygen and nitrogen mixed in proportions of twenty-one to seventy-nine make air. But air in experience is not a formula. Air is the elixir we breathe and live thereby. Air is the magician who takes the words that our lips frame and bears them from friend to friend in daily converse. Air is the messenger who carries music to our ears and fragrance to our nostrils; it is the whisperer among the trees in June, and in March the wild dancer who shakes the bare branches for his castanets. Air is the giant who piles the surf against the rocky shore, and the nurse who fans the faces of the sick. One cannot put that into a formula. No more can God be put into a theology, however true. They who define him best may understand him least. God is the Unseen Friend, the Spiritual Presence, who calls us in ideals, warns us in remorse, renews us with his pardon, and comforts us with power. God is the Spirit of Righteousness in human life, whose victories we see in every moral gain, and allied with whom we have solid hopes of moral victory. God is the One who holds indeed the far stars in his hand, and yet in fellowship with whom each humblest son of man may find strength to do and to endure with constancy and fortitude and deathless hope. And when one lives close to him, so that the inner doors swing easily on quiet hinges to let him in, he is the One who illumines life with a radiance that human wills alone cannot attain. That is God "Blessed is the man that taketh refuge in him" (Psalms 34:8).

04.05. Faith's Intellectual Difficulties

CHAPTER V. Faith’s Intellectual Difficulties

DAILY READINGS

Most people will readily grant that such a sense of personal fellowship with God as the last week’s study presented is obviously desirable. Every one who has experienced such filial life with God will bear witness to its incomparable blessing. Said Tennyson, "I should be sorely afraid to live my life without God’s presence, but to feel he is by my side just now as much as you are, that is the very joy of my heart." But many who would admit the desirability of the experience are troubled about the reasonableness of the be liefs that underly it. They want intellectual assurance about their faith. Let us in the daily readings present certain considerations which a mind so perplexed should take into account.

Fifth Week, First Day

We should let no one deny our right to bring religious be lief to the test of reasonableness. Glanvill was right when in the seventeenth century he said, "There is not anything I know which hath done more mischief to Religion than the disparaging of Reason." In the New Testament Paul says, Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. 1 Thessalonians 5:21.

Peter says, Yea, and for this very cause adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue; and in your virtue knowledge. 2 Peter 1:5. This might be paraphrased to read, Faith should be worked out into character and thought through into knowledge. As for Jesus: One of the scribes came, and heard them questioning together, and knowing that he had answered them well, asked him, What commandment is the first of all? Jesus answered, The first is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God, the Lord is one: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. Mark 12:28-30. In many a life which has neglected these admonitions Lowell’s words have proved true: "Nothing that keeps thought out is safe from thought." In our resolute endeavor to think through the mystery of life, however, and to find a reason able basis for faith, we need to remember that the very desire to know is an indication of the reality which we seek. The dim intuition that the world with all its diverse powers was in some sense a unity, preceded by ages the statement of nature’s uniformity which modern science knows; and man’s tireless desire to reach a reasonable statement of the unity was an intimation in advance that unity was there. So men do not believe in God because they have proved him; they rather strive endlessly to prove him because they cannot help being sure that he must be there. This in itself is an intimation about reality which no thoughtful man will lightly set aside. Tennyson rightly describes the reason for man’s -quest after proof about God, "If e er when faith had fall n asleep, I heard a voice believe no more And heard an ever-breaking shore That tumbled in the Godless deep; A warmth within the breast would melt The freezing reason’s colder part, And like a man in wrath the heart Stood up and answer d I have felt. "Eternal Father, Quest of ages, long sought, oft doubted or forsook; can it be that Thou art known to us, the Law within our

minds, the Life of every breath we draw, the Love that yearneth in our hearts? Art Thou the Spirit who oft hast striven with us, and whom we greatly feared, lest yielding to His strong embrace we should become more than we dared to be? An impulse toward forgiveness has sometimes stirred with in us we have felt moved to show mercy, the sacrificial life has touched our aspiration; but we were unprepared to pay the price. Was this Thyself, and have we turned from Thee? Something like this we must have done, so barren, joyless and so dead has life become. Canst Thou not visit us again?

We hush our thoughts to silence, we school our spirits insincerity, and here we wait. O may we not feel once more the light upon our straining eyes, the tides of life rise again within our waiting hearts?

We never looked to meet Thee in the stress of thought, the toil of life, or in the call of duty; we only knew that somehow life had lost for us all meaning, dignity, and beauty. How then shall we turn back again and see with eyes that fear has filmed? How can we be born again, now grown so old in fatal habit?

If we could see this life of ours lived out in Thee, its common days exalted, its circumstances made a throne, its bitterness, disappointment, and failure all redeemed, then our hearts might stir again, and these trembling hands lay hold on life for evermore. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

Fifth Week, Second Day Not only is man’s tireless quest for assurance about God an intimation that God must be here to be sought after; but the spiritual nature of man which insists on the quest is itself a revelation that God actually is here. Some men say that our spiritual life is the result of evolution, and they suppose that by this magic word they have explained it. But what comes out of a process of growth was somehow latent in the Original Beginning from which the growth started. Palm-trees do not grow from acorns; only oaks evolve from acorns and for the sufficient reason that oaks are somehow involved in acorns to start with. So a universe with spiritual life in it naturally presupposes an Original with spiritual life in It. Whatever evolves must first of all have been in volved. The very fact that the seeker after God has a spiritual life, which is restless and unsatisfied without faith in the Eternal Spirit, is one of the clearest indications that, whatever else may be said about the source of life, it must be spiritual. The Nile for ages was a mystery; it flowed through Egypt a blessed necessity to the land, enriching the soil, and sustaining the people but nobody knew its source. Long before Victoria Nyanza was discovered, however, thinkers were sure that a great lake must be the explanation of the stream; and when at last they found the sources of the Nile, the lake was even greater than anyone had dreamed. So is man’s spirit a revelation of a spiritual origin even before that origin is clearly known. As the Bible puts it, Now he that wrought us for this very thing is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit. 2 Corinthians 5:5.

O God! mysterious and Infinite, Thou art the first and Thou the last: as our weeks pass away and our age rises or declines, we still return to Thee who ever art the same. We seek Thee as the sole abiding light amid the shadows of perishable things. O Thou most ancient God! to whom the heavens are but of yesterday, and the life of worlds but as the shooting star, there is no number of Thy days and mercies; and what can we do, O Lord, but throw ourselves on Thee who failest not, and from whom our pathway is not hid? With solemn and open heart we would meet Thee here. Cover not Thy self with a cloud, most High, but may our prayer pass through.

O Thou our constant Witness and our awful Judge! When we remember our thoughtless lives, our low desires, our impatient temper, our ungoverned wills, we know that Thou hast left us without excuse. For Thou hast not made us blind, O Lord, as the creatures that have no sin; nor hast Thou spared the light of holy guidance. Thy still small voice of warning whispers through our deepest conscience; and Thine open Word hath dwelt among us, full of grace and truth, and called us to the feet of Christ to choose the better part. We are not our own, and are ashamed to have lived unto ourselves. Thou hast formed us for Thy service, and we must hide our face that we have shrunk from the glorious hardships of our task, and slumbered on our holy watch. Our daily work has not been wrought as in Thy sight; and we have not made the outgoings of the morning and the evening to praise Thee. The trials of our patience we have received as earthly pains of nature, not as the heavenly discipline of faith; and the fulness of Thy bounties has come to us as dead comfort, not as the quickening touch of Thy everlasting love. O our true and only God! we have lived in a bondage of the world that bringeth no content; and the passions we serve are as strange idols that cannot deliver. Awake, awake, O Arm of the Lord! and burst our bonds in sunder; and help -the spirit that struggles within us to turn unto Thee with a pure heart, and serve Thee in newness of spirit. Amen. James Martineau.

Fifth Week, Third Day

Many stumble at the very beginning of their quest for God, because they are sure that finite mind can never know the Infinite. The Bible itself asserts that God is in one sense unknowable.

Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out. Job 37:23.

Man cannot find out the work that God hath done from the beginning even to the end. Ecclesiastes 3:2.

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Romans 11:33-34. But in the same sense in which God is unknowable, all the most important realities with which we deal are also beyond our comprehension. We do not know what electricity is, what matter is, what life is. Ether is utterly beyond the reach of our definitions, and an English scientist calls it "unknown, impalpable, the necessary condition of scientific thought." As for the constituent elements of the material world, we are told that atoms are so infinitesimally minute as to be indivisible, and yet that an "electron ranges about in the atom as a mouse might in a cathedral." The plain fact is that in any realm, human knowledge soon runs off into an unknown region where it deals with invisible realities, which it cannot define, but on which life is based. While therefore we do not know what electricity, ether, electrons, and life itself are, we do know them well in their relationship with our needs. So we may know God. Deep beyond deep in him will be past our fathoming, but what God means in his relationships with our lives we may know gloriously. O Thou who transcendest all thought of Thee as the heavens are higher than the earth; we acknowledge that we cannot search Thee out to perfection, but we thank Thee that Thou, the Invisible, contest to us in the things that are seen; that Thy exceeding glory is shadowed in the flower that blooms for a day, in the light that fades; that Thine infinite love has been incarnate in lowly human life; and that Thy presence surrounds all our ignorance, Thy holiness our sin, Thy peace our unrest.

Give us that lowly heart which is the only temple that can contain t}ie infinite. Save us from the presumption that prides itself on a knowledge which is not ours, and from the hypocrisy and carelessness which professes an ignorance which Thy manifestation has made for ever impossible. Save us from calling ourselves by a name that Thou alone canst wear, and from despising the image of Thyself Thou hast formed us to bear, and grant that knowledge of Thee revealed in Jesus Christ which is our eternal life. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

Fifth Week, Fourth Day The assurance of God may come in part from looking out ward at his creation. This universe seems superficially to be material, but really it is saturated with the presence of mind. So a city's streets, buildings, bridges, subways, and railroads might appear to careless thought grossly material; but the fact is that in their origin they all are mental. They are not simply iron and steel and stone; they are thought, plan, purpose materialized and made visible. The basic fact about them is that mind shaped them and permeates every use to which they are put. The most important and decisive force in their origination was not anything that can be seen, but the invisible thought that dreamed them and moulded them. So when one looks at creation he finds something more than matter; he finds order, law, uniformity; his mind is at home in tracing regularities, discovering laws, and perceiving purposes. Creation is not grossly material; it is saturated with the evidence of mind. Lord Kelvin, the chemist, walking in the country with Liebig, his fellow-scientist, asked his companion if he believed that the grass and flowers grew by mere chemical forces; and Liebig answered, "No, no more than I could believe that the books of botany describing them could grow by mere chemical forces."

Lift up your eyes on high, and see who hath created these, that bringeth out their host by number; he calleth them all by name; by the greatness of his might, and for that he is strong in power, not one is lacking.

Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from Jehovah, and the justice due to me is passed away from my God? Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard? The everlasting God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary; there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to him that hath no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait for Jehovah shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint. Isaiah 40:26-31.

O Thou Infinite Perfection, who art the soul of all things that are... we thank Thee for the world of matter where on we lite, wherewith our hands are occupied, and whereby our bodies are builded up and filled with food and furnished with all things needful to enjoy. We thank Thee for the calmness of Night, which folds Thy children in her arms, and rockest them into peaceful sleep, and when we wake we thank Thee that we are still with Thee. We bless Thee for the heavens over our head, arched with loveliness, and starred with beauty, speaking in the poetry of nature the psalm of life which the spheres chant before Thee to every listening soul.

We thank Thee for this greater and nobler world of spirit wherein we live, whereof we are, whereby we are strengthened, upheld, and blessed. We thank Thee for the wondrous powers which Thou hast given to man, that Thou hast created him for so great an estate, that thou hast enriched him with such noble faculties of mind and conscience and heart and soul, capable of such continual increase of growth and in come of inspiration from Thyself. We thank Thee for the wise mind, for

the just conscience, for the loving heart, and the soul which knows Thee as Thou art, and enters into communion with Thy spirit, rejoicing in its blessing from day to day. Amen. Theodore Parker.

Fifth Week, Fifth Day The vital assurance of faith always comes, not so much from observing the outer world, as from appreciating the meaning of man's inner life. Man knows that he is some thing more than a physical machine. Theorists may say that our minds are only a series of molecular changes in the brain; but man turns to ask: Who is it that is watching these molecular changes? The very fact that we can discuss them, is proof that we are something more than they are and of another order. Leslie Stephen was an agnostic, but at the thought of man as merely a physical machine he grew impatient. "I knock down a man and an image," he said, "and both fall down because both are material. But when the man gets up and knocks me down, the result is not explicable by any merely mechanical action." Man denies his own in ward consciousness of self when he refuses to acknowledge the mental and spiritual part of him as the thing he really is. Man may have a body, but he surely is a soul. And when man lets this highest part of him speak its own charac teristic word, he always hears a message like this: I am spirit; to grow into great character is the one worthy end of my existence; but how came I to be spirit with spiritual purpose unless my Creator is of like quality? and how can I believe that my existence and my purpose are not a cruel joke unless I am begotten by a Spiritual Life that will sustain my strength and crown my effort? To believe that man's soul is a foundling, laid on the doorstep of a merely physical universe, crying in vain for any father who begot him or any mother who conceived him, is to make our highest life a liar. Therefore man at his best has always believed in God. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God. For ye received not the spirit of bondage again unto fear; but ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God. Romans 8:14-16.

O Thou whom no name can tell, whom all our thoughts can not fully comprehend, we rejoice in all Thy goodness... We thank Thee for our body, this handful of dust so curiously and wonderfully framed together. We bless Thee for this sparkle of Thy fire that we call our soul, which enchants the dust into thoughtful human life, and blesses us with so rich a gift. We thank Thee for the varied powers Thou hast given us here on earth. We bless Thee for the far-reaching mind, which puts all things underneath our feet, rides on the winds and the waters, and tames the lightning into useful service... We thank Thee for this conscience, whereby face to face we commune with Thine everlasting justice. We thank Thee for the strength of will which can overpower the weakness of mortal flesh, face danger and endure hardship, and in all things acquit us like men...

We thank Thee for this religious sense, whereby we know Thee, and, amid a world of things that perish, lay fast hold on Thyself, who alone art steadfast, without beginning of days or end of years, forever and forever still the same. We thank Thee that amid all the darkness of time, amid joys that deceive us and pleasures that cheat, amid the transgressions we commit, we can still lift up our hands to Thee, and draw near Thee with our heart, and Thou blessest us still with more than a father's or a mother's never-ending love. Amen. Theodore Parker.

Fifth Week, Sixth Day

One ground of assurance concerning faith is the way a sincere fellowship with God affects life. In a delicious pas sage of his autobiography, Benjamin Franklin says, "I was scarce fifteen, when, after doubting by turns of several points, as I found them disputed in the different books I read, I began

to doubt of Revelation itself. Some books against Deism fell into my hands; they were said to be the substance of sermons preached at Boyle's Lectures. It happened that they wrought an effect on me quite contrary to what was intended by them; for the arguments of the Deists which were quoted to be refuted, appeared to me much stronger than the refutations; in short I soon became a thorough Deist. My arguments perverted some others, particularly Collins and Ralph; but, each of them having after wards wrong d me greatly without the least compunction, and recollecting Keith's conduct towards me (who was an other free thinker), and my own towards Vernon and missread, which at times gave me great trouble, I began to suspect that this doctrine, tho it might be true, was not very Useful." Many men, not yet able to see clearly the issue of conflicting arguments, are practically convinced in favor of faith by the relative effects on life of faith and unbelief. When one carries this thought out until he imagines a world where no one any more believes in God, he feels even more emphatically the negative results of unbelief. As Sir James Stephen said, "We cannot judge of the effects of Atheism from the conduct of persons who have been educated as believers in God, and in the midst of a nation which believes in God. If we should ever see a generation of men to whom the word God has no meaning at all, we should get a light on the subject which might be lurid enough." A practical working conviction is often gained in religion, as in every other realm, not by argument, but by acting on a principle until it verifies itself by its results, or, as in Benjamin Franklin's case, by trying a negation until one is driven from it by its consequences.

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves. By their fruits ye shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but the corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Therefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Matthew 7:15-20.

O God, who remainest the same though all else fades, who changest not with our changing moods, who leavest us not when we leave Thee; we thank Thee that when we lose faith in Thee, soon or late we come to faith in something that leads us back again with firmer trust and more sincerity. Even if we wander into the far country we take ourselves with us; ourselves who are set towards Thee as rivers to the sea. If we turn to foolishness, our hearts grow faint and weary, our path is set with thorns, the night overtakes us, and we find we have strayed from light and life.

Grant to us clearer vision of the light which knows no shade of turning, that we stray not in folly away; incline our hearts to love the truth alone, so that we miss Thee not at last; give us to realise of what spirit we are, so that we cleave ever to Thee, who alone can give us rest and joy. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

Fifth Week, Seventh Day When all is said and done in the matter of intellectual assurance, many are confused by the seeming lack of finality in the result. After all these ages of debate, they say, see all the innumerable opinions of jarring sects about religious truth! Evidently there is no satisfying conclusion obtainable at all! But look at the innumerable schools of medicine shall one on their account decide that health is a fruitless study? Consider the infinite variety of taste in food shall we say that therefore hunger and its satisfaction is a futile question to discuss? Rather, the very variety of the answers in man's quest reveals the importance of the quest itself. Of course

proof of God lacks the finality of a scientific demonstration, and this is true because it moves in a realm so much more important than anything that science touches. Exactness and finality are possible only in the least important realms. One can measure and analyze and describe to a minute nicety a table which a carpenter has made, but when one turns to the carpenter himself and endeavors to analyze his motives, weigh his thoughts, estimate his quality, and prove his purposes, one drops minute nicety at once. The carpenter is not to be put into a column of figures and added with mathematical precision as his table is. The farther up one moves in the scale the less precise and undeniable do his conclusions be come. So science is exact just because it deals with meas urable things; but religion, by as much as its realm is more important, can less easily pack its conclusions into neat parcels finally tied up and sealed. A man who will not believe anything which is not precisely demonstrable must eliminate from his life everything except what yardsticks can measure and scales can weigh. Let no man ever give up the fight for faith because he does not seem at once to be reaching an answer which he can neatly formulate. Let him remember Tolstoi, writing on his birthday: "I am twenty-four, and I have not done a thing yet. But I feel that not in vain have I been struggling for nearly eight years against doubt and temptation. For what am I destined? This only the future will disclose."

Hear, O Jehovah, when I cry with my voice:

Have mercy also upon me, and answer me.

When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee,

Thy face, Jehovah, will I seek.

Hide not thy face from me;

Put not thy servant away in anger:

Thou hast been my help;

Cast me not off, neither forsake me,

O God of my salvation. When my father and my mother forsake me, Then Jehovah will take me up. Teach me thy way, O Jehovah; And lead me in a plain path, Because of mine enemies.

Deliver me not over unto the will of mine adversaries: For false witnesses are risen up against me, And such as breathe out cruelty. I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of Jehovah In the land of the living. Wait for Jehovah, Be strong, and let thy heart take courage; Yea, wait thou for Jehovah. Psalms 27:7-14.

Deliver us, our Father, from all those mists which do arise from the low places where we dwell, which rise up and hide the sun, and the stars even, and Thee. Deliver us from the narrowness and the poverty of our conceptions. Deliver us from the despotism of our senses. And grant unto us this morning, the effusion of Thy Spirit, which shall bring us into the realm of spiritual things, so that we may, by the use of all that which is divine in us, rise into the sphere of Thy thought, into the realm where Thou dwellest, and whither have trooped from the ages the spirits of just men now made perfect. Grant, we -pray Thee, that we may not look with time-eyes upon eternal things, measuring and dwarfing with our imperfectness the fitness and beauty of things heavenly. So

teach us to come into Thy presence and to rise by sympathy into Thy way of thinking and feeling, that so much as we can discern of the invisible may come to us aright. Amen. Henry Ward Beecher.

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

While it is true that in many cases the apparent unreasonableness of Christian faith springs from the underlying unreality of Christian life, this is not always a sufficient diag nosis of doubt. Horace G. Hutchinson, the English golfer, who spent much of his life in agnosticism and has now come over into Christian faith, thus interprets the spirit of his long unbelief: "All the while 1 had the keenest consciousness of the comfort that one would gain could he but believe in the truth of the Christian promises. Surely that must always be the agnostic's mood... It is not that they wilfully reject the appeal to the heart; their will is eager to respond to it. But man has his gift of reason; it cannot be that he is not intended to use it. Least of all can it be part of the great design that he should suspend its use in regard to the most important subject to which his thought can be directed."

Such sincere intellectual difficulties with faith must be met with intellectual arguments and not with moral accusations. Plenty of folk of elevated character and admirable lives grant, sometimes impatiently, that the Christian faith is beautiful but is it so? Is not its solacing power a deceptive sleight of hand, by which our pleasing fancies and desires are made to look like truth? So a mirage is beautiful to weary travelers, but their temporary comfort rests on fallacy. McTaggart summed up one of the most wide-spread and masterful desires of this generation when he said, "What people want is a religion they can believe to be true." As one sets himself to meet faith's intellectual difficulties, the attitude in which he is to approach the problem is all- important. Samuel M. Crothers tells us that a young man once left with him a manuscript for criticism, and remarked in passing, "It is only a little bit of my work, and it will not take you long to look it over. In fact it is only the first chapter in which I explain the Universe." When one out grows this cocksure presumption of youth and gains a graver and more seasoned mind, he leaves behind the attempt to pierce to creation's last secret. He sees that we can no more neatly and finally demonstrate God than we can demonstratey any of life's important faiths. Moreover proof of God, as a theorem in philosophy, is not a deep human need. Men often have supposed that they had such demonstration, but human experience was little affected by the fact. The exhaustless source of mankind's desire for assurance about God is not theoretical curiosity but vital need, and until a man feels the need, sees how urgently man's high est life reaches out toward God, he never will make much of any arguments. Browning's bishop asks his friend, "Like you this Christianity or not? It may be false, but will yo u wish it true? Has it your vote to be so if it can?"

Until a man gives an affirmative answer to that inquiry, until he possesses a life that itself suggests God and wants him, he is not likely to arrive anywhere by argument alone. This is not the case with Christianity only. We cannot prove with theoretical finality that monogamy is the form of family life to which the universe is best adapted. But mankind, trying many experiments with family life, has found in the monogamous family values unique and indispensable. It is because men feel the value of such a love-bond, that they begin to argue for it. And their argument, when one sees deeply into it, is framed after this fashion: We know the worth of this family-life of faithful lovers. We want. monogamy and we propose to have it. We do not pretend that our faith in monogamy, as

the form of marriage best fitted to this universe, is capable of exact demonstration; but we do see arguments of great weight in favor of it and we do not see any convincing arguments against it We are persuaded that our faith has reasonable right of way; and we propose to go on believing in monogamy and practicing it and combating its enemies, until we prove our case in the only way such cases ever can be finally proved, by the issue of the matter in the end. So men come into the sort of personal and social life that Jesus represents. Apart from any theories, they value the life itself its ideals of character, friendship, service, trust. If honesty allows, they propose to live that life. When a man has gone far enough in Christian experience, so that he comes, up to his intellectual difficulties by such a road, he is likely to profit by a consideration of the reasons in favor of I faith. He is in the attitude of saying: I have found great living in Christ. No argument for the Christian experience can be quite so convincing as the Christian experience itself. I am bound to have that life if I honestly can, and I will search to see whether there is any insuperable intellectual difficulty in the way of it.

II

One of the initial perplexities of faith concerns the sort of intellectual assurance which we have a right to expect. In a laboratory of physics, the investigator gathers facts, makes inductions as to their laws, and then verifies his findings. He uses a simplicity of procedure and gains a finality of result that makes all other knowledge seem relatively insecure. To be sure, the scientist may seek long for his truth and make many ineffectual guesses that prove false, but, in the end, he reaches a conclusion so demonstrable that every man of wit enough to investigate the subject must agree that it is so. How the Christian wishes for such certainty concerning God!

Before, however, any one surrenders confidence in God, be cause confessedly the affirmations of religious faith cannot be established by such methods as a physicist employs, there is ample reason for delay. We are certain that heat, expands and cold contracts, and we can prove the fact and state its laws. But are we not also sure that it is wrong to lie and right to tell the truth? This conviction about truthfulness at least equals in theoretical certainty and in practical right to determine conduct, our confidence in heat’s expanding power. This conviction about truthfulness does actually sway life more than does any single scientific truth that one can name. Let us then set ourselves to prove our moral confidence by such methods as the physical laboratory can supply with yard sticks, and Troy weight scales, and test tubes, and meters I At once it is evident that if we are to hold only such truth as is amenable to the demonstration of a laboratory, we must bid farewell to every moral conviction that hitherto has influenced our lives. God, banished because the physicist cannot prove him, will have good company in exile!

Moreover, all our esthetic convictions will have to share that banishment. We know that some things are beautiful. The consensus of the race’s judgment has not so much agreed to accept the new astronomy as it has agreed to think sunrise glorious and snow-capped mountains wonderful. Take from lour lives our judgments on beauty, so that we may call no music marvelous, no poetry inspiring, no scenery sublime, } and some of the most intimate and assured convictions we possess will have to go. A man who has seen the Matterhorn at dawn, when the first shaft of light reaches its rocky pin nacle and streams down in glory over the glaciers that cape its shoulders, will not disbelieve the splendor of the scene, though all the world beside unanimously should cry that it is not beautiful. But prove it by the methods of a laboratory? When the geologist has analyzed all

the mountain’s rocks, the chemist all its minerals; when the astronomer has traced the earth’s orbit that brings on the dawn, and the physicist has counted and tabulated the rays of light that make the colors, our conviction of the scene’s beauty will be as little explained or proved as is our confidence in God. It becomes clear that some convictions which we both do and must hold are not amenable to the sort of proof which a scientific laboratory furnishes.

Moreover, if we will have no truth beyond the reach of a physicist’s demonstration, all our convictions in the realm of personal relationship will have to go. We know that friendship-love is the crown of every human fellowship. Father and son, mother and daughter, brother and sister, wife and husband these relationships are in themselves bare branches wanting the foliage and fruit of friendship. Of no truth is man at his best more sure than he is that "Life is just our chance o the price of teaming love." But no laboratory ever can deal with such a truth, much less establish it. For this is the neglected insight, for the want of which our religious confidence is needlessly unstable: Every realm of reality has its own appropriate kind of proof, and a method of proof available in one realm is seldom, if ever, usable in another. That truthfulness is right is in a way provable, but methods proper to the moral realm must be allowed; that the Matter- horn is sublime is in a sense provable, but by methods which the esthetic realm permits; that love is the crown of life can be soundly established, but one must employ a method appro priate to personal relationships. If, obsessed by the procedure of a laboratory as the solitary path to knowledge, one will have no convictions which cannot meet its tests, then in good logic there must be a great emigration from his soul. All his convictions about morals and beauty, all his convictions about personal friendships and about God must leave together. He will have a depopulated spirit. No man could live on such terms for a single hour. The most essential and valuable equipment of our souls is in convictions which the demonstrations of a physicist can as little reach as an inch worm, clambering up the Himalayas, can measure the distance to the sun.

III A man to whom the Christian life has come to be preeminently valuable, and who is asking whether it is intellectually justifiable, is set free, by such considerations as we just have noted, to seek assurance where religious assurance may properly be found. For one thing, he may find help by trying out the creed of no-God. Many a man is a wavering believer, makes little excursions into doubt and returns hesitant and unhappy, because he never has dared to see his doubts through to their logical conclusion and to face the world with God eliminated.

One may sense the general atmosphere of the world, under the no-God hypothesis, by saying, In all this universe there (is no mind essentially greater than mine. The import of such V a statement grows weightier the more one ponders it. All human minds are infinitesimal in knowledge; endless realities must lie beyond our reach; "our science is a drop, our ignorance a sea." Yet human knowledge is all that anywhere exists, if the no-God hypothesis is true. There is no knower who knows more, and the infinite reality beyond our grasp is not known by any mind at all. No one ever thought it or will think it through eternity. Then, let a man add, In all this universe there is no goodness essentially greater than mine. \ Human goodness is pitiably partial; it is but prophecy of what goodness ought to mean; "Man is a dwarf of himself," as Emerson said. But human goodness is all that anywhere exists, if the no-God hypothesis is true. There never will be any better goodness anywhere, and when the earth comes to its end in a solar catastrophe, there will be no goodness left at all. Certainly the hypothesis of no-God raises more questions than it easily can quell.

Indeed the Christian, long accused by unbelieving friends of gross credulity because he holds his creed, may well leave his defense and "go over the top" in an offensive charge. If it is a question of holding creeds, unbelief is a creed as certainly as belief is; it says, I believe that there is no God or that God cannot be known. If it is a question of credulity, the Christian suspects that of all the different kinds of credulousness which the world has seen, nothing ever has surpassed the capacity of modern sceptics to accept impossible beliefs. He who says, I believe that there is no God, nor anything which that name might reasonably connote, is saying, I believe that the fundamental reality everywhere is physical. Long ages ago atoms, electrons, "mobile cosmic ethers" began their mysterious -organization, whose present issue is planetary orbits, rocks, organic life, and, highest point of all, the brain of man. Man's mind is but the moving shadow cast by the activity of brain. Man's character is the subtle fragrance of his nerves. Everywhere, if the no-God hypothesis be true, spirit is a result, physical energy the cause.

Some starting corollaries follow such a view. No man can be blamed for anything. Molecular action in the brain is responsible alike for saints and sinners, and we are as power less to change our quality of character or action as a planet is to change its course. Judas and Jesus, Festus and Paul, the Belgian lads and the Prussian officers who mutilated them, the raper and the raped why blame the one or praise the other when all characters alike are ground from a physical machine, whose action is predetermined by the push of universal energy behind? One man even says that to condemn an immoral deed is like Xerxes whipping the Hellespont punishment visited on physical necessity which is not to blame. The second corollary is not less starthng: every man thinks as he does because of molecular action in the brain. A Christian believes in God because his molecules maneuver so, and his opponent is an atheist because his molecules maneuver otherwise, and all convictions of truth, however well debated and reasoned out, are fundamentally the work of atoms, not of mind. What we call intellect as little causes anything as steam from a kettle causes the boiling out of which it comes. Some brains boil Socialism, some do not; some brains boil Episcopalianism and some Christian Science. A determinist and a believer in freewill differ as do oaks and elm trees, for physical reasons only, and folk are Catholic in southern Europe so we are informed because their skulls are narrow and in northern Europe Protestants because their skulls are broad. Truth is a nickname for a neurosis. The standing marvel is that on some matters like the multiplication table our brains boil so unanimously. A third corollary still remains: we have no creative. power of mind and will. All that is and is to be was wound up in primeval matter, and now in our thoughts and actions is ticking like a clock. "All of our philosophy," says Huxley, "all our poetry, all our science, and all our art Plato, Shakespeare, Newton, and Raphael are potential in the fires of the sun." That is to say, Plato had nothing to do with creating his philosophy, nor Shakespeare with writing plays they were empty megaphones and the real voice is the physical machine from which all things come. Professor Bowne of Boston University, after the publication of his "Metaphysics," received from a physicist a protest against his emphasis on the reality of mind. The professor of physics insisted that the only fundamental reality was physical and that mind is always a result of brain's activity and never a cause of anything. To this Professor Bowne replied that according to the writer's own theory, as he understood it, the letter of protest was the result of certain physical forces issuing in nervous excitations that made scratches on paper, and that the writer's mind had nothing effectual to do with its composition. This, said Professor Bowne, might be a plausible explanation of the letter, but he was unwilling to apply it to the universe. What wonder that the physicist acknowledged to a friend that the retort nettled him,

for he did not see just how to answer it?

IV

One’s discontent with this reduction of our lives to physical causation is increased when he studies the mental process by which men reach it. It is as if a man should perceive in the works of Shakespeare insight and beauty, pathos and laughter, despair and hope, and should set himself to explain all these as the function of the type. How plausibly he could do it! If one takes Shakespeare’s sentences full of spiritual meaning he can readily resolve them into twenty-six constituent letters of the alphabet, and these into certain hooks and dashes, and these into arithmetical points diffused in space. Starting with such abstract points, let one suppose that some fortunate day they arranged themselves into hooks and dashes, and these into letters of the alphabet, and these by fortuitous concourse came together into sentences. Reading them we think we see deep spiritual meaning, but they are all the work of type; the fundamental reality is arithmetical points diffused in space. Such is the process by which a man reduces the mental and moral life of man back to its physical basis; then breaks up the physical basis into atoms; then, starting with these abstractions, builds up again the whole world which he just has analyzed, and thinks he has explained the infinitely significant spiritual life of man. Not for a long time will we accept such a method of explaining the works of Shakespeare! Nor can man contentedly be made to follow so inconsequential a process of thought as that by which the mind and character of Jesus are reduced to a maneuver of molecules. The attractiveness of this explanation of the universe as a huge physical machine is easily understood. It presents a simple picture, readily grasped. It packs the whole explanation of the world into a neat parcel, portable by any mind. In the days of monarchy the government of the universe was pictured in terms of an absolute sovereign; in feudal times the divine economy was pictured as a gigantic feudalism; we always use a dominant factor in the life of man to help us picture the eternal. So in the age whose builder and maker is machinery we easily portray the universe as a huge ma chine. The process is simple and natural, but to suppose that it is adequate is preposterous. Lord Kelvin, the chemist, knew thoroughly the mechanistic idea of the world. He felt the fascination of it, for he said at Johns Hopkins University, "I never satisfy myself until I make a mechanical model of a thing. If I can make a mechanical model I can understand it. As long as I cannot make a mechanical model all the way through, I cannot understand." But Lord Kelvin knew better than to suppose that this figure comprehended all of reality. "The atheistic idea," said he, "is so nonsensical, that I do not know how to put it into words." The rejection of the no-God hypothesis does not necessarily imply that a man becomes fully Christian in his thought of deity. There are way-stations between no-God and Jesus Father. But it does mean that to him reality must be funda mentally spiritual, not physical. What other hypothesis possibly can fit the facts? For consider the view of a growing universe which we see from the outlook that modern science furnishes. Out of a primeval chaos where physical forces snarled at each other in unrelieved antagonism, where no man had yet arisen to love truth and serve righteousness, some thing has brought us to a time, when for all our evil, there are mothers and music and the laughter of children at play, men who love honor and for service sake lay down their lives, and homes in every obscure street where fortitude and sacri fice are splendidly exhibited. Out of a chaos, where a contemporary observer, could there have been one, would have seen no slightest promise of spirit, something has brought us to the Ten Commandments, and the Sermon on the Mount, to great character and growing achievements in social

righteousness, to lofty thoughts of the Divine and hopes oi life eternal. Something has been at work here besides matter. No explanation of all this will do, without God.

Another source of confirmation for the man who, valuing Christian experience, seeks assurance that it is intellectually justifiable, is to be found in the effect of Christian faith on life itself. The nautical tables can be proved by an astronomer in his observatory; but if they are given to a sailor and he beats about the seas with them in safety, finding that they make adventurous voyages practicable, that also would be important witness to their truth. So the Christian ideas of life have not been kept by studious recluses to ponder over and weave philosophies about; they have been down in the market place, men have been practically trying them for generations, and they make great living. The ultimate ground of practical assurance about anything; is that we have tried it and that it works. A man may have experience that other persons exist, may draw the inference that friendly relations with them are not impossible, but only when he launches out and verifies his thought in an adventure will he really be convinced of friendship’s glory. In no other way has final assurance about God come home to man. They who have lived as though God were have been convinced that he is; they who have willed to do his will have I known. That religious faith does justify itself in life is a fact to which mankind’s experience amply testifies. Men have come to God, not as chemists to bread curious to analyze it; they have come as hungry men, needing to eat if they would live. And they have found life glorified by faith in him. The difference between religion and irreligion here is plain. How seldom one finds enthusiastic unbelievers! When all that is fine spirited and resolute in agnostic literature is duly weighed and credited, the pessimistic undertone is always heard. Leslie Stephen thus summarizes life "There is a deep sadness in the world. Turn and twist the thought as you may there is no escape. Optimism would be soothing if it were possible; in fact, it is impossible, and therefore a constant mockery." No gospel burns in the unbeliever’s mind, urgent for utterance; he has no inspiring outlooks to offer, no glad tidings to declare. The more intelligent he is the more plainly he sees this. With Clifford he laments that "the spring sun I shines out of an empty heaven to light up a soulless earth" *and feels "with utter loneliness that the Great Companion is dead"; with Romanes he frankly states, "So far as the ruination of individual happiness is concerned, no one can have a more lively conception than myself of the possibly disastrous tendency of my work." An unbeliever whose admirable life raised the question as to the philosophy by which he guided it, gave this summary of his creed, "I am making the best of a bad mess." Unbelievers do not spontaneously utter in song the glory of a creed like this, and when they do write poetry, it is of a sort that music will not fit "The world rolls round forever like a mill, It grinds out death and life and good and ill, It has no purpose, heart, or mind or will." When from poetry one turns to philosophy, he can see good reasons why hymnals and unbelief should be uncongenial. There is little to make life worth while in a creed which holds as Haeckel does that morality in man, like the tail of a monkey or the shell of a tortoise, is purely a physiological effect, and that man himself is "an affair of chance; the froth and fume at the wave-top of a sterile ocean of matter." Shall the practical unserviceableness of such an idea for the purpose of life, awaken no suspicion as to its truth?

Upon the other hand, suppose that by some strange chance the principles of Jesus should over night take possession of mankind. Even as it is, when one starts his thought with the Stone Age, the progress of mankind has obviously been immense. From universal cannibalism after a battle, to massacre without cannibalism marked one great advance; from massacre of all prisoners taken

in war to enslavement of them marked another; and when slavery ceased being a philanthropic improvement, as it was at first, and became a sin and shame, humanity took another long step forward. With all our present barbarity, a far look backwards shows a clear ascent As for the influence of Jesus, Lecky, the historian, tells us that "The simple record of three short years of Christ's active life has done more to regenerate and soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers and all! the exhortations of moralists." What if this process were 1 brought to its fulfilment between sunset and dawn, and the new day came with every one sure of God's fatherhood and life eternal, of the law of love and the supremacy of character and with everyone living as though these were true? Whatever intellectual perplexities of belief a man may have, he knows that such a world would be divinely great. No war, no evil lust, no covetous selfishness, no drunkenness I Mankind, relieved of ancient burdens which have ruined character and crushed endeavor, confident of faiths that give life infinite horizons and deathless hopes, in cooperative international fraternity would be making the earth a decent home for God to rear his children in. One finds it hard to believe that ideas which, incarnate in life, would so redeem the world are false. As to the effect of the Christian affirmations on individual character, we do not need to picture an imagined future. A Character has been here who has lived them out. A jury of philosophers might analyze the wood-work and the metals of an organ, and guess from form and material what it is, but we still should need for our assurance a musician. When he sweeps the keys in harmony we know that it is an organ. So when the philosophers have debated the pros and cons of argument concerning faith, Jesus plays the Gospel. His life is the Christian affirmations done into character. When religious faith, at its best, is incarnate in a Man, this is the consequence. And multitudes of folk, living out the implications of the faith, have found the likeness of the Master growing in them. Weighty confirmation of the Gospel's truth arrives when its meaning is translated into life; the world will not soon reject the New Testament in this edition bound in a Man. To one in perplexity about belief, this proper question there forerises: What do we think about the Christ character? Is it not life at its sublimest elevation? But to acknowledge that and yet to deny the central faiths by which such life is lived is to say that those ideas which, incarnate, make living great are false, and those ideas which leave life meager of motive and bereft of hope are true. No one lives on such a basis in any other realm. We always mistrust the validity of any idea which works poorly or not at all. And so far from being a practical makeshift, this "negative pragmatism" is a true principle of knowledge. Says Professor Hocking, of Harvard, "If a theory has no consequences, or bad ones; if it makes no difference to men, or else undesirable differences; if it lowers the capacity of men to meet the stress of existence, or diminishes the worth to them of what existence they have; such a theory is somehow false, and we have no peace until it is remedied." The last word against irreligion is that it makes life unlivable; the last word for faith is that it makes life glorious.

VI

One who is facing intellectual difficulties in the way of faith may well consider that the very Christian life for whose possession he is seeking justification is itself an argument of the first importance. This life grew up in the universe; it is one expression of the universe; and it is hard to think that it does not reveal a nature kindred to itself in the source from which it came.

Mankind has always experienced a relationship with the Unseen which has seemed like communion of soul with Soul. When a psychologist like Professor James, of Har vard, reduces to its most general terms this religious Fact which has been practically universal in the race, he puts

it thus: "Man becomes conscious that this higher part (his spir itual life) is coterminous and continuous with a MORE of the same quality, which is operative in the universe outside of him, and which he can keep in working touch with, and in a fashion get on board of and save himself when all his lower being has gone to pieces in the wreck." No experience of man is more common in occurrence, more tremendous in result than this. From the mystics whose vivid sense of God can celed their consciousness that anything else was real, to plain folk who in the strength of the divine alliance have lived ordinary lives with extraordinary spirit, mankind as a whole has known that the best in man is in contact with a MORE.

One does not need to be of a mystical temperament, given to raptures, to know what this means. Let him consider his own experience of love and duty, how he is bound by them to his ideals and woven into a community of personal life not only with his friends but with all humanity, until this spiritual life of his becomes the most august and commanding power he knows. When in our bodies we so discern a physical nature, whose laws and necessities we did not create, and whose power binds us into a community of need and labor with our fellows, our conclusion is confident. This experience is the basis of our assurance that a physical universe is really here. When, likewise in our inner selves we find a spiritual life, which man did not create, in obedience to which alone is safety, and peace, and power, what shall we conclude? That there is a spiritual universe as plainly evidenced in man’s soul as the physical universe is in the body! And when we note the attributes of this Spiritual Order, how it demands righteousness, rebukes sin, welcomes obedience and holds out ideals of endless possibility, it is plain that we are talking about some- 4 thing close of kin to God. As in summer we beat out through some familiar bay, naming the headlands as we sail, until if we go far enough, we cannot prevent our eyes from looking out across the unbounded sea, so if a man moves out through his own familiar spiritual life far enough, he comes to the Spiritual Order which is God. Man has not drifted into his religion by accident or fallen on it merely as superstition; he has moved out from his inner life to affirm a Spiritual Order as inevitably as he has moved out from his bodily expe riences to affirm a physical universe. When from this general experience we turn to the specific experiences of religion, which prayer and worship represent, the testimony of the race is confident. Men have not all these ages been lifting up their souls to an unreality from which no response has come. The artesian well of transforming influence in human souls has not flowed from Nowhere.

Some, indeed, hearing confidence in God founded on the indi vidual experiences of man, derisively cry "Nonsense!" But if one were to prove that the Sistine Madonna is beautiful, he would have to offer his experience in evidence. "I went to Dresden," he might say, "up into the room where the Madonna hangs... and it is beautiful. I saw it." Met with derision by a doubter, as though his experience were no proof at all, how shall he proceed? "I am not the only one," he might continue, "who has perceived its beauty. All these centuries the folk best qualified to judge have gone up into that room and have come down again, sure that Raphael’s work is beautiful." Is anyone in a position to deride that? So through all ages men and women, from lowest savages to the race’s spiritual kings and queens, have gone up to the Divine, and, at their best, from experiences of prayer, worship, for given sins, transfigured lives, have come down sure that Reality is there. One may not call nonsense the most universal and influential experience of the human race! The force of this fact is more clearly seen when one considers that man has grown up in this universe, gradually developing his powers and functions as responses to his

environment. If he has eyes, so the biologists assure us, it is be cause the light waves played upon the skin and eyes came out in answer; if he has ears it is because the air waves were there first and ears came out to hear. Man never yet, according to the evolutionist, has developed any power save as a reality called it into being. There would be no fins if there were no water, no wings if there were no air, no legs if there were no land. Always the developing organism has been trying to "catch up with its environment." Yet some would tell us that man’s noblest power of all has developed in a vacuum. They would say that his capacity to deal with a Spir itual World, to believe in God, and in prayer to experience fellowship with him, has all grown up with no Reality to call it into being. If so, it stands alone in man’s experience, the only function of his life that grew without an originating Fact to call it forth. It does not seem reasonable to think that. The evidence of man’s experience is overwhelmingly in favor of a Reality to which his spirit has been trying to answer. Said Max Miller, "To the philosopher the existence of God may seem to rest on a syllogism; in the eyes of the historian it rests on the whole evolution of human thought."

04.06. Faith's Greatest Obstacle

CHAPTER VI. Faith’s Greatest Obstacle

DAILY READINGS The speculative doubts leave many minds untouched, but one universal human experience sooner or later faces every serious life with questions about God’s goodness. We all meet trouble, in ourselves or others, and oftentimes the wonder why in God’s world such calamities should fall, such wretchedness should continually exist, plunges faith into perplexity. Few folk of mature years can fail to understand Edwin Booth when he wrote to a friend, "Life is a great big spelling book, and on every page we turn the words grow harder to understand the meaning of." Now, the basis of any intelligent explanation of faith’s problem must rest in a right practical attitude toward trouble. To the consideration of that we turn in the daily readings.

Sixth Week, First Day

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial among you, which cometh upon you to prove you, as though a strange thing happened unto you: but insomuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings, rejoice; that at the revelation of his glory also ye may rejoice with exceeding joy. If ye are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are ye; because the Spirit of glory and the Spirit of God resteth upon you. For let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil-doer, or as a meddler in other men’s matters: but if a man suffer as a I Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name... Wherefore let them also that suffer according to the will of God commit their souls in well-doing unto a faithful Creator. 1 Peter 4:12-16, 1 Peter 4:19.

Such an attitude toward trouble as Peter here recommends is the most wholesome and hopeful possible to man. And it is reasonable too, if only on the ground that trouble develops in men the essential qualities of strong character. Our high est admiration is always reserved for men who master difficult crises. If the story of Joseph, begun beside Bedouin camp fires centuries ago, can easily be naturalized beside modern radiators; if Robinson Crusoe, translated into every tongue is understood by all, the reason lies in the depth of man’s heart, where to make the most out of untoward situations is a daily problem. Not every one can grasp the argument or perceive the beauty of "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained," but one thing about them every man appreciates the blind Milton, sitting down to write them, "

I argue not

Against Heaven’s hand or will, nor bate a jot Of heart or hope; but still bear up and steer Right onward." The full understanding of Ole Bull’s playing on the violin was necessarily restricted to the musical, but no restriction bounds the admiration of men, learned or simple, when in a Munich concert, his A string snaps and he finishes the composition on three strings. That is the human problem in epitome. Getting music out of life’s remainders after the break has come; winning the battle with what is left from a defeat; going blind, like Milton, and writing sublimest poetry, or deaf, like Beethoven, and composing superb sonatas; being reared in an almshouse and buried from Westminster Abbey, like Henry M. Stanley; or, like Kernahan, born with out arms or legs and yet

sitting at last in the British Parliament all such hardihood and undiscourageable pluck reach back in a man’s bosom beyond the strings that ease and luxury can touch, and strike there an iron, reverberating chord. Nothing in human life is so impressive as pluck, "fighting with the scabbard after the sword is gone." And no one who deeply considers life can fail to see that our best character comes when, as Peter says, we "suffer as a Christian."

O Lord our God, let our devout approach to Thee, be that of the heart, not of the lips. Let it be in obedience to Thy spiritual law, not to any outward ritual. Thou desirest not temples nor offerings, but the sacrifice of a lowly and grateful heart Thou will not despise. Merciful Father, to all Thy dispensations we would submit ourselves, not grudgingly, not merely of necessity, but because we believe in Thy wisdom, Thy universal rule, and Thy goodness. In bereavement and in sorrow, in death as in life, in joys and in happiness, we would see Thy Hand. Teach us to see it; increase our faith where we cannot see; teach us also to love justice, and to do mercy, and to walk humbly with Thee our God. Make us at peace with all mankind, gentle to those who offend us, faithful in all duties, and sincere in sorrow when we fail in duty. Make us loving to one another, patient in distress, and ever thankful to Thy Divine power, which keeps, and guides, and blesses us every day. Lord, accept our humble prayer, accomplish in us Thy holy will. Let Thy peace reign in our hearts, and enable us to walk with Thee in love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Francis W. Newman 1805.

Sixth Week, Second Day

Even unto -this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place; and we toil, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things, even until now. 1 Corinthians 4:11-13.

If Paul could be questioned about the experience of trouble which these verses vividly express, would he not say that there had been qualities of character in him and resources in his relationship with God which he never would have known about had it not been for the test of adversity? Trouble not only develops but also reveals character; we do not know ourselves until we have been tried out in calamity. The simplest demand of adversity on every man is that he be "game." Henry Newbolt is not indulging in rhetoric when he tells of a Soudan battle where a British square made up of Clifton graduates is hard beset by a charge of fierce enemies, and, in that crisis, makes the cry of a Clifton football captain, "Play up, boys, play the game!"- rally the men and save the day. At school or in the Soudan the problem is the same; the sling with which David plays in his youth is his chief reliance when Goliath comes; a "same" spirit is essential to character from birth to death. We turn from the story of Nelson at Aboukir, nailing six flags to his mast so that if even five were shot away no one would dream that he had surrendered, to find that the spirit there exemplified is applicable to our most common day. The quality which made Nelson an Admiral of England, in spite of his lost arm, his lost eye, his small stature, and his feeble health is one of our elemental needs. And to a supreme degree this quality was in great Christians like Paul. Read his letter to the Philippians and see! Adversity brought his spirit to light, and made it an asset of the cause. In a real sense, trouble, however forbidding, was one of Paul’s best friends, and there was a good reason why he should "rejoice in tribulations."

O Father of spirits! Thou lovcst whom Thou chastenest! Correct us in our weakness as the children of men, that we may love Thee in our strength as the sons of God. May the same mind be in us which was also in Jesus Christ, that we may never shrink, when our hour comes, from drinking of the cup that he drank of. Wake in us a soul to obey Thee, not with the weariness of servile spirits, but with the alacrity of the holy angels. Fill us with a contempt of evil pleasures and unfaithful ease; sustain us in the strictness of a devout life. Daily may we crucify every selfish affection, and felight to bear one another's burdens, to uphold each other's faith and charity, being tender-hearted and forgiving as we hope to be forgiven. Hold us to the true humility of the soul that has not yet attained; and may we be modest in our desire, diligent in our trust, and content with the disposals of Thy Providence. O Lord of life and death! Thy counsels are secret; Thy wisdom is infinite: we know not what a day may bring forth. When our hour arrives, and the veil be tween the worlds begins to be lifted before us, may we freely trust ourselves to Thee, and say, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." Amen. James Martineau.

Sixth Week, Third Day

If adversity, rightly used, so develops and reveals character, we may expect to find trouble as a background to the most admirable men of the race. We read the luminous histories of Francis Parkman and do not perceive, behind the printed page, the original manuscript, covered with a screen of parallel wires, along which the blind author ran his pencil that he might write legibly. We think of James Watt as a genius at invention, and perhaps recall that Wordsworth said of him, "I look upon him, considering both the magnitude and the universality of his genius, as perhaps the most extraordinary man that this country ever produced." But Watt himself we forget sickly of body, starving on eight shillings a week, and saying, "Of all things in life there is nothing more foolish than inventing." Kant's philosophy was a turning point in human thought, but lauding Kant, how few recall his struggle with a broken body! Said he, speaking of his incurable illness, "I have become master of its influence in my thoughts and actions by turning my attention away from this feeling altogether, just as if it did not at all concern me." Wilberforce, the liberator of British slaves, we know, and beside his grave in Westminster Abbey we recall the superb title that he earned, "the attorney general of the unprotected and of the friendless," but the Wilberforce who for twenty years was compelled to use opium to keep himself alive, and had the resolution never to in crease the dose who knows of him? One of the chief rewards of reading biography is this introduction that it gives to handicapped men; the knowledge it imparts of the world's great saints and scripture makers, conquerors and reformers, who, in the words of Thucydides, "dared beyond their strength, hazarded against their judgment, and in extremities were of excellent hope." And when one turns to the supreme Character, could the dark background be eliminated and still leave Him? But now we see not yet all things subjected to him. But we behold him who hath been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God he should taste of death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory to make the author of their salvation perfect through sufferings. Hebrews 2:8-10.

O God, who art unsearchable in Thy judgments, and in Thy ways past finding out, we bow before the mystery of Thy Being, and confess that we know nothing, and can say nothing worthy of Thee. We cannot understand Thy deal ings with us. We have faith, not sight; when we cannot sec, we may only believe. Sometimes Thou seemest to have no mercy upon us. Thou dost pierce us

through our most tender affections, quenching the light of our eyes in dreadful darkness. Death tears from us all that we love, and Thou art seemingly deaf to all -our cries. Our earthly circumstances are reversed and bitter poverty is appointed us, yet Thou takest no heed, and bringest no comfort to the sorrow and the barrenness of our life. Still would we trust in Thee and cling to that deepest of our instincts which tells us that we come from Thee and return to Thee. Be with us, Father of Mercies, in love and pity and tenderness unspeakable. Lift our souls into Thy perfect calm, where all our wills are in harmony with Thine. Amen. Samuel McComb.

Sixth Week, Fourth Day To one perplexed and disheartened by adversity, a theoretical explanation is generally not half as valuable as concrete instances of courage and fortitude, founded on faith. Whether we be theologians or scientists or as ignorant of both as Caliban, there is an immediate, personal call to arms in the brave fight of George Matheson, one of Scotland's great preachers for all his blindness, or in Louis Pasteur's indomitable will, making his discoveries despite the paralytic stroke that in his forty-sixth year crippled his strength. The qualities which we admire in them are a sort of apotheosis of the qualities which we need in ourselves. For we all are handicapped, some by ill-starred heredity, by unhappy environment, or by the consequences of our own neglect and sin; some by poverty, some by broken bodies, or by dissevered family ties and all of us by unfortunate dispositions. It does us good then to know that Phillips Brooks failed as a teacher. His biographer tells us that so did his first ambition to be an educator cling to him, that in the prime of life, when he was the prince of preachers, he came from President Eliot's office, pale and trembling, because he had refused a professorship at Harvard. So Robertson, of Brighton, whose sermons began a new epoch in British Christianity, was prevented from being a soldier only by the feebleness of his body, and Sir Walter Scott, who wanted to be a poet, turned to novel writing, anonymously and tentatively trying a new role, because, as he frankly put it, "Because Byron beat me." He is an excellent cook who knows how to make a good dinner out of the left-overs, and hardly a more invigorating truth is taught by history than that most of the finest banquets spread for the delectation of the race have been prepared by men who made them out of the leavings of Disappointed hopes.

Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that hath endured such gain saying of sinners against himself, that ye wax not weary, fainting in your souls. Hebrews 12:1-3. Our Father, we thank Thee that while we are sure of Thy protecting care, Thy causal providence, which foresees all things, we can bear the sorrows of this world, and do its duties, and endure its manifold and heavy cross. We thank Thee that when distress conies upon us, and our mortal schemes vanish into thin air, we know there is something solid which we can lay hold of, and not be frustrate in our hopes. Yea, we thank Thee that when death breaks asunder the slender thread of life whereon our family jewels are strung, and the precious stones of our affection fall from our arms or neck, we know Thou takest them and elsewhere givest them a heavenly setting, wherein they shine before the light of Thy presence as morning stars, brightening and brightening to more perfect glory, as they are transfigured by Thine own almighty power.

We thank Thee for all the truth which the stream of time has brought to us from many a land and every age. We thank Thee for the noble examples of human nature which Thou hast raised up, that in times of darkness there are wise men, in times of doubt there are firm men, and in every peril there stand up heroes of the soul to teach us feebler men our duty, and to lead all of Thy children to trust in Thee.- Father, we thank Thee that the seed of righteousness is never lost, but through many a deluge is carried safe, to make the wilderness to bloom and blossom with beauty ever fragrant and ever new, and the desert bear corn for men and sustain the souls of the feeble when they faint. Amen. Theodore Parker.

Sixth Week, Fifth Day

One distinguishing mark of the men who have won their victories with the remnants of their defeat is that they refuse to describe their unideal conditions in negative terms. If they cannot live in southern California where they would choose to live, but must abide in New England instead, they do not describe New England in terms of its deficiencies no orange groves, no acres of calla lilies, no palm trees. There are compensations even in New England, if one will carefully take account of stock and see what positively is there! Or if a man would choose to live in Boston and must live in Labrador, the case of Grenfell suggests that a positive attitude toward his necessity will discover worth, and material for splendid triumphs even on that inhospitable coast The mark of the handicapped men who have made the race's history glorious has always been their patriotism for the country where they had to live. They do not stop long to pity themselves, or to envy another's opportunity, or to blame circumstances for their defeat, or to dream of what might have been, or to bewail their disappointed hopes. If the soil of their condition will not grow one crop, they discover what it will grow. They have insight, as did Moses, to see holy ground where an ordinary man would have seen only sand and sagebrush and sheep.

Now Moses was keeping the flock of Jethro his father- in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the back of the wilderness, and came to the mountain of God, unto Horeb. And the angel of Jehovah appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will turn aside now, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when Jehovah saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Exodus 3:1-5 Father of life, and God of the living, Fountain of our being and Light of all our day; we thank Thee for that knowledge of Thyself which lights our life with eternal splendor, for that giving of Thyself which has made us partakers of Thy divine nature. We bless Thee for everything around us which ministers Thee to our minds; for the greatness and glory of nature, for the history of our race, and the lives of noble men; for the thoughts of Thee expressed in human words, in the art of painters and musicians, in the work of builders and craftsmen. We bless Tlice for the constant memories of what we are that rise within ourselves; for the pressure of duty, the hush of solemn thoughts, for moments of insight when the veil on the face of all things falls away, for hours of high resolve when life is quickened within, for seasons of communion when, earth and sense forgotten, heaven- holds our silent spirits raptured and aflame.

We have learned to praise Thee for the darker days when- we had to walk by faith, for weary hours that strengthened patience and endeavor, for moments of gloom and times of depression which taught us to trust, not to changing tides of feeling, but to Thee who changest not. And now since Christ has won His throne by His cross of shame, risen from His tomb to reign forever in the hearts of men, we know that nothing can ever separate us from Thee; that in all conflicts we may be more than conquerors; that all dark and hostile things shall be transformed and work for good to those who know the secret of Thy love.

Glory be to, Thee, O Lord. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

Sixth Week, Sixth Day When folk have seen into human life deeply enough so that they perceive how adversity can be used to high issues, faith in God becomes not so much a speculative problem as a practical need. They want to deal with trouble nobly. They see that faith in God gives the outlook on life which makes the hopeful facing of adverse situations reasonable and which supplies power to make it possible. The result is that they, as sufferers, have been the great believers. The idea that fortunate circumstances make vital faith in God probable is utterly unsupported by history. Hardly an outstanding champion of faith who has left an indelible impress on man’s spiritual life can anywhere be found, who has not won his faith and confirmed it in the face of trouble. What is true of individuals is true of generations. The days of Israel’s triumphant faith did not come in Solomon’s reign, when wealth was plentiful and national ambitions ran high. The great prophets and the great psalms stand out against the dark background of the Exile and its consequences.

Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of Jehovah; awake, as in the days of old, the generations of ancient times. Is it not thou that didst cut Rahab in pieces, that didst pierce the monster? Is it not thou that driedst up the sea, the waters of the great deep; that madest the depths of the sea a way for the redeemed to pass over? And the ransomed of Jehovah shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

I. even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou art afraid of man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall be made as grass; and hast forgotten Jehovah thy Maker, that stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and fearest continually all the day because of the fury of the oppressor, when he maketh ready to destroy? and where is the fury of the oppressor? The captive exile shall speedily be loosed; and he shall not die and go down into the pit, neither shall his bread fail. For I am Jehovah thy God, who stirreth up the sea, so that the waves thereof roar: Jehovah of hosts is his name. And I have put my words in thy mouth, and have covered thee in the shadow of my hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people. Isa. That is a voice out of the Exile. Such great believers, whose faith shone brightest when the night was darkest, have not pretended to know the explanation of suffering in God’s world. But they have had insight to see a little and trust for the rest. Stevenson has expressed their faith: "If I from my spy-hole, looking with purblind eyes upon a least part of a fraction of the universe, yet perceive in my own desting some broken evidences of a plan, and some signals of an overruling goodness; shall I then be so mad as to complain that all cannot be deciphered? Shall I not rather wonder, with infinite and grateful surprise, that in so vast a scheme I seem to have been able to read, however little, and that little was encouraging to

faith?"

We thank Thee, O God, that Thou dost ride upon the cloud, and govern the storm. All that to us is dark is light to Thee. The night shineth as the day. All that which seems to us irregular and ungoverned, is held in Thine hand, even as the steed by the rein. From age to age Thou dost control the long procession of events, discerning the end from the beginning; and all the wild mixture, all the confusion, all the sorrow and the suffering, is discerned of Thee. As is the palette to the color, as is violence to development in strength, as is the crushing of the grape to the wine, so in Thy sight all things are beneficent that to us arc most confusing and seemingly conflicting and threatening. Sorrow and pain and disaster are woven in the loom of God; and in the end we, too, shall be permitted to discern the fair pattern, and under stand how that which brought tears here shall bring righteousness there.

O, how good it is to trust Thee, and to believe that Thou art wise, and that Thou art full of compassion, as Thou earnest on Thy great work of love and benevolence, sympathizing with all that suffer on the way, and gathering them at last with an exceeding great salvation! We trust Thee, not because we understand Thee, but because in many things Thou hast taught us where we should have been afraid to trust. We have crossed many a gulf and many a roaring stream upon the bridge of faith, and have exulted to find ourselves safe landed, and have learned to trust Thee, as a child a parent, as a passenger the master of a ship, not because we know, but because Thou knowest. Amen. Henry Ward Beecher.

Sixth Week, Seventh Day

Every one therefore that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, who built his house upon the rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon the rock. And every one that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall thereof. Matthew 7:24-27. An important fact is here asserted by the Master, which is commonly obscured in the commentaries. He says that no matter whether a man’s life be built on sand or on rock, he yet will experience the blasts of adversity; on both houses alike "the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew." The Master repeatedly affirmed that trouble comes without necessary reference to character, that while we may always argue that sin causes suffering, we never can confidently argue that suffering comes from sin (Luke 13:4; John 9:1-3). Folks needlessly and unscripturally harass their souls when they suppose that some special trouble must have befallen them because of some special sin. The book of Job was written to disprove that, and as for the Master, he distinctly says that the man of faith with his house on a rock faces the same storm that wrecks the faithless man. The difference is not in the adversity, but in the adversity’s effect. No more important question faces any soul than this: seeing that trouble is an unevadable portion of every life, good or bad, what am I to do with it? Says Oliver Wendell Holmes, "Did you ever happen to see that most soft-spoken and velvet-handed steam-engine at the Mint? The smooth piston slides backward and forward as a lady might slip her delicate finger in and out of a ring. The engine lays one of its fingers calmly, but firmly, upon a bit of metal; it is a coin now, and will remember that touch, and tell a new race about it, when the date upon it is crusted over with

twenty centuries. So it is that a great silent-moving misery puts a new stamp on us in an hour or a moment as sharp an impression as if it had taken half a lifetime to engrave it." The only flaw in that simile is that the coin cannot decide what impression shall be made. But we can. Rebellion, despair, bitterness, or triumphant faith we can say which impression adversity shall leave upon us.

O God of our life, whom we dimly apprehend and never can comprehend, to whom nevertheless we justly ascribe all goodness as well as all greatness; as a father teaches his children, so teach us, Lord, truer thoughts of Thee. Teach us to aspire, so far as man may lawfully aspire, to a knowledge of Thee. Thou art not only a God to be honored in times of rest and ease, Thou art also the Refuge of the distressed, the Comforter of the afflicted, the Healer of the contrite, and the Support of the unstable. As we sympathize with those who are sore smitten by calamity, wounded by sudden accident, wrecked in the midst of security, so must we believe that Thy mighty all-embracing heart sympathizes. Pitier of the orphan, God of the widow, cause us to share Thy pity and become Thy messengers of tenderness in our small measure. Be Thou the Stay of all in life and death. Teach all to know and trust Thee, give us a portion here and everywhere with Thy saints; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Francis W. Newman 1805.

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

I

Few who have sincerely tried to believe in God’s goodness and who have lived long enough to face the harrowing facts of human wretchedness will doubt what obstacle most hampers faith. The major difficulty which perplexes many Christians, when they try to reconcile God’s love with their experience, is not belief’s irrationality but life’s injustice. According to the Psalmist, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God " (Psalms 14:1). But the fool is not the only one who has said that. He said it, jeering; he announced it in derision; he did not want God, and contemptuous denial was a joy. It was the temper of his negation that made him a fool. But many hearts, in tones far different from his, have said, "There is no God." Parents cry it brokenheartedly! beside the graves of children; the diseased cry it, suffering; from keener agony than they can bear; fathers cry it when their battle against poverty has failed and their children plead in vain for bread; and men who care about their kind say it as they watch the anguish with which war, drunkenness, lust, disease, and poverty afflict the race. No man of moral insight will call such folk fools. The wretchedness and squalor, the misery and sin which rest upon so much of humankind are a notorious difficulty in the way of faith. In dealing with this problem two short cuts are often tried, and by them some minds endeavor to evade the issue which faith ought to meet. Some minimise the suffering which creation cost and which man and animals are now enduring. We must grant that when we read the experience of animals in terms of man’s own life, we always exaggerate their pain. Animals never suffer as we do; their misery is not compounded by our mental agonies of regret and fear; and even their physical wretchedness is as much lower in intensity as their nerves are less exquisitely tuned. Darwin, who surely did not underestimate the struggle for existence, said in a letter, "According to my judgment, happiness decidedly prevails. All sentient beings have been formed so as to enjoy, as a general rule, happiness." We must grant also that man’s practical attitude toward life gives the lie to pessimism. Only the suicides are the logical pessimists, and all the rest of men, most with good heart and multitudes with jubilant enthusiasm, do actually cling to life. Indeed, all normal men discover, that, within limits, their very hardships are

a condition of their happiness and do not so much abate their love of life is they add zest and tang. We must grant further that suf fering should be measured not by quantity, but by intensity. One sensitive man enduring bereavement, poverty, or disease represents all the suffering that ever has been or ever can be felt. To speak of limitless suffering, therefore, is false. There is no more wretchedness anywhere nor in all the world together, than each one can know in his own person. When all this, however, has been granted, the facts of the world's misery are staggering. Modern science has given terrific sweep and harrowing detail to Paul's assertion, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Romans 8:22). Let one whose insight into misery's meanings is quickened by even a little imagination, try to sum up the agony of drunkards homes, of bereaved families, of hospitals, insane asylums, jails, and prisons, of war with its unmentionable horrors its blinded, deafened, maddened, raped and no small palliatives can solve his problem. Rather he understands the picture which James Russell Lowell said he saw years ago in Belgium: an angel holding back the Creator and saying, "If about to make such a world, stay thine hand."

Another short cut by which some endeavor to simplify the problem and content their thought is to lift responsibility for life's wretchedness from God's shoulders and to put it upon man s. Were man's sin no factor in the world, some say, life's miseries would cease; all the anguish of our earthly lot stands not to God's responsibility but to man's shame. But the sufferings of God's creatures did not begin with man's ar rival, and the pain of creation before man sinned is a longer story than earth's misery since. Let Romanes picture the scene: "Some hundred of millions of years ago, some mil lions of millions of animals must be supposed to have become sentient. Since that time till the present, there must have been millions and millions of generations of millions and mil lions of individuals. And throughout all this period of in calculable duration, this inconceivable host of sentient organizations have been in a state of unceasing battle, dread, ravin, pain. Looking to the outcome, we find that more than one- half of the species which have survived the ceaseless struggle are parasitic in their habits, lower and insentient forms of life, feasting on higher and sentient forms, we find teeth and talons whetted for slaughter, hooks and suckers molded for torture everywhere a reign of terror, hunger, sickness, with oozing blood and quivering limbs, with gasping breath and eyes of innocence that dimly close in deaths of cruel torture." Is man responsible for that? For cold that freezes God's living creatures, for lightning that kills them, for volcanoes that burn them, for typhoons that crush them is man responsible? By no such easy evasion may we escape the problem which faith must meet. "In sober truth," as John Stuart Mill exclaimed, "nearly all the things which men are hanged or imprisoned for doing to one another, are Nature's every day performances." Who can avoid seeing the patent contrast be tween the Father of Jesus and the Creator of such a world? "The power that launches earthquakes and arms cuttlefish," said one perplexed believer, "has but a meager relationship to the power that blesses infants and forgives enemies."

II Could we hold this problem at arm's length, discussing it in speculative moods when we grow curious about the make up of the universe, our case would be more simple. But of all life's problems, this most certainly sometimes creeping, sometimes crashing invades our private lives. Every man has a date with adversity which he must keep and which adversity does not forget. One notes the evidence of this in every normally maturing life. As children we wanted happiness and were impatient, lacking it. Our cups of pleasure easily brimmed and overflowed. A Christmas tree

or a birth day party and our hearts were like sun-parlors on cloudless days with all the windows open to the light! But the time comes to all when happiness like this is not our problem; we recognize that it is gone; our Edens are behind us with flaming angels at the gate. We have had friends and lost them and something has gone from our hearts that does not return; we have won successes which we do not estimate as highly in possession as we did in dreams, and it may be have lost what little we achieved; we have sinned, and though forgiven, the scars are still upon us; we have been weathered by the rains and floods and winds. Happiness in the old fashion we no longer seek. We want peace, the power to possess our souls in patience and to do our work. We want joy, which is a profound and spiritually begotten grace as happiness is not. This maturity which so has faced the tragic aspects of our human life is not less desirable than childhood; it may be richer, fuller, steadier. We may think of it as Wordsworth did about the English landscape that not for all the sunny skies of Italy would he give up the mists that spiritualize the English hills. But when trouble comes, life faces a new set of problems that childhood little knew. We have joined the human procession that moves out into the inevitable need of comfort and fortitude. The decisive crisis in many lives concerns the attitude which this experience evokes. Some are led by it more deeply into the meanings of religion. The Bible grows in their apprehension with the enlarging of their life; new passages become radiant as, in a great landscape, hills and valleys lately unillumined catch the rays of the rising sun. At first the human friendliness of Jesus is most real, and the Bible’s stories of adventure for God’s cause; then knightly calls to character and service become luminous; but soon or late another kind of passage grows meaningful: "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, our Father who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them" (2 Thessalonians 2:16). Others, so far from being led by adversity into the deeper meanings of faith, renounce faith altogether, and fling themselves into open rebellion against life and any God who may be responsible for its tragedy. They may not dare to say what James Thomson did, but they think it.

"Who is most wretched in this dolorous place? I think myself; yet I would rather be My miserable self than He, than He Who formed such creatures to his own disgrace. The vilest thing must be less vile than Thou From whom it had its being, God and Lord! Creator of all woe and sin! abhorred, Malignant and implacable!

I vow

That not for all Thy power furled and unfurled,

For all the temples to Thy glory built,

Would I assume the ignominious guilt

Of having made such men in such a world!"

Many, however, are not by adversity made more sure of God, nor are they driven into rebellion against him. They are perplexed. It had been so much easier, in the sheltered and innocent idealism of their youth, to believe in God than it is now. As children they looked on life as they might have listened to Mozart’s music, ravished with unqualified delight; but now they know that Mozart died in abject poverty, that the coffin which his wife could not buy was donated by charity, that as the hearse went to the grave the driver loudly damned the dead because no drink money had been given him, and that to this day no one knows where Mozart’s body lies. Maturity has to

deal with so much more tragic facts than youth can ever know. With all the philosophy that man's wit can supply, the wisest find themselves saying what Emerson did, two years after his son's death: "I have had no expe rience, no progress to put me into better intelligence with my calamity than when it was new." And in this inevitable wresthng with adversity, the cry of men is not simply for more courage. They might easily steady their hearts to endure and overcome, were only one question's answer clear is there any sense in life's suffering? The one unsupportable thought is that all life's pain and hardship is meaningless and futile, that it has no worthy origin, serves no high purpose, that in misery we are the sport of forces that have no consciousness of what they do, no meaning in it and no care. Such folk want to believe in God, but can they?

III

Two preliminary facts about Christianity's relationship with our problem may help to clarify our thought. The doubt sometimes obtrudes itself on minds perplexed about life's tragedies that the Christian's faith in a. God of love is an idealistic dream. Such faiths as the Fatherhood of God have come to men, they think, in happy hours when calamity was absent or forgotten; they are the fruition of man's fortunate days. And born thus of a view of life from which the miseries of men had been shut out, this happy, ideal faith comes back to painful realities with a shock which it cannot sustain. But is Christian faith thus the child of man's happy days? Rather the very symbol of Christianity is the Cross. Our faith took its rise in one of history's most appalling tragedies, and the Gospel of a loving God, so far from being an ideal dream, conceived apart from life's forbidding facts, has all these centuries been intertwined with the public brutality of a crucifixion. Every emphasis of the Christian's faith has the mark of the Cross upon it. Jesus had said in words that God was love, but it was at Calvary that the words took fire: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son" (John 3:16). Jesus had preached the divine forgiveness, but on Golgotha the message grew imperative: God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). Jesus had put into parables the individual care of the Father for every child, but it was the Cross that drove the great faith home: Christ tasted "death for every man" (Hebrews 2:9). Nothing in Christian faith has escaped the formative influence of the Tragedy. The last thing to be said about the Gospel is that it is a beautiful child-like dream which has not faced the facts of suffering. In the New Testament are all the miseries on which those who deny God's love count for support. We are at home there with suffering men: "they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted, they were slain with the sword: they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated (of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and the holes of the earth" (Hebrews 11:37-38). The men with whom Christianity began were not strangers to such trouble, so that some modern need remind their innocent and dreaming faith that life is filled with mysterious adversity. Chris-\ tianity was suckled on adversity; it was cradled in pain. At the heart of its Book and its Gospel is a Good Man crowned] with thorns, nailed to a cross, with a spear wound in his side. Nor have the great affirmations of faith in God's fatherhood ever been associated with men of ease in fortunate circumstance. The voice that cried "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" spoke in agonizing pain. And through history one finds those words best spoken with a cross for a background. Thomas a Becket said them, martyred in his own cathedral; John Huss said them, going to the stake at Constance; George Wishart said them, roasted at the foot of the sea-tower of St. Andrews. Christian faith is not a dream that came in hours when human trouble had been

forgotten; it has furnished from the beginning an interpretation of hu man trouble and an attitude in meeting it that has made men "more than conquerors." The second preliminary fact is this: Christianity has never pretended to supply a theoretical explanation of why suffering had to be. This seeming lack has excellent reason, for such an explanation, if it be complete, is essentially beyond the reach of any finite mind. The most comprehensive question ever asked, some philosopher has said, was put by a child. "Why was there ever anything at all?" No finite mind can answer that. And next in comprehensiveness, and in penetration to the very pith of creation's meaning, is this query, "Why, if something had to be, was it made as it is?" One must be God himself fully to answer that, or to comprehend the answer, could it be written down. To expect therefore, from Christianity or from any other source a theoretical explanation that will plumb the depths of the mystery of suffering is to cry for the essentially impossible. So Carlyle says with typical vividness: "To the minnow every cranny and pebble, and quality and accident of its little native creek may have become familiar; but does the minnow understand the Ocean Tides and periodic Currents, the Trade-winds, and Monsoons, and Moon's Eclipses; by all which the condition of its little Creek is regulated, and may, from time to time (unmiraculously enough), be quite overset and reversed? Such a minnow is Man; his Creek this Planet Earth; his Ocean the immeasurable All; his Monsoons and periodic Currents the mysterious Course of Providence through Aeons of Aeons." So little is this inability of ours to know all that we wish about the world a cause for regret, that it ought to be an occasion of positive rejoicing. If we could understand the universe through and through, how small and meager the universe would have to be! The fact is that we cannot under stand anything through and through. If one is disheartened because he cannot pierce to the heart of Providence and know all its secrets, let him try his hand upon a pebble add see how much better he will fare. What is a pebble? If one define it roughly as granite he must ask what granite is; if that be defined in terms of chemical properties, he must ask what they are; if they be defined as ultimate forms of matter, he must inquire what matter is; and then he will be told that matter is a "mode of motion," or will be assured by a more candid scientist, like Professor Tait, that "we do not know and are probably incapable of discovering what matter is" No one ever solves the innermost problems of a stone, but what can be done with stones our engineering feats are evidence.

If, therefore, we recognize at the beginning that the question why suffering had to be is an ultimate problem, essentially insoluble by finite minds, we need not be dismayed. Two opposing mysteries are in the world goodness and evil. If we deny God, then goodness is a mystery, for no one has ever yet suggested how spiritual life could rise out of an un- spiritual source, how souls could come from dust. If we affirm God, then evil is a mystery, for why, we ask, should love create a world with so much pain and sin? Our task is not to solve insoluble problems; it is to balance these alter natives no God and the mystery of man's spiritual life, against God and the mystery of evil. Such a comparison is not altogether beyond our powers, nor are weighty considerations lacking to affect our choice.

IV For one thing, we may well inquire, when we complain of this world's misery, what sort of world we are seeking in its place. Are we asking for a perfectly happy world? But happiness, at its deepest and its best, is not the portion of a cushioned life which never struggled, overpassed obstacles, bore hardship, or adventured in sacrifice for costly aims. A heart of joy is never found in luxuriously coddled lives, but in men and women who achieve and dare, who have tried their

powers against antagonisms, who have met even sickness and bereavement and have tempered their souls in fire. Joy is begotten not chiefly from the impression of happy circumstance, but from the expression of overcoming power. Were we set upon making a happy world, therefore, we could not leave struggle out nor make adversity impossible. The unhappiest world conceivable by man would be a world with nothing hard to do, no conflicts to wage for ends worth while; a world where courage was not needed and sacrifice was a superfluity. Beside such an inane lotos-land of tranquil ease this present world with all its suffering is a paradise. Men in fact find joy where in philosophy we might not look for it. Said MacMillan, after a terrific twelve-month with Peary on the Arctic continent: "This has been the greatest year of my life." The impossibility of imagining a worth-while world from which adversity had all been banished is even more evident when one grows ill-content to think of happiness as the goal of life. That we should be merely happy is not an adequate end of the creative purpose for us, or of our purpose for ourselves. In our best hours we acknowledge this in the way we handle trouble. However much in doubt a man may be about the theory of suffering, he knows infallibly how suffering practically should be met. To be rebellious, cursing fate and hating life; to pity oneself, nursing one's hurts in morbid self-commiseration the ignobility of such dealing with calamity we indubitably know. Even where we fall feebly short of the ideal, we have no question what the ideal is. When in biography or among our friends we see folk face crushing trouble, not embittered by it, made cynical, or thrust into despair, but hallowed, sweetened, illumined, and empowered, we are aware that noble characters do not alone bear trouble; they use it. As men at first faced electricity in dread, conceiving toward it no attitude be yond building lightning-rods to ward away its stroke, but now with greater understanding harness it to do their will, so men, as they grow wise and strong, deal with their suffering. They make it the minister of character; they set it to build in them what nothing save adversity can ever build patience, courage, sympathy, and power. They even choose it in vicarious sacrifice for the good of others, and by it save the world from evils that nothing save some one's suffering could cure. They act as though character, not happiness, were the end of life. And when they are at their best they do this not with stoic intrepidity, as though trouble's usefulness were but their fancy, but joyfully, as though a good purpose in the world included trouble, even though not intending it. So Robert Louis Stevenson, facing death, writes to a friend about an old woman whose ventriloquism had fright ened the natives of Vailima, "All the old women in the world might talk with their mouths shut and not frighten you or me, but there are plenty of other things that frighten us badly. And if we only knew about them, perhaps we should find them no more worthy to be feared than an old woman talking with her mouth shut. And the names of some of these things are Death and Pain and Sorrow."

Whatever, then, may be our theoretical difficulty about suffering, this truth is clear: when we are at our best we practically deal with suffering as though moral quality were the goal of life. We use adversity, as though discipline were its purpose and good its end. It is worth noting that the only theory which fully fits this noblest attitude toward trouble is Christianity. Men may think God a devil, as James Thomson sang, and yet may be practically brave and cheerful, but their theory does not fit their life. Men may believe in no God and no purpose in the world, and yet may face adversity with courage and hope, but their spirit belies their philosophy. When men are at their best in hardship they act as though the Christian faith in God were true, as though moral quality zvere the purpose of creation.

If now, we really want a world in which character is the end and aim and no other world is worth God's making we obviously may not demand the abolition of adversity. If one imagines a life from its beginning lapped in ease and utterly ignorant what words like hardship, sorrow, and calamity imply, he must imagine a life lacking every virtue that makes human nature admirable. Character grows on struggle; with out the overcoming of obstacles great quality in character is unthinkable. Whoever has handled well any calamitous event possesses resources, insights, wise attitudes, qualities of sympathy and power that by no other road could have come to him. For all our complaints against life's misery, therefore, and for all our inability to understand it in detail, who would npt hesitate, foreseeing the consequence, to take adversity away from men? He who banishes hardship banishes hardihood; and out of the same door with Calamity walk Courage, Fortitude, Triumphant Faith, and Sacrificial Love. If we abolish the cross in the world, we make impossible the Christ in man. It becomes more clear the more one ponders it, that while this is often a hard world in which to be happy, to men of insight and faith it may be a great world in which to build character.

Before too confidently, however, we accept this conclusion, there is one objection to be heard. So far is the world from being absolved from cruelty, on the plea of moral purpose, one may say, that its injustice is the very crux of its offense. See how negligent of justice the process of creation is! Its volcanoes and typhoons slay good and bad alike, its plagues are utterly indifferent to character; and in the human world which it embosoms some drunken Caesar sits upon the throne while Christ hangs on the cross. Who for a single day can watch the gross inequities of life, where good men so often suffer and bad men go free, and still think that the world has moral purpose in it? The Bible itself is burdened with complaint against the seeming senselessness and injustice of God. Moses cries: "Lord, wherefore hast thou dealt ill with this people? Neither hast thou delivered thy people at all" (Exodus 5:22-23); Elijah laments, "O Jehovah, my God, hast Thou also brought evil upon the widow, with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?" (1 Kings 17:20); Habakkuk complains, "Wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy peace, when the wicked swalloweth up the man that is more righteous than he?" (Habakkuk 1:13); and Job protests, "Although thou knowest that I am not wicked,... yet thou dost destroy me" (Job 10:7-8). Man's loss of faith springs often from this utter disparity between desert and fortune. The time comes to almost every man when he looks on, indignant, desperate, at some gross horror uninterrupted, some innocent victim entreated cruelly. He understands Carlyle's impatient cry, "God sits in heaven and does nothing!"

Natural as is this attitude, and unjust as many of life's tragic troubles are, we should at least see this: man must not demand that goodness straightway receive its pay and wrong its punishment. He may not ask that every virtuous deed be at once rewarded by proportionate happiness and every sin be immediately punished by proportionate pain. That, some might suppose, would put justice into life. But whatever it might put into life, such an arrangement obviously would take out character. The men whose moral quality we most highly honor were not paid for their goodness on Saturday night and did not expect to be. They chose their course for righteousness sake alone, although they knew what crowns of thorns, what scornful crowds about their cross might end the journey. They did not drive close bargains with their fate, demanding insurance against trouble as the price of goodness. They chose the honorable deed for honor's sake; they chose it the more scrupulously, the more pleasure was offered for dis- honor; their tone in the face of threatened

suffering was like Milne s, Scotland’s last martyr: "I will not recant the truth, for I am corn and no chaff; and I will not be blown away with the wind nor burst with the flail, but I will abide both."

Every man is instinctively aware and by his admiration makes it known, that the kind of character which chooses right, willing to suffer for it, is man’s noblest quality. The words in which such character has found utterance are man’s spiritual battle cries. Esther, going before the King, saying, "If I perish, I perish" (Esther 4:16); the three Hebrews, facing the fiery furnace saying, "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods" (Daniel 3:17-18); Peter and the apostles, facing the angry Council, saying, "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29); Anaxarchus, the martyr, crying, "Beat on at the case of Anaxarchus; Anaxarchus himself you cannot touch"; Luther, defying the Emperor, "Here stand I; I can do no other" most words of men are easily dispensable, but no words like these can man afford to spare. They are his best. And this sort of goodness has been possible, because God had not made the world as our complaints sometimes would have it. For such character, a system where goodness costs is absolutely necessary. A world where goodness was paid cash in pleasant circumstance would have no such character to show. Right and wrong for their own sakes would be impossible; only prudence and imprudence for happiness sake could there exist. Out of the same door with the seeming injustice of life goes the possibility of man’s noblest quality his goodness "in scorn of consequence." Many special calamities no one on earth can hope to understand. But when one has granted that fitness to grow character is the only worthy test of creation, it evidently is not so simple as at first it seemed to improve the fundamental structure of the world.

VI

Indeed, when one in imagination assumes the task of omnipotence and endeavors to construct a universe that shall be fitted for the growth of character, he cannot long hesitate concerning certain elements which must be there. A system of regular laiv would have to be the basis of that world, for only in a law-abiding universe could obedience be taught. If the stars and planets behaved "like swarms of flies" and nothing could be relied upon to act twice in the same way, character and intelligence alike would be impossible. In this new world, remolded, "nearer to our heart’s desire," progress also would be a necessity. A stagnant world cannot grow character. There must be real work to do, aims to achieve; there must be imperfections to overpass and wrongs to right. Only in a system where the present situation is a point of departure and a better situation is a possibility, where ideal and hope, courage and sacrifice are indispensable can character grow. In this improved world of our dreams, free will in some measure must be granted man. If character is to be real, man must not in his choice between right and wrong be as Spinoza pictured him, a stone hurled through the air, which thinks that it is flying; he must have some control of conduct, some genuine, though limited, power of choice. And in this universe which we are planning for character’s sake, individuals could not stand separate and unrelated; they must be united into a community. Love which is the crown of character, lacking this, would be impossible. What happens to one must happen to all; good and ill alike must be contagious in a society where we are "members one of another." No one of these four elements could be omitted from a world whose test was its adaptability for character. Men with genuine power of choice, fused into a fellowship of social life, living in a law-abiding and progressive world on no other terms imaginable to man could character be possible. Yet these four things contain all the sources of our misery.

Physical law what tragic issues its stern, unbending course brings with terrific incidence on man! Progress how obviously it implies conditions imperfect, wrong, through which we have to struggle toward the best! Free-will what a night mare of horror man's misuse of it has caused since sin began! (Social fellowship how surely the innocent must suffer with the guilty, how impossible for any man to bear the consequence of his own sin alone! We may not see why these general conditions should involve the particular calamities which we bewail, but even our finite minds can see thus far into the mystery of suffering: all our trouble springs from four basic factors in the universe, without any one of which, great character would be impossible.

While, therefore, if one deny God, the mystery of goodness lacks both sense and solution; one may affirm God and find the mystery of evil, mysterious still but suffused with light God is working out a spiritual purpose here by means with out which no spiritual purpose is conceivable. Fundamentally creation is good. We misuse it, we fail to understand its meaning and to appropriate its discipline, and impatient be cause the eternal purpose is not timed by our small clocks, we have to confess with Theodore Parker, "The trouble seems to be that God is not in a hurry and I am." In hours of insight, however, we perceive how little our complaints will stand the test of dispassionate thought. Our miseries are not God's inflictions on us as individuals, so that we may judge his character and his thought of us by this special favor or by that particular calamity. The most careless thinker feels the poor philosophy of Lord Londonderry's petulant entry in his journal: "Here I learned that Almighty God, for reasons best known to himself, had been pleased to burn down my house in the county of Durham." One must escape such narrow egoism if he is to understand the purposes of God; one must rise to look on a creation, with character at all costs for its aim, and countless aeons for its setting. In the making of this world God has limited himself; he cannot lightly do what he will. He has limited himself in creating a law-abiding system where his children must learn obedience without special exemptions; in ordaining a progressive system where what is is the frontier from which men seek what ought to be; in giving men the power to choose right, with its inevitable corollary, the power to choose wrong; in weaving men into a communal fellowship where none can escape the contagious life of all. What Martineau said of the first of these is true in spirit of them all: "The universality of law is God's eternal act of self limitation or abstinence from the movements of free affection, for the sake of a constancy that shall never falter or deceive." When once a man has risen to the vision of so splendid a purpose in so great a world, he rejoices in the outlook. Granted that now he sees in a mirror darkly, that many a cruel event in human life perplexes still he has seen enough to give solid standing to his faith. What if an insect, someone! has suggested, were born just after a thunderstorm began and died just before it stopped how dark would be its picture of creation! But we who span a longer period of time, are not so obsessed by thunderstorms, although we may not like them. They have their place and serve their purpose; we see them in a broader perspective than an insect knows and on sultry days we even crave their coming. A broken doll is to a child a cruel tragedy, but to the father watching the child's struggle to accept the accident, to make the best of it and to come off conqueror, the event is not utterly undesirable. He is not glad at the child's suffering, but with his horizons he sees in it factors which she does not see. So God's horizons infinitely overpass our narrow outlooks. There is something more than whimsy in the theologian's saying, which President King reports, that an insect crawling up a column of the Parthenon, with difficulty and pain negotiating passage about a pore in the stone, is as well qualified to judge of the architecture of the Parthenon, as we of the infinitude of God's plans. Seeing as much as we have seen of

sense and purpose in the structure of creation, we have seen all that our finite minds with small horizons could have hoped. We have gained ample justification for the attitude toward suffering which Dolly Winthrop in Silas Marner has immortalized: "Eh, there’s trouble I this world, and there’s things as we can never make out the rights on. And all as we ve got to do is to trusten, Master Marner to do the right thing as far as we know and to trusten. For if us, as knows so little, can see a bit o good and rights, we may be sure as there’s a good and a rights bigger nor what we can know I feel it I my own inside as it must be so."

VII

We may not truthfully leave our subject in such a case that faith’s concern with human misery will seem to lie merely in giving adversity an explanation. Faith is concerned not alone to explain misery but to heal it. For while it is impossible without hardship to develop character, there are woeful calamities on earth that do not help man’s moral quality; they crush and mutilate it; they are barbarous intruders on the plan of God and they have no business in his world. Some ills are such that no theory can reconcile them with the love of God and no man ought to desire such reconciliation; in the love of God they ought to be abolished. Slavery must be a possibility in a world where man is free; but God’s goodness was not chiefly vindicated by such a theory of explanation. It was chiefly vindicated by slavery’s abolishment. The liquor traffic and war, needless poverty in a world so rich, avoidable diseases that science can overcome how long a list of woes there is that faith should not so much explain as banish! When some ills t like drunkenness and war and economic injustice are thrust against our faith, and men ask that the goodness of God be reconciled with these, faith’s first answer should be not speculation but action. Such woes, so far from being capable of reconciliation with God’s goodness, are irreconcilable with a decent world. God does not want to be reconciled with them; he hates them "with aperfect hatred." We may not make ourselves patient with them by any theory of their necessity. They are not necessary; they are perversions of man’s life; and the best defense of faith is their annihilation.

Indeed, a man who, rebellious in complaint, has clamorously asked an explanation of life’s ills as the price of faith in God, may well in shame consider God’s real saints. When things were at their worst, when wrong was conqueror and evils that seemed blatantly to deny the love of God were in the saddle, these spiritual soldiers went out to fight. The winds of ill that blow out our flickering faith made their religion blaze a pillar of fire in the night. The more evil they faced, the more religion they produced to answer it. They were the real believers, who "through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises." In comparison with such, it is obviously paltry business to drive a bargain with God that if all goes well we will believe in him, but if things look dark, then faith must go.

Many a man, therefore, who is no philosopher can be a great defender of the faith. He may not weave arguments to prove that such a world as this in its fundamental structure is fitted to a moral purpose. But he can join the battle to banish from the world those ills that have no business here and that God hates. He can help produce that final defense of the Christian faith a world where it is easier to believe in God.

04.07. Faith and Science

CHAPTER VII. Faith and Science

DAILY READINGS The intellectual difficulties which trouble many folk involve the relations of faith with science, but often they do not so much concern the abstract theories of science as they < io the particular attitudes of scientists. We are continually faced with quotations from scientific specialists, in which religion is denied or doubted or treated contemptuously, and even while the merits of the case may be beyond the ordinary man’s power of argument, he nevertheless is shaken by the general opinion that what ministers say in the pulpit on Sun day is denied by what scientists say all the rest of the week. In the daily readings, therefore, we shall deal with the scientists themselves, as a problem which faith must meet.

Seventh Week, First Day No one can nope to deal fairly with the scientists, in their relationship with faith, unless he begins with a warm appreciation of the splendid integrity and self-denial which the scientific search for truth has revealed.

Canst thou bind the cluster of the Pleiades,

Or loose the bands of Orion?

Canst thou lead forth the Mazzaroth in their season?

Or canst thou guide the Bear with her train?

Knowest thou the ordinances of the heavens?

Canst thou establish the dominion thereof in the earth?

Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds,

That abundance of waters may cover thee?

Canst thou send forth lightnings, that they may go,

And say unto thee, Here we are?

Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts?

Or who hath given understanding to the mind?

Who can number the clouds by wisdom?

Or who can pour out the bottles of heaven,

When the dust runneth into a mass,

And the clods cleave fast together? Job 38:31-38

Such is man’s ancient wonder before the physical uni verse; and in the endeavor to discover the truth about it science has developed saints and martyrs whose selfless and sacrificial spirit is unsurpassed even in the annals of the Church. Men have spent lives of obscure and unrewarded toil to get at a few new facts; they have suffered persecution, and, even after torture, have reaffirmed the truth of their discoveries, as did Galileo, when he insisted, "The earth does move." They have surrendered place and wealth, friends and life itself in their passion for the sheer truth, and when human service was at stake have inoculated them selves with deadly diseases that they might be the means of discovering the cure, or have sacrificed everything thai men hold most dear to destroy an ancient, popular, and hurtful fallacy. The phrase "pride of science" is often used in depreciation of the scientists. There is some excuse for the phrase, but in general, when one finds pride, dogmatism, in tolerance, they are the work of ignorance and not of science. The scientific spirit has been characteristically humble. Says Huxley: "Science seems to me to teach in the highest and strongest manner the great truth which is embodied in the Christian conception of entire surrender to th& will of God. Sit down before the fact as a little child, be prepared to give up every preconceived notion, follow humbly wherever and to whatever end nature leads, or you shall learn nothing. ... I have only begun to learn content and peace of mind since I have resolved at all risks to do this." The Christian, above all others, is bound to approach the study of the controversy between science and theology with a high estimate of the integrity and disinterested unselfishness of the scientists.

O God, we thank Thee for the world in which Thou hast placed us, far the universe whose vastness is revealed in the blue depths of the sky, whose immensities arc lit by shining stars beyond the strength of mind to follow. We thank Thee for every sacrament of beauty; for the sweetness of nowers, the solemnity of the stars, the sound of streams and swelling seas; for far-stretching lands and mighty mountains which rest and satisfy the soul, the purity of dawn which calls to holy dedication, the peace of evening which speaks of ever lasting rest. May we not fear to make this world for a little while our home, since it is Thy creation and we ourselves are part of it. Help us humbly to learn its laws and trust its mighty powers.

We thank Thee for the world within, deeper than we dare to look, higher than we care to climb; for the great kingdom of the mind and the silent spaces of the soul. Help us not to be afraid of ourselves, since we were made in Thy image, loved by Thee before the worlds began, and fashioned for Thy eternal habitation. May we be brave enough to bear the truth, strong enough to live in the light, glad to yield ourselves to Thee.

We thank Thee for that world brighter and better than all, opened for us in the broken heart of the Saviour; for the universe of love and purity in Him, for the golden sunshine of His smile, the tender grace of His forgiveness, the red renewing rain and crimson Hood of His great sacrifice. May we not shrink from its searching and surpassing glory, nor, when this world fades away, fear to commit ourselves to that world which shall be our everlasting home. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

Seventh Week, Second Day The Christian’s appreciation of scientists should not stop short of profound gratitude for their service to religion. If one reads Burns’s Tarn o Shanter," with its "ghaists," "war locks and witches," and "auld Nick," and remembers that these demonic powers were veritable facts of terror once, he will see in what a world of superstitious fear mankind has lived. Bells were first put into church steeples, not to call folk to worship, but to scare the devils out

of thunder-clouds, and the old cathedral bells of Europe are inscribed with declarations of that purpose. The ancients hardly believed in God so vividly as they believed in malicious demons every where. Now the Gospel removed the fear of these from the first Christians; it made men aware of a conquering alliance with God, so that believers no longer shared the popular dread of unknown demons. But so long as thunderstorms, pestilences, droughts, and every sort of evil were supposed to be the work of devils, even the Gospel could not dispel the general dread. Only new knowledge could do that. While Christianity therefore at its best has removed the fear of evil spirits, science has removed the fact of them as an oppressive weight on life. Today we not only do not dread them, but we do not think of them at all, and we have science to thank for our freedom. By its clear facing of facts and tracing of laws, science has lifted from man's soul an intolerable burden of misbeliefs and has cleansed religion of an oppressive mass of credulity. True religion never had a deadlier foe than superstition and superstition has no deadlier foe than science. Little children, brought up in our homes to trust the love of the Father, with no dark background of malignant devils to harass and frighten them, owe their liberty to the Gospel of Jesus indeed, but as well. to the illumination of science that has banished the ancient dreads.

These things have I spoken unto you, while yet abiding with you. But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful. John 14:25-27. To God the Father, God the Son, God the Spirit, we pour forth most humble and hearty supplications, that Pie, remembering the calamities of mankind, and the pilgrimage of this our life in which we spend our days, would please to open to us new consolations out of the fountain of His goodness for the alleviating of our miseries. We humbly and earnestly ask that human things may not prejudice such as are Divine, so that from the opening of the gates of sense, and the kindling of a greater natural light, nothing of incredulity . . . may arise in our minds towards Divine mysteries; but rather, O Lord, that our minds being thoroughly cleansed and purged from fancy, and yet subject to the Divine will, there may be given unto faith the things that are faith s, that so we may continually attain to a deeper knowledge and love of Thee, Who art the Fountain of Light, and divellest in the Light which no man can approach unto; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Francis Bacon 1561.

Seventh Week, Third Day

If one approach the scientists, as we have suggested, with appreciation of their devoted spirit and of their beneficent service, he is likely to be fair and Christian in his judgment. For one thing, he will readily understand why some of them are not religious men. The laws of psychology are not suspended when religion is concerned; there as elsewhere persistent attention is the price of a vivid sense of reality. When, therefore, a man habitually thinks intensely of nothing but biological tissue, or chemical reactions, or the diseases of a special organ, the results are not difficult to forecast. Darwin's famous confession that in his exacting concentration on biology he utterly lost his power to appreciate music or poetry is a case in point. Said Darwin, "My mind seems to have become a kind of machine for grinding general laws out of a large collection of facts." It is needless to say that such a mind is not likely to be more vividly aware of God than it is to feel muetc's beauty or poetry's truth. The plain fact is that if any man should persistently restrict him self to a physical science, should never hear a symphony or an oratorio, should shut out from his

experience any dealing with music or enjoyment of it, he would in the end lose all musical capacity, and would become a man whose appreciation of music was nil and whose opinion on music was worth less. Just such an atrophy of life is characteristic of intense specialists. When one understands this he becomes capable of intelligent sympathy with scientists, even when he does not at all agree with their religious opinions. Jude gives us a remarkable injunction, plainly applicable here. "On some have mercy who are in doubt." But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And on some have mercy, who are in doubt; and some save, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

Now unto him that is able to guard you from stumbling, and to set you before the presence of his glory without blemish in exceeding joy, to the only God our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, domin ion and power, before all time, and now, and for ever more. Amen. Jude 1:20-25.

O God, who so fillest all things that they only thinly veil Thy presence; we adore Thee in the beauty of the world, in the goodness of human hearts and in Thy thought within the mind. We praise Thee for the channels through which Thy grace can come to us; sickness and health, joy and pain, freedom and necessity, sunshine and rain, life and death.

We thank Thee for all the gentle and healing ministries of life; the gladness of the morning, the freedom of the wind, the music of the rain, the joy of the sunshine, and the deep calm of the night; for trees, and flowers, the clouds, and skies; for the tender ministries of human love, the unselfishness of parents, the love that binds man and woman, the confidence of little children; for the patience of teachers and the encouragement of friends.

We bless Thee for the stirring ministry of the past, for the story of noble deeds, the memory of holy men, the printed book, the painter’s art, the poet’s craft; most of all for the ministry of the Son of Man, who taught us the eternal beauty of earthly things, who by His life set us free from fear, and by His death won us from our sins to Thee; for His cradle, His cross, and His crown. May His Spirit live within us, conquer all the selfishness of man, and take away the sin of the world. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

Seventh Week, Fourth Day The tendency of scientific specialization to shut out the appreciation of life’s other values has one notable result: the opinions of scientific specialists in the physical realm on matters of religion are generally not of major importance. There is a popular fallacy that an expejt in one realm must be listened to with reverence on all subjects. But the fact is that a great physicist is not by his scientific eminence thereby qualified to talk wisely on politics or literature or religion; rather, so far as a priori considerations are concerned, he is thereby disqualified. Mr. Edison cannot say anything on electricity that is insignificant; but.-when he gave an interview on immortality he revealed to everyone who knew the history of thought on that subject and the issues involved in it, that on matters outside his specialty he could say things very insignificant. The more one personally knows great specialists, the more he sees how human they are, how inter est in one thing shuts out interest in others, how the subject on which the mind centers grows real and all else unreal, how very valuable their judgment is on their specialties, and how much less valuable even than ordinary men’s is their judgment on anything beside. This truth does not

concern reli gion only; it concerns any subject which calls into play appreciative faculties that their science does not use. For a man, therefore, to surrender religious faith because a special ist in another realm disowns it is absurd. If one wishes, outside of those whose vital interest in religion makes them specialists there, to get confirmation from another class of men, let him look not to physicists but to judges. They are accustomed to weigh evidence covering the general field of human life; and among the great judicial minds of this generation, as of all others, one finds an overwhelming preponderance of religious men. But unto us God revealed them through the Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man, which is in him? even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God. But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God; that we might know the things that were freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; combining spiritual things with spiritual words. Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spirit ually judged. 1 Corinthians 2:10-14.

O Eternal and glorious Lord God, since Thy glory and honor is the great end of all Thy works, we desire that it may be the beginning and end of all our prayers and services. Let Thy great Name be glorious, and glorified, and sanctified throughout the world. Let the knowledge of Thee- fill all the earth as the waters cover the sea. Let that be done in the world that may most advance Thy glory. Let all Thy works praise Thee. Let Thy wisdom, power, justice, goodness, mercy, and truth be evident unto all mankind, that they may observe, acknowledge, and admire it, and magnify the Name of Thee, the Eternal God. In all the dispensation of Thy Providence, enable us to see Thee, and to sanctify Thy Name in our hearts with thankfulness, in our lips with thanksgiving, in our lives with dutifulness and obedience. Enable us to live to the honor of that great Name of Thine by which we are called, and that, as we profess ourselves to be Thy children, so we may study and sincerely endeavor to be like Thee in all goodness and righteousness, that we may thereby bring glory to Thee our Father which art in heaven; that we and all mankind may have high and honorable thoughts concerning Thee, in some measure suitable to Thy glory, majesty, goodness, wisdom, bounty, and purity, and may in all our words and actions manifest these inward thoughts touching Thee with suitable and becoming words and actions; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Lord Chief Justice Sir Matthew Hale 1609.

Seventh Week, Fifth Day So far in our thought we have tacitly consented to the popular supposition, that the scientists are at odds with religion. Many of them unquestionably are. But in view of the obsessing nature of scientific specialties, the wonder is not that some scientists are non-religious; the wonder is that so many are profoundly men of faith in God. The idea that scientists as a whole are irreligious is untrue. Lists of testimonials from eminent specialists in favor of religion are not particularly useful, for, as we have said, the judgment of specialists outside their chosen realm is, at the most, no more valuable than that of ordinary men. But if anyone tries to rest his case against religion on the adverse opinions of great scientists, he easily can be driven from his position. Sir William Crookes, one of the world's greatest chemists, writes: "I cannot imagine the possibility of anyone with ordinary intelligence entertaining the least doubt as to the existence of a God a Law-Giver and a Life-Giver." Lord Kelvin, called the "Napoleon of Science," said that he could think of nothing so absurd as atheism; Sir Oliver Lodge, perhaps the greatest

living physicist and certainly an earnest believer, writes, "The tendency of science, whatever it is, is not in an irreligious direction at the present time!; Sir George Stokes, the great physicist (died 1903), affirmed his belief that disbelievers among men of science "form a very small minority"; and Sir James Geikie, Dean of the Faculty of Science at Edinburgh University, impatiently writes, "It is simply an impertinence to say that the leading scientists are irreligious or anti-Christian. Such a statement could only be made by some scatter-brained chatterbox or zealous fanatic." The fact is that, in spite of the tendency of high specialization to crowd out religious interest and insight, our great scientists have never thrown the mass of their influence against religion, and today, in the opinion of one of their chief leaders, are growing to be increasingly men of religious spirit. Whatever argument is to be based on the testimony of the scientists is rather for religion than against it. For this cause I also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is among you, and the love which ye show toward all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe. Ephesians 1:15-19.

O Lord, who by Thy holy Apostle hast taught us to do all things in the Name of the Lord Jesus and to Thy glory; give Thy blessing, we pray Thee, to this our work, that we may do it in faith, and heartily., as to the Lord, and not unto men. All our powers of body and mind are Thine, and we would fain devote them to Thy service. Sanctify them, and the work in which we are engaged; let us not be slothful, but fervent in spirit, and do Thou, O Lord, so bless our efforts that they may bring forth in us the fruit of true wisdom. Strengthen the faculties of our minds, and dispose us to exert them for Thy glory and for the furtherance of Thy Kingdom. Save us from all pride and vanity and reliance upon our own power or wisdom. Teach us to seek after truth, and enable us to gain it; while we know earthly things, may we know Thee, and be known by Thee through and in Thy Son Jesus Christ, that we may be Thine in body and spirit, in all our work and undertakings; through Jesus Christ. Amen. Thomas Arnold 1795.

Seventh Week, Sixth Day

Far more important than the opinions of individual scientists for religion or against it, is the fact that scientists are coming increasingly to recognize the limitations of their field. The field of science is limited; its domain is the system of facts and their laws, which make the immediate environment of man’s life; but with the Origin of all life, with the character of the Power that sustains us and with the Destiny that lies ahead of us science does not, cannot deal. The most superficial observance shows how little any great soul lives within the confines of science’s discoveries. Carlyle, after his great bereavement, writes to his friend Erskine:

" Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy will be done what else can we say? The other night in my sleepless tossings about, which were growing more and more miserable, these words, that brief and grand Prayer, came strangely to my mind, with an altogether new emphasis; as if written and shining for me in mild pure splendor, on the black bosom of the Night there; when I, as it were, read them word by word with a sudden check to my imperfect wanderings, with a sudden softness of composure which was much unexpected. Not for perhaps

thirty or forty years had I once formally repeated that prayer nay, I never felt before how .intensely the voice of man's soul it is; the inmost aspiration of all that is high and pious in poor human nature." But supposing that the facts of science were all of reality and the laws of science all of truth, what sort of prayer could Carlyle have offered? An other has suggested the form which the Lord's Prayer would take in a world that lacked religious faith: "Our brethren who are upon the earth, hallowed be our name; our Kingdom come; our will be done on earth; for there is no heaven. We must get us this day our daily bread; we know we cannot be forgiven, for Law knows no forgiveness; we fear not temptation, for we deliver ourselves from evil; for ours is the Kingdom and ours is the power, and there is no glory and no forever. Amen." In such a barren prayer the whole of man's life is not represented.

Let no man deceive himself. If any man thinketh that he is wise among you in this world, let him become a fool, that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He that taketh the wise in their craftiness: and again, The Lord knoweth the reasonings of the wise, that they are vain. Wherefore let no one glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ s; and Christ is God s. 1 Corinthians 3:18-23.

Thou Infinite Spirit, who occupiest all space, who guid- est all motion, thyself unchanged, and art the life of all that lives, we flee unto thee, in whom we also live and move and have our being, and would reverence Thee with what is high est and holiest in our soul. We know that Thou art not to* be worshiped as though Thou needest aught, or askedst the psalm of praise from our lips, or our heart's poor prayer. O Lord, the ground under our feet, and the seas which whelm it round, the air which holds them both, and the heavens sparkling with many a fire these are a whisper of the psalm of praise which creation sends forth to Thee, and we know that Thou askest no homage of bended knee, nor heart bowed down, nor heart uplifted unto Thee. But in our feebleness and our darkness, dependent on Thee for all things, we lift up our eyes unto Thee; as a little child to the father and mother who guide him by their hands, so do our eyes look up to Thy countenance, O Thou who art our Father and our Mother too, and bless Thee for all Thy gifts. We look to the infinity of Thy perfection with awe-touched heart, and we adore the sublimity which we cannot comprehend. We bow down before Thee, and would renew our sense of gratitude and quicken still more our certainty of trust, till we feel Thee a presence close to our heart, and are so strong in the heavenly confidence that nothing earthly can disturb us or make us fear. Amen. Theodore Parker.

Seventh Week, Seventh Day The difficulty which many Christians feel concerning science centers around their loyalty to the Bible. They still are under the domination of the thought that the Christian idea of the Bible is the same as the Mohammedan idea of the Koran or the Mormon idea of Joseph Smith's sacred plates. The Koran was all written in heaven, word for word, say orthodox Mohammedans, before ever it came to earth. As for the Mormon Bible, God buried the plates on which he wrote, said Smith, and then disclosed their hiding place, and his prophet translated them verbatim, so that the Mormon book is literally inerrant. But this is not the Christian idea of the Bible. Inspiration is never represented in Scripture as verbal dictation where human powers and limitations are suspended, so that like a phonographic plate the result is a mechanical reproduction of the words of God. Rather God spoke to men through their experience as they were able to understand him, and as a result the great Christian Book, like a true Christian man, represents alike the inbreathing of the Divine and the limitation of the human. So the Epistle to the

Hebrews clearly states that God did what he could in revealing partially to partial men what they could understands

God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds. Hebrews 1:12. Of all limitations that are entirely obvious in the ancient Hebrew-Christian world, the current view of the physical universe is the most unescapable. To suppose that God never can reveal to men anything about the world, transcending what the ancient Hebrews could understand, is to deny the principle which Jesus applied even to the more important realm of spiritual truth: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now" (John 16:12).

O Thou who hast visited us with the Day spring from on high, who hast made light to shine in the darkness, we praise Thy holy name and proclaim Thy wonderful goodness.

We bless Thee for the dawning of the light in far-off ages as soon as human eyes could bear its rays. We remember those who bore aloft the torch of- truth when all was false and full of shame; those far-sighted souls who from the {169} mountain tops of vision heralded the coming day; those who labored in the darkened valleys to lift men’s eyes to the hills.

We thank Thee that in the fulness of the times Thou didst gather Thy light into life, so that even simple folk could see; for Jesus the Star of the morning and the Light of the world.

We commemorate His holy nativity, His lowly toil, His lonely way; the gracious words of His lips, the deep com passion of His heart, His friendship for the fallen, His love for the outcast; the crown of thorns, the cruel cross, the open shame. And we rejoice to know as He was here on earth, so Thou art eternally. Thou dost not abhor our flesh, nor shrink from our earthly toil. Thou rememberest our frailty, bearest with our sin, and fastest even our bitter cup of death. And now we rejoice for the light that shines about our daily path from the cradle to the grave, and for the light that illumines its circuit beyond these spheres from our con ception in Thy mind to the day when we wake in Thy image; for the breathing of Thy spirit into ours till we see Thee face to face: in God, from God; to God at last. Hallelujah. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK The innermost questions which some minds raise about religion cannot be answered without candid discussion of the obvious contrasts between faith and science. The conflict be tween science and theology is one of the saddest stories ever written. It is a record of mutual misunderstanding, of bitterness, bigotry, and persecution, and to this day one is likely to find the devotees of religion suspicious of science and scien tists impatient with the Church.

If we are to understand the reason for this controversy between science and theology, we must take a far look back into man’s history. Stephen Leacock remarks that whenever a professor discusses anything, he has to retreat at least 2, 000 years to get a running start. Our retreat must be farther than that; it carries us to the earliest stage in which we are able to describe the thoughts of men. At the beginning men attributed to superhuman spirits all activities in the world which they themselves did not perform. If the wind blew, a spirit did it; if the sun rose, a spirit moved it; if a storm came, a spirit drove it. Natural law was non-existent to the primitive man; every movement in nature was the direct result of somebody’s active will. From the mysterious whispering of a wind-swept field to the crashing thunder, what man did not cause the gods did.

If, therefore, a primitive man were asked the cause of rain, he had but one answer: a god made it rain. That was his scientific answer, for no other explanation of rain could he conceive. That was his religious answer, for he worshiped the spirit on whom he must depend for showers. This significant fact, therefore, stands clear: To primitive man a religious answer and a scientific answer were identical. Sun rise was explained, not by planetary movements which were unknown, but by the direct activity of a god, and the Dawn then was worshipped in the same terms in which it was explained. The historic reason for the confusion between science and religion at once grows evident. At the beginning they zvere fused and braided into one; the story of their relationship is the record of their gradual and difficult disentangling.

Wherever peace has come between science and religion, one finds a realm where the boundaries between the two are acknowledged and respected. Ask now the question, What makes it rain? There is a scientific answer in terms of natural laws concerning atmospheric pressure and condensation. There is also a religious answer, since behind all laws and through them runs the will of God. These two replies are distinct, they move in different realms, and are held together without inconsistency. As Sabatier put it, "Since God is the final cause of all things, he is not the scientific explanation of any one thing." In how many realms where once confusion reigned between the believers in the gods and the seekers after natural laws, is peace now established! Rain and sunrise, the tides and the eclipses, the coming of the sea sons and the growing of the crops for all such events we have our scientific explanations, and at the same time through them all the man of religion feels the creative power of God. Peace reigns in these realms because here no longer do we force religious answers on scientific questions or scientific answers on religious questions. Evidently the old Deuteronomic law is the solution of the conflict between science and religion: "Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor’s landmark" (Deuteronomy 27:17).

II

Left thus in the negative, however, this might seem to mean that we are to divide our minds into air-tight compartments, and allow no influences from one to penetrate another. But science at\d religion do tremendously affect each other, and no honest dealing ever can endeavor to prevent their mutual reaction. Our position is not thus negative; it affirms a positive and most important truth. Life has many aspects; science, art, religion, approach it from different angles, with different interests and purposes; and while they do influence ach other, they are not identical and each has solid standing in its own right. When science has grown domineering, as though her approach to reality were the only one and her conclusions all of truth, the poets have had as much distaste for her as have the theologians. Shelley, who called him self an atheist, had no interest in religion’s conflict with the extreme claims of science; yet listen to his aroused and flaming language as he pleads the case for poetry against her: "Poetry is something divine. . . . It is the perfect and consummate surface and bloom of all things; it is as the odor and color of the rose to the texture of the elements which compose it, and the form and splendor of unfaded beauty to the secrets of anatomy and corruption. What w r ere virtue, "love, patriotism, friendship what were the scenery of this beautiful universe which we inhabit; what were our consolations on this side of the grave and what were our aspirations beyond it, if poetry did not ascend to bring light and fire from those eternal regions where the owl-winged faculty of calculation dare not even soar?" This involves no denial of science’s absolute right to her own field the "texture of the elements which compose" the rose, and the "secrets of anatomy." But it is a justified assertion that this field of science is not all of

reality, and that what the "owl-winged faculty of calculation" can reach is rbt all of truth.

What is a sunset? Science sets forth the answer in tables where the light waves that compose the colors are counted and the planetary movements that bring on the dusk are all explained. Poetry answers in a way how different!

"I've dreamed of sunsets when the sun, supine, Lay rocking on the ocean like a god, And threw his weary arms far up the sky, And with vermilion-tinted fingers, Toyed with the long tresses of the evening star." 1. Is one of these answers more true than the other? Rather it is absurd to compare their truth; they are not contradictory; they approach the same fact with diverse interests, and seek in it different aspects of reality. Each has its rights in its. own field. And so far is it from being true that science has a clear case in favor of its own superior importance, that Hoffding, the philosopher, remarks, "It well may be that poetry gives more perfect expression to the highest Reality than any scientific concept can ever do."

Any great fact is too manifold in its meanings to be exhausted by a single method of approach. If one would know the Bible thoroughly, he must understand the rules of gram mar. Were one to make grammar his exclusive specialty, the Bible to him, so far as he held strictly to his science,, would be nouns and verbs, adverbs, adjectives, and prepositions, and the law-abiding relationships between them. This mere grammarian would know by such a method one aspect of the Bible, but how little of the Book would that aspect be! No rules of grammar can interpret the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians or explain the story of the Cross. The facts and laws of the Book's language a grammarian could know, but the beauty and the soul of it, the innermost trans forming truth of it, would be unperceived. So life is too rich and various to be exhausted by any one approach. Science seeks facts and arranges them in systems of cause and effect Poetry sees these bare facts adorned with beauty, she suffuses them with her preferences and her appreciations. Religion sees the whole gathered up into spiritual unity, filled with moral purpose and good will, and in this faith finds peace and power. There need be no conflict between these various approaches; they are complementary, not antagonistic; and no man sees all the truth by art y one U. G. Holland. of them alone. So a chemist might come to a spring to analyze it; a painter to rejoice in its beauties and reproduce them on his canvas; and a man athirst might come to drink and live. Shall they quarrel because they do not all come alike? Let them rather see how partial is the experience of each without the others!

III In the mutual trespassing which has caused our problem, religion has had her guilty share, and the reason is not difficult to find. God did not have to give a modern scientific educa tion to his ancient Hebrew saints before he could begin to reveal to them something of his will and character. And they, writing their experience and thought of him, could not avoid as no generation's writers can avoid indicating the view of the physical world which they and their contemporaries held. It is easy, therefore, from scores of Scripture passages to reconstruct the early Hebrew world. Their earth was flat and was founded on an underlying sea. (Psalms 136:6; Psalms 24:1-2; Genesis 7:11); it was station ary (Psalms 93:1; Psalms 104:5); the heavens, like an up turned bowl, "strong as a molten mirror" (Job 37:18; Genesis 1:6-8; Isaiah 40:22; Psalms 104:2), rested on the earth beneath (Amos 9:6; Job 26:11); the sun, moon, and stars moved within this firmament, of special purpose to illumine man (Genesis 1:14-19); there was a sea above the sky, "the waters which were above the firmament" (Genesis 1:7; Psalms 148:4), and through the "windows of heaven" the

rain came down (Genesis 7:11; Psalms 78:23); beneath the earth was mysterious Sheol where dwelt the shadowy dead (Isaiah 14:9-11); and all this had been made in six days, a short and measurable time before (Genesis 1:1-31). This was the world of the Hebrews.

Because when the Hebrews wrote the Bible their thoughts of God, their deep experience of him, were interwoven with their early science, Christians, through the centuries, have thought that faith in God stood or fell with early Hebrew science and that the Hebrew view of the physical universe must last forever. In the seventeenth century, Dr. John Lightfoot, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, said: "Heaven and earth, center and circumference, were created all together, in the same instant, and clouds full of water. . . . This work took place and man was created by the Trinity on October 23, 4004 B. C, at nine o clock in the morning." Of what tragedy has this identification of science with religion been the cause! When astronomy began to revolutionize man’s idea of the solar universe, when for the first time in man’s imagination the flat earth grew round and the stable earth began moving through space seventy-five times faster than a cannon-ball, Pope Paul V solemnly rendered a decree, that "the doctrine of the double motion of the earth about its axis and about the sun is false and entirely contrary to Holy Scripture." When geology began to show from the rocks unimpeachable testimony the long leisureliness of God, laying the foundations of the world, a Christian leader declared geology "not a subject of lawful inquiry," "a dark art," "dangerous and dis reputable," "a forbidden province," "an awful evasion of the testimony of revelation." This tragic record of theology’s vain conflict with science is the most pitiable part of the Church’s story. How needless it was! For now when we face our universe of magnificent distances and regal laws has religion really suffered? Has a flat and stationary earth proved essential to Christianity, as Protestants and Catholics alike declared? Rather the Psalmist could not guess the sweep of our meaning when now we say, "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork" (Psalms 19:1). In the last generation the idea of evolution was the occasion of a struggle like that which attended the introduction of the new astronomy. How was the world made? asked the ancient Hebrew, and he answered, By the word of God at a stroke. That was his scientific answer, and his religious answer too. When, therefore, the evolving universe was dis closed by modern science, when men read in fossil and in living biological structure the undeniable evidence of a long history of gradually changing forms of life, until the world was seen not made like a box but growing like a tree, many men of religion thought the faith destroyed. They identified the Christian Gospel with early Hebrew science! Today, however, when the general idea of evolution is taken for granted as gravitation is, how false this identification obviously appears! Says Professor Bowne, "An Eastern king was seated in a garden, and one of his counselors was speaking of the wonderful works of God. Show me a sign/ said the king, and I will believe. Here are four acorns/ said the counselor; will your Majesty plant them in the ground, and then stoop down and look into this clear pool of water? The king did so. Now/ said the other, Look up/ The king- looked up and saw four oak trees where he had planted the acorns. Wonderful! he exclaimed; this is indeed the work of God/ How long were you looking into the water? asked the counselor. Only a second/ said the king. Eighty years have passed as a second said the other. The king looked at his garments; they were threadbare. He looked at his reflection in the water; he had become an old man. There is no miracle here, then he said angrily. Yes said the other; it is God’s work whether he do it in one second or in eighty years. "

Such an attitude as this is now a commonplace with Christian folk. A vast and growing universe through which sweep the purposes of God is by far the most magnificent outlook for faith that man has ever had. The Gospel and Hebrew science are not identical; the Gospel is not indissolubly bound to any science ancient or modern; for science and religion have separable domains.

"A fire-mist and a planet,

A crystal and a cell, A jelly-fish and a saurian,

And caves where cave men dwell.

Then a sense of Love and Duty

And a face turned from the clod, S

ome call it Evolution

And others call it God." The same story of needless antagonism is now being written about religion and natural law. When science began plotting nature’s laws, the control of the world seemed to be snatched from the hands of deity and given over to a system of im personal rules. God, whose action had been defined in terms of miracle, was forced from one realm after another by the discovery of laws, until at last even comets were found to be not whimsical but as regular in their law-abiding courses as the planets, and God seemed to be escorted to the edge of the universe and bowed out. When Newton first formulated the law of gravitation, the artillery of many an earnest pul pit was let loose against him. One said that Newton took "from God that direct action on his works so constantly ascribed to him in Scripture and transferred it to material mechanism" and that he "substituted gravitation for Providence." But now, when science has so plainly won her case, in her own proper field; when we know to our glory and profit so many laws by which the world is governed, and use our knowledge as the most splendid engine of personal pur pose and freedom which man ever had, we see how great our gain has been. Nor is it more a practical than a religious gain. God once was thought of chiefly in terms of miraculous* action; he came into his world now and again, like the deus* ex-machina of a Greek tragedy, to solve a critical dilemma in the plot. Now all the laws we know and many more are his regular ways of action, and through them all continuously his purpose is being wrought. As Henry Drummond exclaimed, "If God appears periodically, he disappears periodically. If he comes upon the scene at special crises, he is absent from the scene in the intervals. Whether is all-God or occasional God the nobler theory?"

Nothing, therefore, can be more pathetic than the self-styled "defenders of the faith" who withstand the purpose of reverent students to give scientific answers to scientific questions. Such men are not really defending the faith. They are doing exactly what Father Inchofer did when he said, "The opinion that the earth moves is of all heresies the most abominable"; what Mr. Gosse did when he maintained, in explanation of geology’s discoveries, that God by the use of stratified rock and fossils deliberately gave the earth the appearance of development through long ages, while really he made it in six days; what Mr. Southall did when, in the face of established anthropology, he claimed that the "Egyptians had no Stone age and were born civilized"; what the Dean of Chichester did when he preached that "those who refuse to accept the history of the creation of our first parents according to its obvious literal intention, and are for substituting the modern dream of evolution in its place, cause the entire scheme of man’s salvation to collapse." These were not

defending the faith; they were making it ridiculous in the eyes of intelligent men and were embroiling religion in controversies where she did not belong and where, out of her proper realm, she was foredoomed to defeat. For scientific problems are not a matter for faith; they are a matter for investigation. No one can settle by faith the movements of the planets, the method of the earth's formation, the age of mankind, the explanation of comets. These lie in science's realm, not in religion s, and religious faith demeans herself when she tries to settle them. Let science be the grammarian of the world to observe its parts of speech and their relations! Religion deals with the soul of the world, its deepest source, its spiritual meaning, its divine purpose.

IV

Science, however, has not always been content with the grammarian's task. When we have frankly confessed religion's sins in trespassing on scientific territory, we must note that science has her guilty share in the needless conflict. Today one suspects that the Church's vain endeavor by ecclesiastical authority to force religious solutions on scientific problems is almost over. But the attempt of many scientists to claim the whole field of reality as theirs and to force their solutions on every sort of problem is not yet finished. This, too, is a vain endeavor. To suppose that the process of scientific observation and inference can exhaust the truth of life is like supposing that there is no more meaning in Westminster , Abbey than is expressed in Baedeker.

Scientists, for example, sometimes claim domains which are I not theirs by spelling abstract nouns with capitals, by posit ing Law or Evolution as the makers and builders of the world. But law never did anything; law is only man's statement of the way, according to his observation, in which things are done. To explain the universe as the creation of Law is on a par with explaining homes as the creation of Matrimony. Ab stract nouns do not create anything and the capitalizing of a process never can explain it. So, too, Evolution does nothing to the world; it is the way in which whoever makes the world is making it. As well explain the difference between an acorn and an oak by saying that Growth did it, as to ex plain the progress of creation from Stardust to civilization by changing e to E. Science may describe the process as evolutionary, but its source, its moving power, and its destiny are utterly beyond her ken. For another thing, scientists often invade realms which are not theirs, by stretching the working theories of some special science to the proportions of a complete philosophy of life. A generation ago, when geology and biology were in their "green and salad days," the enthusiasm inspired by the splendid results of their hypotheses went to strange lengths. One professor of geology seriously explained the pyramids of Egypt to be the remains of volcanic eruption which had forced its way upwards by slow and stately motion. The hieroglyphs were crystalline formations and the shaft of the great pyramid was the airhole of a volcano. Scientists are human like all men; their specialties loom large; the ideas that work in their limited areas seem omnipotent. So a student of the influence of sunlight on life thinks reactions to the sun explain everything. "Heliotropism," he says, "doubtless wrote Hamlet." A specialist on the influence of geography on human nature interprets everything as the reaction of man to seas, mountains, plains, and deserts, and Lombroso even thinks the revolutionary temperament especially native to men who live on limestone formations! Specialists in economic history are sure that man is little more than an animated nucleus of hunger and that all life is explicable as a search for food. And psychologists, charmed by the neatness of description which causal connections introduce into our inner life, leap to the conclusion, which lies outside their realm, that personality is an illusion, freedom a myth and our mental life the rattling of a causal chain forged and set in

motion when the universe began. All this is not science; it is making hypo theses from a limited field of facts masquerade as a total philosophy of life. The underlying reason why science, when she regards her province as covering everything, inevitably- clashes with the interests of religion, is that she starts her view of the world from the sub-human side. The typical sciences are physics, chemistry, astronomy, geology, biology, and the view of the universe which they present is the basis on which all other sciences proceed. But this foundation is sub-human; the master ideas involved in it are all obtained with the life of man left out of account. Such an approach presents a world- machine, immense and regular, and when, later, psychology and sociology arise, how easy it is to call the human He which they study a by-product of the sub-human world, ai? exudation arising from the activities of matter. Religion, on the contrary, starts with human life. Fall down in awe, Science cries, before this vast sub-human world! And the religious man answers: What world is this I am to bow before? Is it not the universe which my mind knows and whose laws my intellect has grasped? This uni verse, so far as it exists at all for me, is apprehended by my vision, penetrated by my thought, encompassed by my interpretations. What is really great and wonderful here, is not the world which I understand, but the mind that understands it not the sub-human but the human, Man himself is the supreme Fact, and all the world that man could bow before, man's mind must first of all contain. The master truth is not that my mind exists within a physical universe, but that the physical universe is encompassed by my mind. There fore, when I interpret life, I will start with man, and not with what lies below him.

Romanes, the English scientist, illustrates in his experience the difference which these two approaches make. When, re turning from agnosticism to Christianity, he explained his lapse, he said, "I did not sufficiently appreciate the immense importance of human nature, as distinguished from physical nature, in any inquiry touching theism. . . . Human nature is the most important part of nature as a whole whereby to investigate the theory of theism. This I ought to have anticipated on merely a priori grounds, had I not been too much immersed in merely physical research." Of how many now does this same explanation hold! They segregate man from the rest of the universe, and endeavor an interpretation of the unhuman remainder. They forget that man is part and parcel of the universe, bone of its bone, as imperative an expression of its substantial nature as are rocks and stars, and that any philosophy which interprets the world minus man has not interpreted the world.

Here is the difference between a Haeckel and a Phillips Brooks. All the dominant ideas of the one are drawn from existence minus man; all the controlling convictions of the other are drawn from the heights and depths of man's own life. The first approach inevitably leads to irreligion, for Spirit cannot reveal itself except in spirit and until one has found God in man he will not find him in nature. The second as certainly leads to religion, for, as Augustine said, "If you dig deep enough in every man you find divinity." Over against the testimony of the sub-human that there is a mechanistic aspect to the world, stands the unalterable testimony of the human that there is as well an ideal, purposive, and spir itual aspect to the world. Surely the latter brings us nearer to the heart of truth. We never understand anything except in terms of ts highest expression and man is the summit of nature. Could religion find a voice, therefore, she would wish to s^eak not in terms of apology but of challenge, when science, assuming all of reality for its field, grows arrogant. Describe the aspect of the world that belongs to you, she would say. I have learned my lesson; your field is yours, and no interference at my hands shall trouble you again. But remember the

limitations of your domain to observe and describe phenomena and to plot their laws. That is an immense task and inexpressibly useful. But when you have completed it, the total result will be as unlike the real world as a medical man ikin with his wire nerves and painted muscles is unlike a real man. The manikin is sufficiently correct; everything is truly pictured there except life. So things are as science sees them, but things are more than science sees. Plot then the mechanistic aspect of the world, but do not suppose that you have caught all of truth in that wide-meshed net! When you have said your last word on facts observed and laws induced, man rises up to ask imperious questions with which you cannot deal, to present urgent problems for which no solution ever has been found save Augustine s, "I seek for God in order that my soul may live." Our thought so ended, however, would le*ave science and religion jealously guarding their boundaries, not cooperating as allies. Such suspicious recognition of each other's realms does not exhaust the possibilities. When once the separate functions each by the other have been granted, we are free to turn our thought to the inestimable service which each is rendering. Consider the usefulness of science to the ideal causes of which religion is the chief! Science has given us the new universe, not more marvelous in its vastness than in its unity. For the spectroscope has shown that everywhere through immeasurable space the same chemical properties and laws obtain; the telescope has revealed with what mathematical precision the orbits in the heavens are traced and how unwaveringly here or among the stars gravitation maintains its hold. Man never had so immense and various and yet so single and unified a world before. Polytheism once was possible, but science has banished it forever. Whatever may be the source of the universe, it is one Source, and whoever the creator, he is more glorious in man's imagination than he could ever have been before. Science also has put at the disposal of the ideal causes such instruments as by them selves they would never have possessed. We are hoping for a new world-brotherhood, and we pray for it in Christian churches as the Father's will. But the instruments by which the inter-racial fellowship must be maintained and without which it would be unthinkable are science's gift. Railroads, steamships, telegraphs, telephones, wireless these are the shuttles by which the ideal faiths in man's fraternity may be woven into fact. When Christian physicians heal the sick or stamp out plagues that for ages have been man's curse and his despair, when social maladjustments are corrected by Christian philanthropy, and saner, happier ways of living are made possible; when comforts that once were luxuries are brought within the reach of all, and man's life is relieved of crushing handicaps; when old superstitions that had filled man's life with dread for ages are driven like fogs before science's illumination, and religious faith is freed of their incumbrance; when great causes of relief have at their disposal the unimaginable wealth which our modern economic system has created can anyone do sufficient justice to man's debt to science? And once more science has done religion an in estimable service in establishing as a point of honor the ambition to see straight and to report exactly. The tireless pa tience, the inexorable honesty, the sacrificial heroism of scientists, pursuing truth, is a gift of incalculable magnitude. Huxley is typical of science at its best when he writes in his journal his ideal "To smite all humbugs however big; to give a nobler tone to science; to set an example of abstinence from petty personal controversies and of toleration for every thing but lying; to be indifferent as to whether the work is recognized as mine or not, so long as it is done." Countless obscurantisms and bigotries, shams and sophistries have been driven from the churches by this scientific spirit and more are yet to go. Science has shown intellectual dishonesty to be a sin of the first rank. Christianity never can be thankful enough for science; on our knees we should be grateful for her as one of God's most indispensable gifts. Nor

should the fact that many a scientist whose contributions we rejoice in was not certain about God defer our gratitude. Cyrus, the Persian, is not the only one to whom the Eternal has said, "I will gird thee, though thou hast not known me" (Isaiah 45:5).

When, however, science has done her necessary work, she needs her great ally, religion. Without the insight and hope which faith alone can bring, we learn a little about the world, our minds enclosed in boundaries beyond which is dark, unfathomable mystery. We rejoice in nature’s beauty and in friendship, suffer much with broken bodies and more with broken family ties, until we die as we were born the spawn of mindless, soulless powers that never purposed us and never cared. And the whole universe is purposeless, engaged with blind hands, that have no mind behind them, on tasks that mean nothing and are never done. Science and religion should not be antagonists; they are mutually indispensable allies in the understanding and mastery of life.

04.08. Faith and Moods

CHAPTER VIII. Faith and Moods

DAILY READINGS The relationship of faith to feeling, rather than faith’s relationship to mind, is with many people the more vital interest. The emotional results of faith are rightfully of in tense concern to everyone, for our feelings put the sense of value into life. To see a sunset without being stirred by its beauty is to miss seeing the sunset; to have friends with out feeling love for them is not to have friends; and to possess life without feeling it to be gloriously worth while is to miss living. Now, in this regard, the attitude of faith stands, sharply opposed to its direct contrary the attitude of fear. Faith and fear are the two emotional climates, in one or the other of which everyone tends habitually to live. To the comparison of these we set ourselves in the daily readings.

Eighth Week, First Day Give ear to my prayer, O God;

And hide not thyself from my supplication.

Attend unto me, and answer me:

I am restless in my complaint, and moan,

Because of the voice of the enemy,

Because of the oppression of the wicked;

For they cast iniquity upon me,

And in anger they persecute me.

My heart is sore pained within me:

And the terrors of death are fallen upon me.

Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me,

And horror hath overwhelmed me.

And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove!

Then would I fly away, and be at rest.

Lo, then would I wander far off,

I would lodge in the wilderness.

Psalms 55:1-7.

How many people are slaves to the mood from which this psalmist suffered! "Fearfulness and trembling" are their habitual attitude toward life. They fear to die and just as 5 much they fear to

live; before every vexatious problem, before every opposing obstacle, even before the common tasks \and responsibilities of daily living, they stand in dread; and every piece of work is done by them at least three times in previous worry, in anxious performance, and in regretful retrospect. Such fear imprisons the soul. No two men really live in the same world; for while the outward geography may be identical, the real environment of each soul is created by our moods, tempers, and habits of thought. Fear builds a prison about the man, and bars him in with dreads, anxieties, and timid doubts. And the man will live forever in that prison unless faith sets him free. Faith is the great liberator. The psalmist who found himself a prisoner of "fearfulness and trembling" obtained his liberty and became a "soul in peace" (Psalms 55:18); and the secret of his freedom We revealed in the closing words of his psalm "But I will?trust in Thee." Faith of some sort is the only power that ever sets men free from the bondage of their timidities and dreads. If a man is the slave of fearfulness, there is no substance in his claim to be a man of faith; a man who has vital faith is not habitually fearful. And as Emerson said, "He has not learned the lesson of life who does not every day surmount a fear."

O God, we remember with sadness our want of faith in Thee. What might have been a garden we have turned into a desert by our sin and wilfulness. This beautiful life which Thou hast given us we have wasted in futile worries and vain regrets and empty fears. Instead of opening our eyes to the *joy of life, the joy that shines in the leaf, the flower, the face of an innocent child, and rejoicing in it as in a sacrament, we have sunk back into the complainings of our narrow and blinded souls. O deliver us from the bondage of un- chastened desires and unwholesome thoughts. Help us to conquer hopeless brooding and faithless reflection, and the impatience of irritable weakness. To this end, increase our faith, O Lord. Fill us with a complete trust in Thee, and the desire for a more whole-hearted surrender to Thy will. Then every sorrow will become a joy. Then shall we say to the mountains that lie heavy on our souls, "Remove and be cast hence," and they shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible unto us. Then shall we renew our strength, and mount up with wings as eagles; we shall run and not be weary; we shall walk and not faint. We offer this prayer in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Samuel McComb.

Eighth Week, Second Day Not only is it true that fear imprisons while faith liberates; fear paralyses and faith empowers. The only attitude in which a man has command of his faculties and is at his best, is the attitude of faith; while fear bewilders the mind and paralyzes the will. The physical effects of fear are deadly; it positively inhibits any useful thinking; and in the spiritual life its results are utterly demoralizing. Fear is the panic of a soul. Consider such an estate as the author of Deuteronomy presents, And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, and there shall be no rest for the sole of thy foot: but Jehovah will give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and pining of soul; and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear night and day, and shalt have no assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shalt say, Would it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would it were morning! for the fear of thy heart which thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see. Deuteronomy 28:65-67.

Such a situation oppresses every vital power, and the conquest of such a situation must always be inward before it can be outward; the man must pass from fear to faith. Let even a little faith arise in him, and power begins to return. Men fear that they cannot overcome evil habits, that they cannot successfully meet difficult situations, that they can not hold out in the Christian life, and that great causes can not be fought through to victory and the weakness which appalls them is the creation

of their own misgiving.

"Our doubts are traitors,

And make us lose the good we oft might win, By fearing to attempt." But faith is tonic; the results which follow a change of heart from fear to faith are miraculous; spiritual dwarfs grow to giants and achieve successes that before would have been unbelievable. No verse in Scripture has behind it a greater mass of verifiable experience than: "This is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4).

Gracious Father, Thou hast invited us, unworthy as we are f to pray for all sorts and conditions of men... We pray for all who are in bondage to fear, unable to face the tasks of life or bear the thought of death with peace and dignity. Free them from the tyranny of these dark dreads. Let the inspiration of a great faith or hope seize their souls, and lift them above their fruitless worry and idle torments, into a region of joy and peace and blessedness. We pray for the victims of evil habits, the slaves of alcohol or morphine, or any other pretended redeemer of the soul from weariness and pain. Great is the power of these degrading temptations; but greater still is the saving energy of Thy Spirit. So let Thy Spirit enter the hearts of these unhappy children of Thine, that their will may be made strong to resist, and that the burning heat of high thoughts may consume the grosser desires of the flesh. We pray for souls bound beneath self- imposed burdens, vexed by miseries of their own making; for the children of melancholy, who have lost their way and grope without -a light; for those who do their work with no enthusiasm, and, when night falls, can find no sleep though they search for it as for hidden treasure. Let Thy light pierce through their gloom and shine upon their path...

Unite us to Jesus Christ, Thy perfect Son, in the bonds of a living trust, so that sustained by His example, and sanctified by His Spirit, we may grow more and more into the image of His likeness. These, and all other blessings, we ask in His name and for His sake. Amen. Samuel McComb.

Eighth Week, Third Day There are many situations in life which naturally throw the pall of dread over man’s soul. Life is seldom easy, it is often overwhelmingly difficult, and if a man has worry in his temperament, circumstances supply plenty of occasions on which to exercise it. The difference between men lies here: those in whom the fear-attitude is master hold the oppressive trouble so close to the eye that it hides everything else; those whom the faith-attitude dominates hold trouble off and see it in wide perspectives. A copper centcan hide the sun if we hold it close enough to the eye, and a transient difficulty can shut out from a fearful soul all life’s large blessings and all the horizons of divine good will. Fear disheartens men by concentrating their attention on the unhappy aspects of life; but faith is the great encourager. Whittier lived in a generation full of turmoil and trouble, and his own life is a story of prolonged struggle against illness, disappointments, and poverty. But, listen, "Yet sometimes glimpses on my sight Through present wrong, the eternal right; And, step by step, since time began I see the steady gain of man." That is the attitude of faith; it does not deny the evil, but it sees around it, refuses to be obsessed or scared by it,and takes heart from a large view when a small view would be appalling. And history always confirms the large view. Fear may be right for the moment, but in the long run it is a liar; only faith tells the truth. Be merciful unto me, O God; for man would swallow me up: All the day long he fighting oppresseth me. Mine enemies would swallow me up all the day long; For they are many that fight proudly against me. What time I am afraid, I will put my trust in thee. Psalms 56:1-3.

Almighty and ever-living God, we draw near unto Thee, believing that Thou art, and that Thou wilt reward all those who diligently seek Thee. We are weak, mortal men, immersed in this world's affairs, buffeted by its sorrows, flung to and fro by its conflicts of right and wrong. We cry for some abiding stay, for some sure and steadfast anchorage. Reveal Thyself to us as the eternal God, as the unfathomable Love that encompasses every spirit Thou hast made, and bears it on, through the light and the darkness alike, to the goal of Thine own perfection. And yet, when Thou speakest to us, we are covered with confusion, for now we remember all the sadness and evil disorder of our lives. Thou hast visited our hearts with ideals fair and beautiful, but alas? we have grown weary in aspiration, and have declined into the sordid alms of our baser selves. Thou hast given us the love of parent and of friend, that we might thereby learn something of Thine own love; yet too often have we despised Thy gift and shut our hearts to all the wonder and the glory. We make confession before Thee of our sin and folly and ignorance. Again and again we have vowed our selves to Thy service; again and again our languid wills have failed to do Thy Will. We have been seduced by the sweet poison of sin, and even against light and knowledge we have done that which Thou dost abhor, and which in our secret hearts we loathe. And now we almost fear to repent, lest Thou shouldst call us into judgment for a repentance that must needs be repented of. O mighty Savior of men! be patient with us a little longer. Take us back to Thyself. Without Thee, we are undone; with Thee, we will take fresh heart of hope, and bind ourselves with a more effectual vow, and laying aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, we will follow Thee whithersoever Thou leadest. Amen. Samuel McComb.

Eighth Week, Fourth Day Fear depresses vitality and is a fruitful cause of nervous disorders, with all their disastrous reactions on man's health. Modern investigation has shown beyond any reasonable doubt that while illness comes often by way of the body, it comes also by way of the mind; our moods and tempers have a physical echo, and of all fatal mental states none is's o ruinous as fear. It is not strange, therefore, that some people, never are well. As Dr. McComb puts it, "Many play at living they do not really live. They fear the responsibilities, the struggles, the adventures, not without risk, which life offers them. They fear illness. They fear poverty. They fear unhappiness. They fear danger. They fear the passion of sacrifice. They fear even the exaltation of a pure and noble love, until the settlements in money and social prestige have been duly certified. They fear to take a plunge into life's depths. They fear this world, and they fear still more the world beyond the grave." In such a mood no man can possibly be well. Faith, therefore, which drives out fear, has always been a minister of health. The Master's healings, which to the rationalism of a previous generation seemed incredible, in the light of the present knowledge seem inevitable. He had faith and he demanded faith, and wherever the faith-attitude can be set in motion against the fear-attitude and all its morbid brood, the consequences will be physical as well as moral. An outgrown custom of the early Church does not now seem so strange as it did a generation ago, Is any among you suffering? let him pray. Is any cheerful? let him sing praise. Is any among you sick? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save him that is sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, it shall be forgiven him. Confess therefore your sins one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working. James 5:13-16.

Eternal God, who art above all change and darkness, whose will begat us, and whose all present love doth enfold and continually redeem us, Holy Guest who indwellest, and dost comfort us; we have gathered to worship Thee, and in communion with Thee to find ourselves raised to the light of our life, and the Heaven of our desires.

Pour upon our consciousness the sense of Thy wonderful nearness to us. Reveal to our weakness and distress the power and the grace that are more than sufficient for us. May we see what we are, Thy Spirit-born children linked by nature, love, and choice to Thy mighty being; and may the vision make all fears to fade, and a Divine strength to pulse within.

Enable us to carry out from this place the peace and strength that here we gain, to take into our homes a kinder spirit, a new thoughtfulness; that we may brighten sadness, heal the sick, and make happiness to abound. May we take into our daily tasks and life of labor, a sense of righteousness that shall be as salt to every evil and corrupting influence.

Because we have walked here awhile with Thee, may we be able to walk more patiently with man. Send us forth with love to the fallen, hope for the despairing, strength to impart to the weak and wayward; and carry on through us the work Thou didst commence in Thy Son our Brother Man and Savior God. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

Eighth Week, Fifth Day Fear makes impossible any satisfying joy in life. A man of faith may be deeply joyful even in disastrous circumstances, but a man of fear would be unhappy in heaven. Stevenson sings in "the saddest and the bravest song he ever wrote", "God, if this were faith?... To go on for ever and fail and go on again, And be mauled to the earth and arise, And contend for the shade of a word and a thing not seen with the eyes, With half of a broken hope for a pillow at night That somehow the right is the right, And the smooth shall bloom from the rough: Lord, if that were enough?"

Sad this song may be, but at the heart of it is yet a fierce joy because faith is there. But put a man of fear in luxury and remove from him every visible cause of disquiet and he will still be miserable. The more a man considers these two determinant moods in life, the more he sees that somehow the faith-attitude must be his, if life is to be worth living. Without it life dries up into a Sahara; with it, he comes into a company of the world’s glad spirits, who one way or an other have felt what the Psalmist sings,

Jehovah is my light and my salvation;

Whom shall I fear?

Jehovah is the strength of my life;

Of whom shall I be afraid?

When evil-doers came upon me to eat up my flesh,

Even mine adversaries and my foes, they stumbled and fell.

Though a host should encamp against me,

My heart shall not fear:

Though war should rise against me,

Even then will I be confident.

One thing have I asked of Jehovah, that will I seek after:

That I may dwell in the house of Jehovah all the days of my life,

To behold the beauty of Jehovah,

And to inquire in his temple.

For in the day of trouble he will keep me secretly in his pavilion:

In the covert of his tabernacle will he hide me;

He will lift me up upon a rock.

And now shall my head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me;

And I will offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto Jehovah. Psalms 27:1-6.

Gracious Father! We confess the painful riddle of our being, that, while claiming kinship with Thee, we feel far from Thee. O, what means this strange bewilderment, this never-ending war between our worse and better thoughts? We are Thine by right, yet we have not given ourselves wholly to Thy care. Our hearts know no rest, save in Thee, yet they have sought it in this world's vainglory, which passeth away. We seek to quench our thirst at the cisterns of this earth, but they are broken cisterns, that can hold no water. Lead us to Thy well of life that springeth up eternally. Give us to drink of that spiritual water, of which, if any man drink, he shall never thirst again. We lament our want and poverty before Thee. Open Thou our eyes to behold the unsearchable riches of Thy grace, and increase our faith that we may make them ours. Unite us to Thee in the bonds of will and love and purpose. Out of Thy fulness, which is in Christ, give to each one of us according to his need. Make us wise with His Wisdom; pure with His purity; strong with His strength; that we may rise into the power and glory of the life that is life indeed. Hear our hearts weak and wandering cries, and when Thou hearest, forgive and bless, for His sake. Amen. Samuel McComb.

Eighth Week, Sixth Day No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment? Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit unto the measure of his life? And why are ye anxious concerning raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all

these things do the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteous ness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Matthew 6:24-33. The meaning of this passage hinges on the first "therefore." You cannot serve God and selfish gain at the same time, says Jesus; you should choose decisively to serve God; and therefore you must not be anxious about yourself. For anxious fear so concentrates a man's thought on himself that he can serve no one else. That this is the meaning of this familiar passage is clear also from its conclusion. The real reason for conquering anxious fear is that a man may give himself wholeheartedly to the service of the Kingdom. That fear does spoil usefulness is obvious; a man cannot be fearful for himself and considerate of his fellows. As Stevenson puts it in "Acs Triplex," "The man who has least fear for his own carcass has most time to consider others. That eminent chemist who took his walks abroad in tin shoes and subsisted wholly upon tepid milk had all his work cut out for him in considerate dealings with his own digestion. So soon as prudence has begun to grow up in the brain, like a dismal fungus, it finds its first expression in a paralysis of generous acts." The shame of our fearful living is that it circles about self, is narrowed down to mean solicitudes about our own comfort, and is utterly incapable of serving God or seeking first his Kingdom. Only faith puts folk at leisure from their small anxieties so that they can be servants of a worthy cause. Jesus, therefore, in this passage is not giving us the impossible injunction not to think about tomorrow; he is stating a truth of experience, that anxious fear for oneself which so draws in the thought that God's great causes are forgotten is a deadly peril in man's life. By faith thrust out the mean and timid solicitudes, is his injunction, that life may be free to put first things first.

We come to Thee, our Father, that we may more deeply enter into Thy joy. Thou turnest darkness into day, and mourning into praise. Thou art our Fortress in temptation, our Shield in remorse, our Covert in calamity, our Star of Hope in every sorrow. O Lord, we would know Thy peace, deep, abiding, inexhaustible. When we seek Thy peace, our weariness is gone, the sense of our imperfection ceases to discourage us, and our tired souls forget their pain. When, strengthened and refreshed by Thy goodness, we return to the task of life, send us forth as servants of Jesus Christ in the service and redemption of the world. Send us to the hearts without love, to men and women burdened with heavy cares, to the miserable, the sad, the broken-hearted. Send us to the children whose heritage has been a curse, to the poor who doubt Thy Providence, to the sick who crave for healing and cannot find it, to the fallen for whom no man cares. May we be ministers of Thy mercy, messengers of Thy helpful pity, to all who need Thee. By our sympathy, our prayers, our kindness, our gifts, may we make a way for the inflow of Thy love into needy, and loveless lives. And so -may we have that love which alone is the fulfilling of Thy law. Hasten the time when all men shall love Thee and one another in Thee, when all the barriers that divide us shall be broken down-, and every heart shall be filled with joy and every tongue with melody. These gracious gifts we ask, in Jesus name. Amen. Samuel McComb.

Eighth Week, Seventh Day Fear does not reveal its disastrous consequences to the (full until it colors one's thoughts about the source and desting lof life. Folk work joyfully at a picture-puzzle so long as they believe that the puzzle can be put together, that it was I meant, completed, to compose a picture, and that their labor is an effort made in reasonable hope. But if they begin to fear that they are being fooled, that the puzzle is a hoax land never can be pieced together anywhere by anyone, how swiftly that suspicion will benumb their work! So joyful living depends on

man’s conviction that this life is not a hap less accident, that a good purpose binds it all together, and that our labor for righteousness is not expended on a futile task without a worthy outcome. But fear blights all such hope; it whispers what one pessimist said aloud: "Life is not a tragedy but a farcical melodrama, which is the worst kind of play." That fear benumbs worthy living, kills hope, makes cynical disgust with life a reasonable attitude, and with its frost withers all man’s finest aspirations. Only faith in God can save men from such fear. Fear or faith there is no dilemma so full of consequence. Fear imprisons, faith lib erates; fear paralyzes, faith empowers; fear disheartens, faith encourages; fear sickens, faith heals; fear makes useless, faith makes serviceable and, most of all, fear puts hope lessness at the heart of life, while faith rejoices in its God.

Oh give thanks unto Jehovah; for he is good;

For his lovingkindness endureth for ever.

Let Israel now say,

That his lovingkindness endureth for ever.

Let the house of Aaron now say,

That his lovingkindness endureth for ever.

Let them now that fear Jehovah say,

That his lovingkindness endureth for ever.

Out of my distress I called upon Jehovah:

Jehovah answered me and set me in a large place.

Jehovah is on my side; I will not fear:

What can man do unto me? Psalms 118:1-6.

O God, we invoke Thy blessing upon all who need Thee, and who are groping after Thee, if haply they may find Thee. Be gracious to those who bear the sins of others, who are vexed by the wrongdoing and selfishness of those near and dear to them, and reveal to them the glory of their fellow ship with the sufferings of Christ. Brood in tenderness over the hearts of the anxious, the miserable, the victims of phantasmal fear and morbid imaginings. Redeem from slavery the men and women who have yielded to degrading habits. Put Thy Spirit within them, that they may rise up in shame and sorrow and make confession to Thee, "So brutish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before Thee." And then let them have the glad assurance that Thou art with them, the secret of all good, the promise and potency of better things. Console with Thy large consolation those who mourn for their loved dead, who count the empty places and long for the sound of a voice that is still. Inspire them with the firm conviction that the dead are safe in Thy keeping, nay, that they are not dead, but live unto Thee. Give to all sorrowing ones a garland for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Remember for good all who are perplexed with the mysteries of existence, and who grieve because the world is so sad and unintelligible. Teach them that Thy hand is on the helm of affairs, that Thou dost guide Thine own

world, and canst change every dark cloud into bright sunshine. In this faith let them rest, and by this faith let them live. These blessings we ask in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. Samuel McComb.

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK I Many people do not find their most perplexing difficulty either in the realm of trust or of belief, but in a problem which includes both. They are confused because neither their experience of God nor their intellectual conviction of the rea sonableness of faith is dependable and steady. Faith comes and goes in them with fluctuating moods that bring an appalling sense of insecurity. Their religious life is not stable and consistent; it runs through variant degrees of confidence and doubt, and its whimsical ups and downs continually baffle them. To classify some folk as men of faith and some as men of doubt does not, in the light of this experience, quite tally with the facts. There are moods of faith and moods of doubt in all of us and rarely does either kind secure unanimous consent. Were we to decide for irreligion, a minority protest would be vigorously urged in the interests of faith, and when most assuredly we choose religion, the prayer, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief" (Mark 9:24) is still appropriate, We often seem to be exchanging, as Brown ing's bishop says, "A life of doubt diversified by faith, For one of faith diversified by doubt."

Some hope arises when we observe that this experience which so perplexes us is fully acknowledged in the Bible. The popular supposition is that when one opens the Scripture he finds himself in a world of constant and triumphant faith. No low moods and doubts can here obscure the trust of men; here God is always real, saints sing in prison or dying see their Lord enthroned in heaven. When one, how ever, really knows the Bible, it obviously is no serene record of untroubled faith. It is turbulent with moods and doubt.

Here, to be sure, is the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians on Immortality, but here too is another cry, burdened with all the doubt man ever felt about eternal life, "That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; and man hath no preeminence above the beasts" (Ecclesiastes 3:19). The Scripture has many exultant passages on divine faithfulness, but Jeremiah's bitter prayer is not excluded: "Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed? Wilt thou indeed be unto me as a deceitful brook, as waters that fail?" (Jeremiah 15:18). The confident texts on prayer are often quoted, but there are cries of another sort: Job's complaint, "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I can not perceive him" (Job 23:8); Habakkuk's bitterness, "O Jehovah, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear? I cry unto thee of violence and thou wilt not save" (Habakkuk 1:2). The Bible is no book of tranquil faith. From the time when Gideon, in a mood like that of multitudes today, cried, "Oh, my Lord, if Jehovah is with us, why then is all this befallen us?" (Judges 6:13) to the complaint of the slain saints in the Apocalypse, "How long, O Master, the holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood" (Revelation 6:10), the Bible is acquainted with doubt. It knows the searching, perplexing, terrifying questions that in all ages vex men's souls. If the Psalmist, in an exultant mood, sang, "Jehovah is my shepherd," he also cried, "Jehovah, why casteth thou off my soul? Why hidest thou thy face from me?" (Psalms 88:14). No aspect of the Scripture could bring it more warmly into touch with man's experience than this confession of fluctuating moods. At least in this the Bible is our book. Great heights are there, that we know something of Psalmists sing in adoration, prophets are sure of God and of his coming victory; apostles pledge in sacrifice the certainty of their belief, and the

Master on Transfiguration Mountain prays until his countenance is radiant. And depths are there, that modern men know well. Saints cry out against unanswered prayer and cannot understand how such an evil, wretched world is ruled by a good God; in their bitter griefs they complain that God has cast them off, and utterly forgotten and, dismayed, doubt even that a man's death differs from a dog's. This is our book. For the faith of many of us, however we insist that we are Christians, is not tranquil, steady, and serene. It is moody, occasional, spasmodic, with hours of great assurance, and other hours when confidence sags and trust is in secure.

II

Faith so generally is discussed as though it were a creed, accepted once for all and thereafter statically held, that the influence of our moods on faith is not often reckoned with. But the moods of faith are the very pith and marrow of our actual experience. When a Christian congregation recite together their creedal affirmation, "I believe in God," it sounds as though they all maintained a solid, constant faith. But when in imagination, one breaks up the congregation and interprets from his knowledge of men's lives what the faith of the individuals actually means, he sees that they believe in God not evenly and constantly, but more or less, sometimes very much, sometimes not confidently at all. Our faith in God is not a static matter such as the recitation of a creed suggests. Some things we do believe in steadily. That two plus two make four, that the summed angles of a triangle make two right angles of such things we are unwaveringly sure. No moods can shake our confidence; no griefs confuse us, no moral failures quench our certainty. Though the heavens fall, two and two make four! But our faith in God belongs in another realm. It is a vital experience. It involves the whole man, with his chameleon moods, his glowing insights, his exalted hours, and his dejected days when life flows sluggishly and no great thing seems real. This experience of variable moods in faith does not belong- especially to feeble folk, whose ups and downs in their life with God would illustrate their whole irresolute and flimsy living. The great believers sometimes know best this tidal rise and fall of confidence. Elijah one day, with absolute belief in God, defied the hosts of Baal and the next, in desolate reaction, wanted to die. Luther put it with his rugged candor, "Sometimes I believe and sometimes I doubt." John Knox, at liberty to preach, "dings the pulpit into blads" in his confident utterance; but the same Knox recalled that, in the galleys, his soul knew "anger, wrath, and indignation which it conceived against God, calling all his promises in doubt." The Master himself was not a stranger to this experience. He believed in God with unwavering assurance, as one believes in the shining of the sun. But the fact that the sun perpetually shines did not imply that every day was a sunshing day for him. The clouds came pouring up out of his dark hori zons and hid the sun. "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say?" (John 12:27). And once the fog drove in, so- dense and dark that one would think there never had been any sun at all. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46). This experience of fluctuating moods is too familiar to be denied, too influential to be neglected. There can be no use in hiding it from candid thought behind the recitation of a creedal formula. There may be great use in searching out its meaning. For there are ways in which this common experience, at first vexatious and disquieting, may supply solid ground for Christian confidence.

III In dealing with these variant moods of faith we are not left without an instrument. We have the sense of value. We discern not only the existence of things, but their worth as well. When, therefore, a man has recognized his moods as facts, he has not said all that he can say about them. Upon no objects of experience can the sense of value be used with so much certainty as

upon our moods. We know our best hours when they come. The lapidary, with unerring skill, learns to distinguish a real diamond from a false, but his knowledge is external and contingent, compared with the in ward and authoritative certainty with which we know our best hours from our worst. Our great moods carry with them the authentic marks of their superiority.

Experience readily confirms this truth. We all have, for example, cynical and sordid moods. At such times, only the appetites of physical life seem much to matter; only the things that minister to common comfort greatly count. When Sydney Smith, the English cleric, writes, "I feel an ungovernable interest in my horses, my pigs, and my plants. But I am forced and always was forced to task myself up to an interest in any higher objects," most of us can understand his mood. We grow obtuse at times to all that in our better moods had thrilled us most. Nature suffers in our eyes; great books seem dull; causes that once we served with zest lose interest, and personal relationships grow pale and tame. From such mere dullness we easily drift down to cynicism. Music once had stirred the depths, but now our spirits tally with the scoffer's jest, "What are you crying about with your Wagner and your Brahms? It is only horsehair scraping on catgut." Man's most holy things may lose their grandeur and become a butt of ridicule. When the mood of Aristophanes is on, we too may hoist serious Socrates among the clouds, and set him talking moonshine while the cynical look on and laugh. The spirit that "sits in the seat of the scornful" is an ancient malady. But every man is thoroughly aware that these are not his best moods. From such depleted attitudes we come to worthier hours; real life arrives again. Nature and art be come imperatively beautiful; moral causes seem worth sacrifice, and before man's highest life, revealed in character, ideal, and faith, we stand in reverence. These are our great hours, when spiritual values take the throne, when all else dons livery to serve them, and we find it easy to believe in God.

Again, we have crushed and rebellious moods. We may have been Christians for many years; yet when disaster, long delayed, at last descends, and our dreams are wrecked, we do rebel. Complaint rises hot within us. Joseph Parker, preacher at the City Temple, London, at the age of sixty-eight could write that he had never had a doubt. Neither the goodness of God nor the divinity of Christ, nor anything essential to his Christian faith had he ever questioned. But within a year an experience had fallen of which he wrote: "In that dark hour I became almost an atheist. For God had set his foot upon my prayers and treated my petitions with contempt. If I had seen a dog in such agony as mine, I would have pitied and helped the dumb beast; yet God spat upon me and cast me out as an offense out into the waste wilderness and the night black and starless." No new philosophy had so shaken the faith of this long unquestioning believer. But his wife had died and he was in a heartbroken mood that all his arguments, so often used on others, could not pene trate. He believed in God as one believes in the sun when he has lived six months in the polar night and has not seen it.

These heartbroken moods, however; are not our best. Out of rebellious grief we lift our eyes in time to see how other men have borne their sorrows off and built them into char acter. We see great lives shine out from suffering, like Rembrandt's radiant faces from dark backgrounds. We see that all the virtues which we most admire constancy, patience, fortitude are impossible without stern settings, and that in time of trouble they find their aptest opportunity, their noblest chance. We rise into a new mood, grow resolute not to be crushed, but, as though there were moral purpose in man's trials, to be hallowed, deepened, purified. The meaning of Samuel Rutherford's

old saying dawns upon us, "When I am in the cellar of affliction, I reach out my hand for the king's wine." And folk, seeing us, it may be, take heart and are assured that God is real, since he can make a man bear off his trial like that and grow the finer for it. These are our great hours too, when the rains descend, and the winds blow, and the floods come, and beat upon our house, and it is founded on a rock!

Once more, we have hours of discouragement about the world. The more we have cared for moral causes and in vested life in their advancement, the more we are desolate when they seem to fail. Some rising tide in which we trusted turns to ebb again, injustice wins its victories, the people listen to demagogues and not to statesmen, social causes essen tial to human weal are balked, wars come and undo the hopes of centuries. Who dogs not sometimes fall into the Slough of Despond? Cavour, disheartened about Italy, went to his room to kill himself. John Knox, dismayed about Scotland, in a pathetic prayer entitled, "John Knox with deliberate mind to his God," wrote, "Now, Lord put an end to my misery." We generally think of Luther in that intrepid hour when he faced Charles V at Worms; but he had times as well when he was sick with disappointment. "Old, decrepit, lazy, worn out, cold, and now one-eyed," so runs a letter, "I write, my Jacob, I who hoped there might at length be granted to me, already dead, a well-earned rest." During the Great War, this mood of discouragement has grown familiar. Many can understand what Robert Louis Stevenson meant when he wrote, of the Franco-Prussian war, "In that year, cannon were roaring for days together on French battlefields, and I would sit in my isle (I call it mine after the use of lovers) and think upon the war, and the pain of men's wounds, and the weariness of their marching... It was something so distressing, so instant, that I lay in the heather on the top of the island, with my face hid, kicking my heels for agony." But these dismayed hours are not our best. As Bunyan put it, even Giant Despair has fainting fits on sunshining days. In moods of clearer insight we perceive out of how many Egypts, through how many round-about wilderness journeys, God has led his people to how many Promised Lands. The Exodus was not a failure, although the Hebrews, disheartened, thought it was and even Moses had his dubious hours; the mission of Israel did not come to an ignoble end in the Exile, although multitudes gave up their faith because of it and only prophets dared believe the hopeful truth. The crucifixion did not mean the Gospel's end, as the disciples thought, nor did Paul, imprisoned, lose his ministry. Nothing in history is more assured than this, that only men of faith have known the truth. And in hours of vision when this fact shines clear we rise to be our better selves again. What a clear ascent the race has made when wide horizons are taken into view! What endless possibilities must lie ahead! What ample rea sons we possess to thrust despair aside, and to go out to play our part in the forward movement of the plan of God!

"Dreamer of dreams? we take the taunt with gladness, Knowing that God beyond the years you see, Has wrought the dreams that count with you for madness Into the texture of the world to bt."

These are our better hours. IV

Such sordid, cynical, crushed, rebellious, and discouraged moods we suffer, but we have hours of insight, too, when we are at our best. And as we face this ebb and flow of confidence, which at the first vexatiously perplexed our faith, an arresting truth is clear. The creed of irreligion, to which men are tempted to resign their minds, is simply the intellectual formulation of what is implied in our less noble hours. Take what man's cynical, sordid, crushed, rebellious, and discouraged moods

imply, and set it in a formal statement of life's meaning, and the result is the creed of irreligion. But take man's best hours, when the highest seems the realest, when even sorrows cannot crush his soul, and when the world is still the battlefield of God for men, and formulate what these hours imply, and the result is the central affirmations of religious faith. Even Renan is sure that "man is most religious in his best moments." Of this high interpretation our variant moods are susceptible, that we know our best hours when they come, and the faith implied in them is essential Christianity. As Browning sings it, "Faith is my waking life: One sleeps, indeed, and dreams at intervals, We know, but waking's the main point with us." This fact which we so have come upon is a powerful consideration in favor of religion's truth. Arc we to trust for our guidance the testimony of our worse or better hours? We have low moods; so, too, we have cellars in our houses. But we do not live there; we live upstairs! It is not unnatural to have irreligious moods. There may be hours when the eternal Energy from which this universe has come seems to be playing solitaire for fun. It shuffles the stars and planets to see what may chance from their combinations, and careless of the consequence, from everlasting to everlasting it shuffles and plays, and shuffles and plays again. But these are not our best hours. We may have moods when the universe seems to us, as Carlyle's figure pictures it, "as if the heavens and the earth were but boundless jaws of a devouring monster, wherein, I, palpitating, lay waiting to be devoured," but we are inwardly ashamed of times like that. Man comes to this brutal universe of irreligion by way of his ignoble moods. When he lifts up his soul in his great hours of love, of insight, and of devotion, life never looks to him as irreligion pictures it; it never has so looked to him and it never will! In his best hours man always suspects that the Eternal must be akin to what is best in us, that our ideals are born from above, have there their source and destiny, that the Eternal Purpose reigns and yet shall justify the struggle of the ages, and that in anyone who is the best we know, we see most clearly what the Eternal is and means. That goodness is deeper than evil, that spirit is more than flesh, that life is lord of death, that love is the source of all such convictions come naturally to us when we are at our best. When one examines such affirmations, he perceives that Christianity in its essential faiths is the expression of our finest hours. This is the source whence Christianity has come; it is man's best become articulate. Some used to say that Christian faith had been foisted on mankind by priests. Christian faith has no more artificially been foisted upon human life than the full blown rose is foisted on the bud. Christianity springs up out of man's best life; it is the utterance of his transcendent moods; it is man believing in the validity of his own noblest days.

Christianity, therefore, at its heart can never fail. Its theologies may come and go, its institutions rise and fall, its rituals have their dawn, their zenith, and their decline, but one persistent force goes on and will go on. The Gospel is saying to man what man at his best is saying to himself. Christ has a tremendous ally in human life our noblest hours. They are all upon his side. What he says, they rise to cry "Amen" to. When we are most truly ourselves we are near est to him. Antagonistic philosophies, therefore, may spring up to assail the Gospel's influence, and seem to triumph, and fall at last and be forgotten. Still Christ will go on speaking. Nothing can tear him from his spiritual influence over men. In every generation he has man's noblest hours for hisally. In the fact to which our study of man's variant moods has brought us we have not only a confirming consideration in favor of religion's truth, but an explanation of some people's unbelief. They live habitually in their low moods; they inhabit spiritual cellars. We are accustomed to say that some friend would be saved from his ignoble attitudes by a vital religious faith; but it is also true that his persistent clinging to ignoble attitudes may be the factor that makes religious faith impossible.

According to Dickens's "Tale of Two Cities" 1 a prisoner in the Bastille, who had lived in a cell and cobbled shoes for many years, became so enamored of the narrow walls, the darkness, the task's monotony, that, when liberated, he built a cell at the center of his English home, and on days when the skies were clear and birds were singing, the tap of his cobbler's hammer in the dark could still be heard. So men, by an habitual residence in imprisoning moods, render themselves incapable of loving the wide horizons, the great faiths and hopes of religion. They do not merely make excursions of transient emotion into morose hours and, like men that find that the road is running into malarial swamps, turn swiftly to the hills. They dwell in their moroseness; they choose it, and often obstinately resist deliverance. The common moods that thus incapacitate the soul for faith are easily seen in any man's experience. There are sullen tempers when we are churlish and want so to be. There are stupid tempers, when our soul is too negligent to care, too dull to ask for what only aspiring minds can crave or find. There are bored moods when we feel about all life what Malachi's people felt about worship, "Behold, what a weariness is it!" (Malachi 1:13); rebellious moods when, like Jonah, deprived of a comfort he desired, we cry, "I do well to be angry, even unto death" (Jonah 4:9); suspicious moods, when wemistrust everyone, and even of some righteous Job hear Satan's insinuating sneer, "Does Job fear God for nought?" (Job 1:9). No man is altogether strange to frivolous hours, when those thoughts are lost which must be handled seriously if at all, and wilful hours, when some private desire assumes the center of the stage and angrily resents another voice than his. To say that one who habitually harbors such moods cannot know God is only a portion of the truth; such a man cannot know anything worth knowing. He can know neither fine friends nor great books; he cannot appreciate beautiful music or sublime scenery; he is lost to the deepest loves of family and to every noble enthusiasm for human help. Athwart the knowledge of these most gracious and necessary things stand our obtuse, ignoble moods. The sullen, stupid, bored, rebellious, suspicious, frivolous, or wilful tempers, made into a spiritual residence, are the most deadly prison of the soul. Of course one who dwells there has no confidence in God. Lord Shaftesbury, the English philanthropist, made too sweeping a statement about this, but one can see the basis for his judgment: "Nothing beside ill-humor, either natural or forced, can bring a man to think seriously that the world is governed by any devilish or malicious power. I very much question whether anything beside ill-humor can be the cause of atheism." At least one may be sure that where ill-humor habitually reigns, vital faith in God is made impossible.

After full acknowledgment, therefore, of the momentous intellectual problems of belief, we must add that there is a moral qualification for faith in God. So great a matter is not achieved by any sort of person, with any kind of habitual moods and tempers. There are views which cellar windows do not afford; one must have balconies to see them. When Jesus said that the pure in heart are blessed because they see God, he was not thinking merely, perhaps not chiefly, of sexual impurity as hindering vision. He was pleading for a heart cleansed of all such perverse, morose, and wayward moods as shut the blinds on the soul's windows. He knew that men could not easily escape the sense of God's reality if they kept their vision clear. On elevated days we naturally think of Spirit as real, and see ourselves as expressions of spiritual purpose, our lives as servants of a spiritual cause. When one habitually dwells in these finer moods, he cannot tolerate a world where his Best is a transient accident.. He must have God, for faith in God is the supreme assertion of the reality and eternity of man's Best. Any man who habitually lives in his finest moods will not easily escape the penetrating sense of God's reality.

VI The certainty with which we tend to be most deeply reli gious in our best hours is clear when we consider that a man does practically believe in the things which he counts of high est worth. Lotze, the philosopher, even says that "Faith is the feeling that is appreciative of value." It is conceivable that one might be so constituted that without any sense of value he could study facts, as a deaf man might observe a symphony. The sound-waves such a man could mechanically measure; he could analyze the motions of the players and note the reactions of the crowd, but he would hear no music. He would not suffuse the whole performance with his musical appreciations; he would neither like it nor condemn. Man might be so constituted as to face faces without feeling, but he is not. Facts never stand in our experience thus barren and unappreciated mere neutral things that mean nothing and have no value. The botanist in us may analyze the flowers, but the poet in us estimates them. The penologist in us may take the Bertillon measurements of a boy, but the father in us best can tell how much, in spite of all his sin, that boy is worth. This power to estimate life's values is the fountain from which spring our music, painting, and literature, our ideals and loves and purposes, our morals and religion. Without it no man can live in the real world at all.

If we would know, therefore, in what, at our highest altitudes, we tend to believe, we should ask what it is that we value most, when we rise toward our best. In our lowest hours what sordid, mercenary, beastly things men may prize each heart knows well. But ever as we approach our best the things that are worth most to us become elevated and refined. Our better moods open our eyes to a world where character is of more worth than all the rest beside, and through which moral purpose runs, to be served with sacri fice. We become aware of spiritual values in behalf of which at need physical existence must be willingly laid down; and words like honor, love, fidelity, and service in our hours of insight have halos over them that poorer moods cannot discern. Man at his best, that is to say, believes in an invisible world of spiritual values, and he furnishes the final proof of his faith's reality by sacrificing to it all lesser things. The good, the true, the beautiful command him in his finer hours, and at their beck and call he lays down wealth and ease and earthly hopes to be their servant. Men really do believe in the things for which they sacrifice and die. In no more searching way can a man's faith be describe than in terms of the objects tvhich thus he values most. Wherever men find some consuming aim that is for them so supreme in worth that they sacrifice all else to win it, we speak of their attitude as a religion. The "religion of science" describes the absolute devotion of investigators to scientific research as the highest good; the "religion of art" describes the consuming passion with which some value beauty. When we say of one that "money is his God" we mean that he esti mates it as life's highest treasure, and when with Paul we speak of others, "whose god is the belly" (Php 3:19), we mean men whose sensual life is to them the thing worth most. What men believe in, therefore, is most deeply seen not by any opinions which they profess, but by the things they prize. Faith, as Ruskin said, is "that by which men act while they live; not that which they talk of when they die." Many a man uses pious affirmations of Christian faith, but it is easy to observe from his life that what he really believes in is money. Where a man's treasure is, as Jesus said, his heart is, and there his faith is, too. Is there any doubt, then, what we most believe in when we are at our best? While in our lower altitudes it may be easy to believe that the physical is the ultimately real, in our upper altitudes we so value the spiritual world, that we tend with undeniable conviction to feel sure that it must be causal and eternal. Materialism is man's "night-view" of his life; but the "day-view" is religion. Tyndall the scientist was regarded by the Christians of his generation as the enemy of almost every thing that they held dear. Let him, then, be witness for the truth which we have stated. "I have noticed," he

said, speaking of materialism, "during years of self-observation, that it is not in hours of clearness and vigor that this doctrine commends itself to my mind." The challenge, therefore, presented to every one of us by Christian faith is ultimately this: Shall I believe the testimony of my better hours or of my worse? Many who deny the central affirmations of the Gospel put the object of their denial far away from them as though it were an external thing; they say that they deny the creed or the Bible or the doctrine about God. Such a description of a man’s rejection of religious faith is utterly inadequate the real object of his denial is inward. One may, indeed, discredit forms of doctrine and either be unsure about or altogether disbelieve many things that Christians hold, but when one makes a clean sweep of religion and banishes the central faiths of Christianity he is denying the testimony of his own finest days. From such rejection of faith one need not appeal to creed nor Bible, nor to anything that anybody ever said. Let the challenge strike inward to the man’s own heart. From his denial of religious faith we may appeal to the hours that he has known and yet will know again, when the road rose under his feet and from a height he looked on wide horizons and knew that he was at his best. To those hours of clear insight, of keen thought, of love and great devotion, when he knew that the spiritual is the real and the eternal, we may appeal. They were his best. He knows that they were his best. And as long as humanity lives upon the earth this conviction must underlie great living that we will not deny the validity of our own best hours.

04.09. Faith in the Earnest God

CHAPTER IX. Faith in the Earnest God

DAILY READINGS

Throughout our studies we have been thinking of the effect of faith on the one who exercises it. As an introduction to this week's thought on the earnestness of God, let us approach the effect of faith from another angle. Faith has enormous influence on the one in whom it is reposed; not only the believer but the one in whom he believes is affected by his faith.

Ninth Week, First Day

I commend unto you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church that is at Cenchreae: that ye receive her in the Lord, worthily of the saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever matter she may have need of you: for she herself also hath been a helper of many, and of mine own self.

Salute Prisca and Aquila my fellow-workers in Christ Jesus, who for my life laid down their own necks; unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles: and salute the church that is in their house. Salute Epaenetus my beloved, who is the first- fruits of Asia unto Christ. Salute Mary, who bestowed much labor on you. Salute Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also have been in Christ before me. Salute Ampliatus my beloved in the Lord. Romans 16:1-8. This series of personal commendations is only the beginning of the last chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans. All the way through one hears the individual names of Paul's friends and fellow-laborers, with his discriminating and hearty praise of each. It is clear that he has faith in these men and women; he believes in them and relies on them. Consider the effect on them that Paul's confidence in their Christian fidelity would naturally have. There is no motive much more stirring than the consciousness that somebody believes in us, is trusting and counting on us. Whatever is fine and noble in human life, responds to that appeal. Soldiers who feel that their country is relying upon their fidelity, children who are conscious that their parents believe in them, friends who are heartened by the assurance that some folk completely trust them how much of the best in all of us has come because we have been the objects of somebody's faith! A Connecticut volunteer in the American Revolution has writ ten that George Washington once paused for a moment in front of his company and said simply, "I am counting on you men from Connecticut." And the recruit clasped his musket in his arms and wept with the devotion which Washington's confidence evoked. Would not the sixteenth chapter of Romans have a similar effect on those who read it?

O Thou loving and tender Father in heaven, we confess before Thee, in sorrow, how hard and unsympathetic are our hearts; how often we have sinned against our neighbors by want of compassion and tenderness; how often we have felt no true pity for their trials and sorrows, and have neglected to comfort, help, and visit them. O Father, forgive this our sin, and lay it not to our charge. Give us grace ever to alleviate the crosses and difficulties of those around us, and never to add to them; teach us to be consolers in sorrow, to take thought for the stranger, the widow, and

the orphan; let our charity show itself not in words only, but in deed and truth. Teach us to judge as Thou dost, with forbearance, with much pity and indulgence; and help us to avoid all unloving judgment of others; for the sake of Jesus Christ Thy Son, who loved us and gave Himself for us. Amen. Johann Arndt 1555.

Ninth Week, Second Day And it came to pass in these days, that he went out into the mountain to pray; and he continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called his disciples; and he chose from them twelve, whom also he named apostles: Simon, whom he also named Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James and John, and Philip and Bartholomew, and Matthew and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot, and Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who be came a traitor. Luke 6:12-16. The power that comes to men when someone believes in them must have come to these disciples whom Jesus trusted with his work. We often note the power that was theirs through their faith in Christ; consider today the inspiration that came from Christ's faith in them. He picked them out, commissioned them, relied on them, and believed in their ability with God's help to carry his work to a successful issue. All that is most distinctive and memorable in their character came from their response to that divine trust. How they must have encouraged themselves in times of failure and disheartenment by saying: He believes in us; even though we are ignorant and sinful, he believes in us; he has trusted his work to us, and for all our inability he has faith that we can carry it to triumph! Their faith in themselves and what they could do with God's help must have been almost altogether a reflex of his faith in them. Our contention, therefore, that faith is the dynamic of life has now a new confirmation: the faith that lifts and motives life is not simply our faith in the Divine, but the faith of the Divine in us. One of the most glorious results of believing in God is that a man can press on to the further confidence that God believes in us. If he did not, he would never have made us. The very fact that we are here means that he does believe in us, in our possibilities of growth, in our capacities of service, for what he can do in and for and through us before he is done. Man's faith in God and God's faith in man together make an unequalled motive for great living. Yet there is always a sad appendix to every list of trusted men, with somebody's blighted name: "Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor."

Loving Father, our hearts are moved to gratitude and trust when we look up to Thee. We rejoice that through our fleeting days there runs Thy gracious purpose. We praise Thee that we are not the creatures of chance, nor the victims of iron fate, but that out from Thee we have come and into Thy bosom we shall return. We would not, even if we could escape Thee. Thou alone art good, and to escape from Thee is to fall into infinite evil. Thy hand is upon us moving us on to some far-off spiritual event, where the meaning and the mystery of life shall be made plain and Thy glory shall be revealed. Look in pity upon our ignorance and childishness. Forgive us our small understanding of Thy purpose of good concerning us. Be not angry with us, but draw us from the things of this world which cannot satisfy our foolish hearts. Fill us with Thyself, that we may no longer be a burden to ourselves. So glorify the face of goodness that evil shall have no more dominion over us. Amen. Samuel McComb.

Ninth Week, Third Day The fact that God has faith in us is not alone a source of comfort; it presents a stirring challenge. It means that he is in earnest about achieving his great purposes in human life and that he is counting upon us to help. He has set his heart on aims, about which he cares, and to whose achievement he is calling us; he is confident that with him we can work out, if

we will, loftier character and a better world. Let us consider some of the purposes which God is counting on us, in fellowship with him, to achieve. The prophet Micah, in a brief but perfect drama, gives one clue. First the Lord summons his people to a trial, with the eternal mountains for judges, Hear ye now what Jehovah saith: Arise, contend thou before the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice. Hear, O ye mountains, Jehovah's controversy, and ye enduring foundations of the earth; for Jehovah hath a controversy with his people, and he will contend with Israel. Micah 6:12.

Then, the Lord presents his case, O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me. For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of bondage; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. O my people, remember now what Balak king of Moab devised, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him; remember from Shittim unto Gilgal, that ye may know the righteous acts of Jehovah. Micah 6:3-5. Then the people put in their hesitant, questioning plea.

Wherewith shall I come before Jehovah, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves a year old? will Jehovah be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? Micah 6:6-7.

Then the mountains pronounce judgment, He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God? Micah 6:8.

God, then, is in earnest about just, kind, and humble character. He believes in it as a possibility; he sees the making of it now in human hearts; he is pledged to further and establish it with all his power; and he is counting on us for loyal cooperation with all our powers of choice. Vital faith means a transforming partnership with a God who is in ear nest about character.

O Thou who art the Father of that Son which hast awakened us and yet urgeth us out of the sleep of our sins, and exhorteth us that we become Thine, to Thee, Lord, we pray, who art the supreme Truth, for all truth that is, is from Thee. Thee we implore, O Lord, who art the highest Wisdom, through Thee are wise, all those that are so. Thou art the supreme Joy, and from Thee all have become happy that arc so. Thou art the highest Good and from Thee all beauty springs. Thou art the intellectual Light, and from Thee man derives his understanding. To Thee, O God, we call and speak. Hear us, O Lord, for Thou art our God and our Lord, our Father and our Creator, our Ruler and our Hope, our Wealth and our Honor, our Home, our Country, our Salvation, and our Life; hear, hear us, O Lord. Few of Thy servants comprehend Thee, but at least we love Thee yea, love Thee above all other things. We seek Thee, we follow Thee, we arc ready to serve Thee; under Thy power we desire to abide, for Thou art the Sovereign of all. We pray Thee to command us as Thou wilt; through Jesus Christ Thy Son our Lord. Amen. King Alfred 849.

Ninth Week, Fourth Day God also is in earnest about social righteousness.

I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Yea, though ye offer me your burnt-offerings and meal-offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream. Amos 5:21-24.

Anyone who cares about character must care about social conditions, for every unfair economic situation, every social evil left to run its course means ruin to character. And the God of the Bible, because he cares supremely for personal life at its best, is zealously in earnest about social justice; his prophets blazed with indignation at all inequity, and his Son made the coming Kingdom, when God's will would be done on earth, the center of his message. To fellowship with this earnest purpose of God we all are summoned; God believes in the glorious possibilities of life on earth; he is counting on us to put away the sins that hold the Kingdom back and to fight the abuses that crush character in men. To believe in God, therefore the God who is fighting his way with his children up through ignorance, brutality, and selfishness to "new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness" is no weakly comfortable blessing. It means joining a moral war; it means devotion, sacrifice; its spirit is the Cross and its motive an undiscourageable faith. And our underlying assurance that this war for a better world can be won is not simply our belief that it can be done, but our faith that God is, and that he believes that it can be done. When we pray we say, "Thy Kingdom come," and we are full of hope about the long, sacrificial struggle, for the purpose behind and through it all is first of all God s. Our earnestness is but an echo of his.

O Thou Eternal One, we adore Thee who in all ages hast been the great companion and teacher of mankind; for Thou hast lifted our race from the depths, and hast made us to share in Thy conscious intelligence and Thy will that makes for righteousness and love. Thou alone art our Redeemer, for Thy lifting arms were about us and Thy persistent voice was in our hearts as we slowly climbed up from savage darkness and cruelty. Thou knowest how often we have resisted Thee and loved the easy ways of sin rather than the toilsome gain of self-control and the divine irritation of Thy truth...

We pray Thee for those who amid all the knowledge of our day are still without knowledge; for those who hear not the sighs of the children that toil, nor the 1 sobs of such as are wounded because others have made haste to be rich; for those who have never felt the hot tears of the mothers of the poor that struggle vainly against poverty and vice. Arouse them, we beseech Thee, from their selfish comfort and grant them the grace of social repentance. Smite us all with the conviction that for us ignorance is sin, and that we are indeed our brother's keeper if our own hand has helped to lay him low. Though increase of knowledge bring increase of sorrow, may we turn without flinching to the light and offer ourselves as instruments of Thy spirit in bringing order and beauty out of disorder and darkness. Amen. Walter Rauschenbusch.

Ninth Week, Fifth Day The thought which we have been pursuing leads us to a truth of major importance: if God is thus in earnest, believing in man's possibilities and laboring for them, then he can not be known by anyone who does not share his purpose and his labor. Action is a road to knowledge and some things never can be known without it. If one would know the business world, he must be an active business man; no amount of abstract study and speculation can take the place of vital participation in business struggle. The way to understand any movement or enterprise is to go into it, share its enthusiasms and hopes, labor sacrificially for its success, bear its defeats as though they were our own, and rejoice in its achievements as though nothing so much mattered to our happiness. Such knowledge is thorough and vital; when one who so lias learned what war is, or the missionary enterprise, or the fight against the liquor traffic, stands up to speak, a merely theoretical student of these movements sounds unreal and tame. If therefore God is earnest Purpose, with aims in which he calls us to share, no one can thoroughly know him

merely by thinking; he must know him by acting. But he that doeth the truth cometh to the light, that his works may be made manifest, that they have been wrought in God. John 3:21.

Jesus therefore answered them, and said, My teaching is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself. John 7:16-17.

Many people endeavor to reach a satisfactory knowledge of God by clarifying their thought and working out a rational philosophy. But, by such intellectual means alone, they could not gain satisfactory knowledge of so familiar a thing as home life. To know home life one elemental act is essential: get into a home and share its problems, its satisfactions, and its hopes. So the most adequate philosophy by itself can bring no satisfactory knowledge of God; only by working with God, sharing his purposes for the world, sacrificially laboring for the aims he has at heart can men know him.

Eternal God, who hast formed us, and designed us for companionship with Thee; who hast called us to walk with Thee and be not afraid; forgive us, we pray Thee, if craven fear, unworthy thought, or hidden sin has prompted us to hide from Thee. Remove the suspicion which regards Thy service as an intrusion on our time and an interference with our daily task. Shew to us the life that serves Thee in the quiet discharge of each day’s duty, that ennobles all our toil by doing it as unto Thee.. We ask for no far-off vision which shall set us dreaming while opportunities around slip by; for no enchantment which shall make our hands to slack and our spirits to sleep, but for the vision of Thyself in common things for every day; that we may find a Divine calling in the claims of life, and see a heavenly reward in work well done. We ask Thee not to lift us out of life, but to prove Thy power within it; not for tasks more suited to our strength, but for strength more suited to our tasks. Give to us the vision that moves, the strength that endures, the grace of Jesus Christ, who wore our flesh like a monarch’s robe and walked our earthly life like a conqueror in triumph. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

Ninth Week, Sixth Day

Because action with God is essential to any satisfying knowledge of him, action is one of the great resolvers of doubt. Many minds, endeavoring to think through the mystifying problems of God’s providence, find themselves in a clueless labyrinth. The more they think the more entangled and confused their minds become. Their thoughts strike a fatal circle, like wanderers lost in the woods, and return upon their course, baffled and disheartened. To such perplexed minds the best advice often is: Cease your futile thinking and go to work. Let action take the place of speculation. Break the fatal round of circular thought that never will arrive, and go out to act on the basis of what little you do believe. Your mind like a dammed stream is growing stagnant; set it running to some useful purpose, if only to turn mill-wheels, and trust that activity will bring it cleansing in due time. Horace Bushnell, the great preacher, while a skeptical tutor at Yale, was disturbed because so many students were unsettled by his disbelief. In the midst of a revival he said that like a great snag he caught and stopped the newly launched boats as fast as they came down. Unable to think his way out of his intellectual perplexity, he faced one night this arresting question: "What is the use of my trying to get further knowledge, so long as I do not cheer fully yield to what I already know?" And kneeling he prayed after this fashion: "O God, I believe there is an eternal difference between right and wrong, and I hereby give my self up to do the right and to refrain from the wrong, I believe that

Thou dost exist, and if Thou canst hear my cry and wilt reveal Thyself to me, I pledge myself to do Thy will, and I make this pledge fully, freely, and forever." What wonder that in time the light broke and that Bushnell became a great prophet of the faith!

Even Paul, finishing his laborious discussion of God's providence toward Israel, acknowledges his baffled thought, O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things. To him be the glory for ever. Amen. Romans 11:33-36. And then, as if he turned from philosophy to action with gratitude, he begins the twelfth chapter, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service. And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Romans 12:12.

O God, we thank Thee for the sweet refreshment of sleep and for the glory and vigor of the new day. As we set our faces once more toward our daily work, we pray Thee for the strength sufficient for our tasks. May Christ's spirit of duty and service ennoble all we do. Uphold us by the consciousness that our work is useful work and a blessing to all. If there has been anything in our work harmful to others and dishonorable to ourselves, reveal it to our inner eye with such clearness that we shall hate it and put it away, though it be at a loss to ourselves. When we work with others, help us to regard them, not as servants to our will, but as brothers equal to us in human dignity, and equally worthy of their full reward. May there be nothing in this day's work of which we shall be ashamed when the sun has set, nor in the eventide of our life when our task is done and we go to our long home to meet Thy face. Amen. Walter Rauschen- busch.

Ninth Week, Seventh Day Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and yc came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and fed thee? or athirst, and gave thee drink? And when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? And when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inas much as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me. Matthew 25:34-40. The earnestness of God is not about any diffuse generality; it is about persons. His purposes concern them, and he be lieves in them and in their capacities for fellowship with him, for growing character and for glorious destiny. If, therefore, one wishes the sense of God's reality which comes from active co-partnership, let him serve persons, believe in them, and be in earnest about them. A woman, troubled by invincible doubts, was given by a wise minister the Gospel of John and a calling-list of needy families, and was told to use them both. She came through into a luminous faith, and which helped her more, her reading or her service, she could never tell. When the Master said that the good we did to the least of his brethren, we did to him, he indicated a road to vital knowledge of him; he said in effect that we can al ways find him in the lives of people to whom we give love and help. Many will never find him at all unless they find him there. The great believers have been the great servants; and

the reason for this is not simply that faith produced service, but also that service produced faith. The life of Sir Wilfred Grenfell, for example, makes convincingly plain that his faith sent him to Labrador for service, and that then he drew out of service a compound interest on his original in vestment of faith.

O God, the Father of the forsaken, the Help of the weak, the Supplier of the needy, who hast diffused and proportioned Thy gifts to body and soul, in such sort that all may acknowledge and perform the joyous duty of mutual service; Who teachest us that love towards the race of men is the bond of perfectness, and the imitation of Thy blessed Self; open our eyes and touch our hearts, that we may see and do, both for this world and for that which is to come, the things which belong to our peace. Strengthen us in the work we have undertaken; give us counsel and wisdom, perseverance, faith, and zeal, and in Thine own good time, and according to Thy pleasure, prosper the issue. Pour into us a spirit of humility; let nothing be done but in devout obedience to Thy will, thankfulness for Thine unspeakable mercies, and love to Thine adorable Son Christ Jesus... Amen. Earl of Shaftesbury 1801.

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

Throughout our studies we have been asserting that faith in God involves confidence that creation has a purpose. But we shall not see the breadth and depth of the affirmation, or its significant meaning for our lives, unless more carefully we face a question, which, as keenly as any other, pierces to the marrow of religion: Is God in earnest? That the God of the Bible is in earnest is plain. If we open the Book at the Exodus, we hear him saying, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people,... and have heard their cry,... and I am come down to deliver them" (Exodus 3:7-8). If we turn to the prophets, we find Hosea, interpreting the beating of God’s heart: "How am I to give thee up, O Ephraim? How am I to let thee go, O Israel? How am I to give thee up? My heart is turned upon me, my compassions begin to boil" [1] (Hosea 11:8). Everywhere in the Old Testament, God is in earnest: about personal character "What doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:8); about social righteousness "Let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream" (Amos 5:24); about the salvation of the world "It is too light a thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth" (Isaiah 49:6). When from the Old Testament one turns to the New, he faces an assertion of God’s earnestness that cannot be surpassed: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." God in the New Testament is as much in earnest as that, and all the major affirmations of the Book cluster about the magnetism of this central faith. God is even like a shepherd with a hundred sheep, who having lost one, leaves the ninety and nine and goes after that which is lost, until he finds it (Luke 15:4). [1] George Adam Smith’s Translation. From the earliest Hebrew seer dimly perceiving him, to the last apostle of the New Covenant, the God of the Bible is tremendously in earnest.

How profoundly the acceptance of this faith deepens the meaning and value of life is evident. For a moment some might think that the major question is not whether God is in earnest but whether we are; but when a man considers the hidden fountains from which the streams of his human earnestness must flow, he sees how necessary is at least the hope that at the heart of it creation is in earnest too. Von Hartmann, the pessimist, makes one of his characters say, "The activities of

the busy world are only the shudderings of a fever." How shall a man be seriously in earnest about great causes in a world like that? The men whose devoted lives have made history great have seen in creation's busyness more than aimless shuddering. Moses was in earnest, but behind his consecration was his vision of the Eternal, saying to Pharaoh, Let my people go!" The Master was in earnest, but with a motive that took into its account the purposefulness of God, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John 5:17).

Indeed, no satisfying meaning, no real unity are conceivable in a purposeless universe. The plain fact is that within the universe nobody explains anything without the statement of its purpose. A chair is something to sit down on; a watch is something to tell time by; a lamp is something to give illumination in the dark and lacking this purposive description, the story of the precedent history of none of these things, from their original materials to their present shape, would in the least tell what they really are. One who knows all else about a telephone, practically knows nothing, unless he is aware of what it is for. Nor is the necessity of such explanation lessened when scientists endeavor descriptions in their special realms. Huxley, narrating the growth of a salamander's egg, writes, "Let a moderate supply of warmth reach its watery cradle, and the plastic matter undergoes changes so rapid, and yet so steady and so purpose like in their succession, that one can only compare them to those operated by a skilled modeler upon a formless lump of clay. As with an invisible trowel, the mass is divided and subdivided into smaller and smaller portions, until it is reduced to an aggregation of granules not too large to build withal the finest fabrics of the nascent organism. And, then, it is as if a delicate finger traced out the line to be occupied by the spinal column and moulded the contour of the body; pinching up the head at one end, the tail at the other, and fashioning flank and limb into the due salamandrine proportions, in so artistic a way, that, after watching the process hour by hour, one is almost involuntarily possessed by the notion that some more subtle aid to vision than an achromatic, would show the hidden artist, with his plan before him, striving with skilful manipulation to perfect his work." The obvious fact is that salamanders eggs act as though they were seriously intent on making salamanders; and lion's cells as though they were tremendously in earnest about making lions. As Herbert Spencer said of a begonia leaf, "We have therefore no alternative but to say, that the living particles composing one of these fragments, have an innate tendency to arrange themselves into the shape of the organism to which they belong." But if this is so, purpose is essential in the description of every living thing. All about us is a world of life with something strikingly like purposeful action rampant everywhere, so that in describing an elm tree it will not do to say only that forces from behind pushed it into being; one must say, too, that from our first observation of its cells they acted as though they were intent on making nothing else but elm. They went about their business as though they had a purpose. The tree's cause is not alone the forces from behind; it is as well the aim that in the cells action lay ahead.

Men can describe nothing in heaven above or on the earth beneath without the use of purposive terminology. How shall they try otherwise to describe the universe? A world in which the minutest particles and cells all act as though they were eagerly intent on achieving aims, can only with difficulty be thought of as an aimless whole. Man's conviction is insistent and imperious that creation, so surcharged with purposes, must have Purpose. The greatest scientists themselves are often our best witnesses here. Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace are the twin discoverers of evolution. Said the former: "If we consider the whole universe the mind refuses to

look at it as the outcome of chance." Said the latter: the world is "a manifestation of creative power, directive mind, and ultimate purpose."

What such men have coldly said, the men of devout religion have set on fire with passionate faith. They have been sure that this world is not " A tale Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,

Signifying nothing." In every cause that makes for man’s salvation they have seen the manifest unveiling of divine intent. God is in earnest this conviction has possessed them utterly, and to live and die for those things on behalf of which the Eternal is tremendously concerned has been the aim, the motive, and the glory of their lives.

II

One need only watch with casual observance the multitudes who say that they believe in God, to see how few of them believe in this God who is in earnest. When they confess their faith in deity they have something else in mind beside the God of the Bible, compassionately purposeful about his world and calling men to be his fellow-workers. Let us therefore consider some of the fallacies that enable men to believe in a God who is not in earnest. For one thing, some put God far away. Missionaries in Africa’s interior find tribes worshiping stocks, stones, demons, ghosts, but this does not mean that no idea of a great original god is theirs. Often they are not strangers to that thought, but, as an old Africander woman said, "He never concerned himself with me; why should I concern myself with him?" To such folk a great god exists, but he does not care; he dwells apart, an indifferent deity, who has left this world in the hands of lesser gods that really count. The task of the missionary, therefore* is not to prove the existence of a creator "No rain, no mushrooms," said an African chief; "no God, no world" but it is to persuade men that the God who seems so far away is near at hand, that he really cares, and over each soul and all his world is sacrificially in earnest.

Such missionary work is not yet needless among Christian people. Said a Copenhagen preacher in a funeral discourse, "God cannot help us in our great sorrow, because he is so infinitely far away; we must therefore look to Jesus." One feels this Siberian exile of God from all vital meaning for our humanity, when he is called the "Absolute," the "Great First Cause," the "Energy from which all things proceed." Like the man, examined by the Civil Service, who, asked the distance from sun to earth, answered, "I do not know how far the sun is from the earth; but it is far enough so that it will not interfere with the proper performance of my duties at the Customs Office," so men with phrases like "the Great First Cause" put God an immeasurable distance off. No man has dealings with a "Great First Cause," no "Great First Cause" ever had vital, personal, constraining meanings for a man. Rather across infinite distance and time unthinkable, we vaguely picture a dim Figure, who gave this toboggan of a universe its primal shove and has not thought seriously of it since. So a wanderer down the street might put a child upon her sled and giving her a start down-hill, go on his way. She may have a pleasant slide, but he will not know; she may fall off, but he will not care; there may be a tragic accident, but that will not be his concern he has gone away off down the street. Multitudes of nominal believers have a god like that. In comparison with such, one thinks of men like Living stone. His God was compassionately concerned for Africa, spoke about black folk as Hosea heard him speak concerning Israel, "How can I give thee up? How can I let thee go?" until the fire of the divine earnestness lit a corresponding ardor in Livingstone’s heart and he went out to be God’s man in the dark continent. Such men have smitten the listless world as winds fill flapping sails, crying "Move!" And the God of such has been tremendously in earnest.

III

Some gain a God lacking serious purpose, not by putting him afar off, but by endeavoring to bring him so near that they diffuse him everywhere. Writers tell us that God is in every rustling leaf and in every wave that breaks upon the beach; we are assured that God is in every, gorgeous flower and in every flaming sunset. And the poetry of this is so alluring that we cannot bear to have God specially anywhere, because we are so anxious to keep him everywhere. Preachers delight to illustrate their thought of God with figures drawn from nature’s invisible energies

"Who has seen the wind?

Neither I nor you:

But when the leaves hang trembling

The wind is passing through.

Who has seen the wind?

Neither you nor I: But when the trees bow down their heads

The wind is passing by." By such comparisons are we taught to see that God invisibly is everywhere. For all the valuable truth that such speech contains, its practical issue, in many minds today, is to strip God of the last shred of personality, and with that loss to end the possibility of his being in earnest about anything. He has become refined Vapor thinly diffused. through space. Folk say they love to meditate on him, and well they may! For such a god asks nothing of anybody except meditation; he has no purposes that call for earnestness in them. When little children are ruined in a city’s tenements, when the liquor traffic brutalizes men, when economic inequity makes many poor that a few may be made rich, when war clothes the world with unutterable sorrow, such a god does not care. He is not in earnest about anything. For the only thing in the universe that can be consciously in earnest is personality, and when one depersonalizes God, the remainder is a deity who has no love, no care, no purpose. Thousands do obeisance to such a gaseous idol. From this fallacy spring such familiar confessions of faith as this, "God is not a person; he is spirit." If by this negation one intends to say that God is not a limited individual, that is obviously true; but the contrast between personality and spirit is impossible. One may as well speak of dry water as of impersonal spirit. Rays of radium are unimaginably minute and swift, but they are not spirit. Nothing in the impersonal realm can be conceived so subtle and refined that it is spirit. Spirit begins only where love and intelligence and purpose are, and these all are activities of personality. No one can really believe what Jesus said, "God is a Spirit," without being ready to pray as Jesus prayed, "Our Father."

Between an impersonal, diffused, and gaseous god, and the God of the Bible, how great the difference! God’s pervading omnipresence is indeed affirmed in Scripture. There, as much as in any modern thought, the heavens declare his glory, the flowers of the field are illustrations of his care, and the influences of his spirit are like the breeze across the hills. To the ancient Hebrew, heaven and sheol were the highest and the lowest, but of each the Psalmist says to God, "Thou art there," and as for the uttermost parts of the sea, "even there shall thy hand lead me" (Psalms 139:7-10). Cries Jeremiah from the Old Testament, "Am I a God at hand, saith Jehovah, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places so that I shall not see him? saith Jehovah. Do

not I -fill heaven and earth?" (Jeremiah 23:23-24). And Paul answers from the New Testament, "Not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:27-28). But the God of the Bible who so pervades and sustains all existence never degenerates into a Vapor. When Egyptian taskmasters crack their whips over. Hebrew slaves, he cares. When exiles try in vain to sing the songs of Zion in a strange land, he cares. When evil men build Jerusalem with blood, and rapacious men pant after the dust on the head of the poor, he cares. He is prodigiously in earnest, and those who best represent him, from the great prophets to the sacrificial Son, are like him in this, that they are mastered by consuming purpose. The God of the Bible is sadly needed by his people. For lack of him religion grows often listless and churches be come social clubs.

IV By another road men travel to believe in a God who is not in earnest: they think of him as an historic being. It was said of Carlyle, shrewdly if unjustly, that his God lived until the death of Oliver Cromwell. Whatever may be the truth about Carlyle, it is easy to find folk whose God to all intents and purposes is dead. Long since he closed his work, spoke his last word, and settled down to inactivity and silence. He made the world, created man, thundered from Sinai, established David’s kingdom, brought back the exiles, inspired the prophets and sent his Son. He once was earnest; the record of his ancient acts is long and glorious, and men find comfort in reading what he used to do. They would not explicitly confess it, but in fact they habitually think of God in the past tense. They cannot conceive the universe as happening by chance, and they posit God as making it; they cannot believe that the transcendent characters of olden times were unin spired, so God becomes the explanation of their power. When such believers wish to assure themselves of God they go to the stern of humanity’s ship and watch the wake far to the rear; but they never stand on the ship’s bridge, and feel it sway and turn at the touch of a present Captain in control. They have not risen to the meaning of the Bible’s reiterated phrase, "the living God."

Tloffding tells us that in a Danish Protestant church, well on into the nineteenth century, worshipers maintained the custom of bowing, when they passed a certain spot upon the wall. The reason, which no one knew, was discovered when removal of the whitewash revealed a Roman Catholic Ma donna. Folk had bowed for three centuries before the place where the Madonna used "to be. So some folk worship deity; he is not a present reality but a tradition; their faith is directed not toward the living God himself, but toward what some one else has written about a God who used to be alive. They do not feel now God’s plans afoot, his purposes as cer tainly in progress now as ever in man’s history. They stand rather like unconverted Gideon, facing backwards and lamenting, "Where are all his wondrous works which our fathers told us of?" (Judges 6:13). Not by what we say, but by our practical attitudes we most reveal how little we believe in an earnest, living God whose voice calls us, whose plans need us, as much as ever Moses or David or Paul was summoned and required. If we say that we do believe in this living God we are belied by our discouragements, deserving as we often do the rebuke which Luther’s wife administered to the Reformer. "From what you have said," she remarked, standing before him clothed in deep, mourning black, "and from the way you feel and act I sup posed that God was dead." If we say that we believe in a living, earnest God, we are belied by our reluctance to expect and welcome new revelations of God’s truth and enlarging visions of his plan. Willing to believe what the astronomers say, that light from a new star reaches the earth each year, we act as though God’s spiritual universe were smaller than his physical, and do not eagerly await the new light perpetually

breaking from his heavens. But most of all the little influence which our faith in God has upon our practical service is a scathing indictment of its vitality and power. No one who really believes in an earnest, living God can have an undedicated life. He may not think of the Divine in the past tense chiefly; the present and the future even more be long to God; and through each generation runs the earnest purpose of the Eternal, who has never said his last word on any subject, nor put the final hammer blow on any task. A faith like this, deeply received and apprehended, is a masterful experience. It changes the inner quality of life; it makes the place whereon we stand holy ground; it urgently impresses us into the service of those causes that we plainly see have in them the purpose of God. No outlook upon life compares with this in grandeur; no motive for life is at once so weighty and so fine.

One of the subtlest fallacies by which we miss believing in an earnest God is not describable as an opinion. Men fall into it, who neither reduce God to a Great First Cause, nor diffuse him into a vapor, nor regard him as an historic being. They rather allow their superstitious sentiments to take the place of worthy faith. Plenty of people who warmly would insist on their religion, reveal in their practical attitudes how utterly bereft of serious moral purpose their God is. They think their fortune will be better if they do not sit thirteen at a table or occupy room thirteen at a hotel; on occasion they throw salt or look at the moon over their right shoulders and rap on wood to assure their safety or their luck; and to be quite certain of divine favor they hang fetishes, like rabbits feet, about their necks. Their attitude toward such surviving pagan superstitions is like Fontenelli’s toward ghosts. "I do not believe in them," he said, "but I am afraid of them." That this is a law-abiding universe with moral purpose in it, such folk obviously do not believe. Their God is not in earnest. He spends his time watching for dinner parties of thirteen or listening for folk who forget to rap on wood when they boast that they have not been ill all winter. The utter poverty to which great words may be reduced by meager minds is evident when such folk say that they believe in God.

Even when these grosser forms of superstition are not present, others hardly more respectable may take their place. God is pictured as a King, surrounded with court ritual, in the complete and proper observance of which he takes delight, and any rupture in whose regularity awakes his anger. To go to church, to say our prayers, to read our Bibles, to be circumspect on Sunday, to help pay the preacher’s salary and to contribute to the missionary cause such things as these comprise the court ritual of God. These Christian acts are not presented as gracious privileges, opportunities, like fresh air and sunshine and friendship, to make life rich and service able; they are presented as works of merit, by which we gain standing in God’s favor and assure ourselves of his benignity. For with those who so conform to his ordinances and respect his taboos, he is represented as well-pleased, and he blesses them with special favors. But any infraction of these rituals is sure to bring terrific punishment. God watches those who do not sing his praises or who. fail in praying, and he marks them for his vengeance! Dr. Jowett tells us that in the Sun day school room of the English chapel where as a child he worshiped, a picture hung that to his fascinated and frightened imagination represented the character of God: a huge eye filled the center of the heavens, and from it rays of vision fell on every sort of minute happening and small misdeed on earth. As such a monstrous Detective, jealous of his rights and perquisites, God is how often pictured to the children! So H. G. Wells indignantly interprets his experience: "I, who write, was so set against God, thus rendered. He and his Hell were the nightmare of my childhood; I hated him

while I still believed in him, and who could help but hate? I thought of him as a fantastic monster, perpetually spying, perpetually listening, perpetually waiting to condemn and to strike me dead; his flames as ready as a grill-room fire. He was over me and about my feebleness and silliness and forgetfulness as the sky and sea would be about a child drowning in mid-Atlantic. When I was still only a child of thirteen, by the grace of the true God in me, I flung this lie out of my mind, and for many years, until I came to see that God himself had done this thing for me, the name of God meant nothing to me but the hideous sear in my heart where a fearful demon had been." This "bogey God" is in earnest about nothing except the observance of his little rituals; he is unworthy of a good man's worship, he has no purpose that can capture the consent and inspire the loyalty of serious folk. How many so-called unbelievers are in revolt against this perversion of the idea of God, taught them in childhood! The deity whom they refuse to credit is not the Father, with "the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ" (Ephesians 3:2); often they have not heard of him. Their denial is directed against another sort of God. "I wish I could recall clearly," writes one, "the conception of God which I gained as a boy in Sunday school. He was as old as grandfather, I know, but not so kind. We were told to fear him." Surely the real God must sympathize with those who hate his caricature. A vindictive Bogey, quer ulous about the mint, anise, and cummin of his ritual, in earn est about nothing save to reward obsequious servants and to have his vengeance out on the careless and disobedient, is poles asunder from the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ with his majestic purpose for the world's salvation.

VI Of all the sentiments, however, by which a worthy faith is made impossible, none is so common, in these recent years, as the ascription to God of a weak and flaccid affectionateness. God's love is interpreted by love's meaning in hours when we are gentle with our children or tender with our friends. The soft and cosy aspects of love, its comforts, its pities, its affections, are made central in our thought of God. We are taught, as children, that he loves us as our mothers do; and as from them we look for coddling when we cry for it, so are our expectations about God. Our religion becomes a selfish seeking for divine protection from life's ills, a recipe for ease, an expectant trust, that as we believe in God he in return will nurse us, unharmed and happy, through our lives. No one intimately acquainted with the religious life of men and women can be unaware of this widespread, ingrained belief in a soft, affectionate, grandmotherly God. What wonder that life brings fearful disillusionment! What wonder that in a world where all that is valuable has been "Battered with the shocks of doom To shape and use," the God of coddling love seems utterly impossible! The lack in this fallacious faith is central; there is no place in it for the movement of God's moral purpose. To ascribe love to God ivithout making it a quality of his unalterable purpose, which must sweep on through costs in suffering how ever great, is to misread the Gospel. Many kinds of love are known in our experience, from a nursing mother with her babe to a military leader with his men. In Donald Hankey's picture of "the Beloved Captain" we see affection and tenderness, as beautiful as they are strong: "It was a wonderful thing, that smile of his. It was something worth living for, and worth working for... It seemed to make one look at things from a different point of view, a finer point of view, his point of view. There was nothing feeble or weak about it... It meant something. It meant that we were his men and that he was proud of us... When we failed him, when he was disappointed in us, he did not smile. He did not rage or curse. He just looked disappointed, and that made us feel far more savage with ourselves than any amount of swearing would have done... The fact was that he had won his way into our affections. We loved him. And there isn t anything stronger than love, when all's said and done."

Yet, this Captain, loving and beloved, will lead his men in desperate charges, where death falls in showers, but where the purpose which their hearts have chosen forces them to go. The love of God must be like that; it surely is if Jesus love is its embodiment. His affection for his followers, his solicitude and tenderness have been in Christian eyes, how beautiful! They shine in words like John's seventeenth chapter where love finds transcendent utterance. Yet this same Master said: "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves" (Matthew 10:16); "Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake" (Matthew 5:11); "Then shall they deliver you up unto tribulation, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all the nations for my name's sake" (Matthew 24:9); "They shall put you out of the synagogues; yea, the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you shall think that he offereth service unto God" (John 16:2); "If any man cometh unto me, and hateth not his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26). The love of Jesus was no coddling affection; it had for its center a moral purpose that balked at no sacrifice. He took crucifixion for himself, and to his beloved he cried, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matthew 16:24). Such love is God s; and preachers who advertise his Fatherhood as a gentle nurse that shelters us from suffering have sapped the Gospel of its moral power. God's love is austere as well as bountiful; he is, as Emerson said, the "terrific benefactor."

Indeed, faith in a God of coddling love may be one of the most pernicious influences in human life. Our trust, so misinterpreted, becomes a cushion on which to lie, a sedative by which to sleep. When ills afflict the world that men could cure, such misbelievers merely trust in God; when tasks await man's strength, they quietly retreat upon their faith that God is good and will solve all, until religion becomes a by-word and a hissing on the lips of earnest men. Such misbelievers have not dimly seen the Scripture's meaning, where faith is not a pillow but a shield, from behind which plays a sword (Ephesians 6:16) and where men do not sleep by faith, but "fight the good fight of faith" instead (1 Timothy 6:12). Or if such misbelievers do rouse themselves to lay hold on their Divinity, it is to demand God's love for them and not to offer their lives to God. As Sydney Smith exclaimed about some people's patriotism, "God save the King.! in these times too often means, God save my pension and my place, God" give my sisters an allowance out of the Privy Purse, let me live upon the fruits of other men's industry and fatten upon the plunder of the public."

Faith in God never is elevated and ennobling until we over pass "God for our lives!" to cry "Our lives for God!" Then at the luminous center of our faith shines the divine purpose, costly but wonderful, that binds the ages together in spiritual unity. To that we dedicate our lives; in that we exceedingly rejoice. No longer do we test God's goodness by our happiness or our ill-fortune; we are his through fair weather and through foul. No longer do we merely hold beliefs, we are held by them, captured now and not simply consoled by faith. Only so are we learning discipleship to Christ and are beginning really to believe in the Christian God.

VII From all these common fallacies of thought and sentiment one turns to the New Testament to find the God of the Gospel. The very crux of the Good Tidings is that God is so much in earnest that he is the eternal Sufferer. The ancient Greeks had a god of perfect bliss; he floated on from age to age in undisturbed tranquillity; no cry of man ever reached his empyrean calm; his life was an endless stream of liquid happiness. How different this Greek deity is from ours may be perceived if one tries to say of him those things which the Scripture habitually says of God. "In all

their affliction he was afflicted" (Isaiah 63:9); "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, these may forget, yet will not I forget thee" (Isaiah 49:15); "God, being rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses" (Ephesians 2:4-5); "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son" (John 3:16). None of these things that Christians say about their God can be said of a deity who dwells in tranquil bliss.

Indeed let one stand over against a war-torn, unhappy world and try to think that God does not suffer in man's agony, and he will see how useless and incredible such a God would be. God looks on Belgium and he does not care; he looks on Armenia desolate and Poland devastated, and he does not care; he sits in heaven and sees his children wounded and alone in No-man's land, watches the deaths, the heart-breaks, the poverty of war, its ruined childhood and its shattered families, and he does not care how impossible it is to believe in such a God! A God who does not care does not count.

Christians, therefore, have the God who really meets the needs of men. He cares indeed, and, with all the modesty that words of human emotion must put on when they are applied to him, he suffers in the suffering of men and is crucified in his children's agonies. God limited himself in making such a world as this; in it he cannot lightly do what he will; he has a struggle on his heart; he makes his way upward against obstacles that man's imagination cannot measure. There is a cross forever at the heart of God. He climbs his everlasting Calvary toward the triumph that must come, and he is tremendously in earnest.

One important consequence follows such faith as this. Confidence in such an earnest, sacrificial God makes inevitable the Christian faith in immortality. Our solar system is no permanent theater for God's eternal purposes; it is doomed to dissolution as certainly as any human body is doomed to die. In the Lick observatory one reads this notice under a picture of the sun: "The blue stars are considered to be in early life, the yellow stars in middle life, the red stars in old age... From the quality of its spectrum the sun is classified as a star in middle age." Those, therefore, who, denying their own immortality, comfort themselves with prophesying endless progress for the race upon the earth, have no basis for their hopes. "We must therefore renounce those brilliant fancies," says Faye the scientist, "by which we try to deceive ourselves in order to endow man with unlimited posterity, and to regard the universe as the immense theater on which is to be developed a spontaneous progress without end. On the contrary, life must disappear, and the grandest material works of the human race will have to be effaced by degrees under the action of a few physical forces which will survive man for a time. Nothing will remain Even the ruins will perish. "If one believes, therefore, in the God who is in earnest, he cannot content himself with such a universe lacking any permanent element, any abiding reality in which the moral gains of man's long struggle are conserved. God's purpose cannot be so narrow in horizon that it is satisfied with a few million years of painful experiment, costly beyond imagination, yet with no issue to crown its sacrifice. In such a universe as Faye pictures, lacking immortality, generation after generation of men suffer, aspire, labor, and die, and this shall be the history of all creation, until at last Shakespeare's prophecy shall be fulfilled, "The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces, The solemn temples, the great globe itself, Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve And, like this insubstantial pageant faded, Leave not a rack behind."

If such is to be the story of creation, there is no purpose in it and the Christian faith in an earnest God is vain.

Only one truth is adequate to crown our confidence in a purposeful universe and to make it reasonable: personality must persist. We believe in immortality, not because we meanly want rewards ahead, but because in no other way can life, viewed as a whole, find sense and reason. If personality persists, this transient theater of action and discipline may serve its purpose in God’s time, and disappear. He is in earnest, but not for rocks and suns and stars, he is in earnest about persons the sheep of his pasture are men. They are not mortal; they carry over into the eternal world the spiritual gains of earth; and all life’s struggle its vicarious sacrifice, its fearful punishments, its labor for better circumstance and worthier life is justified in its everlasting influence on personality. When we say that God cares, we mean no vague, diffusive attitude toward a system that lasts for limited millenniums and then comes to an uneventful end in a cold sun and a ruined earth. We mean that he cares for personality which is his child, that he suffers in the travail of his children’s character, and that this divine solicitude has ever lasting issues when the heavens "wax old like a garment." Still Paul’s statement stands, one of the most worthy summaries of God’s earnestness that ever has been written: "The creation waits with eager longing for the sons of God to be revealed" (Romans 8:22). (Moffatt’s Translation)

04.10. Faith in Christ the Savior: Forgiveness

CHAPTER X. Faith in Christ the Savior: Forgiveness

DAILY READINGS

During the next two weeks we are to consider some of the distinctive meanings which faith in Christ has had for his disciples. They have found in that faith unspeakable blessing and have uttered their gratitude in radiant language. But, just because of this, many folk find themselves in difficulty. Their expectations concerning the Christian life have been lifted very high, and in their experience of it they have been disappointed. Their problem is not theoretical doubt, but practical disillusionment. Their difficulty lies in their experience that the Christian life, while it may be theoretically true, is not practically what it is advertised to be. At this common problem let us look in the daily readings.

Tenth Week, First Day

Many expect in the Christian experience an emotional life of joy and quietude which they have not found. They are led to expect this by many passages of Scripture about "peace in believing," by many hymns of exultation where a mood of unqualified spiritual triumph finds voice, and by testimonies of men who speak of living years without any depressed hours or flagging spirits. Such a wonderful life of elevated emotion many crave for themselves; they came into the Christian fellowship expecting it; and they neither have it, nor are likely to achieve it. Now the beauty of a clear, high emotional life no one can doubt, but we must not demand it as a condition of our keeping faith. We ought not to seek God simply for the sake of sensational experiences, no matter how desirable they may be. In all the ages before Christ, the outstanding example of deep personal religion, expressing itself in over forty years of splendidly courageous prophetic ministry, is Jeremiah, and his temperament was never marked by quietude and joy. His emotional life was profoundly affected by his faith: courage was substituted for fear. But if he had demanded the mood of Psalms 103:1-22 as a price for continued faith, he would have lost his faith. He was not temperamentally constructed like the psalmist and he was a far greater personality. We must not be too much concerned about our spiritual sensations. Consider the Master’s parable about the two sons: one had amiable feelings, but his will was wrong, the other lacked satisfactory emotions, but he did the work. But what think ye? A man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to-day in the vineyard. And he answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented himself, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not. Which of the two did the will of his father? They say, The first. Matthew 21:28-31.

Ah, Lord, unto whom all hearts are open; Thou canst govern the vessel of our souls far better than we can. Arise, O Lord, and command the stormy wind and the troubled sea of our hearts to be still, and at peace in Thee, that we may look up to Thee undisturbed, and abide in union with Thee, our Lord. Let us not be carried hither and thither by wandering thoughts, but, forgetting all else, let us

see and hear Thee. Renew our spirits; kindle in us Thy light, that it may shine within us, and our hearts may burn in love and adoration to wards Thee. Let Thy Holy Spirit dwell in us continually, and make us Thy temples and sanctuary, and fill us with Divine love and light and life, with devout and heavenly thoughts, with comfort and strength, with joy and peace. Amen. Johann Arndt 1555.

Tenth Week, Second Day Many came into the Christian life because they needed conquering power in their struggle against sin. They were told that absolute victory could be theirs through Christ, and they set their hearts on that in ardent hope and expectation. But they are disappointed. That they have been helped they would not deny, but they find that the battle with besetting sin is a running fight; it has not been concluded by a final and resounding victory. This seems to them a denial of what Christian preachers and Christian hymns have promised, and perhaps it is. Hymns and preachers are not infallible. Christian experience, however, is plainly aligned against their disappointment. Some men under the power of Christ are immediately transformed so that an old sin becomes thence forth utterly distasteful; even the desire for it is banished altogether. But a great preacher, only recently deceased, no less really under the power of Christ, had all his life to fight a taste for drink which once had mastered him. His battle never ceased. His victory consisted not in the elimination of his appetite, but in abiding power to keep up the struggle, to refuse subjugation to it, and at last gloriously to fall on sleep, admired and loved by his people who had seen in him steadfast, unconquerable will, sustained by faith. To have done with a sinful appetite in one conclusive victory is glorious; but we must not demand it as a price of keeping faith. Perhaps our victory must come through the kind of patient persistence which James the Apostle evidently knew.

Count it all joy, my brethren, when ye fall into manifold temptations; knowing that the proving of your faith worketh patience. And let patience have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, lacking in nothing. But if any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing doubting: for he that doubteth is like the surge of the sea driven by the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord; a double- minded man, unstable in all his ways. James 1:2-8.

O Lord God Almighty, who givest power to the faint, and increasest strength to them that have no might; without Thee we can do nothing, but by Thy gracious assistance we are enabled for the performance of every duty laid upon us. Lord of power and love, we come, trusting in Thine almighty strength, and Thine infinite goodness, to ask from Thee what is wanting in ourselves; even that grace which shall help us such to be, and such to do, as Thou wouldst have us. O our God, let Thy grace be sufficient for us, and ever present with us, that we may do all things as we ought. We will trust in Thee, in whom is everlasting strength. Be Thou our Helper, to carry us on beyond our own strength, and to make all that we think, and speak, and do, acceptable in Thy sight; through Jesus Christ. Amen. Benjamin Jenks 1646.

Tenth Week, Third Day Jehovah is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;

He leadeth me beside still waters.

He restoreth my soul:

He guideth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. Psalms 23:1-4.

What expectations are awakened by such a passage! Many have come into the Christian life because in experience they have found that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." They wanted a Guide in the mysterious pilgrimage of life, and in the words of hymns like, "He leadeth me, O blessed thought!" they saw the promise of a God-conducted experience. But they are disappointed. They have the same old puzzles to face about what they ought to do; they have no divine illumination that clears up in advance their uncertainty as to the wisdom of their choices; they are not vividly aware of any guidance from above to save them from the perplexities which their companions face about conduct and career. Of course part of their difficulty is due to false expectation. Not even Paul or John was given mechanical guidance, infallible and unmistakable; they never had a syllabus of all possible emergencies with clear directions as to what should be done in every case; they were guided through their normal faculties made sensitive to divine suggestion, and doubtless they never could clearly distinguish between their thought and their inspirations. Divine guidance did not save them from puzzling perplexities and unsure decisions. But it did give them certainty that they were in God’s hands; that he had hold of the reins behind their human grasp; that when they did wisely and prayerfully the best they knew, he would use it somehow to his service. And so far as the vivid consciousness of being guided is concerned, that prob ably came in retrospect; when they saw how the road came out, they agreed that God’s hand must have been in the journey. Such an experience it is reasonable to expect and possible to have.

O God our Lord, the stay of all them that put their trust in Thee, wherever Thou leadest we would go, for Thy ways are perfect wisdom and love. Even when we walk through the dark valley, Thy light can shine into our hearts and guide us safely through the night of sorrow. Be Thou, our Friend, and we need ask no more in heaven or earth, for Thou art the Comfort of all who trust in Thee, the Help and Defence of all who hope in Thee. O Lord, we would be Thine; let us never fall away from Thee. We would accept all things without murmuring from Thy hand, for whatever Thou dost is right. Blend our wills with Thine, and then we need fear no evil nor death itself, for all things must work together for our good. Lord, keep us in Thy love and truth, comfort us with Thy light, and guide us by Thy Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. S. Weiss 1738.

Tenth Week, Fourth Day

Many folk grow up into the Christian life, and so interpret the love of God that they expect from him affectionate mothering; they look to him to keep them from trouble. In childhood, sheltered from life’s tragic incidents, this expectation was more or less realized; but now in maturity they are disappointed. God has not saved them from trouble; he has not dealt with them in maternal tenderness. Rather Job’s complaint to God is on their lips, I cry unto thee, and thou dost not answer me:

I stand up, and thou gazest at me.

Thou art turned to be cruel to me;

With the might of thy hand thou persecutest me.

Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? Was not my soul grieved for the needy?

When I looked for good, then evil came;

And when I waited for light, there came darkness.

My heart is troubled, and resteth not;

Days of affliction are come upon me.

Job 30:20-21, Job 30:25-27.

One such disappointed spirit says that in youth, even if she hurt her finger, she was told to pray to God and he would take away the bruise; but now life does not seem to be directed by that kind of a God at all. It isn't! A pregnant source of lost faith is to be found in this unscriptural presentation of God's love. In Scripture God's love for his people and their tragic suffering are put side by side, and the Cross where the well-beloved Son is crucified is typical of the whole Book's assertion that God does not keep his children from trouble. Sometimes he leads them into it; and always he lets the operation of his essential laws sweep on, so that disease and accident and death are no respecters of character. When Ananias was sent with God's message to the newly converted Paul, that greeting into the Christian life concerned "how many things he must suffer" (Acts 9:16). Whatever else our faith must take into account, this is an unescapable fact: we are seeking the impossible when we ask that our lives be arranged on the basis that we shall not face trouble. Faith means a conquering confidence that good will, a purpose of eternal love, runs through the whole process. It says, not apart from suffering, but in the face of it, "I' m apt to think the man That could surround the sum of things, and spy The heart of God and secrets of his empire, Would speak but love with him the bright result Would change the hue of intermediate scenes, And make one thing of all Theology."

Almighty God to whom all things belong, whose is light and darkness, whose is good and evil, Master of all things, Lord of all; who hast so ordered it, that life from the beginning shall be a struggle throughout the course, and even to the end; so guide and order that struggle within us, that at last what is good in us may conquer, and all evil be overcome, that all things may be brought into harmony, and God may be all in all. So do Thou guide and govern us, that every day whatsoever betide us, some gain to better things, some more blessed joy in higher things may be ours, that so we, though but weaklings, may yet, God-guided, go from strength to strength, until at last, delivered from that burden of the flesh, through which comes so much struggling, we may enter into the land of harmony and of eternal peace. Hear us, of Thy mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. George Dawson 1877.

Tenth Week, Fifth Day

Till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and car ried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error; but speaking truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him, who is the head, even Christ. Ephesians 4:13-15. ML

Many came into the Christian life familiar with such an idea of growth. They expected the new life to be an enlarging experience, with new vistas, deepening satisfactions, in creasing certitude. If at the beginning the Christian way did not content them, they blamed their immaturity for the unsatisfactory experience; they appealed to the days ahead for fuller light. But they are disappointed. They have not grown. The most they can claim is that they are stationary; the haunting suspicion cannot altogether be avoided that their faith is dwindling and their fervor burning down. This difficulty is not strange with many folk it is inevitable; for they have never grasped the fact that the Christian life, like all life whatsoever, is law-abiding, and that to expect effects without cause is vain. That a Christian experience has begun with promise does not mean that it will magically continue; that the spirit will naturally drift into an enlarging life. An emotional conversion, like a flaming meteor, may plunge into a man’s heart, and soon cool off, leaving a dead, encysted stone. But to have a real life in God, that begins like a small but vital acorn and grows like an aspiring oak, one must obey the laws that make such increasing experience possible. To keep fellowship with God unimpeded by sin, uninterrupted by neglect; to think habitually as though God were, instead of casually believing that he is; to practice love continually until love grows real; and to arrange life’s program conscientiously as though the doing of God’s will were life’s first business such things alone make spiritual growth a possibility.

We desire to confess, O Lord, that we have not lived according to our promises, nor according to the thoughts and intents of our hearts. We have felt the gravitation of things that drew us downward from things high and holy. We have followed right things how feebly! Weak are we to resist the attraction of evils that lurk about the way of goodness; and we are conscious that we walk in a vain show. We behold and approve Thy law, but find it hard to obey; and our obedience is of the outside, and not of the soul and of the spirit, with heartiness and full of certainty. We rejoice that Thou art a Teacher patient with Thy scholars, Thou art a Father patient with Thy children. Thou d of long-suffering goodness, and of tender mercies, and therefore we are not consumed. And now we beseech of Thee, O Thou unwearied One, that Thou wilt inspire us with a heavenly virtue. Lift before us the picture of what we should be and what we should do, and maintain it in the light, that we may not rub it out in forgetfulness; that we may be able to keep before ourselves our high calling in Christ Jesus. And may we press forward, not as they that have attained or apprehended; may we press toward the mark, for the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus, with new alacrity, with growing confidence, and with more and more blessedness of joy and peace in the soul. Amen. Henry Ward Beecher.

Tenth Week, Sixth Day The Christian experience which disappoints its possessor by lack of growth is common, because so many leave the idea of growth vague and undefined. They expect in general to grow, but in what direction, to what describable results, they never stop to think. If we ran our other business as thoughtlessly, with as little determinate planning and discipline, as we manage our Christian living, any progress would be impossible. What wonder that as Christians we often resemble the child who fell from bed at night, and explained the accident by saying, "I must have gone to sleep too near the place where I got in"!

Growth is always in definite directions, and folk will do well at times, without morbid self-examination, to forecast their desired courses. Becoming Christians from motives of fear, as many do, we should press on to a fellowship with God in which fear vanishes in divine friendship and cooperation. Choosing the Christian life for self-centered reasons, because it can do great

things for us, we should press on to glory in it as a Cause on which the welfare of the race depends and for which we willingly make sacrifice. Beginning with narrow ideas of service to our friends and neighborhood, we should press on to genuine interest in the world- field, in international fraternity, and in Christ's victory over all mankind. Such definite lines of progress we well may set before us. And a life that does grow, so that each new stage of maturing experience finds deeper levels and heights, is never disappointing; it is life become interesting and worth while.

Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may lay hol< f on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself yet to have laid hold: but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything ye are otherwise minded, this also shall God reveal unto you: only, where unto we have attained, by that same rule let us walk. Php 3:12-16, Our Father, we pray Thee that we may use the blessings Thou hast given us, and never once abuse them. We would keep our bodies enchanted still with handsome life, wisely would we cultivate the intellect which Thou hast throned therein, and we would so live with conscience active and will so strong that we shall fix our eye on the right, and, amid all the distress and trouble, the good report and the evil, of our mortal life, steer straightway there, and bate no jot of human heart or hope. We pray Thee that we may cultivate still more these kindly hearts of ours, and faithfully perform our duty to friend and acquaintance, to lover and beloved, to wife and child, to neighbor and nation, and to all mankind. May we feel our brotherhood to the whole human race, remembering that nought human is strange to our flesh but is kindred to our soul. Our Father, we pray that we may grow continually in true piety, bringing down everything which would unduly exalt itself, and lifting up what is lowly within us, till, though our outward man perish, yet our in ward man shall be renewed day by day, and within us all shall be fair and beautiful to Thee, and without us our daily lives useful, our whole consciousness blameless in Thy sight. Amen. Theodore Parker.

Tenth Week, Seventh Day

While some, for reasons such as we have suggested, have made at least a partial failure of the Christian life, and are tenanted to feel that their experience is an argument against may turn with confidence to the multitude who have life with Christ an ineffable blessing is therefore now no condemnation to them that are|irr Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace. Romans 8:1-6.

Innumerable disciples of Jesus can subscribe to this Pauline testimony, and the center of their gratitude, as of his, is the victory over sin which faith in Christ has given them. The farther they go with him the more wonderful becomes the meaning of his Gospel. What Thomas Fuller, in the seventeenth century, wrote about the Bible, they feel about their whole relationship with Christ:

"Lord, this morning I read a chapter in the Bible, and therein observed a memorable pas sage, whereof I never took notice before. Why now, and no sooner, did I see it? Formerly my eyes were as open, and the letters as legible. Is there not a thin veil laid over Thy Word, which is more rarified by reading, and at last wholly worn away? I see the oil of Thy Word will never leave increasing whilst any bring an empty barrel." As for the consciousness of filial, alliance with the God and Father of Jesus, that has been a deepening benediction. How many can take over the dual inscription on an ancient Egyptian temple, as an expression of their own experience! A priest had written, in the name of the Deity, "I am He who was and is and ever shall be, and my veil hath no man lifted." But near at hand, some man of growing life and deepening faith has added: "Veil after veil have we lifted, and ever the Face is more wonderful."

Eternal and Gracious Father, whose presence comforteth like sunshine after rain; we thank Thee for Thyself and for all Thy revelation to us. Our hearts are burdened with thanksgiving at the thought of all Thy mercies; blessings of this mortal life, for health, for reason, ing, and for love; but far beyond all thought and (ness, for Thy great redemption. It was no pain (that brought us to the birth, it has been no comi that has borne with us all this while; long-suffering lif, and the breaking of the eternal heart alone could reconcile us to the life to which Thou hast ordained us. We have seen the Son of Man sharing our sickness and shrinking not from our shame, we have beheld the Lamb of God bearing the sins of the world, we have mourned at the mysterious passion and stood astonished at the cross of Jesus Christ; and behind all we have had the vision of an altar-throne and one thereon slain from the foundation of the world; heard a voice calling us that was full of tears; seen beyond the veil that was rent, the agony of God.

O for a thousand tongues to sing the love that has redeemed us. O for a thousand lives that we might yield them all to Thee. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK I

Hitherto in our studies we have thought of God as theobject of our faith. From the beginning, to be sure, we have been using the Master as the Way. The God who is in earnest about immortal personalities is supremely revealed in Jesus Christ. But through Christ’s mediation we have been trying to pierce to the Eternal character and purpose; we have been taking Jesus at his word, "He that believeth on me, believeth not on me but on him that sent me" (John 12:44). The meaning of faith for the Christian, however, cannot be left as though Christ were an instrument which God used for his revealing and then thrust aside, a symbol in terms of whom we may poetically picture God. Christ has been for his people more than a transparent pane, itself almost forget table, through which the divine light shone. His personality has been central and dominant, and when his disciples have most vividly expressed the meaning of their faith they have said that they believed in him. The first Christians whose experience is enshrined in the New Testament did not deal with faith in God alone. They adored Jesus; they were thankful to him; they rejoiced to call themselves servants and to suffer for him; they claimed him as but they acknowledged him their Lord as well; bowed before him with inexpressible devotion, set him in the same incomparable place. They all idged to him the same immeasurable debt." One need not read far in the New Testament to see why these first disciples so adored their Lord. He was their Savior. They called him by many other names Messiah, Logos, Son of Man, and Son of God in their endeavor to do justice to his work and character, but one name shines among all the rest and swings them about it like planets round

a sun. He is the Savior. From the annunciation to Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21), to the New Song of the Apocalypse (Revelation 5:5-13), the New Testament is written around the central theme of saviorhood. These first disciples were vividly aware of an abysmal need, which had been met in Christ, a great peril from which through him they had escaped; and throughout the New Testament one never loses the accent of astonished gratitude, from folk who were once slaves and now are free, who from victims have been turned to victors. When Wilberforce's long campaign for the freeing of British slaves was at its climax, the population of Jamaica lined the shore for days awaiting the ship that should bring news of Parliament's decision. And when from a boat's prow the messenger cried "Freedom," the island rang with the thanksgiving of the liberated. Such rejoicing one hears in the New Testament. The disciples speak of the freedom wherewith Christ has set them free (Galatians 5:1); they say that they were dead and now are made alive (Romans 6:11-13); once overwhelmed by sin, they now cry, "More than conquerors" (Romans 8:37). Nor have they any doubt who is the agent or what is the agency of their salvation: Christ is the Savior and faith the means. "This is the victory that hath overcome the world,", they cry, "even our faith" (1 John 5:4).

If we are to understand this attitude of the first disciples toward Christ the Savior, we must appreciate as they did the peril from which he rescued them. One cannot understand the meaning of any character who, like Moses, delivered a people from their bondage, unless he deeply feels the importance of the problem to whose solution the man contributed. Moses shines out against the background of a nation's trouble like a star against the midnight sky. When the blackness of the night is gone, the star has vanished, too. The race's deliverers never can retain their brightness in our gratitude unless we keep alive in our remembrance the evil against which they fought. If we would know Moses, we must know Pharaoh; if we would know Wellington, we must know Napoleon. If we are to value truly the great educators, we must estimate aright the blight that ignorance lays on human life. John Howard will be nothing to us, if we do not know the ancient prison system in comparison with which even our modern jails are paradise; and Florence Nightingale will be an empty name, if we cannot imagine the terrors of war without a nurse. Always we must see the stars against the night. Nor is there any other way in which a Christian can keep alive a vital understanding of his Lord. Many modern Christians seem to have lost vision of the problem that Jesus came to solve, of the human peril to whose conquest he made the supreme contribution. They think that the Church has adored Jesus because of a metaphysical theory about him, but all theories concerning Christ have arisen from a previous devotion to him. Or they think that Jesus is adored because he was so uniquely beautiful in character. But while without this his people never would have called him Lord, not on this account chiefly have they looked on him with inexpressible devotion. No one can understand the Christian attitude toward Jesus except in terms of the bondage from which he came to rescue us. There is a human cry that makes his advent meaningful; it is like the night behind the star of Bethlehem. Long ago a Psalmist heard that cry and every age and land and soul has echoed it, "My sins are mightier than I" (Psalms 65:3).

II The peril of sin as the innermost problem of human life is in these days obscure to many minds. For one thing, sin has been so continuously preached about, that it seems to some an ecclesiastical question, fit for discussion, it may be, in a church on Sunday, but otherwise not often emerging in ordinary thought. But sin is no specialty of preaching. If a man, forgetting churches and sermons, seriously ponders human life as he knows it actually to be, if he gathers up in his

imagination the deepest heartaches of the race, its worst diseases, its most hopeless miseries, its ruined childhood, its dissevered families, its fallen states, its devastated continents, he soon will see that the major cause of all this can be spelled with three letters sin. To make vivid this peril as the very crux of humanity's problem on the earth, one needs at times to leave behind the customary thoughts and phrases of religion and to seek testimony from sources that the Church frequently forgets. When governments try to build social states where equity and happiness shall reign, their prison systems, their criminal codes, their courts of law loudly advertise that their problem lies in sin. When jurists plan leagues of nations and sign covenants to make the world a more fraternal place, only to find greed, hate, and cruelty demolishing their well-laid schemes, their failure uncovers the crucial problem of man's sin. When philanthropists try to lift from man's bent back the burdens that oppress him, it becomes plain how infinitely their task would be lightened, if it were not for sin. As for literature where the seers regardless of religious prejudice, have tried to see into the human heart and truly to report their insights its witness is overwhelming as to what man's problem is. No great book of creative literature was ever written without sin at the center. Macbeth, Hamlet, Othello, Faust. Les Miserable?. Romola, The Scarlet Letter let the list be "Iniquities prevail against me." extended in any direction and to any length! Always the insight of the creative seers reports one inner peril of the race. Sin is no bogey erected by the theologians, no ghost imagined by minds grown morbid with the fear of God. Sin to every seeing eye is the one most real and practical problem of mankind. For another reason this crucial problem is dimly seen by many minds: we do not often use the word about ourselves. The hardest thing that any man can ever say is "I have sinned." We make mistakes, we have foibles of character and conduct, we even fall into error but we do not often sin. By such devices we avoid the painful consciousness of our inward malady and even the name of our disease is banished from decorous speech. But sin does not go into exile with its name. Sin has many aliases and can -swiftly shift its guise to gain a welcome into any company.

Sin in the slums is gross and terrible. It staggers down the streets, blasphemes with oaths that can be heard, wallows in vice unmentionable by modest lips. Then some day prosperity may visit it. It moves to a finer residence, seeks the suburbs, or finds domicile on a college campus. It changes all its clothes. No longer is it indecent and obscene. Its speech is mild, its civility is irreproachable. It gathers a company of friends who minister to pleasure and respectability, and the cry of the world's need dies unheard at its peaceful door. It presses its face continually through the pickets of social allowance, like a bad boy who wishes to trespass on forbidden ground but fears the consequence. Its goodness is superficial seeming; at heart it is as bad as it dares to be. It has completely changed its garments, but it is the same sin indulgent, selfish, and unclean. Sin, as anyone can easily observe, takes a very high polish.

Neither by calling sin an ecclesiastical concern nor by covering its presence in ourselves with pleasant euphemisms can we hide its deadly bane in human life. The truth and import of this negative statement become clear and convincing when its positive counterpart is faced. The world needs goodness. The one thing in which mankind is poor and for the lack of which great causes lag and noble hopes go unful illed is character. With each access of that humanity leaps forward; with the sag of that all else is failure. And the one name for every loss and lack and ruin of character is sin. That is our enemy. Upon the defeat of that all our dearest hopes depend, and in its victory every dream of good that the race has cherished comes to an end.

III The urgency of this truth is manifest when we note the consequence of sin in our own lives. No statement from antiquity has accumulated more confirming evidence in the course of the centuries than the Psalmist's cry, "My sins are mightier than I." Let us consider its truth in the light of our experience. Our sins are stronger than we are in their power to fasten on us a sense of guilt that we cannot shake off. Sinful pleasures lure us only in anticipation, dancing before us like Salome before her uncle, quite irresistible in fascination. Happiness seems altogether to depend upon an evil deed. But on the day that deed, long held in alluring expectation, is actually done how swift and. terrible the alteration in its aspect! It passes from anticipation, through committal, into memory, and it never will be beautiful again. We lock it in remembrance, as in the bloody room of Bluebeard's palace, where the dead things hung; at the thought of it we shrink and yet to it our reminiscence continually is drawn. Some thing happens in us as automatic as the dropping of a loos ened apple from a tree; all the laws of the moral universe conspire to further it and we have no power to prevent: sin becomes guilt. When on a lonely ocean the floating bell- buoys toll, no human hands cause them to ring; the waste of an unpeopled ocean surrounds them every way. The sea by its own restlessness is ringing its own bells. So tolls remorse in a man's heart and no man can stop it. Our sins are stronger than we are in their power to become habitual. If one who steps from an upper window had only the single act to consider, his problem would be simple. He could step or not as he chose. But when one steps from an upper window he finds himself dealing with a power over which his will has no control. Master of his single act, he is not master of the gravitation that succeeds it. Many a youth blithely plays with sin, supposing that separate deeds which he may do or refrain from as he will make up the problem. Soon or late he finds that he is dealing with moral laws, built into the structure of the universe as gravitation is laws which he did not create and whose operation he cannot control. By them with terrific certainty thoughts grow to deeds, deeds to habits, habits to character, character to destiny. At the beginning sin always comes disguised as liberty. Its lure is the seductive freedom which it promises from the trammels of conscience and the authority of law. But every man who ever yet accepted sin's offer of a free, unfettered life, discovered the cheat. Free to do the evil thing, to indulge the baser moods so men begin, but they end not free to stop, bound as slaves to the thing that they were free to do. They have been at liberty to play with a cuttle-fish, and now that the first long arm with its suckers grasps them, and the second arm is waving near, they are not at liberty to get away. Our sins are mightier than we are in their power to make us tempt our fellows. When we picture our sinfulness, even to ourselves, we naturally represent our lives assailed by the allurements of evil and passively surrendering. We are the tempted; we pity ourselves because the outward pressure was too strong for the inward braces. We forget that in sin we are not simply the passive subjects of temptation; sin always makes us active tempters of our fellows. No drug fiend ever is content until he wins a comrade in his vice; a thief would have his friends steal, too; a gossip is not satisfied until other lips are tearing reputations into shreds; and vindictiveness is happiest when other hearts as well are lighted with lurid tempers. Sin always is contagious as disease is; the tempted becomes tempter on the instant that he falls. Peter weak, lures Jesus to his weakness, and the Master recognizes the active quality of his disciple's sin; "Get thee behind me, Satan!" (Matthew 16:23). Sin satanizes men and sends them out to seduce their fellows. When, therefore, a sensitive man repents of his evil, he abhors himself not mildly as a victim, but profoundly as a victimizer. He repents of the way he has played Satan to others, sometimes deliberately, sometimes by the unconscious influence of an unworthy spirit. He remembers the times when his

words have poisoned the atmosphere which others breathed, when his tempers have conjured up evil spirits in other hearts, when his attitude has made wrongdoing easy for his friends and family, and well doing hard. And his desperate helplessness in the face of sin is made most evident when he recalls the irrecoverable injury which lives have suffered and are suffering, hurt, perhaps ruined, by his evil. Our sins arc mightier than we are in their power to bring their natural consequences upon other lives. The landlord, of whom President Hyde has told, who without disinfection rented to a new family an apartment where a perilous disease had been, is typical of every evil-doer. When the only child of the incoming family fell sick of the disease and died, and the landlord was faced with his guilt, he pleaded his unwillingness to spend the money which the disinfection would have cost. He denied his Lord for ten dollars. Let the law punish him as it can, the crux of his moral problem lies in the fact that however much he may be sorry now, he never can bear all the consequences of his sin. Somewhere there is a child less home bearing part of the result of his iniquity. One who had done a deed like that might well crave death and oblivion. But everyone who ever sinned is in that estate. No man ever succeeded in building around his evil a wall high and thick enough to contain all evil's consequences. They always flow over and seep through; they fall in cruel disaster on those who love us best. One never estimates his sin aright until he sees that no man ever bears all the results of his own evil. Always our sins nail somebody else to a cross; they even "crucify... the Son of God afresh" (Hebrews 6:6).

Such is the meaning of the peril against whose background the New Testament believers saw the luminous figure of the Savior. Sin brings men into the debt of a great guilt which they cannot pay and into the bondage of tyrannous habits which they cannot break; it makes men tempting satans to their fellows, and it hurls its results like vitriol across the faces of their family and friends. And when one looks on the lamentable evils of the world at large, its sad inequities, its furious wars, he sees no need to deal delicately with sin or to speak of it in apologetic tones. Sin is, as the New Testament saw it, the central problem of mankind. If anyone has ever come with the supreme contribution to its conquest, the face of the world may well be turned toward him today. In the Christian's faith, such a Savior has cotfie. For if the visitor from Mars who so often has been imagined coming to earth, should come again, arid amazed at the churches built, the anthems sung, the service wrought in Jesus name, should curiously inquire what this character had done to awaken such response, we should have to answer: Jesus of Nazareth made no direct contribution to science or art or government or law with none of these important realms did he concern himself. Only one thing he did: he made the indispensable contribution to man's fight for great character against sin. And because that is man's crucial problem, all science, art, government, and law are under an unpayable indebtedness to him. Because that is man's innermost need, his birthday has become the hinge of history, until one cannot write a letter to his friend without dating his familiar act from the advent of him who came to save us in our struggle for godliness against evil.

IV

Faith in Christ has a double relationship with the problem of man's sin; it concerns the basis on which we are to be judged and the strength by which we are to conquer. Christ has brought to men a gospel of forgiveness and power. With regard to the first and with the first alone this chapter is concerned the opinion of many modern men is swift and summary: folk are to be judged by what they do; the output of a man, as of a machine, is the test of him. Until this popular method of judgment is convicted of inadequacy, there is no hope of understanding what Christians have

meant by being "saved through faith" (Ephesians 2:8)..We must see that men are worth more than they do. A man’s deeds alone are an insufficient basis for judgment, because motives for the same act may be low or high. No one can be unaware of the Master’s meaning when he speaks of those who do their alms before men to be seen of them (Matthew 6:1 ff), or of Paul’s when he says, "If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor... but have not love" (1 Corinthians 13:3)- Some men habitually shine to good advantage by such means; they have the facile gift of putting their best foot forward. Like a store at Christmas time, its finest goods in the window and inferior stock for sale upon the counters, they are infinitely skilful in gaining more credit than their worth deserves. One who has dealt with such folk becomes aware that to estimate an isolated deed is superficial; one must know the motive. A cup of cold water or a widow’s penny may awake the Master’s spirited approval, and millions rung into the temple treasury by showy Pharisees meet only scorn. Deeds alone are an insufficient basis for judgment because, while we are more than body, our bodies are the instruments of all that visibly we do. Many a man in spirit is like a swift mill race, eager for service, but the flesh, a battered mill wheel, ill sustains the spirit’s vehemence; it breaks before the shock. One must shut the gates and patch up the wheel, before the spirit, impatient for utterance, may have its way again; and some mill-wheels never can be mended. Says one of Robert Louis Stevenson’s biographers: "When a temporary illness lays him on his back, he writes in bed one of his most careful and thoughtful papers, the discourse on The Technical Elements in Style. When ophthalmia confines him to a darkened room, he writes by the diminished light. When after hemorrhage, his right hand has to be held in a sling, he writes some of his Child’s Garden with his left hand. When the hemorrhage has been so bad that he dare not speak, he dictates a novel in the deaf and dumb alphabet." When one has lived with handicapped folk, discerning behind the small amount of work the infinite willingness for more, and in the work done a quality that makes quantity seem negligible, he perceives that deeds are no sufficient measure of spiritual value. Only an eye that pierces behind is unwrought work to the man, willing while the flesh was weak, can ever estimate how much some spirits are worth.

Deeds alone are an insufficient basis for judgment because men face unequal opportunities. Some start with one talent, some with ten. The cherished son of a Christian family ought to live a decent life; how favorable his chance! But if a vagrant wharf-rat by some mysterious vision of decency and determination of character makes a man of himself, how much more his credit! The worth of goodness cannot be esti mated without knowledge of the struggle which it cost. When one considers the smug, conventional respectability of some, possessing every favorable help to goodness, and the rough but genuine integrity of others who have fought a great fight against crippling handicaps to character, he sees why, in any righteous judgment, the last will be first, as Jesus said, and the first last. Only God, with power to understand what heredity and circumstance some men have faced, what enticements they have met, what a fight they have really waged even when they may have seemed to fail, can tell how much they are worth. "What’s done we partly may compute, But know not what’s resisted."

Judgment based on deeds alone can never truly estimate a man, because in every important decision of our lives an "un published self" finds no expression in our outward act. Duty is not always clear; at times it seems a labyrinth without a clue. Perplexed, we balance in long deliberation the opposing reasons for this act or that, until, forced to choose, we obtain only a majority vote for the decision. Yet that uncertain majority alone is published in our deed; man’s

eyes never see the unexpressed protestant minority behind. And when the choice proves wrong, and friends are grieved and enemies condemn and what we did is hateful to ourselves, only one who knows how much we wanted to do right, and who accounts not only the published but the unpublished self can truly estimate our worth. Peter, who denied his Lord, it may be because he wanted the privilege of being near him at the trial, is not the only one who has appealed from the outward aspect of his deed to the inner intention of his heart: "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee" (John 21:17).

Moreover, even when we choose aright, no deed can ever gather into utterance all that is best and deepest in us. A mother's love is as much greater than any word she speaks or act she does, as the sunshine is greater than the focused point where in a burning glass we gather a ray of it. We are in finitely more than words can utter or deeds express. No adequate judgment, therefore, can rest on deeds alone. A ma chine may be estimated by its output, but a man is too subtle and profound, his motives and purposes too inexpressible, his temptations and inward struggles too intimate and unrevealed, his possibilities too great to be roughly estimated by his acts alone.

"Not on the vulgar mass

Called work must sentence pass,

Things done, that took the eye and had the price;

O er which, from level stand,

The low world laid its hand,

Found straightway to its mind, could value in a trice:

But all, the world's coarse thumb

And finger failed to plumb,

So passed in making up the main account;

All instincts immature,

All purposes unsure,

That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man's amount

Thoughts hardly to be packed

Into a narrow act,

Fancies that broke through language and escaped;

All I could never be,

All, men ignored in me,

This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher shaped.

If, however, we are to understand the Christian's meaning when he speaks of being saved by faith (Romans 3:28; Romans 5:1; Galatians 3:24), we need to see not only that men are worth more

than they do, but as well that they are worth more than they are. Some things always start large and grow small; some things always start small and grow large; but a man may do either, and his value is determined not so much by the position he is in, as it is by the direction in which he is moving. Even of stocks upon the market in their rise and fall this truth is clear. The figure at which a stock is quoted is important, but the meaning of that figure cannot be understood unless one knows whether it was reached on the way up or the way down. How much more is any static judgment of a man impossible! One starts at the summit, with endowments and opportunities that elevate him far above his fellows, and frittering away his chance, drifts down. Another, be ginning at the bottom, by dint of resolute endeavor climbs upward, achieving character in the face of odds before which ordinary men succumb. Somewhere these two men will pass, and, statically judged, will be of equal worth. But one is drifting down; one climbing up. The innermost secret of their spiritual value lies in that hidden fact. When, there fore, one would judge a man, he must pierce behind the deeds that he can see, behind the present quality that he can esti mate, back to the thing the man has set his heart upon, to the direction of his life, to the ideal which masters him that is, to his faith. There lies the potential future of the man, his ultimate worth, the seed of his coming fruit. If one has eyes to see what that faith is, he knows the man and what the man is bound to be.

When, therefore, men set their hearts on Christ, lay hold on him by faith as life's Master and its goal, that faith opens the door to God's forgiveness. In Augustine's luminous phrase, "The Christian already has in Christ what he hopes for in himself." He is Christ's brother in the filial life with God, young, immature, undeveloped but the issue of that life is the measure of the stature of Christ's fulness God does not demand the end when only the beginning is possible, does not scorn the dawn because it is not noon. He welcomes the first movement of man's spirit toward him, not for the fruit which yet is unmatured, but for the seed which still is in the germ; he takes the will for the deed, because tfie will is earnest; he sees the journey's end in Christlike character, when at the road's beginning the pilgrim takes the first step by faith. There is no fiction here; God ought to forgive and welcome such a man. All good parents act so toward their children. This divine grace corresponds with truth, for a man is worth the central, dominant faith, that determines life's direction and decides its goal. And the Gospel that God so deals with man, announced in the words of Jesus, illustrated in his life, sealed in his death, has been a boon to the race that puts all men under an immeasurable debt to Christ.

VI This method of judgment which all good men use with their friends and families has been often disbelieved, in its Christian formulations, because it has been misrepresented and misunderstood. But human life, far outside religious boundaries, continually illustrates the wisdom and righteousness of so judging men by faith. Roswell Mclntyre deserted during the Civil War; he was caught, court-martialled, and condemned to death. He stood with no defense for his deed, no just complaint against the penalty, and with nothing to plead save shame for his act, and faith that, with another chance, he could play the man. On that, the last recourse of the condemned. President Lincoln pardoned him. "EXECUTIVE MANSION, Oct. 4, 1864.

Upon condition that Roswell Mclntyre of Co. E 6th Reg t of New York Cavalry, returns to his Regiment and faithfully serves out his term, making up for lost time, or until otherwise discharged, he is fully pardoned for any supposed desertion heretofore committed, and this paper is his pass to go to his regiment ABRAHAM LINCOLN." Was such clemency an occasion for lax character? The answer is written across the face of Mr. Lincoln's letter in the archives: "Taken from the body

of R. Mclntyre at the Battle of Five Forks, Va 1865." Five Forks was the last cavalry action of the war; Mclntyre went through to the finish.

Any one who knows the experience of being forgiven under stands the motives that so remake a pardoned deserter. The relief from the old crushing condemnation, the joy of being trusted again beyond desert, the gratitude that makes men rather die than be untrue a second time, the unpayable in debtedness from which ambition springs, "whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto him" (2 Corinthians 5:9) this is the moral consequence of being pardoned. Goodness so be gotten reaches deep and high, has in it conscious joy and hope, feels vividly the value of its moral victories, possesses great motives for sacrificial service in the world. The Apocalypse is right. There is a song in heaven that angels cannot sing. Only men like Mclntyre will know how to sing it. The vital and transforming faith that saves is always better presented in a story than in an argument, and in the Scripture the best description of it is Jesus parable of the Prodigal. As the Master drew that portrait of life in the far country, all the watching Pharisees thought that such a boy was lost. The Prodigal himself must have guessed that his case was hopeless. His friends, his character, his reputation, his will were gone, and in the inner court-room of his soul with maddening iteration he heard sentence passed, Guilty. Only one hope remained. If he was unspoiled enough by the far country’s pitiless brutality to think that at home they might bear no grudge, might find forgiveness possible, might offer him another chance as a hired servant, if he could think that perhaps his father even wanted him to come home, then there was hope. With such slender faith the boy turned back from the far country. He had the same lack of character, the same weakened will, the same evil habits. Only one difference had as yet been wrought. Before, he had been facing toward swine, now he was facing toward home. The direction of his life was changed by faith. And when the father saw him, homeward bound, "while he was yet afar off," forgiveness welcomed him. No pardon could unload from the lad’s life all the fearful consequences of his sin. As long as he lived, the scars on health, repute, and usefulness were there. But forgiveness could take the sin away as a barrier to personal friendship with the father; the old relationships of mutual confidence, helpfulness, and love could be restored; the glorious chance could be bestowed of fighting through the battle for character, not hopelessly in the far country, but victoriously at home.

One of the chief glories of the Gospel is that it has so reclaimed the waste of humanity, made sons of Prodigals and patriots of Mclntyres. Its Paul’s were persecutors, its Aiigus- tines the slaves of lust, and its rank and file men and women to whom Christ’s message has meant forgiveness, reinstatement, a new chance, and boundless hope. Scientific business conserves its waste and makes invaluable by-products from what once was slag; but Christ has been the conserver of mankind. The lost and sick have been returned to sanity and wholesomeness and service; humanity has been enriched be yond computation, with Bunyans and Coughs and Jerry Mc-Auleys. Tolstoi’s simple confession in "My Religion" is typical of multitudes: "Five years ago I came to believe in Christ’s teaching, and my life suddenly became changed: I ceased desiring what I had wished before, and began to desire what I had not wished before. What formerly had seemed good to me appeared bad, and what had seemed bad appeared good... The direction of my life, my desires became different: what was good and bad changed places." Tolstoi had indulged, as he acknowledges, in every form of unmen tionable vice practiced in Russia; and yet forgiven, reinstated, transformed, he was carried to his burial by innumerable Russian peasants with

banners flying. Where Christ's influence has vitally come, the loss and wreck and flotsam of the moral world have been so reclaimed to character and power. At the beginning of the Christian era, a few desolate sand lagoons lay off the Paduan coast of Italy. There the wild fowl made their nests; the lonely skiffs of fishermen threaded the reedy channels; the storms washed the shifting and uncertain sands. And possibly to this day the lagoons would have been thus barren and deserted, had not the Huns swept down on Italy. The Huns made the building of Venice necessary. They did not intend so fair a consequence of their terrific onslaughts. Their thoughts were on death and pillage. But because they came, the Italians fled to the lagoons, built there, behind the barricade of restless waters, their gleaming city, developed there the commerce that combed the world, built the Doge's palace as the abode of justice, and raised St. Mark's in praise of God. Venice was the city of Salvation; it rose resplendent because the Huns had come. So Christ turns the ruin of sin to victory, and builds in human life character, recovered and triumphant. If his Gospel can have its way, a spiritual Venice will arise to make the onslaught of the moral Huns an evil with a glorious issue. What wonder that inexpressible devotion has been felt for him by all hJ$ people?

04.11. Faith in Christ the Savior: Power

CHAPTER XI. Faith in Christ the Savior: Power

DAILY READINGS As we saw in the last week’s study, Christian faith has always centered around the person of Jesus himself. This week let us consider some testimonies from the New Testament as to the meaning and effect of this definitely Christian faith.

Eleventh Week, First Day

It must be clear to any observing mind that the world does not suffer from lack of faith. There is faith in plenty; every body is exercising it on some object. In the Bible we read of folk who "trust in vanity" (Isaiah 59:4), who "trust in lying words" (Jeremiah 7:4), or "in the abundance of riches" (Psalms 52:7); and the Master exclaims over the difficulty which those who "trust in riches" have when they try to enter the Kingdom of God (Mark 10:24). Faith, then, is a necessary faculty of the soul: the power by which we commit ourselves to any object that wins our devotion and commands our allegiance. No man avoids its use, and men differ only in the objects toward which their faith is directed. Of all the tragedies caused by the misuse of human powers, none is more frequent and disastrous than the ruin that follows the misuse of faith. With this necessary and powerful faculty in our possession, capable of use on things high or low, to what determination can a man more reasonably set himself than this? since I must and do use faith on something, I will choose the highest. It is with such a rational and worthy choice that the Christian turns to Jesus. He is the best we know; we will direct our faith toward him. This does not mean that in the end our faith does not rest on God; it does, for Jesus is the Way, the Door, as he said, and faith in him moves up through him to the One who sent him. As Paul put it, "Such confidence have we through Christ to Godward" (2 Corinthians 3:4). But faith in Jesus is the most vivid, true, and compelling way we have of committing ourselves to the highest and best we know. In the light of this truth, we can understand why John calls such faith the supreme "work" which God demands of us.

Work not for the food which perisheth, but for the food which abideth unto eternal life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him the Father, even God, hath sealed. They said therefore unto him, What must we do, that we may work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. John 6:27-29; Gracious Father! Thou hast revealed Thyself gloriously in Jesus Christ, the Son of Thy love. In Him we have found Thee, or rather, are found of Thee. By His life, by His words and deeds, by His trials and sufferings, we are cleansed from sin and rise into holiness. For in Him Thou hast made disclosure of Thine inmost being and art drawing us into fellowship with Thy life. As we stand beneath His Cross, or pass with Him into the Garden of His Agony, it is Thy heart that we see unveiled, it is the passion of Thy love yearning over the sinful, the wandering, seeking that it may save them. No man hath seen Thee at any time, but out from the unknown has come the Son of Man to declare Thee. And now we know Thy name. When we call Thee Father, the mysteries of existence arc not so terrible, our burdens weigh less heavily upon us, our sorrows are touched with joy. Thy Son has brought the comfort that we need, the comfort of knowing that in all our afflictions Thou art

afflicted, that in Thy grief our lesser griefs are all contained. Let the light which shines in His face, shine into our hearts, to give us the knowledge of Thy glory, to scatter the darkness of fear, of wrong, of remorse, of foreboding, and to constrain our lives to finer issues of peace and power and spiritual service. And this prayer we offer in Christ's name. Amen. Samuel Mc- Comb.

Eleventh Week, Second Day The New Testament clearly reveals the experience that forgiveness comes in answer to such self-committing faith in Christ as we spoke of yesterday. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that even forgiveth sins? And he said unto the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace. Luke 7:48-50. In popular thought forgiveness is often shallowly conceived. It is thought to be an easy agreement to forget offense, a good-natured waving aside of injuries committed as though the evil done were of no consequence. But forgiveness is really a most profound and searching experience; and it takes two persons, each, sacrificially desirous of achieving it, before it can be perfected. In the pardoner, the passion for saviorhood must submerge all disgust at the sin in love for the sinner; and in the pardoned, desire for a new life must create sacrificial willingness to hate and forsake the evil and humbly accept a new chance. It follows, therefore, that no one can forgive another, no matter how willing he may be to do so, unless the recipient fulfils the conditions that make pardon possible. Forgiveness is a mutual operation; no forgetting or good will on the part of one person is forgiveness at all; and the attitude in the forgiven man that makes the reception of pardon possible is -negatively penitence and positively faith. Any experience of human forgiveness reveals that the offender must detest his sin and turn from it in trust and self-commitment to claim the mercy and choose the ideals of the one whom he has wronged. That God in Christ is willing to forgive is the Christian Gospel; and if we go unforgiven it is for lack of faith. That is the hand which grasps the proffered pardon.

Almighty God, "whose salvation is ever nigh to them that seek Thee, we think of our little lives, of their wayward ways, and we remember Thee and are troubled. Our days pass from us and we are heated with strifes, and troubled and restless, with mean temptations and fugitive desires. We spend our years in much carelessness, and too seldom do we think of the greatness of our trust and the wonder and mystery of our being. We are vexed with vain dreams and trivial desires. We live our days immersed in petty passions. We strain after poor uncertainties. We pursue the shadows of this passing life and continually are we visited by our own self-contempt and bitterness. We have known the better and have chosen the worse. We have felt the glory and power of a higher life and yet have surrendered to ignoble temptations and to satisfactions that end with the hour.

Almighty Father, of Thy goodness do Thou save our lives, so smitten with passion, from the failure and misery that else must come to us. Be with us in our hours of self-communion, and inspire us with good purpose and service to Thee. Be with us when heart and Hesh faint, and there seems no help or safety near us. Be with us when we are carried into the dry and lonely places, seeking a rest that is not in them. Sustain us, we beseech Thee, under the burden of our many errors and failures. From the confused aims and purposes of our lives may there be brought forth, by the aid of Thy Spirit, and the teaching and discipline of life, lives constant and assured in service and obedience to Thee. Amen. John Hunter.

Eleventh Week, Third Day

It is clear in the New Testament that all the free movements of divine help depend on the presence of man’s faith. Words like these are continually on the lips of Jesus: "Be of good cheer; thy faith hath made thee whole" (Matthew 9:22); "According to your faith be it done unto you" (Matthew 9:29); "Great is thy faith: be it done unto thee even as thou wilt" (Matthew 15:28). Human life as a whole confirms the truth which such words suggest: Man’s faith is always the limit of his blessing; he never obtains more than he believes in. Men live in a world of unappropriated truth and unused power; and the blessings of truth and power can be reached only by ventures of faith. Even electricity withholds its serv ice from a man who, like Abdul Hamid, has not faith enough to try. In personal relationships this fact becomes even more clear. Whatever gifts of good will may be waiting in the heart of any man, we are shut out from them forever, unless we have the grace of faith in the man and open-hearted self- commitment to him. As the Christian Gospel sees man’s case, the central tragedy lies here: that God in Christ is willing to do so much more in and for and through us than we have faith enough to let him do. Our unbelief is not a matter of theoretical concern alone; it practically disables God, it handi caps his operation in the world, it is an "evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God" (Hebrews 3:12). The divine will is forced to wait upon the lagging faith of man. How often the Master exclaimed, "O ye of little faith! * (Matthew 6:30; Matthew 8:26). And the reason for his lament was emi nently practical. And coming into his own country he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter’s son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joseph, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things? And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house. And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief. Matthew 13:54-58.

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, we desire to come to Thee in all humility and sincerity. We are sinful; pardon Thou us. We are ignorant; enlighten Thou our darkness. We are weak; inspire us with strength. In these times of doubt, uncertainty, and trial, may we ever feel conscious of Thine everlasting light. Soul of our soul! Inmost Light of truth! Manifest Thyself unto us amid all shadows. Guide us in faith, hope, and love, until the perfect day shall dawn, and we shall know as we are known.

Almighty God, teach us, we pray Thee, by blessed experience, to apprehend what was meant of old when Jesus Christ was called the power of God unto salvation, for we stand in need of salvation from sin, from doubt, from weakness, from craven fear; we cannot save ourselves; we are creatures of a day, short-sighted, and too often driven about by every wind of passion and opinion. We need to be stayed upon a higher strength. We need to lay hold of Thee. Manifest Thyself unto us, our Father, as the Savior of our souls, and deliver us from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Amen. John Hunter.

Eleventh Week, Fourth Day Not only is man’s power to appropriate the divine blessing dependent on faith; in the experience of the New Testament man’s power of achievement has the same source. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast it out? And he saith unto them, Be cause of your little faith: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Matthew 17:19-20.

Mountains are symbols of difficulty, and the Master’s af firmation here that faith alone can remove them is clearly confirmed in human experience. It may seem at times as though faith, compared with the obstacles, were like a minute mustard seed before the ranges of Lebanon, but faith can overcome even that disproportion in size. Great leaders al ways must have such confidence. Listen to Mazzini: "The people lack faith... the faith that arouses the multitudes, faith in their own destiny, in their own mission, and in the mission of the epoch; the faith that combats and prays; the faith that enlightens and bids men advance fearlessly in the ways of God and humanity, with the sword of the people in their hand, the religion of the people in their heart, and the future of the people in their soul." In any great movement for human good, the ultimate and deciding question always is: How many people can be found who have faith enough to believe in the cause and its triumph? When enough folk have faith, any campaign for human welfare can be won. Without faith men "collapse into a yielding mass of plaintive-ness and fear"; with faith they move mountains. And when /men have faith in Christ as God’s Revealor faith, not formal and abstract, but real and vital they begin to feel about the word "impossible" as Mirabeau did, "Never mention to me (again that blockhead of a word!"

O God, our Father, our souls are made sick by the sight of hunger and want and nakedness; of little children bearing on their bent backs the burden of the world’s work; of motherhood drawn under the grinding wheels of modern industry; and of overburdened manhood, with empty hands, stumbling and falling.

Help us to understand that it is not Thy purpose to do away with life’s struggle, but that Thou desirest us to make the conditions of that struggle just and its results fair.

Enable us to know that we may bring this to pass only through love and sympathy and understanding; only as we realize that all are alike Thy children the rich and the poor, the strong and the weak, the fortunate and the unfortunate. And so, our Father, give us an ever-truer sense of human sisterhood; that with patience and steadfastness we may do our part in ending the injustice that is in the land, so that all may rejoice in the fruits cf their toil and be glad in Thy sunshine. *

Keep us in hope and courage even amid the vastness of the undertaking and the slowness of the progress, and sustain us with the knowledge that our times are in Thy hand. Amen. Helen Ring Robinson.

Eleventh Week, Fifth Day

Faith in Christ has always been consummated, in the experience to which the New Testament introduces us, in an inward transformation of life.

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me. Galatians 2:20.

Such conversion of life is the normal result of a vital fellowship whose bond is faith. For one thing, a man at once begins to care a great deal more about his own quality when he believes in Christ and in Christ’s love. "What a King stoops to pick up from the mire cannot be a brass farthing, but must be a pearl of great price." To be loved by anyone is to enter into a new estimate of one’s

possible value; to be loved by God in Christ is to come into an experience where our possible value makes us alike ashamed of what we are and jubilant over what we may become. We begin saying with Irenaeus, "Jesus Christ became what we are that he might make us what he is." And then, faith, ripening into fellowship, opening the life sensitively to the influence of the friend, issues in a character infused by the friend's character. He lives in us. Such transformation of life does not happen in a moment; it requires more than instantaneous exposure to take the Lord's picture on a human heart; but time-exposure will do it, and "Christ in us" be alike our hope of glory and our secret of influence. O Father Eternal, we thank Thee for the new and living way into Thy presence made for us in Christ; the way of trust, sincerity, and sacrifice. Beneath His cross we would take our stand, in communion with His Spirit would we pray, in fellowship with the whole Church of Christ we would seek to know Thy mind and will.

We desire to know all the fulness of Christ, to appropriate His unsearchable riches, to feed on His humanity whereby Thou hast become to us the bread of our inmost souls and the wine of life, to become partakers of Thy nature, share Thy glory, and become one with Thee through Him.

Give unto us fellowship with His sufferings and insight into the mystery of His cross, so that we may be indeed crucified with Him, be raised to newness of life, and be hidden with Christ in Thee.

We desire to make thankful offering of ourselves as members of the body of Christ; in union with all the members may we obey our unseen Head, so that the Body may be undivided, and Thy love, and healing power, and very Self may be incarnate on the earth in one Holy Universal Church. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

Eleventh Week, Sixth Day With faith in Christ so seen as the secret of divine for giveness and assistance, of achieving power and inward transformation, there can be little surprise at the solicitude which the New Testament shows concerning the disciples faith. We find this urgent interest in Paul, Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left behind at Athens alone; and sent Timothy, our brother and God's minister in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith;... night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face, and may perfect that which is lacking in your faith. 1 Thessalonians 3:12, 1 Thessalonians 3:10.

We are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren, even as it is meet, for that your faith groweth exceedingly, ano^ the love of each one of you all toward one another aboundeth. 2 Thessalonians 1:3. And one of the most appealing revelations of Jesus habit in prayer concerns his supplication for Peter's faith. Simon, Simon, behold, Satan asked to have you, that he might sift you as wheat: but I made supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not; and do thou, when once thou hast turned again, establish thy brethren. Luke 22:31-32. In all such passages one feels at once that faith is used as Paul uses it in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians a comrade and ally of hope and love. It is not a matter of dogma and does not move in the realm of opinion, although ideas of the first magnitude may be involved in it. It is primarily a bond of divine fellowship, which at once keeps the life receptive to all that God would do for the man and moves the man to do all that he should for God. If that fails, even Peter would fall in ruins, and the expression is none too strong, when in I Timothy the failure of such vital faith is described as a "shipwreck" (1 Timothy 1:19). But when by faith the consciousness of God has grown clear, and alliance with him is so real that we stop arguing about it and begin counting on it in daily living, the increment of power

and confidence and stability which a man may win is quite incalculable.

O Thou plenteous Source of every good and perfect gift, shed abroad the cheering light of Thy seven-fold grace over our hearts. Yea, Spirit of love and gentleness, we most humbly implore Thy assistance. Thou knowest our faults, our failings, our necessities, the dulness of our understanding, the waywardness of our affections, the perverseness of our will. When, therefore, we neglect to practice what we know, visit us, we beseech Thee, with Thy grace, enlighten our minds, rectify our desires, correct our wanderings, and pardon our omissions, so that by Thy guidance we may be preserved from making shipwreck of faith, and keep a good conscience, and may at length be landed safe in the haven of eternal rest; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Anselm 1033.

Eleventh Week, Seventh Day

Some who gladly acknowledge the surprising results which faith can work in life, do not see any great importance in the object to which faith attaches itself. They say that faith is merely a psychological attitude, and that faith in one thing does as well as faith in another. Folk are healed, they point out, by all kinds of faith, whether directed toward fetishes, or saints relics, or metaphysical theories, or God himself. It is the faith, they say, and not the object, which does the work. There is a modicum of truth in this. Faith, by its very power to organize man's faculties and give them definite set and drive, is itself a master force, and a man has no interest beyond the achievement of some immediate end, like conquering nervous qualms or getting strength for a special task, he may achieve that end by believing in almost anything, provided he believes hard enough. But to believe in some things may debauch the intelligence and lower the. moral standards, even while it achieves a practical end. Toy win power for a business task by believing in a palm-reader's predictions is entirely possible, but it is a poor bargain; ay man sells out his intelligence for cash. The object in which a man believes does make an immense difference in the effect of his faith on his mind and character. An African savage may gain courage for an ordeal by believing in his fetish but how immeasurable is the abyss between the meaning of that faith for the whole of life and the meaning of a Christian's faith in God! We have no business, for the sake of immediate gain, to allow our faith to rest in anything lower than the highest.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undented, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, ye have been put to grief in manifold trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold that perisheth though it is proved by fire, may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ: whom not having seen ye love; on whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. 1 Peter 1:3-9 Gracious Father of our spirits, in the stillness of this worship may we grow more sure of Thee, who art often closest to us when we feel Thou hast forsaken us. The toil and thought of -daily life leave us little time to think of Thee; but may the silence of this holy place make us aware that though we may forget Thee, Thou dost never forget us. Perhaps we have grown careless in contact with common things, duty has lost its high solemnities, the altar fires

have gone untended, Thy light within our minds has been distrusted or ignored. As we withdraw awhile from all without, may we find Thee anew within, until thought grows reverent again, all work is hallowed, and faith reconsecrates all common things as sacraments of love.

If pride of thought and careless speculation have made us doubtful of Thee, recover for us the simplicity that under stands Thou art never surer than when we doubt Thee, that through all failures of faith Thou becomest clearer, and so makest the light that once we walked by seem but darkness. Help us then to rest our faith on the knowledge of our imperfection, our consciousness of ignorance, our sense of sin, and see in them shadows cast by the light of Thy drawing near.

If Thy purposes have crossed our own and Thy will has broken ours, enable us to trust the wisdom of Thy perfect love and find Thy will to be our peace. So lead us back to meet Thee where we may have missed Thee. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

I The forgiveness which the Gospel offers reinstating a man in the personal relationships against which he sinned, and giving him another chance opens opportunity, but by itself it does not furnish power. The saviorhood of Christ, how ever, so far from failing at this crucial point, makes here its chief claim to preeminence. However one may explain it, the normal quality of a genuine Christian life is moral energy. The Gospel not alone to Paul, but to all generations of Christ’s disciples, had been "God’s saving power for everyone who has faith" (Romans 1:16). (Moffatt’s translation)

Faith always supplies moral dynamic. Emerson’s challenge. "They can conquer who believe they can," is easily verified in daily life. In practical business, in social reform, in personal character, no more common or fatal barrier to success exists than disbelief in possibilities. While some who think they can when they cannot, prove the rule by its exception, we are sure in advance that one who believes he cannot, has lost his battle before it has begun. Granted a task worth doing, suffi cient strength for its accomplishment, and motives in plenty to make success desirable, and one insinuating enemy can spoil the enterprise. Let the subtle fear that the task is impossible obsess the thought, paralyze the nerve, and no hope is left. Like chlorine gas, such fear defeats us before we have be gun to fight and fills our trenches with asphyxiated powers.

Anyone who is to be a savior to mankind, therefore, must be able to make men say, "I can." That Christ has had that influence on men is the commonplace of Christian biography from the beginning until now. "In him who strengthens me I am able for anything" (Php 4:13 Moffatt’s translation) is a word of Paul’s which the best Christian experience confirms. It does not mean that men can do what they will, overriding all obstacles to chosen goals; it means that they are aware of resources in reserve, of power around them and in them, so that they are not afraid of anything which they may face. If a duty ought to be done, they are confident that they can do it; if a trouble must be borne, they are assured that they can bear it. This buoyant faith is more than a grace of temperament. In Paul’s case, for example, it was not due to rugged health, for that he lacked; it was not the easy optimism of some happiness cult, for he was a persecuted man, bearing in his body "the marks of the Lord Jesus"; and such a note of assured resource as we just have quoted did not come from the hope fulness of fortunate circumstance, but from a prison where he wore a chain. Paul himself is certain that his sense of power springs from discipleship to Jesus. And when one turns to the gospels, he sees that whenever the Master had opportunity to exert to the full his

influence on men, some such result as here appears in Paul is evident. A contagious personality always enlarges the sense of possibilities and powers in other men. A man, leaving Trinity Church, where he had heard Phillips Brooks, exclaimed, "He always makes me feel so strong." It was said that one could not stand for a moment with Edmund Burke under an archway, to let a shower pass by, with out emerging a greater man. Each one of us knows folk who so impress him. We go into their presence, weak, self-pitiful; when we come out, the horizons are broader, the possibilities have enlarged, there is more in us than we had suspected, we are convinced that we can. To a degree that escapes our estimation Jesus exerted that influence on men. Napoleon said that he made his generals out of mud. Out of what, then, did the Master make his apostles? At the beginning, Peter, for example, is protesting, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord," and Jesus is bending over him, saying: Come after me, and I will make you a fisher of men; if you will, you can. After months of influence, Peter, still shamed and weak, is pleading his love against his deed, and Jesus is saying: Feed my sheep; feed my lambs; if you will, you can. In Jesus relationship with his disciple, a great personality stands over a lesser one, by life and word insistently saying, You can, until power is vitally transmitted, and in the vacillating, vehement Simon there emerges rock-like, stable Peter.

Throughout the Christian centuries nothing has been more typical than this of the Master's influence on men. He has come to innumerable sodden lives, held slaves to tyrannous sin, saying in the hopelessness of bondage, "I cannot," and he has touched them with his contagious confidence, until they rose into freedom, saying, "By the help of God, I can!" He has come into social situations where ancient evils, long entrenched and seemingly invincible, withstood the assault of reformation, and he has put inexhaustible resource into his people, until they said with an old reformer, "Impossible? If that is all that is the matter, let us go ahead!" He has come to his Church, reluctant to undertake a world-wide mission, staggered by the task's magnitude, and he has made men pray with life and not alone with lip, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Wherever the influence of Christ vitally has come, the horizons of possibility have widened and the sense of power grown inexhaustible.

Such influence is of the very essence of saviorhood and the attitude that appropriates it is saving faith. When John B. Gough, desperately enmeshed in habit, faces the Christian Gospel of release one easily may trace his changing response. Dubious at first, he wants to believe it but he does not dare. He wishes it were true, but the whole logic of his situation, his long habit, his spoiled reputation, his weakened will, argue against the possibility. As Augustine said about his lust, "The worse that I knew so well had more power over me than the better that I knew not" Still, a note of authority in the Gospel, as though spoken by one whose power to perform is equal to the thing he promises, arrests Cough's mind, captures his imagination, awakens his spirit's deep desire, until at last the Master's call, "You can," is answered by the human cry, "I will," and the man moves out into new possibilities, new powers, and increasing liberty. That is salvation. It is no formal status decreed by legal enactment, as though a judge technically acquitted a prisoner. It is new life, inward liberation from old habits, apprehensions, anxieties, and fears. It lifts horizons, consumes impossibilities, and at the center of life sets the stirring conviction that what ought to be done cjan be done.

Christians who are accustomed lightly to assert that they are saved need specially to take this truth to heart. Some speak as though salvation were a technicality and they sing about it, "Tis

done, the great transaction’s done." To many such, were candor courteous, one would wish to say: Saved? Saved from what? You are habitually anxious. Your life is continually vexed with little fears and apprehensions. When trouble comes, you are sure that you cannot stand it; when tasks present themselves, you are certain that you cannot perform them. You have pet self-indulgences, from. major sins to little meannesses; you know that they are wrong; but when suggestion comes that you surrender them, you are sure that you have not the strength. When causes. plainly Christian, on whose successful issue man’s weal depends, appeal to you for help, you weaken every enterprise by your disheartenment Saved from what? Not from fear, timidity, selfishness, and stagnation! And if you say, Saved from Hell what is Hell but the final subjugation of the soul to such sins as you now are cherishing? The words of Jesus are promises of saviorhood from real and present evils: "Be not anxious" (Matthew 6:34); "Go, sin no more" (John 8:11); "Fear not, little flock" (Luke 12:32). When one, by faith, turns his face homeward from such destroyers of life, he begins to be saved; but only as he lives by faith in fellowship with the Divine and so achieves progressive victory, does he keep on being saved. The heart of salvation is victorious power.

II Not all men feel the need of the power which comes from discipleship to Christ. They live content without such increment of strength as Christians find in faith. Their power is equal to their tasks because their tasks are levelled to their power. One cannot understand, therefore, what the Savior- hood of Christ has meant to men, unless he sees how Christ has created the need of the very power he furnishes. He has done this, in part, by awakening the desire for an ascending life. Men do not naturally want to believe in possibilities too great and taxing; it always is easier to leave undisturbed the status quo. Even changing one’s residence is difficult. Though one may move to a better house, yet to decide to move, to break old relationships, to tear up and refit the furnishings, and to adjust oneself to new associations mean stress and strain. So men come to be at home with habits; they are comfortably accustomed to timidity and self-indulgence. Release into a new life does not lure as privilege; it repels as hardship. Some sins, indeed, are followed byremorse, but others, grown habitual, bring a sense of well- being and content. We like ourselves; we do not want a better life; we are unwilling to pay its cost. Our sins are no bed of nettles, but a lotus land of decent ease. Were we candidly to speak to them, we should say, O Sin, you are a comfortable friend! When most we want forbidden fruit you suggest excuses. You side happily with our inclinations and save us from the struggle that high duty costs and the sacrifice of striving for the best. Among the blessings of our lives, we count you not the least, O decent, comfortable, self-indulgent Sin!

Idlers thus drift listlessly and refuse a voyage with apurpose and a goal; youths living by low standards, look on Christlike character as beyond their interest and possibility; undedicated men find excuse for holding back devotion to great causes in the world we shelter ourselves from aspiration and enterprise behind our faithlessness. Into such a situation Christ repeatedly has come, bringing a vision of what life ought to be, too imperative to be neglected, too challenging to be denied. Men have been shaken out of their content; the true color of their lives has been revealed against his white background, the meanness of their plans against the wide ranges of his purpose. From seeing him they have gone back to be content in their old habits, but in vain. Can one who has seen a home be happy in a hovel? Ranke, the historian, says, "More guiltless and more powerful, more exalted and more holy, has naught ever been on earth than his conduct, his life, and his death. The human race knows nothing that could be brought even afar off into

comparison with it." So he has been the disturber of man's ignoble self-content, and to say that we believe in him means that, no longer able to endure the thing we are, we go on pilgrimage toward the thing he is.; Faith means that we decide to move. This first essential work of saviorhood Christ has wrought, and when men start to follow him, they feel the need of power. For another thing, Christ has created a thirst for the power he furnishes by revealing the quality of character in the possession of which salvation ultimately consists. At the beginning of the ethical development whether of the individual or of the race, goodness is defined in terms of prohibitions. There are many things which men ought not to do; they walk embarrassed in the presence of their duty like courtiers before an exacting prince. How negative and repelling such goodness is! As another exclaims: "They do not break the Sabbath themselves, but no one who has to spend it with them likes to see the dreadful day come round. They do not swear themselves, but they make all who know them want to. They are just as good as trying not to be bad can make them."

Discerning spirits, therefore, turn to goodness positively conceived. "Thou shalt not" becomes "Thou shalt"; duty consists of rules to be kept, precepts to be observed, principles to be applied, and we go out to do good deeds to men. But whoever seriously tries to do deeds really good, faces a need of moral elevation, as much beyond the outward act of good as that surpasses the observance of prohibitions. Good deeds are not a matter of will alone, but of spiritual quality. Let the wind blow to fan the faces of the sick, but if it discover that it is laden with disease, what shall it do? To blow this way or that may be within volition's power, but not to cleanse oneself. The task of character reaches inward, beyond the things we do or refrain from doing to the man we are. Goodness is something more than girding up the loins, blowing upon the hands, and setting to the work of being dutiful. It springs from the spirit's depths; it is tinctured with the spirit's quality; and deeds are never really better than the soul whose utterances they are. From "Thou shalt not do" to "Thou shalt do" and from "Thou shalt do" to "Thou shalt be," man's flying goal of goodness moves. And this ideal in Christ has been incarnate, visible, imperative. He was right in the inner quality and flavor of his life; and to be like him involves a pure and powerful personality. Whoever sets that task ahead knows that he cannot strut proudly into it. Like Alice entering Wonderland he must grow very small before he can grow large. The Christ who has power to give has revealed the need of it. Not only by the intensifying of the ideal, but by its extension, has Christ created thirst for divine help. In youth the problem of character concerns persojial habits. Our untamed strength must be broken to the harness, and the snaffle bit be used upon our wayward powers. We justly fear our sins and in their triumph we see the wreck of individual prospects and the ruin of our families hopes. Our concern centers about ourselves, and its crux is self-mastery. But when in maturity, somewhat "at leisure from ourselves" in settled habits, we no longer fear our own ruin nor think it probable, goodness extends its meaning. To play our part in man's advancement, to live, work, sacrifice, and if need be die for causes on which our children's hopes depend, becomes our ideal. As boys in spring-time when the ice is melting see from a hill-top the swirling flood that overflows the plain, and know that some where underneath the unfamiliar and tumultuous rapids the main channel runs, from which the floods have broken, to which in time they must return, so in a generation when man's life has broken its banks in fury we still believe that the main course of the divine purpose is not forever lost. To believe that, and in the strength of it to toil for the ends God seeks, becomes to awakened spirits the essential soul of goodness. When such meanings enter into his ideal, a man runs straight upon the need of God. For we may make our contribution to the cause of man's good upon the earth and our children may make theirs, but if this world is a

spiritual Sahara, never meant for character and social weal, and against the dead set of the desert's power we are building oases here with our unaided fingers, then the issue of our work stands in no doubt. The Sahara will pile its burning sands about us and hurl its blistering winds across us, and we and our works together come to naught. By as much, then, as a man really cares about democracy and liberty and social equity, about human brotherhood and Christian civilization, by so much he needs God, who gathers up the scattered contributions of his children and builds them into victory. A man alone may keep the decalogue, but alone he cannot save the world. Who dreams of that wants power. And Christ has made men dream of that, believe in that with passionate certainty, until "Thy Kingdom come" is the daily prayer of multitudes. To no human strength can such prayer be offered; we are not adequate to an eternal, universal task. Again Christ has brought us to the need of power, and his people call him Savior, "because the need which he creates he also satisfies. In one of the tidal risers near New York, the building of a bridge was interrupted by a derelict sunk in the river's bottom. Divers put chains about the obstacle and all day long the engineer directed the maneuvering of tugs as they puffed and pulled in vain endeavor to dislodge the hulk. Then a young student, fresh from the technical school, asked for the privilege of trying, and from the vexed, impatient chief obtained his wish. "What will you do it with?" the engineer enquired. "The flat-boats in which we brought the granite from Vermont," the young man answered. So when the tide was out, the flat boats were fastened to the derelict. The Atlantic began to come in; its mighty shoulders underneath the boats lifted lifted until the derelict had to come. The youth had harnessed infinite energy to his task. To the consciousness of such resource in the spiritual world Christ has introduced his people. They have meant not formula but fact, not tech nicality but experience, when they have called him Savior.

III This consciousness of power has come in part from Christ's revelation of God the Father. Whoever has sinned against his friend or unkindly wronged a child knows what sin does to personal relationships. How swift a change comes over a son's thought of his father when the son has sinned! The wrong may have been done secretly so that his sire does not know, and the boy alone on earth is conscious of it. But for all that the filial relationship has lost its glory. Before the sin, the son was happy with his father near; they were companions, confidants, and to the boy fatherhood was very beautiful. Now, he is most unhappy with his father near; the father's eyes like a detective's pierce him through, the face like a judge's waits sternly to condemn. He is looking at his father through the dark glasses of his sin, and they distort his vision. When one considers the gods whom men have worshiped, approaching them by bloody altar-stairs, offering their first-born to assuage wrath or win from apathy to favor, he sees, extended to a racial scale, our boyhood's tragedy. Mankind has been looking at the Father through its ignorance and sin and it has seen him beclouded and awry. Christ changed all that. By what he taught, by what he was, by what he suffered he has said to man, so that man increasingly has believed it You are wrong about God. He does not stand aloof careless or vindictive; he is not as he looks to you through the twisted lenses of your evil. He loves you. He cares beyond your power to understand, and all my compassion but reveals in time what is eternally in him. He is pledged to the victory of goodness in you and in the world, and you have not used all your power until you have used his, for that, too, is yours. From that day the fight against sin has been a new thing, and men have gone into it with battle-cries they never used before "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto him self" (2 Corinthians 5:19); "God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8); "If God is for us, who is against us?" (Romans 8:31). This access

of power has come in part from Christ's revelation of man. When a jewel is taken from darkness into sun light, there is a two-fold revealing. The sunlight is disclosed in new glory, for it never seemed so beautiful before as it appears breaking in splendor through the jewel's heart. And there is a revelation of the jewel. Dull and unillumined in the dark, it is lustrous when the sun enlightens it. So Christ brought us an unveiling of the Father; the Divine never had seemed so wonderful as when it poured in glory through his purity and love. And he brought as well a new revelation of man. Our human nature, bedimmed by sin and lusterless, he in his own person took up into the light, and lifting it where all mankind could see he cried This is human nature man as God intended him to be no slave of fate and dupe of sin, but a free man and a victor. And from that day the war on sin has had new spirit in it, and battle cries that presage triumph have grown familiar on the fighters lips: "Now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be" (1 John 3:2); "Till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the statute of the fulness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13); "His precious and exceeding great promises; that through these ye may become partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4).

IV

Christ's double revelation of God and man, however, has "had its vital impact of power on life in what Christians have. always called the experience of the Spirit. When the New Testament speaks its characteristic word about the Spirit, it means the conscious presence of the living God in the hearts of men, and that is the very essence of religion. The first Christians did not know God in one way only; they knew him in three ways. So one man might know Beethoven the composer and be an authority upon his works; another might know Beethoven the performer and delight in his playing; and another might know Beethoven the man and rejoice in his friendship but no one could know the whole of Beethoven until he knew him all three ways. The New Testament Chris tians came thus to God. He was the Father, Creator of all; he was the Character, revealed in Jesus; but as well he was the Spiritual Presence in their lives, their sustenance and power. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit" (2 Corinthians 13:14) such was their experience of the Divine. It was not dogma; it was life. God was Creator, Character, and Comforter.

Christian experience is in continual danger of drifting from this vital center. In our age especially, we are prone to find God at the end of an argument and to leave him there. We have been compelled by militant agnosticism to put our apologetic armies on the defensive. Finding it impossible to hold the respect of men's intelligence without reasonable arguments in the faith's behalf, we have had to draw such inferences from the nature of the material universe, from the necessities of human "nought, the demands of human conscience, and the progress of moral evolution in history, that materialism should be made, what indeed it is, a discredited affair. But God so arrived at, by way of reason, is an external matter. He is an hypothesis to explain the universe. "He sitteth upon the circle of the earth and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers before him." Granted the incalculable value in such faith, putting unity into history and purpose into life it is not religion and it never can be. Religion begins when the God outwardly argued is inwardly experienced. Religion begins when we cease using the tricky and unstable aeroplane of speculation to seek Him among the clouds, and retreat into the fertile places of our own spirits where the living water rises, as Jesus said. God outside of us is a theory; God inside of us

becomes a fact. God outside of us is an hypothesis; God inside of us is an experience. God the Father is the possibility of salvation; God the Spirit is actuality of life, joy, peace, and saving power. God the transcendent may do for philosophy, but he is not enough for religion.

Without this completion of the Gospel, Christ's saviorhood does not reach inward to our need. For lacking it, we stand before the Master with the same admiration that a man who is no painter feels when he sees a Raphael. He knows the work is sublime, but he is not proposing to reproduce it. He is conquered by its beauty, but he knows no possibility of its imitation. If, however, there were a spirit of Raphael that could lay hold upon a man's life and transform him to the master's skill and power, then his admiration would become inwardly effective. It takes the spirit of Raphael to do Raphael's work. If this gospel of an indwelling dynamic is not coupled with our admiration for Jesus, we are like a student practicing the fingering of the Hallelujah Chorus on an organ from which the power has been shut off. With what accuracy his fingers travel the keys, who can tell? Once Handel's soul, on fire with the passion of harmony, burned itself into that composition. He wrote it upon his knees. But with whatever agility the student's fingers follow the notes, no Hallelujah Chorus comes from his organ to praise God and move men. So the record of this matchless character handed to us in the gospels, like notes of music meant to be played again, is but our despair, if we must attempt its reproduction on a powerless organ. Our admiration for it is external and ineffectual. We fall thereby into a static religion of creed; we have no dynamic religion of progress and hope. This then is the glorious message, where the Christian Gospel reaches its climax, and which alone puts fullest meaning into Jesus perfect life: the Spirit of God in Jesus made his quality; that same Spirit is underground in our lives, striving to well up in characters like his, until zve live, yet not we, but Christ lives in us.

Any spring day may serve to illustrate this faith. Where does the restlessness in nature have its source? Every tree, in discontent, hastens to make buds into leaves, and every blade of grass is tremulous with impatient life. No tree, however, is a sufficient explanation of its own haste and dissatisfaction; no flower has in itself the secrets of its eager growth. The spirit of life is abroad, and crowding itself everywhere on old, dead forms, is making them bloom again. Explain then, the moral restlessness of our hearts in other wise! We do ill, and are distraught with remorse until we repent and make reparation. We attain money or talents, and are chased day and night by the urgent call to their spir itual dedication. We conform ourselves to decency and still hear a call for goodness beyond all earthly need. We succeed as the world calls it, and we know that it is failure; we fail as the world sees it, and our hearts sing for joy be cause we know that we have succeeded. Everywhere we are confronted with a pulsing life that longs to get itself expressed in us. We cannot get away from God. He is not far, he is here. This Spirit, for whom there is no better name than the Spirit of Jesus, is our continual companion. We are locked in an enforced fellowship with him. There is no friend. with whom we deal more directly and -continually than with him. Every time we open an inspiring book and devoutly study it, this Spirit is pleading for entrance. Every time we pray he stands at the door and knocks. Every time some child in need, or some great cause demanding sacrifice, lays claim on us, this Spirit is crying to be let in. Men's hunger for food, their love for family and friends, are not more direct, concrete, immediate experiences than our dealings with this Spirit of the Lord. He is not only God the Father; he {284} is God the Spirit, striving to dwell in us and work through us.

Into a vital use of this relationship with the Divine, Christ opened the way and multitudes have followed. He has taught men to find that same resourcefulness in the spiritual world which science finds in the physical. Every successful invention of a man like Edison involves a twofold faith: that there is inexhaustible power in the universe and that, with persistent patience and cooperation, there is no telling what marvels yet may come from the employment of it. Faith is science's flying column. It runs out into engineering, agri culture, medicine, and refuses to limit the possibilities. Science is a tremendous believer; it lives by faith that al most anything may yet be done. Such a relationship Paul sustained with the Spirit. He was confident of resources there, "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Ephesians 3:20). He was a spiritual Edison, a believer in the divine reality and power and their availability by faith in human life.

Only such a Gospel is adequate to man's deepest need. Sin, whether its forms be decent or obscene, cripples men's wills with the appalling certainty that they are slaves. As a hypnotist draws imaginary circles around his victims, across which they cannot step, so Sin, that Svengali of the soul, whether in personal or social life, paralyzes its dupes with disbelief in possibilities. To innumerable folk, emprisoned by their fears and sins, Christ has been the Savior. He has awakened that faith which, as he said, is the greatest mountain-mover known to men. They have been "strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man" When one considers, as we have in these two chapters, what Christ has meant in the experience of his people, little wonder can remain that they have called him by such high names as have aroused man's incredulity. For this Gospel of power has never been separable from him. as though he were its historic fountain and could easily be forgotten by those who far down-stream enjoyed the water. His personality itself has been the inspiration of his people. At Marston Moor, when the Puritans and Cavaliers were aligned for battle and all was in readiness for conflict to begin, Oliver I 285. Cromwell came riding across the plain. And the chronicler says that at the sight of him the Puritans sent up a great victorious shout, as though their battle already had been won. Some such effect our Lord has had on his disciples. To explain that effect one would have to speak not so much of his teaching as of himself his character and purpose; nor so much of them as of the Cross where all he taught and was came to a point of flame that has set the world on fire. Christ was the "nerve o'er which do creep The else unfelt oppressions of the earth."

He suffered with man and for man, he uniquely embodied in his own experience the universal law that the consequences of sin fall in part on the one who loves the sinner and tries to save him; and in that sacrifice his work for man was consum mated, and his influence over man confirmed. When his people have bowed before him in unutterable devotion they have been thinking not only of what he has done for them, but of what it cost him to do it.

Why, therefore, should we wonder that his disciples at their best have called Jesus divine? His first followers began with no abstract ideas of deity; they began with "the man, Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5). They had no idea at the first that he was more. His bodily and mental life had obeyed the laws of normal human development, advancing "in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men" (Luke 2:52). He hungered after his temptation, thirsted on the Cross, slept from weariness while the boat tossed in a storm, and exhausted, sat beside the well. Like other men he had elevated hours of great rejoicing; times when compassion moved him to tears, as when he saw a multitude unshepherded or, swinging round the brow of Olivet, beheld Jerusalem;?nd hours of hot indignation, too, as when he found his Father's house a den of thieves or spoke out his heart

against the Pharisees. He asked questions, and was astonished, now at the people’s lack of faith, again at the centurion’s excess of it. His fel lowship with God was nourished by secret prayer, his power replenished by retreat to quiet places for communion, and all his life was lived, his temptations faced, his troubles borne, and his work done in a spirit of humble, filial depen dence on his Father. Thus real and human, a sharer in their limitations, their sorrows, and their moral trials, the first disciples saw the Master. But ever as they lived with him, whether in physical presence or in spiritual fellowship, he wrought in them a Savior’s work. He became to them manhood indeed, but manhood plus. He grew in their apprehension, as though a boy had thought an ocean’s inlet were a lake enclosed, and now discovers that it is the sea itself, and all its tides the pulse of the great deep. How should they name this greatness in their Lord? They were not utterly without a clue, for he himself had introduced them to the life divine. They had learned through him to say about themselves that they were temples in which God dwelt (2 Corinthians 6:16), that God abode in them (1 John 4:12), that he stood ever waiting to come in (Revelation 3:20), and that the possession of the divine nature was the Gospel’s promise (2 Peter 1:4). By what other element in their experience could they interpret the greatness of their Lord? It might be inadequate, but it was the best they had. They rose to understand the divine life in him from the expe rience of the divine life in themselves. "God was in Christ," they said. They never dreamed of claiming equality with him. Like pools beside the sea, they understood the ocean’s quality from their own. There are not two kinds of sea-water; nor, with one God, can there be two kinds of divine life. But so understanding the sea, shall the pool claim equality with it? Rather, the sea has deeps, tides, currents, and relationships with the world’s life that no pool can ever know. So Christ was at once their brother and their Lord. He was real, be cause they interpreted his life divine from the foregleams of God’s presence in themselves. He was adorable, because he was an ocean to their landlocked pools, and they waited for his tides.

Only by some such road as these first disciples trod can men come to a vital understanding of the Lord. Nothing but experience can give us a living estimate of anything; without that theory is vain. Let a man live with the Master’s man hood until it grows luminous and through it he sees the char acter of God; let a man avail himself of the Master’s saviorhood until forgiven and empowered he finds the "life that is life indeed"; let a man grow in the experience of God’s presence until he knows not only the God without but the God within; and then if he rises to estimate his Lord, he will not hesitate to see in Jesus the incarnate presence of the living God. After that, theology may help or hinder him, according as it is wise and vital or cold and formal; but with theology or not, he knows the heart of the New Testament’s attitude toward Jesus. He understands why the first Christians summed up their faith as "believing in the Lord Jesus Christ."

04.12. The Fellowship of Faith

CHAPTER XII. The Fellowship of Faith

DAILY READINGS Our thought turns, in our closing week of study, from be lievers taken one by one, to believers gathered in fellowship. This community of faith has wider boundaries than the organized churches; in a real sense it includes all servants of man’s ideal aims; yet in the Church we naturally seek the chief meanings of fellowship for faith. Why men do not go to church, is often asked. But why men do go, so that in spite of countless failures in the churches, attendance on public worship and loyalty to organized religion are among mankind’s most usual habits, is an inquiry far more important. To that inquiry let us in the daily readings turn our thought.

Twelfth Week, First Day But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye shut the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye enter not in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering in to enter.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is become so, ye make him twofold more a son of hell than yourselves. . . .

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye tithe mint and anise and cummin, and have left un done the weightier matters of the law, justice, and mercy, and faith: but these ye ought to have done, and not to have left the other undone. Ye blind guides, that strain out the gnat, and swallow the camel! Matthew 23:13-15; Matthew 23:23-24.

Jesus indictment of the Jewish Church is terrific, and yet no one who knows the story of the Christian churches can doubt that they often have deserved the same condemnation. They have at times committed all the sins that can be laid at any institution’s door; they have been selfish, formal, worldly, cruel. A wonder-story from the Arctic says that once the candle-flames froze and the explorers broke them off and wore them for watch charms; the flames of the great fire congealed and were wound like golden ornaments around men’s necks. So repeatedly the burning words of Scripture, the blazing affirmations of old creeds, on fire at first with the passion of souls possessed by God, have been frozen in the churches Arctic climate, and handed to men like talismans and amulets, with no saving warmth or light. Creeds, rituals, organizations how often these frozen forms of life have taken the place of inward spiritual power! Dr. Washington Gladden would not be alone in saying: "While therefore I had as large an experience of church-going in my boyhood as most boys can recall, I cannot lay my hand on my heart and say that the church-going helped me to solve my reli gious problems. In fact, it made those problems more and more tangled and troublesome." And yet the Church goes on. Voltaire prophesied its collapse in fifty years, and in fifty years the house where he made the prophecy was a depot for the circulation of the Scriptures. The Church’s persis tence, continual adaptation to new conditions, and apparently endless power of revival must have some deep reason. It may be because prayer like this which follows has never utterly died out in the sanctuary.

O Thou that dwellest not in temples made with hands! We ever stand within the courts of Thy glorious presence, only we open now the gates of our poor praise. Thou hast enriched this day of rest, O Lord, with Thy choicest gifts of peace; and lo! Thou unforgetting God, its record is be fore-Thee, for ages past, moistened with penitential tears, and illumined with glad hopes, and hallowed by the innumer able prayers of faithful and saintly men. In this our day may the churches of Thy Holy One seek Thee still in spirit and truth; may we also enter in and find our rest, being of one heart and mind, and serving Thee with a wakeful and humble joy. Teach us now how we may converse with Thee, for we cannot order our speech by reason of darkness. We are naked and without disguise before Thee; oh! hide .not Thy self from us behind our ignorance and sin. May we at least in this Thine hour shake off the sluggish clouds of sense and self that cling around our souls; and strenuously open our whole nature to the breath of Thy free spirit, and the health ful sunshine of Thy grace. Let the divine image of the Son of God visit us with power; driving out, with the chastise ment of penitence, all obtruding passwns that profane the temple of our hearts, and turn into a place of traffic that native house of prayer. O God of glory, God of grace! let not the things which are spiritually discerned be foolishness unto us through the blindness of our conscience: Thou know- cst the thoughts of our wisdom that they are vain; take them from us, and bid them vanish away, lost in that wisdom from above which is revealed only to the pure *-n heart. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thee be every thought of Praise! Amen. James Martineau.

Twelfth Week, Second Day

Some men doubtless go to church from traditional habit only, but such a m tive obviously is not adequate to explain why the recurrent tides of humanity, even after an ebb in interest, sweep back to the Church again. In the eighteenth century, for example, Butler reports the common opinion that all that remained for Christianity was decent obsequies. But in a few years the We c leys began a movement that * changed the spiritual complexion of the English-speaking world, and swept multitudes into Christian fellowship. One reason for this repeated fact is clear. Mankind cannot and will not consent to live without faith in God, and faith in God in its genesis and its sustenance is largely a matter of contagion. We are not so much taught it; we catch it. It is vitally imparted in the family circle, and wherever kindred and believing spirits gather. No man is so independent as to escape the vital fact that his noblest emotions, attitudes, ideals, and faiths are socially engendered and socially sus tained; he never would have had them in a solitary life and a solitary life would soon spoil those which he has now. A man may believe in his country and love her; but let him join in a patriotic movement or even attend a high-spirited patriotic meeting, and he will believe in her and love her more ardently. Man’s religious life is not lawless; it is regulated t> y the same necessities of fellowship. The Church has made many mistakes, but on her altar the fire has never utterly gone out, and in her fellowship the faith of multitudes has been kindled.

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope that it waver not; for he is faithful that promised: and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works; not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day drawing nigh. Hebrews 10:23-25.

Great is Thy name, O God, and greatly to be praised. In Thee all our discordant notes rise into perfect harmony. It is good for us to think of the wonder of Thy being. Thou art silent, yet mosi

strong; unchangeable, yet ever changing; ever working, yet ever at rest, supporting, nourishing, matur ing all things. O Thou Eternal Spirit, who hast set our noisy years in the heart of Thy eternity, lift us above the power and evils of the passing time, that under the shadozv of Thy wings we may take courage and be glad. So great art Thou, beyond our utmost imagining, that we could not speak to Thee didst Thou not first draw near to us and say, "Seek ye my face." Unto Thee our hearts would make reply, "Thy face, Lord, will we seek." . . . We thank Thee for our birth into a Christian community, for the Church and the Sacra ments of Thy grace, for the healing day of rest, when we enter with Thy people into Thy House and there make holy- day; for the refreshment of soul, the joys of communion, the spiritual discipline, the inspiration of prayer and hymn and sermon. . . . We praise Thee for the myriad influences of good, conscious and unconscious, that have been about us, deeply penetrating our inner life, shaping and fitting us for Thy Kingdom. Thou hast indeed forgiven all our iniquities, and healed all our diseases, and redeemed our life from destruction, and crowned us with loving-kindness. There fore would we call upon our souls, and all that is within us, to bless Thy holy Name. Amen. Samuel McComb.

Twelfth Week, Third Day For ye, brethren, were called for freedom; only use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants one to another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one an other, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. Galatians 5:13-15.

One fundamental reason for the endless revival of the Church is that faith never is satisfied until it issues in work. It insists on our being "servants one to another." We have spoken of God’s merciful acceptance of a man when out of sin he turns his life by faith toward Christ; but to interpret this as meaning the adequacy of faith without effec tive service is to misread Scripture and to demoralize life. Faith that does not lead to service is no real faith at all. But whenever men endeavor to express in work any faith which they may hold they must come together. Service in volves cooperation. A hermit may have faith, but his faith does not concern any ideal hopes on earth; it has no outlooks save upon his own soul’s condition in the world to come; it is a narrow, selfish, inoperative thing. As soon as men are grasped by some moving faith about what ought to be done for God’s service and man’s welfare here and now, a hermit’s solitude or any sort of unaffiliated life becomes im possible. They must combine in a fellowship of faith and of labor to seek common ends. They begin to say with Edward Rowland Sill, "For my part I long to fall in* with somebody. This picket duty is monotonous. I hanker after a shoulder on this side and the other." And to fall in with others to serve Christian ends means some kind of church. Let us pray today for a church more fit to express this pas sion to serve.

God, we pray for Thy Church, which is set today amid the perplexities of a changing order, and face to face with a great new task. We remember with love the nurture she gave to our spiritual life in its infancy, the tasks she set for our growing strength, the influence of the devoted hearts she gathers, the steadfast power for good she has exerted. When we compare her with all other human institutions, we rejoice, for there is none like her. But when we judge her by the mind of her Master, we bow in pity and contrition. Oh, baptize her afresh in the life-giving spirit of Jesus! Grant her a new birth, though it be with the travail of repentance and humiliation. Bestow upon her a more imperious respon siveness to duty t a swifter compassion with suffering, and an utter loyalty to the will of God. Put upon her lips the ancient Gospel of her Lord. Help her to proclaim boldly the coming of the Kingdom of God and the doom of all that resist it. Fill her with the prophet’s scorn of

tyranny, and with a Christ-like tenderness for the heavy-laden and down trodden. Give her faith to espouse the cause of the people, and in their hands that grope after freedom and light to recognise the bleeding hands of the Christ. Bid licr cease from seeking her own life, lest she lose it. Make her valiant to give up her life to humanity, that like her crucified Lord she may mount by the path of the cross to a higher glory. Amen. Walter Rauschenbusch.

Twelfth Week, Fourth Day For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be put to shame. For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek: for the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon him: for, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not be lieved? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? even as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things! Romans 10:11-15. The necessity of affiliation for effective faith is clear when one considers the missionary enterprise. One of the noblest qualities in human life is our natural desire to share our blessings. Every normal child is happier when some other child is joining in the play; every lover of music is gladdened by sharing with a friend enjoyment of a favorite symphony; save in singularly churlish folk the love of having others partake our joys is spontaneous and hearty. To those whom Christian faith has blessed with hope and power, the un deniable impulse comes to share these finest benedictions with all other men. The missionary enterprise does not rest upon a text; it wells up from one of the worthiest impulses in man's life. One may be fairly sure, that save as some perverted theology inhibits a spirit of love, a man's missionary interest will be proportionate to the reality and value of his own experience. If he himself has something well worth sharing, he will want to share it. But the missionary enterprise is more than any individual can compass; it demands organi zation, cooperation, and massed resources; it cannot be prose cuted without a church. The further our thought proceeds the more clear it becomes that the question is not, shall we have churches? but rather, since churches are inevitable, of what sort shall they be?

O Thou who hast made all nations of men to seek Thee and to find Thee; bless, we beseech Thee, Thy sons and daughters who have -gone forth, into distant lands, bearing in their hands Thy Word of Life. We rejoice that, touched with the enthusiasm of Christ, so many have consecrated their lives to proclaiming the message of Thy love to those other sheep of Thine who are not of our fold, that they may be united with us and that there may be one nock and one Shepherd. Help Thy ministering servants to recognise the fragments of truth and goodness that are ever found where men are sincere and to claim the^e glimpses of Thyself as the prophecies of a fuller revelation. When discouraged by the hardness of their task, and the meager fruit of all their labor, give them faith to see the far-off whitening harvest. Inspire them with Thy gracious promise that though the sower may go forth weeping, bearing precious seed, he will come again with joy, bringing his sheaves with him. Comfort them in their exile and loneliness with a sense of Thy companion ship and with the prayers and sympathy of their brethren at home. Through them let Thy Word have free course and be glorified. And so let Thy Kingdom come, and Thy Will be done on earth as in Heaven, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen. Samuel McComb.

Twelfth Week, Fifth Day

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your tres passes. Matthew 6:9-15. The central ideal of Christian effort is set for us in the first petition of the Master's prayer. But a Kingdom on earth, with God's will done here in heavenly fashion, is a social idea. It means not only right personal quality; it means right family life, and economic, political, and inter national relationships Christianized. No amount of fine in dividual character, necessary as it is, will of itself rectify the social maladjustments and inequities. Were everyone as good as possible, we still should need organized action. All parts of an engine may be correct, and yet they may be wrongly fitted together. As it is, social relations obviously demand concerted action; we must join together to combat immoral industrial conditions, to throttle the liquor traffic, to make human fraternity a fact and not a dream. The opposition to all such reforms is organized, and no haphazard attack will succeed. Now, many organizations may arise to serve special ends and may do excellent service to the cause, but what has proved true in the conflict with the liquor traffic, is true also of enterprises for industrial justice and inter national cooperation only when the churches see the moral issue and put their power in, is there any hope of victory. A Christian whose faith involves the Kingdom sees plainly that he cannot go on without the Church.

O Lord, we praise Thy holy name, for Thou hast made bare Thine arm in the sight of all nations and done wonders. But still we cry to Thee in the weary struggle of our people against the power of drink. Remember, Lord, the strong men who were led astray and blighted in the flower of their youth. Remember the aged who have brought their gray hairs to a dishonored grave. Remember the homes that have been made desolate of joy, the wifely love that has been outraged in its sanctuary, the little children who have learned to despise where once they loved. Remember, O Thou great avenger of sin, and make this nation to remember. May those who now entrap the feet of the weak and make their living by the degradation of men, thrust away their shameful gains and stand clear. But if their conscience is silenced by profit, do Thou grant Thy people the indomitable strength of faith to make an end of it. May all the great churches of our land shake off those who seek the shelter of religion for that which damns, and stand with level front against their common foe. May all who still soothe their souls with half-truths, saying "Peace, peace" where there can be no peace, learn to see through Thy stern eyes and come to the help of Jehovah against the mighty. Help us to cast down the men in high places who use the people's powers to beat back the people's hands from the wrong they fain would crush.

O God, bring nigh the day when all our men shall face their daily task with minds undrugged and with tempered passions; when the unseemly mirth of drink shall seem a shame to all who hear and see; when the trade that debauches men shall be loathed like the trade that debauches women; and when all this black remnant of savagery shall haunt the memory of a new generation but as an evil dream of the night. For this accept our vows, O Lord, and grant Thine aid. Amen. Walter Rauschenbusch.

Twelfth Week, Sixth Day

Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me. And the glory which thou hast given me I have given unto them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me. John 17:20-23. To the Christian the Church is a problem, just because she is a necessity. He caught his faith from the contagion of her fellowship and he sees that if he is to serve effectively the ideals of Christ and the coming of the Kingdom he must work through some church. But because the Church is neces sary, he is not thereby made content with her. She is at once helping and hindering the spread of the faith; she is the source of immeasurable good and yet she is not "one, that the world may believe." A traveler across the American plains in springtime sees fences, tiresomely prominent, star ing at him from the landscape; but in summer when he re turns the fences are invisible. The wheat and corn are grow ing, the earth is bearing fruit, and while the old divisions may be there, they all are hidden. One suspects that if Christians everywhere set themselves with hearty zeal to bear the fruit of service for the common weal, if they gave themselves to achieve the aims of Christ for men with ardor and thoroughness, the sectarian divisions would grow un- imperative and disappear. We may not be able to think the disagreements through, but we may be able to work them out; even where we cannot recite a common creed, we can share a common purpose. The War, where Jewish rabbis have held crucifixes before the eyes of dying soldiers, and where Catholic priests have met death, as one did at Gallipoli, following a Wesleyan chaplain "my Protestant com rade" into danger, has revealed how deeply underneath our sharp divisions our spiritual loyalties seek unity when crisis comes. For all the unity that can come without compromise to conscience, surely the Christian people are bound to pray and work.

O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Saviour, the Prince of Peace; give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions. Take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatso ever else may hinder us from godly union and concord; that as there is but one body and one Spirit, and one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may be all of one heart and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. "The Book of Com mon Prayer."

Twelfth Week, Seventh Day For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing. 2 Timothy 4:6-8. The fellowship of faith is not bounded by the earth. Paul’s expectation took into its account a communion that far overreached the confines of temporal experience. The New Testa ment believers not only held but vividly apprehended that the "whole family" to which they belonged in Christian com munion was "in heaven and on earth." Their outlook Words worth has expressed in modern words:

"There is

One great society alone on earth:

The noble Living and the noble Dead." To that society of the world's prophets and martyrs, seers and servants, it may well be a man's ambition to belong. And that ideal is not impossible to anyone, for the mark and seal of their fellowship is that they have "kept the faith." When others despaired, lost heart, and deserted causes on which man's welfare hung, they kept the faith. When mysteries perplexed their minds and discouragement, to human vision, was more rational than hope, they turned from sight to insight and they kept the faith. When new knowledge, half-understood, disturbed old forms of thought and multitudes were confused in uncertainty and disbelief, they kept the faith. And they often came to their end, like Paul, having "suffered the loss of all things" yet not all, for they had kept the faith.

"For all the saints, who from their labors rest, Who Thee by faith before the world confessed, Thy name, O Jesus, be forever blest, Alleluia!

O may Thy soldiers, faithful, true, and bold, Fight as the saints who nobly fought of old, And win with them the victor's crown of gold, Alleluia!

O blest communion, fellowship Divine! We feebly struggle; they in glory shine; Yet all are one in Thee, for all are Thine. Alleluia!"

O God, Thfu only Refuge of Thy children! who rcmainest true though all else should fail, and livest though all things die; cover us now when we fly to Thee. Thy shelter was around our fathers. Thy voice called them away, and bids us seek Thee here till we depart to be with them. In Thy memory are the lives of all men from of old. Before Thy sight are the secret hearts of all the living. We stand in awe of Thy justice which, since the ages began, hath never changed: and we cling to Thy mercy that passeth not away.

Almighty Father, Thou art a God afar off as well as nigh at hand. Thou who in times past didst pity the prayers of our forerunners, and especially of that suffering servant of Thine whom Thou hast made our Leader unto Thee! be pleased to strengthen us now, O Lord, to bear our lighter cross and surrender ourselves for duty and for trial unto Thee. Show us something of the blessed peace with which they now look back on their days of strong crying and tears, and teach us that it is far better to die in Thy service than to live for our own. Rebuke within us all immoderate desires, all unquiet temper, all presumptuous expectations, all ignoble self-indulgence, and feeling on us the .embrace of Thy Fatherly hand, may we meekly and with courage go into the darkest ways of our pilgrimage, anxious not to change Thy perfect will, but only to do and bear it worthily. May we spend all our days in Thy presence, and meet our death in the strength of Thy grace, and pass thence into the nearer light of Thy knowledge and love. Amen. John Hunter.

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK So far in our studies we have been dealing with the indi vidual believer in his search for a reasonable faith. But we must face at last what from the beginning has been true, that there is no such thing as an individual believer. All faiths are social. However little we may be aware of each other's influence, however intangible the social forces which shape the convictions by which we live, no man builds or keeps his faiths alone. We may pride ourselves on our independent thought, but the fact remains as. Prof. William James has stated it: "Our faith is faith in some one else's faith, and in the greatest matters this is most the case." The realm of religious conviction is not the only place where we hold with a strong sense of personal possession what has been given us by others, and often forget to ac knowledge our indebtedness.

We believe in democracy and popular education, not because by some gift of individual genius we are wiser than our unbelieving sires, but because, in the advance of the race, that faith has been wrought out by many minds, and, with minute addition of our own thought, we share the general conviction. As a man considers how rich and varied are the faiths he holds, how few of them he ever has thought through or ever can, and how helpless he would be, if he were set from the beginning to create any one of them, he gains new insight into Paul's words, "What hast thou that thou didst not receive? but if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" (1 Corinthians 4:7).

Indeed, this same truth holds in every relationship. Nothing is more impossible than a "self-made man." In no realm can that common phrase be intelligently applied to anyone. If in business one has risen from poverty to wealth, he has used railroads that he did not invent and telephones that he does not even understand; he has built his business on a credit system for which he did not labor and whose moral basis has been laid in the ethical struggles of unnumbered genera tions. For the clothes he wears, the fdod he eats, the educa tion he receives, he is debtor to a social life that taps the ends of the earth and that has cost blood not his and money which he never can repay. If granting this, a man still say, "My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth" (Deuteronomy 8:17), he may well consider whence his power has come. His distant ancestors stalked through primeval for ests, fcheir brows sloped back, their hairy hides barren of clothes, and in their hands stone hatchets, by the aid of which they sought their food. What has this Twentieth Century boaster done to change the habits of the Stone Age to the civilization on which his wealth is based or to elevate man's intellect to the grasp and foresight of the modern business world? All the power by which he wins his way is clearly a social gift, and any contribution which he may add is infini tesimal compared with his receipts. By this truth all declarations of individual independence need to be chastened and controlled and all boasting cancelled utterly. Normal minds have their times of self-assertion in religion, when they grow impatient of believing anything simply because they have been told. As a college Junior put it: "I must clear the universe of God, and then start in at the beginning to see what I can rind." But to assert a reasonable independence ought not to mean that one cut himself off from the support of history, the accumulated experience of the race, the insight of the seers, and in unassisted isolation walk, like Kipling's cat, "by his wild lone." No man can do that anywhere and still succeed. Imagine a man, in politics, dubious of his old affiliations and disturbed by the conflicting opinions of his day. If, so perplexed, he should throw over all that ever had been thought or done in civic life, and in an unaided individual adventure attempt out of his own mind to constitute a state, in what utter confusion would he land! No mind can begin work as though it were the first mind that ever acted, or were the only mind in action now. All effective thinking is social; contributions from innumerable heads pour in to make a wise man's knowledge. And to suppose that any man can climb the steep ascent of heaven all alone and lay his hands comprehensively on the Eternal is preposterous. No one ever apprehended a science so, much less God! Even Jesus fed his soul on the prophets of his race.

II

Indeed, Jesus attitude toward the fellowship of faith is most revealing, seen against the background of his nation's history. In the beginning, there was in Israel no such thing as individual religion. In the earliest strata of the Bible's revela tion, we find no indication of a faith that brought

God and each of his people into intimate relationships. Jehovah was the God of the nation as a whole and not of the people one by one. When he spoke, he spoke to the community through a leader; "Speak thou with us and we will hear," the people cried to Moses, "but let not God speak with us lest we die" (Exodus 20:19). It was at the time of the Exile, when the nation fell in ruins, and the hearts of faithful Jews were thrown back one by one on God that individual trust, peace, joy, and confidence found utterance. It was Jeremiah (Jeremiah 31:1-40) and Ezekiel (Ezekiel 18:1-32) who saw men individually re sponsible to God, and who opened the way for loyal Jews to be his people even when the nation was no more. And what they began Jesus completed. He lifted up the individual and made each man the object of the Father's care. "It is not the will of your Father . . . that one of these little ones should perish" (Matthew 18:14). "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, and having lost one of them . . ." (Luke 15:4)- The very hairs of your head are all numbered" (Matthew 10:30). As for religion's inner meaning, it became in Jesus Gospel not a national ritual but a private faith: "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and hav ing shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret" (Matthew 6:6).

While Jesus, however, so emphasized the inward, individual aspects of religion, he did not leave it there, as though per sons could ever be like jugs in the rain, separate receptacles that share neither their emptiness nor their abundance. He bound his disciples into a fellowship. He joined their channels until, like interflowing streams, one contributed to all and the spirit of all was expressed in each. He braided them into, friendship with himself and -with each other, so close that the community did what no isolated believer ever could have done it survived the shock of the crucifixion, the agony of sustained persecution, the frailties of its members, and the discouragements of its campaign. On that group the Master counted for his work: "The gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). And when the New Testa ment Church emerged, the fellowship which Christ himself had breathed into it was clear and strong. Men who became Christians, in the New Testament, came into a new relation ship with God indeed, but into a new human fraternity as well. They were "builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:22), and even when death came that fellowship was not destroyed. They were still "the whole family in heaven and on earth" (Ephesians 3:15). John Wesley was right: "The Bible knows nothing of a solitary religion." In the Old Testament religion was predominantly national; in the New Testament, individuals rejoicing in the "Beloved Community" could not describe their life without the reitera- ton of "one another." They were to "pray one for another" and "confess sins one to another" (James 5:16); they were to "love one another" (1 Peter 1:22), "exhort one another" (Hebrews 3:13), "comfort one another" (1 Thessalonians 4:18); they were to "bear one another's burdens" (Galatians 6:2) and in communal worship "admonish one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs " (Colossians 3:16). So when they thought of their faith, they never held it in solitary confidence; they were "strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowl edge" (Ephesians 3:18).

III When a modern believer endeavors to interpret this spirit in the New Testament in terms of his own wants, he sees at once that he needs fellowship for the enriching of his faith. Cooperation for achievement is a modern commonplace, but when Paul prayed, as we have quoted him, that the Ephesians might be "strong to apprehend with all the saints," he was stating the more uncommon proposition that men must co operate for knowledge. He saw the divine love in its length, breadth,

depth, and height on one side, and on the other a .solitary man endeavoring to understand it. Impossible! said Paul; the divine love in its fulness cannot be known in soli tude, it must be apprehended in fellowship. At first nothing seems more strictly individual than knowl edge. To know is an intimate, personal affair; it cannot be carried on by proxy. But even casual thought at once makes clear that in solitude we cannot know even the physical uni verse. No man can go apart and through the narrow aperture of his own mind see the full round of truth. For astronomers study the stars, geologists the rocks, chemists know their spe cial field and physicists know theirs; each scientist under stands in part, and if one is to know the breadth and length and height and depth of the physical world he must be strong to apprehend with all the scientists. In religion this necessity of cooperation in knowing God may not at first seem evident. In the secret session behind closed doors, as Jesus said, one finds his clearest thought of God, and in the individual heart the divine illumination comes. So some insist; and the answer does not deny, but surpasses the truth in the insistence. Is yours the only heart where God is to be found? Does the sea of his grace exhaust itself in what it can reveal in your bay? Rather, in how many different ways men come to God, how various their experiences of him, and how much each needs the rest for breadth and catholicity of view!

One man conies to God by way of intellectual perplexity and he knows chiefly faith’s illumination of life’s puzzling problems; another comes through the experience of sin and he responds to such a phrase as "God our Saviour" (1 Timothy 1:1); another comes to God through trouble and has found in faith "eternal comfort and good hope through grace" (2 Thessalonians 2:16); and another by way of a happy life has found in God the object of devoted gratitude. One, a mystic, finds God in solitary prayer; another, a worker, knows him chiefly as the Divine Ally. Some are very young and have a child’s religion; some are at the summit of their years and have a strong man’s achieving faith; and some are old and are familiar with the face of death and the thought of the eternal. How multiform is man’s experience of God! Some composi tions cannot be interpreted by a solo. Let the first violinist play with what skill he can, he alone is not adequate to the endeavor. There must be an orchestra; the oboes and viols, the drums and trumpets, the violins and cellos must all be there. So faith in God is too rich and manifold to be in terpreted by individuals alone; a fellowship is necessary. Even Paul, in one of his most gloriously mixed-up and yet revealing sentences, prays for fellowship that his faith may be enriched: "I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; that is, that I with you may be comforted in vou, each of us by the other’s faith, both yours and mine" (Romans 1:11-12).

Poverty of faith, therefore, is not due only to individual lapses of character and perplexities of mind; it is due to neglect of Christian fellowship. One who with difficulty has clung to his slender experience of God, goes up to the church on Sunday. Even though it be a humble place of prayer, if the worship is genuine, the hymns, the prayers, the Scriptures gather up the testimony of centuries to the reality of God. Here David speaks again and Isaiah answers; here Paul reaffirms his faith and John is confident that God is love. Here the saints before Christ cry, "Jehovah is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer" (Psalms 18:2), and the sixteenth century answers, "A mighty fortress is our God"; and the nineteenth century replies, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord!" We go up to the church finding it hard to sing, "My Jesus, I love thee, I know thou art mine"; we go down with a tune in our hearts:

"The glorious company of the apostles praise thee; The goodly fellowship of the prophets praise thee; The noble army of martyrs praise thee; The holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge thee." In the rich and varied faiths of the Church we find a far more fruitful relationship with God than by ourselves we ever could have gained. Without such an enriching experience men can only with difficulty keep faith alive. Twigs that snap out of the camp-fire lose their flame and fall, charred sticks; but put them back and they will burn again, for fire springs from fellowship. Amiel, after an evening of solitude with a favorite book on philosophy, wrote what is many a Christian's prayer: "Still I miss something common worship, a positive religion, shared with other people. Ah! when will the church to which I belong in heart rise into being? I cannot, like Scherer, content myself with being in the right all alone. I must have a less solitary Christianity."

IV

Men need fellowship, not only for the enrichment ot their faith, but for its stability. No man can successfully believe anything all alone. Let an opinion in any realm be denied, despised, neglected by common consent of men, and not easily do we hold an unshaken conviction of its truth. But let it be agreed with, supported and endorsed by many, especially by men of insight, and with each additional testimony to its truth our faith grows confident. A fundamental experience of man is that his faiths are socially confirmed.

Authority of some sort, therefore, never is outgrown in any province of knowledge, and strugglers after faith have solid right to the sustenance which it can give. For one thing the authority of the expert is acknowledged everywhere. When a great astronomer speaks about the stars, most of us ptrt our hands upon our mouths and humble ourselves to listen. If in science, expert knowledge has this authority not artificial, infallible, and externally enforced, but vital, serviceable, and real how much more in realms where insight and spiritual quality are indispensable! Such authority cqmes in the spirit of Paul: "Not that we have lordship over your faith, but are helpers of your joy" (2 Corinthians 1:24). An amateur stands before a picture like Turner's "The Building of Carthage" and either does not notice the details, or noticing sees no special meaning there. But when Ruskin, Turner's seer, begins to speak how wonderful the children in the foreground sailing toy boats in a pool, prophecy of Carthage's future greatness on the sea! one by one the details take fire and glow with meaning as our eyes are opened. Such is the service of a real authority. It does not, as Weigel says, put out a person's eye and then try to persuade him to see with some one else s. It rather cures our blindness and enables us to see what by ourselves we were incapable of seeing. Christ supremely, when allowed to be himself, has helped men thus. He has not oppressed the mind with bur densome authority, denying us our right to think. He has come appealing to our little insight with his own clear vision, "Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" (Luke 12:57). Things which we see dimly he has clarified; things which we did not see at all, he has made manifest. He has been what he called himself, the Light, and his people have said of him what the man in John's ninth chapter said, "He opened mine eyes" (John 9:30). A struggler after faith may well count among his assets the insight of the seers and of the Seer. As another states it: "Our weak faith may at times be permitted to look through the eyes of some strong soul, and may thereby gain a sense of the certainty of spirit ual things which before we had not."

Beside the authority of the seers, there is the authority of racial experience, to which indeed no mind ought slavishly to subject itself, but from which all minds ought to gain insight and confidence. Tradition has done us much disservice. Op pressions that might long before have been outgrown have been counted holy because they were hoary. There must be something to commend an opinion or a custom beside its age, and all progress depends upon recognizing that "Time makes ancient good uncouth." But if out of the past have come evils to be overthrown, out of the past also have come the best possessions of the race. "Traditional" has grown to be an adjective of ill repute; it signifies in common parlance the inheritance of oppressive ideals and institutions that hold the "dead hand" over hopes of progress. But our best music also, our poetry, and our art are traditional; the discoveries of our scientists on the long road from alchemy to chemistry, from magic to physics are traditional; all that each new generation begins with, fitted out like the well-favored child of a provident father, is traditional. No one can describe the utter barrenness of life, if we could not build on the accumulations of our sires, using the result of their toil as the basis of our work, their hardly won wisdom as our guide. To discount anything because it is traditional is to discount everything, except that com paratively minute addition which each new generation makes to the slowly accumulating wisdom and wealth of the race. As Mr. Chesterton has put it: "Tradition may be defined as the extension of the franchise. Tradition means giving votes to the most obscure of all classes, our ancestors. It is the democracy of the dead. Tradition refuses to submit to the small and arrogant oligarchy of those who merely happen to be walking about. All democrats object to men being dis qualified by the accident of birth; tradition objects to their being disqualified by the accident of death. Democracy tells us not to neglect a good man’s opinion, even if he is our groom; tradition asks us not to neglect a good man’s opinion, even if he is our father."

Now racial experience is dubious at many points and at very few does it approach finality. But on one matter it speaks with a unanimity that is nothing short of absolute. Man can not live without religion like the earth beneath the mountain peaks this universal experience of the race underlies the spe cial insights of the seers. When during the mid-Victorian dis comfiture of faith at the first disclosures of the new science, Tennyson’s "In Memoriam" appeared, Prof. Sidgwick wrote of it, "What In Memoriam did for us, for me at least in this struggle, was to impress on us the ineffable and irradi- cable conviction that humanity will not and cannot acquiesce in a godless world." That conviction is confirmed by the whole experience of the race. To be sure religion, like love, exists in all degrees. From degraded lust to the relationship of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett, love is infinite in variety; it takes its quality from the character of those whom it affects; yet through all its changes it is itself so built into the structure of mankind, that though there be loveless indi viduals, life as a whole is unimaginable without it. So reli gion runs the gamut of human quality. In a Hindu idolater it performs disgusting rites to placate an angry god, and in Rabindranath Tagore it cries: "If thou speakest not I will fill my heart with thy silence and endure it. I will keep still and wait like the night with starry vigil and its head bent low with patience. The morning will surely come, the dark ness will vanish, and thy voice pour down in golden streams, breaking through the sky." In Torquemada it is cruel; in Father Damien it becomes a passion for saviorhood. Reli gion helped Sennacherib to his campaigns and Isaiah to his prophecies; it preached the Sermon on the Mount and it dragged Jesus before Pilate. Can the same spring send forth sweet water and bitter? But religion does it, for religion is life motived by visions of God; it is tremendous in strength, but with man’s unequal power to understand the Divine, it is ambiguous in quality. Like electricity, it is

magnificent in blessing or terrible in curse. Yet through all its degrees man’s relationship with the Invisible is so essentially a part of his humanity that lacking it he has never yet been discovered, and without it he cannot be con ceived. It was this impressive witness of racial experience that made John Fiske, of Harvard, say, "Of all the implica tions of the doctrine of evolution with regard to man, I be lieve the very deepest and strongest to be that which asserts the Everlasting Reality of Religion." This testimony of the spiritual seers and this cumulative experience of the race have a right to play a weighty part in any consideration of religious faith. Even a rebellious youth might pause before he scoffs at a mature and thoughtful mind, letting his Church, his Scripture, and his Christ speak impressively to him about the reality of God. What we all do in every other realm, when we are wise, this mind is doing in religion. His individual grasp on truth he sets in the per spective of history. He does not feel himself upon a lonely quest when he seeks God; rather he feels behind him and around him the race of which he is a part and which never yet has ceased to believe in the Divine, and he sees his own insights illumined by those supreme spirits who have talked with God "as a man talketh with his friend." He knows as well as any youth that authority has been stereotyped in theories of artificial infallibility, to which no mature mind for a moment can weakly surrender its right to think, but he refuses to give up a real authority because some have held a false one. The authority of the dictionary is one thing literal and external. But the authority of a good mother moves on a different plane. It is not artificial and oppressive. It is vital and inspiring. She has lived longer, experienced more than her children; she is wiser, better, more discerning than they. A man who has had experience of great mother hood comes to feel that if his mother thinks something very strongly and very persistently, he would better consider that thing well, for the chances are overwhelming that there is truth in it. How much more shall he feel so about the age long experience of the saints with God! In this respect at least there still is truth in Cyprian’s words, "He that hath God for his Father, hath the Church for his Mother."

Faith needs fellowship not alone for enrichment and sta bility, but for expression. For faith, as fronl the beginning we have maintained, is not an effortless acceptance of ideas or personal relationships; it is an active appropriation of con victions that drive life, and Christian faith especially has always involved a campaign whose object is the saving of the world. Such an expression of religious life involves coopera tion; men cannot effectively support the "work of faith" (1 Thessalonians 1:3) apart from fellowship. The necessity for this cooperative expression of religion is clear when we consider the one in whom we believe. How anyone can expect in solitude to believe in Christ is a mystery. For Christ, with overflowing love to those who shared his filial fellowship with God, said, "No longer do I call you ser vants ... I have called you friends" (John 15:15); his care encompassed folk who never heard of him and .whom he never saw, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring . . . and they shall become one flock, one shepherd" (John 10:16); and beyond his genera tion’s life his love reached out to followers yet unborn, "Them also that believe on me through their word" (John 17:20). Whatever other quality a movement sprung from such a source may possess, it must be social. Moreover, Jesus faith was active; the meaning of it he himself disclosed, "All things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:23). In such a spirit, both by himself and through his followers, he sought the lost, healed the sick, preached the Gospel, and expectantly proclaimed an earth transformed to heaven. Such a character cannot be known in contemplation under the trees in June or through the pages of an interesting book. If Garibaldi, leading his men to the liberation of Italy, had found a devotee who said, I believe in you; I love to read your deeds, and often in my solitary, meditative

hours I am cheered by the thought of you one can easily imagine the swift and pene trating answer! That you believe in me is false; no one be lieves in me who does not share my purpose; the army is afoot, great business is ahead, the cause is calling, he who be lieves follows. Such a spirit was .Christ s. The hermits, whether of old time in their cells, or of modern time with their unaffiliated lives, are wrong. The final test of faith in Christ is fellowship in work. The Church itself has been to blame for much undedicated faith. Correctness of opinion has been substituted, as a test, for fidelity of life. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," has been interpreted to mean: accept a theory about Christ's person and all is well. But one need only go back in imagination to the time when first that formula was used to see how vital was its import. To believe in Christ then meant to accept a despised religion, to break ties that men value more than life, to face the certainty of contempt and the risk of violence. To believe in Christ then meant coming out from old relationships and going to a sect where one was pilloried with derision, that one might work for the things which Christ represents. No one did that as a theory; it required a tremendous thrust of the will, a de cision that reached to the roots of life. All this was involved in believing on Christ, and our decent holding of a theory about him, in a time when all lips praise him, is a poor sub stitute for such vital faith. John tells us that once a multitude of Jews professed belief in Jesus, but the Master, hearing their affirmations, saw the superficial meaning there. "Many believed on his name," says John "but Jesus did not trust himself unto them" (John 2:23-24). How many believe in Christ in such a way that he cannot believe in them! They forget that while the test of a man is his faith, the test of faith is faithfulness. An apostolic injunction needs modern enforcement, "that they who have believed God may be care ful to maintain good works" (Titus 3:8). The necessity for a cooperative expression of religion is evident again in the truth which we believe. Take in its simplest form the Gospel which Christianity presents, that God is in earnest about personality, and what urgency is there for associated work! For personality is being ruined in this world. False ideas of life, idolatry whether to fetishes in Africa or to money here, irreligion in all its manifold and blighting forms, are destroying personality from within, and from without sweatshops, tenements, war, the liquor traffic, industrial inequity, are engaged in the same task of ruin. The common contrast between individual and social Chris tianity is superficial. The one thing for which the Chris tian cares is personal life, and in its culture and salvation he sees the aim of God and Godlike men. Whatever, therefore, affects that is his concern, and what is there that does not affect it? What men believe about life's meaning and its destiny strikes to the core of personal life, and the houses in which men live, the conditions under which they work, the wages that they are paid, and the environments which sur round their plastic childhood these, too, mould for good or ill the fortunes of personality. The Christian, therefore, who intelligently holds the faith that he professes cannot be negligent either of evangelism, education, and missionary enterprise upon the one side, or of social reformation on the other. These are two ends of the tunnel by which the Gospel seeks to open out a way for per sonality to find its freedom. A man who says that he believes in Jesus Christ, and yet is complacent about child labor and commercialized vice, poor housing conditions and unjust wages, the trade in liquor and the butchery of men in war, stands in peril of hearing the twenty-third chapter of Matthew's gospel brought up to date for his especial benefit by the same lips that spoke it first. The indignation of the Master falls on priests and Levites who, speeding to the temple service, "pass by on the other side" the victims of social injury.

Isolated Christians, however, cannot further this campaign for personality redeemed from inward ills and outward handicaps. Evil is organised, and goodness must be, too. As wisely would a single

patriot shoulder a rifle and set out for France as would an unaffiliated Christian set his solitary strength against the massed evil of the world. Men increase effec tiveness by a large per cent through fellowship, as ancient He brews saw: "Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hun dred of you shall chase ten thousand" (Leviticus 26:8).

VI

Many secondary fellowships offer to a Christian opportunity for associated service; no cooperative endeavor to make this a better world for God to rear his children in should lack Christian sympathy and support. But the primary fellowship of Christians is the Church. Some indeed would have no church; they would have man's spiritual life a disembodied wraith, without "a local habitation and a name." But no other one of all man's finer interests has survived without organized expression. Justice is a great ideal; any endeavor to incar nate it in human institutions sullies its purity. One who dwelt only on the lofty nature of justice, who thought of it uncon- taminated and ideal, might protest against its embodiment in the tawdry ritual and demeaning squabbles of a law court. Between the poetry of justice and the recriminations of law yers, the perjury of witnesses, the fumbling uncertainty of evidence, the miscarriages of equity, how bitterly a scornful mind could point the contrast! But a reverent mind, sorry as it may be at the misrepresentation of the ideal in the human institution, is ill content with scorn. He who with insight reads the history of jurisprudence, perceives how the courts of law, with all their faults, have conserved the gains in social equity, have propagated the ideal for which they stand, have made progress sometimes slowly, sometimes with a rush like soldiers storming a redoubt, and in times of stress have been a bulwark against the invasion of the people's rights. The poetry of justice would have been an idle dream without equity's laborious embodiment in codes and courts.

Some minds dwell with joy upon the spiritual Church. Its names are written on no earthly roster, but in the Book of Life; its worship is offered in no earthly temple, but in the trysting places where soul meets Over-soul in trustful fellow ship; its baptism is not with water but with spirit, its eucharist not with bread but with the shared life of the Lord. Or, rang ing out to think of the Church as an ideal human brotherhood,, men dream as Manson did in "The Servant in the House":

"If you have eyes, you will presently see the church itself a looming mystery of many shapes and shadows, leaping sheer from floor to dome. The work of no ordinary builder! . . . The pillars of it go up like the brawny trunks of heroes: the sweet human flesh of men and women is moulded about its bulwarks, strong, impregnable: the faces of little children laugh out from every corner-stone: the terrible spans and arches of it are the joined hands of comrades; and up in the heights and spaces there are inscribed the numberless musings of all the dreamers of the world. It is yet building building and built upon. Sometimes the work goes forward in deep darkness: sometimes in blinding light: now beneath the burden of unutterable anguish: now to the tune of a great laughter and heroic shoutings like the cry of thunder. Sometimes, in the silence of the night-time, one may hear the tiny hammerings of the comrades at work up in the dome the comrades that have climbed ahead."

All such ideals, like pillars of fire and cloud, lead the march toward a promised land. They are to the actual Church what the poetry of justice is to the actual courts. But in one case as in the other, such ideals are dreams if, with labor and struggle, through many mistakes, against the disheartenment of man's frailty and sin, we do not work out an institution that shall embody and

express man’s spiritual life. Even now a discerning spirit whose own faith has been nourished at the altar regards the Church with boundless gratitude. She has indeed been to the Gospel what courts are to justice, indispens able and yet burdensome, an institution that the ideal cannot live without and yet often cannot easily live with. No one feels her faults so acutely as one who devotedly values the Gospel and longs for its adequate expression on the earth. Yet the Church conserves the race’s spiritual gains, fits out our youth with the treasure of man’s accumu lated faith, is a power house of endless moral energy for good causes in the world, exalts the ideal aims of life amid the crushing pressure of material pursuits, holds out a gospel of hope to men whom all others have forsaken, and to the ends of the earth proclaims the good news of God and the Kingdom. No other fellowship offers to men of faith so great an opportunity to make distinctive contribution to the race’s spiritual life. In the presence of the Church’s service and the Church’s need an unaffiliated believer in Jesus Christ is an anomaly. For enrichment, stability, and expression, faith must have fellowship.

"Oh magnify Jehovah with me, and let us exalt His name together" (Psalms 34:3).

Chapter 35

05.00. The Meaning of Prayer

The Meaning of Prayer

By Harry Emerson Fosdick

Copyright: 1915 In this 10 chapter work, Fosdick examines prayer in general and in specific. His chapters run: the Naturalness of Prayer, Prayer as communion with God, God’s care for the individual, prayer and the goodness of God, hindrances and difficulties, pray and the reign of Law, Unanswered Prayer, Prayer as a dominant desire, prayer as a battlefield, and unselfishness in pray.

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Selected Bibliography Author of "The Manhood of the Master," "The Assurance of Immortality," "The Second Mile" With Introduction by JOHN R. MOTT Association

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INTRODUCTION

These meditations and studies on prayer are most timely. Never have there been such extensive and such convincing evidences of the poverty and inadequacy of human means and agencies for furthering the welfare of humanity; never has there been such a widespread sense of the need of super human help ; never have there been such challenges to Chris tians to undertake deeds requiring Divine cooperation; never has there been such a manifest desire to discover the secret of the hiding and of the releasing of God s power. Interest in prayer is world-wide. This is shown in the prominence of this subject in addresses and sermons in all lands, as well as by the growing volume of books and pamphlet literature in different languages. The multiplication of Calls to Prayer and of Prayer Cycles, and the formation of Prayer Bands and of Leagues of Intercession, constitute similar testimony. Among Christians everywhere, and even among many who would not call themselves believing Christians, there is being manifested an earnest desire to understand what prayer is and to engage more fully in its exercise.

Among many recent writings on prayer possibly none does more to show its reasonableness than the following chapters. They will answer the unanswered questions of many an honest doubter. The daily arrangement of the material will serve to make the following of this course of studies a valuable school of prayer. This suggests one of the principal merits of Professor Fosdick s treatment of the subject. It shows clear recognition of the simple and central fact a fact apparently unrecognized by so many that prayer is something the reality and power of which can be verified only by pray ing. An alarming weakness among Christians is that we are producing Christian activities faster than we are producing Christian experience and Christian faith; that the discipline of our souls and the deepening of our acquaintance with God are not proving sufficiently thorough to enable us to meet the unprecedented expansion of opportunity and responsibility of our generation. These studies and spiritual exercises in helping men and women to form that most transforming, most energizing, and most highly productive habit the habit of Christlike prayer will do much to overcome this danger.

JOHN R. MOTT.

PREFACE This little book has been written in the hope that it may help to clarify a subject which is puzzling many minds. Prayer is the soul of religion, and failure there is not a super ficial lack for the supply of which the spiritual life leisurely can wait. Failure in prayer is the loss of religion itself in its inward and dynamic aspect of fellowship with the Eternal. Only a theoretical deity is left to any man who has ceased to commune with God, and a theoretical deity saves no man from sin and disheartenment and fills no life with a sense of divine commission. Such vital consequences require a living God who actually deals with men. In endeavoring to clear away the difficulties that hamper fellowship with this living God, the book has used the Scrip ture as the basis of its thought. But the passages of Scrip ture quoted are not employed as proof texts to establish an opinion; they are uniformly used as descriptions of an experi ence which men have actually had with God. In a study such as this, the Bible is the invaluable laboratory manual which records all phases of man s life with God and God s dealing with man. A debt of gratitude is due to many books and many friends consulted by the author. In particular, Professor George Albert Coe, Ph. D., of the Union Theological Seminary, New York City, and Mr. Frederick M. Harris, of Association Press, have given generously of their time and counsel.

Each chapter is divided into three sections : Daily Readings, Comment for the Week, and Suggestions for Thought and Discussion. This arrangement for daily devotional reading "The Morning Watch," for intensive study, and for study group discussion, has met such wide acceptance in my pre vious book that it has been continued here.

Special acknowledgment is gladly made to the following: to the Pilgrim Press for permission to use selections from Dr. Rauschenbusch s "Prayers of the Social Awakening"; to E. P. Dutton & Company for permission to use prayers from "A Chain of Prayers Across the Ages"; to the Rev. Samuel McComb and the publishers for permission to draw upon "A Book of Prayer," Copyright 1912, Dodd, Mead & Com pany ; to George W. Jacobs & Company for permission to make quotations from "The Communion of Prayer"; to Mrs. Mary W. Tileston for the use of "Prayers Ancient and Modern"; to Fleming H. Revell for permission to quote from Henry Ward Beecher s "Book of Public Prayer"; and to the author and publishers of W. E. Orchards "The Temple," E. P. Dutton & Company.

H. E. F. June 1, 1915.

05.01. CHAPTER I. The Naturalness of Prayer

CHAPTER I. The Naturalness of Prayer

DAILY READINGS First Day, First Week

Samuel Johnson once was asked what the strongest argu ment for prayer was, and he replied, "Sir, there is no argument for prayer." One need only read Johnson's own petitions, such as the one below, to see that he did not mean by this to declare prayer irrational; he meant to stress the fact that praying is first of all a native tendency. It is a practice like breathing or eating in this respect, that men engage in it because they are human, and afterward argue about it as best they can. As Carlyle stated it in a letter to a friend: "Prayer is and remains the native and deepest impulse of the soul of man." Consider this universal tendency to pray as revealed in "Solomon's prayer" at the dedication of the temple:

Moreover concerning the foreigner, that is not of thy people Israel, when he shall come from a far country for thy great name's sake, and thy mighty hand, and thine outstretched arm; when they shall come and pray toward this house; then hear thou from heaven, even from thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the foreigner calleth to thee for; that all the peoples of the earth may know thy name, and fear thee, as doth thy people Israel, and that they may know that this house which I have built is called by thy name. 2 Chronicles 6:32-33.

Note how this prayer takes for granted that any stranger coming from anywhere on earth is likely to be a praying man. Let us say to ourselves on this first day of our study, that in dealing with prayer we are dealing, as this Scripture suggests, with a natural function of human life.

"All souls that struggle and aspire, All hearts of prayer, by thee are lit; And, dim or clear, thy tongues of fire On dusky tribes and centuries sit."

O Lord, in whose hands are life and death, by whose power I am sustained, and by whose mercy I am spared, look down upon me with pity. Forgive me that I have until now so much neglected the duty which Thou hast assigned to me, and suffered the days and hours of which I must give account to pass away without any endeavor to accomplish Thy will. Make me to remember, O God, that every day is Thy gift, and ought to be used according to Thy command. Grant me, therefore, so to repent of my negligence, that I may obtain mercy from Thee, and pass the time which Thou shalt yet allow me in diligent performance of Thy commands, through Jesus Christ. Amen. Samuel Johnson (1709-1784).

Second Day, First Week

Epictetus was a non-Christian philosopher and yet listen to him: "When thou hast shut thy door and darkened thy room, say not to thyself that thou art alone. God is in thy room." Read now Paul's appreciation of this hunger for God and this sense of his presence which are to be found among all peoples.

Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive that ye are very religious. For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, "To an Unknown God." What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this I set forth unto you. The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek God, if haply, they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us; for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Acts 17:22-28.

Consider the meaning of the fact that prayer and worship are thus universal; that all peoples do "seek God, if haply, they might feel after him and find him." It is said that an ignorant African woman, after hearing her first Christian sermon, remarked to her neighbor, "There! I always told you that there ought to be a God like that." Somewhere in every man there is the capacity for worship and prayer, for the apprehension of God and the love of him. Is not this the distinctive quality of man and the noblest faculty which he possesses? How then are we treating this best of our endowments?

Lord our God, grant us grace to desire Thee with our whole heart; that so desiring we may seek and find Thee; and so finding Thee may love Thee; and loving Thee, may hate those sins from which Thou hast redeemed us. Amen. Anselm (1033-1109).

Third Day, First Week

Prayer has been greatly discredited in the minds of many by its use during war. Men have felt the absurdity of praying on opposite sides of a battle, of making God a tribal leader in heaven, to give victory, as Zeus and Apollo used to do, to their favorites. Let us grant all the narrow, bitter, irrational elements that thus appear in prayer during a war, but let us not be blind to the meaning of this momentous fact: whenever in national life a time of great stress comes, men, however sceptical, feel the impulse to pray. How natural is Hezekiah's cry in the siege of Jerusalem!

O Jehovah, the God of Israel, that sittest above the cherubim, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth. Incline thine ear, O Jehovah, and hear; open thine eyes, O Jehovah, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, wherewith he hath sent him to defy the living God. Of a truth, Jehovah, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands, and have cast their gods into the fire; for they were no gods but the work of men's hands, wood and stone; therefore they have destroyed them. Now therefore, O Jehovah our God, save thou us, I beseech thee, out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou Jehovah art God alone. 2 Kings 19:15-19.

Consider now the same tendency to pray in a crisis, which appears in the European war. Here is a passage from a Scotchman's letter, describing the infidel in his town, who never went to church, but who now sits in the kirk, and is moved to tears when he hears the minister pray for the king's forces, and for the bereaved at home: "It was then that my friend stifled a sob. There was Something after all, Some thing greater than cosmic forces, greater than law with an eye to pity and an arm to save. There was God. My friend's son was with the famous regiment that was

swaying to and fro, grappling with destiny. He was helpless and there was only God to appeal to. There comes an hour in life when the heart realizes that instinct is mightier far than logic. With us in the parish churches of Scotland the great thing is the sermon. But today it is different; the great thing now is prayer." So always a crisis shakes loose the tendency to pray.

O Lord God of Hosts, grant to those who have gone forth to fight our battles by land or sea, protection in danger, patience in suffering, and moderation in victory. Look with compassion on the sick, the wounded, and the captives;] sanctify to them their trials, and turn their hearts unto Thee. For Thy dear Son’s sake, O Lord, pardon and receive the dying; have mercy upon the widow and fatherless, and com fort all who mourn. O gracious Father, who makest wars to cease in all the world, restore to us, Thy people, speedily the blessing of peace, and grant that our present troubles may be overruled to Thy glory, in the extension of the Redeemer’s Kingdom, and the union of all nations in Thy faith, fear, and love. Hear, O Lord, and answer us; for Jesus Christ’s sake. Amen. E. Hawkins (1789-1882).

Fourth Day, First Week

H. Clay Trumbull tells us that a soldier in the Civil War, wounded in a terrific battle at Fort Wagner, was asked by an army chaplain, "Do you ever pray?" "Sometimes," was the answer; "I prayed last Saturday night, when we were in that fight at Wagner. I guess everybody prayed there." Consider how inevitably the impulse to pray asserts itself whenever critical danger comes suddenly upon any life. In view of this, read the Psalmist’s description of a storm at sea:

They that go down to the sea in ships,

That do business in greet waters;

These see the works of Jehovah,

And his wonders in the deep.

For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind,

Which lifteth up the waves thereof.

They mount up to the heavens,

they go down again to the depths:

Their soul melteth away because of trouble.

They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man,

And are at their wits end.

Then they cry unto Jehovah in their trouble. Psalms 107:23-28.

Remember those times in your experience or observation when either you or some one else has been thrown back by an emergency upon this natural tendency to pray in a crisis. Consider what it means that this impulse to pray is not simply age-long and universal; that it also is exhibited in every one of us at least occasionally. How natural as well as how noble is this prayer of Bishop Ridley during the imprisonment that preceded his burning at the stake!

O Heavenly Father, the Father of all wisdom, understand ing, and true strength, I beseech Thee, for Thy only Son our Savior Christ's sake, look mercifully upon me, wretched creature, and send Thine Holy Spirit into my breast; that not only I may understand according to Thy wisdom, ho^v this temptation is to be borne off, and with what answer it is to be beaten back; but also, when I must join to fight in the field /or the glory of Thy name, that then I, being strength ened with the defence of Thy right hand, may manfully stand in the confession of Thy faith, and of Thy truth, and may continue in the same unto the end of my life, through the same our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. Bishop Ridley (1500-1555).

Fifth Day, First Week The instinctive turning of the heart to a Tower not our selves" is often felt, not alone in crises of peril, but in the presence of great responsibility, for which a man unaided feels inadequate. Despite Solomon's shallowness of life, there were times when something finer and deeper was revealed in him than his deeds would have suggested. When he first realized that the new responsibility of kingship was upon him, how elevated the spirit of his impulsive prayer! And now, O Jehovah my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child; I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give thy servant therefore an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may dis cern between good and evil; for who is able to judge this thy great people? 1 Kings 3:7-9. As a companionpiece with this cry of Solomon, see Lin coln's revealing words: "I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go; my own wisdom and that of all around me seemed insufficient for the day." Whenever a man faces tasks for which he feels inadequate and upon whose accomplishment much depends, he naturally turns to prayer. Let us imagine ourselves in Luther's place, burdened with new and crushing responsibilities, and facing powerful enemies, when he cried:

O Thou, my God! Do Thou, my God, stand by me, against all the world's wisdom and reason. Oh, do it! Thou must do it! Yea, Thou alone must do it! Not mine, but Thine, is the cause. For my own self, I have nothing to do with these great and earthly lords. I would prefer to have peaceful days, and to be out of this turmoil. But Thine, O Lord, is this cause; it is righteous and eternal. Stand by me, Thou true Eternal God! In no man do I trust. All that is of the flesh and savours of the flesh is here of no account. God, O God! dost Thou not hear me, O my God? Art Thou dead? No. Thou canst not die; Thou art only hiding Thyself. Hast Thou chosen me for this work? I ask Thee how I may be sure of this, if it be Thy will; for I would never have thought, in nil my life, of undertaking aught against such great lords. Stand by me, O God, in the Name of Thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, who shall be my Defence and Shelter, yea, my Mighty Fortress, through the might and strength of Thy Holy Spirit. God help me. Amen. Martin Luther (1483-1546).

Sixth Day, First Week And when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house (now his windows were open in his chamber toward Jerusalem); and he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime. Daniel 6:10.

We are evidently dealing here with a new element in prayer, not apparent in our previous discussion. Prayer, to Daniel, was not simply an impulsive cry of need, wrung from him by sudden crises or by overwhelming responsibilities. Daniel had done with the impulse to pray what all wise people do with the impulse to eat. They do not neglect it until imperious hunger demands it to save

their lives or until special work absolutely forces them to it. They rather recognize eating as a normal need of human beings, to be met regularly. So Daniel not only prayed in emergencies of peril and responsibility; he prayed three times a day. How many of us leave the instinct of prayer dormant until a crisis calls it into activity! "Jehovah, in trouble have they visited thee; they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them" (Isaiah 26:16). Consider how inadequate such a use of prayer is.

I am forced, good Father, to seek Thee daily, and Thou off crest Thyself daily to be found: whensoever I seek, I find Thee, in my house, in the fields, in the temple, and in the highway. Whatsoever I do, Thou art with me; whether I eat or drink, whether I write or work, go to ride, read, meditate, or pray, Thou art ever with me; wheresoever I am, or -whatsoever I do, I feel some measure of Thy mercies and love. If I be oppressed, Thou dcfendest me: if I be envied, Thou guardest me; if I hunger, Thou feedcst me; whatso ever I want Thou givest me. O continue this Thy loving- kindness towards me for ever, that all the world may see Thy power, Thy mercy, and Thy love, wherein Thou hast not failed me, and even my enemies shall see that Thy mercies endure forever. J. Norden (1548-1625).

Seventh Day, First Week For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, that ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; to the end that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God. Ephesians 3:14-19.

Compare praying like this with the spasmodic cry of occasional need and see how great the difference is. Here prayer has risen into an elevated demand on life, unselfish and constant. It gathers up the powers of the soul in a constraining desire for God’s blessing on the one who prays and on all men. What starts in the pagan as an unregulated and fitful impulse has become in Paul an intelligent, persever ing, and well-directed habit. As power of thought confused and weak in an Australian bushman, becomes in a Newton capable of grasping laws that hold the stars together, so prayer may begin in the race or in the individual as an erratic and ineffective impulse, but may grow to be a de pendable and saving power. Consider how much you under stand this latent force in your own life and how effectively you are

O God, Thou art Life, Wisdom, Truth, Bounty, and Blessed ness, the Eternal, the only true Good! My God and my Lord, Thou art my hope and my heart’s joy. I confess, with thanks giving, that Thou hast made me in Thine image, that I may direct all my thoughts to Thee, and love Thee. Lord, make me to know Thee aright, that I may more and more love, and enjoy, and possess Thee. And since, in the life here below, I cannot fully attain this blessedness, let it at least grow in me day by day, until it all be fulfilled aTlast in t life to come. Here be the knowledge of Thee increased, and there let it be perfected. Here let my love to Thee grow, and there let it ripen; that my joy being here great in hope, may there in fruition be made perfect. Amen. Anselm (1033-1109).

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK When any one undertakes to study the cultivate the habit of prayer, it is well for WfrTto understand from the beginning that he is dealing^vlth a natural function of his

life and not with an artificial addition. Raising palm trees in Greenland would be an unnatural proceeding. They never were intended to grow there, and never can grow there save under stress of artificial forcing. The culture of prayer would be just as strained a procedure, were it not true that the tendency to pray is native to us, that prayer is-indigenous in us, that we do pray, one way or another, even though fitfully and without effect, and that men always have prayed and always will pray. The definition of man as a "praying animal," while not comprehensive, is certainly correct. The culture of prayer, therefore, is not importing an alien, but is training a native citizen of the soul. Professor William James of Harvard was thinking of this when he wrote: "We hear in these days of scientific enlightenment a great deal of discussion about the efficacy of prayer; and many reasons are given us why we should not pray, whilst others are given us why we should. But in all this very little is said of the reason why we do pray. . . . The reason why we do pray is simply that we cannot help praying." Our justification for calling prayer natural may be found in part, in the universality of it. In some form or other, it is found everywhere, in all ages and among all peoples. The most discouraging circumstances do not crush it, and theories of the universe directly antagonistic do not prevent it. Buddhism, a religion theoretically without a God, ought logically to exclude prayer; but in countries where Buddhism is dominant, prayer is present. Confucius, a good deal of an agnostic, urged his disciples not to have much to do with the gods; and today Confucius is himself a god and millions pray to him. Before the tendency to pray all barriers go down. The traveler climbs the foothills of the Himalayas, and among the Khonds of North India hears the prayer: "O Lord, we know not what is good for us. Thou knowest what it is. For it we pray." The archeologist goes back among the Aztec ruins and reads their prayer in affliction: "O merciful Lord, let this chastisement with which thou hast visited us, give us freedom from evil and from folly." The historian finds the Greek world typical of all ancient civiliza tions at least in this, that prayer is everywhere. Xenophon begins each day’s march with prayer; Pericles begins every address with prayer; the greatest of Greek orations, Demos thenes "On the Crown," and the greatest of Greek poems, "The Iliad," are opened with prayer. When from the super stitious habits of the populace one turns to the most elevated and philosophic spirits to see what they will say, he hears Plato, "Every man of sense before beginning an important work will ask help of the gods." And turning from Plato’s preaching to his practice, he reads this beautiful petition, "King Zeus, grant us the good whether we pray for it or not, but evil keep from us, though we pray for it."

If today one crosses the borders of Christianity into Mohammedanism, not only will he find formal prayer five times daily, when the muezzin calls, but he will read descrip tions of prayer like this from a Sufi "There are three degrees in prayer. The first is when it is only spoken by the lips. The second is when with difficulty, by a resolute effort, the soul succeeds in fixing its thought on divine things. The third is when the soul finds it hard to turn away from God." And if from all others, one looks to the Hebrew people, with what unanimous ascription do they say, "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come" (Psalms 65:2). A man is cutting himself off from one of the elemental functions of human life when he denies in himself the tendency to pray.

II

Moreover, justification for calling prayer natural is found in the fact that mankind never outgrows prayer. Both the practice and the theory of it have proved infinitely adaptable to all stages of culture. In its lowest forms, among the most savage peoples, prayer and magic were indistinguishable. To pray then was to use charms that compelled the assent of the gods. And

from such pagan beginnings to Jesus in the Garden or a modern scientist upon his knees, prayer, like all other primary functions, has proved capable of unlimited development. It has not been crushed but has been lifted into finer forms by spiritual and intellectual advance. It has shaped its course like a river, to the banks of each genera tion's thought; but it has flowed on, fed from fountains that changing banks do not affect. Nowhere is this more plain than in the Bible. Compare the dying prayer of Samson, as he wound his arms around the sustaining pillars of the Philistine dining hall and cried: "O Lord Jehovah, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes" (Judges 16:28); with the dying prayer of Stephen, as he was being stoned, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:60). Both are prayers, but they come from two ages between which the revelation of God and the meaning of prayer had infinitely widened.

Both in the Scripture and out of it, the quality of prayer is suited to the breadth or narrowness of view, the generosity or bitterness of spirit, which the generation or the individual possesses. As Sabatier puts it, "The history of prayer is the history of relic/ion" At one end of the scale,

"In even savage bosoms There are longings, strivings, yearnings For the good they comprehend not; And their feeble hands and helpless, Groping blindly in the darkness, Touch God's right hand in that darkness And are lifted up and strengthened." At the other end of the scale, Coleridge says, "The act of praying is the very highest energy of which the human mind 5 capable"; and President Harper of the University of Chicago, on his death-bed prays: "May there be for me a life beyond this life; and in that life may there be work to do, tasks to accomplish. If in any way a soul has been injured or a friend hurt, may the harm be overcome, if it is possible." The human soul never outgrows prayer. At their lowest, men pray crudely, ignorantly, bitterly; at their best, men pray intelligently, spiritually, magnanimously. Prayer is not only universal in extent; it is infinite in quality. A man may well give himself to the deepening and purifying of his prayer, for it is as natural in human life as thought.

III The naturalness of prayer is further seen in the fact that prayer is latent in the life of every one of us. At first the experience of some may seem to gainsay this. They have given up praying. They get on very well without it, and when they are entirely candid they confess that they dis believe in it. But they must also confess that their dis belief lies in their opinions and not in their impulses. When some overwhelming need comes upon them, their impulse is still to pray.

Modern scepticism has done all that it could to make prayer unreasonable. It has viewed the world as a machine, regular as an automaton, uncontrollable as sunrise. It has made whatever God there is a prisoner in the laws of his own world, powerless to assist his children. It has denied everything that makes prayer possible; and yet men, having believed all that sceptical thought says, still have their times of prayer. Like water in an artesian well, walled up by modern concrete, prayer still seeps through, it breaks out; nature is stronger than artifice, and streams flowing under ground in our lives insist on finding vent. Sometimes a crisis of personal danger lets loose this hidden impulse. "I hadn t prayed in ten years," the writer heard a railroad man ex claim when his train had just escaped a wreck; "but I prayed then." Sometimes a crushing responsibility makes men pray almost in spite of themselves. General Kodoma, of the Japanese army during the Russian war, used to retire each morning for an hour of prayer. When asked the reason, he answered: "When a man has done everything in his power, there remains nothing but the help of

the gods." Anything peril, responsibility, anxiety, grief that shakes us out of our mere opinions, down into our native impulses, is likely to make us pray. This is true of whole populations as well as of individuals. Shall not a war like the appalling conflict in Europe make men doubt God and disbelieve all good news of him that they have heard? Only of far distant spectators is any such reaction true. In the midst of the crisis itself, where the burdens of sacrifice are being borne and super -human endur ance, courage, and selflessness are required, the reaction of men, as all observers note, is accurately described in Cardinal Mercier's famous pastoral letter: "Men long unaccustomed to prayer are turning again to God. Within the army, within the civil world, in public, and within the individual conscience there is prayer. Nor is that prayer today a word learned by rote, uttered lightly by the lip; it surges from the troubled heart, it takes the form at the feet of God of the very sacrifice of life." Whether in the individual or in society, great shocks that loosen the foundations of human life and let the primal tendencies surge up, always set free the pent foun tains of prayer. In the most sceptical man or generation prayer is always underground, waiting. Henry Ward Beecher was giving us something more than a whimsical simile when he said: "I pray on the principle that the wine knocks the cork out of a bottle. There is an inward fermentation and there must be a vent." Even Comte, with his system of religion that utterly banished God, soul, and immortality, prescribed for his disciples two hours of prayer daily, because he recognized the act itself as one of the elemental functions of human nature.

Whether, therefore, we consider the universality of prayer, or its infinite adaptability to all stages of culture and intel ligence, or the fact that it is latent in every one of us, we come to the same conclusion: praying is a natural activity of human life. We may only note in passing the patent argu ment here for the truth of religion. Can it be that all men, in all ages and all lands, have been engaged in "talking forever to a silent world from which no answer comes"? If we can be sure of anything, is it not this that wherever a human function has persisted, unwearied by time, un-crushed by disappointment, rising to noblest form and finest use in the noblest and finest souls, that function corresponds with some Reality? Hunger never could have persisted without food, nor breathing without air, nor intellectual life without truth, nor prayer without God. Burke said that it was difficult to press an indictment against a nation. It is far more difficult to sustain a charge against all mankind.

IV From this argument which the naturalness of prayer sug gests, we press on, however, to a matter more immediate to our purpose. The fact that prayer is one of our native tendencies accounts for one peril in our use of it. We let prayer be merely a tendency, and therefore spasmodic, occa sional, untrained. A tragedy is always present in any fine function of human nature that is left undisciplined. The impulse to love is universal; but left to be merely an im pulse, it is brutal and fleshly. The love that inspires our noblest poems and is celebrated in our greatest music, that builds Christian homes and makes family life beautiful, is a primal impulse trained and elevated, become intelligent, dis ciplined, and consecrated. The tendency to think is universal, but left as such, it is but the wayward and futile intellect of savages. Their powers of thinking are stagnant, called into activity by accident, not well understood, carefully trained, and intelligently exercised. So prayer left to spasmodic use is a futile thing. In the one-hundred and seventh Psalm, a marvelous description of a storm at sea ends with a verse which reveals the nature of impulsive prayer: "They . . . are at their wits end. Then they cry unto Jehovah" (Psalms 107:27-28). When prayer is left untrained, men pray only when they have reached their wits end. In moments of

extreme physical danger, men who never make a daily friend of God, cry to him in their need. "He that will learn to pray," says George Herbert, pithily, "let him go to sea"; and Shakespeare in the "Tempest," knowing human nature as the Psalmist knew it, has the sailors, when the storm breaks, cry: "All lost! To prayers! To prayers! All lost!" In extreme moral danger, also, where pleasant dalliance with evil has run out into the unbreakable habit of evil, men almost always pray. And in death how naturally men think of God! So Dame Quickly says of the dying Falstaff: "Now I, to comfort him, bid him a should not think of God. I hoped there was no need to trouble himself with any such thoughts yet!"

Prayer, left as an undisciplined impulse, inevitably sinks into such a spasmodic and frantic use. "When my soul fainted within me, I remembered Jehovah" (Jonah 2:7). Like the old Greek dramatists, men hopelessly tangle the plot of their lives, until at the end, with a dilemma insoluble by human ingenuity and power, they swing a god from the wings by machinery to disentangle the desperate situation. They use prayer as a deus-ex-machina, a last resort when they are in extremity. In one way or another, how many of us must accuse ourselves of this fitful use of prayer 1 One of the supreme powers of our lives is left to the control of impulse and accident, its nature unstudied, and its exercise untrained. The baneful effect of this spasmodic use of prayer is easily seen. For one thing it utterly neglects all Christian concep tions of God and goes back to the pagan thought of him. God becomes nothing more than a power to be occasionally called in to our help. This is the conception of an Indian woman bowing at an idol’s shrine. Her god is power, mys terious and masterful, whose help she seeks in her emergen cies. When, therefore, we pray as she does, fitfully running to God in occasional crises, we are going back in substance, if not in form, to paganism. We deserve Luther’s rebuke in his sermon on praying to the saints: "We honor them and call upon them only when we have a pain in our legs or our heads, or when our pockets are empty." But the best of humanity have traveled a long way from such an idea of deity. The Christian God desires to be to every one an inward and abiding friend, a purifying presence in daily life, the One whose moral purpose continually restrains and whose love upholds. Above all advances made in human life none is so significant as this advance in the thought of God. We have moved from rumbling oxcarts to limited express trains, from mud huts to cathedrals, from tom-toms to orchestras. If we neglected these gains, we should rightly be regarded as strange anachronisms. Yet in our treatment of God how often are we ancient pagans born after our time! We are examples of religious reversal to type. We are mis dated A. D. instead of B. C. when we use God as a power to be occasionally summoned to our aid.

Consider a new parable of a father and his two sons. One son looked upon his father as a last resort in critical need. He never came to him for friendly conference, never sought his advice, in little difficulties never was comforted by his help. He did not make his father his confidant. He went to college and wrote home only when he wanted money. He fell into disgrace, and called on his father only when he needed legal aid. He ran his life with utter disregard of his father’s character or purpose, and turned to him only when in desperate straits. The other son saw in his father’s love the supreme motive of his life. He was moved by daily gratitude so that to be well-pleasing to his father was his joy and his ideal. His father was his friend. He confided in him, was advised by him, kept close to him, and in his crises came to his father with a naturalness born of long habit, like Jesus, who having prayed without ceasing, now at last bows in Gethsemane. Is there any doubt as to -which is the nobler sonshipf And is not the former type a true picture of our relationship with

God when we leave prayer to be a merely instinctive and untrained cry of need?

VI For another thing ^ this use of prayer as merely a spasmodic cry out of an occasional crisis, makes it utterly selfish. We think of God solely with reference to our own emergencies. We never remember the Most High except when we wish him to run an errand for us. Our prayer does not concern itself with the fulfilment of his great purposes in us and in the world, and does not relate itself to a life devoted to his will. In utter selfishness we forget God until it occurs to us that we may get something from him.

Some men treat God in this respect as others treat their country. That regard for native land which in some has inspired heroic and sacrificial deeds, appears in others in the disguise of utter selfishness. Consider a man who does nothing whatever for his country; is not interested in her problems; is careless of the franchise, evades every public responsibility, and even dodges taxes. One would suppose that this man never thought of his country at all. Upon the contrary, there are occasions when he thinks of her at once. When his person or property is attacked and his rights invaded, this same man will appeal clamorously to the govern ment for protection. He reserves every thought of his country for the hours of personal crisis. His relationship with his government is exhausted in spasmodic cries for help. He furnishes a true parallel to that ignoble type of religion, in which prayer, left fitful and undisciplined, is nothing more than an occasional, selfish demand on God.

VII The shame of leaving thus uncultivated one of the noblest functions of man’s spirit is emphasized when we face the testimony of the masters in prayer concerning its possibili ties. What the power of thought can mean must be seen in the thinkers; what prayer can do must be seen in the pray-ers. Whenever they speak, language seems to them inadequate to describe the saving and empowering influences of habitual prayer. As in our Christian songs, where we leave the more superficial differences of opinion and go down into the essential spirit of worship, Catholics and Protestants, Jews and Gentiles, men of every shade of special belief and sectarian alliance are authors of the hymns we all sing, so in prayer men of opposite opinions agree as one. Luther, the Protestant, is alien at how many points from St. Bernard the Catholic, and yet says Luther "In the faith wherein St. Bernard prays, do I pray also." Not only does a liberal philosopher, Sabatier, say, "Prayer is religion in act; that is, prayer is real religion"; and a conservative theologian, Hartmann, say, "God has given to real prayer the power to shape the future for men and the world"; and a Catholic poet, Francis Thompson, say, "Prayer is the very sword of the saints": even Professor Tyndall, the scientist, who was regarded by the Christians of his generation as the most aggressive antagonist of prayer, says: "It is not my habit of mind to think otherwise than solemnly of the feelings which prompt to prayer. Often unreasonable, even contempt ible, in its purer forms prayer hints at disciplines which few of us can neglect without moral loss." If there is any element in human life to whose inestimable value we have abundant testimony, it is prayer; and to leave misunderstood and untrained a power capable of such high uses is a spiritual tragedy.

This, then, is the summary of the matter. Deep in every one of us lies the tendency to pray. If we allow it to remain merely a tendency, it becomes nothing but a selfish, unin telligent, occasional cry of need. But understood and disciplined, it reveals possibilities whose limits never have been found.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

How far can prayer be said to be natural to all peoples in all times?

Are the following exercises forms of prayer?

An African throwing a stone on the votive pile along the roadside.

A Buddhist using a prayer wheel.

A Thibetan tying a prayer flag to a tree.

An Indian Fakir lying on a bed of spikes.

An American nailing a horse shoe over the door for good luck.

How far can superstitious prayers, growing out of ignor ance, of mysterious happenings and attempts to propitiate some unknown mighty power, be said to be proof of the universality of prayer?

How far can Paul’s statement in regard to the men of Athens being very religious be duplicated in non-Christian countries today?

To what degree is crying out for help in time of great trouble a proof that prayer is natural? Was Stephen’s prayer as natural as Samson s? Compare Hezekiah’s prayer at the siege of Jerusalem with prayer in modern wars. Is the Psalmist’s description of a man praying in a storm at sea proof of the naturalness of prayer?

Is prayer more natural to some types of individuals and races than others? Is it more natural to women than men?

In the sense that you use the word "prayer," do all men pray?

How far is the universality of prayer a proof of its reality?

What effect has lack of control and training upon fine natural tendencies?

Is love involuntary, or can a man control and develop his love instinct?

To what degree is the instinct to pray capable of develop ment and direction?

Wherein do untrained natural prayer instincts fall short? Why are the prayers of a Christian often really pagan in character?

What were the distinctive elements in Daniel’s prayer? in the prayer of Ephesians 3:14-19?

Can spasmodic and untrained prayer be unselfish?

How can prayer be trained? What determines the limit of the development of prayer in any individual? For in stance, what process is necessary to develop the turning of a prayer wheel into a prayer like Stephen’s?

05.02. CHAPTER II. Prayer as Communion with God

CHAPTER II. Prayer as Communion with God

DAILY READINGS First Day, Second Week The thought of prayer as a natural function in human life ought to be of this practical service to us: it should keep us from yielding too easily to disbelief or discouragement when we have difficulty with prayer in our individual experience. At least, so one of the psalmists felt. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

Why art thou so far from helping me,

and from the words of my groaning?

O my God, I cry in the daytime,

but thou answerest not;

And in the night season,

and am not silent.

But thou art holy,

O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

Our fathers trusted in thee:

They trusted, and thou didst deliver them.

They cried unto thee, and were delivered:

They trusted in thee, and were not put to shame. Psalms 22:1-5.

Note the three troubles which this psalmist has been having with prayer. He cannot make God seem real to him; his prayer brings him no relief in his difficulties; and even persistency in prayer accomplishes nothing. Then he remembers that prayer is not something with which he, for the first time in history, is experimenting. "Our fathers trusted in thee... and thou didst deliver them." He sees that the accumulating testimony of his fathers in all ages bears witness to the power of prayer. He therefore sensibly concludes that he would better not pit a few months of individual failure in praying against the general experience of the race. In view of what prayer has meant to all peoples, he sees that probably the trouble is with himself and not with prayer. He sets himself therefore to understand prayer if he can, and in Psalms 22:22, he begins the recital of the victorious outcome: "I will declare thy name unto my brethren: In the midst of the assembly will I praise thee." May God make us as sensible as this psalmist and give us as real a triumph!

O God, who art, and wast, and art to come, before whose face the generations rise and pass away; age after age the living seek Thee, and find that of Thy faithfulness there is no end. Our fathers in their pilgrimage walked by Thy guidance, and rested on Thy compassion; still to their

children be Thou the cloud by day, the fire by night. In our manifold temptations, Thou alone knowest and art ever nigh: in sorrow, Thy pity revives the fainting soul; in our prosperity and case, it is Thy Spirit only that can wean us from our pride and keep us low. O Thou sole Source of peace and righteousness! take now the veil from every heart; and join us in one communion with Thy prophets and saints who have trusted in Thee, and were not ashamed. Not of our worthiness, but of Thy tender mercy, hear our prayer. Amen. _ James Martineau (1805-1900).

Second Day, Second Week

Let us consider this week some of the practical reasons for our failure to make the most out of our power to pray. To that end read these verses representing two aspects of the Master's life, We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work John 9:4. In the morning, a great while before day, he rose up - departed into a desert place and Which of these two emphases in the Christian life do we appreciate the better? Is it not clear that all the characteristic enthusiasms of our day cluster around work? In the churches, service is the popular note, and the favorite hymns are "The Son of God goes forth to war," "Soldiers of Christ arise," and their kind. Our failure in prayer is partly due to the prevailing temper of our generation, which in its splendid enthusiasm for work has neglected that culture of prayer, on which in the end the finest quality of spirit and the deepest resources of power must depend. Is not this one reason why keen observers note that our generation is marked by practical efficiency and spiritual shallowness? May we not hope to keep in ourselves the best gains of this efficient age and at the same time recover the "practice of the presence of God"?

Almighty Father, enter Thou our hearts, and so fill us with Thy love, that, forsaking all evil desires, we may embrace Thee, our only good. Show unto us, for Thy mercies sake, O Lord our God, what Thou art unto us. Say unto our souls, I am thy salvation. So speak that we may hear. Our hearts are before Thee; open Thou our ears; let us hasten after Thy voice, and take hold on Thee. Hide not Thy face from us, we beseech Thee, O Lord. Enlarge Thou the narrowness of our souls, that Thou mayest enter in. Repair the ruinous mansions, that Thou mayest dwell there. Hear us, O Heavenly Father, for the sake of Thine only Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen. St. Augustine (354-430).

Third Day, Second Week Failure to cultivate our power of prayer goes back in many to childish ideas of prayer's meaning, which, never altogether outgrown, hamper us and make our praying seem unreasonable and futile. There are some who still think of prayer in terms of childish supplications to a divine Santa Claus. Let us note the two aspects of truth set forth in these two passages, And he sat down, and called the twelve; and he saith unto them, If any man would be first, he shall be last of all, and servant of all. And he took a little child, and set him in the midst of them: and taking him in his arms, he said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such little children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever receiveth me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me. Mark 9:35-37. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child: now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things. 1 Corinthians 13:11. When Christ sets as our ideal the childlike qualities of sincerity and humility, he is not asking us to be childish. Many foolish prayers are offered by the well-meaning but unintelligent with the excuse that they are childlike in their simple trust. But we are grown-up children, and have an obligation to exercise our intelligence, to outgrow infantile ideas of prayer that belittle it, and to enlarge our conceptions

of the significance which fellowship with God may have for life. To pray to God as though he were Santa Glaus is childish; but a man may still be childlike in his faith and range up into another sort of praying, Thou Life within my life, than self more near, Thou Veiled Presence infinitely clear; From all illusive shows of sense I flee To find my center and my rest in Thee."

Heavenly Father, the Author and Fountain of all truth, the bottomless Sea of all understanding, send, we beseech Thee, Thy Holy Spirit into our hearts, and lighten our under standings with the beams of Thy heavenly grace. We ask this, O merciful Father, for Thy dear Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ's sake. Amen Bishop Ridley (1500-1555).

Fourth Day, Second Week Childishness in prayer is chiefly evidenced in an overweening desire to beg things from God, and a corresponding failure to desire above all else the friendship of God himself. The same growth ought to take place in our relationship with God which occurs in a normal fellowship between a child and his parents. At first the child wants the parents gifts, and thinks of the parents largely in terms of the things which they do for his comfort and pleasure. He is not able yet to appreciate the value of the parents personalities. A sure sign of wholesome maturity, however, is found in the child's deepening understanding of the parents themselves his increasing delight in their friendship, thankfulness for their care, acceptance of their ideals, reliance on their counsel, and joy in their approval. The child grows through desiring things from his parents into love of his parents, for their own sakes. A certain man had two sons: and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of thy substance that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country; and there he wasted his substance with riotous living... But when he came to himself he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. Luke 15:11-13, Luke 15:17, Luke 15:19. Note the change of prayer from "Give me" to "Make me." Whether through experience of sin or sorrow or hard practical struggle we come to a real maturity, we always tend to grow out of crying to God "Give me" into the deeper prayer "Make me." In a word we cease valuing God merely because of the things he may give, and we come into the love of God himself and the desire to be made over by him.

Grant me, O most loving Lord, to rest in Thee above all creatures, above all health and beauty, above all glory and honor, above all power and dignity, above all knowledge and subtilty, above all riches and art, above all fame and praise, above all sweetness and comfort, above all hope and promise, above all gifts and favors that Thou canst give and impart to us, above all jubilee that the mind of man can receive and feel; finally, above angels and archangels, and above all the heavenly host, above all things visible and invisible, and above all that Thou art not, O my God. It is too small and unsatisfying, whatsoever Thou bestowest on me apart from Thee 01 revealest to me, or promise st, whilst Thou art not seen, and not fully obtained. For surely my heart cannot truly rest, nor be entirely contented, unless it rest in Thee. Amen. Thomas a Kempis (1379-1471).

Fifth Day, Second Week Prayer has failed in some because it has always appeared to them as an obligation rather than a privilege. When they think of it they think of a duty to be done. Contrast with this the glowing words of the sixty-third Psalm, O God, thou art my God; earnestly will I seek

thee:...

Because thy lovingkindness is better than life,

My lips shall praise thee...

My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness;

And my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips;

When I remember thee upon my bed,

And meditate on thee in the night-watches.

For thou hast been my help,

And in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.

My soul followeth hard after thee:

Thy right hand upholdeth me. Psalms 63:5-8.

Prayer here is not a burden to be borne, an obligation to be fulfilled, something that is due to God and must be paid. Prayer is a privilege; like friendship and family love and laughter, great books, great music, and great art, it is one of life's opportunities to be grasped thankfully and used gladly. The man who misses the deep meanings of prayer has not so much refused an obligation; he has robbed himself of life's supreme privilege friendship with God.

O Thou divine Spirit that, in all events of life, art knocking at the door of my heart, help me to respond to Thee. I would not be driven blindly as the stars over their courses. 1 would not be made to work out Thy will unwillingly, to fulfil Thy law unintelligently, to obey Thy mandates unsympathetically. I would take the events of my life as good and perfect gifts from Thee; I would receive even the sorrows of hfe as disguised gifts from Thee. I would have my heart open at all times to receive at morning, noon, and night; in spnny, and summer, and winter. Whether Thou comest to me in sunshine or in rain, I would take Thee into my heart joyfully. Thou art Thyself more than the sunshine, Thou art Thyself compensation for the rain; it is Thee and not Thy gifts I crave; knock, and I shall open unto Thee. Amen. George Matheson.

Sixth Day, Second Week

I exhort therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings, be made for all men; for kings and all that are in high place; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, one mediator also between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus... I desire therefore that the men pray in every place, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and disputing. 1 Timothy 2:1-5, 1 Timothy 2:8. Our failure to think of prayer as a privilege may be partly due to the fact that we can pray any time, "in every place." The door of prayer is open so continuously that we fail to avail ourselves of an opportunity which is al ways there. There are plenty of people in London who never have seen the inside of Westminster Abbey, partly because they could go there any day. Consider then the aptness of Austin Phelps illustration: "In the vestibule of St. Peter s, at Rome, is a doorway, which

is walled up and marked with a cross. It is opened but four times in a century. On Christmas Eve, once in twenty-five years, the Pope approaches it in princely state, with the retinue of cardinals in attendance, and begins the demolition of the door, by striking it three times with a silver hammer. When the passage is opened, the multitude pass into the nave of the cathedral, and up to the altar, by an avenue which the majority of them never entered thus before, and never will enter thus again. Imagine that the way to the Throne of Grace were like the Porta Sancta, inaccessible, save once in a quarter of a century. Conceive that it were now ten years since you, or I, or any other sinner, had been permitted to pray: and that fifteen long years must drag themselves away, before we could venture again to approach God; and that, at the most, we could not hope to pray more than two or three times in a lifetime! With what solicitude we should wait for the coming of that Holy Day!" It may be that through sheer negligence and the deceiving influence of good but weak intentions, we are missing one of life’s great privileges, because it is so commonplace.

O Lord, keep me sensitive to the grace that is round about me. May the familiar not become neglected! May I sec Thy goodness in my daily bread, and may the comfort of my home take my thoughts to the mercy seat of God!]. H. Jowett.

Seventh Day, Second Week Another practical reason for failure in prayer is found in impatience. We have made a few fitful and hurried attempts at praying and seeing no good consequence have impatiently called the practice worthless and have quit it. Suppose that a man should similarly make a dash at friend ship and after throwing off a few trial conversations should dogmatically conclude that there was nothing in friendship after all. But friendship is not really tested in 30 dashing and occasional a way; friendship is rather a life to be lived, habitually, persistently and its results are cumulative with the years. So prayer is a cumulative life of friendship with God. And it came to pass, as he was praying in a certain place, that when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, even as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Father, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive uspursins; for we ourselves also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And bring us not into temptation. Luke 11:1-4.

Note that when the disciples heard Jesus pray they became aware that praying like his was nothing that they could happen on, or drift into, or dash off i. I a moment of special inspiration. Such praying was a lesson to be learned by assiduous practice. "It is a great art to commune with God," said Thomas a Kempis. We would not expect to take a try at a violin once in a while and yet make much of it. But see how we treat this finer instrument of prayer! Which of these seven practical causes of failure, considered this week, apply to you? pitting a little individual failure against the experience of the race; welcoming the emphasis on work to the exclusion of the emphasis on prayer; thinking of prayer childishly until it has seemed irrational; valuing God less than the things he may give until prayer has looked mean; regarding prayer as an obligation rather than a privilege; neglecting prayer because it is so familiar an opportunity; impatience with praying after a few, fitful trials.

Come, O Lord, in much mercy down into my soul, and take possession and dwell there. A homely mansion, I confess, for so glorious a Majesty, but such as Thou art fitting up for the reception of Thee, by holy and fervent desires of Thine own inspiring. Enter then, and adorn, and make it such as Thou canst inhabit, since it is the work of Thy hands. Give me Thine own self, without which,

though Thou shouldst give me all that ever Thou hast made, yet could not my desires be satisfied. Let my soul ever seek Thee, and let me persist in seeking, till I have found, and am in full possession of Thee. Amen. St. Augustine (354- 430).

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

I When a man begins to make earnest with prayer, desiring to see what can be done with it in his life, he finds that one of his first necessities is a fairly clear idea of what praying means. In most lives, behind all theoretical perplexities about this problem, there lies a practical experience with prayer that is very disconcerting. When we were little children prayer was vividly real. We prayed with a naive confidence that we should obtain the things for which we asked. It made but little difference what the things were; for prayer was an Aladdin's lamp by rubbing which we summoned the angels of God to do our bidding, prayer was a blank check signed by the Almighty which we could fill in at will and present to the universe to be cashed. Such a conception of prayer is picturesquely revealed in the confession which Robertson of Brighton, the great English preacher, gives us in a paragraph about his childhood. "I remember when a very, very young boy," he says, "going out shooting with my father, and praying, as often as the dogs came to a point, that he might kill the bird. As he did not always do this, and as sometimes there would occur false points, my heart got bewildered. I believe I began to doubt sometimes the efficacy of prayer, some times the lawfulness of field sports. Once, too, I recollect when I was taken up with nine other boys at school to be unjustly punished, I prayed to escape the shame. The master, previously to flogging all the others, said to me, to the great bewilderment of the whole school: Little boy, I excuse you: I have particular reasons for it, and in fact, I was never flogged during the three years I was at that school. That incident settled my mind for a long time; only I doubt whether it did me any good, for prayer became a charm. I fancied myself the favorite of the Invisible. I knew that I carried about a talisman unknown to others which would save me from all harm. It did not make me better; it simply gave me security, as the Jew felt safe in being the descendant of Abraham, or went into battle under the protection of the Ark, sinning no less all the time."

Many of us can look back to some such experience as this with prayer; but, as with Robertson, serious doubts soon disturbed our simple-hearted trust. How often we rubbed this magic lamp, and no angels came! How steadily our faith in its efficacy gave place to doubt and then to confident denial! As experience increased, "we relied not on prayer but on foresight, work, money, and shrewdness to obtain our desires. Frederick Douglass said that in the days of his slavery he used often to pray for freedom, but that his prayer was not answered until it got down into his own heels and he ran away. In that type of prayer we come increasingly to believe; but where then, is the old trust that used to look for gifts from heaven? Indeed, when in anguish we have cried for things on which the worth and joy of life seemed utterly to depend, our faith has been staggered by the impotence of our petition and the seeming indifference of God. We have entered into Tennyson's crushing doubt, "Mother, praying God will save thy sailor, Even while thy head is bowed, His heavy shotted hammock shroud Sinks in its vast and wandering grave."

II This practical disappointment with prayer as a means of getting things leads in most men to one of two conclusions: either a man gives over praying altogether; or else, continuing to pray, he seeks a new motive for doing so to take the place of his old expectation of definite results from God. Men used to put flowers on graves because they thought that the departed spirits enjoyed

the odor. Although that superstition long has been overpassed, we still put flowers on graves; but we have supplied a motive of sentiment in place of the old realistic reason. So men who learned to pray in childlike expectation of getting precisely what they asked, are disillusioned by disappointment; but they continue prayer, with a new motive. "Never mind if you do not obtain your requests," men say in this second stage of their experience with prayer; "remember that it does you good to pray. The act itself enlarges your sympathies, quiets your mind, sweetens your disposition, widens the perspective of your thought. Give up all idea that some one does anything for you when you pray, but remember that you can do a great deal for yourself. In prayer we soothe our own spirits, calm our own anxieties, purify our own thoughts. Prayer is a helpful soliloquy; a comforting monologue; a noble form of auto-suggestion." So men returning disappointed from prayer as a means of obtaining definite requests, try to content themselves with prayer as the reflex action of their own minds. This is prayer's meaning, as they see it, put into an ancient parable: Two boys were sent into the fields to dig for hidden treasure, where all day they toiled in vain; and at evening, coming weary and ^disappointed home, they were met by their father. "After all," he said to comfort them, "you did get some thing digging itself was good exercise." How many today think thus of prayer as a form of spiritual gymnastics what Horace Bushnell called "mere dumb-bell exercise!" They lift the dumb-bell of intercessory prayer, not because they think it helps their friends, but because it strengthens the fiber of their own sympathy. They lift the dumb-bell of prayer for strength in temptation not because God helps them, but because the act itself steadies them. Prayer to them is one form of menticulture. But this kind of prayer is not likely to persist long. A thoughtful man balks at continuing to cry "O God," simply to improve the quality of his own voice. He shrinks from the process which Charles Kingsley describes in a letter as "Praying to oneself to change oneself; by which I mean the common method of trying by prayer to excite oneself into a state, a frame, an experience." Or if he does indulge in such spiritual exercise, he must call what he is doing by its right name; it is meditation, it is soliloquy, but it is not prayer. When a man indulges in this occasional self-communion for spiritual discipline; when no sense of fellowship with God is left in his soliloquies to remind one of Jesus great confession, "I am not alone, but I and my Father" (John 8:16), his meditation can be called prayer only in the qualified phrase of one of the parables, where a man "stood and prayed... with himself" (Luke 18:11). Is not this a typical experience of modern men? They find themselves impaled, as they think, upon the horns of a dilemma. "Either" they say, "prayer is an effective way of getting things by begging, or else prayer is merely the reflex action of a man's own mind." But the dilemma is false. Prayer may involve something of both, but the heart of prayer is neither the one nor the other. The essential nature of prayer lies in a realm higher than either, where all that is false in both is transcended and all that is true is emphasized. To Jesus, for example, the meaning of prayer was not that God would give him whatever he asked. God did not. That sustained and passionate petition where the Master thrice returned with blood-stained face, to cry, "Let this cup pass" (Matthew 26:39), had "No" for an aswer. Neither did prayer mean to Jesus merely the reflex action of his own mind. Jesus prayed with such power that the one thing which his disciples asked him to teach them was how to pray (Luke 11:1); he prayed with such conscious joy that at times the very fashion of his countenance was changed with the glory of it (Luke 9:28-29). Can you imagine him upon his knees then talking to himself? Was he merely catching the rebound of his own words? Surely, when the Master prayed, he met somebody. His life was impinged on by another Life. He "Felt a Presence that disturbed him with the joy of elevated thoughts." His prayer

was not monologue, but dialogue; not soliloquy, but friendship. For prayer is neither chiefly begging for things, nor is it merely self-communion; it is that loftiest experience within the reach of any soul, communion with God. Of course, this does not answer all questions about prayer, nor exhaust all its meaning. Definite petition has its important place, and later we must consider it. But at the beginning of our study, the thought of prayer as communion with God puts the center of the matter where it ought to be. The great gift of God in prayer is himself, and whatever else he gives is incidental and secondary. Let us, then, consider in particular the significance which this truth has for our idea of praying.

III For one thing, the thought of prayer as communion with God makes praying an habitual attitude, and not simply an occasional act. It is continuous fellowship with God, not a spasmodic demand for his gifts. Many people associate prayer exclusively with some special posture, such as kneeling, and with the verbal utterance of their particular wants. They often are disturbed because this act gives them no help, because it issues in no perceptible result at all. But even a casual acquaintance with the biographies of praying men makes clear that praying is to them a very different thing from saying prayers. One who all her life had identified with prayer certain appointed acts of devotion, properly timed and decently performed, exclaimed "Prayer has entirely left my life"; yet when asked whether she never was conscious of an unseen Presence in fellowship with whom she found peace and strength, she answered, "I could not live without that!" Well, that is prayer "not a mechanical repetition of verbal forms," as A. C. Benson puts it, "but a strong and secret uplifting of the heart to the Father of all."

Let any of the spiritual seers describe the innermost meaning of prayer to them, and always this habitual attitude of secret communion lies at the heart of the matter; they are seeking God himself, rather than his outward gifts. As Horace Bushnell says: "I fell into the habit of talking with God on every occasion. I talk myself asleep at night, and open the morning talking with him"; and Jeremy Taylor describes his praying as "making frequent colloquies and short discoursings between God and his own soul"; and Sir Thomas Browne, the famous physician, says, "I have resolved to pray more and to pray always, to pray in all places where quietness inviteth, in the house, on the highway, and on the street; and to know no street or passage in this city that may not witness that I have not forgotten God." Ask a monk like Brother Lawrence what praying means to him; and he answers, "That we should establish ourselves in a sense of God’s presence, by continually conversing with Him"; and ask the question of so different a man as Carlyle, and the reply springs from the same idea, "Prayer is the aspiration of our poor, struggling, heavy-laden soul toward its Eternal Father, and with or without words, ought not to become impossible, nor, I persuade myself, need it ever." To be sure, this habitual attitude is helped, not hindered, by occasional acts of devotion. Patriotism should extend over all the year, but that end is encouraged and not halted by special anniversaries like Independence Day; gratitude should be a continuous attitude, but all the months are thankfuller because of Thanksgiving Day; "Remember the week day to keep it holy" is a great commandment, but the experience of the race is clear that to keep one day each week uniquely sacred makes all days sacreder. So if all hours are to be in some degree God-conscious, some hours should be deliberately so. The biographies of praying men reveal regularity as well as spontaneity. One would expect John Wesley to undertake anything methodically, and prayer is no exception. In addition to his voluminous Journal. Wesley kept diaries, scores of which have been preserved, and on the first page of each this vow is found: "I resolve, Deo juvante, (i) to devote an

hour morning and evening to private prayer, no pretense, no excuse whatsoever; and (2) to converse Kara &e 6v (face to face with God), no lightness, no eirpaTreMa (facetiousness)." The greatest praying has generally meant habitual communion with God that expressed itself in occasional acts, and occasional acts that deepened habitual communion; but whatever the method, alike the basis and the end of all was abiding fellowship with God.

"There is a viewless, cloistered room,

As high as heaven, as fair as day,

Where, though my feet may join the throng,

My soul can enter in, and pray.

One hearkening, even, cannot know

When I have crossed the threshold o’er;

For He alone, who hears my prayer,

Has heard the shutting of the door."

IV For another thing, the thought of prayer as communion with God relieves us from the pressure of many intellectual difficulties. To pray for detailed gifts from God, to ask him in the realm where the laws of nature reign to serve us in this particular, or to refrain in that this sort of entreaty raises puzzling questions that baffle thought. To commune with God, however, is not only prayer in its deepest meaning; it is prayer in its simplest, most intelligible form. Here, at least, we can confidently deal with reality in prayer, undisturbed by the problems that often confuse us. For the standard objections to prayer the reign of natural law making answer impossible, the goodness and wisdom of God making changes in his plans undesirable need not trouble us here. When a man sits in fellowship with his friend, neither begging for things, nor trying to content himself with soliloquy, but gaining the inspiration, vision, peace, and joy which friendship brings through mutual communion, he does not fear the reign of law. The law of friendship is communion, and prayer is the fulfilling of the law. So fellowship in the spirit may be free and unencumbered, theoretical perplexities may be left far behind; and we may range out into a transforming experience of the divine friendship, when we learn that prayer is not beggary, it is not soliloquy, it is communion with God. This interpretation of the innermost nature of prayer as the search of the soul for God rather than for his gifts, has, to some, a modern sound, as though it were new in vented, perhaps, to put the possibility of praying out of reach of this generation’s special difficulties. But to call this view modern is to betray ignorance of what the choicest people of God in all centuries have meant by praying. Recall St. Augustine’s entreaty in the fourth century, "Give me thine own self, without whom, though thou shouldest give me all that ever thou hadst made, yet could not my desires be satisfied." Recall Thomas a Kempis in the fifteenth century, praying, "It is too small and unsatisfactory, whatsoever thou bestowest on me, apart from thyself." And then recall George Matheson in the nineteenth century: "Whether thou comest in sunshine or in rain, I would take thee into my heart joyfully. Thou art thyself more than the sunshine; thou art thyself compensation for the rain. It is thee and not thy gifts I crave." This view of prayer is neither peculiarly modern nor ancient; it is the common property of all Christian seers who have penetrated to the heart of praying. The intellectual puzzles are found in the fringes of prayer; prayer at its center is as simple

and as profound as friendship. The inevitable effect of this sort of communion is that God becomes real. Only to one who prays can God make himself vivid. Robertson of Brighton has already described for us his crude ideas of prayer in his boyhood. Listen to him, however, as at the age of twenty-five he writes: "It seems to me now that I can always see, in uncertainty, the leading of God’s hand after prayer, when everything seems to be made clear and plain before the eyes. In two or three instances I have had evidence of this which I cannot for a moment doubt." An experience like this makes God vivid, but to many people God is only a vague Being in whom they dimly believe but with whom they have no dealings. They have heard of him in the home from childhood and never have entirely escaped the influence of their early teaching about him; they have heard of him in the church and find it difficult to doubt what everywhere, always, and by all has been believed concerning him; they have heard of him from the philosophers, and when a scientist like Sir Oliver Lodge says, "Atheism is so absurd that I do not know how to put it into words," they see no reason to dispute. But all this is like the voice of many astronomers saying that there are rings about Saturn. Men believe it who never saw the rings. They believe it, but the rings have no influence upon their lives. They believe it, but they have no personal dealings with the object of their faith. So men think that God is, but they never have met him. They never have come into that personal experience of communion with God which says: "I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee" (Job 42:5) Nothing is real to us except those things with which we habitually deal. Men say that they do not pray because to them God is not real, but a truer statement generally would be that God is not real because they do not pray. Granted a belief that God is, the practice of prayer is necessary to make God not merely an idea held in the mind but a Presence recognised in the life. In an exclamation that came from the heart of personal religion, the Psalmist cried, "O God, thou art my God" (Psalms 63:1). To stand afar off and say "O God," is neither difficult nor searching. We do it when we give intellectual assent to a creed that calls God "Infinite in being and perfection; almighty, most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute; working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will." In such a way to say, "O God," is easy, but it is an inward and searching matter to say, "O God, thou art my God." The first is theology, the second is religion; the first involves only opinion, the second involves vital experience; the first can be reached by thought, the second must be reached by prayer; the first leaves God afar off, the second alone makes him real. To be sure, all Christian service where we consciously ally ourselves with God’s purpose, and all insight into history where we see God’s providence at work, help to make God real to us; but there is an inward certainty of God that can come only from personal communion with God. e God," said Emerson, "enters by a private door into every individual" One day in Paris, a religious procession carrying a crucifix passed Voltaire and a friend. Voltaire, who was generally regarded as an infidel, lifted his hat. "What!" the friend exclaimed, "are you reconciled with God?" And Voltaire with fine irony replied: "We salute, but we do not speak" That phrase is a true description of many men’s relationship with God. They believe that God is; they cannot explain the universe without him; they are theists, but they maintain no personal relationships with him. They salute, but they do not speak. They believe in the church, and, especially in sensitive moments when some experience has subdued them to reverence, they are moved by the dignity and exaltation of the church’s services, but they have no personal fellowship with God. They salute, but they do not speak. When men complain, then, that God is not real to them, the reply is fair: How can God be real to some of us? What conditions have we fulfilled that would make anybody real? Those earthly friendships

have most vivid reality and deepest meaning for us, where a constant sense of spiritual fellowship is refreshed occasionally by special reunions. The curtain that divides us from the thought of our friend is never altogether closed, but at times soul talks with soul in conscious fellowship. The friend grows real. We enter into new thankfulness for him, new appreciation of him, new intimacy with him. No friendship can sustain the neglect of such communion. Even God grows unreal, ceases to be our Unseen Friend and dwindles into a cold hypothesis to explain the world, when we forget communion, Jude expressed a deep insight into the necessities of the spiritual life, when he said: "Keep yourselves in the love of God" (Jude 1:21).

SUGGESTIONS FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

What are the primary practical difficulties in prayer?

Why does a child lose confidence in prayer if it is not literally answered?

How far do men continue to pray who believe in prayer as spiritual exercise?

What difficulties in prayer are set forth in Psalms 22:1-5? How far are these typical? In your experience, what have been the chief practical difficulties in praying?

If no petition were ever answered, would it still be worth while to pray?

What light does the Bible throw upon these practical difficulties!

What was the difference in the prayer of the prodigal on leaving and returning home?

What was the essential element in prayer in the experience of Jesus? Did Jesus receive everything he prayed for? Why did Jesus pray?

Why did the disciples ask Jesus to teach them to pray?

Why is communion with God the central idea of prayer?

What is the greatest gift that any friend gives another? What is the essence of any personal relationship? Is this true of relationship with God?

How does communion with God differ from the experience of human friendship?

What effect upon the prayer life has the experience of prayer as communion with God?

What is necessary for the maintenance of communion with God?

05.03. CHAPTER III. God's Care for the Individual

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DAILY READINGS First Day, Third Week

Perhaps the greatest single difficulty in maintaining the habit of prayer is our tendency to make of it a pious form and not a vital transaction. We begin by trying to pray and end by saying prayers. To urge ourselves to a practice that has thus become a stereotyped and lifeless form is futile. Nobody ever succeeds in praying as a tour de force; but if the act of prayer can be seen as the great Christians have seen it a vital and sustaining friendship with a God who cares for every one of us praying will cease being a form and become a force and a privilege. Note the vitality of prayer as the Psalmist has experienced it, My soul, wait thou in silence for God only;

For my expectation is from him.

He only is my rock and my salvation:

He is my high tower; I shall not be moved.

With God is my salvation and my glory:

The rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.

Trust in him at all times, ye people;

Pour out your heart before him:

God is a refuge for us. Psalms 62:5-8. In confirmation of this same experience in our own day, consider the testimony of Sir Wilfred Grenfell: "The privilege of prayer to me is one of the most cherished possessions, because faith and experience alike convince me that God himself sees and answers, and his answers I never venture to criticise. It is only my part to ask. It is entirely his to give or withhold, as he knows is best. If it were otherwise, I would not dare to pray at all. In the quiet of home, in the heat of life and strife, in the face of death, the privilege of speech with God is inestimable. I value it more because it calls for nothing that the wayfaring man, though a fool, cannot give that is, the simplest expression to his simplest desire. When I can neither see, nor hear, nor speak, still I can pray so that God can hear. When I finally pass through the valley of the shadow of death, I expect to pass through it in conversation with him."

O Lord, renew our spirits and draw our hearts unto Thy self that our work may not be to us a burden, but a delight; and give us such a mighty love to Thee as may sweeten all our obedience. Oh, let us not serve Thee with the spirit of bondage as slaves, but with the cheerfulness and gladness of children, delighting ourselves in Thee and rejoicing in Thy work. Amen. Benjamin Jenks (1646-1724).

Second Day, Third Week

One of the root reasons why prayer becomes merely a pious form is that while people believe in God in a general and vague fashion, they do not vividly grasp the idea that God cares for and is dealing with every one of us.

How think ye? If any man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and go unto the mountains, and seek that which goeth astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth over it more than over the ninety and nine which have not gone astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish. Matthew 18:12-14. A man may hold true this individual care of God for each of his children, and still may not practice habitual prayer, but it is difficult to see how anyone can practice habitual prayer if he does not hold for true that God loves every one of us. Who can continue praying, in any Christian sense, to a God that does not care? For prayer, at least, a God who does not care, does not count. Haeckel, the materialist, has displaced the Creator by a primal substance which he solemnly crowns Emperor of the universe under the title of "Mobile Cosmic Ether." Can we imagine anyone finding vital and sustaining help in supplications addressed to such an object, or are vast congregations likely to be stirred in adoration, praying, "O Mobile Cosmic Ether, hallowed be thy name!" Why not? Is not the reason simply this, that the God to whom real prayer is made must care for us as a race and as individuals?

Almighty God, the refuge of all that arc distressed, grant unto us that, in all trouble of this our mortal life, we may flee to the knowledge of Thy lovingkindness and tender mercy; that so, sheltering ourselves therein, the storms of life may pass over us, and not shake the peace of God that is within us. Whatsoever this life may bring us, grant that it ma\ never take from us the full faith that Thou art our Father. Grant us Thy light, that we may have life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. A men. George Dawson (1821-1876).

Third Day, Third Week Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father: but the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows. Matthew 10:29-31.

Let us face again today that formality in prayer that comes from a failure to grasp the individual love of God. There are real difficulties for the mind to face when it tries to believe that God so cares for each of us, but perhaps even greater for most people is the difficulty that the imagination faces. In this vast universe how can we picture God as caring for every individual thing, even to stricken sparrows and to the hairs of our head? Consider, however, the scientific truth of gravitation, that the whole earth rises to meet a child’s ball, just as truly as the ball falls to meet the earth, and that only the lack of sensitiveness in our instruments prevents us from measuring the earth’s ascent as it responds to the pull of the child’s toy. Can we imagine that? Is it not unimaginable, though plainly true? And if in a gravitate system a whole planet moves to meet a tossed ball, we ought not to dismiss, for reasons of weak imagination, the truth that in a love-system of persons, the Eternal God responds to each child’s approach. As Kipling sings, "Who clears the grounding berg, And guides the grinding floe, He hears the cry of the little kit fox, And the lemming on the snow."

O Thou good omnipotent, who so cares for every one of us, as if Thou carest for him alone; and so for all, as if all were but one! Blessed is the man who loveth Thee, and his friend in Thee, and his enemy for Thee. I behold how some things pass away that others may replace them, but Thou

dost never depart. O God, my Father, supremely good, Beauty of all things beautiful, to Thee will I intrust what soever I have received from Thee, and so shall I lose nothing. Thou madest me for Thyself, and my heart is restless until it repose in Thee. Amen. St. Augustine (354-430).

Fourth Day, Third Week Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me. And the glory which thou hast given me I have given unto them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me. John 17:20-23.

It is easy to think that God’s love centered about the Master, but consider what it would mean for prayer vitally to believe that God so cares for each of us "lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me!" As Silvester Home puts it in his Yale lectures: "What is the Gospel? It is contained in a verse of one of the greatest Christian hymns, Were the whole realm of Nature mine, That were a present far too small! Love so amazing, so Divine, Demands my soul! That is to say that my soul is a greater and bigger thing than the whole realm of nature. Do you believe it? I agree it is the most romantic of all beliefs. It affirms that the soul of every forced laborer on the Amazon is of more value than all the mines of Johannesburg, all the diamonds of Kimberly, all the millions of all the magnates of America. It affirms that in God’s sight all the suns and stars that people infinite space, are of inferior worth to one human spirit dwelling, it may be, in the degraded body of some victim of drink or lust, some member of the gutter population of a great city who has descended to his doom by means of the multiplied temptations with which our so-called society environs him. It is a romantic creed. But if it is not true Christianity itself is false." Has your failure in prayer been due to your failure in apprehending for yourself this heart of the Gospel?

O God, mercifully grant unto us that the fire of Thy love may burn up in us all things that displease Thee, and make us meet for Thy heavenly Kingdom. Roman Breviary.

Fifth Day, Third Week For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help us in time of need. Hebrews 4:15-16.

Note the sequence of thought in these verses: first, the revelation in Christ of a God who cares; and second, resultant confidence in the reality of prayer. In contrast with this reality of prayer to those who apprehend the personal love of God, consider how many people know prayer only as an inherited bit of propriety. Prayer to them is a formality because it is a practice taught in infancy, and maintained by force of habit as a tradition. It is not vital. It does not mean "Grace to help us in time of need." They are true to George Eliot’s description of Hetty in Adam Bede: "Hetty was one of those numerous people who have had god-fathers and god-mothers, learned their catechism, been confirmed, and gone to church every Sunday, and yet for any practical result of strength in life, or trust in death, have never appropriated a single Christian idea or Christian feeling." Over against such a futile form of religion consider a vital prayer like this of Thomas a Kempis, founded on the thought of God’s individual love.

Ah, Lord God, Thou holy Lover of my soul, when Thou comest into my soul, all that is within me shall rejoice. Thou art my Glory and the exultation of my heart; Thou art my Hope and Refuge in the day of my trouble. Set me free from all evil passions, and heal my heart of all inordinate affections; that, being inwardly cured and thoroughly cleansed, I may be made fit to love, courageous to suffer, steady to persevere. Nothing is sweeter than Love, nothing more courageous, nothing fuller nor better in heaven and earth; because Love is born of God, and cannot rest but in God, above all created things. Let me love Thee more than my self, nor love myself but for Thee. Amen. Thomas a Kempis (1379-1471).

Sixth Day, Third Week To many people prayer is a pious practice rather than a vital transaction, not so much because it is an inherited bit of propriety, but because it is looked upon as a good work which wins merit in the eyes of God. Men think of prayer as a safe practice to indulge in if they are to keep on good terms with God. They go through it as a courtier might observe the rituals of obeisance that please the king and the neglect of which might get a careless man into trouble. Prayer to many is a safety appliance, like a lightning-rod, upward raised lest the Eternal God, seeing their neglect, fall foul of them. It is founded on fear. They conceive that the saying of prayer is a measure of protection which they would better attend to. What a pitiful misunderstanding of prayer! Prayer is not a "good work" in return for which a blessing is given, as men buy and sell over the counter. Our pious practices are as useless as a Tibetan prayer wheel, unless at the heart of them all is conscious fellowship with the Father who cares. Listen to Isaiah’s expression of God’s contempt for formal worship without spiritual meaning, What unto me is the multitude of your sacrifices? saith Jehovah: I have had enough of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to trample my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; new moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with iniquity and the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me; I am weary of bearing them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Isaiah 1:11-15.

Most loving Lord, give me a childlike love of Thee, which may cast out all fear. Amen. E. B. Pusey (1800-1882).

Seventh Day, Third Week For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For ye received not the spirit of bondage again unto fear; but ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. Romans 8:14-17. In the light of this passage how impossible to think of saying prayers as merely a pious practice. Prayer seen in the light of this Christian truth becomes at once the claiming of our sonship, the appropriation of our heritage. All through the New Testament the reader is conscious that wealth is waiting to be claimed. "Unsearchable riches of Christ," "Rich toward God," "Heirs of God," phrases such as these suggest the sense of spiritual wealth in which the first Christians rejoiced. They had found an Eldorado in the Gospel that God loved every son of man. Now, prayer is the active appropriation of this wealth. Of how many of us is it true that friendship with God is an unclaimed heritage! We have the title-deeds in our church membership, but we do not have the spiritual riches in our lives. In our prayers we are not appropriating our faith that God really does

care.

Grant me, even me, my dearest Lord, to know Thee, and love Thee, and rejoice in Thee. And, if I cannot do these perfectly in this life, let me at least advance to higher degrees every day, till I can come to do them in perfection. Let the knowledge of Thee increase in me here, that it may be full hereafter. Let the love of Thee grow every day more and more here, that it may be perfect hereafter; that my joy may be great in itself, and full in Thee. I know, O God, that Thou art a God of truth; O make good Thy gracious promises to me, that my joy may be full. Amen. St. Augustine (354-430).

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

I When a man, making earnest with prayer, sets himself to practice communion with God, he is likely to awaken with a start some day to a disturbing reflection. "This thing that I am doing," he well may say, "presupposes that the Almighty God takes a personal interest in me. I am taking for granted when I pray that the Eternal is specially solicitous on my behalf. Praying may seem a simple matter, but on what an enormous assumption does it rest!" Now, this reflection accords entirely with the facts. Prayer does involve confidence that God takes interest in the individual who prays. The fact, for example, that the Bible is preeminently a book of prayer, involves of necessity the companion fact that the God of the Bible cares for individuals. He knows all the stars by name (Psalms 147:4); he numbers the hairs of our heads (Matthew 10:30); of all the sparrows "not one of them is forgotten in the sight of God" (Luke 12:6). John is expressing his thought of God as well as his interpretation of Christ when he says, "He calleth his own sheep by name" (John 10:3). God is like a shepherd who misses even one lost from his flock, a housewife who seeks for a single coin, a father who grieves for one boy gone wrong (Luke 15:1-32). Of all the children in the world, says Jesus, "It is not the will of your Father... that one of these little ones should perish" (Matthew 18:14). Throughout the Bible, and especially in the New Testament, God is not a king dealing with men in masses. He is no Napoleon, who, warned by Metternich that a campaign would cost a million men, said, "What are a million men to me?" God is a father, and the essence of fatherhood is individual care for the children. For all that there are so many of us, as St. Augustine said, He loves us every one as though there were but one of us to lore." That is the message of the Book, and it underlies the possibility of vital prayer. This truth that God cares for every one of us is easy to. speak about, beautiful to contemplate, but hard to believe. How can God care for each of us? We know the heart of Jesus well enough to understand that he loved every one he met. But God? How can we make it real to ourselves that he who sustains the milky way, who holds Orion and the Pleiades in his leash, knows us by name?

II For one thing, we seem too small and insignificant for him to know. If God cares for each of us, that presupposes in us a degree of value and importance surpassing imagination; and as one considers the vastness of the physical universe, it seems almost unbelievable that individual men can be worth so much. Even the Psalmist felt the wonder of man’s worth in such a world, when he cried: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?" (Psalms 8:3-4). The Psalmist, however, never saw more than 6, 000 stars on the clearest night when he looked at the sky from the heights of Zion. We today can see 100, 000, 000 of them through our telescopes; and when we put a photographic plate, instead of our eyes, at the orifice

of the instrument, we obtain indications of multitudes more. When, therefore, a modern psalmist like Tennyson thinks of man's possible value in so great a universe, he feels the terrific urge of doubt; he gathers all the activities of mankind, our wars, politics, arts and sciences, and cries, "What is it all but the murmur of gnats In the gleam of a million million suns?" How in the face of this new knowledge of the universe can we pray in the confidence that God knows and cares for each one of us?

Many a man's faith is undone and his prayers stopped by this appalling contrast between the size of the world and his own smallness. The microscope, however, should counteract a little the disheartening influence of the telescope. It is evident that the Power which cares for the stars cares for all things with utter disregard of size. Inside any common pin as marvelous activity is going on as ever was present among the stars. Here are electrons so many and so small that the race in a million years could not count them, and yet not one electron touches another. In comparison with their size they are as far apart as the planets of a solar system. Endlessly they revolve about each other, and no one ever slips by an infinitesimal degree from the control of law. Not strong reason but weak imagination leads us to be terrified by the mere size of the universe into the thought that God cannot care for us. So far as physical nature has any testimony to bear on the matter at all, she says, "There is nothing too great for the Creator to accomplish, and nothing too small for him to attend to. The microscopic world is his, as well as the stars." The real answer to our doubt, however, comes not from physical nature at all, but from spiritual insight. We are so small that God cannot care for every one of us? But surely, we ourselves are not accustomed to judge comparative value by size. As children we may have chosen a penny rather than a dime because the penny was larger; but as maturity arrives, that basis of choice is outgrown. The dearest possessions of the human race diamonds and little children, for example are rather notable for their comparative smallness. A mother's love for her baby is not a matter of pounds and ounces. When one believes in God at all, the consequence is plain. God must have at least our spiritual insight to perceive the difference between size and worth. Mere bulk can not deceive him. He must know where in all his universe the real values lie. As to where the real values do lie, the thoughtful of all races have unanimously agreed that they are found inside personality, not outside of it. Tennyson's word is a summary of the best thought of all time: "For tho the Giant Ages heave the hill And break the shore, and evermore Make and break, and work their will Tho world on world in myriad myriads roll Round us, each with different powers, And other forms of life than ours, What know we greater than the soul?" The thinker is of nobler worth than any external thing that he can think about; the seer is more wonderful than all he sees; and righteousness, friendship, generosity, courage, wisdom, love, functions of personality, all of them, are, so far as value goes, worth more than infinite galaxies of stars. No star ever knew that it was even being gazed upon. No star ever felt God's hand upon it, or was moved by gratitude for its creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life. As an astronomer watches the unconscious heavens, does not God know, as we do, that the man, with his powers of vision, intellect, volition, and character, is far more marvelous than all the stars he sees? We may as well deny God's existence altogether, as, granting his existence, affirm that he is enamoured by hugeness, in love with avoirdupois, and blind to spiritual values. To gain the whole world and lose a soul would be a poor bargain for God as well as for man. Personality is the one infinitely valuable treasure in the universe. If God is, he cares; if he cares, he cares for personality. "For Jehovah's portion is his people" (Deuteronomy 32:9).

III The difficulty which many experience in trying to conceive of God's individual care, is complicated by the fact that not only are we small, but there are countless multitudes of us. With so many people, how can God know us all by name? This difficulty is one of the commonest stumbling blocks to prayer, and yet its mere statement ought to be its sufficient refutation. Could anything be more plainly an attempt to make God in man's image than this suggestion that his powers may be inadequate to his responsibilities? "It is hard for us to keep individual interest in many people," we are saying, "therefore it must be hard for God." This crude and childish imposition of our human limitations on God, this fear that he will find it trying to remember so many, springs not from good reason but from immature thoughtlessness.

"There was an old woman, who lived in a shoe; She had so many children, she didn t know what to do." Is that nursery rhyme to represent our picture of God?

We may help ourselves to the conception of God's individual care, which is essential to all vital and earnest praying, by noting that knowledge, when it moves out toward omniscience, always breaks up vague masses into individual units, and cares for each of them. When an ignoramus goes into a library, he can see only long rows of books, almost indistinguishable as units. But when the librarian comes, the student and lover of books, he knows each one by name. Each volume has its special associations; he knows the edition, the value, the contents, the author, the purpose. He takes down one book after another, revealing his individual appreciation of each. The more he knows, as a librarian, the less he sees books in the mass; the more he knows them one by one.

Increasing knowledge is always thus not extensive only but intensive. The average man returns from seeing the turbines at Niagara, with a vague impression of enormous masses moving at tremendous speed. But the engineer? He knows every bolt and screw, every lever and piston: he knows the particular details of secret bearing and balanced strain; he pokes his wrench around dark corners for hidden bolts that the spectator never guessed were there. The more he knows, as an engineer, the more he sees the details and not the bulk. Ignorance sees things in mass] knowledge breaks all masses up into units and knows each one; omniscience perfectly understands and cares for every most minute detail.

Consider then the meaning of God's knowledge of men. When a stranger thinks of China, he imagines a vague multitude, with faces that look all alike. When a missionary thinks of China, the vague multitude is shaken loose in one spot, and individuals there stand out, separately known and loved. When God thinks of China, he knows every one of the Chinese by name. He does for humanity what a librarian does for his books, cr an engineer for his turbines. We stand, every one, separate in his thought. He lifts us up from the obscurity of our littleness; he picks us out from the multitude of our fellows; he gives to our lives the dignity of his individual care. The Eternal God calls us every one by name. He is not the God of mankind in the mass; he is the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob! All great prayers have lived in the power of this individual relation ship with God. They have said with the Psalmist, "I will give thanks in the great assembly: I will praise thee among much people." (Psalms 35:18.)

IV So important is the vital apprehension of this truth that we may well approach it from another angle. When one believes in God at all, he must believe that God has a purpose for the universe as a whole. The seers have uttered this faith in scores of figures, but no one of them is adequate

to express the full meaning of this confidence that creation means something, has a goal, is not a blind accident, but a wise plan. "Nothing walks with aimless feet," says Tenny son. "There are no accidents with God," says Longfellow. All who believe in God must somehow share this faith. For them there is a divine purpose that "binds in one book the scattered leaves of all the universe." Indeed, most men do believe this. The contrary position makes life too empty and futile to be easily tolerable. If there is no purpose in creation at all, if it came from nowhere, is going nowhere, and means nothing, then the world is like a busy seamstress sewing on a machine with no thread in it. The centuries move like cloths beneath the biting needle, but no thread binds them. Nothing is being done. The years will pass; the machine will wear out; the scrap-heap will claim it; but there will be nothing to show for all its toil. That is the world without divine purpose; and because such an outlook on life makes it utterly vain and futile, most men do believe in "one far-off divine event, toward which the whole creation moves." They believe that there is a thread of divine purpose in this ma chine of the universe and that it binds the separate centuries together. As soon as we speak of this general purpose of God, however, an inevitable corollary faces us. Can God have a purpose for the whole and not for the parts? Can an architect thoroughly plan a house without planning the details? Shall he stand upon the site and say in a vague and sweeping way, "Let there be a house"? But, if you ask him about the chimney angles and the window frames, shall he answer, "There is no plan for them"? Rather planning a house consists in arranging the parts. And when we turn from dealing with things to deal with persons, each one so individual and unique, how much more clear the truth is! No father can love his family in general, without loving the several mem bers of it in particular. So God can neither care nor plan for his world as a whole, without caring and planning for each of the individuals that make his world. The faith of the Bible, in the individual knowledge, love, and purpose of God for each of us is not mere sentiment. It is the inevitable corollary of theism. No man can think through the meaning of belief in God without coming to it. Purpose for the universe and purpose for each life are two aspects of the same thing and they mutually involve each other. You can as easily find a shield with only one side as a purpose that concerns the whole and not the parts. Here, too, God calls us every one by name. As an Indian poet sings, "The subtle anklets that ring on the feet of an insect when it moves are heard of Him."

Whether, therefore, we consider the fact that God must care for value rather than for size; or the fact that knowledge, as it grows, always breaks up masses into units and under stands each one of them; or the fact that no love and purpose in general can fail to include the particular parts, we come to the same conclusion: God’s individual care for us is not only a reasonable, it is an inevitable corollary of our faith. Of course, God numbers the hairs of our heads! Just that sort of thing infinite knowledge necessarily implies. Of course, the Scripture cries in a passage, quoted by Jesus, "All of you sons of the Most High!" (Psalms 82:6). Just that -must be said when the fatherhood of God is believed at all. Of course, it is not God’s will that "one of these little ones should perish" (Matthew 18:14). How could he care for all and not for each? Of course, Jesus says, "Having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret" (Matthew 6:6). For trust in God’s individual love, if it have normal growth, must always flower out in prayer.

Indeed, prayer is the personal appropriation of this faith that God cares for each of us. When a man really prays he no longer leaves his thought of God’s individual care as a theory, held in his mind, beautiful but ineffective. He now avails himself of the truth which he sees; he thrusts his life

out upon it; he enters into that fellowship with God of which the creed is the theory, and prayer is the practice. It is one thing to think that a man is your friend; it is another thing actively to enter into friendly relations with him. So some men merely believe that God is, and that he cares for them; but some richly profit by their faith, so acting upon it in prayer that vague belief about God passes over into transforming relationship with him. Belief by itself is a map of the un- visited land of God's care; prayer is actually traveling the country. The tragedy of the church is to be found in the thousands who fondle their credal maps, on which are marked the roadways of God's friendship, but who do not travel. They would resent any sceptical doubt about God's love for every individual, but they do not in habitual reliance and communion take advantage of the faith they hold. They miss the daily guidance, the consciousness of divine resource, the sustaining sense of God's presence, which can come only to those who both believe that God cares for each, and who in habitual communion with him are making earnest with their faith.

When, therefore, we have satisfied our minds of God's individual care, we have arrived at the beginning, not at the end of the matter. Now comes the vital and searching task of laying hold on the experience of that care, in whose existence we believe. We must pass from thought into spiritual activity, from the "industrious squirrel work of the brain" into an adventure of the soul in the practice of prayer. The Gospel offers a great privilege; prayer appropriates it. In Calvin's vivid figure, "Prayer digs out those treasures which the Gospel of the Lord discovers to our faith."

SUGGESTIONS FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

What makes prayer a pious form rather than a vital transaction?

What gave vitality to the Psalmist's prayer? What is the difference between a Buddhist turning a prayer wheel and a Christian praying? What merit is there in praying?

What is the estimate of the value of the individual in the Christian religion?

What was Jesus view as set forth in the Daily Readings?

What place has the individual had in the history of the Church?

How does the Christian religion differ from other religions in its estimate of the worth of the individual?

How far are Christians justified in basing their confidence in prayer on God's care for the individual?

Is the possibility of prayer dependent upon God's care for the individual?

To what extent is prayer futile if God does not care for us?

What are your chief difficulties in a belief that God cares for each individual? To what extent do you feel these difficulties make prayer impossible?

How far is it reasonable to think that God cares for us?

What difference will it make in my prayers if I really believe God cares for me as an individual?

05.04. CHAPTER IV. Prayer and the Goodness of God

CHAPTER IV. Prayer and the Goodness of God

DAILY READINGS First Day, Fourth Week And there came near unto him James and John, the sons of Zebedee, saying unto him, Teacher, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall ask of thee. And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? And they said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and one on thy left hand, in thy glory. But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask. Arc ye able to drink the cup that I drink? or to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? Mark 10:35-38. Of all misconceptions of prayer, none is more common than the idea that it is a way of getting God to do our will. Note the request which James and John made of our* Lord: they wanted him to put himself at their disposal; they wished their will for themselves to be in absolute control, with the Master as aider and abettor of it. Prayer to God, so conceived, is simply self-will, expecting the Almighty to back it up and give it right-of-way. Consider how often our praying is thus our demand on God that he shall do exactly what we want; and then in contrast, note this real prayer of D. L. Moody:

Use me then, my Saviour, for whatever purpose, and in whatever way, Thou mayest require. Here is my poor heart, an empty vessel; fill it with Thy grace. Here is my sinful and troubled soul; quicken it and refresh it with Thy love. Take my heart for Thine abode; my mouth to spread abroad the glory of Thy name; my love and all my powers, for the advancement of Thy believing people; and never suffer the steadfastness and confidence of my faith to abate that so at all times I may be enabled from the heart to say, "Jesus needs me, and I Him." D. L. Moody.

Second Day, Fourth Week The trouble with many folk is that they believe in only a part of God. They believe in his love, and thinking of that alone they are led into entreating him as though he might be coaxed and wheedled into giving them what they want. They argue that because he is benign and kindly he will give in to a child’s entreaty and do what the child happens to desire. They do not really believe in God’s wisdom his knowledge of what is best for all of us, and in his will his plan for the character and the career of each of us. When anyone believes in the whole of God, is sure that he has a wise and a good purpose for every child of his, and for all the world, prayer inevitably becomes not the endeavor to get God to do our will, but the endeavor to open our lives to God so that God can do in us what he wants to do. Consider, in the light of this truth, the prayer of the Master in Gethsemane:

Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto his disciples, Sit ye here, while I go yonder and pray. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and sore troubled. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: abide ye here, and watch with me. And he went forward a little, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me: never theless, not as I will, but as thou wilt. And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter

not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Again a second time he went away, and prayed, saying, My Father, if this cannot pass away, except I drink it, thy will be done. And he came again and found them sleep ing, for their eyes were heavy. And he left them again, and went away, and prayed a third time, saying again the same words. Matthew 26:36-44.

O Lord, Thou knowcst what is best for us, let this or that be done, as Thou shalt please. Give what Thou wilt, and how much Thou wilt, and when Tho-u wilt. Deal with me as Thou thinkest good, and as best pleaseth Thee. Set me where Thou wilt, and deal with me in all things just as Thou wilt. Behold, I am Thy servant, prepared for all things; for I desire not to live unto myself, but unto Thee; and Oh, that I could do it worthily and perfectly! Amen. Thomas a Kempis.

Third Day, Fourth Week

Let us this week consider particularly the ways in which the practice of prayer opens our lives to God so that his will can be done in and through us. For one thing, prayer, as we now are thinking of it, involves solitude, where the voice of God has a chance to be heard. And when ye pray, ye shall not be as the hypocrites: for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee. Matthew 6:5-6.

Consider the testimony of different sorts of men to the value of occasional solitude in the midst of a busy life. Says Walter Savage Landor, the poet, "Solitude is the ante-chamber of God; only one step more, and you can be in his immediate presence." Goethe says, "No one can produce anything important unless he isolates himself." "Chinese" Gordon writes to his sister, "Getting quiet does one good it is impossible to hear God’s voice in a whirl of visits you must be more or less in the desert to use the scales of the sanctuary, to see and weigh the true value of things and sayings." And an anonymous epigram hits off the important truth, "He is a wonderful man who can thread a needle while at cudgels in a crowd." How much time, away from the distractions of business, and the strife of tongues, are we giving to the enriching use of solitude?

O God, by whom the meek are guided in judgment, and light riseth up in darkness for the godly; grant us, in all our doubts and uncertainties, the grace to ask what Thou wouldest have us to do; that the spirit of Wisdom may save us from all false choices, and that in Thy light we may see light, and in Thy straight path may not stumble, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. William Bright.

Fourth Day, Fourth Week

Prayer opens our lives to the guidance of God because by its very nature it encourages the receptive mood. The dominant mood today is active; but some things never come into life until a man is receptive. That a boy should run many errands for his father and should be faithful and energetic in doing it is of great importance; but the most far-reaching consequences in that boy’s life are likely to come from some quiet hour, when he sits with his father, and has his eyes opened to a new idea of life, which the father never could give him in his more active moods. God’s trouble to get people to listen is set forth in the eighty-first Psalm:

Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee:

But my people hearkened not to my voice;

And Israel would none of me.

So I let them go after the stubbornness of their heart,

That they might walk in their own counsels.

Oh that my people would hearken unto me. Psalms 81:8, Psalms 81:11-13.

Lord, I know not what I ought to ask of Thee; Thou only knowest what I need; Thou lovest me better than I know how to love myself. O Father! give to Thy child that which he himself knows not how to ask. I dare not ask either for crosses or consolations: I simply present myself before Thee, I open my heart to Thee. Behold my needs *which I know not myself; see and do according to Thy tender mercy. Smite, or heal; depress me, or raise me up: I adore all Thy purposes without knowing them; I am silent; I offer myself in sacrifice: I yield myself to Thee; I would have no other desire than to accomplish Thy will. Teach me to pray. Pray Thyself in me. Amen. Frangois de la Mothe Fenelon (1651-1715).

Fifth Day, Fourth Week

Jesus therefore answered them, and said, My teaching is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself. He that speak- eth from himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh the glory of him that sent me, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him. John 7:16-18.

Prayer opens our lives to God so that his will can be done in and through us, because in true prayer we habitually put ourselves into the attitude of willingness to do whatever God wills. If a young man says, "I am willing to be a lawyer, but not a business man; I am willing to be a physi cian, but not a medical missionary," he will never discover what God really wants him to be. He must hand God a carte blanche to be filled in as God wills, and there must be no provisos and reservations to limit the guidance of God. If a man of whose wisdom and motives we are suspicious asks us to do what he is about to demand, we may well say, "Tell me what you expect and I will tell you whether or not I will do it." But we may not take that attitude toward God; we may not distrust his wisdom, or his love, or his power to see us through what he demands. We must be willing to do whatever he wills. True prayer is deliberately putting ourselves at God’s disposal.

O Lord, let me not henceforth desire health or life, except to spend them for Thee, with Thee, and in Thee. Thou alone knowest what is good for me; do, therefore, what seemeth Thee best. Give to me, or take from me; conform my will to Thine; and grant that, with humble and perfect submission, and in holy confidence, I may receive the orders of Thine eternal Providence; and may equally adore all that comes to me from Thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Blaise Pascal (1623-1662).

Sixth Day, Fourth Week And Jehovah spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. Exodus 33:11. And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, And Abra ham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness; and he was called the friend of God. James 2:23. The most transforming influences in life are personal friendships. Everyone who meets us influences us, but friend ship opens the heart to the ideas, ideals, and spiritual quality of another life, until we

are susceptible to everything that the friend is and sensitive to everything that he thinks. Desdemona describes the natural effect of close friendship:

"My heart’s subdued Even to the very quality of my lord."

Consider then what persistent fellowship with God will mean in changing life’s quality and tone. Henry Drummond said, "Ten minutes spent in Christ’s society every day; aye, two minutes, if it be face to face and heart to heart, will make the whole life different." In how many people is the fine quality which all feel and none can describe, the result of this inner fellowship! Some things cannot be bought or earned or achieved; they must be caught, they are transmitted by contact as fragrance is. Perhaps the gieatest consequence of prayer is just this atmosphere which the life carries away with it, as Moses came with shining face from the communion of his heart with God. True prayer is habitually putting oneself under God’s influence.

We rejoice that in all time men have found a refuge in Thee, and that prayer is the voice of love, the voice of plead ing, and the voice of thanksgiving. Our souls overflow toward Thee like a cup when full; nor can we forbear; nor shall we search to see if our prayers have been registered, or whether of the things asked we have received much, or more, or anything. That we have had permission to feel ourselves in Thy presence, to take upon ourselves something of the light of Thy countenance, to have a consciousness that Thy thoughts are upon us, to experience the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in any measure this is an answer to prayer transcending all things that we can think of. We are glad that we can glorify Thee, that we can rejoice Thee, that it does make a difference to Thee what we do, and that Thou dost enfold us in a consciousness of Thy sympathy with us, of how much Thou art to us, and of what we are to Thee. Henry Ward Beecher.

Seventh Day, Fourth Week Yet thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel. Isaiah 43:22. And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee; for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us by means of our iniquities. Isaiah 64:7.

Consider the reasonableness of the prophet’s vehement condemnation of prayerlessness, in view of this week’s truth. Take out of life solitude where God’s voice can be heard, the receptive mood that welcomes guidance, the willingness to do whatever God wills that puts itself habitually at God’s disposal, and the fellowship that gives God’s secret influence its opportunity; and what can God do with any life? Two very young girls were discussing prayer. Said one: "I am not going to pray again for two weeks." After an interval of shocked silence, the other exclaimed: "Poor God!" Does not this exclamation reveal a true philosophy of prayer? Think of the things God wants to give to and do through our lives, and consider how the prayerless, unreccptive heart blockades his will.

Almighty God, and most merciful Father, give us, we beseech Thee, that grace that we may duly examine the in most of our hearts, and our most secret thoughts, how we stand before Thee; and thai we may henceforward never be drawn to do anything that may dishonor Thy name: but may persevere in all good purposes, and in Thy Holy service, unto our life’s end; and grant that we may now this present day, seeing it is as good as nothing that we have done hitherto, perfectly begin to walk before Thee, as be- cometh those that are called to an inheritance of light in Christ. Amen. George Hickes (1642-1715).

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

I

Strangely enough, when we have convinced ourselves of the individual love and care of God, we do not so much evade difficulty as encounter it; for we find ourselves running straight into the arms of one of the commonest perplexities concerning prayer. God is all wise and all good; why should we urge on him our erring and ignorant desires? He knows what we need; why tell him? His love purposes the best for us; why beseech him? Why should we, weak and fallible mortals, urge the good God to work good in the world? Is not Rousseau speaking sound sense when he says: "I bless God, but I pray not. Why should I ask of him that he would change for me the course of things? I who ought to love, above all, the order established by his wisdom and main tained by his Providence, shall I wiish that order to be dis solved on my account?" This objection to prayer is the stronger because reverence and humility before God seem to be involved in it. "We will take whatever God sends," says the objector, "we will pray for nothing. We trust him perfectly. Can we in our igno rance suggest to him any excellent thing of which he has not thought or which he has forgotten, or can we in our weakness cajole him to do something which he has purposed otherwise? Rather Let him do what seemeth him good! " This sort of speech has the ring of sincere faith. It comes from a strong and glad belief in the providence of God. The man shrinks from prayer because it seems silly and pre sumptuous for ignorance to instruct perfect wisdom, for human evil to attempt the persuasion of perfect love to do good.

It is interesting, then, to discover that the Master’s life of urgent prayer was founded on these very ideas which now are used as arguments against prayer. No one, before or since, has believed quite so strongly as he did in the wisdom and love of God. Did they seem to him, then, reasons for abandoning prayer? On the contrary, the love and wisdom of God were the foundations of his prayer. In God’s goodness he saw a solid reason for praying: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father . . . give good things to them that ask him?" (Matthew 7:11). In God’s wisdom he found assuring confidence, when he prayed. "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him" (Matthew 6:8). Just because of God’s perfect knowledge and love, the Master seems to say, pray with confidence. Do not think that you can add to God’s information about your need or can inspire in him an increased good-will by your petition. You cannot. He knows your need in advance and is more willing to give than you are to take. But one thing you can do. You can open the way for God to do what he wants to do. Prayer cannot change God’s purpose, but prayer can release it. God cannot do for the man with the closed heart what he can do for the man with the open heart. You can give God a chance to work his will in and for and through you. Prayer is simply giving the wise and good God an opportunity to do what his wisdom and love want done.

II This point of view is the distinguishing element in the Christian conception of prayer, and to understand it, is of the utmost importance. The argument that because God is infinitely good and wise, prayer is a superfluity, rests on two fallacies. The first is the idea that praying is an attempt to secure from God by begging, something which God had not at all intended, or had intended otherwise. But Christian prayer is never that. The African savage beats his fetish when a petition is unanswered. He endeavors to make his god his slave. His one idea is to get what he wants. Christian prayer is giving God an opportunity to do what he wants, what he has been trying in vain,

perhaps for years, to do in our lives, hindered by our unreadiness, our lack of receptivity, our closed hearts and unresponsive minds. God stands over many lives, like the Master over Jerusalem, saying, "How oft would I ... and ye would not" (Matthew 23:37). True prayer changes that. It opens the door to the will of God. It does not change God's plan, but it does give God's plan gang-way. It is not begging from God; it is cooperation with God. In the luminous words of Archbishop Trench: "We must not conceive of prayer as an overcoming of God's reluctance, but as a laying hold of his highest will ingness." The other fallacy underlying the thought that the wisdom and love of God make praying superfluous is the idea that God can do all he wills without any help from us. But he cannot. The experience of the race is clear that some things God never can do until he finds a man who prays. Indeed, Meister Eckhart, the mystic, puts the truth with extreme boldness: "God can as little do without us, as we without him." If at first this seems a wild statement, we may well consider in how many ways God's will depends on man's cooperation. God himself cannot do some things unless men think. He never blazons his truth on the sky that men may find it without seeking. Only when men gird the loins of their minds and undiscourageably give themselves to intellec tual toil, will God reveal to them the truth, even about the physical world. And God himself cannot do some things unless men work. Will a man say that when God wants bridges and tunnels, wants the lightnings harnessed and cathe drals built, he will do the work himself? That is an absurd and idle fatalism. God stores the hills with marble, but he never built a Parthenon; he fills the mountains with ore, but he never made a needle or a locomotive. Only when men work can some things be done. Recall the words of Stradi- varius, maker of violins, as George Eliot interprets him:

"When any Master holds twixt hand and chin A violin of mine, he will be glad That Stradivari lived, made violins And made them of the best. . . . . For while God gives them skill, I give them instruments to play upon, God using me to help him. . . . ... If my hand slacked, I should rob God, since he is fullest good, Leaving a blank behind, instead of violins. He could not make Antonio Stradivari's violins Without Antonio."

Now if God has left some things contingent on man's thinking and working why may he not have left some things contingent on man's praying? The testimony of the great souls is a clear affirmative to this: some things never without thinking; some things never without working; some things never without praying I Prayer is one of the three forms of man's cooperation with God. The fact, therefore, that God is all-wise and all-good, is no more reason for abandoning prayer than for abandoning thought and work. At their best, none of them is an endeavor to get anything against the will of God, and all of them alike are necessary to make the will of God dominant in human life. Who would dream of saying, God is all wise, he knows best; he is all good and will give the best; why, therefore, should I either think or work? But that is just as sensible as to say, If God is good, why should I pray? We pray for the same reason that we work and think, because only so can the wise and good God get some things done which he wants done.

Indeed, there is a deal of nonsense talked about resignation to God's will as the only attitude in prayer. Not resignation to God's will, but cooperation with God's will is the truer expression of a Christian attitude. We are not resigned any where else. We find an arid desert and, so far from being resigned, we irrigate it until it blossoms like a garden. We find a thorny cactus, and commission Luther Burbank as speedily as possible to make of it a thornless plant for food. We find social evils like slavery, and from Moses to Lincoln all that are best among us are willing to

surrender life rather than rest content with wrong. Resignation in the presence of things evil or imperfect is sin; and all the heroes of the race have been so far discontented and unresigned that Blake’s challenge has been kindred to their resolution,

"I will not cease from mental fight, Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand, Till we have built Jerusalem In England’s green and pleasant land." This unresigned attitude, inseparable from nobility of char acter, is not rebellion against God but cooperation with God. Men act on the assumption that the present situation may be temporarily God’s will, but that he has put them in it so that they may fight their way out to a situation that is ultimately his will. To this end they think and work and pray. Resigna tion is in all three only in the sense that by all three men are endeavoring to open doors for the free passage of God’s hindered will. They do not submit to God’s purpose; they assert it. Prayer, like the other two, when it is at its best, never says, Thy will be changed, but it says tremendously, Thy will be done!

III That we may clearly perceive God’s inability to accomplish his will until men cooperate in prayer, we may note, for one thing, that unless men pray there are some things which God cannot say to them. One of our strongest misconceptions concerning prayer is that it consists chiefly in our talking to God, whereas the best part of prayer is our listening to God. Sometimes in the Scripture a prayer of urgent and definite petition rises, "Oh that I might have my request; And that God would grant me the thing that I long for!" (Job 6:8); but another sort of prayer is very frequently indicated: "Speak; for thy servant heareth" (1 Samuel 3:10); "My soul, wait thou in silence for God only; For my expectation is from him" (Psalms 62:5); "I will hear what God Jehovah will speak" (Psalms 85:8); or in Luther’s version of Psalms 37:7, "Be silent to God and let him mold thee." Without such openheartedness to God, some things which he wills never can be done.

Madame de Stael, after a two hours visit in which she had talked continuously, is said to have remarked at parting, "What a delightful conversation we have had!" Too many prayers are conducted on that plan. The ironical remark of Savonarola that the saints of his day were "so busy talking to God that they could not hearken to him," is applicable to us at least to this extent: we seldom listen. We hammer so busily that the architect cannot discuss the plans with us. We are so preoccupied with the activities of sailing, that we do not take our bearings from the sky. When the Spirit stands at the door and knocks the bustle of the household tasks drowns the sound of his knocking. God has a hard time even to get in a word edgewise; and in lives so con ducted, there are some things which God himself, with all his wisdom and good-will, cannot do. Even a casual study of the effective servants of the world reveals how much of their vision and stimulus came in quiet and receptive hours. Prayer gave God his opportunity to speak, for prayer is the listening ear.

IV The dependence of God’s will upon the cooperation of man’s prayer may be further seen in the fact that until men pray there are some things which God cannot give to them. One of the most disconcerting verses in Scripture tells us that God is more willing to give to us than fathers are to give to their children (Matthew 7:11). To some this seems mere sentiment, an exaggerated statement, made in a poetic hour. To others, who have cried in vain for things that appeared certainly good, it seems mockery. If God is willing to give, why doesn t he? What hinders him? How can he be willing to give, when, being omnipotent, he still with holds? Even a superficial observation of human life, how ever, could supply the answer. Giving is not a simple matter. It is always a dual transaction in which the recipient is as important a factor as the giver. No suffering

on earth is more tragic than great love hin dered in its desire to bestow. If a father wishes to give his son an education, why doesn t he? If he sees the need, has the means, is willing, even anxious to bestow, what hinders him? In how many cases is the answer clear: the boy has no genuine desire, no earnest prayer for the blessing which the father would give. The father is helpless. He must wait, his love pent, his willingness checkmated, until a prayer, however faint, rises in the boy's heart. The finest gifts cannot be dropped into another's life like stones in a basket. They must be taken or else they cannot be given. Jesus was thinking of the two factors involved when he said to the Samaritan woman, "If thou knewest the gift of God, . . . thou wouldest have asked" (John 4:10). The re ceptive heart is the absolute pre-requisite of all great gifts, and God himself cannot bestow his best on men unless they pray.

Whenever, therefore, we pray intent chiefly on what we want, we are likely to be disappointed. But when we pray, intent chiefly on what God wants to give us perhaps forti tude to bear the trouble which we wish to evade, or patience to wait for the blessing which we demand now, or leadership down a road of service from which we are asking release we need never be disappointed. Men who come to God not to dictate but to receive have approached prayer from the right angle. They have seen that prayer is giving God an opportunity to bestow what he is more willing to give than we are to welcome. Prayer is the taking hand. As a. six teenth century mystic said, "Prayer is not to ask what we wish of God, but what God wishes of us." The dependence of God on the cooperation of men's prayer may be further seen in the fact that until men pray there are some things which God cannot do through them. Many today, in spite of the busyness, wealth, and efficient organiza tion of our Christian work, bemoan the lack of real power. "What is the matter?" says the practical man. "Have we not taken our time, money, talents and given them in many consecrated and unselfish ways to the service of God? Why, with so many working for God, is not more done?" The answer is written plainly in history. The souls who have ushered in new eras of spiritual life have never been content with working for God. They have made it their ideal to let God work through them. A scientist has figured that the farmer's toil is five per cent of the energy expended in producing a crop of wheat. The other ninety-five per cent is the universe taking advantage of the chance which the farmer gave it. So these greater servants of God have not thought chiefly of what they could do for God, but of what God could do through them if they gave him opportunity. To be pliable in the hands of God was their first aim. Never to be unresponsive to his will for them was their supreme concern. They said, therefore, with Thomas Hooker, "Prayer is my chief work, and it is by means of it that I carry on the rest. No one can walk through the pages of Scripture, or of Christian biography, with these greater servants of the Kingdom without feeling their power. They are God-pos sessed. Their characteristic quality is found in Jesus: Not my words, my Father's; not my deeds, his; he that believeth on me, believeth not on me but on him that sent me (John 14:24; John 9:4, John 5:24) . The secret of their lives is like the secret of the Nile: they are the channel of unseen resources. The ideal of such living is deeper than working for God. To release the Eternal Purpose through their lives into the world; to be made a vehicle for power which they do not create but can transmit this is their ideal. They pray be cause theirs is the sublime ambition of the German mystic, "would fain be to the Eternal Goodness what his own hand is to a man."

Only through men who take this attitude can God do his choicest work. A life that utterly lacks this attitude, wants the elements of power. When, therefore, a man prays, intent chiefly on what he

wishes done, his prayer is a failure; but when he prays in order that he may release through his life what God wishes done, he has discovered the great secret. Through him, habitually praying, God can do what else would be impossible. He is one of God’s open doors into the world.

VI

We have, then, two fundamentally opposed ideas of prayer: one, that by begging we may change the will of God and curry favor or win gifts by coaxing; the other, that prayer is offering God the opportunity to say to us, give to us, and do through us what he wills. Only the second is Christian. At once we see that the second, no less than the first, and in a way far truer, makes prayer not a form but a force. Prayer really does things. It cannot change God’s intention, but it does change God’s action. God had long intended Isaiah to be his prophet. When Isaiah said, "Here am I, send me," he did not alter in the least the divine purpose, but he did release it. God could do then what before he could not. God had long intended that Africa should be evangelized. When Livingstone cried, "O God, help me to paint this dark conti nent white," he did not alter God’s intention, but he did alter God’s action. Power broke loose that before had been pent; the cooperation of a man’s prayer, backed by his life, opened a way for the divine purpose. There was an invasion of the world by God through Livingstone. No one can set clear limits to this release of divine power which the effectual prayer of a righteous man can accomplish. Pentecost is typical: "When they had prayed, the place was shaken wherein they were gathered together; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spake the word of God with boldness" (Acts 4:31).

SUGGESTIONS FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

God is all-wise and all-good, what is the use of praying?

Can prayer change God’s plans? If not, what is the use of praying?

How far are God’s plans dependent upon individuals?

Can God’s purpose be stopped by the failure of an indi vidual to cooperate?

If God is in any way dependent upon the cooperation of individuals, is this inconsistent with his sovereign power and wisdom?

What light do the experiences recorded in the Bible throw upon the problem of prayer and the goodness of God?

In what respect did the request of James and John differ from true prayer?

Why did his belief in the goodness of God give Jesus confidence to pray?

What is the difference in emphasis between the prayer re corded in the eighty-first Psalm and Jesus comment on the prayer of the hypocrites on the street corners?

In his Gethsemane prayer, what was Jesus attitude to the will of God?

What place has prayer in the life of every man in finding and doing God’s will?

05.05. CHAPTER V. Hindrances and Difficulties

CHAPTER V. Hindrances and Difficulties

DAILY READINGS First Day, Fifth Week

Howbeit what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ. Yea verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may gain Christ, and be found in him. Php 3:7-9.

We have been speaking of the privilege of prayer, the supreme opportunity of friendship with God kept vital by deliberate communion, and we may well stop now to count the cost. Paul is typical of all Christian seers in -discovering that the "excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus" is not arrived at without counting some things loss. It does cost to win a life that really can pray. Vasari says that Raphael used to wear a candle in a paste board cap, so that, while he was painting, his shadow would not fall upon his work. Many a man’s prayers are spoiled by his own shadow. There are things in his life which must be given up if ever he is truly to pray. He must wear on his forehead the candle of renunciation for his work’s sake. Consider the evil attitudes, cherished sins, bad tempers in your life that make praying in any deep and earnest way a difficult under taking.

O Lord, come quickly and reign on Thy throne, for now oft-times something rises up within me, and tries to take possession of Thy throne; pride, covetousness, uncleanness, and sloth want to be my kings; and then evil-speaking, anger, hatred, and the whole train of vices join with me in warring against myself, and try to reign over me. I resist them, I cry out against them, and say, "I have no other king than Christ." O King of Peace, come and reign in me, for I will have no king but Thee! Amen. St. Bernard (1091-1153).

Second Day, Fifth Week In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, what soever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Php 4:6-8. This connection of verses on great praying and right thinking is not accidental. A man cannot habitually indulge in mean, perverse, or abominable thoughts and suddenly come out of them into unimpeded communion with God. An automobile can be shifted from "low" to "high" with a stroke of the hand, but not so a man’s mind. Real praying costs habitual self-discipline in thinking the pure in heart see God. Sherwood Eddy says that the great Madras Young Men’s Christian Association building was held up for months, after the site was chosen, the plans drawn, and the money provided, because two shanty-owners would not let go their hold on a little ground in the center of the plot. What is the name of that shanty in your mind which is holding up the great building of character and service for which God has the plans and the means ready?

Most Merciful Father, who orderest the wills and affections of men; inspire in the heart of this Thy servant holy wishes and aspirations, that all base imaginings and sinful broodings may be cast out. Spirit of purity and grace, cleanse the thoughts of his heart and bring his whole being into captivity to the law of Christ. So direct and control his mind that he may ever think on whatsoever things are true ind pure and lovely. Let no corrupt thought get dominion over him. Enter Thou into the house of his soul. Enlarge and renew it and consecrate it to Thyself, that he may love Thee with all his mind and serve Thee with all his might. Free him from the fascinations of false pleasures and the allurements of debasing desires. Fill his eyes with the eternal beauty of goodness, that vice and sin may appear as they really are, the last shame and despair of life. Keep him outwardly in his body and inwardly in his soul, and con strain him to reverential obedience to the laws Thou hast ordained for both. Sustain him in health of body that he may the better control the motions of thought, and repel the assaidts of passion. We ask it for Thy Son our Saviour's sake. Amen. Samuel McComb.

Third Day, Fifth Week Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter anything before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few. Ecclesiastes 5:2.

Successful prayer involves not only the general preparation of good living and right thinking; it often costs special preparation. The mood may not be right; an irritated or anxious temper may be in the way; the preoccupation of business may still be straining our minds so that if we pray, only a small fraction of us is engaged in it a dozen different exigencies may make special preparation an absolute necessity for real prayer. Consider with what rash hastiness, unprepared thoughts, preoccupied minds, and unexamined lives we often rush into God's presence and out again. Dr. South puts the matter with brusque directness, "None but the careless and the confident would rush rudely into the presence of a great man; and shall we in our applications to the great God, take that to be religion which the common reason of mankind will not allow to be manners?"

Slay utterly, Oh Lord, and cast down the sin which does so easily beset us; bridle the unholy affection; stay the unlawful thought; chasten the temper; regulate the spirit; correct the tongue; bend the will and the worship of our souls to Thee, and so sanctify and subdue the whole inward man, that setting up Thy throne in our hearts, to the dethronement of all our idols, and the things of earth we hold too dear, Thou mayest reign there alone in the fulness of Thy grace, and the consolations of Thy presence, till the time arrives when we shall reign with Thee in glory. Amen. Richard S. Brooke (1835-1893).

Fourth Day, Fifth Week

Jehovah, the God of my salvation,

I have cried day and night before thee.

Let my prayer enter into thy presence;

Incline thine ear unto my cry.

For my soul is full of troubles . . .

Unto thee, O Jehovah, have I cried;

And in the morning shall my prayer come before thee.

Jehovah, why castest thou off my soul?

Why hidest thou thy face from me? Psalms 88:1-3, Psalms 88:13-14.

Such an experience as finds voice in this Psalm suggests at once that at times prayer costs persistence in the face of difficulties. The unreality of God, the difficulty of holding the mind to the act of prayer, the wayward mood, the dis appointment of the spirit at praying which rings hollow and gives no result all these difficulties men of prayer have known. Read the diary of Benjamin Jowett, the great Master of Balliol, "Nothing makes one more conscious of poverty and shallowness of character than difficulty in praying or attending to prayer. Any thoughts about self, thoughts of evil, day dreams, love fancies, easily find an abode in the mind. But the thought of God and of right and truth will not stay there, except with a very few persons. I fail to undersand my own nature in this particular. There is nothing which at a distance I seem to desire more than the knowledge of God, the ideal, the universal; and yet for two minutes I cannot keep my mind upon them. But I read a great work of fiction, and can hardly take my mind from it. If I had any real love of God, would not my mind dwell upon him?"

Gracious Father, who givest the hunger of desire, and satisfiest our hunger with good things; quicken the heart of

Thy servant who mourns because he cannot speak to Thee, nor hear Thee speak to him. Refresh, we beseech Thee, the dulness and dryness of his inner life. Grant him perseverance that he may never abandon the effort to pray, even though it brings for a time no comfort or joy. Enlarge his soul’s desires that he may be drawn unto Thee. Send forth Thy Spirit into his heart to help his infirmities; to give him freedom of utterance, and warmth of feeling. Let him muse upon Thy goodness; upon the blessings with which Thou hast strewn his path; upon the mystery of the world, and the shame of sin, and the sadness of death, until the fire kindles and the heart melts in prayer and praise and supplication.

Lord, teach him to pray the prayer that relieves the burdened spirit, and brings Thy blessing, which maketh rich and addeth no sorrow. Hear us, for Jesus sake. Amen. Samuel McComb.

Fifth Day, Fifth Week

Give ear to my words,

O Jehovah, Consider my meditation.

Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God;

For unto thee do I pray.

O Jehovah, in the morning shalt thou hear my voice;

In the morning will I order my prayer unto thee, and will keep watch. Psalms 5:1-3.

Probably most people are so constituted by nature and are so preoccupied by business that some such arrangement as is suggested in this Psalm about regularity is essential to a successful life of prayer. To be sure, Alice Freeman Palmer, first President of Wellesley, has this written of her in

her husband’s story of her life, "God was her steady companion, so naturally a part of her hourly thought that she attached little consequence to specific occasions of inter course. . . . She had no fixed times of prayer." But before any one presumes on such a record of fine living with God, minus regularity of prayer, he would better examine his own character with some scrutiny. The chances are in most lives that the keeping of the "morning watch" will prove to be one of the most salutary agencies within the control of the will. This will cost, as regularity always costs, a per sistent determination not to surrender to adverse circum stances or wayward moods. But consider what it would mean each morning to put the life at God’s disposal in some such way as Thomas a Kempis does in this prayer:

Lord, work in my heart a true Faith, a purifying Hope, and an unfeigned Love towards Thee; give me a full Trust on Thee, Zeal for Thee, Reverence of all things that relate to Thee; make me fearful to offend Thee, Thankful for Thy Mercies, Humble under Thy Corrections, Devout in Thy Service, and sorrowful for my Sins; and Grant that in all things I may behave myself so, as befits a Creature to his Creator, a Servant to his Lord: . . . make me Diligent in all my Duties, watchful against all Temptations, perfectly Pure and Temperate, and so Moderate in Thy most Lawful Enjoyments, that they may never become a Snare to me; make me also, O Lord, to be so affected towards my Neigh bour that I never transgress that Royal Law of Thine, of Loving him as myself; grant me exactly to perform all parts of Justice; yielding to all whatsoever by any kind of Right becomes their due, and give me such Mercy and Compassion, that I may never fail to do all Acts of Charity to all men, whether Friends or Enemies, according to Thy Command and Example. Amen. Thomas a Kempis (1379-1471).

Sixth Day, Fifth Week And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them; and his garments became glistering, exceeding white, so as no fuller on earth can whiten them. And there appeared unto them Elijah with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter answereth and saith to Jesus, Rabbi, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah. Mark 9:2-5.

How natural for Peter to desire to remain in such a glowing experience! But he could not; it was one of those elevated hours, that cannot be continuous, but that can reveal outlooks which make all the dusty traveling after ward more meaningful. Once in a while our moods go up a mountain and have a great experience, returning cleansed, exhilarated and reassured. We must cherish such hours, believe in the validity of their witness to God’s presence with us, gain confidence from their testimony to our sonship with him, and keep the reassuring memory of life’s meaning as we saw it then. But we must not refuse another sort of praying, less ecstatic and glowing, more quiet and common place. We must not cherish false expectations, demanding transfigured hours continually. Gethsemane is also prayer and many a lesser time when the soul inwardly steadies itself on God and trusts where it cannot see. Successful praying costs this sort of patience with commonplace hours. Said Fenelon: "Do not be discouraged at your faults; bear with yourself in correcting them, as you would with your neighbor. Accustom yourself gradually to carry prayer into all your daily occupations. Speak, move, work in peace, as if you were in prayer."

O God, Thou hast found us, and not we Thee. At times we but dimly discern Thee; the dismal mists of earth obscure Thy glory. Yet in other and more blessed moments, Thou dost rise upon our

souls, and we know Thee as the Light of all our seeing, the Life of all that is not dead within us, the Bringer of health and cure, the Revealer of peace and truth. We will not doubt our better moments, for in them Thou dost speak to us. We rejoice that Thou hast created us in Thine image. Thy love has stirred us into being, has endowed us with spiritual substance. In the intellect, whose thoughts wander through eternity; in the conscience that bears witness to Thy eternal righteousness; in the affections that make life sweet, and reach forth to Thee, O Lover of Mankind in these, we are made heirs to the riches of Thy grace. Samuel McComb.

Seventh Day, Fifth Week

Hold not thy peace, O God of my praise;

For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of deceit have they opened against me:

They have spoken unto me with a lying tongue.

They have compassed me about also with words of hatred,

And fought against me without a cause.

For my love they are my adversaries:

But I give myself unto prayer. Psalms 109:1-4.

Such things as these true prayer is likely to cost: a good life, right thinking, special preparations of the mind, persistence through difficulties, regularity, and patience with commonplace hours. But a life that has learned the secret of real praying is worth all that it costs. As the Psalmist says, it is worth giving ourselves to. Consider Luther’s great description of such a life: "Therefore, where there is a Christian, there is also the Holy Spirit, and he does nothing else save pray continually. For even if the mouth be not always moving and uttering words, yet the heart goes on beating unceasingly with cries like these, Ah! dear Father, may thy name be hallowed, may thy Kingdom come, and thy will be done. And whenever there come sorer bufferings and trials and needs, then the aspiration and supplication increase, even audibly, so that you cannot find a Christian man who does not pray; just as you cannot find a living man without a pulse that never stands still, but beats and beats on continually of itself, although the man may sleep or do anything else, so being all unconscious of this pulse."

Let us today make Archbishop Trench’s sonnet our prayer:

"If we with earnest effort could succeed

To make our life one long connected prayer,

As lives of some perhaps have been and are;

If, never leaving thee, we had no need

Our wandering spirits back again to lead

Into thy presence, but continue there,

Like angels standing on the highest stair

Of the sapphire throne, this were to pray indeed.

But if distractions manifold prevail,

And if in this we must confess we fail,

Grant us to keep at least a prompt desire,

Continual readiness for prayer and praise,

An altar heaped and waiting to take fire

With the least spark, and leap into a blaze."

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

I A critic with discriminating insight has objected to Voltaire’s writings on the ground that nothing could possibly be quite so clear as Voltaire makes it. A book on prayer readily runs into danger of the same criticism. For, like every other vital experience, prayer in practice meets obstacles that a theoretical discussion too easily glosses over and for gets. Even when prayer is defined as communion with God, and our thought of it is thereby freed from many embarrassments, as a kite escapes the trees and bushes when one flies it high, there remain practical difficulties which perplex many who sincerely try to pray. For example, real communion involves the vivid consciousness that someone is present, with whom we are enjoying fellowship. Now a man may believe that God is, may desire earnestly to speak with him, and may not doubt in theory the possibility of such communion; but in practice he may utterly fail to feel the presence of God. In spite of his best efforts he may seem to himself to be talking into empty space. The sense of futility such as comes to one who finds that he has been speaking in the dark to nobody, when he supposed a friend was in the room may so confuse him that, theory or no theory, prayer becomes practically value less. He cries with Job, not in a spirit of scepticism, but in great perplexity and in genuine desire for the divine fellow ship, "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; And back ward, but I cannot perceive him" (Job 23:8). The practice of God’s presence is not so simple as words sometimes make it seem.

One obvious reason for this sense of God’s unreality, which often makes helpful prayer impossible, lies of course in character. Isaiah was dealing with a universal truth when he said: "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you" (Isaiah 59:2). One has only to consider that frivolous American who in the Rembrandt room of the Amsterdam Gallery looked lackadaisically around and asked: "I wonder if there is any thing here worth seeing"; one has only to recall the women who climbed an Alpine height on an autumn day, when the riot of color in the valley sobered into the green of the pines upon the heights, and over all stood the crests of eternal snow, and who inquired in the full sight of all this, "We heard there was a view up here; where is it?" to see that there is a spiritual qualification for every experience, and that without it nothing fine and beautiful can ever be real to any one. "Mr. Turner," a man once said to the artist, "I never see any sunsets like yours." And the artist answered grimly, "No, sir. Don t you wish you could?" How clearly then must the sense of God’s reality be a progressive and often laborious achievement of the spirit! It is not a matter to be taken for granted, as though any one could saunter into God’s presence at any time, in any mood, with any sort of life behind him, and at once perceive God there. Let some debauche from the dens of a city walk into

a company where men are chivalrous and women pure, and how much will the debauche understand of his new environment? Stone walls are not so impenetrable as the veil of moral difference between the clean and unclean. So spiritual alienation between God and man makes fellowship impossible, f all the evils that most surely work this malign result in man’s communion with the Father, the Master specially noted two: impurity "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"; and vindictiveness, the unbrotherly spirit that will not forgive nor seek to be forgiven "If therefore thou art offering thy gift before the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer they gift" (Matthew 5:23-24). No one can be wrong with man and right with God. In Coleridge’s "Ancient Mariner," one of the most vivid pictures of sin’s consequences ever drawn, the effect of lovelessness on prayer is put into a rememberable verse:

"I looked to heaven and tried to pray,

But or ever a prayer had gush t,

A wicked whisper came and made

My heart as dry as dust."

Most of us have experienced that stanza’s truth. The harboring of a grudge, the subtle wish for another’s harm, the envy that corrupts the heart, even if it find no expression in word or deed such attitudes always prove impassable barriers to spontaneous prayer. When, therefore, any one en counters the practical difficulty that arises from the sense of God’s unreality, he may well search his life for sinister habits of thought, for cherished evils dimly recognized as wrong but unsurrendered, for lax carelessness in conduct or deliberate infidelity to conscience, for sins whose commission he deplores, but whose results he still clings to and desires, and above all for selfishness that hinders loving and so breaks the connections that bind us to God and one an other.

II The sense of God’s unreality, however, does not necessarily imply a wicked life. There are other reasons which often hinder men from a vivid consciousness of God. All of us, for example, have moods in which the vision of God grows dim. Our life is not built on a level so that we can maintain a constant elevation of spirit. We have mountains and valleys, emotional ups and downs; and, as with our Lord, the radiant experience of transfiguration is succeeded by an hour of bitterness when the soul cries, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46). Cowper tells us that in prayer he had known such exaltation that he thought he would die from excess of joy; but at another time, asked for some hymns for a new hymnal, he wrote in answer, "How can you ask of me such a service? I seem to myself to be banished to a remoteness from God’s presence, in comparison with which the distance from the East to the West is vicinity, is cohesion." Of course we cannot always pray with the same intensity and conscious satisfaction. "I pray more heartily at some times than at others," says Tolstoi; and even Bunyan had his familiar difficulties: "O, the start ing holes that the heart hath in the time of prayer! None knows how many bye-ways the heart hath and back lanes to slip away from the presence of God." The first step in dealing with this familiar experience is to recognize its naturalness and therefore to go through it undismayed. When Paul said to Timothy, "Be urgent in season, out of season," he was giving that advice which a wise

experience always gives to immaturity: Make up your mind in advance to keep your course steady, when you feel like it and when you don t. This difficulty of moods has been met by all God's people. The biography of any spiritual leader contains passages such as this, from one of Hugh Latimer's letters to his fellow-martyr, Ridley: "Pardon me and pray for me; pray for me, I say. For I am sometimes so fearful, that I would creep into a mouse-hole; sometimes God doth visit me again with his comfort. So he cometh and goeth." A man who surrenders to these variable moods is doomed to inefficiency . He is like a ship that drifts as the tides run and the winds blow, and does not hold its course through them and in spite of them. Matthew Arnold goes to the pith of the problem, so far as duty-doing is concerned:

"Tasks in hours of insight willed May be in hours of gloom fulfilled." And the same attitude is necessary in the life of prayer. Of course we cannot always pray with the same sense of God's nearness, the same warmth of conscious fellowship with him. Plotinus said that he had really prayed only four times in his life. Lowell, in his "Cathedral," writes,

"I that still pray at morning and at eve . . . Thrice in my life perhaps have truly prayed, Thrice, stirred below my conscious self, have felt That perfect disenthralment which is God." The heights of fellowship with God are not often reached even the record of Jesus life contains only one Transfiguration but this does not mean that the value of prayer is only thus occasional. As Dean Goulburn put it, "When you can not pray as you would, pray as you can." A man does not deny the existence of the sun because it is a cloudy day, nor cease to count on the sun to serve him and his. Moods are the clouds in our spiritual skies. A man must not overemphasize their importance. Surely he should not on account of them cease to trust the God who is temporarily obscured by them.

Moreover, a man need not passively allow his moods to become chronic. Many a life, like an old-fashioned well, has latent resources of living water underneath, but the pump needs priming. Into a man's prayerless mood let a little living water from some one else's prayer be poured, and water from the nether wells of the man's own soul may flow again. For such a purpose, collections of prayers like the Bishop of Ripon's "The Communion of Prayer" or Tiles- ton's "Great Souls at Prayer" are useful; and books of devo tion such as St. Augustine's "Confessions." They often prime the pump. Indeed, prayer itself is a great conqueror of perverse moods. You are not in the spirit of prayer and therefore will refuse to pray until your mood chances to be congenial? But clearly Dr. Forsyth's comparison is apt: "Sometimes when you need rest most you are too restless to lie down and take it. Then compel yourself to lie down and to lie still. Often in ten minutes the compulsion fades into consent and you sleep, and rise a new man ... So if you are averse to pray, pray the more."

III

Deeper than the difficulty of passing moods lies the problem of those who habitually fail to feel the presence of God. In many cases the trouble is temperamental. Some men seem by their native constitution to be specially designed for religion. They are geniuses in the realm of spirit, as a Beethoven is in music or a Raphael in art. The unseen is real to them; they are immediately aware of its presence, sensitive to its meaning, responsive to its appeal. When they speak of prayer their vivid experience of God demands for its expression poetry rather than prose. "Orison," they cry with Mechthild of Magdeburg, "draws the great God into the small heart; it drives the hungry soul

out to the full God. It brings together two lovers, God and the soul, into a joyful room." To temperaments of this quality the practice of God's presence is as spontaneous as any human love and quite as real. But what of one who is not thus gifted? He is perhaps of a practical temperament, a man of action rather than of meditation. Even in human relationships he is not demonstrative, and is more given to revealing his loyalty and affection by concrete deeds of service than by radiant hours of communion. He stands perplexed before the exalted moods of the mystic. He cannot so strain himself as to reach them. He feels out of his element when he reads about them. When he prays he reaches no heights of conscious fellowship with God. During the singing of a hymn like "Sweet Hour of Prayer" he feels as unresponsive to the experience from which the hymn arose as Dean Stanley would have felt to the music. The Dean could not recognize even the national anthem save by the fact that the people all arose at the first bar. What shall be said to a man who thus believes in God and tries to do his will, but who is not warmly conscious of fellowship with him in prayer? Something surely must be said, for if prayer is so interpreted that it is left as the possession of those only who are of the emotional and mystic temperament, many of the most useful folk on earth, in whom practical and intellectual interests are supreme the thinkers and the workers will feel themselves excluded from the possibility of praying.

We touch here one of the most crucial matters in our study of prayer. Every man must be allowed to pray in his own way. It is far from being true that the most valuable temperament in religion is the mystical. God needs us all. Some are phlegmatic stolid, patient, undemonstrative; some are choleric high-spirited, nervous, passionate; some are sanguine hopeful, cheerful, light-hearted; some are somber and serious. Even this time-honored classification of the temperaments is not exhaustive. There are as many temperaments as there are men, and each has his own problems and his peculiar way of expressing the spirit of Christ. The first step in useful living for many folk is the recognition of God's purpose in making us on such unique and individual plans. He evidently likes us better that way. John makes a better John than Peter ever could have been, and Peter a more useful Peter than was possible to John. We are so used to school examinations where the whole class must submit to the same tests of excellence that we forget how surely in the moral life we shall have individual tests. Each man is being tried in a private examination. He is not expected to be a Christian in any other man's way. As in Emerson's parable of the mountain and the squirrel, he can be undismayed by the special excellence of another, and can say as the squirrel did to the mountain,

"If I cannot carry mountains on my back, Neither can you crack a nut." Now this general principle has its special application to prayer. Nothing could be more intensely individual than the prayers of the Bible. Nobody tries to commune with God in any one else's way. Some pray kneeling, like Paul (Acts 20:36); some standing, like Jeremiah (Jeremiah 18:20); some sitting, like David (2 Samuel 7:18); some prostrate, like Jesus (Matthew 26:39). Some pray silently, like Hannah (1 Samuel 1:13); some aloud, like Ezekiel (Ezekiel 11:13). Some pray in the temple (2 Kings 19:14); some in bed (Psalms 63:6), in the fields (Genesis 24:11-12), on the hillside (Genesis 28:18-20), on the battlefield (1 Samuel 7:5), by a riverside (Acts 16:13), on the seashore (Acts 21:5), in the privacy of the chamber (Matthew 6:6). Moreover all sorts of temperaments are found at prayer; practical leaders like Nehemiah, who in a silent ejaculation of the spirit seeks God's help before he speaks to the king (Nehemiah 1:3, Nehemiah 1:5); poets like the writer of the twenty- seventh Psalm, who

love communion with God; men of melancholy mind like Jeremiah, "Hast thou utterly rejected Judah? hath thy soul loathed Zion?" (Jeremiah 14:19); and men of radiant spirit like Isaiah, "Jehovah, even Jehovah, is my strength and song; and he is become my salvation" (Isaiah 12:2). There are as many different ways of praying as there are different individuals. Consider the prayer of St. Augustine: "Let my soul take refuge from the crowding turmoil of worldly thoughts beneath the shadow of thy wings; let my heart, this sea of restless waves, find peace in thee, O God." And then in contrast consider the prayer of Lord Ashley, before he charged at the battle of Edge Hill: "O Lord, thou knowest how busy I must be this day. If I forget thee, do not thou forget me."

We need always to remember, therefore, that there is no one mould of prayer into which our communion with God must be run. Let each man pray as best he can. Let no man make himself the slave of another's methods. Professor George Albert Coe has put a valuable truth into a few succinct sentences: "The tendency ... is to create an impression that the more valuable forms of prayer are reserved for a special class of persons. This impression, too, is unconsciously fostered by the adulation that is bestowed upon men, often young men, who cultivate a particular type of prayer, and talk a great deal about it. What we need more than almost anything else is to cultivate in timid souls that tend to self-distrust, in critical souls that think before they assert, and in active souls that prefer giving to receiving, a robust respect for their own natural types of prayer."

IV

If we are to deal adequately, however, with the trouble which some habitually and all of us occasionally have in realizing the presence of God, we must do more than tell each man to pray as he can. There are prevalent attitudes among people who try to pray that make the consciousness of God's presence well-nigh impossible. We may note as the first of these that vague groping after a God outside of us which so often ends in the futile feeling of having talked to empty space. Many men, in their earnest desire to enter fully into the Christian experience, strain after a realization of God's presence as though by some violence and stress of the will it could be attained. Their souls are mortars, their petitions bombs; they explode themselves toward heaven, and save for the echo of their own outburst they hear no answer whatever. Madame Guyon records that just this was her perplexity until a Franciscan friar gave her this suggestive advice: "Madame, you are seeking without that which you have within. Accustom yourself to seek God in your own heart, and you will find him." This counsel is wise and practical. The presence of God can be experienced only within our own hearts. All the best in us is God in us. Generally, if not always, it is quite impossible to distinguish between the voice of God and the voice of our own best con science and ideals. They are not to be distinguished. What we call conscience and ideals are God's voice, mediated to us through our own finest endowments. This does not mean that these voices of God, mediated to us through our best, are infallible. It does mean that God in them is trying to speak to us according to our capacity to understand. If our windows are soiled, the sun's rays are hindered; but that fact is no denial of the truth that what ever light does come through our windows comes from the sun. So God is compelled to minister his blessing to us through our own capacities to receive and appropriate. No man should ever grope outside of his best self to find God. He should always seek the God who is speaking to him in his best self.

During a dry season in the New Hebrides, John G. Paton the missionary awakened the derision of the natives by digging for water. They said water always came down from heaven, not up through

the earth. But Paton revealed a larger truth than they had seen before by discovering to them that heaven could give them water through their own land. So men insist on waiting for God to send them blessing in some super normal way, when all the while he is giving them abundant supply if they would only learn to retreat into the fertile places of their own spirits where, as Jesus said, the wells of living waters seek to rise. We need to learn Eckhart's lesson, "God is nearer to me than I am to myself; he is just as near to wood and stone, but they do not know it." We need to understand the word attributed to Albert the Great, "To mount to God is to enter into one's self. For he who inwardly entereth and intimately penetrateth into himself gets above and beyond himself and truly mounts up to God." And in learning the meaning of words like these, we shall be coming into the spirit of many a Scripture passage: "If we love one another, God abideth in us" (1 John 4:12); "We are a temple of the living God; even as God said, I will dwell in them" (2 Corinthians 6:16); "If any man . . . open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3:20); "The water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water" (John 4:14).

Any one, therefore, troubled by the seeming unreality of God may well imitate the Psalmist who begins his psalm by saying, "I will cry unto God," and who in the sixth verse says, I commune with mine own heart" (Psalms 77:1-20). The two verses are not in conflict. The only way any one can commune with God is through his own heart. Indeed, we may call _ those psychologists to witness who discover in the spirit's life the transforming influences of which we have been speaking, and who ascribe them to the "subconscious." Powers of joy and peace, influences that renovate character, change disposition, and inspire service, do appear in human life, they say, but these effects which the New Testament attributes to the Holy Spirit, they ascribe to the "sub conscious. There should be no permanent misunderstanding here. The tides that come into New York Harbor come through the Narrows, but they do not start there. You never can get at the secret of the inflow from the sea, which makes the sailing of great ships possible, by saying that the presence of the Narrows explains it. The tides come through the Narrows, not from them. So we cannot solve the mystery of that divine help which great souls know by giving names to substations in our own minds. We must go deeper and farther than that. God himself is trying through our best to find a channel for his Spirit. The consideration of this vague groping after a God out side of us, leads us to a matter even more important. The elemental trouble with the prayers of those who fail to find God real is often the very fact that they are seeking for God. No one is prepared to experience the presence of God until he sees that God is seeking for him. Paul describes the pagan world as seeking God, "if haply they might feel after him and find him" (Acts 17:27); and many a Christian in this regard is a pagan still. We have turned the parables of Jesus in the fifteenth Chapter of Luke quite upside down. According to our attitude in prayer, the shepherd is lost, and the sheep have gone out on the tempest-driven mountainside to hunt for him. But not so the Master! To him the sheep are wandering, and the shepherd with undiscourageable persistency is seeking them. Without this thought of God as initiating the search, so that our finding of him is simply our response to his quest for us, the endeavor of any man to seek God is of all enterprises the most hopeless. How can the finite discover the Infinite unless the Infinite desires to be found? How can man break up into an experience of God unless God is seeking to reach down into friendship with man? The deepest necessity of a fruitful life of prayer is the recognition that God's search for men is prior to any man's search for God. In the .words of one of Faber's hymns, "Tis rather God who seeks for us Than we who seek for him."

Now the search of God for man has always been believed by Christians, but by many it has become a historical matter. God did seek for man in Christ. This fundamental truth is of the utmost importance for prayer. For, as a matter of fact, whenever a Christian prays he prays to the God whose love for us Christ revealed, and to the knowledge of whom we never should have come without Christ. As Fichte put it, "All who since Jesus have come into union with God have come unto union with God through him." But this belief in God’s search for man in Christ is not sufficient for prayer. God is forever seeking each man. The promptings of con science, the lure of fine ideals, the demands of friendship, the suggestions of good books, the calls to service, every noble impulse in hours when

"The spirit’s true endowments Stand out plainly from the false ones," are all the approach of God to us. Prayer is not groping after him. Prayer is opening the life up to him. The prayer- less heart is fleeing from God. Finding God is really letting God find us; for our search for him is simply surrender to his search for us. When the truth of this is clearly seen, prayer becomes real. There is no more talking into empty space, no more fumbling in the dark to lay hold on him. We go into the secret place and there let every fine and ennobling influence which God is sending to us have free play. We let him speak to us through our best thoughts, our clearest spiritual visions, our finest conscience. We no longer endeavor to escape. We find him as run-away children, weary of their escapade, find their father. They consent to be found by him.

"I said, I will find God, and forth I went To seek Him in the clearness of the sky, But over me stood unendurably Only a pitiless, sapphire firmament Ringing the world, blank splendour; yet intent Still to find God, I will go seek, said I, His way upon the waters, and drew nigh An ocean marge, weed-strewn and foam-besprent; And the waves dashed on idle sand and stone, And very vacant was the long, blue sea; But in the evening as I sat alone, My window open to the vanishing day, Dear God, I could not choose but kneel and pray, And it sufficed that I was found of Thee." I SUGGESTIONS FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

Why do most people find it hard to pray?

In how far are the types of hindrances which prevent communion with God peculiar to the "realm of religion"?

What is necessary to be able to enjoy a sunset, a painting, or a musical symphony? Can any but a technical expert really enjoy these? To what extent do these conclusions apply to enjoying communion with God?

Can a man without an appreciation of nature, art and intellectual integrity fully commune with God? How far is the completeness of such communion dependent upon the range of human interests and experiences?

In the light of the above questions, to what extent are "spiritual" qualifications essential only to "religious" experiences?

How do the hindrances to human friendship differ from the hindrances to communion with God?

In the light of Jesus teachings, what are the principal hindrances to prayer in the realm of character?

Where first shall we look for hindrances to communion with God?

What dependence is to be placed upon "favorable moods"?

In the general enterprises of human life, how much allow ance is made for favorable moods?

How far is special application necessary if advantage is to be taken of such moods?

What is the relation of favor able moods to prayer? What light does the Transfiguration throw on this?

What relation has a man’s temperament to his ability to achieve reality in prayer? How far is reality in prayer possible to people with other than a mystical temperament? What proportion of prayers recorded in the Bible are the prayers of mystics? What proportion in later history?

To what degree must the form of prayer be determined by the type of personality? W hat answer would the Bible record of prayers suggest?

What prevalent attitudes among the people make the consciousness of God’s presence well-nigh impossible? How can these attitudes be overcome?

How can the hindrances to prayer in the life of any particular individual be overcome?

05.06. CHAPTER VI. Prayer and the Reign of Law

CHAPTER VI. Prayer and the Reign of Law

DAILY READINGS First Day, Sixth Week The heavens declare the glory of God;

And the firmament showeth his handiwork.

Day unto day uttereth speech,

And night unto night showeth knowledge.

There is no speech nor language;

Their voice is not heard.

Their line is gone out through all the earth,

And their words to the end of the world.

In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,

Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,

And rejoiceth as a strong man to run his course.

His going forth is from the end of the heavens,

And his circuit unto the ends of it;

And there is nothing hid from the heat thereof. Psalms 19:1-6.

Consider the ease with which the Psalmist here ascribes all the activities of the heavens to the direct influence of God. The idea of natural law has not gotten between him and the Creator; whenever the sun comes up or the stars appear he feels that God is doing it. Now it may still be true, as Mr. Chesterton remarks, that each morning God says to the sun, "Get up, do it again!" but it is difficult for most people to imagine that. The sun seems to run itself by law; everything seems to run itself, so that in the modern mind this psalm is unconsciously changed until it reads, "The heavens declare the glory of law." In the weekly comment we shall consider the unreasonableness of this negation of religious faith which our modern scientific knowledge has caused in many, but in the daily readings let us note the ways in which our new information about natural law practically affects us. Does it not, as we have today suggested, seem to push God away off? The world looks like a great machine, self-running and self-regulating, with God a very distant Sustainer, if he is anywhere at all. Thomas Hood put the feeling into a familiar verse:

"I remember, I remember

The fir-trees dark and high; I used to think their slender tops

Were close against the sky. It was a childish ignorance,

But now tis little joy To know I m further off from heaven

Than when I was a boy."

God, we thank Thee for this universe, our great home; for its vastness and its riches, and for the manifoldness of the life which teems upon it and of which we are part. We praise Thee for the arching sky and the blessed winds, for the driving clouds and the constellations on high. We praise Thee for the salt sea and the running water, for the ever lasting hills, for the trees, and for the grass under our feet. We thank Thee for our senses by which we can see the splendor of the morning, and hear the jubilant songs of love, and smell the breath of the springtime. Grant us, we pray Thee, a heart wide open to all this joy and beauty, and save our souls from being so steeped in care or so darkened by passion that we pass heedless and unseeing when even the thornbush by the wayside is aflame with the glory of God. Walter Rauschenbusch.

Second Day, Sixth Week

O Jehovah, thou hast searched me, and known me.

Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising;

Thou understandest my thought afar off.

Thou searchest out my path and my lying down,

And art acquainted with all my ways.

For there is not a word in my tongue,

But, lo, O Jehovah, thou knowest it altogether.

Thou hast beset me behind and before,

And laid thy hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;

It is high, I cannot attain unto it.

Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?

Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there;

If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there.

If I take the wings of the morning,

And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

Even there shall thy hand lead me. Psalms 139:1-10 In contrast with this Psalmist’s sense of God’s immediate presence, the reign of law not only seems to push God away off; it pushes him away back into history. He becomes nothing more than a hypothesis to explain how the universe

happened to exist in the first place. In President Faunce's figure, men think of God as an engineer who started this locomotive of a world, pulled the throttle wide open, and then leaped from the cab; and the world has been running its own unguided course ever since on the rails of law. This does not simply make impossible the spiritual faith which glows in our Scripture passage; it violates every canon of sound thinking. It is childish. It is on a par with the belief of the Piedmontese peasant, of whom Benjamin Constant tells. He thought that the world was made by a God who had died before his work was completed. Con sider whether your prayers have been hindered by the subtle influence of this idea of God. Before men can really pray, God must be seen as the present living God whose ways of action we partially have plotted and called laws.

O Lord, our God, we desire to feel Thee near us in spirit and in body at this time. We know that in Thee we live and move and have our being, but we are cast down and easily disquieted, and we wander in many a sad wilderness where we lose the conscious experience of Thy presence. Yet the deepest yearning of our hearts is unto Thee. As the hart panteth after the waterbrooks, so pant our souls after Thee, O God. Nothing less than Thyself can still the hunger, or quench the thirst with which Thou hast inspired us. Power of our souls! enter Thou into them and fit them for Thyself, making them pure with Christ's purity, loving and lovable with His love. Samuel McComb.

Third Day, Sixth Week And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered; and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose. Romans 8:26-28.

Note the connection of thought here between prayer, and belief in the controlling providence of God that makes all things work together for good to those that love him. Is not this connection vital? Unless God's providence does control, so that he is now at work in the world shaping events and moulding men, what is the use of praying? But just here is one of our modern perplexities. The reign of law seems to rule out the activity of Providence. When we were children, many of us doubtless prayed as Florence Nightingale said she did. "When I was young," she writes, "I could not understand what people meant by their thoughts wandering in prayer. I asked for what I really wished, and really wished for what I asked. And my thoughts wandered no more than those of a mother would wander, who was supplicating her Sovereign for her son's reprieve from execution. ... I liked the morning service much better than the afternoon, because we asked for more things. ... I was always miserable if I was not at church when the Litany was said. How ill-natured it is, if you believe in prayer, not to ask for everybody what they want. ... I could not pray for George IV. I thought the people very good who prayed for him, and wondered whether he could have been much worse if he had not been prayed for. William IV I prayed for a little. But when Victoria came to the throne, I prayed for her in a rapture of feeling and my thoughts never wandered."

What is it that has changed this childlike spirit in our prayers? Is it not our increasing knowledge of the reign of natural law? So Miss Nightingale came to say in contrast with her childhood's point of view, "God's scheme for us is not that he should give us what we ask for, but that man kind should obtain it for mankind." Consider the people whom you know who have altogether given up praying for this same reason.

Almighty God, of Thy fulness grant to us who need so much, who lack so much, who have so little, wisdom and strength. Bring our wills unto Thine. Lift our understand ings into Thy heavenly light; that we thereby beholding those things which are right, and being drawn by Thy love, may bring our will and our understanding together to Thy service, until at last, body and soul and spirit may be all Thine, and Thou be our Father and our Eternal Friend. Amen. George Dawson (1821-1876).

Fourth Day, Sixth Week

Bless Jehovah, O my soul.

O Jehovah, my God, thou art very great;

Thou art clothed with honor and majesty:

Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment;

Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain;

Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters;

Who maketh the clouds his chariot;

Who walketh upon the wings of the wind;

Who maketh winds his messengers;

Flames of fire his ministers;

Who laid the foundations of the earth,

That it should not be moved for ever.

Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a vesture;

The waters stood above the mountains.

At thy rebuke they fled;

At the voice of thy thunder they hasted away

(The mountains rose, the valleys sank down)

Unto the place which thou hadst founded for them.

Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over;

That they turn not again to cover the earth.

He sendeth forth springs into the valleys;

They run among the mountains;

They give drink to every beast of the field;

The wild asses quench their thirst.

By them the birds of the heavens have their habitation;

They sing among the branches. Psalms 104:1-12.

Read the entire Psalm, a glowing expression of faith in the controlling presence of God in his world. Now in our day many are troubled in their endeavor to share such a faith, because the reign of law suggests that any help from God would involve a miracle, an intervention in the regular, natural order. How can God shape the course of nature and human history without interfering with law? But consider that what we call a miracle need not involve at all a break in any law. Plant a pebble and a seed side by side. The law of the pebble is to lie dead; the law of the seed is to grow. If therefore the pebble could see the seed sprouting, how certainly it would lift its pebble hands in astonishment and cry, "A miracle!" But no law is broken there. There and everywhere else, what is called miracle is not a rupture of law; it is the fulfilling of a larger and higher law than we have yet understood. God’s providence never has and never does involve breaking his laws; it means that we are as little acquainted with all the resources of the spiritual universe as a pebble is with the resources of a plant, and that God guides the course of events by means of laws, some of which are known to us and some unknown. Remember that natural law is nothing but man’s statement of how things regularly happen, so far as he has been able to observe them. What looks like a miracle to man is no miracle to God. To him it is as natural as sunrise.

O Lord God, in whom we live, and move, and have our being, open our eyes that we may behold Thy Fatherly presence ever about us. Draw our hearts to Thee with the power of Thy love. Teach us to be anxious for nothing, and when we have done what Thou hast given us to do, help us, O God our Saviour, to leave the issue to Thy wis dom. Take from us all doubt and mistrust. Lift our thoughts up to Thee in heaven, and make us to know that all things are possible to us through Thy Son our Redeemer. Amen. Bishop Westcott.

Fifth Day, Sixth Week

It is he that sitteth above the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in; that bringeth princes to nothing; that maketh the judges of the earth as vanity. Yea, they have not been planted; yea, they have not been sown; yea, their stock hath not taken root in the earth: moreover he bloweth upon them, and they wither, and the whirlwind taketh them away as stubble. To whom then will ye liken me, that I should be equal to him? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and see who hath created these, that bringeth out their host by number; he calleth them all by name; by the greatness of his might, and for that he is strong in power, not one is lacking. Isaiah 40:22-26. The central trouble in the religious thinking of many people lies here: the new knowledge of the universe has made their childish thoughts of God inadequate, and instead of getting a worthier and larger idea of God to meet the new need, they give up all vital thought about God whatsoever. We can feel Isaiah in this fortieth chapter reaching out for as great a conception of God as he can compass, because the situation demands it. Our modern situation calls for the same outreach of mind. This is the truth behind Sam Foss’s poem:

"A boy was born mid little things,

Between a little world and sky,

And dreamed not of the cosmic rings

Round which the circling planets fly.

"He lived in little works and thoughts,

Where little ventures grow and plod,

And paced and ploughed his little plots,

And prayed unto his little God.

"But, as the mighty system grew,

His faith grew faint with many scars;

The cosmos widened in his view,

But God was lost among his stars.

"Another boy in lowly days,

As he, to little things was born,

But gathered lore in woodland ways,

And from the glory of the morn.

"As wider skies broke on his view,

God greatened in his growing mind;

Each year he dreamed his God anew,

And left his older God behind.

"He saw the boundless scheme dilate,

In star and blossom, sky and clod;

And, as the universe grew great,

He dreamed for it a greater God."

O God our Father, who dost exhort us to pray, and who dost grant what we ask, if only, when we ask, we live a better life; hear me, who am trembling in this darkness, and stretch forth Thy hand unto me; hold forth Thy light before me; recall me from my wanderings; and, Thou being my Guide, may I be restored to myself and to Thee, through Jesus Christ. Amen. St. Augustine (354-430).

Sixth Day, Sixth Week For though the fig-tree shall not flourish, Neither shall fruit be in the vines; The labor of the olive shall fail, And the fields shall yield no food; The flock shall be cut off from the fold, And there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in Jehovah, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

Habakkuk 3:17-18.

We have noted five effects that knowledge of the reign of law has on modern minds: it pushes God away off; pushes him away back; makes his special help seem impossible; suggests that any providential aid would involve a miracle; and finally makes our immature, childish ideas of him in adequate. But now supposing that all of these were over come, and that like Habakkuk, a man believed thoroughly in the providential control of a living God in his world note the lack of presumption with which he uses his faith. The forces of nature are in the hands of God, but the prophet does not immodestly demand that they shall be used in accordance with human desire. It may even be that they bring dire trouble on him, as the seventeenth verse pictures; yet he does not doubt the guidance of God in the world. Consider the importance of this attitude for prayer. Belief in God’s providence is not to be confused with the arrogant assumption that that providence must be exercised as we wish. One summer in England when the clergy were vehemently praying for dry weather, Charles Kingsley refused to do so. "How do we know," he said in a sermon, "that in praying God to take away these rains, we are not asking him to send the cholera in the year to come? I am of opinion that we are . . . Now, perhaps you may understand better why I said that I was afraid of being presumptuous in praying for fine weather."

O Thou, who givest liberally unto all men and upbraidest not, give to this, Thy servant, the desire of his heart. Thou knowest his inward and outward state. Whatever it be that holds him back from self-surrender unto Thee, grant that it may be taken out of the way, that there may be a free and open intercourse between him and Thee. May he be willing to trust where he cannot prove; willing to believe his better moments in spite of all that contradicts them. Open his eyes to see Thee as Thou art, infinitely real, infinitely gracious, infinitely good. Speak to him in the daily witness of earth and sky; in the goodness and tender mercy of human hearts; above all, in the words and works of Thy perfect Son in whom Thou hast spoken the "everlasting yea" that puts to night our every care. Take from him all dread of evils that may never happen. Grant him the victory over every besetting doubt; and patience while any darkness remains, that he may glorify Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Samuel McComb.

Seventh Day, Sixth Week

I will give thee thanks with my whole* heart:

Before the gods will I sing praises unto thee.

I will worship toward thy holy temple,

And give thanks unto thy name for thy lovingkindness

and for thy truth:

For thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

In the day that I called thou answeredst me,

Thou didst encourage me with strength in my soul . . .

Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive

me; Thou wilt stretch forth thy hand against the wrath of mine enemies,

And thy right hand will save me. Jehovah will perfect that which concerneth me:

Thy lovingkindness, O Jehovah, endureth for ever. Psalms 138:1-3, Psalms 138:7-8.

Note the joyful certainty with which this Psalmist testifies to the effect of prayer on his own life. With all the puzzles that perplex our thought when we try to pray that God will change outward circumstances, this inward realm where prayer is continually efficacious remains undisturbed. Read thoughtfully this testimony from Henry M. Stanley, the African explorer: "To relate a little of the instances in my life wherein I have been grateful for the delicate monitions of an inner voice, recalling me, as it were, to my true self, it would be difficult for me to do their importance justice. I, for one, must not, dare not, say that prayers are inefficacious. Where I have been earnest, I have been answered. ... In the conduct of the various expeditions into Africa, prayer for patience has enabled me to view my savage opponents in a humorous light; sometimes with infinite com passion for their madness. . . . Without prayer for it, I doubt that I could have endured the flourish of the spears when they were but half-a-dozen paces off. ... On all my expeditions prayer made me stronger, morally and mentally, than any of my non-praying companions. It did not blind my eyes, or dull my mind, or close my ears; but, on the contrary, it gave me confidence. It did more; it gave me joy and pride in my work, and lifted me hopefully over the one thousand five hundred miles of forest tracks, eager to face the day’s perils and fatigues."

Eternal God, lead us into the blessedness of the mystery of communion with Thee. Bow our spirits in deepest rever ence before Thee, yet uplift us into a sense of kinship. Send the spirit of Thy Son into our hearts, crying "Abba, Father" that all unworthy fear may be banished by the gladness of Thy perfect love. Thy love is like the luminous heaven, receiving only to purify the foulest breath of earth. Thy gentleness is like the sun, seeking to cheer and warm the chilled hearts of men. Touch us, O our Father, with a Reeling of Thy great realities, for though our thought about Thee is better than our words, our experience of Thee is better than our thought. Samuel McComb.

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

One element in communion with God has so far been kept in the background of our discussion. Prayer is conversation, but generally it is not merely conversation for conversation’s sake. Sometimes we talk with our friends for the sheer joy of talking, but sometimes we talk because we want something. So communion with God is commonly motived by desire; the element of petition belongs by nature to the tendency which has led all men to pray. Now, as soon as petition enters into a man’s prayers, he is likely to run against an obstacle that seems very formidable. He comes face to face with the reign of law, as modern knowledge has revealed it. In a world where there is a cause for every effect and an effect for every cause, where each event is intermeshed with every other and all move by inevitable consequence from what has gone before, it seems absurd to expect God to change anything in answer to our call. Men feel this when they consider the vastness of the universe throughout which the unbroken reign of law obtains. If the ring upon a girl’s finger be taken as the orbit of the earth 180, 000, 000 miles in diameter, the nearest fixed star is twenty miles away; and the mass of the heavenly bodies scores of hundreds of miles beyond that, and throughout the whole expanse law is absolute. Or if one looks at near-by things to rest his thought from such iron regularity, he finds no comfort there. Of all snow-crystals that ever fell, there have been no angles of crystallization in their filaments except 60 and 120. The wind is as obedient to law as is a falling stone; the tempera ture of the air is as much a creature of cause and

effect as is the rising sun; and the rays of radium, infinitesimally minute and so swift that one could encompass the earth thrice in a single second and still have time to spare, are as regular in their law-abiding ways as an eclipse.

Indeed, if one look within himself, in hope of evading law, he fails. The mind’s operations too are controlled by laws, and the psychologists are plotting them with increasing accuracy. The conviction irresistibly claims our assent that nothing happens anywhere contrary to law. The conditions which cause an Aurora Borealis are not fully known, but no one doubts that the conditions exist, and that if they fail by the least degree an Aurora cannot be conjured up by all the prayers of all the saints on earth. Definite petition to God in such a world seems absurd. To many even com munion with God grows difficult, so lost is he in the maze of law. Job’s cry gains strength a thousand fold today "O that I knew where I might find him!" (Job 23:3). As for the demand that we continue to pray "without understanding, self-respect rebels. Otway’s words in "Venice Preserved," though written in 1682, have a contemporary ring in them:

"You want to lead

My reason blindfold like a hampered lion,

Checked of his noble vigour then, when baited

Down to obedient tameness, may it couch

And show strange tricks which you call signs of faith." In this special difficulty men are often disappointed because the Bible does not directly help. Dr. McFadyen clearly states the truth of the matter "Just as the Bible assumes the existence of God, so it also assumes the naturalness of prayer. It does not answer, and, for the most part does not even raise the problems which bear so heavily upon educated men today." In the Bible there is no difficulty in the way of fleece on the same night becoming both wet and dry (Judges 6:37 ff); the sun may stop or proceed (Joshua 10:13), the shadow on the sun dial go forwards or backwards (Isaiah 38:8); the axe head may sink or float (2 Kings 6:5 ff); and the prison doors may open without human help (Acts 5:19). Like all people of the generations during which the Bible was being written, the writers of Scripture for the most part described events in terms of miracle and not of law. But this biblical assumption that prayer is entirely natural, and this description of the results of prayer in terms of miracle, rather increase than allay the perplexity of many Christians. "This world of the Bible is not our world," they cry in doubt. "Show us a single place in the world in which we live, where we cannot depend for certain on nature’s regularity. We predict sunrise and sunset to the second and they never fail. We plot the course of the planets and they are never late. The achievements of our modern world rest on the discovery that we can rely on the same things happening under the same conditions, always and everywhere. When we figure strain on a bridge we know that the laws of mechanics will not shift overnight. Indeed, the marvel of our present age is symbolized by the English astronomers, going out to Africa to study an eclipse, and standing at last on the veldt beside their instruments. Now, said one, watch in hand, if we have made no mistake in our calculations, the eclipse should begin at once/ On the instant the shadow of the moon pushed its edge over the rim of the sun! What is the use of praying in a world like that? Stern as fate, absolute as tyranny, merciless as death; too vast to praise, too inexorable to propitiate; it has no ear for prayer, no heart for sympathy, no arm to save. " No one needs to travel far to discover men whose religious

thinking has stumbled over this difficulty. It is, therefore, important thus early in our discussion to see clearly that natural law is not at all what superficial thinking makes it appear to be. Dealing with the reign of law is like going through the Simplon tunnel. Go a little way and one has darkness and imprisonment. Go a little further and one has light, liberty, and the far stretches of the Italian hills. The classic word of Bacon is nowhere more true than here "This I dare affirm in knowledge of nature that a little natural philosophy, and the first entrance into it, doth dispose the opinion to atheism, but on the other side, much natural philosophy and wading deep into it, will bring about men's minds to religion."

II

We may approach this deeper truth about "natural philosophy" by remarking that the man who believes in nature's inexorable regularity immune from personal control, ought not to expect, under ordinary circumstances, to see water flow up hill. As a matter of fact, however, he can see it any day. Reservoirs are built among the mountains or pumping stations are established and water runs up hill and down dale with equal facility and seeks the topmost stories of the tallest buildings. And this is the important secret there revealed Persons cannot violate the law of gravitation, but they can use the law-abiding force of gravitation to do what, without their cooperation, never would occur. So ordinarily a heavy substance will not float upon a lighter one. But every day iron steamships plow the sea, and heavier-than-air machines navigate the sky. Here too is revealed the fact that persons while they can never break nor change laws, can utilize, manipulate, and combine the forces which laws control to do what those forces by themselves would not accomplish. The insight which takes from the heart of religion all fear of the reign of law is this: Personality, even in ourselves, how much more in God, is the master and not merely the slave of all law-abiding forces. As Huxley put it, "The organized and highly developed sciences and arts of the present day have endowed man with a command over the course of non-human nature greater than that once attributed to the magicians." This truth underlies all our modern material accomplishments. If an engineer proposed to bridge a stream, who would say to him: "It is impossible. The laws of nature forbid hanging iron over air"? He could answer: "I am not merely the slave of nature but in part its master. Nature can be used as well as obeyed." And if one insisted to the contrary, claiming that natural laws are inviolable, the engineer's reply is evident: "The inviolability of natural laws is the beauty of them. They are trusty servants. They can be depended on. They are unwavering yesterday, today, and forever. And if. you will watch, you will see me say to this force, come, and it will come; to this force, go, and it will go; and I, a person, will manipulate and utilize the law- abiding energies of nature, making infinitely varied combinations of invariable procedures, until millions of men shall cross this river on my bridge."

III So important is it clearly to see the truth that personality, even in ourselves, can work the most unexpected results, not by violating laws, but by using knowledge of them, that we may well approach it from another angle. When men are dismayed by the inflexibility of law, they are thinking of cause and effect as forming a rigid system in whose estab lished order no break can come. Now, we may not enter here into the philosophy of causation, but it is worth noting that in practical experience we seem to be dealing with two kinds of cause. When the atmospheric pressure makes the wind blow that is one sort; when a man sails by that same wind, skilfully tacking until he reaches his destination, that is another. In one case we have absolutely predetermined procedure; in the other we have a personal will serving a personal purpose by

utilizing the predetermined procedure. These two kinds of cause seem everywhere to be at work. When the snow falls on the walk, its removal may be effected by natural causes, the sunshine or the rain. But its removal may also be effected by personal causes. A man with an ideal and a shovel may put his shovel at the service of his ideal and clear the walk. Personal causation is everywhere in evidence and when the reign of cause and effect seems rigid and merciless, it is because we forget how pliable law- abiding forces are in the hands of personality. [1]

Strange that we should forget it! All our human achieve ments are illustrations of this truth. Natural causes cannot explain St. Paul's Cathedral. Gravitation never cried to his brethren, the forces of nature, "Come, let us conspire to build a temple to God." The cause of St. Paul's Cathedral is personality utilizing its knowledge of laws. Natural causation cannot explain the sonatas of Beethoven. Nothing could be more mathematically exact than the laws of sound-vibration, but all great music bears witness to the power of personality when it uses its privilege of manipulating law- abiding sounds. Natural causation may explain the straits of Gibraltar, but it cannot explain the Panama Canal. Per sonal cause alone can account for that.

"A man went down to Panama

Where many a man had died,

To slit the sliding mountains

And lift the eternal tide.

A man stood up in Panama,

And the mountains stood aside."

One of the most liberating conceptions that can come to any mind is this perception that law-abiding forces can be made the servants of personal will. The only possibility of denying this truth lies in a theory of absolute determinism that makes the whole world a material machine with personality a helpless cog in the wheels. Grant, even in the least degree, what experience asserts and the greatest philosophies confirm, the truth of individual initiative; and we have a new element in the reign of cause and effect namely personal causation. Continually we arc projecting personal cause into the realm of natural causes. And when one deeply considers this, he sees that what we call natural cause may not be impersonal cause at all, that our limited control of uni versal forces may be a counterpart of God's unlimited control. Then all cause would be personal, and all procedure that we call natural would be God's regular ways of acting. Neither with God nor man do cause and effect make an iron system in which personality is enslaved. Rather they present to personality a reliable instrument through which personal freedom is continually expressed.

IV

Many of the arguments against prayer, based on the reign of law, bear with exactly the same force against any request made of an earthly friend. God cannot answer prayer be cause he cannot interfere with the reign of law? Let us see! A child falls from an open window and, badly hurt, calls to his father. Will the father regret his inability to help because the reign of law prevents? On the contrary, the father will set about using his knowledge of the reign of law as speedily as possible. He lifts the child from the ground although gravitation by itself would have kept the child there. He

calls up the hospital by telephone and in that act uses a combination of natural forces, put together by personal will, so wonderful that the thought of it may well make even a modern man gasp. The ambulance clangs down the street, representing a utilization of nature where knowledge of hundreds of invariable mechanical, physical, and chemical laws has been utilized. The surgeon projects personal will against the dead set and certainly fatal outcome of natural causation, and the child is saved. How many laws did that father violate? Not one, but he utilized knowledge of so many that no man can count them, and he employed that knowledge as the instrument of his love in the service of his child.

Whether, therefore, we consider the ways in which men subject natural processes to their will; or the ways in which personal cause controls natural causes; or the ways in which we answer requests, not by violating laws but by using our knowledge of them, we come to the same conclusion: personality can control the universal forces to serve personal ends. Scientific laws are human statements and increasingly true statements of nature's invariable procedures, but the procedures are always pliable in the hands of human intelligence and will. Do we mean to say that God is less free than we are? Are we, the creatures, in so large measure masters of law-abiding forces and is he, the Creator, a slave to them? Are the universal powers plastic and usable in our hands, and in his hands stiff and rigid? The whole analogy of human experience suggests that the world is not governed by law; that it is governed by God according to law. He providentially utilizes, manipulates, and combines his own invariable ways of acting to serve his own eternal purposes. Our fundamental fallacy about God is our thought of him as an artificer, now far-off, who has left this machine of his running by its own laws, and who cannot do anything with it except by intervention. Let us banish so primitive a picture of God, so childish a conception of the universe! He is not far-off. He is the Indwelling Presence in the World, as our life is in our bodies, controlling all. He is the immanent and eternal Creator, and the laws, some known to us, some unknown, are his ways of doing things. He is not a prisoner caught in the mechanism of his own world; he is not reduced to the impotency of Louis Philippe, "I reign, but I do not govern." He is free, more free than we can guess, to use the forces he has ordained. Providence is possible. A youth can deflect a brook's course from one channel to another. God can do with any life and with the course of history, what we do with a brook. The laws are all in his leash. Says Jesus, "Not a sparrow shall fall on the ground without your Father" (Matthew 10:29).

While the Bible, therefore, does not deal with the modern problem of natural law, in its reference to prayer, we still may share with the Bible that utter confidence in the power and willingness and liberty of God to help his children, which makes the Scriptures radiant with trust and hope. When the Bible says, "God hath spoken once, twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God" (Psalms 62:11); or "Jehovah is my strength and my shield; my heart hath trusted in him, and I am helped" (Psalms 28:7); or "To them that love God all things work together for good" (Romans 8:28) it is saying nothing that the most thorough believer in the reign of law may not say too. There are many prayers that God must not answer, but there are no good prayers which God cannot answer. He is the master of all laws, known to us and unknown. When God utilizes his knowledge of his own laws, who can say in advance what may happen? God is free, so far as the mere possibilities are concerned, to answer any petition whatsoever; and if a prayer is left un answered it is not because the reign of law prevents. It is because there are vast realms where God must not substitute our wish for his plan.

VI This last statement deserves emphasis. We may prefer to have the sun rise earlier, or to have a dozen colors in the spectrum, or to think without association of ideas, or to sin and not suffer; but we may as well spare our pains. God does not remake his world for the asking, not because he cannot, but because he must not. It may be convenient for us to substitute rain for sunshine or sunshine for rain, but we are likely to be vainly substituting presumption for faith when we try to control the weather. As the old rabbis put it: A mother had two sons, one a gardener and the other a potter. Said the gardener, "O mother, pray God for rain to water my plants." Said the potter, "O mother, pray God for sunshine to dry my pots." Now the mother loved them equally well. Shall she pray for rain or sun? Nay, she would best leave it in the hands of God. When entire confidence has been established, therefore, in the power and liberty of God to utilize any force at any time, a due humility will restrain us from making a pre sumptuous application of this truth to prayer. Within the realm of personal relationships the effect of prayer is so clear that our faith in prayer's efficacy has assured ground in experience, but the power of prayer to affect the objective processes of nature is incapable of scientific demonstration. We never can so completely isolate an event, like a change in the weather, as to prove that nothing but our prayer could have caused it. To be sure no man can draw a clear boundary, saying, "Within this we may expect God to use his laws in answer to our prayers, and without we may look for nothing of the kind." Professor Bowne's word is sane and helpful: "To pray about everything, in submission to God's will, would be both more human and more Christian than a scrupulous limitation of our prayers to what we might think permissible subjects of petition." But it must be obvious that we should never presumptuously demand the use of natural forces in the objective world to serve our personal purpose, and then confidently expect our prayer to work the change. Before sun and rain, as Jesus said, the just and unjust seem to fare alike (Matthew 5:45). Lyman Beecher's public claim that the burning of an un orthodox church was due to the special judgment of God on false doctrine was shown to be perilous, as well as untrue, when the next week Lyman Beecher's church burned down. The forces of the external world are in the hands of God to do with them as he wishes, but that does not necessarily mean that he must do with them as we wish. God must not surrender his sovereignty on demand. It is far better that man should learn the discipline of law than be exempt for the asking. Prayer distinctly is not "a machine warranted by the theologians to make God do what his clients want!" In all our praying therefore, we need to remember the distinction, to use Trumbull's phrases, between "faith in prayer" and "prayer in faith" Faith in prayer may be presumptuous and clamorous; it may present ultimatums to the Almighty demanding his acquiescence; it may try to make of prayer a magic demand on God. But prayer in faith asks everything in entire submission to the will of God. It desires never to force its wish on the Eternal Purpose but always to align its wish with the Eternal Purpose. It pleads passionately for its needs; but it closes its petition, as the Master did, "Thy will be done." Prayer in faith rejoices in God's sovereignty, is confident that all forces are in his leash, and that to those who love him all things work together for good. Prayer thus becomes meaningful because God is free to do what he will in his world; but prayer does not on that account become presumptuous as though God must do what we will in his world.

VII

There is a realm, however, where none need be hesitant in expecting answer to prayer. Prayer is the law of personal relationships. It is important to see clearly that all laws do not apply in all realms. Gravitation for example is not universal; it obtains without exception in the objective

physical world, but it does not range up into the personal, spiritual world. We come there into a new realm where we deal with realities that cannot be caught in test-tubes, measured by yardsticks, or weighed in scales. In that new realm new laws are at work. Gravitation cannot break up into the world of spirit, although spirit can break down and use the force of gravitation. Laws are thus arranged in regimes. When one leaves the inorganic world for the organic, he leaves behind him laws that are now no longer applicable; when he leaves the world of plants for the world of men, he moves up to laws that do not concern plants but do apply to men; and in this higher realm where men deal with one another and with God, there are conditions of communion, laws of fellowship and prayer. One cannot imagine Jesus asking for an objective change in the physical world, without entire willingness to submit to a negative answer; but when he goes up into the mountain alone to commune with God, he goes with absolute assurance that the strength and peace and vision which he needs will come. Personal relationship is the unique realm of prayer. As one reads the great prayers of the church he sees that in this realm supremely the people of God have prayed with confidence, have expected answer and have not been disappointed.

Lord, what a change within us one short hour

Spent in Thy presence will avail to make!

What heavy burdens from our bosoms take;

What parched grounds refresh, as with a shower!

We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;

We rise, and all the distant and the near

Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear!

We kneel, how weak! we rise, how full of power!

Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong,

Or others, that we are not always strong;

That we are ever overborne with care;

That we should ever weak or heartless be,

Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,

And joy and strength and courage are with Thee?"

SUGGESTIONS FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

If things are going to happen in any case according to fixed law, what is the use in petitioning for change?

What effect does knowledge of the reign of law have upon a man’s attitude toward prayer?

How far can personal volition control the operation of natural forces?

What is the difference between violating a natural law and using a law-abiding force to accomplish something which would not have happened in the ordinary course of nature?

How far is the injection of a personal will into the operation of natural laws a violation of such laws?

To what degree is the Psalmist's faith in the controlling presence of God in his world justified?

How far could parents meet the need of their children if they were bound rigidly by the reign of law?

To what extent is doubt about the possibility of answer to prayer due to the belief that it violates law, and to what extent to lack of understanding of the operation of law?

How far is confidence in God's control of natural forces inconsistent with a belief in the reliability of law?

To what extent does the reign of law prevent the answer to prayer?

Are there any prayers which God cannot answer?

How far is the Bible's confidence in the power and willing ness and liberty of God to help his children justified?

How do you think God's plans for the world affect his response to individual prayers?

What is the difference between law in the realm of nature and law in the personal, spiritual world?

What is the difference between faith in prayer and prayer in faith?

[1] One of the best philosophic statements of this truth will be found in Prof. G. H. Palmer's " The Problem of Freedom."

05.07. CHAPTER VII. Unanswered Prayer

CHAPTER VII. Unanswered Prayer

DAILY READINGS

First Day, Seventh Week Complaint about unanswered prayer is nothing new. Con sider this cry of distress with which Habakkuk opens his book, The burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see. O Jehovah, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear? I cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save. Why dost thou show me iniquity, and look upon perverseness? for destruction and violence are before me; and there is strife, and contention riseth up. Therefore the law is slacked, and justice doth never go forth; for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore justice goeth forth perverted... Thou that art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and that canst not look on perverseness, wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy peace when the wicked swalloweth up the man that is more righteous than he? Habakkuk 1:1-4, Habakkuk 1:13. The weekly comment will take up the reasons for such an experience as is revealed here, but in the daily readings let us consider the unreasonableness of allowing such experiences to cause the abandoning of prayer. For one thing, unanswered petition ought not to cause the abandonment of all praying because much of the greatest praying is not petition at all. Even the pagans in their polytheism have occasionally perceived this truth; as, for example, in an ancient book, De Mysteriis Aegyptorum, "Prayer is not a means of inducing the gods to change the course of things, but their own gift of communion with themselves, the blessing of the living gods upon their children." When one turns to Christian experience he finds this aspect of prayer everywhere magnified and exalted. When Tennyson described prayer’s meaning for his life he said, "Prayer is like opening a sluice between the great ocean and our little channels, when the sea gathers itself together and flows in at full tide." Consider how entirely this realm of prayer lies outside the disappointments of denied petition for changed circumstances.

Father, I thank Thee for Thy mercies which are new every morning. For the gift of sleep; for health and strength; for the vision of another day with its fresh opportunities of work and service; for all these and more than these, I thank Thee. Before looking on the face of men I would look on Thee, who art the health of my countenance and my God. Not without Thy guidance would I go forth to meet the duties and tasks of the day. Strengthen me so that in all my work I may be faithful; amid trials, courageous; in suffering, patient; under disappointment, full of hope in Thee. Grant this for Thy goodness sake. Amen. Samuel McComb.

Second Day, Seventh Week

How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God!

How great is the sum of them!

If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand:

When I awake, I am still with thee...

Search me, O God, and know my heart:

Try me, and know my thoughts;

And see if there be any wicked way in me,

And lead me in the way everlasting. Psalms 139:17-18, Psalms 139:23-24.

Consider the Psalmist's use of prayer as an opening of the heart to God's search, a means of restandardizing the life and aligning it continually with God's will. Should any number of disappointed petitions for external things blind our eyes to this transforming use of prayer? A typical result of Quintin Hogg's work for boys in London was seen in Jem Nicholls, a reclaimed lad of the streets. When Jem was asked, after Mr. Hogg's death, how the fight for character was coming on, he said, "I have a bit of trouble in keeping straight, but I thank God all is well. You see, I carry a photo of Q. H. with me always, and whenever I am tempted, I take it out and his look is a wonderful help, and by the grace of God I am able to overcome all." Prayer can be in our lives this sort of cleansing and empowering look at our Lord. It sets us right, reestablishes our stand ards, confirms our best resolves. After all, is not this what we most want prayer for? Are we not showing poor judgment when we surrender this kind of praying because other kinds do not always seem effective?

Almighty God, who by Thy grace and providence hast brought my great and crying sins to light, I most humbly beseech Thee to continue Thy grace and mercy to me, that my conscience being now awakened, I may call my ways to remembrance, and confess, and bewail and abhor all the sins of my life past. And, O merciful God, give me truerepentance for them, even that repentance to which Thou hast promised mercy and pardon, that even the consequences of my wrongdoing may bring a blessing to me, and that in all / may find mercy at Thy hands, through the merits and mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. Bishop Thos. Wilson (1663-1755).

Third Day, Seventh Week Seek ye Jehovah while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto Jehovah, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, and giveth seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. Isaiah 55:6-11. To make unanswered petition an excuse for abandoning all prayer is clearly unreasonable when we stop to consider how utterly unfitted we are to substitute our wish for God's will, and what appalling results would follow if all our requests were answered. Think over the faith in God's providence, superior wisdom, and mercy which Isaiah here makes the basis of prayer. Is it not clear that our clamorous demands that this kind of God should please us, justify Long fellow in his table-talk in breaking out into this indignant and somewhat exaggerated reproof: "What discord should we bring into the universe if our prayers were all answered! Then we should govern the world and not God. And do you think we should govern it better? It gives me only pain when I hear the long, wearisome petitions of men asking for they know not what. As frightened women

clutch at the reins when there is danger, so do we grasp at God’s government with our prayers. Thanksgiving with a full heart and the rest silence and submission to the divine will!"

Thou hast called us to Thyself, most merciful Father, with love and with promises abundant; and we are witnesses that it is not in vain that we draw near to Thee. We bear witness to Thy faithfulness. Thy promises are Yea and Amen. Thy blessings are exceeding abundant more than we know or think. We thank Thee for the privilege of prayer, and for Thine answers to prayer; and we rejoice that Thou dost not answer according to our petitions. We are blind, and are constantly seeking things which are not best for us. If Thou didst grant all our desires according to our requests, we should be ruined. In dealing with our little children we give them, not the things which they ask for, but the things which we judge to be best for them; and Thou, our Father, art by Thy providence overruling our ignorance and our head long mistakes, and are doing for us, not so much the things that we request of Thee as the things that we should ask; and we are, day by day, saved from peril and from ruin by Thy better knowledge and by Thy careful love. Amen. Henry Ward Beecher.

Fourth Day, Seventh Week

Yet a further reason for the way we let denied petition break our faith in prayer is that we fail to see how often God answers our prayers in ways that we do not expect and, it may be, do not like. Consider Paul’s experience, in the one petition that, so far as we have record, he ever offered for his own individual need, And by reason of the exceeding greatness of the revelations, that I should not be exalted overmuch, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, that I should not be exalted over much. Concerning this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he hath said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my power is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 2 Corinthians 12:7-9.

How often do God’s replies thus come to us in disguise, so that we, lacking Paul’s insight, do not recognize them. Henry Ward Beecher stated with characteristic humor what is often a very serious truth in the practice of prayer. "A woman," he said, "prays for patience and God sends her a green cook." That is, we seek for a thing, and God gives us a chance. When our answers come so, they are likely neither to be recognized nor welcomed. The old Olney Hymns contain two stanzas that are applicable to not a little experience with prayer,

"I asked the Lord that I might grow,

In faith, and love and ev’ry grace,

Might more of his salvation know,

And seek more earnestly his face.

"Twas he who taught me thus to pray,

And he I know has answered prayer,

But it has been in such a way

As almost drove me to despair."

God, forgive the poverty, the pettiness,

Lord, the childish folly of our prayers.

Listen, not to our words,

but to the groanings that cannot be uttered;

hearken, not to our petitions,

but to the crying of our need.

So often we pray for that

which is already ours, neglected and unappropriated;

so often for that which never can be ours;

so often for that which we must win ourselves;

and then labour endlessly for that which can only come to us in prayer.

How often we have prayed for the coming of Thy kingdom,

yet when it has sought to come through us we have some times barred the way;

we have wanted it without in others, but not in our own hearts.

We feel it is we who stand between man’s need and Thee;

between ourselves and what we might be;

and we have no trust in our own strength, or loyalty, or courage.

O give us to love Thy will, and seek Thy kingdom first of all.

Sweep away our fears, our compromise, our weakness,

lest at last we be found fighting against Thee. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

Fifth Day, Seventh Week But if any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing doubting: for he that doubteth is like the surge of the sea driven by the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord; a double- minded man, unstable in all his ways. James 1:5-8. Our petitions seem to us to be denied and we give up praying in discouragement, when the fact may be that God is suggesting to us all the time ways in which we could answer our own requests. Many a man asks for a thing, and God’s answer is wisdom sufficient to get the thing. Dean Bosworth puts it clearly: "Almost all the petitions a disciple ever has occasion to make to his Father can be answered without recourse to the so-called laws of nature, if God has power to put a thought into the mind of man. Suppose that the disciple wants work or money. If his Father has power to put an appropriate suggestion into his mind, or into some other man’s mind, or into the minds of both, the prayer can be answered. And this can be done by means of, and not in spite of, the laws of mental action. We are able to put thoughts into each other’s minds by means of words, and science seems to be surely demonstrating the fact that there are other ways of doing it.

Jesus simply assumes that God has so made the human mind that it is capable of an interchange of thought with himself, its Heavenly Father."

O Thou, who art the true Sun of the world, ever rising, and never going down; who, by Thy most wholesome appearing and sight dost nourish, and gladden all things, in heaven and earth; we beseech Thee mercifully to shine into our hearts, that the night and darkness of sin, and the mists of error on every side, being driven away, by the brightness of Thy shining within our hearts, we may all our life walk without stumbling, as in the day-time, and, being pure and clean from the works of darkness, may abound in all good works which Thou hast prepared for us to walk in. Amen. Erasmus (1467-1536).

Sixth Day, Seventh Week And he spake a parable unto them to the end that they ought always to pray, and not to faint; saying, There was in a city a judge, who feared not God, and regarded not man: and there was a widow in that city; and she came oft unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest she wear me out by her continual coming. And the Lord said, Hear what the unrighteous judge saith. And shall not God avenge his elect, that cry to him day and night, and yet he is longsuffering over them? I say unto you, that he will avenge them speedily. Neverthe less, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? Luke 18:1-8.

Men often call their petitions unanswered because in their impatience they do not give God time. Remember that in this parable the judge stands in contrast with God, not in similarity with him, and that the lesson is: If it was worth while waiting persistently upon the unjust judge, how much more surely worth while to wait patiently on the fatherly God! Many of our greatest desires demand time, patience, persistent search, long waiting as conditions of theirfulfilment. Our petitions sometimes are unanswered only because we too soon give them up as unanswered. Spurgeon put the case strongly: "It may be your prayer is like a ship, which, when it goes on a very long voyage, does not come home laden so soon; but when it does come home, it has a richer freight. Mere coasters will bring you coals, or such like ordinary things; but they that go afar to Tarshish return with gold and ivory. Coasting prayers, such as we pray every day, bring us many necessaries, but there are great prayers, which, like the old Spanish galleons, cross the main ocean, and are longer out of sight, but come home deep laden with a golden freight."

O Merciful God, fill our hearts, we pray Thee, with the graces of Thy Holy Spirit, with love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Teach us to love those who hate us; to pray for those who despitefully use us; that we may be the children of Thee, our Father, who makest Thy sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sendest rain on the just and on the unjust. Anselm (1033-1109).

Seventh Day, Seventh Week

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial among you, which cometh upon you to prove you, as though a strange thing happened unto you: but insomuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings, rejoice; that at the revelation of his glory also ye may rejoice with exceeding great joy. If ye are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are ye; because the Spirit of glory and the Spirit of God resteth upon you. For let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evildoer, or as a

meddler in other men’s matters: but if a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name... Wherefore let them also that suffer according to the will of God commit their souls in well-doing unto a faithful Creator. 1 Peter 4:12-16, 1 Peter 4:19.

Note the serious situation reflected in this Scripture, the suffering endured, the "fiery trial" to be faced, and consider the spirit of prayer in the last verse, where "as to a faithful Creator" they commit their souls. Some people make an unreasonable surrender of their praying, because they have been disappointed in getting their desires, and suppose that the great prayers have estimated the value of prayer in terms of the trouble out of which it saved them. On the contrary, many a saint has prayed his best for changed circumstances and then has committed his soul "as to a faithful Creator," although the outward trouble still was there. "Chinese" Gordon was a great believer in prayer; he said that he "prayed his boats up the Nile"; but he also has left on record this statement: "I think all prayer for temporalities must be made in subjection to God’s will, with this reservation if it falls in with his great scheme. The person who prays must be ready to have his request denied, if it runs counter to God’s rule, which is dictated by infinite wisdom."

O Father, who hast ordained that we be set within a scheme of circumstance, and that in stern conflict we should find our strength and triumph over all; withhold not from us the courage by which alone we can. conquer. Still our tongues of their weak complainings, steel our hearts against all fear, and in joyfully accepting the conditions of our earthly pilgrimage may we come to possess our souls and achieve our purposed destiny.

It has pleased Thee to hide from us a perfect knowledge, yet Thou callest for a perfect trust in Thee. We cannot see to-morrow, we know not the way that to take, darkness hangs about our path and mystery meets us at every turn. Yet Thou hast shut us up to final faith in goodness, justice, truth; that loving these for themselves alone, we may find the love that passeth knowledge, and look upon Thy face.

O suffer us not for any terror of darkness or from any torment of mind to sin against our souls, or to fail at last of Thee. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

I To a beginner in the high art of praying the Bible is often a very disheartening book. Its characters appear at first sight to enjoy the uninterrupted experience of answered prayer. The refrain of the Psalmist seems typical: "Thou hast given him his heart’s desire, thou hast not withholden the request of his lips" (Psalms 21:2). If the Bible, however, knew no other experience with prayer than the enjoyment of successful petition, it would be a book utterly inadequate to meet our needs. One of the sorest trials of our faith is petition unanswered. It is worth our notice, therefore, that the Bible itself records the experience of ungranted prayer. Even in the Psalms one finds not alone jubilant gratitude over petitions won but despondent sorrow over petitions denied. "O my God, I cry in the day-time, but thou answerest not; and in the night season, and am not silent" (Psalms 22:2).

Indeed, upon examination, the Bible turns out to be full of unanswered prayers. Moses prays to enter the Promised Land, but dies on Nebo’s top, his request refused. In the midst of national calamity the patriot lifts his Lamentation, "Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, so that no prayer can pass through" (Lamentations 3:44); and the prophet Habakkuk in his despondency exclaims, "O Jehovah, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear?" (Habakkuk 1:2). Paul prays thrice that a

vexatious, physical handicap, a "thorn in the flesh," which hinders his missionary labors, may be removed; but for the rest of his life he is compelled to make the best of it and to let it make the best of him (2 Corinthians 12:9). Even the Master in the Garden prays for release from the appalling cup, but goes out to drink it to the dregs. Not only do we meet in the Scriptures such outstanding examples of unanswered prayer; we find as well whole classes of men whose petitions are on principle denied. In the first chapter of Isaiah men are praying and God is speaking to them, "When ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood" (Isaiah 1:15). In James 4:1-17 men are praying, and the Apostle says, "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may spend it in your pleasures" (James 4:3). Throughout the Old Testament the reader runs continually on verses such as these: "What is the hope of the godless?... Will God hear his cry?" (Job 27:8-9); "Pray not thou for this people, neither lift up a cry or prayer for them; for I will not hear them in the time that they cry unto me" (Jeremiah 11:14); "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Psalms 66:18). Even in the Gospels, Jesus the supreme believer in prayer, tells his disciples that if a man does not forgive his enemies, even his own prayer for God’s pardon will be disregarded (Matthew 6:15). The Bible is full of unanswered prayer. We have here no monotonous, unreal record of petitions always granted. This book is no stranger to that complaint which, more than any puzzle over theory, makes confident prayer difficult: "I cry unto thee, and thou dost not answer me: I stand up, and thou gazest at me" (Job 30:20).

II In dealing with this problem we should emphasize the truth before maintained that petition is by no means the only form of prayer. Even though a man never asked God for anything, he still could pray. Indeed, the value of prayer is made to hinge too often upon the granting of minor material requests. God is reduced to the office of a village charity organization doling out small supplies to improvident appli cants. This conception of prayer’s use and value is infinitely removed from the elevated thought of Scripture. When we listen there in the places where men pray, we hear, for example: "Bless Jehovah, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name" (Psalms 103:1). It is the prayer of adoration. Or we hear the cry of a great statesman, remaking a ruined nation, "O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God; for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our guiltiness is grown up unto the heavens" (Ezra 9:6). It is the prayer of confession. We hear a grateful Psalmist pray: "I will extol thee, O Jehovah; for thou hast raised me up... O Jehovah my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever" (Psalms 30:1, Psalms 30:12). It is the prayer of thanksgiving. We hear the vow: "Teach me, O Jehovah, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end. Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart" (Psalms 119:33-34)- It is the prayer of consecration. And often, a voice like this is heard: "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them!... When I awake, I am still with thee" (Psalms 139:17-18). It is the prayer of communion. Adoration, confession, thanksgiving, consecration, communion these are the great prayers of the jBook as they are of the soul. Petition is only one province in the vast Kingdom of Prayer. Whatever our difficulties there, the wide ranges of prayer are not closed to us.

Nevertheless this province of petition is important. It is not the whole of prayer, but it is the original form of prayer and never can be nor ought to be outgrown. Men cannot be content simply to praise God, confess to him, thank him, make vows of devotion, and enjoy communion with him. Men have desires, all the way from the long-sought coming of the Kingdom to the welfare of their loved ones and the prosperity of their daily business, to whose furtherance they instinctively call the help

of any god in whom they really believe. "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," and "Give us this day our daily bread," are both petitions; and they belong in the Lord’s Prayer, together with "Hal lowed be thy name." Petition, in its lower forms, trying to make God a mere means to serve some selfish, external end, is the result of ignorant, unspiritual immaturity. But petitions that well up out of mankind’s deep desires for real good, are an integral part of prayer. They are to the whole domain what the thirteen original states are to America; not the whole of it, nor the major portion of it, but the primary nucleus of it and the initial influence in it.

Moreover, the Bible, with all its emphasis upon the other aspects of prayer, uses words very explicit, sweeping, and confident about petition: "Call unto me, and I will answer thee" (Jeremiah 33:3); "Ask, and it shall be given you" (Matthew 7:7); "All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matthew 21:22); "All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24); "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father" (Matthew 18:19). What expectations such words awaken! And what a puzzling, baffling obstacle to active faith is the repeated denial of ourrequests! What is the use of proving that prayer can bring results if our experience shows that it does not?

III

One obvious reason for our unanswered petitions is, of course, the ignorance of our asking. Piety is no guarantee of wisdom. One has but to consider the spectacle of all sorts and conditions of men at prayer, voicing to God their various and often contradictory desires; praying vehemently on opposite sides of the same war; some even praying, like the Bourbon king, that they may be allowed to sin once more; and almost all of us praying in ignorance of our profoundest needs, to see that many petitions must be denied. Indeed, instead of calling prayers unanswered, it is far truer to recognize that "No" is as real an answer as "Yes," and often far more kind. When one considers the partialness of our knowledge, the narrowness of our outlook, our little skill in tracing the far-off consequences of our desire, he sees how often God must speak to us, as Jesus did to the ambitious woman, "Ye know not what ye ask" (Matthew 20:22). This suggestion is no special pleading, superficially to evade a difficulty. Rabindranath Tagore, the Bengali poet, was not constructing a Christian apologetic, but was stating aprofound human experience, when he wrote, "My desires are many and my cry is pitiful, but ever didst thou save me by hard refusals; and this strong mercy has been wrought into my life through and through." This suggestion gains force when we perceive that often, if God granted the form of our petition, he would deny the substance of our desire. In one of the most impressive pas sages in his "Confessions," St. Augustine pictures his mother, Monica, praying all one night, in a sea-side chapel on the north African coast, that God would not let her son sail for Italy. She wanted Augustine to be a Christian. She could not endure losing him from her influence. If under her care, he still was far from being Christ s, what would he be in Italy, home of licentiousness and splendor, of manifold and alluring temptations? And even while she prayed there passionately for her son’s retention at home, he sailed, by the grace of God, for Italy, where, persuaded by Ambrose, he became a Christian in the very place from which his mother’s prayers would have kept him. The form of her petition was denied; the substance of her desire was granted. As St. Augustine himself puts it: "Thou, in the depth of thy counsels, hearing the main point of her desire, regardedst not what she then asked, that thou mightest make me what she ever desired." It would be a sorry world for all of us, if our unwise petitions did not

often have "No" for their answer.

IV

Another plain reason for our denied requests is that we continually try to make prayer a substitute for intelligence and work. We have already seen that there are three chief ways in which men cooperate with God: thinking, working, and praying. Now, no one of these three can ever take the place of another. Each has its peculiar realm. No human mind may be acute- and penetrating enough exactly to trace the boundaries, but it is clear that the boundaries must be there. When our petitions cross over into the realms where results must be achieved, not by asking, but by working and thinking, the petitions cannot be granted.

There are prayers, for example, which attempt to achieve by supplication what can be achieved only by effective thinking. Consider what this world would become if everything could be accomplished by prayer. What if men could sail their ships as well by prayer alone as by knowledge of the science of navigation; could swing their bridges as firmly by petition only as by studying engineering laws; could light their houses, send their messages, and work out their philosophies by mere entreaty? Is it not clear that if, as in fairy-tales, we had the power of omnipotent wishing conferred upon us, we never would use our intelligence at all? If life is to mean development and discipline, some things must be impossible until men think, no matter how hard men pray. If a boy asks his father to work out his arithmetic lesson because he wishes to play, will the father do it? The father loves the boy; he could work out the lesson, but he must not. The boy’s prayer must never be made a substitute for his intellectual discipline. The father, in answer to the boy’s request, may encourage him, assist him, stand by him and see him through; but the father must not do for the boy anything that the boy can possibly do for himself. Harsh though at times it may seem, God surely must require us as individuals and as a race to endure the discipline of painful enterprise and struggle, rather than find an easy relief by asking.

There are prayers, also, which attempt to accomplish by supplication what can be accomplished only by work. In one of the most dramatic scenes of the Exodun, where the Israelites are caught with the unfordable Red Sea in front and the pursuing Egyptians behind, Moses goes apart to pray. The reply which he receives from Jehovah is starting. It is nothing less than a rebuke for having prayed: "Where fore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward" (Exodus 14:15). It is as though God were saying, "I have everything prepared for your aggressive action. I have done the last thing that I can do, until you resolutely take advantage of it. It is your move! You can not obtain by prayer what comes only as the reward of work." Such a rebuke many of our prayers deserve. We forget the proverb: "If wishes were horses, beggars would ride." When one studies the great servants of the Kingdom at prayer, he always finds in them this sturdy common-sense. If ever an enterprise was begun, continued, and ended in prayer, it was Nehemiah’s reconstruction of the Hebrew commonwealth; but Nehemiah always combined prayer and work, without confusing them: "I prayed unto the God of heaven. And I said unto the king" (Nehemiah 2:4-5); "We made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night" (Nehemiah 4:9); "Remember the Lord... and fight" (Nehemiah 4:14). So Cromwell prayed, but when he faced a weak and flaccid piety that made prayer a substitute for practical devotion, he put his feeling into a phrase as hard as his bullets: "Trust God and keep your powder dry." Such men have understood that God has three ways of accomplishing his will through men,

not one way only. "Pray to God," said Spurgeon, "but keep the hammer going."

Still another reason for ungranted petition may be noted: we are not ready for the reception of the gift which we desire. The trouble is not with the petition but with us who offer it. We need not be wilfully wicked. We may simply lack that eager readiness to receive which voices itself in earnest, persistent prayer. The note of Jacob's wresting with the angel, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me" (Genesis 32:26), is lacking in our supplication. We are lackadaisical in our desires and therefore are not importunate in our prayers. At first it may be surprising, in view of all that has been said about the individual love of God, that we should insist on importunity in prayer. If God is good and wishes to give us the best, why must we clamor long after a real good, eagerly and patiently and with importunity seeking it? At this point many of Jesus sayings are difficult to under stand. He clearly insisted on importunate prayer. "He spake a parable unto them to the end that they ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18:1), and the parable recorded a woman's tiresome, reiterated petitioning of a judge until he cried in despair, "I will avenge her, lest she wear me out by her continual coming." He who believed so fully in the utter willingness and power of God to help, even illustrated prayer by a man's arousal of a sleepy neighbor and his pestering persistence in calling for bread until "be cause of his importunity" he won his request (Luke 11:5 f). We must allow for the picturesque exaggeration in these vivid parables; we must remember that they were supposed to illustrate only one aspect of prayer, not the whole of it; we must balance these passages by Jesus own condemnation of those who think they shall be "heard for their much speaking": but we must not thin out, until we lose it, the obvious meaning here. Jesus was insisting on tireless praying. He said prayer was seeking (Luke 11:9); and if one considers what intellectual search means, as when Copernicus ques tioned the heavens year after year to discover the truth, or what geographical search means, as when Peary tried undiscourageably for the Pole, he catches at least a faint idea of the Master's thought of prayer as an unwearied seeking after spiritual good. "For twenty-four years," said Peary, "sleeping or awake, to place the Stars and Stripes on the Pole had been my dream." That is the spirit of seeking, and that, the Master said, is the spirit of prayer. The necessity of this sort of prayer is not difficult to understand. Boys on Halloweenring bells and run. So, many of us pray. But any one who has serious business will wait for an answer to his summons and if need be, will ring again. The patient waiting, the reiterated demand are an expression and a test of our earnestness. When we said that both "No" and "Yes" were real answers to prayers, we did not exhaust the possibilities. There is another answer which God continually gives us "Wait." For nearly two thousand years the church has been praying "that they may all be one." God never has said "No" to that, nor yet has he said "Yes." He has said "Wait." Since Jesus taught them first to pray, "Thy kingdom come," his disciples have lifted that supplication century after century; and "Lo! Thy church is praying yet, a thousand years the same." Great prayers such as these are not affairs of "Yes" or "No"; they reach over ages and bind together the aspirations of God's noblest sons; they are an eager, patient, persistent search after good.

Now compare with such undiscourageable prayers our individual spasms of petition. Our requests spurt up like intermittent geysers; we cry out and fall back again. We are not in earnest. "Easiness of desire," said Jeremy Taylor, "is a great enemy to the success of a good man's prayer. It must be an intent, zealous, busy, operative prayer. For consider what a huge indecency it is that a man should speak to God for a thing that he values not. Our prayers upbraid our spirits when we beg

tamely for those things for which we ought to die." This, then, is the rationale of importunity in prayer, not that it is needed to coax God, but that it is needed alike to express and by expressing to deepen our eager readiness for the good we seek. Some things God cannot give to a man until the man has prepared and proved his spirit by persistent prayer. Such praying cleans the house, cleanses the windows, hangs the curtains, sets the table, opens the door, until God says, "Lo! The house is ready. Now may the guest come in."

VI As we step, then, from the wider domain of prayer into the special province of petition, we can see three comprehensive reasons for denied request: the ignorance of our asking, our use of prayer in fields where it does not belong, and the unreadiness of our own lives to receive the good we seek. There are many people who have a thoughtless and unauthorized belief in the power of prayer to get things for themselves. They forget the searching condition put on all petition, that it must be in Christ's name (John 14:13; John 16:23-24, John 16:26). No hurried addition of "For Jesus sake" appended to a prayer can satisfy this deep and spiritual demand. Petition must be in accordance with the divine will and in harmony with Christ's spirit; it must be wise in itself and must come from a life -persistent in its desires and unselfish in its purposes, before that law of prayer can be satisfied. To pray in Christ's name is nothing less than the acceptance of St. Augustine's attitude when he cried: "O Lord, grant that I may do thy will as if it were my will; so that thou mayest do my will as if it were thy will." Prayer is not magic, and it is a fortunate thing for us that Trumbull's word is true, alike to Scripture and experience, that so far as petition is concerned "Prayer is not to be depended on, but God is!"

There is one sense, however, in which answer to prayer can always be depended on, if a man has kept his life at all in harmony with God. Even when God cannot answer affirmatively the man's petition he can answer the man. Paul's petition for relief from his physical distress was not affirmatively answered, but Paul was answered. He went out from that denied request, thrice repeated, with a reply from God that put fortitude and courage into him: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9). God always answers true prayer in one of two ways "No good prayer ever comes weeping home." For either he changes the circumstances or he supplies sufficient power to overcome them; he answers either the petition or the man. As Luther put it, "A Christian knows that he is not refused what he has prayed for, and finds, in fact, that he is helped in all troubles... and that God gives him power to bear his troubles and to overcome them: which is just the same thing as taking his trouble away from him, and making it no longer misfortune or distress, seeing it has been overcome." This truth explains such amazing statements as Adoniram Judson, for example, made at the close of his life: "I never prayed sincerely and earnestly for anything, but it came; at some time no matter at how distant a day somehow, in some shape probably the last I should have devised it came." But Judson had prayed for entrance into India and had been compelled to go to Burmah; he had prayed for his wife's life, and had buried both her and his two children; he had prayed for release from the King of Ava's prison and had lain there months, chained and miserable. Scores of Judson's petitions had gone without an affirmative answer. But Judson always had been answered. He had been upheld, guided, reinforced; unforeseen doors had opened through the very trials he sought to avoid; and the deep desires of his life were being accomplished not in his way but beyond his way. He meant by his assertion of the unfailing power of prayer what Paul meant when he cried, "My God shall supply every need" (Php 4:19). Yes, even the Master faced denied petition. "Let the cup pass,"

was a cry that could not be granted. But Jesus himself was greatly answered in the Garden. The request was denied, but as our Lord goes out to face Pilate and the cross, with a loyalty to his Cause that no temptation can relax, a steadiness that no suffering can shake, a mag nanimity that neither nails nor spear nor gibe can embitter, who can measure what in prayer had been done for the Man?

SUGGESTIONS FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

Why are prayers unanswered?

What would happen if all petitions were granted?

If the course of events were decided alone in accordance with the petitions to God by men, what kind of a world would it be?

To what extent would any individual be willing to have his prayers answered?

What is the effect upon personal character of a religion that substitutes begging for honest work?

Under what circumstances do you think God would grant a petition for definite help in securing something which a man might get by his own intellect and work?

To what extent is it possible for a man’s "petition" to be denied and his "prayer" still to be answered?

If we ask God for something in how far is it an answer to this petition to be given the opportunity and direction to answer the petition for ourselves?

In response to his petition to be relieved from "the thorn in the flesh," which do you think presented the greater value to Paul the granting of his actual petition or the answer which he received?

If all petitions were unanswered, would it still be worth while to pray?

Why are answers to prayer deferred?

What prerequisites does a wise father require of his sons before granting them their share of the inheritance? What light does this throw upon the answer to a petition being deferred by God?

Why did Jesus suggest the necessity of importunity in prayer?

What does the New Testament mean when it speaks of praying "in Christ’s name"?

What is the difference between "answering a petition" and "answering a man"? Have any of my prayers really been unanswered?

05.08. CHAPTER VIII. Prayer as Dominant Desire

CHAPTER VIII. Prayer as Dominant Desire

DAILY READINGS First Day, Eighth Week And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? have all gifts of healings? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But desire earnestly the greater gifts. And moreover a most excellent way show I unto you. If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. 1 Corinthians 12:28-31, 1 Corinthians 13:1.

Note the unfortunate break in this great passage made by a new chapter's beginning. 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 on love should always be read as an explanation of the verse in 1 Corinthians 12:1-31, "Desire earnestly the greater gifts."

Many reasons for unreality in prayer we have noted, such as perversity of mood, or failure to grasp the individual love of God, or wilful alienation of the life in sin. With one of the deepest troubles in our praying, however, we have not dealt. Our prayers arc often unreal because they do not represent what in our inward hearts we sincerely crave. We ask God for the "greater gifts" which we do not "desire earnestly." For example we pray against some evil habit in our lives, while at the same time we refuse to give up the practices that make the habit easy, or the companion ships in which the habit thrives. We go through the form of entreating God to save us from the sin, but we do not want the answer enough to burn the bridges across which the sin continually comes. Our petition is a lame and in effective whim without driving power. Said "Chinese" Gordon: "I have been thinking over our feelings and how often it is that we are so very insincere even in prayer. . . . We pray for power to give up a certain habit, say evil speaking, and, at the moment of so praying, we have a thought of evil against some one, and we, as it were, whisper to that thought, By and by I will attend to ypu, not now/ and we go on praying against the very act we intend in our hearts to do. All this is insincere and dishonoring."

O God, whose Spirit searcheth all things, and whose love beareth all things, encourage us to draw near to Thee in sincerity and in truth. Save us from a worship of the lips while our hearts are far away. Save us from the useless labour of attempting to conceal ourselves from Thee who searchest the heart.

Enable us to lay aside all those cloaks and disguises which we wear in the light of day and here to bare ourselves, with all our weakness, disease and sin, naked to Thy sight.

Make us strong enough to bear the vision of the truth, and to have done with all falsehood, pretence, and hypocrisy, so that we may see things as they are, and fear no more.

Enable us to look upon the love which has borne with us and the heart that suffers for us. Help us to acknowledge our dependence on the purity that abides our uncleanness, the patience that

forgives our faithlessness, the truth that forbears all our falsity and compromise. And may we have the grace of gratitude, and the desire to dedicate ourselves to Thee. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

Second Day, Eighth Week

Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, who would make a reckoning with his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, that owed him ten thousand talents. . . . And the lord of that servant, being moved with com passion, released him, and forgave him the debt. But that servant went out, and found one of his fellow- servants, who owed him a hundred shillings: and he laid hold on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay what thou owest. So his fellow-servant fell down and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay that which was due. So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were exceeding sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord called him unto him, and saith to him, Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou besoughtest me: shouldest not thou also have had mercy on thy fellow-servant, even as I had mercy on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due. So shall also my heavenly Father do unto you, if ye forgive not every one his brother from your hearts. Matthew 18:23-24, Matthew 18:27-35. The unreality of our praying may be illustrated in our petitions for forgiveness. Nothing may be more superficial than a request for pardon; nothing can be more searching than a genuine experience of penitence. A boy who has sinned and faces the consequence may have a momentary spell of regret; he naturally wishes to have the slate wiped clean. But to be sincerely sorry for his evil itself, rather than for its consequences; to be ashamed of his failure, so that he feels himself a brother of all sinners, and like Richard Baxter, could say of a murderer going to execution, "There but for the grace of God goes Richard Baxter!" how penetrating an experience is that! Consider this expression of penitence from Tagore, the Bengali poet:

"I came out alone on my way to my tryst.

But who is this that follows me in the silent dark?

I move aside to avoid his presence, but I escape him not.

He makes the dust rise from the earth with his swagger;

he adds his loud voice to every word that I utter.

He is my own little self, my lord, he knows no shame; but

I am ashamed to come to thy door in his company." A man so sincerely ashamed of himself will seek forgiveness and renewal, with a genuine desire that will make his supplications real, and by the very vividness of his own sense of guilt will find it impossible to be unforgiving to any other man. Read again today’s Scripture, and consider the Master’s insistence on that kind of genuineness in our prayers for pardon.

O Searcher of hearts, Thou knowest us better than we know ourselves, and seest the sins which our sinfulness hides from us. Yet even our own conscience beareth witness against us, that we often slumber on our appointed watch; that we walk not always lovingly with each other, and

humbly with Thee; and we withhold that entire sacrifice of ourselves to Thy perfect will, without which we are not crucified with Christ, or sharers in His redemption. Oh, look upon our contrition, and lift up our weakness, and let the dayspring yet arise within our hearts, and bring us healing, strength, and joy. Day by day may we grow in faith, in self-denial, in charity, in heavenly-mindedness. And then, mingle us at last zvith the mighty host of Thy redeemed for evermore. Amen. James Martineau (1805-1900).

Third Day, Eighth Week

Holy Father, keep them in thy name which thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are. While I was with them, I kept them in thy name which thou hast given me: and I guarded them, and not one of them perished, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy made full in themselves. I have given them thy word; and the world hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them from the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth. As thou didst send me into the world, even so sent I them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth. Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me. John 17:11-21.

Consider another way in which we pray insincerely. We go through the form of praying for our friends. It seems the right thing to do, and it gives us at least a momentary glow of unselfishness. But the prayer does not so rise from a controlling desire for our friends good, that we can be counted on all that day to be thoughtful about their needs, sensitive to their feelings, generous to their faults, glad of their success, and helpful to our utmost in their service. We often do not really care enough about our friends, so that our supplication for them has vital meaning for us and. therefore, for God. As Nolan Rice Best has expressed it. "Like the supreme court of our land, the Supreme Court of heaven passes on no hypothetical matters; the petitioner must have a real case in order to obtain attention."

Think of the Master’s love for his disciples, of the ways he revealed it, of the lengths to which he willingly went in being true to it. The reality of this intercessory prayer in John’s seventeenth chapter goes back to the genuineness of the love out of which it came. The prayer actually represented what the Master sacrificially desired.

O blessed Lord and Saviour, who hast commanded us to love one another, grant us grace that, having received Thine undeserved bounty, we may love every man in Thee and for Thee. We implore Thy clemency for all; but especially for the friends whom Thy love has given to us. Love Thou them, O Thou fountain of love, and make them to love Thee with all their heart, with all their mind, and with all their soul, that those things only which arc pleasing to Thee they may will, and speak, and do. And though our prayer is cold, be cause our charity is so little fervent, yet Thou art rich in mercy. Measure not to them Thy goodness by the dulness of our devotion; but as Thy kindness surpasseth all human affection, so let Thy hearing transcend our prayer. Do Thou to them what is expedient for them, according to Thy will, that they, being always and everywhere ruled and protected by Thee, may attain in the end to everlasting life; and to Thee, with the Father

and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and praise for ever and ever. Amen. Anselm (1033-1109).

Fourth Day, Eighth Week

If I have withheld the poor from their desire,

Or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail,

Or have eaten my morsel alone, And the fatherless hath not eaten thereof. . . .

If I have seen any perish for want of clothing,

Or that the needy had no covering;

If his loins have not blessed me,

And if he hath not been warmed with the fleece of my sheep;

If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless,

Because I saw my help in the gate:

Then let my shoulder fall from the shoulder-blade,

And mine arm be broken from the bone. Job 31:16-22. When a man can take words like these on his lips, as a description of his own life, he is prepared sincerely to pray for the poor. We often emphasize the fact that prayer is a powerful builder of character; but the other side of the truth is important, that great character is essential to great praying. A man with a small, mean, self-indulgent life cannot genuinely offer a noble prayer. This is the meaning of the saying that it is easy to commit the Lord's Prayer to memory, but difficult to learn it by heart. In any man's entreaty, no matter how great the words, only that much is real which is the expression of his character, the inward quality and habitual desire of his life. When, therefore, pity leads us to ask God's mercy on the popr, the value of our praying depends on the controlling power of that good desire in our lives. Does the supplication come out of an inward devotion that is to us of serious concern? Can God see in our habitual, systematic care for the poor and support of the agencies that help them, the proof of our prayer's sincerity?

We beseech Thee, Lord and Master, to be our help and succour. Save those who are in tribulation; have mercy on the lonely; lift up the fallen; show Thyself unto the needy; heal the ungodly; convert the wanderers of Thy people; feed the hungry; raise up the weak; comfort the faint-hearted. Let all the peoples know that Thou art God alone, and Jesus Christ is Thy Son, and we are Thy people and the sheep of Thy pasture; for the sake of Christ Jesus. Amen. St. Clement of Rome (90 A. D.).

Fifth Day, Eighth Week

Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers, Barnabas, and Symeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen the foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work where- unto I have called them. Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the

Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. Acts 13:1-4.

Note how this first missionary tour of Paul and his companions was conceived in the spirit of prayer and furthered by prayer's power. We too have prayed for missions. Per haps we have personal friends on the foreign field and that fact has quickened our sense of obligation to pray for the Cause. But the plain fact often is that while we are offering prayers, we are offering nothing else. We make supplication a substitute for devotion. We do not give to missions with any deep sense of stewardship, but rather treat the Cause of the Kingdom as a charity, to which an occasional dole from our surplus is sufficient. In our inmost desires we are not devotedly set on the triumph of Christ's cause, so that we seek information about missions, make as generous gifts as we can, and put personal service into strengthening the church as the "home base." In our petitions for the missionaries, how often, as Friar Lawrence phrases it, we are "fooling ourselves with trivial devotions."

O great Lord of the harvest, send forth, we beseech Thee, labourers into the harvest of the world, that the grain which is even now ripe may not fall and perish through our neglect. Pour forth Thy sanctifying Spirit on our fellow Christians abroad, and Thy converting grace on those who are living in darkness. Raise up, we beseech Thee, a devout ministry among the native believers, that, all Thy people being knit together in one body, in love, Thy Church may grow up into the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; through Him who died, and rose again for us all, the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Bishop Milman (1791-1868).

Sixth Day, Eighth Week

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:

They shall prosper that love thee.

Peace be within thy walls,

And prosperity within thy palaces.

For my brethren and companions sakes,

I will now say, Peace be within thee.

For the sake of the house of Jehovah our God

I will seek thy good. Psalms 122:6-9. In the time of a great war, nothing is more natural than prayer for peace. But of all petitions that arise for peace, how many represent deep and transforming devotion of the life to the cause of human brotherhood? Men pray for peace, and still retain and express those racial prejudices that are one of the most prolific causes of war. They ask for human brotherhood to come, but they are most un- brotherly to the foreigner within their own communities. Women piously frame petitions in behalf of the day when there shall be no "barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman; but Christ is all, and in all," but all the while they violate every Christian principle in their dealings with their servants, their social inferiors, or the aliens of their city. Their prayers are long-range dreams that do not touch their lives. And least of all do many of us, when we pray for peace, purge our own hearts of that rancor that lies behind all war. "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and railing, be put away from you, with all

malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you" (Ephesians 4:31).

O Lord, since first the blood of Abel cried to Thee from the ground that drank it, this earth of Thine has been defiled with the blood of man shed by his brother's hand, and the cen turies sob with the ceaseless horror of war. Ever the pride of kings and the covetousness of the strong have driven peace ful nations to slaughter. Ever the songs of the past and the pomp of armies have been used to inflame the passions of the people. Our spirit cries out to Thee in revolt against it, and we know that our righteous anger is answered by Thy holy wrath.

Break Thou the spell of the enchantments that make the nations drunk with, the lust of battle and draw them on as willing tools of death. Grant us a quiet and steadfast mind when our own nation clamors for vengeance or aggression. Strengthen our sense of justice and our regard for the equal worth of other peoples and races. Grant to the rulers of nations faith in the possibility of peace through justice, and grant to the common people a new and stern enthusiasm for the cause of peace. Bless our soldiers and sailors for their swift obedience and their willingness to answer to the call of duty, but inspire them none the less with a hatred of war, and may they never for love of private glory or advancement provoke its coming. May our young men still rejoice to die for their country with the valor of their fathers, but teach our age nobler methods of matching our strength and more effective ways of giving our life for the flag.

O Thou strong Father of all nations, draw all Thy great family together with an increasing sense of our common blood and destiny, that peace may come on earth at last, and Thy sun may shed its light rejoicing on a holy brotherhood of peoples. Walter Rauschenbusch.

Seventh Day, Eighth Week And it came to pass after these things, that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house; and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it: or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money. And Naboth said to Ahab, Jehovah forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee. And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread. 1 Kings 21:1-4.

Supposing that Ahab had said his prayers that night, would it have made much difference what he said in praying? Imagine him rehearsing some formal petitions learned in his childhood; would that have been his real prayer? It is clear that Ahab's demand on life that night was simply his covetous desire for Naboth's vineyard. No formal, proper, pious supplication addressed to God could have hidden from the divine insight this deeper fact, that what Ahab really wanted was his neighbor's field. Consider how often God must so look through our conventionally proper petitions, and in our hearts perceive our unvoiced but controlling wants sometimes as mean, selfish, covetous as Ahab s. These are the deep prayers of our lives our hearts are set upon them and God is not deceived when we tell him in pious phrases that we wish his blessing. Let us consider this week what our hearts really are set on, what are our chief ambitions and desires.

O Eternal God, sanctify my body and soul, my thoughts and my intentions, my words and actions, that whatsoever I shall think, or speak, or do, may be by me designed for the glorification of Thy Name, and by Thy blessing, it may be effective and successful in the work of God, according as it can be capable. Lord, turn my necessities into virtue; the works of nature into the works of grace; by making them orderly, regular, temperate; and let no pride or self-seeking, no covetousness or revenge, no little ends and low imaginations, pollute my spirit, and unhallow any of my words and actions; but let my body be a servant of my spirit, and both body and spirit servants of Jesus; that, doing all things for Thy glory here, I may be partaker of Thy glory hereafter, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Jeremy Taylor (1613-1667).

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

Hitherto we have spoken of prayer as a definitely religious act. In using the word we thought of hearts bowed in the presence of God; we thought of shut doors, bent knees, reverent spirits. But in this chapter we must sink down into that realm of human desire, which, like an ocean under separate waves, lies beneath all specially religious petitions. At least during the early portion of this chapter we must think of prayer as quite separable from religion; we must ask not only what our desires are when we bow before God, but what our dominant aims are in daily business; what we are really after in our innermost ambitions; what is our demand on life. Prayer, in this more inclusive sense, is the settled craving of a man’s heart, good or bad, his inward love and determining desire. When the prodigal in Jesus parable said, "Father, give me the portion of thy substance that falleth to me," he was in a real sense praying. His innermost ambition was there expressed. His heart was set on gaining the means that in the end would be his ruin. It was a prayer resolutely directed toward evil, but it was prayer. In this sense, Columbus search for America was prayer; Edison’s long attempt to find the secret of incandescence was prayer; Paul’s ambition to found Christian churches and Napoleon’s ambition to rule Europe both were prayers. Not alone the woman who pleads with the reluctant judge for justice, but the prodigal seeking from his father the means of dissipation, is praying; and any man who after money or fame or pleasure insistently directs his course, has in his dominant desire the prayer that shapes his life. We must accept for a while the fruitful definition which Mrs. Browning gives us, "Every wish, with God, is a prayer."

II

One immediate result of this point of view is a clear perception that everybody is praying. Prayer regarded as a definite act of approach to God may be shut out from any life. But prayer regarded as desire, exercised in any realm and for anything, at once includes us all. In this general sense we pray without ceasing. We are hunger-points in the universe; the elemental fact in every human life is desire. To a man who disclaims any act of prayer we may retort, "Your life is an organized prayer. Your body craves food, your mind craves knowledge, your affection craves friendship, your spirit craves peace and hope. You do not pray? Rather every stroke of work and every purposeful thought are endeavors to satisfy inward prayers."

Ordinarily prayer is regarded as the act of a man’s best hours. But in this deeper sense men pray in their worst hours too. Prayer may be either heavenly or devilish. When we think of a man’s dominant desire as in very truth his prayer, we see that Gehazi, with covetous eyes following Naaman to filch his wealth, is praying; that David, with licentious heart putting Uriah at the front of

the battle, is praying; that the prodigal seeking the means of his own ruin is praying. None ever found heaven, here or anywhere, without prayer the uplift of a settled desire after God and righteousness. And none ever found hell, here or anywhere, without prayer the dead set and insistent craving of the heart after evil. In any group of men, you may not in this sense divide those who pray from those who do not. All are praying the prayer of dominant desire. The great ques tion is: what are they after? what is their demand on life?

III

It is to be noted, also, that prayer in this sense is the inward measure of any man's quality. Living beings reveal their grade in the scale of existence by their wants. Inani mate things want nothing. Stones and clods are undisturbed by any sense of lack. The faintest glimmering of life, how ever, brings in the reign of want. Even in some one-celled Amoeba rolling about in search of food, the presence of life means a hunger which is the rudiment of prayer. And from these dim beginnings of instinctive need to the spiritual demands of sage and saint, the extent and quality of a being's wants are a good measure of his life. In the difference between a savage, wanting nothing but nakedness, a straw-hut, and raw food to content him, and one of us, demanding conveniences that lay tribute on the ends of the earth, our material progress can be measured. In the difference between an African dwarf, with no interests beyond his jungle's edge, and a modern scientist beating the wings of his enquiry against the uttermost bars of the uni verse, we can gauge our intellectual growth. In the difference between a pagan with his fetish, and Paul saying of his life with Christ, "I press on," our spiritual enlargement is measured. The greater a man is, the wider and deeper and finer are his desires. His prayer is the measure of him. What it takes to meet his need is the gauge of his size. Men come into life as they move into strange cities and at once begin praying. Some ask for the city's places of vulgar amusement or of vice; some for the best music and the finest art; some for low companionship, others for good friends; and some for the centers of social service and the temples of God. So each man prays and as he prays he reveals his quality. No man can escape the prayer of dominant desire, nor evade the inevitable measurement of his life by his prayer.

IV This truth becomes very serious when we face a further development of it: that the prayer of dominant desire always tends to attain its object. This is true, in the first place, be cause a central craving organizes all the faculties of our lives about itself and sets mind and hands to do its bidding. Of the three ways in which men cooperate with God, working, thinking, and praying, a cursory view might suggest that praying is a somewhat superfluous addition; that, at least, the other two plainly belong first in importance. On the contrary the prayer of dominant desire habitually precedes thought and work. We think and labor because in our innermost heart we have prayed first, because some Desire is in us, calling to our minds, "Come, bring me this!" and ordering our hands, "Go bring me that!" Desire is the elemental force in human experience. A man wants money. That is his real demand on life his prayer. How his mind, then, puts on servile livery to wait on his dominant desire! How quick his wit becomes, how sinewy his thought in the service of his prayer 1 Wherever men concentrate their wills, apply their minds and submit to toil, back of this visible consequence is dominant desire. If Bismarck stops at nothing in amalgamating the German Empire, an ambition is in the saddle "You may hang me," he said, "so long as the rope you do it with binds Germany to the Prussian throne." And if Burns writes incomparable Scotch lyrics, we must trace his labor back to his prayer:

"E’en then a wish (I mind its pow r),

A wish that to my latest hour

Shall strongly heave my breast,

That I for poor auld Scotland’s sake

Some useful plan or book could wake,

Or sing a song at least."

Dominant desire gathers up the scattered faculties, concenters the mind, nerves the will, and drives hard toward the issue. It always tends to achieve its end. As John Burroughs put it, "If you have a thing in mind, it is not long before you have it in hand." This prayer of dominant desire, however, tends to achieve its object, not merely because it concentrates the powers within the man, but because it calls into alliance with it forces from without the man. Wherever there is low pres sure in the atmosphere, thither the wind rushes to fill the need. So the cravings of men create low-pressure areas and, from without, help blows in to the fulfilment of their desires. This is easily illustrated in the social life, for in every enter prise now on foot in the world, men are endeavoring to supply other men’s desires churches to meet the desire for worship, saloons to meet the craving for drink, schools to supply the thirst for knowledge. Behind every organization lies a craving. Human wants are the open bays that call the sea of human effort in. This truth is just as evident in the life of the individual. When a man craves vicious pleasure, low companions inevitably drift to him from every side; low books that pure minds pass unobserved, flow in to satisfy his appetite. His prayer creates a call that is answered by everything kindred to his want. As a whirlwind catches up the adjacent air into its vortex, so a man’s desire calls in the congenial forces of his environment. To the prodigal, doubtless, every evil influence in the village came by spiritual gravitation to further his evil purpose, until at last his dominant desire drew his father in. The very patrimony which was meant to be his blessing he used in furtherance of his controlling passion until it proved his curse. To translate the story at once into the terms of our experience with God, the universe itself responds to a man’s insistent demands upon it. Even the forces of the Spiritual World align themselves, however reluctantly, with a man’s controlling prayer. He can create a back eddy in the river of God’s will, and the very waters that would have helped him go straight on, will now swirl around his dominant desire.

Here, then, is one of the most revealing and startling aspects in which the meaning of prayer may be considered: we all are praying the prayer of dominant desire, our quality is measured by it; and because it both engages in its service our inward powers and calls to its furtherance forces from without, it tends with certainty to achieve its end. When from this general consideration of prayer as desire, we move up to the more usual thought of prayer as the soul’s definite approach to God, we gain outlooks on our subject that no other road so well affords. We see clearly that many of the speeches addressed to God that we have called our prayers are not real prayers at all. They are not our dominant desires. They do not express the inward set and determination of our lives. What we pray for in the closet is not the thing that daily we are seeking with undiscourageable craving. It is not difficult to pray with the lips for renewed character and serviceable life, for social justice and the triumph of the Gospel. The Bible shows us in many a familiar passage what we ought to pray for. The liturgies of the churches too are beautifully eloquent with prayers that welled up from

sincerely aspiring hearts, and we readily can frame petitions that copy the letter of the churches prayers. A man in this superficial sense may gain the trick of public supplication. His prayers are eloquent and beautiful, they are verbal aspiration after most worthy things. But as with "Solomon's Prayer" at the dedication of the temple, there is an appalling hiatus between the requests publicly made and the manifest desires of the man who prays. Prayer that is not dominant desire is too "weak to achieve anything. Any loitering student can cheaply pray to be learned; any idler in the market place can pray to be rich; any irresolute dodger of duty can pray for a vigorous character. But such praying is not really prayer.

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,

Uttered or unexpressed,

The motion of a hidden fire

That trembles in the breast." This perception of the nature of true prayer as dominant desire addressed to God, lights up two important matters. For one thing it adds a significant contribution to our thought on unanswered prayer. It suggests that while a man's out ward petition may be denied, his dominant desire, which is his real prayer, may be granted. Parents for example pray for their children's character and usefulness. They ask that godliness and public-mindedness may make their sons and daughters men and women of spiritual distinction. Such supplications are eminently worthy; but too often, proper as they are, they do not represent the parent's dominant desire. The real wish that controls decisions, that creates the atmosphere of the home and shapes the character of the children, is the parents ambition for the children's wealth or social success. There lies the family's masterful craving. Now as between the spoken prayer and the dominant desire, is there any question which will be answered? The fact is that the real prayer of that family tends inevitably to be answered. Many a man would have to confess that for all his denied petition, he had gotten what his heart was inwardly set upon. The controlling passion in any life draws an answer, some times with appalling certainty.

Men are given to complaining of unanswered prayer, but the great disasters are due to answered prayers. The trouble with men is that so often they do get what they want. When the prodigal in the far country came to himself, friends gone, reputation gone, will-power almost gone, to find himself poor, hungry, feeding swine, he was suffering from the consequence of an answered prayer, a dominant desire fulfilled. So Lot wanted Sodom, and got it; Ahab craved Naboth's vineyard, and seized it; Judas desired the thirty pieces, and obtained them. The Bible is full of answered prayers that ruined men. The power of dominant desire is terrific. Again and again in history we see the old truth come true: "He gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul!" (Psalms 106:15).

"O Gracious Lord, how blind we are,

On our own ruin bent!

Make not thine answer to our prayer

Our bitterest punishment!

"For to importunate approach

Persistent in its wrong,

Thou grantest its deluded wish

To make thy warning strong."

VI This perception of the nature of prayer as dominant desire also lights up one of the most notable causes of failure in praying insincerity. The Master laid reiterated emphasis upon sincerity in prayer. He meant that the petition offered must be the genuine overflow of inward desire. The fault of the Pharisees who prayed on the corners was not that they were asking for unworthy things. Their petitions were doubt less excellent, springing out of scriptural ideas and couched in scriptural language. But the prayers did not represent the inward and determining wishes of the men. The petitions were not sincere. The lives of the Pharisees blatantly advertised that their habitual ambitions did not tally with their occasional supplications. When the Master bids us make prayer private, to think of God when we pray as "the Father who seeth in secret," to use no futile and repetitious formulas but to go at once to the pith of our want (Matthew 6:5 ff), he is making a plea for sincerity. Prayer to him is the heart, with all its most genuine and worthy desires aflame, rising up to lay hold on God. It is no affair of hasty words at the fag-end of a day, no form observed in deference to custom, no sop to conscience to ease us from the sense of religious obligations unfulfilled. Prayer is the central and determining force of a man’s life. Prayer is dominant desire, calling God into alliance. The fact that we do not stand on street corners to perform our devotions ought not to blind us to the subtle temptation by which, even in private, we are led into theatrical, insincere praying. We pray as we think we ought to. We ask for blessings that we feel are properly to be asked for, graces that we should want, whether we do or not. We mask our selves behind an imaginary personage ourselves disguised in court clothes and asking from God the things which we presume God would like to be asked to give. We cry as St. Augustine did, "O Lord, make me pure"; and then we hear our real self add as his did, "but not now!" How much such praying there is and how utterly ineffective! It is not real. We have not at the center of our lives controlling desires so worthy that we can ask God to further them and so earnest that our prayers are the spontaneous utterance of their urgency. In the last chapter we spoke of such petitions as "Thy kingdom come," which for nearly twenty centuries has been the prayer of the church. But how many have really prayed it? In how many has it been the dominant desire? Economists describe what they call "effective demand." It is the demand of those who not only need commodities, but who are willing and able to pay the price. Only when a petition becomes an "effective demand" is it real prayer. When a man rehearses all the blessings he has prayed for himself and the world, he may well go on to ask whether he really wishes the prayers granted. Is he willing to pay the price? The great servants of the Kingdom in history always have been men of prayer and the implication is sometimes suggested that praying would make us similarly serviceable. But this essential element should never be forgotten, that the great servants of the Kingdom were men of powerful prayer because they were men of dominant desires for whose fulfilment they were willing to sacrifice anything. Paul, Carey, Living stone, and all their spiritual kin praying for the triumph of Christ with all their hearts and hurling their lives after their prayers; St. Augustine at last really praying for purity, until the answer involved tearing loose the dearest ties of his past life these are examples of costly praying which achieves re sults. This is not prayer called in to eke out what is lacking in an otherwise contented life; this is life centering in and swung round prayer like planets round the sun. Prayer be comes serious business when it becomes dominant desire. We stand

there at life’s center, at the springs of its motive and the sources of its power. A cursory reading of the Beatitudes awakens surprise be cause prayer is not mentioned there. How could the Master sum up the benedictions of the spiritual life and omit prayer from his thought? Turn to them again, then, and read more deeply. The Master put prayer into the Beatitudes in one of the greatest descriptions to be found in the Bible: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6). Prayer is hunger and thirst. Prayer is our demand on life, elevated, purified, and aware of a Divine Alliance.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

What is the relation between prayer and a person’s dominant desires and purposes?

How far does prayer represent the real purpose and desire of the man?

When do the words spoken in prayer fail to represent the real prayers?

How far can a man’s character be measured by his prayers? What is the difference between outward petition and a dominant desire of a life?

What effect upon the answer to prayer has a person’s dominant desire?

Can prayer which does not represent dominant desire be answered? Why or why not?

What made the difference in the prayer for forgiveness of the servant who owed ten thousand talents and the one who owed one hundred shillings? When has a person a right to expect an answer to a prayer for forgiveness?

How far was the first missionary tour of Paul the result of prayer? What is the difference between offering a prayer for missions and offering ourselves?

When is a nation’s prayer for peace sincere? To what extent does prejudice against other classes and nations interfere with an effective prayer for peace?

When are we justified in praying for the poor? for our friends? for forgiveness? for world brotherhood? for missions?

Are all prayers representing dominant desire answered?

When is prayer sincere?

Why did the Master denounce the prayers of the Pharisees?

Why does lack of time for meditation make for insincerity in prayer?

When does a person really pray "Thy kingdom come"?

What is the relation of procrastination to the inefficacy of prayer?

What light do the Beatitudes throw upon the prerequisite of answered prayer?

What makes the difference between a petition addressed to God and a sincere prayer?

What makes for insincerity in prayer?

What is the relation of dominant desire to sincerity in prayer?

How can I make my prayers sincerely represent my dominant desires?

05.09. CHAPTER IX. Prayer as a Battlefield

CHAPTER IX. Prayer as a Battlefield

DAILY READINGS First Day, Ninth Week Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts;

And in the hidden part thou wilt make me to know wisdom.

Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness, That the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Hide thy face from my sins, And blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; And renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; And take not thy holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; And uphold me with a willing spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; And sinners shall be converted unto thee. Psalms 51:6-13. The Psalmist is praying here for a cleansed and empowered personality. The secret place where he first offered these entreaties must have been to him a battlefield. There took place those inner struggles on whose issue moral purity and power depend. Prayer is the innermost form of the fight for character. As Clement of Alexandria in the second cen tury, put it, "The aim of prayer is to attain the habit of goodness, so as no longer merely to have the things that are good, but rather to be good," and in our generation George Meredith restates the same truth. "Who rises from his prayer a better man, his prayer is answered." The profoundest need of the world is clean, strong, devoted personality. We are poor there not in material prosperity or organizing skill or intellectual ingenuity, but in radiant, infectious, convincing personality. The real poverty is poverty of character, and that is due in how large a measure to the lack of those spiritual disciplines and fellowships which are included in genuine prayer! Let us consider this week the service of prayer as an inner battlefield on which the issues of character are settled.

O God, make perfect my love toward Thee and to my Redeemer and Justifier; give me a true and unfeigned love to all virtue and godliness, and to all Thy chosen people wheresoever they be dispersed throughout all the world; in crease in me strength and victory against all temptations and assaults of the flesh, the world, and the devil, that according to Thy promise I be never further proved or tempted than Thou wilt give me strength to overcome. Give me grace to keep a good conscience; give me a pure heart and mind, and renew a right spirit within me. Amen. Christian Prayers (1556).

Second Day, Ninth Week And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were sick, and them that were possessed with demons. And all the city was gathered together at the door. And he healed many that were sick with divers diseases, and cast out many demons; and he suffered not the demons to speak, because they knew him. And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose up and went out, and departed into a desert place, and there prayed. And Simon and they that were with him followed after him; and they found him, and say unto him, All are seeking thee. And he saith unto them, Let us go elsewhere into the next towns, that I may preach there also; for to this end came I forth. And he went into their synagogues throughout all

Galilee, preaching and casting out demons. Mark 1:32-39. Was not this solitary prayer of the Master a battle for courage and strength to go on? It came between the crushing labors of Capernaum and the preaching tour that lay ahead; it came at a time when the storm of the Pharisees wrath was gathering. If the Master needed the courage that comes in solitary prayer, can we well dispense with it? Many lives would be incalculably strengthened, their tone would be changed from anxious timidity to power, if they would learn the secret of this inner fellowship. It is said that Napoleon before a great battle would stand alone in his tent, and one by one the marshals and commanders of his armies would enter, grasp his hand in silence, and go out again fired with a new courage and resolute in a new willingness to die for France. Some such effect those souls have felt who have learned the secret of prayer's power.

O Thou, who art the ever-blessed God, the underlying Peace of the world, and who wouldst draw all men into the companionship of Thy joy; speak, we beseech Thee, to this Thy servant, for whom we pray. Take him by the hand and say unto him, "Fear not; for I am with thee. I have tailed thee by my name; thou art mine." Put such a spirit of trust within him that all fear and foreboding shall be cast out, and that right reason and calm assurance may rule his thoughts and impulses. Let quietness and confidence be his strength. Reveal to him the vision of a universe guided and governed by Thy wise and loving care; and show him that around and about him are Thy unseen and beneficent powers. Lift up his whole being into communion with Thy life and thought. Let him ever remember that Thou dost not give to any the spirit of fearfulness, but a spirit of power and love and self-mastery. In this faith, grant, Lord, that he may summon the energies of his soul against the miseries that cast him down. Give him courage, confidence, an untroubled heart, and a love that loves all creatures, great and small, for Thy love's sake. Amen. Samuel McComb.

Third Day, Ninth Week

Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Wherefore take up the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; withal taking up the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: with all prayer and supplication praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints. Ephesians 6:10-18.

Note the surprising conclusion of this warlike passage. The man is armed for conflict and then the climax reads "with all prayer . . . praying." To the Apostle prayer evidently has a warlike aspect. He is writing this passage in prison, where he needs fortitude to endure. In prayer he finds the battlefield where he fights his fears and gains enduring power that he may be able, "having done all, to stand." How many people weakly give way in the face of trouble, lose their spirit, fall into self-pity, and refuse to join that great succession of God's people who have proved by the way they handled their troubles, even more than by the way they handled their talents, what God can do for a man of faith! It is said that in a newly invented vacuum furnace every thing in a log of wood

that is destructible can be consumed, leaving only an irreducible minimum that man's skill is not yet great enough to burn. And we are told that that in destructible remainder is pure carbon, every bit of which the tree took from the sunlight through the leaves. Many may think of prayer as a strange way of gaining power to endure, but the indestructible elements of the soul, that cannot be crushed or consumed by adversity, do come from our spiritual fellowship with God.

Consider this prayer of Lady Jane Grey in her last imprisonment:

O Merciful God, be Thou now unto me a strong tower of defence, I humbly entreat Thee. Give me grace to await Thy leisure, and patiently to bear what Thou doest unto me; nothing doubting or mistrusting Thy goodness towards me; for Thou knowest what is good for me better than I do. Therefore do with me in all things what Thou wilt; only arm me, I beseech Thee, with Thine armour, that I may stand fast; above all things, taking to me the shield of faith; praying always that I may refer myself wholly to Thy will, abiding Thy pleasure, and comforting myself in those troubles which it shall please Thee to send me, seeing such troubles are profitable for me; and I am assuredly persuaded that all Thou doest cannot but be well; and unto Thee be all honour and glory. Amen. Lady Jane Grey (1537-1554).

Fourth Day, Ninth Week

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he afterward hungered. And the tempter came and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him into the holy city; and he set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and, On their hands they shall bear thee up, Lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, Again it is written, Thou shalt not make trial of the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him unto an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and he said unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him; and behold, angels came and ministered unto him. Matthew 4:1-11.

These verses are the record of an inward struggle in which the Master fought out the purpose of his life. The use of Scripture, the continual reference in Jesus words to God and God's claims on men, indicate the atmosphere of devotion in which this battle was fought. Do we deal with our temptations in this high way! Consider our besetting sins temper, passion, irreverence or whatever other form of self-will we may most easily fall into, and think of the ways the habitual use of inward prayer would help us. How an improper story or a mean judgment withers on our lips if a fine, high-minded personality happens to join the circle! And what a cleansing effect takes place in our lives if we grow accustomed to usher God upon the scene when uncleanness or ill-temper or self-will appears! Gradually but surely those feelings and thoughts which are not comfortable when God is present disappear. The life grows clear of those tempers and attitudes that make spontaneous prayer impossible. "The devil leaveth him."

O Thou, who proclaimest liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prisons to them that are bound; we rejoice that Thou hast brought the soul of this Thy servant out of prison that he might praise Thy name. Thou didst inspire him with pure desires. Thou didst rouse him again and again from despair and didst sustain him in the fight for freedom. And now we bless Thee that Thou hast crowned his efforts with success. Abide with him and in him that henceforth he may bear the fruits of good living. So fill him with love and holiness, with courage and trust, that through all the coming days temptation will lose its power. Let the dead past bury its dead. Go with him into the new world of joy and peace and health. Inspire him with the resolve to do something for Thy sake, to tell another imprisoned soul what great things Thou hast done that, if it please Thee, he may have a double joy. Hear our thanks giving and bless us through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. Samuel McComb.

Fifth Day, Ninth Week Is any among you suffering? let him pray. Is any cheerful? let him sing praise. Is any among you sick? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save him that is sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, it shall be forgiven him. Confess therefore your sins one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working. James 5:13-16.

Never more than in our day has the wisdom of this ancient advice been clear. Prayer is the inner battlefield where men often conquer most effectually the false worries, trivial anxieties, morbid humors and all the unwholesome specters of the mind that irritate the spirit and make the body ill. There they learn Paul’s lesson, "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus" (Php 4:6-7). Dr. Hyslop, Superintendent of Bethlehem Royal Hospital, at the annual meeting of the British Medical Association in 1905, said: "As an alienist, and one whose whole life has been concerned with the sufferings of the mind, I would state that of all hygienic measures to counteract disturbed, sleep- depressed spirits, and all the miserable sequels of a dis tressed mind, I would undoubtedly give the first place to the simple habit of prayer."

Ever Blessed God, whose word is, "Peace, peace to him that is far off and to him that is near," fulfil Thy promise to this Thy servant for whom we pray. Rescue him, from the misery of groundless fears and restless anxieties. Take him more and more out of himself, that duty may be no longer a drudgery but a delight. Lead him into the secret of Thy peace which quiets every misgiving and fills the heart with joy and confidence. Save him from the shame and emptiness of a hurried life. Grant him to possess his soul in patience. Amid the storms and stress of life, let him hear a deeper voice assuring him that Thou livest and that all is well. Strengthen him to do his daily work in quietness and confi dence, fearing no tomorrow, nor the evil that it brings, for Thou art with him. And this we ask for Jesus Christ’s sake. Amen. Samuel McComb.

Sixth Day, Ninth Week And he went forward a little, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt. Matthew 26:39.

Again a second time he went away, and prayed, saying, My Father, if this cannot pass away, except I drink it, thy will be done. Matthew 26:42. And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible

unto thee; remove this cup from me: howbeit not what I will, but what thou wilt. Mark 14:36.

Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. Luke 22:42.

Consider the battlefield of Gethsemane. Was there ever a more eventful engagement than that? It was a struggle for clear vision to see and strength to do the will of God. Peter Annet, an old Deist, used to say that praying men are like sailors who have cast anchor on a rock, and who imagine they are pulling the rock to themselves, when they are really pulling themselves to the rock. But that is a caricature of what praying men at their best think. The Master here was deliberately trying to pull himself to the rock. That was the objective of the struggle in the garden. The will of God was settled; he wanted clearly to see it and strongly to be apprehended by it, and he called God in to fight the narrower self will that opposed the larger devotion. What a deep experience such praying brings into any life that knows it! As Phillips Brooks exclaimed: "God’s mercy seat is no mere stall set by the vulgar road side, where every careless passer-by may put an easy hand out to snatch any glittering blessing that catches his eye. It stands in the holiest of holies. We can come to it only through veils and by altars of purification. To enter into it, we must enter into God."

O God, who hast in mercy taught us how good it is to follow the holy desires which Thou manifoldly puttest into our hearts, and how bitter is the grief of falling short of whatever beauty our minds behold, strengthen us, we be seech Thee, to walk steadfastly throughout life in the better path which our hearts once chose; and give us wisdom to tread it prudently in Thy fear, as well as cheerfully in Thy love; so that, having been faithful to Thee all the days of our life here, we may be able hopefully to resign ourselves into Thy hands hereafter. Amen. Rowland Williams (1818-* 1870).

Seventh Day, Ninth Week And I said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God; for our iniquities are in creased over our head, and our guiltiness is grown up unto the heavens. Since the days of our fathers we have been exceeding guilty unto this day; and for our iniqui ties have we, our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to plunder, and to confusion of face, as it is this day. . . . And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments . . . And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great guilt, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such a remnant, shall we again break thy com mandments . . .? O Jehovah, the God of Israel, thou art righteous; for we are left a remnant that is escaped, as it is this day: behold, we are before thee in our guiltiness; for none can stand before thee because of this. Ezra 9:6-7, Ezra 9:10, Ezra 9:13-15.

See how plainly the concern with which this prayer is burdened is the character of the people. Ezra’s interest as he prays is moral; he wants transformed life, cleansed personality, empowered manhood, social righteousness. This week we have been noting some special aspects of this central objective in prayer. We have seen how moral courage, fortitude, power in temptation, spiritual poise and clear vision of God’s will, may all be won upon the inner battle field of prayer. Consider the vitality that such a use of prayer puts into the religious life. It involves making God an actual partner in our moral struggle; it fills our religion witb practical significance. Gladstone, in a letter to the Duchess of Sutherland, wrote: "There is one proposition which the experience of life burns into my soul; it is this, that a man should beware of letting his religion spoil his morality. In a

thousand ways, some great, some small, but all subtle, we are daily tempted to that great sin." The sort of praying described in this chapter is the most efficient guard against that evil. It makes the center of religion a fight for character.

Strong Son of God, who was tried and tempted to the uttermost, yet without sin; be near me now with Thy strength and give me the victory over this evil desire that threatens to ruin me. I am weak, O Lord, and full of doubts and fears. There are moments when I am afraid of myself, when the world and the flesh and the devil seem more power ful than the forces of good. But now I look to Thee in whom dwelleth all the fulness of grace and might and redemption. Blessed Saviour! I take Thee afresh to be my Refuge, my Covert, my Defence, my strong Tower from the enemy. Hear me and bless me now and ever. Amen. Samuel McComb.

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

I

If we define praying as "Communion with God," we naturally think of it as fellowship with a friend, and so emphasize its peaceful aspect. When Robert Burns bewailed the fact that he could not "pour out his inmost soul without reserve to any human being without danger of one day repenting his confidence," he expressed a need which is met in the lives of those who habitually commune with God. Prayer means restfulness, quietude; men come from it saying,

"And I smiled to think God’s greatness flowed around our

incompleteness; Round our restlessness, his rest." As Jeremy Taylor described it, "Prayer is the peace of our spirit, the stillness of our thoughts, the evenness of our recollection."

Now, praying is all of this, but none can think of it as dominant desire without seeing that it is more. Prayer is a battlefield. When a man, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, calls God into alliance, he does so because he has a fight on his hands. He may have set his heart in dominant desire on goodness, but that desire meets enemies that must be beaten. "No man ever became a saint in his sleep." From without, the influences of the world assail his best ambitions; from within, the perverse inclinations of his own heart make war on his right resolutions. A fight is on in every aspiring life. Sometimes, like the captain of a ship in mid-sea with a tempest raging and his own crew in rebellion, a man must at once steady his course amid outward temptations, and hold a pistol at the head of his mutinous desires. No one in earnest about goodness has ever succeeded in de scribing the achievement of goodness except in terms of a fight. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh," says Paul, "I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage." In this moral battle, as in every other, the decisive part of the engagement is not public and ostentatious; it is in secret. Long before the armies clash in the open field, there has been a conflict in the general’s office, where pro met con, and the determinations were reached that controlled each movement of the outward war. Even in law, "Cases are won in chambers." So, in the achievement of character there is a hidden battlefield en which the decisive conflicts of the world are waged. Behind the Master’s public ministry, through which he moved with such amazing steadfastness, not to be deflected by bribes, nor halted by fears, nor discouraged by weariness, lay the battles in the desert where he fought out in prayer the controlling principles of his life. Behind his patience in Pilate’s Court, and his fidelity on Calvary, lay the battle in Gethsemane, where the whole problem was fought through and the issue settled before the face of God. All

public consequences go back to secret conflicts. Napoleon sat for hours in silent thought before he ordered the Russian Campaign. Washington, praying at Valley Forge, was settling questions on which the independence of his country hung. We are deceived by the garish stage-settings of big scenes in history. The really great scenes are seldom evident. The decisive battles of the world are hidden, and all the outward conflicts are but the echo and reverberation of that more real and inward war. To be sure, prayer, which at its best is thus a fight for character, can be perverted to the hurt of character. Because certain temperaments are so constituted that they can experience a high degree of tranquil peace, and sometimes ecstatic delight, in protracted communion with God, the exaggerations of the mystic are always possible. "I made many mistakes," said Madame Guyon, "through allowing myself to be too much taken up by my interior joys." Nothing so hurts genuine piety as that spurious piety which is expressed, at its extreme limit, in the words of the Blessed Angela of Fulginio, "In that time and by God's will there died my mother, who was a great hindrance unto me in following the way of God: my husband died likewise, and in a short time there also died all my children. And because I had commenced to follow the aforesaid Way, and had prayed God that he would rid me of them, I had great consolation of their deaths, albeit I did also feel some grief." The worst enemies of prayer are those who thus speak much of it and revel much in it, but whose lives exhibit in ordinary relationships little of the trustworthiness, the "plain devotedness to duty," the thoughtful generosity and large-heartedness, which are the proper fruits of real communion with God. Jesus himself called his enraptured disciples away from the Mount of Transfiguration, where they wished to prolong their glowing experience, and led them down to save a demoniac groveling in the valley (Matthew 17:2-18). He would be the first to rebuke us for praying, "Lord, Lord," and not doing the things which he says (Matthew 7:21). The real pray-ers, however, have not thus weltered in futile emotion, supposed to be induced by God; they have been warriors who on the inner battlefield fought out the issues of righteousness with God as their ally.

II As one seeks in the biographies of praying men to discover in terms of actual experience what prayer as a battlefield has meant to them, he sees that for one thing it has been the place where they reconquered faith and reestablished confidence in God and in themselves. Professor Royce, of Harvard, has given us this testimony from a friend: "When things are too much for me, and I am down on my luck, and everything is dark, I go alone by myself, and I bury my head in my hands, I think hard that God must know it all and will see how matters really are, and understand me; and in just that way alone, by understanding me, will help me. And so I try to get myself together, and that, for me, is prayer." St. Francis, of Assisi, used to sit in prayer by the hour, with no spoken word except the occasional exclamation, "God." Doubts, it may be, had assailed his faith; the clamor of the flesh had dulled the voice of the spirit; practical perplexities had distracted his life; and he went out from all of these to take a reassuring look at the Eternal. He "got himself together," and came back "things seen" a little more obscure, "things unseen" vivid. Of how many powerful lives is this the secret!

"As torrents in summer Half-dried in their channels, Suddenly rise, though the Sky is still cloudless, For rain has been falling Far off at their fountains;

"So hearts that are fainting Grow full to overflowing, And they that behold it Marvel, and know not That God at their fountains Far off has been raining!" This sort of inward self-conquest to some may seem impractical. They feel about it as a man may feel, who, not understanding what

astronomy has done for life, goes into an observatory and sees the astronomer studying the stars. That the world needs ploughs and looms and loco motives is as plain as a pike-staff; that the real wants of men are on the earth, not in the heavens, appears so obvious that this hard-headed man of common sense may wonder what use could be made of a star-gazing tube that looks away from earth and seeks the sky. But the fact is that the star-gazer sets the clock by which we time our simplest tasks; he made the almanac by which we measure all our days. We never caught a train, nor figured time on con tracts, nor set ourselves to any common duty, that we did not put ourselves under obligation to the astronomer. Men never understood this earth until they looked away from it. It never was truly seen until it was seen in its infinite relationships. Galileo and Kepler and Copernicus did not idly dream in impractical aloofness from the needs of men: they rather fought out in their observatories a conflict for the truth that has remade the world. So prayer is an observatory. Even though our only solitude is that of the woman in the tenement who said, "I throw my apron over my head when I want solitude; it is all that I can get," prayer may still be our observatory; and there outlooks are attained that orient life aright, that reveal perspective and give proportion, so that the solitary conflict proves the redemption of every day's most common task.

III The biographies of praying men show us also that their struggles for right desire were fought out on the battlefield of prayer. We said in the last chapter that prayer is real only when it voices an elevated and purified demand on life, calling God into alliance. But such praying requires in us the very thing we lack. Let a man try as he will to set his heart on righteousness, the course of that desire does not flow smoothly; it is impeded, sometimes halted, by land slides and cross-currents. The profoundest trouble in our characters is our wayward appetites. The old picture of a Judgment Day gains its terror not so much from thunder, lightning, shaken earth, and falling mountains, nor from anything that these may signify. What would cover us with unutterable shame is the fulfilment of the repeated scriptural threat, All secret desires known (Ecclesiastes 12:14; Romans 2:16; 1 Corinthians 4:5). No one with equanimity could endure that. When one contemplates the possibility, he becomes aware that the deepest need in character is right desire.

Now, prayer has been the battlefield where the war against wrong desire has been fought out. George Adam Smith in a Dwighl Hall talk at Yale suggested that no one had so frankly revealed this use of prayer as a battlefield for the conquest of desire as "Chinese" Gordon. A search of his letters to his sister reveals the truth of this. "I can say for my part," writes Gordon, "that backbiting and envy were my delight, and even now often lead me astray, but by dint of perseverance in prayer, God has given me the mastery to a great degree; I did not wish to give it up, so I besought him to give me that wish; he did so, and then I had the promise of his fulfilment." Even more vividly does Gordon put his use of prayer when he speaks of Agag his figure for his own selfish ambition and pride: "My constant prayer is against Agag, who, of course, is here, and as insinuating as ever"; "I had a terrible struggle this morning with Agag"; "I had a terrible half-hour this morning, hewing Agag in pieces before the Lord." Who can fail to see what Gordon meant? Some impurity was in him and he hauled it before the face of God and slew it there; some selfish ambition, counter to the will of God, he dragged up into the light and hewed in pieces before the Lord. Prayer is so often spoken of as the preparation for the fight of life that it is worth while to note how truly here prayer was the fight itself. Prayer, to Gordon, was no drill, where forms were observed that might add to the army's graces or even to its future efficiency; prayer was the actual battle between a wrong desire and a right one, with God called in as an ally. He went to prayer as to

earnest business, saying with the Psalmist, "Lord, all my desire is before thee" (Psalms 38:9). Day by day he returned to cast down unholy passions and selfish aims and to confirm every true ambition in the sight of God. The very fountains of his life, the springs from which all action comes, were cleansed, until that injunction which Hartley Coleridge put into verse became the familiar prose of his daily living:

"Whate er is good to wish, ask that of heaven,

Though it be what thou canst not hope to see;

Pray to be perfect though the material leaven

Forbid the spirit so on earth to be;

But if for any wish thou dar st not pray,

Then pray to God to cast that wish away."

IV The biographies of praying men show also that prayer was the battlefield where they fought out the issue between the two conflicting motives that most master human life the praise of the world, on the one side, and the approval of God on the other. One distinguishing quality of superior souls is their capacity to discount the praise of men and to set their hearts singly upon pleasing God. We catch the note in Socrates before he drinks the hemlock, "We must obey not men, but God"; we hear it in Peter facing persecution, "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). Such men were not so acutely aware of the public opinion of the earth as they were of the Public Opinion of the uni verse, in the sight of which they set themselves to stand clear and blameless. They lived as Milton sang of Michael:

"This was all thy care,

To stand approved in sight of God, Though worlds judged thee perverse." At times the vividness with which such souls perceive the will of God for them, and the steadiness with which they do it, despite the condemnation of their fellows, lifts heroism to superhuman heights. Like the boy in school who pitched his best game of ball on the Saturday after his blind father died, because he said it was the first game that his father had ever watched him pitch, so these men live and work in the vivid consciousness of the "Father who seeth in secret." Their dominant motive is to satisfy him. But such living as this costs a fight. God is not the only one whom we may try to please. Evil assumes its most seductive form when it appeals to this same motive when some wrong-minded friend requests what good conscience cannot grant, or when popular taste sets the tone of living low and offers us praise if we will join the song. Sin in the abstract is hateful, but when it clothes itself in human flesh and waits to smile approval upon our compliance, it becomes tremendously attractive. Drink and impurity and all their ilk are horrible in theory, but dressed in the invitation of a friend, made alluringly incarnate in a person, what terrific fascination they may gain! Would Herod have slain John if the deed had not been pleasing to Herodias? Would Antipas have killed James and imprisoned Peter if he had not seen that "it pleased the Jews"? Would Charles IX have ordered the massacre of St. Bartholomew if his mother had not wanted it? To be sure, there are times when to please God and to please some human friend are synonymous. From the time our only possible understanding of our duty was to deserve the approval of our parents, until now when the commendation of our worthy friends is life’s highest earthly gratification, duty has

assumed its most attractive form when it clothed itself in a person to be pleased. Stopford Brook tells us that while gathering material for his life of Robert son of Brighton, he stepped into a Brighton bookstore and noticed a picture of Robertson upon the wall. "Yes," said the bookseller, "whenever I am tempted to do anything mean I look at that face, and it recalls me to my better self."

Many a living friend has so served us, and in the satisfaction of that friend's ideal for us we found duty no cold keeping of a law, but the warm pleasing of a person. In deed, neither right nor wrong is often presented to our choice as an abstract proposition. They are almost always incarnate; they have faces and hands, and blood flows through them; they appeal to us with all the enticement that human flesh and a human voice can give. Because, therefore, to displease people causes us most acute unhappiness, and to win their approval is life's most poignant satisfaction, some of the severest battles in the moral life must be fought about this issue. If there is any commandment in Scripture most difficult of all to keep, it is this: "If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, that is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, . . . thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him" (Deuteronomy 13:6, Deuteronomy 13:8). This conflict between the desire to please God and those who represent him, and to please the generation in which he lived was the central struggle of the Master's life, and he fought it out in prayer. We look at him now, across the centuries, and all his life seems singly set on pleasing God. To satisfy his Father was his motive, the possibility of doing it his joy, the consciousness of having done it his recom pense. His great hours, such as his baptism and transfiguration, were blessed with the assurance that he was the be loved Son in whom God was well pleased; his idea of daily duty was defined in his own words, "I do always the things that are pleasing to him" (John 8:29); and when he thought of heaven and reward he dreamed of no golden streets and gates of pearl he saw only his approving Father saying, "Well done, good and faithful servant." But even with the Master this life involved an inward war. To please God meant to displease his family, the leaders of his nation, the venerable fathers of his people's faith; it meant desertion by his friends and calumny from his enemies; it meant that he would be thought crazy by his household, a traitor by his nation, and a heretic by his church. This great battle of the Master was waged in prayer, be fore ever its results were seen in public. In many a secret conflict the engagement was fought out, until in Gethsemane he "offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death" (Hebrews 5:7). That sort of praying is a real battle, not a dress parade. Jeremy Taylor may call prayer "the peace of our spirits, the stillness of our thoughts"; but when David Brainerd, colonial missionary to the Indians, comes out from one of his Gethsemanes, saying, "My joints were loosed; the sweat ran down my face and body as if it would dis solve," it is clear that Taylor's definition is inadequate. Prayer is a fight for the power to see and the courage to do the will of God. No man's life can altogether lack that struggle, if he is to achieve dependable integrity that cannot be bought or scared. The best guaranty of a character that is not for sale is this battlefield of prayer, where day by day the issue is settled that we shall live "not as pleasing men, but God who proveth our hearts" (1 Thessalonians 2:4).

V To the great pray-ers the practice of prayer has meant this vital struggle of which we have been speaking. On that secret battlefield faith and confidence have been reconquered, right desires have been confirmed, and men have gone from it to live "in the sight of God." When men say that

they have no time for praying, they can hardly have seen the truth that prayer is this innermost, decisive business of life. The time involved in the deliberate practice of prayer may indeed be brief or long. Whitefield, the great companion of the Wesleys, used to lie all day prostrate in prayer, and Luther, in the crisis of his life, said, "I am so busy now that if I did not spend two or three hours each day in prayer I could not get through the day." But Spurgeon, quite as good a Christian, when speaking of prolonged prayer said, "I could not do it even if my eternity depended upon it. Besides, {169} if I go to the bank with a check, what do I wait loafing around the premises for when I have got my money!" The length of time is not the decisive matter in prayer. "We may pray most when we say least," as St. Augustine remarked; "and we may pray least when we say most." With many of us time must be divided, as is the land of the United States. The little District given to congress for the Federal Government, would on any quantitative basis be most ill-proportioned. Texas is 4, 430 times as large as the District of Columbia, and even Rhode Island would contain it twenty times and over. So one, regarding the brief time that a Christian spends in deliberate prayer, might cry out against such ill proportion, seeing how business and recreation of necessity preoccupy so many hours. But is not the answer clear? In quantity the little District is small, but it is pre eminently powerful. The government is there. Nothing goes on in all these states utterly out of the control and influence of that District. Its mandates are over the com merce and legislation of all the states; and every mooted question, not elsewhere resolvable, is taken before its Supreme Court for ultimate decision.

Granted then, that our spiritual District of Columbia must be smaller in area than our State of Texas, have we done with that inward District what our fathers did in the nation? Have we solemnly chosen it and set it sacredly aside? Have we located there the central government, so that all power issues thence and all questions come back to it for settlement? Is it apparent to those who know us best that we would rather any other place in our lives should be taken by the enemy than this Capital of our Country, the place of prayer?

SUGGESTIONS FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

What determines whether a man’s good intentions will issue in action?

Why do good intentions fail?

What are the enemies that oppose a man’s dominant desires? Upon what does their strength depend?

What happens to the man whose good intentions habitually fail to result in action?

What is the relative importance of time for preparation and execution in a successful achievement?

To what extent is a victory in a great public battle of life dependent upon previous victory in an unseen battle?

How far are right decisions in times of crisis dependent upon the controlling purpose of life? Where is this purpose determined?

What is the relation of secret prayer to public action?

What was the relation of the Master’s habit of prayer to the controlling purpose of his life? What suggestions are given in the record of the temptations?

What place did Jesus give to time for prayer in the critical periods of his life?

What has been the relation of the prayers of praying men to their publicaction?

What great issues of life must be fought out in secret prayer?

Why does time for secret prayer give assurance of victory? What constitutes complete personal victory for a man in his life struggles? How far is it dependent on securing one’s ends?

In these "prayers of preparation" what is the nature of the answer expected of God?

How far is it true that the longer the time spent in secret prayer the greater the victories in practical life?

05.10. CHAPTER X. Unselfishness in Prayer

CHAPTER X. Unselfishness in Prayer

DAILY READINGS First Day, Tenth Week And straightway he constrained the disciples to enter into the boat, and to go before him unto the other side, till he should send the multitudes away. And after he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into the mountain apart to pray: and when even was come, he was there alone. Matthew 14:22-23.

We are surely right in saying that the dominant motive of the Master's life was service. Yet we find him here sending away multitudes, some of whom he might never have another chance to address, and retiring into the solitude of the hills to pray. Was this selfish? Must we not suppose that he sent away the people, sought solitude, and gave himself to prayer, because he believed that by so doing he was rendering the largest service to others. Make real in your thought the truth of this; consider the increased power for usefulness that came to the Master in his prayer, the recovery from spiritual exhaustion and the fresh sense of God's companionship that he there secured. Are we not often shallow in our service and superficial in our influence, just because we do not escape the multitude long enough for the ministry of unselfish praying alone?

O Merciful Lord, who hast made of one Blood and redeemed by one Ransome all Nations of Men, let me never harden my heart against any that partake of the same Nature and Redemption with me, but grant me an Universal Charity towards all Men. Give me, O Thou Father of Compassions, such a tenderness and tneltingness of Heart that I may be deeply affected with all the Miseries and Calamities outward or inward of my Brethren, and diligently keep them in Love: Grant that I may not only seek my own things, but also the things of others. O that this mind may be in us all, which was in the Lord Jesus, that we may love as Brethren, be Pitiful and Courteous, and endeavour heartily and vigorously to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, and the God of Grace, Mercy and Peace be with us all. Amen. Thomas a Kempis (1379-1471).

Second Day, Tenth Week And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine is come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him: and he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee? I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will arise and give him as many as he needeth. Luke 11:5-8.

Notice the suggestive situation which the Master here describes. The one who prays is asking for bread, not for his own sake, but for his friend s. The need of another has made him feel the poverty of his own life; "I have nothing to set before him." How much such praying ought to be done! by parents who feel their insufficiency in meeting their children's deepest needs, by friends who take seriously the fine possibilities of mutual service, by every teacher or minister or physician who deals intimately with human lives, by all in responsible positions in the social or political life of a community. Many of us, like the man in the parable, do not see how empty our cupboards are

until a friend "comes to us from a journey," and then our barren uselessness, our ill-equipped spirits, our meager souls shame us. Such persistent importunity as this belongs rightfully to a man who is praying unselfishly whose cry is motived by desire to have plenty to set before his friend.

Grant unto us, O Lord God, that we may love one another unfeignedly; for where love is, there art Thou; and he that loveth his brother is born of Thee, and dwelleth in Thee, and Thou in him. And where brethren do glorify Thee with one accord, there dost Thou pour out Thy blessing upon them. Love us, therefore, O Lord, and shed Thy love into our hearts, that we may love Thee, and our brethren in Thee and for Thee, as all children to Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Anonymous (1578).

Third Day, Tenth Week For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; it is not therefore not of the body. And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; it is not therefore not of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the mem bers each one of them in the body, even as it pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now they are many members, but one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee: or again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. . . . And whether one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it; or one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof. 1 Corinthians 12:12-21, 1 Corinthians 12:26-27. Is not the truth which Paul here puts into his classic figure of body and members, the basis of intercessory prayer? "No man is the whole of himself; his friends are the rest of him." A man’s bare individuality is like the piece of grit that gets into an oyster shell, but the pearl of his life is made by the relationships that are built up around it. Let a man endeavor to abstract from his life all the meaning that has come from friends, family, and social relationships, and he will soon see how very small his narrow self is, and how his true and greater self is inconceivable without the social body of which he is a member. "In such a kingdom," says Professor Jones of Haverford "an or ganic fellowship of interrelated persons prayer is as normal an activity as gravitation is in a world of matter. Personal spirits experience spiritual gravitation, soul reaches after soul, hearts draw toward each other. We are no longer in the net of blind fate, in the realm of impersonal force, we are in a love-system where the aspiration of one member heightens the entire group, and the need of one even the least draws upon the resources of the whole even the Infinite. We are in actual Divine-human fellowship."

O God, Thou great Redeemer of mankind, our hearts are tender in the thought of Thee, for in all the afflictions of our race Thou hast been afflicted, and in the sufferings of Thy people it was Thy body that was crucified. Thou hast been wounded by our transgressions and bruised by our iniquities, and all our sins are laid at last on Thee. Amid the groaning of creation we behold Thy spirit in travail till the sons of God shall be born in freedom and holiness.

We pray Thee, O Lord, for the graces of a pure and holy life, that we may no longer add to the dark weight of the world’s sin that is laid upon Thee, but may share with Thee in Thy redemptive work. As we have thirsted with evil passions to the destruction of men, do Thou fill us now with

hunger and thirst for justice that we may bear glad tidings to the poor and set at liberty all who are in the prison-house of want and sin. Lay Thy spirit upon us and inspire us with a passion of Christ-like love, that we may join our lives to the weak and oppressed and may strengthen their cause by bearing their sorrows. And if the evil that is threatened turns to smite us and if we must learn the dark malignity of sinful power, comfort us by the thought that thus we are bearing in our body the marks of Jesus, and that only those who share in His free sacrifice shall feel the plenitude of Thy life. Help us in patience to carry forward the eternal cross of Thy Christ, counting it joy if we, too, are sown as grains of wheat in the furrows of the world, for only by the agony of the righteous comes redemption. Walter Rauschenbusch.

Fourth Day, Tenth Week And in praying use not vain repetitions, as the Gentiles do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye*. Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Matthew 6:7-15.

"When ye pray," said Jesus, "say, Our" "our Father," "our daily bread," "our debts," "our debtors." Mark the fact that this prayer is not given simply for public use when many are praying together; it is directly related with the injunc tion to go into one’s closet, shut the door, and pray in secret (Matthew 6:5-6). Even when in solitude an individual is communing with God, he is to say not merely I and my, but our. The degree to which this social spirit in prayer will take possession of us depends on the vividness with which we perceive the intimate relationships that bind all men together, until each individual is seen not simply as a separate thread but as an inseparable element in the closely woven fabric of human life. "One man," said an old Latin proverb, "is no man at all!" To be sure, he is not. Rather every acquaintanceship is a live-wire connection between one life and another. Suppose that each one of us has a thousand acquaintances, and each one of those a thousand more, and so on over all the earth. Then we are completely intermeshed with one another. No two persons can be selected though one lived on Fifth Avenue, New York, and the other on the plains of Arabia, between whom, by many a circuitous route, live-wire connections might not conceivably be traced by a mind sufficient for the task. Subtle influences run out from each and sooner or later come to all; no blessing and no disaster ever can be strictly private; common needs, common perils, and common possibilities bind all mankind together. "When ye pray, say, Our."

Once more a new day lies before us, our Father. As we go out among men to do our work, touching the hands and lives of our fellows, make us, we pray Thee, friends of all the world. Save us from blighting the fresh flower of any heart by the flare of sudden anger or secret hate. May we not bruise the rightful self-respect of any by contempt or malice. Help us to cheer the suffering by our sympathy, to freshen the drooping by our hopefulness, and to strengthen in all the wholesome sense of worth and the joy of life. Save us from the deadly poison of class-pride. Grant that we may look all men in the face with the eyes of a brother. If any one needs us, make us ready to yield our help un grudgingly, unless higher duties claim us, and may we rejoice that we have it in us to be helpful to our fellow-men. Walter Rauschenbusch.

Fifth Day, Tenth Week

Another parable set he before them, saying, The king dom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is less than all seeds; but when it is grown, it is greater than the herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the heaven come and lodge in the branches thereof. Matthew 13:31-32. The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in the field; which a man found, and hid; and in his joy he goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a merchant seeking goodly pearls: and having found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it. Matthew 13:44-46.

Read these words of the Master in the light of our thought about prayer as dominant desire. How plainly the petition, "Thy kingdom come" represented the controlling passion of Jesus! Prayer at its best always refuses the impossible task of separating the from the we, and in its supplications gathers up the common needs of all mankind to carry them in earnest sympathy to God. It thanks God for communal blessings in which all share; it repents for communal sins in which every one of us who has thought selfishly or acted grossly has had some part; and it strives in earnest entreaty for social justice, international peace, the brotherhood of man, the triumph of Christ every cause on which the welfare of all of us depends. As the Talmud puts it, "A prayer that makes not mention of the Kingdom is no prayer at all."

O Christ, Thou hast bidden us pray for the coming of Thy Father’s kingdom, in which His righteous will shall be done on earth. We have treasured Thy words, but we have for gotten their meaning, and Thy great hope has grown dim in Thy Church. We bless Thee for the inspired souls of all ages who saw afar the shining city of God, and by faith left the profit of the present to follow their vision. We rejoice that to-day the hope of these lonely hearts is becoming the clear faith of millions. Help us, O Lord, in the courage of faith to seize "what has now come so near, that the glad day of God may dawn at last. As we have mastered Nature that we might gain wealth, help us now to master the social relations of mankind that we may gain justice and a world of brothers. For what shall it profit our nation if it gain numbers and riches, and lose the sense of the living God and the joy of human brotherhood?

Make us determined to live by truth and not by lies, to found our common life on the eternal foundations of righteousness and love, and no longer to prop the tottering house of wrong by legalised cruelty and force. Help us to make the welfare of all the supreme law of our land, that so our commonwealth may be built strong and secure on the love of all its citizens. Cast down the throne of Mammon who ever grinds the life of men, and set up Thy throne, O Christ, for Thou didst die that men might live. Show Thy erring children at last the way to the City of Love, and fulfil the longings of the prophets of humanity. Our Master, once more we make Thy faith our prayer: "Thy Kingdom Come! Thy will be done on earth!" Walter Rauschenbusch.

Sixth Day, Tenth Week

Verily I say unto you, What things soever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and what things soever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven. Matthew 18:18-19. Jesus words about praying together are quite

as positive as his words about praying alone. We often quote this reference to "two or three," as though the contrast were between a few and a multitude; but in fact the contrast lies between social and solitary prayer. Christ means to stress the fact that he is especially present in a praying group. Praying for another, especially an unfriendly man, is a searching test of our relationship with him. But praying with another how much more intimate and penetrating a test is that! If there is unforgiven grudge or impenitent unkindness or secret disloyalty, we cannot do it. As Jesus said, we must "agree." Prayer is a most effective cleanser of personal relationships when in the home, for example, people kneel amid the familiar scenes of daily life. The bitter word and the neglected kindness will quarrel with the mutual prayer; people must really be loyal to one another to pray well together. This is one of the fundamental reasons for public prayer, and in the family circle, the college group, or the church, the sincere and habitual practice of it will help any who genuinely catch its spirit to say Our our blessings, our sins, our needs, and our Father.

Eternal, Holy, Almighty, whose name is Love; we are met in solemn company to seek Thy face, and in spirit and truth to worship Thy name. We come in deep humility, since Thou art so high and exalted, and because Thou beholdest the proud afar off. We come in tender penitence, for the contrite heart is Thy only dwelling. We come in the name and spirit of Jesus to make our wills one with Thine; to abandon our lonely and selfish walk for solemn communion with Thee, to put an end to sin by welcoming to our hearts Thy Holy Presence. Deeper than we have known, enter, Thou Maker of our souls; clearer than we have ever seen, dawn Thy glory on our sight. Light the flame upon the altar, call forth the incense of prayer, waken the song of praise, and manifest Thyself to all. Amen. W. E. Orchard.

Seventh Day, Tenth Week

Simon, Simon, behold, Satan asked to have you, that he might sift you as wheat: I made supplication for tnee, that thy faith fail not; and do thou, when once thou hast turned again, establish thy brethren. And he said unto him, Lord, with thee I am ready to go both to prison and to death. And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, until thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me. Luke 22:31-34.

Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father who is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust. Matthew 5:43-45.

Look through these two passages as through open windows into the habitual intercessions of the Master. We have been noting this week different forms which unselfish pray ing takes: praying for our own need that we may serve others better; pleading the common wants which belong to all of us; offering our entreaty for the coming Kingdom; and praying together in a social group. But in addition to these the Master prayed for individual people, both his enemies and his friends. His love was personal and con crete; when he prayed, he used names. Think of different tests by which we can measure the reality of love such as willingness to render costly service or daily thoughtfulness in little matters. Consider then the quality and depth of love that are revealed by this further test a care profound enough to express itself in sincere and habitual intercession. When a man prays in secret for another, and does it genu inely, he must really care. Put yourself in Peter’s place and see what the revelation of the Master’s love, expressed in secret intercession,

must have meant to him. At the death of Robert McCheyne, the Scotch preacher, some one said, "Perhaps the heaviest blow to his brethren, his people, and the land, is the loss of his intercession."

Two or three days before Cromwell died, the Chronicler tells us, his heart was "carried out for God and his people yea, indeed, for some who had added no little sorrow to him." This was his prayer:

Lord, though I am a miserable and wretched creature, I am in Covenant with Thee through grace. And I may, I will, come to Thee, for Thy People. Thou hast made me, though very unworthy, a mean instrument to do them some good, and Thee service; and many of them have set too high a value upon me, though others wish and would be glad of my death; Lord, however Thou dost dispose of me, continue and go on to do good for them. Give them consistency of judgment, one heart, and mutual love; and go on to deliver then:, and with the work of reformation; and make the Name of Christ glorious in the world. Teach those who look too much on Thy instruments, to depend more upon Thyself. Pardon such as desire to trample upon the dust of a poor worm, for they are Thy People too. And pardon the folly of this short Prayer: even for Jesus Christ's sake. And give us a good night, if it be Thy pleasure. Amen. Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658).

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK Of all forces in human life that go to the making of dominant desire, none is more powerful than love. Love in the family circle makes the mother's dominant desires center about the children, until no words can tell how cheap she holds her own life and how dear she holds theirs. In the nation such devotion makes patriots, consuming in them selfishness and fear, until they endure for their country's sake what they would never endure for their own. When one ranges through biography to see what desire has meant in men, he finds not only the sordid Ahab, the avaricious Judas, the licentious Herod, the ambitious Felix; he finds also men in whom devotion to people and to causes has made dominant desire utterly unselfish. A young lad named Miiller, who was picked up from the river after the burning of the "General Slocum," bore this testimony: "My mother gave me a life preserver, that's how I got saved. 1 guess she didn t have none herself, cause they can t find her." Trace in this testimony the direction of that mother's dominant desire! So the controlling wants of the world's devotees, from mothers to martyrs, have been unselfish. Said Gordon in the Soudan, "I declare, if I could stop this slave traffic, I would willingly be shot this night." Cried John Knox, "God, give rae Scotland, or I die!" Indeed, what expression of dominant desire could be more natural than this prayer of Knox? The tendency to pray is shaken into action, not alone by crises of individual need, but by hours of masterful love. Men who do not pray for themselves will sometimes pray for others; fathers who do not think to ask God's grace on their own lives, find themselves exclaiming, "God bless my son!" If, as in Paul, vital trust in God is combined with devotion to a cause, the result is always urgent, intercessory prayer. "Unceasingly I make mention of you, always in my prayers" (Romans 1:9); "Always in every supplication of mine on behalf of you all making my supplication with joy" (Php 1:4); "I . . . cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers" (Ephesians 1:15-16) these are windows through which we look into Paul's habitual intercession. He prays for the Jews "My heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them, that they may be saved" (Romans 10:1); for new con verts "To the end he may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness" (1 Thessalonians 3:13); for the church that they may "walk worthily of the Lord unto all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work" (Colossians 1:10). When dominant desire becomes unselfish the result is truly represented in these prayers of Paul.

II In considering the meaning of this sort of praying we may well note, first, that a man can pray unselfishly for him self. Sir Edward Burne-Jones put significant truth into his saying, "There is only one religion: Make the most of your best for the sake of others is the catholic faith, which except a man believe faithfully he cannot be saved." All that we have said about the service of prayer to individual character may be reaffirmed here as part of the unselfish aspect of prayer's ministry. When the Master said, "I sanctify my self," he was not selfish. A very unselfish motive was behind his care for his own life. "For their sakes I sanctify myself." The vividness with which this motive in prayer will appeal to any man depends on his clear perception of the intimate ways in which his friends welfare and happiness depend on him. Many a young man, rebuked for an evil in his life, has answered in effect, "My habits are my private affair." The reply which ought to be made to such a statement is obvious: a private affair is precisely what your habits are not. Your habits are the interest of everybody else. They are as truly a matter of social concern, if not of social control, as is the tariff, or the conflict between capital and labor. No man can keep the consequences of any evil to himself. They seep through his individual life, and run out into the community. When the Scripture says, "Be sure your sin will find you out," it does not mean "will be found out." It means what it says, "will find you out," track you down, spoil your char acter, destroy your happiness, ruin your influence; and be cause it does that, it will find your friends out, will tend to pull them down with you, will surely make goodness harder for them, and within your family circle will roll upon those who love you a burden of vicarious suffering. If a man could sin privately, he might allow himself the ignoble self-indulgence. But he cannot. Somebody else always is involved. The whole world is involved, for the man has deprived the world of a good life and given it a bad life instead. Sinning, even in its most private forms, is putting poison into the public reservoir, and sooner or later everybody is the worse for the pollution. A man then has the choice between two prayers. Either he will pray for his friends sake and his family s, for the sake of the girl he may marry and the children he may beget, for the sake of the commonwealth and the Kingdom which he may help or hinder, that he may defeat his temptations and live a godly, righteous, and useful life; or else some day he will be driven to a petition of the sort which Shakespeare put on the lips of Richard:

"O God! if my deep prayers cannot appease thee But thou wilt be avenged on my misdeeds, Yet execute thy wrath on me alone!" The latter is always a hopeless request. God cannot grant it. No man ever yet bore all the consequences of his own sin. The cross is a universal fact symbol of the suffering brought on those who have not done the wrong by those who have. To pray for one's life in the light of this fact is to pray unselfishly.

Moreover, even when the fight with definite sin does not occupy the center of attention, a man for his friends sake may well pray against the emptiness and uselessness of his life, and may well seek power to be worth as much as pos sible to others. Unselfishness is clearly the motive of such a cry for blessing as we have in the sixty-seventh Psalm: "God be merciful unto us, and bless us, and cause his face to shine upon us; that thy way may be known upon earth, thy salvation among all nations" Wherever real friendship and devotion come, prayer takes on this quality. When Quintin Hogg, with his Polytechnic Institute on his heart, during his last illness, wrote, "I would that I could be of some use to my boys, instead of the barren, dried up old scarecrow that I am!" he revealed the inevitable result of true friendliness. His desire to be at his best was motived by his love for "his boys." Here we face the real trouble with our prayers. Not for lack of a satisfying philosophy do our prayers run dry, but for lack of love. We do not care enough about people and

causes to pray for ourselves on their account. Let any one be possessed by a genuine devotion, and necessarily he will rise toward that union of love and prayer which Mrs. Browning put into remember- able words:

"And when I sue God for myself He hears that name of thine And sees within my eyes The tears of two."

III

Unselfishness in prayer, however, never has been and never can be fully satisfied with praying for ourselves for others sakes. It involves specifically praying for others, and the more deep and constraining the love, the more natural is the definite entreaty for God’s blessing upon our friends. The Master is our example here. The prayers of Jesus verbally reported in the Gospels, are not many in number and are few in words; but the indications of his habit of intercession are abundant and convincing. He prays for the children "Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should lay his hands on them, and pray" (Matthew 19:13); for the sick when a blind man is to be healed, we find the Master "looking up to heaven" (Mark 7:34); for his disciples "Simon ... I made supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not" (Luke 22:31-32); for his enemies "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34); for laborers in the harvest, since he must have practiced his own injunction "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest" (Luke 10:2); and for the whole community of his followers to the end of time "For them also that shall believe on me through their word" (John 17:20). That the most unselfish life ever lived would be unselfish in prayer was to have been expected, and the evidence that he was so is clear. When one, endeavoring to catch the Master’s spirit, considers the various effects that may be expected from this kind of praying, he sees immediately that such intercession sincerely and habitually practiced, will have notable result in the one who prays. How much experience with vicarious prayer is summed up in that revealing verse with which the book of Job draws toward its close, "Jehovah turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends" (Job 42:10). Such prayer does liberate. It carries a man out of himself; it brings to mind the names and needs of many friends, making the heart ready for service and the imagina tion apt to perceive ways of helping those else forgotten and neglected; it purges a man’s spirit of vindictive moods and awakens every gracious and fraternal impulse. As William Law put it, "Intercession is the best arbitrator of all differ ences, the best promoter of true friendship, the best cure and preservative against all unkind tempers, all angry and haughty passions." For another thing intercession will often have effect in the lives of those on whose behalf the prayer is made, if only for this reason, that the knowledge that his friends are praying for him is one of the finest and most empowering influences that can surround any man. For Peter to know that the Master was interceding for him was in itself what a source of sustenance and strength! They say that Luther when he felt particularly strong would exclaim, "I feel as if I were being prayed for"; and in illustration of the same truth, John G. Paton, the missionary to the New Hebrides, writes in his autobiography, "I have heard that in long after years the worst woman in the village of Torthorwald, then leading an immoral life but since changed by the grace of God, was known to declare that the only thing that kept her from despair and from the hell of the suicide, was when in the dark winter nights she crept close up underneath my father’s window, and heard him pleading in family worship that God would convert the sinner from the error of wicked ways and polish him as a jewel for the Redeemer’s crown. ... I felt, said she, that I was a burden on that good man’s heart, and I knew that God would

not disappoint him. That thought kept me. "

Many lives have been kept by knowledge of intercessions continually offered for them; and one need know only a little of Christian leaders, with their urgent requests for the support of their friends prayers, to see what encouragement they always have found in the assurance that supplications were offered on their behalf. Melanchthon here is typical, rejoicing over his accidental discovery that children were praying for the Reformation. Paul writes, "Brethren, pray for us" (1 Thessalonians 5:25); "Ye also helping together on our behalf by your supplication" (2 Corinthians 1:11); "I beseech you, brethren, . . . that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me" (Romans 15:30). Cromwell writes to his admirals at sea: "You have, as I verily believe and am persuaded, a plentiful stock of prayers going for you daily, sent up by the soberest and most approved ministers and Christians in this nation; and, notwithstanding some discouragements, very much wrestling of faith for you; which is to us and I trust will be to you, a matter of great encouragement."

IV In addition to these two effects, however, Christians have looked to intercession for a far more vital consequence. When trust in God and love for men co-exist in any life, prayer for others inevitably follows. Deepening intimacy with God, by itself, may find expression in quiet communion; enlarging love for men, alone, may utter itself in serviceable deeds; but these two cannot live together in the same life without sometimes combining in vicarious prayer. Now, such prayer always has been offered, not as a formal expression of well-wishing, but as a vital, creative contribution to God’s good purposes for men. The genuine intercessors, who in costly praying have thrown their personal love alongside God’s and have earnestly claimed blessings for their friends, have felt that they were not playing with a toy, but that they were somehow using the creative power of personality in opening ways for God to work his will. They have been convinced that their intercessions wrought consequences for their friends. In this generation, however, with its searching doubts, its honest unwillingness to act without knowledge, its refusal even when faith would be a comfort to accept faith without good reason, this projectile power of intercession has to many become dubious. One reason for this doubt lies in the in adequate way in which intercession has been conceived and preached. To some people it seems to mean that one person may persuade a thoughtless or unwilling God to do something for another person. A popular analogy has tended to keep alive this misconception. God in many ways, so runs the analogy, refuses to work his will save as some man co operates with him. The home life suffers, the government becomes corrupt, the non-Christian world goes unevangelized until men come to God’s help. So intercessory prayer may be another way in which God waits for our assistance. If he will not do some things for my friend until I work, it may be that he will not do other things until I pray.

There is an element of truth in this analogy, but the limited application of the comparison is clear. God cannot save my family life without my cooperation, because he cannot take my place as son or husband or father; he must work through me. He cannot save the government without men, because he cannot take the voter’s place; he must work through the citizens. And in the evangelizing of China, he cannot go as a missionary; he must find some man to go. There is nothing artificial about this necessity of human cooperation; it belongs to the nature of the case. But that God should deliberately withhold from a man in China some thing that he is free to give to him, and should continue to withhold it until it occurs to me to ask him to bestow it, looks like an arbitrary proceeding. It argues imperfect good ness in God. No true father would keep from one

child a blessing that the child has a right to and that the father is free to give, simply because he waits for another child to ask for its bestowal. The trouble with such an idea of intercession is not simply intellectual; it is moral. That one individual, myself, should try to persuade another individual, God, to do for a third individual, my friend, something which the second individual, God, had not thought of, or was intending otherwise, or was arbitrarily withholding until I asked to have it given, plainly involves a thought of deity with pagan elements in it. And many people feeling this have given up intercession as unreasonable.

V This surrender of reality, however, because it is explained in an inadequate form of thought, is never a solution of any problem. With or without adequate interpretations of vicarious prayer, earnest Christians in their intercessions are about a serious and reasonable business, whose sources lie deep in the needs of human life. A clear and rational belief in intercession must start with two truths: first, the Christian Gospel about God; and second, the intimate relationships that make the world of persons an organic whole. As to the first, the Christian God desires the welfare of all men everywhere; his love is boundless in extent and individual in application; his purpose of good sweeps through creation, comprehending every child of his and laboring for a transformed society on earth and in the heavens. This, as Paul says, is "the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ." Nothing that we ever dreamed of good for any man or for the race has touched the garment’s hem of the good which he purposes and toward which he works. He is not an individual after the fashion of a pagan deity, who, like Baal, must be awakened from his sleep and besought to do good deeds for men. Rather every dim and flickering desire our hearts ever have known for mankind’s good has been lighted at the central fire of his eternal passion for the salvation of his children. As Whittier sang it:

"All that I feel of pity thou hast known Before I was; my best is all thy own. From thy great heart of goodness mine but drew Wishes and prayers; but thou, O Lord, wilt do, In thine own time, by ways I cannot see, All that I feel when I am nearest thee!"

Such is the Christian God. When men go up to such a God in vicarious prayer, their intercession must mean casting themselves in with the eternal purpose of the Father for his children, "laying hold on God," not to call him to ministry, as though he needed that, but to be carried along with him in his desire for all men’s good. Nothing is more wanted in the world than such intercession. The title of Dr. Mott’s address "Intercessors the Primary Need," is clearly the statement of a fact. God wants men to lay hold on him in inward prayer, aligning their dominant desires with his, until their intercession be comes the effective ally of his will. As in an irrigation system, with its many reticulated channels, the sluice-gate would not plead with the reservoir to remember its for gotten power of doing good, but rather, feeling the urge of the ready water, would desire to be opened, that through it the waiting stream might find an entrance into all the fields and the will of the reservoir be done so men should pray to God. As to the second truth which underlies the reasonableness of intercession persons are not separate individuals merely, like grains of sand in a bag, but, as Paul says, are "mem bers one of another." The ganglia of a nervous system are hardly more intimately related and more interdependent than are people in this closely reticulated system of personal life. As Professor Everett once put it: "We ask the leaf, are you complete in yourself? and the leaf answers, No! my life is in the branches. We ask the branch, and the branch answers, No, my life is in the trunk. We ask the trunk, and it answers, No, my life is in the root. We ask the root, and it answers, No, my life is in the trunk and the branches and the leaves. Keep the

branches stripped of leaves and I shall die. So it is with the great tree of being. Nothing is completely and merely individual." The more we know about personality, the less possible it is to draw clear circles about each of us, partitioning us off from one another. We all run into each other, like interflowing rivu lets, with open channels, above ground and subterranean connecting all of us. Even telepathy may prove to be true bo that if a man believes in God, in whom all live and move and have their being, there is no basis for denying the possibility that prayer may open ways of personal influence even at a distance. Personality, at its best, in its thinking and working is creative, and when in this love-system of persons, a soul throws in its dominant desire alongside God s, no one easily can set boundaries to that prayer's influence.

Indeed, there are certain aspects of intercessory praying where the consequences are plain. It is not a theory but a fact empirically demonstrable, that if in any community a large number of earnest Christians unite in unselfish praying for a revival of religious interest, that revival is sure to come. This can be tested anywhere at any time, if earnest men and women are there to do the praying. To say that this effect is simply psychological, is only another way of saying that God has so ordained psychological laws that vicarious praying by a group of earnest people does bring results. So far from depreciating the value of intercession, this fact gives to it the stability of a universal law. It names the conditions under which God does his most effective work through men. "For many years," says Dr. Mott, "it has been my practice in traveling among the nations to make a study of the sources of the spiritual movements which are doing most to vitalize and transform individuals and communities. At times it has been difficult to discover the hidden spring, but invariably where I have had the time and patience to do so, I have found it in an intercessory prayer- life of great reality."

While our minds are insufficient for the task of seeing to its end the explanation of intercession's power, our experience is clear that something creative is being done when in this unitary system of personal life human souls take on themselves God's burden for men, and in vicarious prayer throw themselves in with his sacrificial purpose. "Surely the man who joins himself with God," writes Professor Coe, "does not leave the universe just where it was before. All things are bound together into unity. I drop a pebble from my hand; it falls to earth, but the great earth rises to meet it. They seek a common center of gravity, determined by the mass of one as truly as by that of the other. You cannot change any one thing without changing something else also. The man who prays changes the center of gravity of the world of persons. Other persons will be different as well as himself, and he could not have produced this difference by any other means than this union of himself with God." But no explanation, however reasonable, can do justice to the experience of vicarious praying. To feel that, we must turn to life. When a mother prays for her wayward son, no words can make clear the vivid reality of her supplications. Her love pours itself out in insistent demand that her boy must not be lost. She is sure of his value, with which no outward thing is worthy to be compared, and of his possibilities which no sin of his can ever make her doubt. She will not give him up. She follows him through his abandonment down to the gates of death; and if she loses him through death into the mystery beyond, she still prays on in secret, with intercessions which she may not dare to utter, that wherever in the moral universe he may be, God will reclaim him. As one considers such an experience of vicarious praying, he sees that it is not merely resignation to the will of God; it is urgent assertion of a great desire. She does not really think that she is persuading God to be good to her son, for the courage in her prayer is due to her

certain faith that God also must wish that boy to be recovered from his sin. She rather is taking on her heart the same burden that God has on his; is joining her demand with the divine desire. In this system of personal life -which makes up the moral universe, she is taking her place alongside God in an urgent, creative outpouring of sacrificial love.

Now, this mother does not know and cannot know just what she is accomplishing by her prayers. But we know that such mothers save their sons when all others fail. The mystery of prayer's projectile force is great, but the certainty of such prayer's influence, one way or another, in working redemption for needy lives, is greater still. It may be, as we have said, that God has so ordained the laws of human interrelationship that we can help one another not alone by our deeds but also directly by our thoughts, and that earnest prayer may be the exercise of this power in its highest terms. But whether that mother has ever argued out the theory or not, she still prays on. Her intercession is the utterance of her life; it is love on its knees.

VI

Let any man of prayerless life, or of a life in which prayer, an untrained tendency, is nothing more than an occasional cry of selfish need, consider himself in the light of this ideal of unselfish praying. To pray for himself for the sake of others, and to pray in vicarious entreaty for his friends, his enemies, and all mankind this ministry he has denied. Let him not hide his real and inward lack of the intercessory spirit behind any confusion of mind about the theory. If a man honestly seeks the reason why a prayer like that of Moses is not easily conceivable upon his own lips, "Oh, this people have sinned a great sin. . . . Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written" (Exodus 32:31-32), he sees that the difference between Moses and himself is mainly one of moral passion. We have no such high and commanding desires as Moses had; our wishes are lame and weak and petty compared with his; if every mental perplexity were overcome, we still should lack the spirit out of which such prayers spontaneously pour. Supposing that we knew exactly and held completely the Master's theory of prayer; is there any man for whom we care enough to pray as Jesus did for Peter? Is there any cause that could call from us his cry: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!" The chief obstacles to intercession are moral. We live for what we can get; our dominant desires are selfish. The main current of us runs in the channel of our mean ambi tions, and our thoughts of other people and of great causes are but occasional eddies on the surface of the stream. Even when we do succeed in praying for our friends, our country, or the Kingdom, we are often giving lip-service to conventionality; we are not expressing our urgent and continual demand on life. Our prayers are hypocrites. If the cause we pray for should suddenly take form and ask of us our share in the achievement of our own entreaty, we would dodge and run. All such intercession is clanging brass. "Our prayers must mean something to us," said Maltbie Babcock, "if they are to mean anything to God."

Before a man therefore blames his lack of intercession on intellectual perplexities, he well may ask whether, if all his questions were fully answered, he has the spirit that would pour itself out in vicarious praying. Is his heart really surcharged with pent devotion waiting to find vent in prayer as soon as the logic of intercession is made evident? Rather, it is highly probable that if his last interrogation point were laid low by a strong answer, he would intercede not one whit more than he does now. Intercession is the result of generous devotion, not of logical analysis. When such devo

tion comes into the life of any man who vitally believes in God, like a rising stream in a dry river bed it lifts the obstacles at whose removal he had tugged in vain, and floats them off. The unselfish prayer of dominant desire clears its own channel. We put our lives into other people and into great causes; and our prayers follow after, voicing our love, with theory or without it. We lay hold on God’s alliance for the sake of the folk we care for and the aims we serve. We do it because love makes us, and we con tinue it because the validity of our praying is proved in our experience. St. Anthony spoke to the point, "We pray as much as we desire, and we desire as much as we love." Of such intercession it is true,

"More things are wrought by prayer Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice Rise like a fountain for me night and day. For what are men better than sheep and goats That nourish a blind life within the brain, If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer Both for themselves and those who call them friend? For so the whole round earth is every way Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

SUGGESTIONS FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

How far can a man say: "It is nobody else’s concern what I do"?

Is there a person so far away that no act of mine can touch him?

Is there anything which a person can ask for in prayer which concerns nobody but himself?

When can a person really pray the Lord’s Prayer?

When is a prayer for personal needs an unselfish prayer? What are the results of unselfish prayer? What does prayer accomplish for the man who prays? {193}Why does the knowledge that others are praying for him help a man? How far is this a sufficient reason for unselfish prayer?

"Can prayer accomplish anything apart from the man who prays?" What kind of answers have we a right to expect?

Why is it necessary to intercede with a loving God for human needs?

What is really accomplished by intercessory prayer?

What place has reason and what place experiment in deter mining the results of prayer?

Why do men fail to practice intercession?

05.11. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY I. DISCUSSIONS OF VARIOUS ASPECTS OF PRAYER

"PRAYER. WHAT IT is AND WHAT IT DOES," by Samuel Mc-Comb. A brief but worthy treatment of the personal effects of habitual prayer.

"CONQUERING PRAYER," by L. Swetenham. A valuable essay on the relationships between prayer and character.

"THE POWER OF PRAYER," by Forsythe and Greenwell. Two brief essays of real insight from a deeply religious point of view.

"THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PRAYER," by Anna Louise Strong. A Ph.D. thesis on the Psychological aspects of prayer.

"THE PRAYERS OF THE BIBLE." by John Edgar McFadyen. A stimulating treatment of the subject, with a topical catalogue of Scriptural prayers.

"THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF PRAYER," by James Freeman Clarke. Somewhat out of date in many of its positions but still suggestive. "THE DOUBLE SEARCH" by Rufus M. Jones.

Two vital essays on Atonement and Prayer God’s search for man and man’s search for God.

PRAYER, ITS NATURE AND SCOPE by H. Clay Trumbull.

Written in a popular vein but with more than ordinary good sense.

"THE PLACE OF PRAYER IN THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION," by James M. Campbell.

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"COMMUNION WITH GOD," by Wilhelm Herrman.

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S. The Challenge of the Present Crisis

THE CHALLENGE OF THE

PRESENT CRISIS HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK Author of "The Meaning of Prayer," "The Manhood of the Master," etc.

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I did not intend to write an essay on the War, and I am glad to see that I have avoided doing so. Many informing treatises are throwing light on every aspect of the great struggle, and it is not likely that there will be lack of more. But when all the special treatises have had then* say, an inner problem still remains unsolved. In what mood shall a Christian, or for that matter an idealist of any kind, face the catastrophe? With what considerations and insights can he support his faith and hope? And how can he harmonize his ideals with his necessities of action in a time of war? The morale of our people critically depends upon their answer to such questions.

If one attempts to write upon the War with these needs in mind, the result cannot be an impersonal treatise. One must say out what his own thought has done in adjusting life to the strange and hor-

FOREWORD rible events of these days; he must plead for the attitudes that seem essential to the saving of man's spiritual treasures. This little book, therefore, is a message, not an essay, and while the pronoun of the first person is absent, the background of the argument is none the less the struggle of the writer to see his way and keep his soul alive in this terrific generation. If taken, then, for what it was intended, it may be worth the reading to some other who is finding this a difficult time in which to think, believe, and live. At least, in this hope, it has been written.

HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK. September 1, 1917. THE CHALLENGE OF THE PRESENT CRISIS The first question to be answered by any individual or by any social group, The real handle facing a hazardous sitto a difficult uation, is whether the crisis is to be met as a challenge to strength or as an occasion for despair. Henry Fawcett, a young Englishman, hunting with his father, suffered an accident staggering enough to break the nerve of ordinary men: his father shot at a partridge, hit his son's eyes, and entirely blinded them. Writing about the matter afterward, young Fawcett said, "I made up my mind inside of ten minutes after the accident to stick to my main purpose as far as in me lay. " He kept his word worked his way through Cambridge University, was made Professor of Political Economy there, was elevated to be Postmaster-General of England, and gave to the British people a generation ago the Parcel Post that we in America have just achieved for ourselves. He took hold of his situation by its real handle; he met it as a challenge to his strength and not as an excuse for disheartenment.

Even a little observation of popular reactions to the Great War reveals many men inwardly looking at the catastrophe in unrelieved dismay. It means to them despair, not challenge. One of the most important battles of this generation is being fought behind closed doors, where men are making up their minds whether this war is to leave them social pessimists or not. While many voices, therefore, are speaking of the significance of the War for political, diplomatic, financial, and military interests, something more ought to be said about the meaning of the War to our personal attitude and faith. All constructive agencies, after the war is over, will depend for their success upon the vision and energy of those who have not been driven by the present catastrophe into cynicism. That many are becoming cynical, are growing dubious of social possibilities, are surrendering to practical skepticism the faith which they never would have surrendered to speculative doubt, is clear to anyone who talks much with men. Materialism as a theory never would have convinced them. But the horrors of Verdun, the mutilated bodies of Belgian boys, the bleaching bones of countless children left by the Russian retreat along the military roads of Poland, and, after sixty generations of Christian opportunity, some five million wounded men in the hospitals of Europe how shall we keep heart in the face of this?

One natural consequence of such a reaction to the War is a lavish accusation of failure against the ideal agencies on which men had counted to improve the world. As in nervous prostration a man becomes most fretful against those whom in normal health he loves best, so, many people, in the collapse of nerve which the War has caused, bring the accusation of futility against the best loved of their faiths. What most we had relied upon, seeing that it has not saved us from the very evil its purpose was to cure, we now in exasperated disillusionment throw upon the scrap-heap. Christianity is a failure how often has the charge been spoken and how much of tener has the doubt been thought! An initial mistrust as to the wisdom of this attitude is suggested by the simple fact that if one is to call Christianity a failure because it has not forestalled this war, logically he must box the compass before he is through and call failures all those agencies on which we might have counted to prevent the catastrophe. If for this reason Christianity is a failure, so too is education. War may be wicked from the standpoint of religion, but just as truly is it foolish from the standpoint of intelligence, and the universities of Europe and America have been established long enough to have taught men before this the futility of war. If Christianity is a failure because it has not prevented the present disaster, so too is commerce. It promised to bind the dissevered races in an economic unity so close that what happened to one would happen to all, and so to make the race one family.On that interdependence Norman Angell had taught us to rely for the increasing unprofitableness and, as some of us dared hope, the increasing improbability of war. But now the economic bonds are torn asunder; they have proved to be causes of strife, not barriers against it. If anything is a failure, surely that social idealism is, on which we have been priding ourselves these recent decades past. Only a small proportion of those who read these words are likely to be Socialists in a technical sense, and yet all of us had counted on the international Socialist brotherhood, uniting so many million workmen of so many nations in a league pledged explicitly and absolutely against war. Great confidence for the future was begotten when hi Berlin’s public square 100,000 Socialists at the time of the Agadir incident lifted their hands unanimously against war with France. And yet, hi spite of brave attempts, the voice of the Socialists against this cataclysm has been pitiably weak. Christianity a failure? Then surely international law is. The international conventions, guaranteeing the neutrality of Belgium, had expended on them the best brains that statesmanship could supply, but they are scraps of paper now. The leagues and

covenants to make the world a more fraternal place, although they are the finest work of our best international lawyers, have been torn to tatters by military necessity. If anything has failed, international law has. Does any sane man think, however, that it is possible to be content with such a sweeping charge of failure against our ideal agencies? Are they hopelessly to be thrown into the discard? A man who has fallen into a pit might as well saw off his own legs in despite because they did not prevent him from falling in. On second thought, he will do well to keep those legs; they are his only hope of ever climbing out again. ^His attitude toward them is sadly incomplete if he sits at the pit's bottom, blaspheming the feet that he should have walked straight with. And in the reconstructive age that shall succeed the war, mankind must keep and confidently rely upon those ideal agencies which, with too facile tongues, some folk call failures. Education, fraternalized commerce, social idealism, international law, and Christianity these are not ready for the discard. They are humanity's great hope. This war is not so much an occasion for despair concerning them as it is a challenge to a better ur lerstanding and a finer use of them. THE CHALLENGE OF II

If a man, however, with any satisfaction and confidence, is thus to face the Reasons for P^ent crisis in terms of accepting the challenge, he must have present crisis something more than a as a challenge , . . determination so to tace it. Only a frivolous mind can easily be optimistic at a time like this. One who today feels no strain upon his faith has not taken his faith seriously enough to attempt the direct application of it to the actual facts of the war. Let him take his former social hopes into the trenches, the hospitals, the desolated homes of Europe, let him face his old faiths with the elemental human factors that made this war possible and that will make the prevention of its repetition difficult, and he will crave some solid reasons for continued hope, some intelligible justification for accepting the crisis not with dismay, but as a challenge to his courage and devotion. One intelligible reason for the attitude which we recommend is to be found in the very factors that make this the most appalling war in history. What conditions necessarily precede the most distressing conflicts that mankind can know? Are they not always conditions of intimate relationship? For this reason the worst of all fights is a family fight. One cannot have a heart-breaking quarrel with a total stranger; there are not points of contact enough. But one can have a dour time in his own family. The very relationships that offer most gracious opportunities for satisfaction, peace, and self -development are the same relationships that offer the most exasperating chance for misunderstanding, discord, and collision. Now, the basic reason for this war's appalling extent and terrific character is that it is waged in a world of increasingly intimate relationships. The ends of the earth have been crowded together as man has conquered distance with his swift inventions. The points of contact between nations and races have been indefinitely multiplied. More than once the telegraph stations around the world have been aligned for a message that made the swift circuit of the globe. Such a message left Oyster Bay one night when Mr. Roosevelt was President. It was a minute later when it went through Denver and a minute later still when it dived out through the Golden Gate. Then it slid past Manila, sang through the Indian Ocean, leaped over the boundary of Asia into Europe, jumped across England, came up from its long bath in the Atlantic on the bleak shores of Newfoundland, and set the telegraph receiver ticking almost before the transmitter had ceased around the world in nine minutes! A fellowship of life so close and intimate has followed in the wake of these new means of communication that we need not be surprised to learn that when war was declared in Europe food prices in Siam went up 100 per cent. The bullets that fly at the front today fly further than bullets ever went before.

They strike not only the men and boys in the trenches and the women and children at home. They strike the business man in Shanghai and the family with a son of military age in San Francisco; their whirr calls brown and black men from the antipodes and is answered by cannon on the warships of a nation that until a generation ago represented the acme of racial exclusiveness.

Plainly a world of such unprecedented intimacies offers a double chance to its inhabitants. On the one side lies the finest opportunity for racial solidarity and international brotherhood that mankind has ever known; on the other the most abysmal possibilities of friction, collision, and terrific war. Did we really think that mankind was so ideal that dealing with this new situation of multiplied relationships, difficult to handle, full alike of blessing and of curse, it could get all the sweet and none of the bitter? The passions that breed war are deep in the human heart; the traditions that support war are venerable. How could man learn what war would mean in this new world-neighborhood without trying it? How could he handle so new and intricate a situation and not mishandle it? Yet the very conditions that make the consequence of his mishandling so terrible are the same conditions on which are founded our hopes of racial unity and world-wide brotherhood. Say, as we must, that this war in its extent and horror surpasses all its predecessors, yet who would give up the chances of growing internationalism and an ultimate federation of the world that lie in the very intimacies which make the widespread horror possible? The whole course of mankind's increasing interdependence indicates that in this war we are paying the heavy price for the upward climb toward solidarity. We are fighting the war on the way up, not on the way down. Give man time and he yet will learn to handle the new relationships for fraternity and not for war. Our own American states passed through a colonial period when the points of contact increased beyond the power of wisdom and good will to handle them. The friction of mutual jealousies, impossible between strangers, difficult to avoid between neighbors, issued in tariff wars and even in the invasion of armed bands. At last, within memory of many living, one of the great wars of history was fought before the colliding interests between the states were accommodated in a federation that no misunderstanding ever again will break. Such is the course of social evolution. Those quarrels of the states were met on the way up toward unity. They grew out of the friction of increasing intimacy. Weak men were dismayed at them; courageous men saw the opportunities in the very relationships that were being abused. Today the same problem on a world-wide scale invites the faith and challenges the hope of men. It says: Look through the terror of the present hour at the basic elements that make it possible for seven-eighths of mankind to be engaged in the same war. For in the very interdependence of all races and nations lies the possibility of realizing Joseph Cook's dream: "The nineteenth century made the world into a neighborhood; the twentieth century will make it into a brotherhood."

Another reason for accepting this present crisis in terms of challenge rather than dismay lies in the fact that this is the first war in history that has made men widely say that Christianity is a failure. Christendom has not hitherto so perceived the incongruity between war and the Christian Gospel as to feel that the continuance of war was a reflection on Christianity's effectiveness. Some of the early Fathers, to be sure, Tertullian, Cyprian, Lactantius, denounced war as unchristian, but from the tune of Constantine the Church and war congenially have lived together. Many of war's worst horrors were alleviated, some of its worst excesses curbed, and the Church's sanctuaries and truces became oases in the midst of hostility. Always there was a standing disagreement, however latent, between Christ and organized slaughter. But one looks in vain for any such widespread

consciousness as we face today that the persistence of war is a staggering blow to the claims of Christianity. Said Athanasius, "It is not permitted to kill; but in war to slay the enemy is both legitimate and worthy of all praise." Said Augustine, "What is the evil in war? Is it that men who are to die anyway die that the victors may live in peace? To complain of this is the part of the timid, not the religious." Said Luther, "War is a business, divine in itself, and as needful and necessary to the world as eating or drinking, or any other work." The popes sent armies out to battle and blessed their banners for the fighting. Henry V's bishops, as Shakespeare rightly pictures them, urged theking to war. And when unbelievers were in question some Peter the Hermit stormed Europe with urgent calls to slaughter, "Deus vult" God wills it. Nor can anyone who listens today fail to hear echoes of this historic attitude that accepted war, unconscious of any essential incompatibility between the spirit of Christ and the spirit of a battlefield.

Christianity and war lived in peace to* gether as did Christianity and slavery. For generations none perceived disharmony between these two. If some now call the Gospel a failure because war persists, what would they have said if, with awakened conscience in the matter, they had lived while Christianity and slavery walked arm in arm down the centuries? John Newton, who wrote, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear!" tells us of blissful seasons of prayer to Christ, while on slaving expeditions along the African coast. Cotton Mather, our own Puritan prophet, thanked God with full heart for the arrival of a cargo of slaves and molasses, overdue from the West Indies, but at last come safely in at Boston port. Nothing in history seems to us more essentially unchristian than the slave raids hi Africa, the merciless conditions of transportation, and the inhumanities of the slave's life as slavery spread. Consider a system one of whose characteristic expressions could be an advertisement like this, published in our own country in 1825:

"Twenty dollars reward, ran away from the subscriber, on the 14th instant, a negro girl named Molly. She is 16 or 17 years of age, slim made, lately branded on her left cheek, thus, *R/ and a piece is taken off her left ear on the same side; the same letter is branded on the inside of both her legs.

ABNER Ross, Fairfield District, S. C." And then consider that one of the last defenses of that system was written by a Christian bishop. But the day came when men began to cry: "Christianity is a failure, it has not stopped slavery." The incongruity between the Gospel of God's Fatherhood on the one side and holding a fellow-being in serfdom on the other, had at last become evident. That was one of the climactic days in history. Aristotle tells us that a few people in his time thought that slavery was unethical. Such occasional insight doubtless had persisted through centuries, a subterranean stream rising in sporadic fountains, some of which we know. But at last the stream emerged fully into the light. Men saw, with regard to slavery, the clear implications of the Gospel; they perceived that Christianity and slavery could not perpetually live together in the same world. The issue was drawn: Christianity would be a failure if it did not stop slavery. And from the day that the issue was drawn, the result was assured. It was not Christianity that failed; it was slavery.

When, therefore, men cry today that Christianity is a failure because it has not stopped war, a man of faith may well thank God and take courage.

This, too, is a climactic day in history. For so long tune the Gospel and war have lived together in ignoble amity! If at last the disharmony between the spirit of Jesus and the spirit of war is

becoming evident, then a great hope has dawned on the race. Only a little while ago many were telling us that Christianity had nothing to do with social questions, that it was a gospel of salvation for the individual out of the wreckage of a ruined world. They urged ministers to "stick to the Gospel" in its application to the separate souls of men and to keep a quiet tongue about the wider applications of Christ's truth. And now we are told that Christianity has failed because it has not stopped war ! It is confessed then, that Christianity does have something to do with social questions, that it will be judged and judged rightly not alone by what it does for individuals, but by what it makes of the world in which individuals must live. As for war, the same charge confesses that the issue is drawn between that and the Gospel. Many opinions as to ways and means for bringing permanent security will be entertained, but underneath diversity of method, the main issue is clear: Christianity will indeed have failed, if it does not stop war.

If, then, the issue is drawn, this is no time for despair. ' The situation is a stirring challenge to our strength and our devotion. Impossible to conquer? Rather, as an old reformer cried, "The only difference between the difficult and the impossible is that the impossible takes a little longer time." If mankind had no other outlook than an indefinite recurrence of wars like this, hope for a worthy future for the race would have to be surrendered; stoical fortitude would be our best recourse. But no such disheartened counsel need content us. The conclusion of this world-drama, now at its climax, need no more see the triumph of war than our fathers' generation saw the triumph of slavery. If we will, we may have another victory for Christian ideals. A further reason for accepting the present crisis as a challenge lies in the assurance that comes from the perspective of history. The tremendous events through which we now are living tend to preoccupy all our thoughts. We are obsessed by the immediate, because the immediate is so absorbingly terrific. But it is not treachery to the importance of the present hour to retreat from it far enough to see it in the perspective of the centuries. We do not lose faith now when we read of the Peloponnesian War that ruined Athens. But contemporaries did. Euripides' skepticism had for its background that appalling conflict which brought the pride of his Achaia to the dust. How modern is his ancient cry!

"When faith overfloweth my mind, God's providence all embracing Banisheth griefs; but when Doubt whispereth, AJi, but to know! No clue through the tangle I find, of fate and of life for my tracing."

We do not lose faith now when we read of the old barbarian invasions that devastated Europe, although they overthrew the civilization on which man's choicest hopes seemed to depend. But multitudes of contemporaries did, and Augustine's "City of God" is the splendid attempt of a man who would not surrender hope to steady his fellows in the time of their dismay. The man who wrote it, aged and unconquered, died while the victorious barbarians were hammering at his city's gates. We do not lose faith now when over against the French Revolution's fair beginning, promising liberty, fraternity, equality, we note its dismal end the tumbrils rumbling through the city's streets and the falling guillotines. But contemporaries had a bitter struggle to keep heart and Wordsworth in the dismay of the time retreated to the woods and later described his painful disillusionment:

"I lost

All feeling of conviction, and, in fine, Sick, wearied out with contrarieties, Yielded up moral questions in despair."

How often have such earthquakes, like the Great War now, thrown the saints upon their faces in dismay! Yet in the retrospect of history, Peloponnesian wars, barbarian invasions, French revolutions take their proper and significant place. They do not now appear as hopeless blockades to human progress. Rather they emerge like rocks around which the advancing stream of the human river swirled for a while and made its progress more evident by the commotion. And in our better hours we know that this present catastrophe so will take its place in history. It is not the end of all things, the finale of our hopes. The unique thing about our generation is not the War. War has always been here. In over 3,000 years of written history since 1496 B. C. there have been hardly more than 227 years of peace. The unique thing about our generation is the way the very people who decide for war, as President Wilson did, are thinking about it. Their obvious abhorrence of war, their increasingly clear insight that whatever may be the necessities of immediate action, war, regarded from the standpoint of the ideal, is the last word in idiocy and infamy as a way of settling international difficulties in the twentieth century this is more distinctive of our time and country than war itself is. And when a man senses this, he throws aside the despair that in weaker hours confuses him and goes out to do his "bit" for that Divine Purpose in the world, which this war may impede, but which it cannot stop. He determines to play his part, that this war may impede the Divine Purpose as little as possible and that out of it may come indeed a world made "safe for democracy." Behind this attitude he feels the confirmation of history. Ahead of it he sees the promise of hope. THE PRESENT CRISIS

III

If the reader’s assent has at all been gained by the reasons which we have An apnoted for accepting the world’s predation crisis as a challenge and not o orce ag an occas j on f or despair, the natural progress of our thought leads us to consider the practical directions which that challenge takes. To us in America the War is now no longer a mere theory to be discussed; it is upon us as a call to action, a stupendous fact whose range and depth of influence no man can measure. Whether or not we should ourselves have voted for America’s participation in the struggle, the War is ours now, and its challenge to our Christianity is unescapable. To what does it summon us? As Christians we are summoned, for one thing, amid all the obsessing influences of war, to keep a clear insight into the limitations of force as an agency in human life. This does not mean that force can be dispensed with. Indeed, since the whole temper of our thought is so anti-militaristic, we may well take special pains to do justice to force, to grant it all the value that its usefulness deserves. Those who put force on one side and love upon the other, as though there were between them an unavoidable antipathy, are creating one of those false dilemmas which are a common stumblingblock to useful thinking. Force and love are not necessarily antithetical. Doubtless it is the absolute ideal that children should be reared by moral suasion only, without compulsion. But because most of us were not absolutely ideal children, we are thankful that we were not reared on an absolutely ideal schedule. We are glad that some things not otherwise obtainable in us were helped by the judicious application of force in the hands of love. Love in its high reaches is not a soft and cooing thing it is life’s most searching and tremendous power, and neither in the family nor in the commonwealth ought it so to delight in the comfort of tenderness that it refuses the discipline of force. The love of Jesus is commonly appealed to by those who would altogether dispense with force. One has only to read the many conflicting interpretations of Jesus’ sayings in their application to the questions which this war presents, to see how difficult, if

not quite impossible it is, to build with confidence any solution of our special problems on a literal pressing of the texts. The Master never faced in his own experience, never directly considered in his teaching a national problem such as Belgium met when the Prussians crossed the border. To be sure he fraternized with centurions, taking them for granted as unreprovingly as in his parables he took slavery for granted, but no cause can be made out for or against either slavery or war from this natural attitude of his. The fact is that Jesus did not directly face our modern questions about war; they were not his problem, and to press a legalistic interpretation of special texts, as though they were, is a misuse of the gospels.

It is clear, however, that that boundless love of hfe, which was the center of his life, was no mild and dovelike thing. It had terrific aspects. The love of Jesus looked on Lazarus, lying untended at Dives' gate, and then the love of Jesus looked on Dives, and God have mercy on him after that ! The love of Jesus looked on pious Israelites coming up to the Father's temple to pay their tithes and make their offerings of sacrifice, and then the love of Jesus looked upon the hucksters who rang this piety upon their counters for their private gain; and the love of Jesus took a whip of cords and drove them out. Jesus pictures the ideal of life under the figure of a shepherd, and the tender aspects of the shepherd's ministry so captivate our imagination that we would leave the picture with no shadows in it. Not so our Lord. He is under no such soft illusions about life. He follows through his figure till the thief comes, that he "may steal and kill and destroy"; he adds the wolf as well, who if he can "snatcheth them and scattereth them"; and then the shepherd proves his quality while the hireling flees by setting to in desperate encounter to protect his sheep. Jesus knew that a true shepherd could not always be a gentle man; at times the call must come for force. The love of Jesus, as we often are reminded, said, "Bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you"; and that same love of Jesus, looking on the violaters of the poor, also said, "Ye serpents! Ye offspring of vipers! How shall ye escape the judgment of hell?" Love like his does not always speak gently and act gently; love never can speak and act gently with effectiveness unless it has behind it capacious possibilities of moral indignation. Indeed so stern an aspect did the love of Jesus have that the greater problem which the serious interpreter must face and which pacifist writers commonly forget, is not to har* monize the Master's love with so temporal a thing as the use of force for moral ends, but to harmonize it with so prodigious a conception as the word hell familiar on his lips even in its most merciful interpretation must connote. " These mine enemies that would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither and slay them before me" no soft and comfortable soul, afraid of force, put words like that into his picture of the Eternal. Just as, in the Master's love there are heights of tenderness and horizons of compassion where even our imaginations cannot reach, so, in the presence of obdurate iniquity, depths of sternness are there that make us quail. We have been too soft in our thought of him; we have remembered the 6th chapter of Matthew's gospel and have forgotten the 23rd; and some of the most egregious misinterpretations of him ever written have but lately come from extreme pacifists, identifying love with gentleness.

While, therefore, none can be dogmatically sure what Jesus would say about our duty in this present war although we can be sure that Jesus would hate war and all that makes it possible one does not see how a soul who spoke as Jesus spoke could forbid as intrinsically wrong the use of force for moral ends. * And if, in answer the familiar text is pleaded, "Resist not evil," surely both the context and the whole temper of the Master's life make clear that the meaning there is not

passive acquiescence in iniquity, but rather that magnanimity of spirit which Paul summed up in his parallel word: "Recompense to no man evil for evil." For force in Jesus' thought must always be wielded with a heart of love behind and a purpose of good will ahead.

Those who would dispense with force, who at a stroke would lift all opposition to evil from the physical to the moral plane, and fight iniquity with reason and love alone, do not estimate aright what sin can do to human life. They have an unsupported confidence that no heart ever grows so callous in iniquity that it is unresponsive to the appeal of tenderness. Such folk should go to court some day when the little children and the fathers who have beaten them are brought in. If anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath can love and forgive beyond limit it is a little child. And these children have so forgiven and so loved again the brutal men whose rage has been vented on their defenseless bodies. Yet forgiven repeatedly by these little ones, beset by the appeals of their own children's unconquerable love for them, these men have gone on beating the scarred bodies of their own offspring with obdurate cruelty. Sin can work that result and does work it in human hearts. This is the deep damnation of sin that it makes men's spirits callous until the nerves are paralyzed that once thrilled to the touch of tenderness and the appeal of reason. The state's force cannot save these men from their brutality only love can do that but it can stop the beating of the children. What do we really think Jesus would have said about it Jesus who, facing something like it, said it were better for a man, with a mill-stone round his neck, to be flung into the sea, than to offend one of these little ones?

It is true that the advance of society is marked by the progressive substitution of moral suasion for physical force: in wedlock, where men once captured wives and held them by brute strength, but now woo them instead; in parenthood, where a father's power of death over a child was once constraining and where now force is a last resort; in education, where no longer is the birch the tree of knowledge; in penology, where physical compulsion gives way before more generous treatment of the criminal everywhere the advance of social life involves the gradual displacement of brutal constraint by reasonable persuasion. But this advance of humanity will not bring us utterly past the need of force until it has eliminated more of sin than as yet has gone out of us. Any day on any street any man of us may face an exigency where sin is expressing itself in forms that far have overpassed the power of reason and gentleness immediately to handle. We must use force. The wolf has come and we must be shepherds and not hirelings.

It sometimes is maintained that even in international relations no emergency ever arises which a peaceful good will cannot meet. Writes an enthusiastic pacifist, "Suppose half of Belgium's sons who were killed in battle had died instead as unarmed martyrs resisting German progress, but not to the point of bloodshed could even the Prussian host have advanced?" To which the answer seems sufficiently obvious : of course they could have advanced, just as they swept through unresisting and now enslaved, Luxemburg; advanced, if there were any determined opposition, as the old Romans slaughtered the unresisting Jews on Sabbath days when the Jews died rather than fight. One admires those ancient Hebrews, but it is their loyalty to principle that he admires and not their intelligence. No more fallacious reading of history is possible than that which represents the peaceful peoples as safe from aggression. The fact is that there never yet has been an agricultural civilization that grew rich in prosperity and weak in power that did not become victim to some predacious military nation. The gradual substitution of moral for physical force in niternational relations is as certain as human progress, for there can be no assured human

progress without it, but mankind is not yet so free from elemental sin that any nation can count on spiritual sweetness as a safeguard against rampant greed. Even Jesus did not bless the peaceful; he blessed the peace-makers; and peacemaking in any human relationship may any day involve resort to force. When such exigencies come, no man can be sure how far the use of force may have to go. To say that we may use force up to the point of killing and not beyond is in practice often an impossible distinction. It is here that the crucial difficulty and horror of the Christian arise, alike in personal experiences where he has taken life to protect another and in the frank and brutal slaughter of a war. Only a few question the rectitude of parental compulsion or the wisdom of having our police. The difficulty comes when the use of force involves killing. Personality is for Christians the one absolute value in the world, and to push the use of force to the point where it kills seems blatant denial of all that Christians say about the worth of persons. To believe that a man is a son of God and your brother and yet to kill him in what flagrant contradiction do those two things stand !

Facing this issue some Christians, notably the Quakers, have framed their answer in uncompromising idealism. I not kill, says such a Christian. Under no circumstances, even when my own .existence is at stake, or a woman's honor or a child's life is concerned, or moral principles are involved that I confess to be of essential value to mankind, will I ever kill. In personal relations I will never so oppose evil as to run any risk of ending the physical existence of anybody, and as for war, I will have no partf in it. The nation may jail me, my friends desert me, and public opinion call me traitor, but I will not fight. The business of war is killing men, and to that business I will not consent, in it I will have no share. The enemy may be ruthless beyond reach of the immediate persuasions of reason and good will; he may burn our cities, rape our women, mutilate our children but I will not kill. Personality is sacred and my hand shall never violate it.

Thus some Christians have spoken and no one who rightly measures the con- trast between the Cross of Christ and

.screwing a bayonet into a fellow-man will lightly scorn their spirit. But this is not the only way in which a Christian may speak. I, too, count personality supremely sacred so another Christian may say but personality and physical existence are not identical. They are not identical in myself. My personality is God's most sacred trust to me ; it is the thing I am, my soul, and to gain the whole world and lose that were a poor bargain; but any day I must be ready to surrender my physical existence for another's welfare and for the ideals that make us men. What is true of me is true of others. Their personality is one thing; their physical existence is another. Any day the exigency may arise where, with no depreciation whatsoever of my estimate of personality's absolute, unrivaled worth, I may, for a woman's safety or a child's life, have to strip some man's physical existence from him, if I can, and trust God that in the world unseen his abiding personality may be recovered from his sin. Nothing is worth more than personality, but many things are worth more than physical existence, whether mine or another's, and when the race forgets* that, the days of moral grandeur are ended and the doom of heroism come. Therefore, when other measures fail, I shall not hesitate to throw my life, at any risk to my body or to his, against one who assails what should be inviolate, nor shall I ever call the Belgians iniquitous because they risked their own physical existence and the invaders' in a magnificent endeavor, in the face of perfidy, to keep their word. Bayonets do not reach as far as personality; they reach only physical existence, and the problem of personality passes far beyond an earthly battlefield. So a man may speak and be a

Christian.

If such a willingness upon a Christian's part to risk his own and others' lives in physical encounter, when rampant evil resists other cure, seems a compromise with his ideals, it is only such a compromise as is involved in all endeavor to live for ideals amid unideal conditions. War is unchristian, but so is our economic system with its terrific inequities. Our economic competition is the war perpetual that runs through all the days of so-called peace and is one of the major causes of that more obvious war that uses sword and shrapnel. No one who deeply sees the evils that our fight for wealth brings on man, with an incidence more terrible than war because it is so continuous and unrelieved, can call it Christian. >War brutalizes men? So does our economic system, ruining multitudes with hours of labor that no life can endure, under conditions that no character can sustain. War kills men? So does our economic system, resisting the expense of safer conditions of labor, blowing men up needlessly in mines, pulverizing them in unguarded machinery, poisoning them every day with deadly gases, and on our American railroads running up a death-rate that no necessity ever can excuse. War ruins childhood? So does our economic system, using up children like grist in our mills, and withstanding by every means that money can buy and legal talent can suggest all movements for their relief. There are brave and unselfish aspects to our commercial life as there are to war, and noble men are engaged in both, but no one who knows the under side of our fight for money can help knowing the ' horror of it. There is hardly a kind of agony on a modern battlefield that has not its counterpart somewhere in our economic struggle. Shall a man say, then, that because the economic system is unchristian he will have none of it? He could say that if he were in earnest about absolutely uncompromised ideals. He could sell his stocks and bonds, give up his position, refuse to buy and sell, and as a nonresistant pacifist willingly suffers any loss rather than share directly or indirectly in a war, so he could go out alone to live as a monk, free from the entanglements of an unchristian business world. But that man would be shouldering off on others the necessity of dealing with life's stern, forbidding problems and would be retreating into a spiritual vacuum to nurse his absolute ideals. Such an attitude is rank individualism and is obviously unethical. No more can we play the recluse in the face of such a war as this, content to say that fighting is unchristian and that we will have none of it. The answer to such an attitude need involve no defense of war. From the standpoint of every high ideal, war is unchristian essentially, hideously unchristian. After a look at Europe, let no man ever again speak of a Christian war! The Christian's definite and unrelenting hostility to that international paganism from which war inevitably comes, we shall deal with later. But if, in the present stage of human society, moral values are at stake which ruthless violence attacks, we cannot remain outside the critical problem thus thrust upon us as though we lived in another and a better world. We must help to meet the crisis, with all its wretched necessities, as sharers in a mutual responsibility which no one rightly may evade. To do anything else is to shoulder off on others the burden of meeting life's harsh and unideal emergencies. It may even mean that we sit safely hi the lee of the men who use massed force against massed force for righteousness' sake, not because they like to do it but because it has to be done, and that we credit what is really our ignoble individualism with being a fine service of ideals. A noted English pacifist said to the writer that in the present estate of the world he judged that England could have done nothing else in 1914 save to go to war, but that as for himself, he was a conscientious objector and would have no part hi it. He acknowledged a social necessity, in the meeting of which he refused any share. Nothing could be more immoral. For, however heartily we may hate the emergencies that the evil of the world presents, we must

stay within the problem of international entanglements, as we stay within the economic system, to play our part as best we can in the redemption of both. As a great English Christian put it : " The War presents to every creature whose country is involved in it the one great moral issue of our times and for a man to say he can do nothing in it is to vote himself out of the moral world. "

Even "conscientious objectors" rather, they especially and most of all should face this truth. As the Quakers luminously have shown, a man may be unalterably averse to fighting and yet may take more than a negative attitude toward war. Forbidden by their scruples to engage in war, how often have they stopped the mouths of their traducers by their active, sacrificial contribution to the cause for which others fought! Since they came into existence, every war waged around a moral issue has felt the weight of their support. Sometimes, as in Whittier's day, the Quaker's blazing indignation against moral wrong has fed the flames of the conflict. Sometimes, as in England now, the most hazardous enterprises that the war could furnish, like sweeping the seas for mines, have specially attracted the Quaker volunteers. In many wars their money has gone where they could not and they have outbraved the brave in deeds of mercy on the battlefield. They shouldered what part they could of the common burden; they acknowledged their share in the social emergency; they could not fight, but they revealed in ways as perilous as battle their unspoiled conviction that some things are worth fighting for. One does not need to agree with such a Quaker's program in order to honor his spirit. Today he points the only way of selfrespect for a "conscientious objector." The first business of any man whose scruples will not let him fight is to find a post of danger and sacrifice in the common cause that will save him from the deadly sin of shirking. As for the Christian who believes that when force is ruthlessly employed for wrong, it may have to be met by force employed for right, the present war must come to him with a call for service clear and undeniable. He surely cannot thrust on others the meeting of the crisis, while he escapes. He must bear his part, and in those hours when he carries up to God the sad and tangled confusion of the world's affairs, and seeks in the divine light the clue of duty through the labyrinth of conflicting rights and wrongs, he may plead America's cause in sincere and hearty prayer:

O God, bless our Country! We lament before Thee the cruel necessity of war. But what could we do? Our dead by hundreds lie beneath the sea; the liberties that our sires baptized with their blood and handed down to us in trust, so that they are not ours alone but all humanity's, are torn in shreds; and a foe is loose against us whom we have not chosen, whom we have not aggrieved, and who in his will to conquer counts solemn oaths to be but scraps of paper and the chivalry of the seas an empty name. We have grown weary, to the sickness of our souls, sitting comfortably here, while others pour their blood like water forth for those things which alone can make this earth a decent place for man to live upon. What could we do? With all the evils of our nation's life, that we acknowledge and confess with shame, we yet plead before Thee that we have not wanted war, that we hate no man, that we covet no nation's possessions, that we have nothing for ourselves to gain from war, unless it be a clear conscience and a better earth for all the nations to live and grow in. We plead before Thee that if patience and good will could have won the day, we gladly should have chosen them, and patience long since would have had her perfect work. And now we lay our hand upon our sword. Since we must draw it, O God, help us to play the man and to do our part in teaching ruthlessness once for all what it means to wake the sleeping lion of humanity's conscience.

IV

We have endeavored to do justice to the use of force as an agency in human life. The But the peril with most limitations Americans is not that they will undervalue force during these days of war; the peril is that they will be obsessed by it. In war the instruments with which men endeavor to achieve their ends are instruments of force ; and in the thought of our generation what guns and battleships and submarines and aeroplanes and the massed strength of charg-^ ing men, armed to the teeth, can do is dominant. We Christians need chiefly to be reminded of what these things cannot do; we are challenged to an unremitting emphasis upon the limitations of force, and its futility for all the higher ends of human life. War, like all use of physical compulsion, is at its best a surgical operation. By surgery you may restrain an alien growth, but surgery never cures. The positive, constructive forces of health must cure and without them surgery is a cruel failure. So war at its best can do one thing and one thing only. It can halt some external work of evil, it can blow away, as in the American Revolution, oppressive conditions that thwart free development. But that is all. Its work is all negative, eliminative. The agencies of positive health in social life are not akin to war; they are good will and friendship and cooperation. Only' these can cure any social ill and without them the work of the knife is a bitter failure.

Suppose that the dearest hopes of our military leaders were fulfilled and that Germany were conquered by force of arms until she must confess it and abide by such terms as we and our allies chose to impose, what after all would be accomplished? We could compel Germany physically to vacate violated territory; we could compel Germany to pay indemnity, we could cripple the piratical schemes of pan-Germanism such things we could do by force, and leaving it there, would thrust under the ashes of Germany's failure embers of undying hatred that in a generation would flare up again in fire. We would cure nothing. War by itself never cures anything. Mankind is fortunate if war even restrains the evil it was meant to halt and does not create new evils worse than those attacked, as surgery sometimes scatters the cancerous poison that it tries to cut away. But even when a war does the restraining work to which it sets itself, it can cure no radical social wrong or offer to humanity a single solid hope. Only good will can do that. We Christians need to say this to ourselves until it makes the circuit of our blood and comes back to our hearts again. The knife of the surgeon is cutting in; can we supply the constructive forces of social health to make the operation worth while?

We need to say this to ourselves emphatically because whatever may be the fine ideals with which a nation enters war, as President Wilson phrased them for us in his noble message, hate thrives in war-time like germs in a congenial medium. We have heard much about the cult of hatred in Germany; we have cringed at Lissauer's "Hymn of Hate" against England. But such a spirit is not peculiarly indigenous in Germany. Here is Henri de Regnier's song of hate from France:

"I swear to cherish in my heart this hate Till my last heart-throb wanes; So may the sacred venom of my blood Mingle and charge my veins! May there pass never from my darkened brow The furrows hate has worn! May they plough deeper in my flesh, to mark The outrage I have borne! By towns in flames, by my fair fields laid waste, By hostages undone, By cries of murdered women and of babes, By each dead warrior son, . . .

I take my oath of hatred and of wrath Before God, and before The holy waters of the Marne and Aisne, Still ruddy with French gore; And fix my eyes upon immortal Rheims, Burning from nave to porch, Lest I forget, lest I forget who lit The sacrilegious torch!"

One quotes this not chiefly to condemn it, but to note how natural it is, how spontaneously it rises from the mood that war creates, how certainly we shall be tempted to it in America. Whatever conceivable good this war might possibly do will be undone by such a spirit. If that mood prevails, and in the settlement of the war is dominant, then the war is all sheer waste, a mad expenditure of blood and tears and treasure, with nothing to show for it save graves and poverty and broken hearts and bitter rancor and a world grown worse, not better. For our own sakes and for the world's sake, though we fight we must not hate. We are Christians. We know when we think of it that had we been born in Germany, there is not one chance in a million that we would be doing other than the Germans do. We know that had we been the inheritors of the Prussian tradition, the pupils from early childhood of the Prussian instruction, and the instinctive patriots that all good men are, we should be thinking what the Germans think today. Underneath they are not different men and women from ourselves, and they can no more be conquered in the inner citadel of their hearts by force alone than could we. We never really surrender to anything but good will. Neither will they. Force is evidently the necessary prelude to that capitulation. There is no hope for the world with an autocratic, military Germany triumphant. We must win thejwar^ But we must keep ourselves unembittered; we must fight all bitter policies in our government; our good will must be unwearying and strong. We must be as ready to forgive as is God. And in those secret hours when we carry the tragedy of this war before the throne of God we must pray for more than our country; we must pray for our enemies;

O God, bless Germany! At war with her people, we hate them not at all, and underneath the cruel divisions that force on us this sorry business of mutual destruction we acknowledge before Thee those underlying unities that yet will be there and will be beautiful when war is over. Our enemies, too, are sons of God and brothers for whose sake Christ died. We acknowledge before Thee our part in the world's iniquity that rolls this burden on Thy heart and crucifies the Son of God afresh. . We dare not stand in Thy sight and accuse Germany as though she alone were guilty of our international disgrace. We all are guilty. We confess with shame that the present horror is the natural fruit of sins in which we all have shared. We beseech Thee against those things in Germany and in us that make war possible. And especially we lift up our prayer for every good impulse in every German heart, for all misgivings among Germany's people that cast doubt upon the policies of f rightfulness and terror, for all the forces of a forward-looking democracy within her, and for every German Christian on his knees who is asking Thee for the dawn of peace and brotherhood. Save to the great service of the world, we beseech Thee, the wonderful qualities of the people whom we fight; let them not perish from the earth, burned in retributory fire. We need their strength to be our admiration and our help, as it now is our despair. O God, bring us all, Thy wayward people, to such a penitence and shame at having made Thy world by sin so sad a place, that we may learn brotherhood with that same diligence which now we give to war.

It is no counsel of perfection to urge such an attitude. This never can be an impossible ideal to reach, even in war, while we have before us the admirable words of Edith Cavell, as she went out to execution: "I see now that patriotism is not enough. I must die without hatred or bitterness toward anyone."

Especially should those who go to the front with the army purge their spirits of all hate. We are constantly reminded that war brutalizes men; but we often forget that that depends on the man. The reactions of soldiers to the influences of war are as diverse as the response of people

everywhere to life’s less strenuous appeals. Some are ruined by war and some are redeemed by it to a purity of devotion and a wealth of sacrificial spirit they have never known before. Some are besmirched by war and some are cleansed by it, consecrating their bodies to chastity for service’s sake. The elders among us who saw the conflict between the states, say that some men went into the Civil War and came out beasts. But some came back from the sights of suffering and deeds of horror and sacrifices of surpassing heroism more tender and beautiful of spirit and rich in sympathetic humanity than they had ever been before. A brave and radiant friend of the writer, suffering the tragic consequences of infantile paralysis, was addressed in sympathy by an acquaintance who said, "Affliction does so color the life/’ "Yes," was the swift answer, "and I propose to choose the color." That such an attitude is possible toward war by those who are in the thick of its abominations is plain enough from the testimony of these recent years. Donald Hankey is dead now but he has left an imperishable witness from the midst of the battlefield : "I have seen with the eyes of God. I have seen the naked souls of men, stripped of circumstance. Rank and reputation, wealth and poverty, knowledge and ignorance, manners and uncouthness, these I saw not. I saw the naked souls of men. I saw who were slaves and who were free: who were beasts and who were men: who were contemptible and who honorable. I have seen with the eyes of God. I have seen the vanity of the temporal and the glory of the eternal. I have despised comfort and honored pain. I have understood the victory of the Cross. O Death, where is thy sting? Nunc dimittis, Domine. "

Christians are challenged by this war not only to a recognition of the limitations The case of force and to a spirit against of unconquerable good will, but to a ceaseless attack upon the whole system of unchristian international relationships of which war is a natural expression. There is one marked difference between the sudden crisis which calls upon a man to attack a ruffian in the street, and the crisis which issues in war. We have not specially prepared for the former. We have not taken it for granted, expected it, armed for it, and assiduously planned for years to meet it. But in international relationships we count war an integral part of our system. We assume it as an event to be expected, and the nations arm themselves against each other and train themselves to slay each other, reckless of expense, as though war and international relations were inseparable. We scheme with mutual distrust in secret diplomacy, make compacts and leagues to each other’s hurt, and act in every way as though a condition of international suspicion, envy, and latent hostility were the normal state of the world. Of course war comes. We shall as easily get peace out of the present, dominant idea of international affairs as we shall get figs from thistles. Christian people are challenged to a definite and unending assault upon this immoral and needless paganism.

Some are still so wedded to the present idea of international relationships that they find even the worst issue of them, war, not only unobjectionable but positively desirable. They still talk of the glory of war. The writer once heard a learned judge, justly famed for legal talent and literary genius, declare that a country needed a war about once in thirty years. As well call in the floods of the Mississippi because incidentally they leave more fertile soil; as well call in the San Francisco fire because it showed the pluck of a brave people and made the building of a greater city possible. There are better ways of accomplishing such results than by disasters. Fire and flood are not glorious; all the glory is in the spirit of mankind which is made of stuff too splendid not to show its mettle even in the worst calamities. And war is not glorious, though oftentimes in war men are.

One who knows what really is happenbig on European battlefields today and calls war glorious is morally unsound. Says an eye-witness: "Last night, at an officers' mess there was great laughter at the story of one of our men who had spent his last cartridge in defending an attack. 'Hand me down your spade, Mike,' he said; and as six Germans came one by one round the end of a traverse, he split each man's skull open with a deadly blow." That is war. Says a Young Men's Christian Association secretary: "Many times these fingers have reached through the skulls of wounded men and felt their throbbing brains." That is war. An officer's letter from the front reads:

"An enemy mine exploded here a few days ago and buried our brigade. Many of the men were killed, but some were not much hurt; so we dug them out and used them over again."

Sons of God and brothers of Jesus Christ "dug them out and used them over again"! That is war. Said a group of German prisoners, as they bared their gashed forearms, "We were dying with thirst, we had our choice of doing what some men do in such a case drink the blood of an enemy, or else drink our own. We are Christians: so we cut our own arms to get drink." That is war. War is not the gay color, the rhythmic movement, the thrilling music of the military parade. War is not even killing gallantly as knights once did, matched evenly in armor and in steed and fighting by the rules of chivalry. War now is dropping bombs from aeroplanes and killing women and children in their beds; it is shooting, by telephonic orders, at an unseen place miles away and slaughtering invisible men; it is murdering innocent travelers on merchant ships with torpedoes from unknown submarines ; it is launching clouds of poisoned gas and slaying men with their own breath. War means lying days and nights wounded and alone in NoMan's Land; it means men with jaws gone, eyes gone, limbs gone, minds gone; it means countless bodies of boys tossed into the incinerators that follow in the train of every battle; it means prison camps vicious with the inevitable results of enforced idleness; it means untended wounds and gangrene and the long time it takes to die; it means mothers who look for letters they will never see and wives who wait for voices they will never hear and children who listen for footsteps that will never come. That is war "Its heroisms are but the glancing sunlight on a sea of blood and tears" and a man who calls it glorious is mad. And through all these physical horrors runs a horror more appalling still, the persistent debauching and brutalizing of men's souls. One who uses his knowledge and his imagination to perceive in its abominations what war really is, while he might never dream of using Walt Whitman's language, finds it hard to be sorry that the language has been used: "Wars are hellish business all wars. . . . Any honest man says so hates war, fighting, blood-letting. I was in the midst of it all saw war where war was worst not on the battlefields, no in the hospitals: there war is worst: there I mixed with it, and now I say God damn the wars all wars: God damn every war: Goddamn 'em ! God damn 'em ! ' ' The last stand of those who still cling to the old illusion that there is something glorious about war is on the claim that war awakens the heroic qualities in men. To such an indictment as we just have brought against war, a very plausible counter is quite possible. Where is it that the ministers of Christ, so the retort might run, look for their finest illustrations of loyalty and courage and sacrifice? When most they wish to inspire that devotion to moral causes on which the welfare of the world depends, where instinctively do they look for allusions to grip the heart? To war. And what hymns do they sing? "Onward, Christian soldiers,^arching_as_to^ar''; "The Son of GocTgoes forth to war"; "Soldiers of Christ arise, and gird your armor on." War so inglorious and horrible as you depict? Then why is it the foundation of some of the finest chapters in Scripture, some of the most inspiring hymns, and many of the most appealing passages in preaching? This question is

worth asking and worth answering. The defendants of militarism often catch Christian ears with this appeal. Bernhardi's appalling book, stating the purpose of the German war-party, says that war is Christian because it encourages obedience, devotion, and selfsacrifice. And he is right in saying that war uses these noble qualities in men. Today deeds of heroism are being performed upon the battlefields that, when the war is over, will be recalled and cherished as spiritual treasures for the race's memory. The Prussian ensign who, fatally wounded, gathered the flag he carried to his breast, that falling in death upon it he might hide it from the capture of the enemy, presents what a picture of devotion! Or the French commander, calling for a volunteer for a fatal mission, who saw his own son step out, for an instant looked at him with blanched face, and then sent him forth never to return where shall one seek for more absolute loyalty? Bernhardi is right in this: the record of war is full of deeds whose nobility the race never can forget. This fact, however, as Bernhardi and many a milder advocate of militaristic glory do not see, is the basis for the most scathing charge against war. Shall not a man of Christian insight say this in answer? O war, I hate you most of all because you lay your hands upon the finest qualities in human life, qualities that rightly used would make a heaven on earth, and you use them to make a hell on earth instead. You take our spirit of courage and devotion, and instead of letting it be a benediction in the world, you use it to burn cities and sack cathedrals and slay men. , You take our loyalty that well used would redeem the world, and you harness it to a movement that inevitably means the rape of women, the murder of children, and the starvation of whole populations. You take our religion, and to help your deadly work you rend our God in pieces and make of him a score of tribal deities to whom men pray, as old barbarians, before our Lord had come, prayed to their idols as the gods of war. You take our science, the fruit of our dedicated intelligence, and you make even of that an effective minister of hate, so that while Napoleon in his wide experience never saw a battle-line over fifteen miles long, we have battlelines 500 miles long, and death falls from the sky and bursts from the earth and hurtles from unseen ambuscades twenty miles away. This is the deepest charge against you, that you take our noblest powers and prostitute them to destructive ends.

How can Christian people fail to see that they are challenged to a tireless fight against the system of international relationships that makes this gross abuse of noble powers a possibility? Men are glorious in war. After a charge a wounded American, who was fighting with the troops in France, exclaimed: "We went over the parapet at five o'clock and I was not hit till nine. They were the greatest four hours of my life." Where was the glory there? In war? No, in the spirit of the man and that spirit is no specialty of war. Captain Scott had it when he crossed the Antarctic continent; Judson had it when he invaded Burma for Christ; Garrison had it when he launched the campaign for abolition. It is the spirit of adventure, loyalty, self-sacrifice, and scorn of danger. The most enheartening revelation of the war is the clear evidence it gives of how widespread in ordinary people these elemental qualities of manhood are. Clerks, ploughmen, bankers, day-laborers from the streets; lawyers, physicians, ministers from their professions what prodigies of heroism are they all performing! "Look at those millions of men," a recent writer cries, "every man with his back to his home and his face toward his flag, and meditate on the incredible, immeasurable, unimaginable power of patriotism!" But having a human nature to deal with that has such powers of devotion, cooperation, and tireless energy within it, this is the most colossal crime that the race can commit, to use these splendid qualities for slaughter. What a world could be made here, if they were harnessed to a better cause! Is there anything impossible to a race with powers like these?

There are many who seriously think that it is impossible to do away with war and the conditions that produce it. They do not call war glorious, but they do call it necessary. They have no faith that humanity can put its bayonets and cannon in the museums where they belong with racks and thumbscrews and the shackles of the slave. And one reason for this skepticism is that Christian people have presented as the cure for international hostilities panaceas so pitiably inadequate that no one who knows the problem could believe in them. We never can cleanse the huge Augean stables of our world-wide armaments and wars by gathering a band of people who will persuade some other people never, under any circumstances, in the face of atrocities however great, to fight. The task before us is too gigantic to be handled by such means. Neither can we greatly help the situation by fervid campaigns for unpreparedness, urging individual nations to disarm. Such negative movements for disarmament are bankrupt. Their failure is not due to any untruth in their main contention that to be prepared for war is to invite war. The old illusion that a great military establishment is an insurance against war has been finally dissipated, let us hope, by the present cataclysm. Large armaments are a certain road to war, and militarism, posing as the angel of peace, is the most feckless and muddle-headed sham in history. The nations, however, even if they know for certain that armaments mean war, will not individually disarm. In the early days of our Western frontiers men carried six-shooters and were quick on the trigger, not because they were bad men. They were the same men they had been before, unarmed and peaceable in Eastern towns. But they were afraid. In the wild, anarchic life of the frontier there was no social order to guarantee a peaceful man his life and liberty. No community was organized that represented the force of all at the disposal of all for the good of all. How useless to argue with individual men in such a situation, that carrying guns encouraged fighting and that therefore each man should throw his gun away! They may not doubt the abstract proposition, but they keep their guns. They are afraid. Only one measure ever made them disarm. The communal life was organized and the forceful protection of life and liberty was delegated to a social order that policed the towns. Fear was removed, and the arms which once seemed indispensable became a needless burden, an anachronism. No other hopeful road lies open before the nations. We keep armed because we are afraid. Perhaps that fear is our disgrace, our moral failure to trust the spiritual powers of friendship and good will; but when we so begin to think and are almost ready to repent of dreadnoughts and regiments, Austria strikes Serbia, Germany devastates Belgium, and all the ancient fears come back again. There is only one road out. We must have a a federation of the world. No other solution is great enough to deal with our critical need. The nations today are living on the wild, anarchic frontiers of history, carrying their guns in mutual fear, because there is no league of nations to police the world. The forces of good will and brotherhood that are latent in mankind have no fair opportunity to do their saving work. They are stifled by the apparent necessity of armed distrust. No urgent appeals to the nations one by one to lay aside their armaments will meet with favorable response. No negative proposal of any kind can solve the problem of our divided world. The only solution of international discord is internationalism. Wherever force is needed, the force of all must be put at the disposal of all for the good of all. Does this federation of the nations seem an impossible ideal? But already a concrete proposition that has for its vouchers the leading statesmen of the world is framed and offered for our support. To the principles of the "League to Enforce Peace" President Wilson has given his assent; and ex-President Taft, Premier Lloyd George, ex-Premier Asquith, Mr. Balfour, Lord Grey, Viscount Bryce, and Premier Briand have promised their support. 1

Such a massing of international influence around an endeavor after worldwide cooperation for the good of mankind has never been known before. No one supposes that the task is a light one. Was it easy even to form a federation of our American states? No one supposes that he can foresee the details of the plan, the steps which one by one across years and

1 Lloyd George said in a Guildhall speech: "The peace and security for peace will be that the nations will band themselves together to punish the first peace breaker who comes out." Said President Wilson in an address to the Senate: "In every discussion of the peace that must end this war, it is taken for granted that that peace must be followed by some definite concert of power, which will make it virtually impossible that any such catastrophe should ever overwhelm us again. Every lover of mankind, every sane and thoughtful man, must take that for granted." centuries will lead to the goal. But this federation of the world not only can be achieved; it must be. All the forces of man's economic and moral life demand that it be done. Better far to live in isolation, each nation behind its Chinese wall, than to come out into our new worldwide intimacies and then not learn the secret of mankind's larger unity that alone can bring peace instead of war. And to this unwearying conflict against our present international paganism in favor of this federation of the world, the Christian people supremely are challenged. In one essential part of this campaign, the innermost and preeminently essential part of it, the Christian people have unique responsibilities. Behind and around all forms of organization which our statesmen may devise for international cooperation, there must be developed in all the people the international mind. Once men of clannish tradition found it hard to think in tribal terms; then men of tribal mold strained their minds to national dimensions; and now we with our national sectarianisms find it difficult to think ourselves citizens of the world. No scheme of universal policy that statecraft can devise will work until the people are internationalists in their thoughts. And Christianity is challenged by its Master to give to men that horizon to their loyalties, that Fatherland for their sacrifice. If this seems a platitude, it is one of those platitudes^ whose most obvious applications have not yet been even dimly seen by multitudes of Christians. In 1860 a man in Maryland said, "I am firstly a citizen of Hartford County; secondly a citizen of Maryland; thirdly a citizen of the United States." How amazingly provincial such words sound a generation after! One wonders if this man was a member of a Christian church, a believer in the Christian creed, a pray-er to the Christian God. And then he sees how many churchmen still are like him no disciples of Jesus in any deep, intelligent sense. For the Christian's citizenship must always begin at the other end from Hartford County; he is firstly a citizen of the Kingdom of God on earth, a patriot for mankind. A Christianity that is not international has never known its Master. No fine loyalties hi human life, however sacred and essential they may be, are ever ruined, they are glorified by being subjugated to a larger spiritual unity. Jesus did not hurt the family when he said a man should hate his father and mother, his wife and children, if they stood athwart the Kingdom's triumph in the world; he made the family. Family life in Christendom has grown beautiful just because it has been subjugated to a spiritual idea and made a moral, not simply a natural relationship. Nationalism will not be hurt by being overpassed in international concord and cooperation. Rather, this alone can ever make nationalism great, can cleanse it from its ignoble strifes and mean ambitions, and can wash patriotism pure from hatred and malignity. As things stand now, patriotism is half curse, half blessing. It runs to chauvinism and sinister designs on other's goods as readily as it does to noble sacrifice. It issues in slaughter as easily as it does in service. Only one thing can save nationalism from .its., perversions and that is internationalism. Patriotism rteeds to be mastereoTby a greater unity before it ever can be really

great itself. If it is to mean unqualified blessing to the earth a generous rivalry in service and not a malign consecration of selfishness under a holy name patriotism must surrender its primacy to a world-wide loyalty, wrought into the habitual thinking of the people and expressed in agencies of international cooperation and goodwill. To work this inward transfiguration of man's thinking, which alone can give effectiveness to the outward devices of our statesmen, is the task of religion. Nothing but religion is adequate to the task. The words of Dr. Charles E. Jefferson ought to be nailed to the doorposts of every Christian's memory: *

"Science cannot kill war, for science has not the new heart, and whets the sword to a sharper edge. Commerce cannot kill war, for commerce lacks the new heart, and lifts the hunger of covetousness to a higher pitch. Progress cannot kill war, for progress has no heart at all, and progress in wrong directions leads us into bottomless quagmires in which we are swallowed up. Law cannot kill war, for law is nothing but a willow withe tied round the arms of humanity, and human nature when aroused snaps all the withes asunder and carries off the gates of Gaza. Education cannot end war, and if by education you mean the sharpening of the intellect, the drawing out of the powers of the mind, the mastering of formulas and laws and dates and facts, education may only fit men to become tenfold more masterful in the awful art of slaughter. Who will end war? The world has had 1<4 What the War is Teaching," pp. 198-199. three historic scourges : famine, pestilence and war. Each one numbers its victims by the tens of millions. Commerce killed famine. By her railroads and steamships she killed it. It lies like a dead snake by the side of the road along which humanity has marched up to the present day. Science killed pestilence. The Black Plague, the Bubonic Plague, Cholera, Smallpox, Yellow Fever all have received their deathblow. Science did the work. These foes of mankind lie bleeding and half dead by the side of the road along which the world presses on to a higher day. Who will kill war? Not Commerce and not Science, nor both of them together. Only Religion Withoutjreligion we are withottt-hepe4i this world. Without God we ...are lost, "

VI

If religion has such a part to play in the program of internationalism, we, as The challenge Christians, are challenged to the to a searching examina- tion of our faith and works, and to a fresh devotion to our cause. One of the wisest and most picturesque explications of the present crisis is attributed to Bergson, the French philosopher. He says, in effect, that the chief work of science has been to enjarge man's body. Telescopes and microscopes have increased the power of our eyes; telephones have stretched our hearing to some three thousand miles; telegraphs have made our voices sound around the earth; locomotives and steamship lines, better than seven-league boots of ancient fable, have multiplied the speed and power of our feet; and French big guns have elongated the blows of our fists from two feet to twenty -five miles. Man never had such a body since the world began. The age of the giants was nothing compared with this. But man's soul there the failure lies. We have not grown spirits great enough to handle our greatened bodies. The splendid new powers which science furnishes are still in the hands of the old sins greed, selfish ambition, cruelty. The innermost necessity of mankind is a spiritual life adequate to handle our new acquisitions. Some things we can do without, but one thing, in this war, has grown obviously indispensable. We must have a new access of moral vision and power or we are utterly undone. As a thoughtful^hristiaii stands before this^challenge heTmust repent, for himself and for the churches, the lamentable inadequacy of our organized religion to meet the crucial need. Were

it not for such institutions as the Young Men's and the Young Women's Christian Associations, and the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ, we should have to cover our faces in confusion. This .war will fail of one of its most beneficent results if it does not drive the sense of shame into the Christian churches with a poignancy that no excuses can palliate. In the presence of a gigantic task, calling for a federated Church, we stand a split, dissevered Sock of churches. In the presence of abysmal need, demanding a great religion of comprehensive faith and devoted social spirit, we stand how often! tithing "mint and anise and cummin,' 5 ' and neglecting "the weightier matters of the law." We are challenged by this war to a renovation of our popular Christianity, to a deep and unrelenting detestation of the little bigotries, the needless divisions, the petty obscurantisms that so deeply curse our churches, to a new experience and a more intelligent expression of vital fellowship with God. Unless we can answer that challenge, there is small use in our trying to answer any other. We must have a great religion to meet a great need. The saddest aspect of Christian history is the misrepresentation of Christ and the spoiling of his influence, not by irreligious men but by the official exponents of religion. The belittling of religion by its devotees is the most tragic narrative of Christendom. The unhappy story began with the Master's earthly ministry. As he emerged among a people where the minute disputes of rabbis were so large a part of piety, how great in contrast was religion as it appeared to him! It meant to him an inward fellowship with God so close that to tell where he left off and God began is like discerning the air's fragrance from the sunlight on a radiant day. It meant to him a thought of God that sent him out to the help of men with a love no sin could turn aside and no ingratitude could quench, and with a hope that shone for him on desperate days like a beacon from below the line of the horizon, advertising from afar that the haven was at hand. And after all these centuries, with what an ample sweep do the truths move that his religion meant to him! The Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the friendship of the Spirit, the inexorableness of moral law, the supremacy of the Cross, the campaign for the Kingdom, the life eternal what weight and range must the words have that try to tell what his faith meant to him! And coming so to men, with his great religion, what opposition did the Master meet that most perplexed and disconcerted him? He faced bad men like the Prodigal, but with a love and hopefulness that never failed and never were dismayed. He found selfish men, like Zacchseus, but he refused to let their meanness blind his eyes to their possibilities. But another type of men he met, that he could not understand and against whose obdurate life his spirit spent itself in vain. These were the religious men who discussed whether it was the will of God that men eat eggs which had been laid on the Sabbath Day; and one school said it was and another said it wasn't. These were the religious men who by a ritual word escaped their moral obligations to their parents or stood in the temple thanking God that they had fasted twice a week. Only one type of man, our Master, with all the wide ranges of his pity and compassion, could not understand the religious man who belittled religion into technicalities and reduced the service of the living God from ethics to etiquette. How the Master's spirit chafed against these! "Ye blind guides," he said, and there was agony in the cry, "that strain out the gnat and swallow the camel!" A thoughtful Christian cannot fail to see that when our Lord comes now to us, in the crisis of this terrific war, he finds us too, with our petty emphasis on the technicalities of sectarian religion, poorly prepared to understand the spiritual greatness of his message, unready to interpret it to a world, whose footsteps, lacking it, have manifestly taken hold on ruin. Many a man among us, reared in some special sect, as he now recalls the preaching that he has heard remembers how much of it concerned the minutiae of the sect. At tunes he almost was

constrained to think that only where he stood was holy ground, and he alone with his few fellow-devotees elect of God. So Ruskin tells us that he gave up his evangelical faith because a sermon that he heard at Turin was the last straw: "A little squeaking idiot," Ruskin writes, "was preaching to an audience of seventeen old women and three louts that they were the only children of God in Turin; and that all the people outside the chapel and that all the people in the world out of sight of Monte Viso, would be damned." But as our Christian grew he saw how certainly religion was greater than his sect. The very hymnals unconsciously advertised the fact. For even in his little church, he sang with a Methodist, "Jesus, Lover of my soul," and with an Episcopalian, "Rock of ages, cleft for me," and with a Congregationalist, "I love Thy Kingdom, Lord, " and with a Presbyterian, "Jesus and shall it ever be, a mortal man ashamed of Thee, " and with a Unitarian, "In the cross of Christ I glory," and with a Roman Catholic, "Lead, Kindly Light," and with a Baptist, "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love."

Surely religion was greater than his sect. Still when he thought of folks, not Christians, who never had heard of Christ, unnumbered millions far and wide around the world, the majority of the children of God, he grouped them under one word "heathen." v Then some things that the heathen did began to disturb his soft complacency. He found that some heathen in India pray like this: "O Lord From the unreal lead me to the real, From darkness lead me to light, From death lead me to immortality."

He found that some heathen hi China pray like this:

"Spirits and men rejoice together, praising God the Lord. What limit, what measure can there be, while we celebrate his great name? Forever he setteth fast the high heavens and shapeth the solid earth. His government is everlasting. His poor servant, I bow my head and lay it in the dust bathed in his grace and glory."

If our Christian was wise, he did not from this conclude that all religions are equally true and good. A man may not here abdicate the first work of intellect, which is discrimination. Buddhism, Confucianism, and Christianity represent quite distinct philosophies of the spiritual life and can no more be equally true than can contrasting hypotheses in science. But with the outward sweep of his horizons he did begin to see how much greater a thing religion is than he had used to think, how deep its fountains lie in human souls, how unescapable is the spirit’s thirst, like the homing instinct of the bird, for the God from whom it comes. He did begin to see that as love is in human life, so is religion; that in forms low or high all men know them both; that low they curse men, and high, bless them with ineffable benediction. And in hourfe of vision when he saw it so, and heard the deep in man calling out for the deep in the Eternal, it seemed to him that he was coming close to the heart of Christ, close to the springs of his exhaustless passion to reveal the living God, without whom man cannot be really man. When one in such a spirit comes to the religious world today to work in it and through it, a jargon pitched in an alien key astonishes his ears. "You cannot sit at my communion table," one sect is saying; "Nor you at mine," another cries. "Your rituals are inexact, your ordinances are incorrectly understood." He sees strange sights in 1890, 137 different kinds of Christians in the United States, now 165. And if he listens from within, what bickering over details of polity, what petty pressing of legalistic texts, what endless splits twixt Tweedledee and Tweedledum as though our Lord would not once more, if he were here, wither with blistering scorn such rabbinical belittling of the faith! Are these times that seem to call for such minute finesse? As

one thinks of the world today, shaken in an earthquake that brings clattering down about our ears the dearest dreams our hearts have cherished, it does seem that religion should grow great to meet her crisis and opportunity, and casting aside the littleness that in calmer days might find excuse, ought to speak great words about God and the Kingdom, lest men's hearts turn to water in them and their strength be gone. This is the challenge of the present crisis to the Christians. The New Testament does not say that "Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess" that our church or our theology alone is true. The New Testament says that "Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." If we were large enough so to interpret him that men could see him as he is, unperverted by our littleness, they soon would understand his claim to spiritual mastery. "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name"; "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy strength and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself"; "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another"; "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" is there anything local or provincial about words like those? Are they not as broad, as deep, as high as human need? And are not his disciples challenged to labor unceasingly for such a generous freedom of opinion on details, such a dominant emphasis on the central message of the Gospel, and such a fraternal federation of the churches for united work, as will make the need of the world the opportunity of Christ to come to his own? The practical need of this is made vivid in an unexampled way by the world's disaster. The nations are forever striving to avoid war when it is too late; they try to dam the stream after the spring freshet has begun. The only way to guard against war, so far as war arises from the embittered passions of the people, is by constructive campaigns of good will, launched long before the first rumbling of a coming conflict. What now is our surest reliance in America against any unresolvable misunderstanding with China? It lies in the $10,000,000 which out of sheer good will our government returned to China when the Boxer indemnity was paid. Hundreds of Chinese students supported by the interest of that fund are studying in America now, and in every intelligent Chinese mind there is a settled predisposition to trust America.

We have just adopted a gigantic budget of $7,000,000,000 for the purposes of war. How magnificent and how pathetic! Consider what a very little of that prodigious sum would do if, instead of being voted after war begins, it were appropriated before war was thought of for such international service as the Boxer Indemnity Fund is furnishing. Utopian? On the contrary the most sane and economical statesmanship ! To spend billions for the means of slaughter when millions previously expended in good will for service would often make the means of slaughter needless, is folly so supreme as almost to justify the saying that soldiers often fight, not for their country but for some blockhead of a diplomat. The cost of that folly we loyally will pay, and our children after us will be paying it for generations; but, as Christians, we may not be silent about the folly itself nor cease our unwearying antagonism to it. So few tunes in history has any nation done what America did for China, and so overwhelming is the response to such simple friendliness that the nations cannot permanently be blind to the good sense, as well as the ethical nobility, of such a course. The extreme pacifists insist that there is no situation which kindness cannot handle. They are wrong if they mean that kindness can begin at any time, appealing to the Prussians, for example, after the assault on Belgium has been started. But they are right if they mean that kindness begun soon enough and practiced long enough hi the end will prove omnipotent. We yet shall learn that the best armament of any people is the friendship of the world, won by constructive good will. The

application of this truth to the churches' missionary program is manifest. The cause of missions has too often been presented in its significance for individuals alone; it has been pictured only as the snatching of souls one by one from ruin. But this crisis in the world's life challenges us to balance our view of missions with a more social concept of their meaning. The missionary enterprise is the Christian campaign for international good will. We must see that it is so and must handle it as though it were so. What the nations, through their governments, will slowly learn to do, loath to leave old precedents, bound by the sectarian narrowness of national loyalties, Christians must do now, and do with a lavish generosity that they have not practiced hitherto.

We are told that some day we shall have war with Mexico. How much our own fault it will be if such a lamentable conflict comes ! What Mexico needs is an invasion of school teachers and social workers and Christian preachers, who have caught the idea of missions in their international relationships; and if such an invasion is not forthcoming, a military invasion may indeed be necessary. One suspects hi many a case like this that we have our choice. We are continually reminded of clashing interests that some day will embroil us with Japan. Even the present war could hardly be a more grievous catastrophe than that. And short of some league of nations which may offer means of mediation and settlement not today existent the surest hope of avoiding conflict, of forestalling war by friendship, is an energetic campaign of good will now. If the Christians of America do not want war with Japan* they need not have it. Japan is not mad enough to want war with America. Only we must begin now, under the leadership of Christian missionaries and statesmen like Dr. John R. Mott and Dr. Sidney Gulick, a determined movement within our country against our needlessly insulting legislation, when Orientals are concerned, and we must organize such expressions of good will through our missionary agencies that, if possible, we may create a predisposition in the Japanese people to believe the best of us and not the worst. The missionary enterprise at its very heart is the impulse to share our finest, and if the finest in America and the finest in Japan were thoroughly known to each other, the chances of collision would be minimized to vanishing. Such a ministry of mutual interpretation and reconciliation is committed to the churches. The present war is an appalling commentary upon our failure to fulfil or even to acknowledge our obligations. We have seen our duty in too little terms; we have but dimly understood what the Master wanted of us. We are challenged to understand it now; the call is written in lines of fire on the map of the world; and we shall be renegade, indeed, if we do not now accept before it is too late the opportunity for international service which this war reveals.

Such is the challenge of the present crisis. We have talked of it as though its appeal were directed to the nations and the churches. But we shall not deal fairly with the world's appalling need if we fail as individuals to hear the call it sounds for each of us. A writer in the Atlantic, to whom Good Friday, 1917, with its sacred memories and its imminent entrance of America into the war, came with overwhelming solemnity, has issued a call that no one can honorably deny: "The greatness of the whole nation is so inextricably bound up with its individuals that I beg again each one of you now to say to himself or herself, 'This means me. It means me and my life, my best self, my highest ideals, if the magnificent opportunities of the times are to be realized. ' ' There may have been other days when selfishness could find excuse in the smooth ease of the nation's, prosperity, but the last shred of such excuse has been torn now from every selfish undedicated life. An American visitor at the French front was allowed a three hours' conference with Marshal Joffre. He has said, in the writer's presence, that the most impressive incident of the conversation came

when the Marshal drew from an inner pocket a well-worn letter, written by a French mother to her son in Canada, and, with unsteady voice, read this:

"Mr DEAR BOY:

"You will be grieved to learn that your two brothers have been killed. Their country needed them and they gave everything they had to save her. Your country needs you, and while I am not going to suggest that you return to fight for France, if you do not return at once, never come.'

Multitudes are living in that spirit today. He must have a callous soul who can pass through times like these and not hear a voice, whose call a manjnustjyi: swer, or else lose hisjsojiiL Yourcountry needs you._ The Kingdom of _ God. on, earth needs you, The Cause of Christ is hard bestead and righteousness is having a heavy battle in the earth they need you.

S. The Second Mile

The Second Mile HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK Whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile, go with him two GROSSET & DUNLAP Publishers: New York By arrangement with Association Press

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BOX

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THEN lago says about Desdemona that "she holds it a vice in her goodness not to do more than is requested," he lays his discriminating finger on a trait of character not ordinarily worked up in the systems of ethics. Nowhere does he better justify his own comment on himself, "I am nothing if not critical." And it is precisely this trait of character on which lago with his devilish ingenuity lighted for his evil purpose, that Jesus made the crown of the moral life. The distinctively Christian quality is to hold it a vice in our goodness not to do more than is requested.

Indeed, when it comes down to doing the bare stint of requirement, and nothing more, Jesus calls that "unprofitable." When he describes the servants who, after their day’s work in the field, wait upon their lord at supper, he takes obvious satisfaction in the paradox that, though they have fulfilled their obligations from plowing in the morning to serving at night, they deserve no thanks at all. Lest his disciples should doubt the application, he says distinctly and peremptorily, " Even so ye also, when ye shall have done all the things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which it was our duty to do. " Not until a man’s willingness overflows his obligation, so that what he has to do is seen as a segment in the circle of what he would be willing to do, does he become what Jesus would call profitable nor even what Shakespeare would count worthy a character like Desdemona.

Now, when the Sermon on the Mount faces us with those strict and startling injunctions to give coat and cloak when a coat is wanted, or to take two blows when one is offered, or to travel two miles when but one is compulsory injunctions that are either stark nonsense or supernally divine sense we are manifestly dealing with a dramatic presentation of this favorite and characteristic truth of Jesus, that only an unstinted willingness to do more than anyone can ask makes possible a liberal and Christian character. To be sure, he stated his truth in an austere and formidable way. His figures of speech startle us with their severe requirements, and to those who first heard them they must have been bewildering in their difficulty. When Jesus said, "Whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile, go with him. two," a concrete picture rose before his Jewish audience, a hateful picture of a Roman soldier, under the sanction of his military law, compelling a Jew to the defiling business of carrying his burden for a mile. To hear this new Rabbi say that under such compulsion a Jew should be willing to go two must have clashed with the Jewish temper, as it would with the American. This sounded like gratuitous surrender of a man’s just rights. This looked like generosity gone to seed. And any hearer, knowing the history of that Roman word "angario,"

whose Aramaic equivalent Jesus doubtless used when he said "compel," must have found acquiescence in Jesus command even more unreasonable. As though it were the badge of tyranny, that word had been handed down by the Persian Empire to the Greek, and by the Greek to the Roman, and from the beginning it had stood for military power to impress into unwilling service all men or horses whose help the soldiery de sired. The word was saturated with the hatefulness of age-long tyranny. The unrelenting visages of Persian satraps, Greek governors, and Roman generals were conjured up by its ominous sound, and Jesus injunction to superabundant willingness was made by its use to seem impossibly difficult.

Nevertheless, the aptitude of the principle to our experience is obvious at least in this regard, that while the old military empires long since have gone and Roman soldiers no longer draft into grudging service, compulsion, as a permanent factor in human life, remains. Whether we face it Jesus way or not, we must face it somehow. We do have our Roman couriers that light upon us trudging our chosen path and, whether we will or no, take us along with them. The word " must " belongs in our lives as truly as in any Jew’s forced into serv ice by an imperial messenger.

Young folk, like rollicking colts in a lush meadow, have preeminently the sense of freedom, but no colt ever pranced far without coming to a fence. One of the signs of dawning maturity appears when this first consciousness of liberty gives place to perception of limitations, to insight into the compelling power of necessity to audience that often hears the magisterial words " You must ! " The body says " Must " ; the demands of social life say " Must " ; the necessities of business say " Must " ; at every other milestone we meet a courier to impress us into service. Like springs, bubbling up in a first ecstasy of un fettered freedom, but soon finding that every brook has its banks, so men out of the youthful sense of unrestricted liberty flow into a life-course, held in on either side by unescapable necessities. Sooner or later every man finds his boundaries, and while poets may sing their songs of pathos over the fact, practical people have a more serious problem: to find out, that is, how a man ought to face life’s compulsions, in what attitude of mind and spirit he should meet the " Must " of the world. And Jesus said, " Whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile, go with him two." At first sight that is about the strangest prescription for the trouble a man could well imagine. It proceeds upon able the homoeopathic principle that "like things cure like," and would drive out the poison of a disease by injecting more of the same kind. If you are compelled to go one mile, of your own free will go two, it says, and so defeat the malice of the necessity by voluntarily going it one better.

Indeed, it is clear that if the earth should say to two plants in a garden, " You must grow," and if one plant should accept the bare necessity, and sullenly grow its stint and no more, that would be slavish business with no glory in it. But if its companion should say : " It is my delight to grow! Come on, O Earth, with all your bounty! You say I must grow, but lo! I am twice as willing as you are to make me ! " that would be a free plant, with worth and distinction in its growing. It is found true at even a cursory glance that the sting of compulsion is gone when a man is twice as willing to act as necessity is to make him.

Now among all the ways in which we feel the Roman hand upon our shoulder, none is more unescapable than the compulsion of time. This is the most inevitable of all inevitable things. Tie what you will to the tail of the seconds, they are sublimely in different to your hindrances. If you watch the passing days closely, you find a tyrannic oppression in their noiseless and unceasing

march. The Valley of Ajalon where the sun stands still and the retreating shadow on Ahaz's dial have long vanished into the limbo of the eternally lost. When in Congress the sergeant moves back the hands of the government clock, making an artifice of time to pass the last bills in, he must do it with a sardonic grin, for he knows what a futile fraud he is perpetrating on the sun, and how the constellations laugh at him. This slow inevitableness of time is a small matter indeed to the youth, but it puts compulsion on a man not easy to be glad about. So Jesus said to Peter, " When thou wast young thou girdedst thyself and wentest whither thou wouldst, but when thou shalt be old another shall gird thee and carry thee where thou wouldst not."

How men rebel against this un- evadable fatality ! How they fret over declining powers, and grudgingly submit to limitation, like free lakes poured into narrowing canyons and tumbling upon themselves in fury! Because men take it so, because they enter their cramped confines with such ill grace, they make sorry business out of age, with never a touch of Rabbi Ben Ezra's mellow and radiant spirit:

" Grow old along with me, The best is yet to be; The last of life for which the first was made ! "

Rabbi Ben Ezra had the spirit of the second mile. His years were no less implacable in their compulsion and his limitations no less carking than is the lot of other men, but he could see in both years and limitations " Machinery just meant To give thy soul its bent; Try thee and turn thee forth Sufficiently impressed." And whenever you seek the secret of this kind of age, you will not fail to find a man who has gone the second mile; who has faced time and said, " O Time, you are a stern fellow, but you have a godlike power of beauty in you. You can make souls deep and rich and fruitful, as you make old violins musical with the stored-up melodies of years; as you make old wine perfect with the ripeness of long generations. You say that I must go this mile with you, but I am wise enough to look upon my necessities as though they were my luxuries, and I will go with you so willingly that men shall learn from me to say anew, * The hoary head is a crown of glory ! " The more one considers it, the more it is clear that when a man must go one mile, the only spirit that can save his soul from bitterness is the willingness to go two.

There is another Roman also, who levies his draft upon us, and that is the Roman of work. Underneath every other practical necessity, is this elemental " must " of the breadwinner: and unless a man has been so hapless as to receive a legacy, youth's heaviest handicap, he needs no one to tell him what an inexorable master this necessity is. Now this compulsion, which sooner or later most men are sure to encounter, may be faced in one of two ways. If he will, a man may accept it doggedly and go about the demanded labor like the Sultan's Janizaries under the lash. He may take work as an unfortunately necessary part of life, and let himself be beaten to it by the cat-o-nine-tails in the hand of Need. He may skimpingly perform the bare requirements and, hating his taskmaster as a rancorous old Jew hated a Roman courier, may bitterly trudge that one scant mile, as unwilling as Bryant's " quarry-slave at night scourged to his dungeon." That is one way to face the necessity of work and thousands of men with their eyes on the clock are working that way to-day. Or if he will, a man may rise to the measure of Antonio Stradivari, in George Eliot's poem, and say of his humblest daily tasks what Stradivari said about his violins:

" If my hand slacked I should rob God, since he is fullest good, Leaving a blank instead of violins. ***** He could not make Antonio Stradivari's violins Without Antonio."

Whenever a man glorifies his work in that way he has gone the second mile; he has translated duty into privilege. He has seen that while God supplies quarries he never carves statues or piles cathedrals save by the hand of a man; he has perceived that the earth was not built like Aladdin's Palace, by magic spells for lazy occupancy, but is an unfinished world into which men are ushered in time to bear a part in its completion; and he has reached the dignity of believing that every honest piece of work is cooperation with God in building the universe. Such a man can fol low the Master's word and can give glad welcome to the necessity of work, as it accosts him on the road. He can say, and mean it too, "O Work, you are my best friend in dis guise. God sent you to me. You come with a stern face, but your heart is full of strength and courage and good cheer. You demand that I travel with you that one hard mile? Then, my task, doff that scowl, for to the limit of my strength I am twice as willing to work as you are to make me." Work, greeted like that, loses the frown of compulsion and begins to smile. When a man works that way because he thinks it is his Father's business, feels that it is his meat and drink to do the will of him that sent him, wishes there were more hours in the day than twenty-four, and dreams of Heaven as a place where a man can work all the time at his best and never be tired all the slavery of work has vanished for such a man and he and his task, good friends, walk arm in arm, and will be sorry when the second mile is done. It looks as though Jesus were right, after all. The way to avoid the slavishness of necessity is of your own accord to be willing, if possible, to do more than is demanded. The first mile alone is drudgery. The glory comes with the second mile!

Another kind of compulsion faces every man in some degree the compulsion of limiting circumstances and restricted powers that shut him up to narrow and obscure activities. There are more people than perhaps we think, whose aspirations for preeminence have been snuffed to a smoulder. Some aspired to be musicians, some authors, others teachers, preach ers, missionaries; they had perhaps to start with talents equal to their dreams; but the thwarting circum stance, the broken health gradually closed them in and shortly they found themselves hedged around, with a stern Roman peremptorily saying, " You must live your lives here ! " We all face this one way or another. If not the external circumstance, it is that unescapable limitation of our own individuality, the most vexatious handicap of all. For a man to accept himself and start with only one talent, if God has not given him ten, is difficult business. " Das verdammte Ich," cried Goethe, and we all know what he meant.

Some one has compared man to an actor able to play many roles but restricted to one; and any virile man, facing the fascinating opportunities of the world's work and feeling the latent possibility of many accomplishments and ministries, knows that the necessity of choosing one role, or having it thrust upon him, of playing that and not another, is no less tyrannic than a Roman courier to a Jew. Other compulsions may be more grievous to a feeble man, but to the nobler character it is the limitation of life's possible investment that presses hardest. He wants the whole farm and is confident that he could farm it, but lo ! this small garden plot with a hedge all around.

Now one solution of the problem is both popular and easy. He may raise his little crop of vegetables in that narrow garden plot and sit down in bitterness behind his hedge to eat them. He may look over his meager boundaries at the bigger farms of stronger men and envy their more extensive operations. He may take his spite out by a cynical disparagement of the whole business of living any how, or he may wax melodramatic with Henley and talk about his head being " bloody but unbowed." He may even assume the Titanic pose and grandiloquently dare high heaven, de

claiming like Thompson in his " City of Dreadful Night," " I vow That not for all Thy power, furled or unfurled, For all the temples to Thy glory built, Would I assume the ignominious guilt Of having made such men in such a world ! " In a word, he may incarnate the one- mile spirit and grow surly, rebellious and morose within his narrow hedges. If, however, that does not seem a knightly attitude, there appears no alternative short of Jesus way, who evidently would have us say about this same meager plot, " Well, it is not much to start with, but, O Roman of Necessity, you need not think that I am going to do only what you command, merely live here and raise enough to eat. I am going to make this little place so beautiful that passers-by will stop to enjoy it. It is not large, but fair flowers grow in small places. You require me to live here, but I will go twice as far as that. I will not only live here, but I will make it worth while living here; and these very hedges which you say must al ways bind me in, I will husband until they are as fragrant as English hawthorne or Scotch heather, and people who cried, What cruel limitations ! shall yet say, What a beautiful hedge! "

History loves to record the names of men who conquered the malice of their fate by this spirit of the second mile men like the old Greek chosen in a joke to be town scavenger, who filled the office with such high serviceableness that thereafter in all Greece the office was an honor ; men like blind Huber becoming the great scientist, or blind Fawcett becoming Postmaster-General of England; men like Cervantes using an imprisonment to begin " Don Quixote," or Bunyan glorifying Bedford Jail with the " Pilgrim’s Progress " ; men of the spirit of those four marines from the British ship " Wager " of whom Steven son tells us, who, compelled to remain on a desert island because the lifeboat could hold no more, stood on the shore and gave three cheers when the boat pulled off with a " God save the King ! " for a tiger. These men his tory delights to honor, for, in the end, time endorses God’s evaluations. And where in humbler expressions this same spirit of the second mile is found, as when the young woman wrote her friend out of her invalid- ism, " At first I thought somehow to make the best of it, but now I am planning how to make the most of it," every man with a heart for chivalry pays homage. These folk of the more abundant willingness travel with us the first hard mile of compulsion, but they make it beautiful with the second mile of consecration. That bare compulsion, taken alone, is grim, but when we rise to say " I will make my narrow boundaries a garden of the Lord where he may walk as he did in Eden in the cool of the day," the cruel necessity glows with a divine meaning, and a glory appears in the limited life the glory of the second mile. When we carry this principle out from the realm of such inevitable necessities as time and work and personal limitation, into the sphere of moral obligation, its applicability be comes all the more clear. Some things are sternly demanded of men by the regulations of the social life. The for mal obligations of the marriage covenant, for example, can be enforced. There is an irreducible minimum of duty which Public Opinion insists on expecting from wives and husbands, parents and children. Like some old Roman, the Social Conscience, some times speaking with the voice of legal enactment, comes to every one of us, and says of the absolutely necessary duties of family relationship, " You must do these things."

There are households, moreover, where this minimum marks the outer boundary within which the whole life of the family moves. They do just as much as they have to do and no more. The household is run in the spirit with which a miser pays taxes. Any over flow of spontaneous love, any volunteering of surplus kindliness is un known. They keep the prohibitions of the law, and look for a home to come of it, like Gasparoni, the Italian bandit who hoped for heaven because he had never committed murder on Friday. They are one-mile folk and they make a one-mile home. But it

is the unnecessary courtesies, the unexpected presents brought from the city, the uncalled-for thoughtfulness of lovers, the surprises of kindliness over and above what can be required this superabundance makes a real home. Here the difference lies between a parent and a father; between progeny and sons; between a housewife and a mother. Let a housewife be never so faithful about her tasks, determined to do them well, with resolution keeping the home neat, the children well provided; yet any man who has had a real mother knows at once that such description leaves the glory out. The real mother did her duties too, but there was something more a radiance that glowed through her simple tasks like a quiet dawn in summer, an ampleness of love as though she moved in realms where rules had been forgotten, that made her human affection liberal like the love of the Eternal God. Her ministries could not be so common place as to let you utterly escape the secret influence of the fact that with unsearchable desire she had prayed for you first. Her spirit was greater than her deeds and suffused them; and as you remember her now, you think not so much of her particular ministries as of that unwearied willingness to overpass all boundaries in loving you. The last thing you can ever forget is that luminous tenderness which, like God’s sunshine on the just and the unjust, sought you out in whatsoever merit or demerit you might be, to find you as Christ found the world, not that he might condemn it, but that the world through him might be saved. All true mothers live in the spirit of the second mile.

Like the Word of God brooding over chaos and making a world of it, this surplus tenderness creates homes out of households. There are few things more pathetic than a one-mile family, but the crown of all human relationships and the hope of the country is the two-mile home, where al ways " the cup runneth over."

What this principle of Jesus does, then, when applied to our moral life, is clear. It divides a man’s conduct into two parts, the compulsory and the voluntary, the things he must do and the things he chooses to do, the first mile and the second. It says, moreover, that only as the voluntary overspreads and saturates the necessary can life cease to be slavery and come to its full meaning of dignity and value. There is an essential nobility that belongs only to the soul who can say with Jesus, " No man taketh my life from me. I lay it down of myself." Until willingness over flows obligation, men fight as con scripts instead of following the flag as patriots.

Now, with reference to this spirit of the second mile, men are divided into well-defined classes, of which the lowest are clearly those miserable folk who like Shylock are forever after their rights. Their attitude toward men is that of a collector seeking payment on protested bills. They are specialists in the exaction of what is due them. They interpret duty as a cus toms officer does to mean not what he owes men, but what men owe him. Such men reveal themselves by their instinctive attitude toward clearly stat ed moral obligations, such as, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." Facing this command, some will cry, desiring all their rights, " Is my neighbor, then, bearing false witness against me ? " and some will search their souls with the question of duty, "Am I bearing false witness against my neighbor?" Rights or duties, you can interpret any commandment either way, and it is the relative emphasis a man places here that measures the first stage in his character building. Not till duty looms larger than rights is a man truly moral. But neither the one nor the other is the test of Christian character. Christianity begins when the sense of privilege in service becomes greater than both rights and duties. For us to be Christian is to be more willing to serve a man than he is to demand it; to go the second mile; to forgive seventy times seven; to pray on our Calvaries for the men who put us there; to act, that is,

as no one has the right to require of us, and to feel about it all that our meat and drink are to do the will of him that sent us. The essential word of Christianity is love and that means superabundant willingness to help. A man becomes really Christian when the sense of joy in ministry overflows both rights and duties and submerges them. And just here is the real worth of the moral life. So long as Words worth sings Duty, " Stern Daughter of the Voice of God," he is but on the threshold of the matter. It is only when he rises in his climax to say:

" Yet thou dost wear The Godhead's most benignant grace; Nor know we anything so fair As is the smile upon thy face: Flowers laugh before thee on their beds And fragrance in thy footing treads," only then has he come to the heart of it. Duty is never worthily done until it is performed by a man who loves it so that he would gladly do more if he could. Some men say of their duties, "I must"; some men say, " I ought " ; some men say, " I want to, let me at it." These are the three tones of life. One man is the slave of his necessities; one, the grim moralist doing his duty; one, the man of an abounding sense of privilege in life, who feels all blessings large with God's favor, all trials meaningful with purpose, all duty a glorious prerogative. Though the gross output of moral living may seem in each case to be the same, these lives are not of one spiritual family. A duty done grudgingly and the same duty done willingly are after all not the same. All sense of compulsion and of obligation is only underground foundation for the real temple, whose altar- song is forever, " I delight in the law of the Lord." As the real worth of the moral life lies in this attitude of more abundant willingness, so the whole joy of the moral life lies there too. It is because of their unwillingness to go the second mile that men make such desperate labor out of going the first. When Paul finds himself with his hard road to travel an arduous journey all the way from the midnight escape at Damascus to the headsman's axe at Rome he does not, like the lesser souls, spoil it by desiring to go half instead. " I must " is alien from his spirit ; " I ought," an occasional but not dominant tone ; " Thanks be to God who counted me worthy, appointing me to be his minister," that is Paul's over flowing zeal which took the sting from the first mile's obligation. If a friend ask a favor, saying, " I have a right to demand that as a friend," and you reply, " Man, stop talking about rights. I am more willing to make that sacrifice than you are to ask me," by that you have transformed obligation from drudgery to privilege. So Paul wrote to Philemon, making re quest of service from him, and said, "Without thy mind I would do nothing, that thy goodness should not be as of necessity, but of free will " ; and thereby he suggested the only way to find joy in duty. The penurious moralist stingily expending himself no farther than the law requires, is a pitifully sad fellow, who has never learned that it is hard work serving as a drafted man in a battle you would like to avoid, but that it is glorious business fighting as a volunteer for a cause you love.

There are a thousand little ways in which we can put this to the test: If we have money and are pestered by requests for its expenditure, what a cure for impatience to recognize that it is more to our interest to have our stewardship rightly accomplished than it can be to any other man s, so that even if we cannot give to a particular cause we can send the petitioner away with the feeling that we were more willing to give than he was to ask us! If we have talents and are worn threadbare by the continual demands upon us, what a cure for the requirement's malice to know that it is more to our interest to do all the good we can than it can be to any other man's and so to meet each request with a willingness to do even more if we are able. Any child knows the magic of this divine remedy if he has ever dragged his reluctant feet toward the berry patch under orders to pick two quarts, and then has solved the problem of his uncomfortable duty by crying, "What fun! I ll

surprise the family by picking four ! " Drudgery is all redeemed by that. When a man, however, attempts this attitude toward all the duties of his life, tries to make it the solvent for his moral drudgeries, he finds that reasonably to be more than willing to do all he ought to do, so that his volunteering outruns the demands of men upon him, implies a view of life that taxes the limit of his faith. A man can say, " I must " in atheism ; he can say, " I ought " in bare morality ; but to say " I want to " as though there were a great privilege in living, as though it " means intensely and means good/ as though purpose were there because the world had been thought through and willed through and loved through by a Father, as though des tinies were ahead in which the meanings of all sacrifice would come to their apocalypse in glory " exceeding abundant above all we can ask or think" that means a religious view of the world. Only when a man believes that there is a Person to receive our consecration, whose service is perfect freedom, and whose love constraineth to that noblest motive for all duty doing, the gratitude of love to One who loved us first; only then can he reasonably feel the more abundant willingness in sacrificial service. If there is some one able to "keep that which we commit unto him," so that nothing is ever wasted, no serviceable deed, no love, no aspiration, but

" All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist, Not its semblance, but itself," then we can say, "I want to." Only the man of Christian faith, who sees the Eternal God mirrored in the character and purposes of Christ can reasonably accept the privilege of Christian service. A man can stumble the first mile almost anyhow, but no man can travel the second mile without God!

Indeed here we enter the very Holy of Holies of religious living. As the spirit of the second mile so inevitably demands the Christian God to make it reasonable, so the same spirit is the best interpreter of the life which such a God inspires. To many people religious living is an affair of negative prohibitions, and they walk in the presence of God like an embarrassed courtier at the salon of Louis XIV, conscious chiefly of what they must not do. Their righteousness is exhausted in what they refrain from. " They are just as good as trying not to be bad can make them." Or if a man has graduated from this idea of God as a Sinaitic Lawgiver, who spends his odd moments checking up the accounts of folk who have transgressed his prohibitions, he may still conceive religious living as a matter of positive rules and regulations, ceremonial and moral, whose observance is the whole of duty. This man is the kind of character who stereotypes his courtesy into a list of memorized rules, who keeps account of his good deeds and bad deeds by number and charts them at night, who figures his hopes of heaven by the balance of credit on the celestial ledger, and who so punctiliously goes his round of the commandments that his friends would offer a hecatomb if only the man would do a single impulsive and hearty deed, were it even to be guilty of spontaneous sin. Whichever way he goes at it, negatively or positively, this man is the legalist, living by rule the man of the one-mile spirit living the one-mile life.

It was in escaping from this legalism that Paul said he became a Christian. No man is really a Christian until he has escaped it. If a boy, adopted into a strange home, and unruly in his new surroundings, should perforce be given a set of regulations which he must ob serve, he might become more orderly, but he would hardly by that alone become a true son. But if some day the love of the father or mother should be persuasively revealed to him, so that the love that had been there al ways laid masterful hold on him, and his love, newly born, should spring up in answer, flooding his spirit with its loyalty, and if, knowing the new life in him, he should take the rules and tear them up, saying " Because I love you I will do all these and much more beside," then a true

son would have been begotten. He would have been " born again." " If ye love me, ye WILL keep my commandments," said Jesus and this statement of inevitable consequence is summed up in Paul's sublime word, " Love is the fulfilling of the law." Apart from love a man cannot keep so many rules or do so many deeds as to make himself a Christian. "If I give all my goods to feed the poor and have not love," said Paul, " it profiteth me nothing ! " This does not mean the destruction of the moral law; it means that the Christian life so far outruns the moral law, so far overflows commandment with compassionate willingness to serve, that rules of conduct are to its wide domain what the obligations of a civil marriage ceremony would be to the love of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett. They would keep the contract as one would walk over a molehill in climbing a mountain! Love does all that the commandments say, and counts that the mere beginning. Love is not love until it has forgotten rules. The Christian's " royal law " fulfils all lesser laws like the Atlantic flowing into the Bay of Fundy when the sky calls to the tide. Nor does this mean that conduct is to be left to the unregulated expression of a compassionate heart. A man may be in spirit truly courteous and still need instruction in the conventions of society. Love in the soul does not make inevitable a judicious and intelligent expression. So the old proverb has it that " the chief business of the wise is undoing the mistakes made by the good." It is the prime thing to be courteous and kindly at heart, but important, too, to make the outer symbol truly signify the inner reality. " What is the use of being gold, if you look like brass ? " is only partly true, but that part is of consequence. The love of God may be shed abroad in our hearts and still through ignorance that love's expression may be indiscreet and mischievous. While the primary matter, therefore, is that the branches abide in the vine, the trellis of commandment is a needful device that the fruit shall have guidance in normal growth. Nevertheless the trellis alone is so fu tile, and the training of a live vine so easy as compared with getting fruit from a dead one, that the necessity of the trellis should not blind us to the main issue which is the vital junction of the branch and vine. Moral instruction in details of conduct must never hide the fundamental matter, that there is no Christianity apart from a love which goes the second mile. Christ is witness that there is such a love, God himself underground in a man's life, rising in artesian wells of living water a love so exhaustless in its willingness to serve, that he who knows it understands the safety of St. Augustine's profound injunction, " Love God and do as you please ! " This love that goes the second mile, however, is more than a solvent for moral drudgeries in the individual life. It is distinctly a force of social revolution. For here is the testing of this principle in its application to society: that in the home it is entirely possible to exercise this superabundant willingness to serve; in the neighborhood, even, it is possible for a man to outrun the demands upon him by the volunteering of his own kindliness; but who by any possibility can live the spirit of the second mile in the industrial world where the fundamental principle is " The good old rule, the simple plan, That he should get who has the power, And he should keep who can." Your business man will tell you frankly that it is hard enough to run an enterprise successfully and be scrupulously honest, honest, that is, not ac cording to the letter of the statutes, but according to the dictates of a sensitive and instructed conscience. But when it comes to loving, loving in Jesus sense of being twice as will ing to help men as they are to ask you; as willing to give coat and cloak together as they can be to take your coat alone; willing to take two blows if two there must be, rather than give one; when it comes to overflowing all sense of duty with spontaneous kindliness, who does not see that the principles of Jesus and the principles of a competitive system where men throttle each other for bread come into absolute and unavoidable collision?

Even yet many Christians are in credulous that Christ ever intended that his principles should control the business world. The idea they work on is: Let love control in home, and school, in church and neighborhood, but let business be governed by the rules of battle. Yet is such a division of the world's life conceivably permanent? If the nation could not continue " half slave and half free," can the world continue so forever? Can a thoughtful man imagine as the ultimate state of society, the Kingdom of God on earth, a regime where home and neighborhood life shall be Christianized by the spirit of love and where the commercial world shall still be mastered by the spirit of " Every man for himself"? Surely it is manifest that Christ will not accept half a world for his demesne any more than he will accept half a man; and this is manifest, too, that before the spirit of the second mile, which now is possible in the home, shall come to its full possibility in the realm of business, our industrial system must be something other than it is to-day. To be sure men can go the second mile always with certain individuals whom they know and like in business, but no one can make the spirit of the second mile his commercial principle, the underlying postulate of every business transaction, when the basal idea of the commercial system is rivalry for the necessities of life. To be sure men can always ameliorate the conditions of the competitive fight so as to make its appearance more respectable; they can always pass laws to limit the degrees of exploitation and abolish its worst indecencies. Just so they smoothed out rough-and- tumble fighting into the respectabilities of the duel, guarded by regulations from brutality; but is duelling any less abhorrent in principle than thuggery? And is a system where one man knifes another for food and clothes any less abhorrent because restricting laws tone down its more repugnant features? No one doubts the beneficent effect of making individual ap plication of the spirit of kindliness in business. But then, that is not the primary idea of business in a competitive system. Mercy may be shown in war, by one foe to another, and mutual courtesy between individuals upon the firing line is an occurrence in almost every battle only that is not what war means. And however many instances of kindliness between commercial rivals may relieve the fearful carnage of our industrial strife, the truth remains that men, instead of being in cooperative association to exploit the riches of the world, are rather engaged in exploiting one an other; and that the basal idea of a war between men for life's necessities is violently at variance with Christ's idea of superabundant willingness to help. What first is needed is the Christian spirit of cooperation in the hearts of individuals, but with that must come the gradual reformation of social structure that such a spirit may have freedom of expression. This is what makes the great truth of Christ revolutionary if once it be really believed in. Let individuals do their best at it now, yet only in a common wealth founded on cooperation can the second-mile spirit come to its full social utterance. And here is the question the twentieth-century Christian must settle whether he really believes more in the principles of Christ, or the principles of the present industrial order. For unless irreconcilable enemies can live in the same house one or the other must go.

Returning now to the individual application of this master truth of Jesus there remains at least this one thing more to say: that not alone do the moral worth and joy of a man's life lie in the second mile, but the influence of a man lies there too. Jesus evidently is speaking here especially of some man who dislikes us, criticizes us, maliciously plans against us and seeks our hurt. What he says is that our love for that man should be so great that we should be more willing to serve him than he is to make us yes, twice as willing; that no malice of his should ever reduce our souls to the level of hatred, or spoil our invincible love that pushes on through all his wrongs, still willing to serve him more and win him if w& can.

There are many ways in which an unfriendly man can be treated, and every one has chances to try them all. " If he hurt me," it is possible to say, " I shall hurt him worse, until, like Jason sowing dragons teeth and reaping a hostile army, he shall find his evil to me coming back upon him as many fold as I can manage it." That is vindictive vengeance. Or it may be said, " If he hurt me I shall, with level measure, return as much to him, and teach him the meaning of the law, * Eye for eye, tooth for tooth. " This is retribution. Or it may be said, " If he hurt me I shall ignore him, and scorning to recognize his injury, treat him with the con tempt the moon gives to the dog that bays it." That is the disdain of hot resentfulness. Or it may be said, " If that man hurt me I will serve him still and try with undiscourageable love to do him good. Whatever comes, his hate shall never ruin my good will. I will take his unfriendliness as my opportunity for unrequited service, and when the first mile of his unkindness has been traveled I will be there to say, Man, my master is Christ and Christ never let any man’s unkindness spoil His love. I am trying to follow Him and I am not going to let your unkindness spoil my love. You may not be my friend, but I am yours, and nothing you can ever do will stop it. " That clearly is the way Jesus lived, and clearly that is what he expects of his disciples. To be sure, there may be limits which love cannot overpass; but then we may be certain that none of us has ever come within reaching distance of them. Even Christ seems never to have discovered limits to love in all his wide horizons.

Now this unconquerable compassion is not alone the most profoundly joyful spirit in which to live. At the very least it is that. The niggardly soul who, when he must give a quart of kindliness measures it out by thimblefuls to avoid the possibility of sur plus and does that only to the inner circle of his friends, has all the work and none of the joy of love. But this spirit of unwearied goodwill, that with a divine carelessness seeks just and unjust, is the great lifting power of the world, the secret not alone of joy but of spiritual effectiveness. From the standpoint of the giver it seems a severe requirement that he love and serve those who have no personal claim on him, as Living stone served Africa, or Paton the New Hebrides, but from the standpoint of Africa and the New Hebrides, which have no right to claim such devotion, the only hope lies in those souls who, like Livingstone and Paton, love of their own free will away over and above all right of demand. From the standpoint of the giver it is no easy matter to love regardless of the recipient’s moral worth, like Moses praying God for the apostate people holding bacchanalian rout about their golden calf, but from the standpoint of the people who are unworthy, their only hope lies in just such souls, baptized with the spirit of saviorhood, who understand that " they who are sick need a physician," and are willing to help especially the undeserving. And it is a peculiarly hard saying that a man should love regardless of the personal attitude of the recipient, whether it be recognition and gratitude or the lack of them; but from the standpoint of the man so far down in spiritual desolation that he does not even know enough to be grateful, there is no hope save in those souls who for the time will forego gratitude and will serve on through ingratitude, misunderstanding, persecution even, if thereby they may be saviors of their fellows. The men with lifting power have al ways been men who served regard less of the right of the recipient to demand it, regardless of his moral worth, regardless of his personal in gratitude who served for only one reason, the love of saving. Since the time when the " Lamb was slain before the foundation of the world," and the principle of sacrifice was imbedded in the fabric of the universe, there has been only one force with grip and lift enough in it to hoist the spiritual life of man, and that is the power Jesus used when he suffered, " the righteous for the unrighteous that he might bring us to God."

Now, mystical and unpractical as these injunctions may seem, as a matter of fact no spiritual achievement ever yet was wrought without this unbought and unpaid for generosity of love. The hope of the world's salvation lies in this spirit that, forgiving seventy times seven, keeps at the main issue which Jesus suggested when he said, " If thy brother hear thee, thou hast won thy brother." Whether in the individual's treatment of his private foe, or in society's treatment of her public enemy, the crimi nal, any other principle than this is not only wrong, it is entirely ineffective. This mercy may sometimes be stern; it may even take the outward form of punishment on the of fender. So Beecher said, " A mother may have all Mount Calvary in her heart and all Mount Sinai in her hand : and the child get both." But what ever may be the outward form that wisdom determines to be best, the inner spirit is always of one quality, the undiscourageable desire to save. This virtue of overflowing love that seeks alone the good of all men, is not too unpractical; it is too practical for this world of ours to under stand. This kind of love is the only force that really gets things done. Without it not even an eddy has ever been made in the spiritual history of man. The men who have struck humanity's life as the shaft of water strikes the turbine at Niagara, saying, " Move," have been men who knew that " God does not always pay wages on a Saturday," and so were willing to serve on through all hostility, to help the very humanity that cursed them while they blessed. The roll- call of the world's spiritual heroes reveals not a single one-mile man. For no man ever saved anybody, or served any great cause, or left any enduring impress who was not willing to forget indignities, bear no grudges, and, like Paul when the Jews had cast him out of their synagogues, had beaten, stoned, and all but killed him, say, "I could wish myself accursed for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen ac cording to the flesh. . . . My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved." The world's saviors have all, in one way or another, loved their enemies and done them good. All of saviorhood lies in the second mile.

Clearly it is nothing less than this that Christianity means by love. The man who in his serving holds perpetual inquisition, suspicious that some how he is being swindled out of love, and who, with the scrutiny of a detective, searches the character of his fellows for some unworthiness to excuse his neglect, never really loves at all, as Christianity counts it, whose God " commended his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." The man who serves for pay, and like a hireling loves with his eyes on Saturday noon, wondering if he will get his love's worth back again in the appreciation of his fellows, does not love at all, as Christ understood it who said, " Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you." This is the note that Jesus struck when he told his disciples that if they merely loved those who loved them or saluted their brethren only, they were doing what any outcast Publican would do. It is in the " exceeding righteousness " alone that mankind feels the touch of God. It is the spirit of the second mile that makes them seek the cause in the superhuman. To-day in a certain Chinese village, a strange deity receives incense at the pagan shrine. Long ago there came a Christian mission ary there, who, before he could make clear the Christian doctrine, died. But it was not before he could make clear the spirit of his Christian love, that brought him unasked and unrewarded over seas to carry his good tidings and his ministry of help. And so they made him the village god and burn incense still upon his altar; for human nature is sure of this, that vicarious love is nearest deity. It is the instinct of the heart of man that where sacrificial love is, there God is also. There is one spirit whose divinity no man can deny and that is the unwearied compassion which in- defatigably keeps on loving when love goes unrewarded. Even a Roman centurion cries, " The Son of God ! " when a soul can bear the contumely and the pain of crucifixion and still pray, "

Father forgive them." There is but one invincible power on earth and that is the unwearied spirit of the second mile.

Only, a man must surely believe in God to have it in the God of Jesus and of immortality. For underneath such sacrificial compassion must lie the eternal love of God; and ahead of it must rise a vision radiant, a triumphal day, whose songs are even now in hours of struggle quietly audible, " As if some fair city were one voice Around a king returning from his wars."

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