

Our Daily Homily - Exodus

by F.B. Meyer

F.B. Meyer's sermon emphasizes that affliction often leads to spiritual growth and multiplication through reliance on God's strength and promises.

Scripture: Exodus 1:12, Exodus 2:12, Exodus 3:8, Exodus 4:10, Exodus 5:22, Exodus 6:6, Exodus 7:5, Exodus 8:23, Exodus 9:26, Exodus 10:23

Topics: "Dependence On God", "Affliction and Growth"

Description

F.B. Meyer emphasizes that the affliction of the Hebrews in Egypt led to their multiplication, illustrating that God's people often thrive under persecution. He draws parallels between the struggles of the early Church and individual believers, suggesting that true growth often occurs in times of trial rather than comfort. Meyer highlights the importance of relying on God's strength rather than our own, as exemplified in Moses' journey from self-reliance to dependence on God. He reassures that God comes down to lift us from our lowest points, and that our trials can lead to a deeper understanding of His grace and provision. Ultimately, Meyer encourages believers to trust in God's promises and to recognize that their struggles are part of His divine plan.

Transcript

The more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied - Exodus 1:12

It was a very unequal struggle on which Pharaoh had entered; for he opposed not the Hebrews, but Jehovah. It is thus that the great ones of this world have ever spoken and acted. "Let us build a tower;" "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." "Against Thy holy child Jesus, both Herod and Pontius Pilate were gathered together." In every case, He that sits in the heavens has laughed at the boast of human pride. His cause and His people's are one. Yet times of affliction have always been on times of multiplication.

In the history of the Church. - When has she made her greatest number of adherents? When her pulpits have been filled with eloquent preachers, and her aisles crowded with fashion and wealth? No; but when she has been driven to the dens and caves of the earth, and her sons have been proscribed outcasts. The real triumphs of the early Church were in the first centuries of opprobrium and persecution; her decline began when Constantine made Christianity the religion of the State.

In the history of each earnest soul. - It is rarely the case that we make much spiritual headway when winds and currents favor us. We do best when all is against us. We grow quickest in the dark. In times of persecution we realize the security, and comfort, and joy, which are in Christ Jesus our Lord; and as God goes the round of the world, it is in chambers of pain, sickness, and bereavement, that He beholds the multiplication of the choice graces of holy character and temper. The affliction, which is for the moment, is working out an exceeding weight of glory.

He Smote the Egyptian - Exodus 2:12

This was creature-strength, wrought on by creature-passion, and ending in creature-failure. Moses stood on an eminence, and reached down to these poor brethren of his with a passing spasm of pity. He was very careful to look this way and that, so as not to invalidate his own position at court. And fear for himself carried him swiftly from the scene of his people's woes. It was a brief effort to do the Divine work of redemption in his own energy. Long years must pass, during which God would drain away drop by drop his strength, his resolution, and his very desire to be an emancipator; that when he had become nothing, God through him might effect His almighty will.

We sometimes smite the Egyptian within. - We rise up against some tyrant passion, and strike two or three vigorous blows. Our efforts to rid ourselves of its thrall originate and are prosecuted in our own resolve. At first the conflict seems easily our own; finally the dead weight of all the Egyptians within is more than a match for us.

We often smite the Egyptian without. - We make an assault on some giant evil - drink, gambling, impurity. It seems at first as though we should carry the position by our sudden and impetuous rush. But Egypt conquers in the end, and we flee.

No: we need to learn for the inward and outward conflict the lesson that forty years in Midian taught Moses, that only the Spirit of God in man can overcome the spirit of the world. By disappointment and repeated failure, by the silence of the desert, we are taught that we are nothing - then God becomes our all in all: and all things become possible to us as we believe.

I am come down - Exodus 3:8

THIS is a marvellous chapter, because it is so full of God. If the previous one, in its story of human striving, reminds us of Rom. 7., this as surely recalls Rom. 8. There is little mention of the part that Moses was to play, but much is said of what God was about to do. "I am come down." "I will bring you up." "I will put forth Mine hand." O weary soul, bitter with weary bondage, groaning beneath cruel taskmasters, afflicted and tossed with tempest, the I AM has come down!

God comes down to our lowest to lift us to His highest. - This is the theme of the Magnificat, and of Hannah's song. God comes down to the dust for the poor, and to the dunghill for the needy. You cannot be too lonely or broken in spirit for Him to notice and help. In proportion to your humiliation will be your exaltation.

He comes down to our saddest to lift us to His joyfullest. - How great the contrast between the cry of the Hebrews, because of their taskmasters, and the exultant note that smote on the rocks of the Red Sea! Such shall be your experience also. If you suffer in the line of God's will and providence, you are sowing the seeds of light and gladness. Oh, anticipate the harvest!

He comes down to our helplessness to succor with His great might. - Israel could not help herself; but the resources of I AM were sufficient for every need, and they will be for yours and mine. This is God's blank check; fill it in! Insert after these majestic words, wisdom, or courage, or love, or whatever you need most. And He will be all this, and more also: not for a moment, but always; not spasmodically, but unchangeably.

I am not Eloquent - Exodus 4:10

THIS is what we all say. We think more of the words than of the message; more of our eloquence or slowness of speech than of the King's seal and signature. Moses had learned many wholesome lessons through his long sojourn in Midian; but he had to learn this last one, that God does not want excellency of speech or of language in His messengers, but the unction and power which come on those who speak after direct audience with the Eternal. Aaron, who came to meet Moses, could speak well; but he was a weak man, whose alliance with Moses caused his nobler younger brother much anxiety and pain. However, God determined to send Aaron with him, to be his colleague and spokesman. Better a thousand times had it been for Moses to trust God for speech, than be thus deposed of his premiership.

Be sure to get thy message from the King. - Wait before Him in the inner shrine, till He says the word which thou shalt speak. This will give thee the real eloquence of the heart.

Look up for the right words. - The Apostle said that the Corinthians were enriched in all utterance; and he said that he spoke the Divine mysteries in words which the Holy Spirit taught. Ask for these, and you will not be disappointed.

Rely on the Divine cooperation. - There is another force at work, more subtle and penetrating than the most eloquent words of man - the power of the Holy Ghost. Seek for His Divine demonstration and co-witness. And it shall come to pass, that mysterious influences shall move over the hearts of those that listen to thy words, which shall attest the mighty fellowship and cooperation of One whom the natural man cannot detect.

Why is it that Thou hast sent me? - Exodus 5:22

BEFORE God can use us, He must bring us to an end of ourselves. When Paul was summoned to the greatest epistles and labors of his life, his strength was drained to utter weakness, and he despaired even of life. So in the case of Moses and Israel.

Moses, for forty years, had been undergoing the emptying process; but perhaps when God called him to this great enterprise, there may have been a slight revival of confidence in himself, in his mission, his miracles, the eloquence of Aaron's speech. So in the rebuff he received from Pharaoh, in the bitter remonstrances of the elders of his people, in the sad consciousness that his efforts had aggravated their condition, the lesson was still further taught him - that of himself he could do absolutely nothing.

Israel also had begun to hope something from his mission. Through the brickfields the story ran of his early years, his uncompromising speech to Pharaoh, of his miracles; and the wretched slaves cherished faith in him and Aaron as their heaven-sent deliverers. They had, however, to learn that all such hopes were vain, and to see that the brothers, at the best, were as weak as themselves. Then the way was prepared to lean only on God.

Ourselves. - By repeated failures all along our life-course God is teaching us the same lesson. We fail to justify and then to sanctify ourselves. Our efforts to serve and please Him only end in increasing

perplexity. The tale of bricks is doubled; the burdens augment; the strength of our purpose is broken; we are utterly discouraged; and then, when the soul is utterly desolate, the heavenly Bridegroom draws near and says, "I will do all; I am Alpha and Omega; I am thy salvation."

I am Jehovah, and I Will! - Exodus 6:6

WHEN all human help has failed, and the soul, exhausted and despairing, has given up hope from man, God draws near, and says, I AM. It is as though He said, "All that can really help you resides in My nature as in its native home. I have weaned you from all beside, that you might seek in Me what you had been wont to seek in men and things and self-help."

Thus God with Israel. The people had come to relish the dainties of Egypt - the leeks and onions, the fleshpots and sensual delights; therefore the need for this cruel bondage to wean them, and prepare them for marriage union with Himself. Moreover, they placed great hopes in Moses, and such appeals as might be made to move Pharaoh's pity; from these too it was necessary to withdraw the people's heart, that they might look for all to their heavenly Lover, and find in Jehovah their infinite supply.

Affliction is always needful in the first stage of the Christian's deepening experience. The world, with its vainglory, pride, and envy; the delights of the flesh; the praise and good opinion of our fellows - these take the place of Christ in His disciples. We must be taught to despise these things, and feel their vanity and insufficiency to satisfy.

Failure is often necessary to teach humility and patience; so that we may have no confidence in anything we can call our own, and be prepared to find all our satisfaction and delight in Jesus only.

Revelation then becomes possible, of all that God can be and do. He draws near with His sevenfold "I will." He looks on us with infinite delight, and commences to bring us into such blessedness that we forget all else, and behold our Bridegroom only.

The Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord - Exodus 7:5

IN God's dealings with His people He purposed to reveal Himself to Egypt: so that when He led forth Israel's hosts, in redemption power, from the brick-fields of slavery on to resurrection ground, there might be afforded such a display of His love, and pity, and power, as the world had never before witnessed. Egypt and all surrounding nations should know the character of God in the Exodus, as the Lover and Redeemer of His own.

So with the Church. - The Apostle tells us that redeemed men are to be the subjects of angelic contemplation and wonder. In the Church, principalities and powers shall discern the manifold wisdom and grace of God. When God has brought all the ransomed hosts up from the Egyptian bondage of the world to stand in the radiance of the eternal morning, then the universe shall ring with the ascription, "Great and marvellous are Thy works. Righteous and true are Thy ways."

So with each individual believer. - Each one of us has been formed for Jesus Himself, that we might show forth His praise. In growing purity and sweetness, in our deliverance from the clinging corruptions of the world and flesh, in our patience under tribulation, our submission and steadfast hope, in our willingness to sacrifice ourselves for others, let us be revelations of what Christ is, and of what He can make sinful men become.

Believers are the world's Bibles, by studying which men may come to know the Lord Himself. Let us see to it that we be clear in type, unmistakable in our testimony, pleasant to behold, thoughtful and helpful toward all, commending the blessed Bridegroom whom the world sees not.

I will put a Division between My People and thy People - Exodus 8:23

THIS division is as old as eternity. - In the council chamber of the Godhead the Father chose Jesus and all who should believe in Him unto eternal life. We cannot understand the reason of that Divine choice; we can only affirm it, that in those ages of the unfathomed past, Christ and His seed stood out from the rest of mankind, the people of God's own possession and inheritance.

It was affected by the Cross of Jesus. - By it we are crucified to the world, and the world to us. The cross, with its outstretched arms, stands sentinel between the Church and the world which cast out her Lord. The grave, like a great gulf, yawns between those who gather round the risen Master on resurrection ground, and all men else. From the moment that Jesus ascended, the rallying centre of the Church was removed from earth to heaven, from the cross to the throne.

It is wrought out by the daily grace of the Holy Ghost. - It is right, of course, to come out and be separate in our outward walk and behavior. But, deeper than this, if only we will let the Spirit of God work unhindered, He will effect an inward division. Our tastes and desires, our hopes and aims, will become different, and we shall be aware of a growing dissimilarity between ourselves and the world.

Then to the separate soul the Bridegroom comes. He says tender and loving words. In one hour He teaches more than all human teachers could; and sheds forth by the Holy Ghost the torrent of Divine Love. There may be darkness without, but there is light in the dwellings of Goshen: there may be plague and pestilence in the world, but there is peace, joy, and bliss, in the separated soul.

Only in Goshen, where the Children of Israel were, was there no hail - Exodus 9:26

Those who are included in the provisions of the covenant are sealed. The storm may sweep around them, but the great angel, who ascends from the east, cries with a great voice to the angels to whom it is given to hurt the earth, and the sea, and the trees, saying, Hurt them not till we have sealed the servants of God in their foreheads (Rev 7:3).

The only spot on which the soul is safe is within the encircling provisions of the covenant. Israel stood there, and was safe - not only from the hail, but from the destroying sword. The invulnerable walls of that sacred enclosure were the oath and promise of God to Abraham. God had bound himself by the most solemn sanctions to be a God to this people, and deliver them; it was necessary, therefore, that He should be their pavilion and canopy, catching the hailstones on His outstretched wings and securing them from hurt.

The covenant is entered, not by merit nor by works. There was neither the one nor the other in that race of slaves; but they stood there simply because of their relationship to the Friend of God. So we enter the blessed safety of the better covenant, through our relationship with the Lord Jesus, who is the Beloved of the Father, the one glorious and blessed Man. Without beauty or merit, the soul attaches itself by faith to Him, and discovers that it was loved before the worlds were made.

Ah, blessed Lover of souls, we see how the storm swept Thy heart, that it might never touch us. Thou art our hiding-place, our shield, our deliverer, our strong tower. Without dismay we Can anticipate the storms

of death, judgment, and eternity, sure that wherever Thou art there can be no hail.

All the Children of Israel had Light in their dwellings - Exodus 10:23

WITHOUT, darkness that might be felt; within, light. This should be the condition of each believing heart. The sun may have gone down, and the moon withdrawn herself in the firmament of the world; the darkness of perplexity and trouble may envelop Pharaoh and all his chosen counsellors; all things may wear the aspect of approaching dissolution: but with the Lord as our everlasting Light we walk in the light of life.

Light is purity. - The soul which is exposed to the indwelling of God, purifies itself even as He is pure; and walks as Jesus did, with white and stainless robes. He that says he has fellowship with the Holy God, and walks in the darkness of his own lusts, lies. Where God is really hidden in the heart, the beams of His lovely purity must irradiate and beautify the life.

Light is knowledge. - There is a wisdom, an insight, an understanding of the Divine mysteries, which the mere intellect could never give, but are the product of the Divine indwelling in the holy soul. All around men may be groping aimlessly after truth, trying to discover the secret of the Universe, whilst to the loving, childlike soul, in which God has taken up His abode, these things, which are hidden from the wise and prudent, are unveiled.

Light is love. - It steals so gently over the world, blessing flowers and birds, little children and invalids. Everywhere it is the symbol of the beneficent work of its Creator. His eldest daughter! Thus amid the selfishness of the world, let Jesus dwell deep in thee, that thou mayest be rooted and grounded in the love of God, which shall illumine thy dwelling, and ray out to the world.

Jewels of Silver and Jewels of Gold - Exodus 11:2

THE Egyptians knew very well that they would never see their jewels again; and the people of Israel were thus, to some extent, compensated for their unpaid toils. The Lord gave them such favor with the Egyptians that they gave them whatever they asked; so that "they spoiled the Egyptians."

These jewels were employed afterward in the adornment and enrichment of the Sanctuary. They flashed in the breastplate of the High Priest, and shone in the sacred vessels. In this they remind us of the treasures which David gathered by his conquests from neighboring nations, and which were afterward incorporated in the Temple of Solomon. They recall also the glowing predictions of the prophet, that the kings of the earth shall bring their treasures into the New Jerusalem.

The jewels of the Church, whether they stand for her graces or her choice children, have often been obtained from the midst of Egypt. Was not Saul of Tarsus just such a jewel? The world counted him one of her rarest sons; but God set him as a jewel in the breastplate of Immanuel.

Let us ever seek jewels from the land of our captivity and suffering. It will not do to come away empty. It is not enough merely to bear what God permits to fall on us for our chastisement; but to go further, and extract from all trials, jewels. Let every trial and temptation enrich you with the opposite grace. There are Egyptians in your life, which have grievously tormented you with their heavy whips, yet even these shall yield wealth - "jewels of silver and jewels of gold"; which you shall consecrate to holy service, and which shall shine in the fabric and worship of the New Jerusalem.

With bitter herbs - Exodus 12:8

THE Paschal feast is the emblem of the Christian life. The Blood is ever speaking to God for us; though we see it not, God sees it, and hears its prevalent plea. We in the meanwhile are called upon to feed in faith daily, hourly, on the flesh of the Son of Man, according to His own command. In all Christian life, even in its hours of greatest rapture, there must be a touch of the bitter herb.

We can never forget the cost of our redemption. - Even in heaven, in the full realization of its' bliss, whenever we catch sight of the print of the nails in His hand, we shall remember the agony and bloody sweat, the cross and passion, and eat the feast with the flavor of the bitter herb. How much more on earth, where we are so constantly requiring the efficacy of His precious death!

There will always be the memory of our sinnership. - We cannot forget our unworthiness and sin. He has forgiven; but we cannot forget. Ah, those years of rebellion and perverseness before we yielded to Him; and those years of self-will and pride since we knew His love! They will sometimes come back to us, and give us to eat of the bitter herb.

Moreover, there must be the constant crucifixion of the self-life. - We can only properly feed on Jesus, the Lamb of God, when we are animated by the spirit of self-surrender and humiliation, of death to the world and to the will of the flesh, which were the characteristics of His cross. Deep down in our hearts, the drinking of His cup and being baptized with His baptism, will be the touch of the bitter herbs in the feast. But "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

By strength of hand the Lord brought us out - Exodus 13:14

FOUR times over in this chapter Moses lays stress on the strong hand with which God redeemed His people from the bondage of Egypt; and we are reminded of "the exceeding greatness of His power, which is to us-ward who believe" (Eph 1:12-20).

God's strong hand reaches down to where we are. - It would have been useless if Israel had been bidden to help itself up to a certain point, whilst God would do the rest. The people were so broken that they could only lie at the bottom of the pit, and moan. God's hand reached down to touch and grasp them at their lowest. So God's help is not conditional on our doing something, whilst He will do the rest. When we are without strength, when we have expended our all in vain, when heart and flesh fail - then God comes where we are, and becomes the strength of our heart and our portion forever.

God's strong hand is mightier than our mightiest adversaries. - Pharaoh was strong, and held the people as a child may hold a moth in its clenched fist. But a man's hand is stronger than a child's, and God's than Pharaoh's. So Satan may have held you in bondage; but do not fear him any more, look away to the strength of God's hand. What can it not do for you?

We must appropriate and reckon on God's strong hand. - It is there toward them who believe, as a locomotive may be next a line of carriages; yet there must be a coupling-iron connecting them. So you must trust God's strength, and avail yourself of it, and yield to it. Remember that His arm is not shortened, nor His hand paralyzed, except our unbelief and sin intercept and hinder the mighty working of His Power.

And Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the seashore - Exodus 14:30

What a relief that morning brought from the anxieties of the previous night! Then, as they lifted up their eyes, they saw Pharaoh and the dreaded Egyptian taskmaster in full pursuit; now they beheld the seashore strewn with their bodies, stark and cold. They would never see them again, nor hear the crack of their whips.

So in life we are permitted to see the dreaded temptations and evils of earlier days suddenly deprived of all power to hurt us. The Egyptians are dead upon the shore; and we see the great work of the Lord. Let us take comfort in this.

In the pressure of trial. - You are suffering keenly; yet remember that no trial is allowed to come from any source in which there is not a Divine meaning. Nothing can enter your life, of which God is not cognizant, and which He does not permit. Though the pressure of your trial is almost unbearable, you will one day see your Egyptians dead.

Amid the temptations of the great adversary of sauls. - They may seem at this moment more than you can bear; but God is about to deliver you. He can so absolutely free you from the habits of self-indulgence which you have contracted, and from the perpetual yielding to temptation to which you have been prone, that some day you will look with amazement and thankfulness on these things, as Egyptians dead on the seashore.

So also in the presence of death. - Many believers dread, not the after-death, but the act of dying. But as the morning of eternity breaks, they will awake with songs of joy to see death and the grave and all the evils that they dreaded, like Egyptians, strewn on the shores of the sea of glass.

The waters were made Sweet - Exodus 15:25

OUR joys and sorrows, like the varied products of nature, lie very close together. One moment we are singing the joyous song of victory on the shores of the Red Sea, and vow we will never again mistrust our God; and then, by a sudden transition, we find ourselves standing beside the Marah waters of pain and disappointment, inclined to murmur at our lot.

There is, however, a tree, which, when cast into the waters, makes them sweet. It is the tree of the cross. "He bare our sins in His own body on the tree." The cross means the yielding up of the will. Now, it is in proportion as we see God's will in the various events of life, and surrender ourselves either to bear or do it, that we shall find earth's bitter things becoming sweet, and its hard things easy.

We must yield our will to God. - The secret of blessedness is in saying "Yes" to the will of God, as it is shown in the circumstances of our lot or the revelations of His Word. It is the will of a Father whose love and wisdom are beyond question.

We must accept what He permits. - It may be that our pains emanate from the malevolence or negligence of others; still, if He has permitted them, they are His will for us. By the time they reach us they have become minted with His die, and we must patiently submit.

We must do all He bids. - The thread of obedience must always be running through our hands. At all costs to our choice and feeling we must not only have His commands, but keep them. Our Lord perpetually lays stress on obeying His words. This is the spirit of the Cross, and the properties of this tree sweeten earth's bitterest sorrows. "Disappointments become His appointments.

A day's Portion every day - Exodus 16:4

It is said that the twenty-four hours should be divided thus: Eight hours for work, eight for rest, eight for recreation, food, etc. There should be a counterpart of this in Christian living. Each day there should be a portion for work, a portion for restful meditation and sitting before the Lord, and a portion for the gathering of God's manna.

Each day brings its own work. - God has created us for good works, and has prepared our pathway, so that we may come to them one by one. He has apportioned to each one some office to fulfill, some service to render, some function in the mystical body of our Lord. It is comforting to know that we have not to scheme for ourselves, but to look up for guidance into the Divine plan.

Each day brings its own difficulties. - God spreads them over our days, giving each day only what we can sustain. The servant girl might be startled were she told that she would have to carry the coals, which it has taken two horses and a great cart to bring to her master's door; but she will be comforted by being reminded that they will be borne upstairs only a coal scuttle full at a time.

Each day brings its own supply. - No Israelite could point to his store of manna and congratulate himself that he was proof against any famine that might befall. The lesson of daily trust for daily bread was constantly being enforced; for as the day came the manna fell. Those who followed the cloud were always certain of their sustenance. Where the cloud brooded the manna fell. Whatever any day may bring there always will be within reach of you, lying ready prepared on the sands of the desert, just what you require. Go forth and carry it; there will be no lack.

I will stand before thee upon the rock in Horeb, and then shall smite the rock - Exodus 17:6

HERE is a beautiful example of the cooperation between God and His servants in providing for the needs of His people. Clearly the smiting of the rock was a very small item in this incident, the main consideration was what God was doing in the heart of the earth. But the two wrought together: Moses in the eyes of the people, God in hidden depths. Similarly we are fellow workers with God.

One of the greatest revelations that can come to any Christian worker is the realization that in every act of Christian ministry there are two agents, God and man: that God does not need to be implored to help us, but wants us to help Him; that our part is the very unimportant and subsidiary one of smiting the rock, whilst His is the Divine and all important part of making the waters flow.

Did Moses go to the rock that day weighted with care, his brow furrowed with the anxiety of furnishing a river of which his people might drink? Certainly not; he had only to smite: God would do all the rest, and had pledged Himself to it. So, Christian worker, you have been worrying as though the whole weight of God's inheritance were upon you, but you are greatly mistaken; smiting is very easy work.

In every congregation and religious gathering the Holy Spirit is present, eager to glorify Christ, and to pour out rivers of living water for thirsty men; believe this. See that you are spiritually in a right condition, that He may be able to ally you with Himself. Keep reckoning on Him to do His share; and when the river is flowing, be sure not to take the praise.

"We are workers together with God."

And God command thee so - Exodus 18:23

It was good and sound advice that Jethro gave his son-in-law. It could hardly have been better. It is always better to set one hundred men to work than attempt to do the work of one hundred men. There is no greater art in the world than to develop the latent capacities of those around us by yoking them to useful service. But good though the advice obviously was, Jethro carefully guarded Moses against adopting it, unless the Lord had been consulted, and had commanded it.

Let us test human advice. - There are plenty of voices that advise us, and each has some nostrum for our health, some direction for our path. Some are true guides, whom God has sent to us, as Jethro to Moses. Often an on-looker can see mistakes we are making, and can suggest something better. But we are wise to get alone into the holy presence of God, and ask what He commands, what is His will.

Let us test human teachings. - So full is the world of voices, so bewildering the din of religious schools and sects! The Apostle was justified in advising us to prove all things, and to try the spirits, whether they were of God. There are four tests for truth: what glorifies Christ; what humbles the flesh; what is in accord with the Word of God; and what has stood the trial of Christian experience in the past.

There is no teacher like God, and we may always detect His voice. It is small and still; it casts down imagination, and brings our thoughts into the captivity of Jesus; it is definite and distinct. When there is an indistinct murmur of many sounds along the wire, you may be sure that you are not in communication with your Father's person. When He speaks, there is no mistaking His voice or His will.

A peculiar Treasure unto Me - Exodus 19:5

OUR Saviour told of a man who, in ploughing his field, heard his ploughshare chink against buried treasure, and hastened to sell all that he had in order to buy it. In speaking thus, He pictured Himself as well as us. He found us before we found Him. The treasure is His people, to purchase whom He gave up all that He had, even to His throne (Mat 13:44). "Ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light" (1Pe 2:9, R. V.).

Where his treasure is, there is a man's heart. If it is in ships on the treacherous sea, he tosses restlessly on his bed, solicitous for its safety. If it is in fabrics, he guards against moth; if in metal, against rust and thieves. And is Christ less careful for His own? Does He not guard with equal care against all that would deteriorate our value in His esteem? Need we fear the thief? Will not the Only-begotten keep us, so that the evil one shall not touch us (Mat 6:19-20)?

God's treasure is His forever. "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in the day that I do make, even a peculiar treasure." He will hold His own, as men cling to their treasure, binding it about their loins, in a storm at sea (Mal 3:17, R. V.).

Let us mind the conditions: to obey His voice, and keep His covenant; then on eagles' wings He will bring us to Himself. Compliance with these is blessed in its results. God regards us with the ecstasy of a love that rejoices over us with singing; and counts on us as a mother on her child, a miser on His gold.

The thick darkness where God was - Exodus 20:21

GOD is light, and dwells in light, but it is mercifully veiled to the weak eye of man. This is why Christ spake in parables - that seeing, they might not see. As Moses veiled his face when he spake to the people, so God veils Himself in the flesh of Jesus, in which He tabernacles; and in the mysteries of His providence,

beneath which He conceals a smiling face. The Sun of Righteousness in whose beams we rejoice must needs hide beneath the cloud, else we should fall at His feet as dead. It may be that His light seems to us darkness, because of its excessive brilliance; but God dwells in the thick darkness - clouds and darkness are round about. Him.

The darkness of mystery. - God has still His hidden secrets, hidden from the wise and prudent. Do not fear them; be content to accept things you cannot understand; wait patiently. Presently He will reveal to you the treasures of darkness, the riches of the glory of the mystery. Mystery is only the veil on God's face.

The darkness of trial. - Do not be afraid to enter the cloud that is settling down on your life. God is in it. The other side is radiant with His glory. "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings."

The darkness of desertion. - When you seem loneliest and most forsaken, God is nighest. Jesus once cried "Forsaken," and immediately after, "Father." God is in the dark cloud. Plunge into the blackness of its darkness without flinching - under the shrouding curtain of His pavilion you will find God awaiting you.

With an awl - Exodus 21:6

THE Hebrew slave who meant perpetual consecration of service had to lose a little blood. It was a disagreeable and not wholly painless process, by which his vows were ratified and rendered permanent. But not otherwise could he serve forever. That awl represents the nail that affixed Christ to the cross, and we must expect it in every true act of consecration. For want of it so many seem to go through that supreme act, and shortly after go back from it, bringing discredit and shame upon the teaching they had eagerly welcomed. There are two stages in the Christian life: that in which we serve with the spirit of a slave, and that in which we freely yield ourselves to serve our Master forever. This is the service represented by the pierced ear.

The awl spiritually means the humiliation and pain with which we surrender the self-life. We are tempted to consecrate ourselves in our own energy; to resolve on the devout life in the strength of our own resolution; to say, "I will serve Christ utterly." We avoid the awl which deprives us of our own energy, which is applied to us by the hand of another, and which makes us helpless and self-emptied, that God may become all in all. In your case the awl may be the daily fret of some uncongenial associate; the pressure of loss and anxiety for the sake of Jesus; the humiliation of your pride by perpetual sense of failure. Whatever it be, welcome all that binds you to His cross, because through death you live.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

He shall make Restitution - Exodus 22:5

THIS chapter is full of restitution, of which there is far too little in ordinary Christian life. We try to make amends for injury done to another by an extraordinary amount of civility; but we are reluctant in so many words to frankly confess that we have done wrong, and make proper reparation for the act or speech. We often excuse ourselves by the thought that we were fully justified in speaking or acting as we did, whereas we may behave ourselves wrongly in courses of conduct which are themselves legitimate.

Loosing a beast into another man's field (Exodus 22:5). - We may through our carelessness allow another to suffer detriment. The beast ought not to have been thus allowed to stray; and, as we let it loose, we should make amends for our carelessness in respect to our brother's interests. We wrong another not only by what we do, or permit to be done, but in what we carelessly fail to do.

Kindling a fire (Exodus 22:6). - The tongue is a spark that kindles a great matter. If we drop firebrands and lighted matches in the inflammable material of a circle of gossip, we should make amends to the person whose character may have been thereby injured.

Borrowed goods (Exodus 22:14). - To return a house, a book, a horse, in the state in which we received it, fair wear and tear excepted, or to make good any injury, should be a commonplace of Christian morality. Trustees are responsible for not making due inquiry into risky investments. Each is his brother's keeper. If we remember at the prayer-hour that he has aught against us, let us seek him, and confess, and restore.

An enemy unto thine enemies - Exodus 23:22

It is a most helpful thought that the angel of the covenant in whom is God's name, always precedes us. In our march through the wilderness we perceive His form, which is viewless to others, and realize that His strong hand prepares our path. Let us be very careful not to grieve or disobey Him, lest we lose His mighty championship. Strict obedience to His slightest whisper secures the certainty of His vindication of us from the wrongs we suffer at the hands of our foes. A little further on the same voice promises to send a hornet before the chosen host (Exodus 23:28). He who is an angel to the saint is a hornet to his foes. A swarm of hornets is the most relentless and irresistible foe that man can face.

Have you enemies? Be sure that they hate you only for the truth's sake, and because darkness must always be in antagonism to light. "Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled." But see to it that you cherish no spirit of hatred or retaliation toward them. Think of the misery of their heart, which is full of jealousy, envy, and bitterness. Pity and pray for them.

When we are right with God we shall have many new enemies. All who hate Him will hate us. But this is rather to our credit than otherwise. Those who have defamed the master of the household will be hostile to his servants. But when our cause is one with God's, and His foes ours, our foes are His, and He deals with them; He stands between us and their hate. He will not leave us in their hands; He will give us vindication and deliverance.

They beheld God, and did eat and drink - Exodus 24:11

It is a beautiful combination, which we should do well to emulate.

Some eat and drink, and do not behold God. - They are taken up with the delights of sense. Their one cry, as the children of this world, is, What shall we eat, what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed? But the God in whose hand their breath is and whose are all their ways, they do not glorify. Let us beware; it was of Christian professors that the Apostles said, Their god is their belly.

Some behold God, and do not eat and drink. - They look on God with such awful fear that they isolate Him from the common duties of life. They draw a strict line between the sacred and secular, between Sunday and weekday, between God's and their own. This divorce between religion and daily life is fatal to true religion, which was meant to be the bond between the commonest details of life and the service of God.

Some behold God, and eat and drink. - They turn from the commonest avocations to look up into His face. They glorify God in their body as well as in their spirit. They obey the apostle's injunction, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." Oh for the grace to be able to combine the vision of God with every common incident - to live always beneath His eye in the unrestrained gladness of little children in their Father's presence!

Never a trial that He is not there,

Never a burden that He doth not bear;

Never a sorrow that He doth not share -

Moment by moment I'm under His care.

According to all that I show thee, even so shall ye make it - Exodus 25:9

IT was clear that God would only be responsible for the material that was needed for His plan. If Moses, or the people, insisted on putting in more than was in his original plan, they would have to bear the anxiety of securing the stuff. This is our mistake. We incur responsibilities that God does not put on us; we burden our hearts with anxiety and care because we insist on introducing so many items into our daily life, which would not have been there if we had but been content with God's pattern, and acquiesced in His programme.

This injunction is repeated in four different passages, showing the importance with which God regards it. Indeed, to be on God's plan is the only place of rightness, safety, and joy.

It is presented in the human life of Jesus. We are to walk as He walked. Having been called according to His purpose, let us never rest content with anything less than being conformed to the image of God's Son.

God's plan in our character. - It is presented in the human life of Jesus. We are to walk as He walked. Having been called according to His purpose, let us never rest content with anything less than being conformed to the image of God's Son.

God's plan in our Christian service. - Not seeking to resemble some other devoted life; but endeavoring to be as God would have us, the embodiment of His thought, the expression of His conception. Then our efforts will be crowned with success, and we shall bear much fruit to the glory of God.

God's plan for every day. - He has prepared a scheme for the employment of every hour, and will show it to us by the indication of His Spirit, or by the trend of circumstances. Let us abide in Him, doing nothing that He does not teach, doing all He does. So life will become a tabernacle, in which the Shekinah will shine and sacrifices be offered.

The vail shall divide unto you - Exodus 26:33

That vail was rent when Jesus died, the Holy Ghost signifying that from that moment access was free into the Holiest. All believers are now welcome to draw near and live in the perpetual presence of God, their Father, even as Jesus did in His earthly life, and as He does in the Heaven of Heavens. This is the clear teaching of Heb 10:19-22 : - " Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, His flesh; and having a High Priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance

of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water."

But there is a deeper significance still. The new and living way was opened through the rending of the flesh of Jesus Christ. As His flesh was rent on the Cross, the Temple veil was rent from the top to the bottom. And it is only when we have chosen the cross, with its shame and death, as the lot of our self-life, that we can enter into that immediate fellowship with God, which is described as "within the veil."

How many there are who never get beyond that dividing veil! They know the brazen altar of Atonement, the laver of daily washing, the golden altar of intercession; but they are never admitted to that blessed intimacy of communion which sees the Shekinah glory between the cherubim and blood-sprinkled mercy-seat.

O Spirit of God, apply the blood to sprinkle our consciences, and the water to cleanse the habits of our daily life; and lead us where our Forerunner and Priest awaits us.

Pure olive oil beaten for the Light - Exodus 27:20

THE saintly McCheyne used to say, when urging his brother ministers to diligent preparation for the pulpit: "Beaten oil for the sanctuary." And he strove never to present to his people truth which had not been beaten out by careful devout meditation.

But there is yet another thought. That lamp in the Holy Place was an emblem of the testimony of the Church, that is, of believers. As the incense table was a type of their aspect toward God, as intercessors, so the seven-branched candlestick was a type of their aspect toward the world, as luminaries. In the Book of Revelation the Lord compares His churches to candlesticks: "the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches."

The oil is, of course, as always in Scripture, a type of the Holy Spirit. He in us is the only source of light-bearing. But the beaten oil reminds us of the chastisement and discipline through which alone our best testimony can be given. The persecutions of the Church have always been the times when she has given her fairest, brightest witness to the Redeemer. The sufferings of believers have ever led to the tenderest, strongest words for the Master, whether by the sick bed or in the hospital ward. That brokenness of spirit, which is the surest mark of mature work of God in the heart, is also a rare condition of light-giving. The more beaten and broken you are, in poverty of spirit, the purer will be the heavenly ray of love and light which will shine forth from your life; and it is the purpose of God that you should be "blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Phi 2:15).

A golden bell and a pomegranate - Exodus 28:34

The robe of the high priest's ephod was of blue, the color of heaven, of deep lakes, of the glacier-crevasse, of the gentian and forget-me-not. On the hem of the robe were these alternate bells and pomegranates.

Those skirts may illustrate our own position. - We dare not take a high place near the head or arm; but, thank God, there is a place for each of us at the skirt, near the foot; and the holy oil will reach us there, for the Psalmist tells us that it descended even to the skirts of the high priest's robe. It is a blessed thought, that we may receive the droppings of each anointing that falls on the head of Jesus.

But the anointing of the Holy Ghost always shows itself in sweetness and fruitfulness; the sweetness of the golden bell, tinkling with every movement, and the fruitfulness of the pomegranate.

We must be sweet, as well as fruitful - Too many Christian workers are over-tired and overwrought; they are peevish and fretful. When they come back from meetings on which they have bestowed their last energies, they are neither sweet nor gentle to the home-circle, which has been so lonesome during their absence.

We must be fruitful, as well as sweet. - True religion is not a mere sentimentality; it is strong, healthy, helpful, fruit-bearing. Some seem to think that to attend moving meetings, to be profuse in emotional tears and smiles, to make profuse use of the word dear, is to touch the high-water mark; let them learn that the worth of our life is measured by its influence on others, and its bearing fruit, which has in it the seed of reproduction. "Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit."

Thou shall wash them with water - Exodus 29:4

THIS chapter tells of the consecration to their high office of Aaron and his sons. The entire family is constantly joined thus together as one in God's sight. Similarly, Christ and His house - which is ourselves, who believe - are one. We too must be sprinkled by the blood on ear and thumb and toe, as those who have been redeemed. We too must be consecrated and anointed; and there must be the cleanliness of which these words speak.

This is where so many have erred; they have sought consecration, anointing, and the priestly office; but have not remembered that their bodies must first be washed with pure water.

We must be clean in our habits. - If there is anything in our daily behavior which is not quite clean, it must be put away. There seems some incongruity between the anointing of the Holy Ghost and the smell of spirits or fumes of tobacco. Any excessive indulgence of the flesh, even in legitimate directions, and all indulgence in wrong ones, are inconsistent with the life of consecration.

We must be cleansed in our thoughts. - Whenever temptation is suggested, even though it is still in the far distance, we must turn from it with loathing, and ask that the blood of Jesus may go on cleansing hour by hour. "Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee."

We must be cleansed in our intentions. - The self-life recedes as it is driven from the outworks of our nature, and goes deeper into the motives and springs of action. We discover that self is the spring of so much of our religious activity. Everywhere we need the laver, the hourly washing of John 13.

Upon the flesh of man shall it not be poured - Exodus 30:32

WHAT perpetual references to the work of the Holy Spirit, under the symbol of the Anointing Oil, meet us in these chapters. It becomes us to ask ourselves very seriously whether we lay an equal stress on it in our daily experience. Is it true of us, as of those to whom the Beloved Apostle wrote, that the anointing which we received abideth in us? It is not enough to have the Spirit in us for sanctification; He must be on us for service and ministry.

But He cannot come on the flesh of the natural man; He descends only to those who are washed, consecrated, set apart for God. Many claim the Holy Spirit's anointing, and try to reckon they have

received it; but they find it fail, because they desire it for the flesh.

There must be no yielding to fleshly appetite. - When we were in the flesh, sinful passions wrought in our members. But there must be no permission given in these directions. A calm, reverent, self-disciplined nature is alone fitted to be the seat of the Holy Ghost, His nest and home.

There must be no gratification to worldly pride and ambition. - Too many are eager for the Holy Ghost, that they may be able to make a name, or gather an audience; but God is not likely to give us His river of throne-water to turn the mill-wheels of personal ambition.

There must be no fleshly striving after it. - We wrestle and struggle to win the Spirit, and miss Him. It is only when our hope of attaining this blessing by our own efforts dies down, and we are humbled and broken before God; when we cry out to Him to give what we cannot win, that He draws near and gives the best of all His donations.

I have called by name Bezaleel - Exodus 31:2

WE lightly speak of a man's occupation as his calling, and fail to realize the profound significance of the phrase. One man is called to the ministry; another to the bar; others, like Bezaleel and Aholiab, to work in all manner of workmanship. Each should realize, therefore, that faculty, desire, circumstance, constitute a Divine call, and that there may be as distinct a vocation in the merchant's office, the tradesman's shop, or in the work of a domestic servant, as in the Church itself.

The morning bell that summons us to daily duty is the call of our Father, bidding us to engage in the toils to which He has assigned us. He, who gave Moses the plan, gave the artificers the power to work it in gold, silver, brass, and wood. Let this be your faith; and each morning, as you go to your work, however distasteful it may be, say, "God has called me to this; and He will fill me with all the strength, wisdom, and grace, that I need for its right-doing."

Abide in your calling, - Unless it is a wrong or dishonorable one, it is better to stay in it than to become restless and changeable; and if you must leave it, wait for God to open another door.

Find in God the makeweighl to all the deficiencies of your life. - If you are enslaved by daily duty, remember that in Christ you are free; if free from daily toil, in Christ you are a slave. The supply of every deficiency, the rectification of every hardship, is to be found in Jesus.

Mind to do all for God. - To do all in God and for Him, remembering that He sees and accepts all, not according to the results accomplished, but to the heavenly and holy motives that prompt the worker - this is to be blessed.

Peradventure I shall make an Atonement for your sin - Exodus 32:30

THE heart of Moses was full of that great, wonderful new word, Atonement. For many days God had been telling him about it, and speaking it over and over to his heart. He seemed, however, to feel that no ordinary sacrifices would avail: the blood of goats and bulls would surely be insufficient to put away the black transgression into which Israel had fallen. But there was rising in his heart a resolve, to which he gave expression when he returned to God: "Blot me, I pray thee, out of the book which Thou hast written." He did not realize that his blood would not avail, but that the blood of Christ, who should, in the fullness of times, offer Himself without spot to God, alone could put away sin.

In every heart there is a deep conviction of the necessity of an Atonement. - This is the source of the temples, altars, and sacrifices, which have marked the history of every nation under heaven. Man has felt as by a natural instinct that some reparation was necessary to the broken law.

The insufficiency of animal sacrifice. - In the Levitical system there was a remembrance of sin made year by year; but the sin itself could not be purged by such rites. The fact that the worshippers so constantly came back to offer their sacrifices shows that they were not assured. The priests always stood- their attitude was an emblem of an unfinished work.

The sufficiency of Christ's Atonement. - He was willing to be cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of His people; and because He died, there is no longer the " - " which in Moses' prayer speaks of uncertainty; but a blessed assurance that we are at one with God, with each other, and with all holy beings.

In a Cleft of the Rock - Exodus 33:22

THAT rock was Christ. In the Divine thought the position of Moses, first on the rock, and afterward in its cleft, was a moving emblem of the position in which alone we can dare to look out on the sublime progress of God's glory.

God is always passing by. - In the great movements of history which evolve His plans, and are leading to Christ's advent; in the passage of the ages, which are His swift chariots; in storm and catastrophe, which break up old forces and forms of evil; in the goodness of His daily mercy; in the revelation of His character - we are always living in the very midst of God's presence and power.

In our condition of weakness and sinfulness we need a position of stability and shelter from which to look on God. - No man can see that face of awful holiness and love and live. Sir John Herschel says that when sweeping the heavens with his telescope the brilliant Sirius suddenly burst on his view, he nearly fainted. Who then could behold God! But in Jesus, we are stable, established in Him, accepted in the Beloved; and in Him we are covered. The full blaze of the Divine glory is tempered to our gaze; it comes to us through the medium of the pierced hand. We stand on the rock; we are hidden under the covering hand.

Our Rock was cleft. - How scarred are the great Alps! Their sides have been split by the action of tempest, avalanche, earthquake, frost, and glacier. Hence their clefts. But who shall enumerate all that has been borne by our dear Lord for us! What storms have pelted on Him, that we might have a safe hiding. On Calvary, a niche was hollowed in which a world of sinners may take shelter!

Moses wist not - Exodus 34:29

UNCONSCIOUSNESS of goodness is always a main element in the highest forms of goodness: in the same way that unconsciousness is characteristic of the worst forms of depravity. "Samson wist not that the Lord had departed from him."

Directly people become conscious of their superiority to others, and boast of it, it is certain that they have never really seen the beauty of God's holiness, and have no clear knowledge of the condition of their own hearts. They see that they have been cleansed from their old sins; but they do not perceive that the spirit of selfishness has retreated into the springs of motive and intention.

We are all tempted to this terrible self-consciousness. We are proud of being humble, complacent for being lowly, self-congratulatory because we take back-seats. In all this we betray the vanity of our pretensions. This sort of goodness is like a thin veneer of mahogany on very common deal.

The real goodness is more conscious of the remaining evil than of the acquired good; of the lingering darkness than of the hilltops smitten with the dawn; of that which has not been attained. But we can only attain this blessed condition by intimate and prolonged, fellowship with God, in solitudes where human voices and interests cease to distract. The brightness of which Moses was unconscious was caught from the Presence-chamber of the Divine Loveliness. Ah, what patterns are seen on the Mount! What cries are uttered there! What visions are seen there! What revelations are made there! What injunctions are received there! Oh for the closer access, the nearer view, the more intimate face to face intercourse, such as is open still to the friends of God!

Go work all manner of workmanship - Exodus 35:35

THERE was an infinite variety in the contributions made to the Tabernacle, from the precious jewels of the rulers to the acacia wood of the poor, and the goats' hair of the women. The completed structure was a monument of the united gifts, handicrafts, and gems of the entire people. But in all there was the unity of the spirit, and plan, and devotion.

In the Church and the world there is a work for each of us to do. - It may be a very humble part in the great factory - like minding the lift, or stoking the furnace, or fetching materials for the more skilled operatives; but there is a berth for each willing worker, if only the will and way of God are diligently sought and followed.

This work is suited to our special powers. - He who prepares the work for the worker, prepares the worker for the work. Whenever God gives us a task to fulfill, it is because He sees in us faculties for its successful and happy accomplishment, in cooperation with Himself. It is a mistake then to turn back daunted by difficulty and opposition. As Caleb and Joshua said of the possessors of Canaan, "We be well able to overcome them."

We must bring our resources and powers to God. - Willing hearts were summoned to bring their offerings to the Lord. The maker of a musical instrument knows best how to develop its waiting music, and He who created and endowed us can make the most of us. Let us not work for Him; but yield ourselves to His hand, and our members as instruments of righteousness for His service. We may differ from all others in the special character of our work; but it matters not, so long as God effects through us His purpose in our creation.

Much more than enough - Exodus 36:5

This is always God's way. No words could better express the Imperial measure and standard of His dealings with His people. When He calls us out, as He did Moses, Bezaleel, and Aholiab, and entrusts us with His plan; and when we are careful to work out His specifications; He always makes more than enough provision for all our need.

The redemption in Christ Jesus. - Where sin abounded grace did much more abound. The topmost bills were covered by the waters of the deluge, and the Alpine heights of human rebellion were more than atoned for when Jesus died. Grace overtops sin.

God's ability to answer prayer. - He does exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. We ask great things, and secretly think that if God were to give only a fraction, we would be thankful. How we straiten Him! He cannot do much because of our unbelief! He yearns to do not only enough, but much more than enough for us. See His prodigality in nature: its enamelled shells, its profusion of flowers, its swarming life.

In daily provision for spirit, soul, and body. - Give, and it shall be given to you, good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over. God is not niggard. If He withholds, it is that we may cling to the Giver rather than the gift. But for the most part, He gives all things richly to enjoy. He opens His hand, and satisfies. Whatever thy need, God has much more than enough to meet it. He has riches of grace and of glory. Trust Him, obey Him, appropriate thy share in thy Father's rich provision. Weak and needy as thou art, there is much more than enough strength in God to perfect what concerns thee.

A mercy-seat of pure gold - Exodus 37:6

THIS was the Propitiatory. Beneath it lay the tables of the law, which even Moses had broken, almost as soon as they came into his hands, but which had been renewed. Concealing and covering them lay this golden lid, encrusted with the blood which successive generations of priests sprinkled there on the Great Day of Atonement.

There can be no doubt that this golden slab sets forth our Saviour's obedience unto death. God set Him forth to be "the Propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

Our Lord's obedience is priceless in the Divine esteem. - What pure gold is among metals, that is His advent to do God's will, in comparison with all other endeavors to do it. It takes the first place, and is of peerless beauty and excellence. "Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered."

His obedience was to blood. - His wounds tell the story. He held nothing back; but yielded all to blood-shedding. Blood is life, and life is in the Blood: this He freely poured out to meet the claims of justice, and herein gave the sublimest token of His love.

His person and work are the medium of our approach. - In Jesus the Shekinah of God's presence awaits us. On this priceless mercy-seat the Divine Fire trembles, and we may draw near with boldness. We are beloved children; but let us never forget that we are redeemed sinners.

There is a place where Jesus sheds

The oil of gladness on our heads;

A place than all beside more sweet -

It is the blood-stained Mercy-seat.

The laver of the mirrors of the serving-women - Exodus 38:8

THIS was a good use to put these mirrors to. The women were so deeply interested in the work which was afoot, that they counted no sacrifice too great. But the main suggestion for ourselves is the wisdom of renouncing self-inspection.

The mirror speaks of self-scrutiny. - We are constantly holding up the mirror to our tuner life, studying its mechanism and operations. Our fingers often on our pulse; the attention of the soul turned back on itself; the study of symptoms carried to the grievous extent of inducing the diseases which we dread. Of course, where there is evident mischief at work, we do well to take heed; but we must guard against a morbid self-anatomy, a perpetual analysis of motive and intention, an inwardness which diverts our attention from the person of Christ and the performance of duty.

The evils of self-scrutiny. - If we look clown into the depths of our own nature, we miss the face of Jesus. To consider self is to become involved in a maze of perplexities and disappointments. The disease cannot be cured by ceaselessly pondering its symptoms. The soul cannot lift the soul. Self can never expel the spirit of self.

Its cure. - These women became so interested in the service of the Tabernacle that they were weaned from their mirrors. The better expelled the worse; the higher cast out the lower. Go out of yourself, find some work to do for God and man; seek in the laver the removal of the strains of human sin; find your centre in God and His plans; and you will abandon the habit of morbid self-scrutiny. For every look at self, take ten at Christ: He "healeth all thy diseases."

Holy to the Lord - Exodus 39:30

ZECHARIAH tells us that these words were to be written on the bells of the horses. The sacred inscription, which stood on the brow of Aaron, designating his separation to his sublime office, was to become incorporated with the business of the farm and city, where burdens were borne and heavy weights drawn with difficulty. The inscription befits all bells that ring in the home, the shop, the factory. We are to be God's priests everywhere.

The priest was separated from all impurity. We must be in the world, but separate from its sin. When evil threatens us from a distance, we must be sensitive to its approach, and quick to put the

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