

# *Living Water* — Issue No.8

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## WHAT CHRIST HAS BEEN MADE

**“Made some little inferior to angels” (Hebrews 2:5-10)**

I know that in this company there is a very real interest in Christ and in what belongs to Christ and so it is a privilege to speak of this wonderful Person to an appreciative audience. Would to God that we all go away from this meeting enriched in our souls, built up in our faith, and strengthened in our love for our Saviour.

Come with me to Hebrews chapter 1. Young christians, get your mind filled with Hebrews chapter 1. It tells us of the greatness of the person of the Son; I cannot recommend any better literature to you. If you want to advance in your soul, in your knowledge of Christ, I would commend three scriptures to you: John's gospel chapter 1; Colossians chapter 1; and Hebrews chapter 1. They exalt the greatness of the Son of God. Hebrews chapter 1 tells us that in what ever way God has spoken before, “at the end of these days [He] has spoken to us in the person of the Son”. My friend, there is no more to be said. It has all been said in God's own beloved Son. “Whom He has established heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds”. Not only this world but the universe; the Person who came to die for me made the whole universe. He upholds “all things by the word of his power”. All the galaxies are held in position by this power. He was higher than the angels, but in Hebrews 2 we learn that He was “made some little inferior to angels”. What a sight it must have been for the angels when they saw that Babe lying in the manger. He was “made some little inferior to angels”. That is my first impression, to lay on your heart and soul that He came down from the highest point of glory to Bethlehem's manger. What a stoop! Does it move you? To think that He came into this world to fulfil totally the will of God.

He came to die! He came down from highest glory into a world full of corruption and woe. He was “made some little inferior to angels on account of the suffering of death”. Which of the angels had blood to shed for your redemption and mine? None of them! Mighty beings though they are and able to accomplish great feats, none of them could accomplish redemption. It needed One to come from the highest realms of glory into this world to redeem us.

Are you moved in your affections when you think of the way that Jesus has come into this world that we might be redeemed?

We went to Chartwell earlier today, where Winston Churchill used to live. We saw some of the many honours that had been bestowed upon him by various countries, universities and cities, all of them given to him for what he did during his life. Jesus is crowned with glory and honour for what He did in His death! He shed His blood that we might be redeemed. He was made inferior to angels for that very purpose, that you and I might be saved for all eternity and spend eternity in the presence of a holy God with no fear that He will bring up against us any of our sins. We have each got thousands of sins but if we have trusted in Christ they are washed away in His precious blood. Are you a believer in Jesus? He came into this world to die for you. The One who was greater than angels became lower than angels to die.

#### **“Made sin” (2 Corinthians 5:17-21)**

Now come with me to 2 Corinthians chapter 5. There we read, “Him who knew not sin he has made sin for us”. As He went through this world He saw the awfulness of sin, saw the sorrow sin caused and He felt it all because He was going on to deal with it on the cross. In a way I tremble to repeat Paul’s words, “Him who knew not sin he has made sin for us”. Oh you believers here, it was for us! The root matter of sin cannot be forgiven. It has to be condemned and it has been condemned and removed from the presence of God in the death of His Son. He “condemned sin in the flesh” (Romans 8:3) in the Person of His beloved Son. Do you understand it? I cannot, but I accept it.

He was made sin. There is something very deep about this transaction. Think of what happened at the cross. There was the public scandal, the humiliation, the ignominy; there was the shame and the spitting and all those things, but His being made sin was deeper and more terrible than all that. Nobody saw it happen but I can tell you on the authority of scripture, by the Spirit of God, that He was made sin, for us!

When Jesus came into this world and saw the sorrow and the sin and the pressure on men, how He felt it in His spirit! We are told that He “wept”, that

He was "moved with compassion"; what a Man of feeling He was when here. Then at Calvary He was made sin for us. It was a transaction between God and Jesus. I cannot explain it but I thankfully accept it.

The great result is "That we might become God's righteousness in him." Is not that marvellous? We could never be made fit for the presence of God other than by the death of His Son. As believers in Jesus we can go into His presence and feel perfectly at home. You will never get stronger light than in the presence of the holiness of God Himself yet we can stand there on the basis of the righteousness that Christ has accomplished in His death for us. "That we might become God's righteousness in him." What a transaction! So you can understand why Paul says "there is a new creation". It is all possible because Jesus was made sin and took away for ever from the sight of God the root matter of sin. So sins, too, the fruit of the root, can be forgiven. What was the cry on the cross? "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Those men crucifying Christ were doing wrong; they were not coming up to God's standards, not for a minute, but He said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." God alone knew what was being done at the cross when His own dear Son was made sin. The great result is that we might become God's righteousness in Him. That is what I am resting on. Are you resting on that? Our own righteousnesses are as "filthy rags"; they are not good enough for God and never will be, no matter how hard we try, but you can rest with absolute certainty on His finished work.

#### **"Made ... both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:32-36)**

Now let us come to the Acts for there we see the real power of the gospel in operation. No one saw Jesus being made sin. No one saw Him actually rising from the tomb. That privilege was reserved for the Father Himself. The women came very early to the tomb but they were not early enough! He was risen. "Let the whole house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made him, this Jesus... both Lord and Christ", says Peter. He was not very well educated but he had power. Where did he get the power from? The risen Christ, the glorified Christ. It was the power of the Holy Spirit which had been poured out because Jesus had gone back into heaven, and had actually sat down "on the right hand of the greatness on high" (Hebrews 1:3).

Do you know what affected me today as I was meditating on this? That the Man who sits on the right hand of the Greatness, is the same Man who sat at Sychar's well, the Man who came so close to that sinful woman and showed her the path of blessing. I would like to have seen her face when she went back into the city. I think she would have had the radiance of the saved, and gloriously saved person. "Come, see a man who told me all things I had ever done" (John 4:29). He had become to her Lord and Christ.

"Let the whole house of Israel therefore know assuredly ..."—not some of the tribes, not just the privileged ones, but them all—"that God has made him, this Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." God has installed His Man in office. What a Man! What an office! Yet He is so available to you and to me. Is He your Lord? Tell me, my friend, is He really your Lord? Is He Christ to you? 'Christ' means 'the sent one', the Messiah. Do you believe in a Messiah? Some Israeli friends of ours are not sure about the Messiah. They do not think it could be a person. They like the concept but they cannot see it being a man because to them there is not a man good enough. Aye, but my Man is the Messiah. "God has made him ... Lord and Christ." Have you fallen in with the exaltation of this Person? Have you come to Him and bowed the knee to Him?

What a Person He is. If Jesus was here tonight, you and I could hardly believe how lowly He is. He "made himself of no reputation". How many troubles among christians arise because we are so concerned about our reputation! 'What will so-and-so think?' 'How will I stand...?' Oh, it is so terrible, but it is so true. Yet Jesus "made himself of no reputation". If He was here, you would love Him, but you would be amazed at how lowly He is. J. G. Deck puts it very beautifully in his hymn:

*'We wonder at Thy lowly mind,  
And fain would like Thee be,  
And all our rest and pleasure find  
In learning, Lord, from Thee'*

Is that true of you? Is Jesus Lord to you? God has made Him both Lord and Christ. He has put everything in His hands. Go to the end of the gospels and you will see what God has done with Him. "All power has been given me in heaven and upon earth" (Matthew 28:18). Everything has been given into the

hand of Jesus. Those of us who are saved, we are in the hand of Jesus. God has entrusted us to Him. Have you trusted Him with your life? Or are you still holding Him at a distance?

Does He have an effect on your way of thinking? Paul says, "we have the mind of Christ" (1 Corinthians 2:16). His mind was to go down. It is so unnatural for me to humble myself. Why? Because I have got my reputation to watch! It is sobering, in the light of the sacrificial work that He undertook, that we should still be thinking of our own ego. The man that offended God has gone from the presence of God in the cross. God is operating on a new platform, the platform of resurrection. "Let the whole house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made him, this Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Is there anyone to compare with Him? Is there anyone to equal Him? He is made both Lord and Christ. Would that our lives were moulded and governed and controlled by this Person. He has control of the physical universe and He has got the control of the lives of those that believe in Him and trust in Him and love Him and seek to serve Him. May we be among them.

### "Made unto us wisdom" (1 Corinthians 1:21-31)

Finally, I come to the epistle to the Corinthians. Paul gave a lot of time to this assembly. There were many problems but he never gave them up. Thank God he did not give them up! We have these beautiful epistles, written, you might say, mainly because of the problems in Corinth, the partisan outlook, the divisions. They were still meeting together but they were not brotherly and were marked by self-importance. Do you think you are better than somebody else because you belong to a different party from them? Oh, my friend, that is not the level that Paul would encourage. He would say, 'You know what that is, brethren? That is the wisdom of the world; that is just the empty arguing and debating of human thinking.' Where does this lead to? The place of a skull! It is the emptiness of human thinking, symbolised in the place where Jesus died, for that was the place of a skull. The Jews wanted signs; they looked for miracles. The Greeks were not so much interested in miracles; what they wanted was a good-going debate on philosophy. This comes very close home. But to us Christ is God's power and God's wisdom. I do not

want the philosophy of the Greek. I do not want the religiousness of the Jew. I want Christ.

Paul would ask the Corinthians where all their worldly wisdom was leading them. He says in effect, 'I am going to tell you the answer to it all'. The problem was, according to 1 Corinthians 1:17, "wisdom of word". So what is the solution? "The word of the cross" (1 Corinthians 1:18). That is the solution. "The word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but to us that are saved it is God's power. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and set aside the understanding of the understanding ones. Where is the wise? where scribe? where disputer of this world?". Arguments, discussions, fightings, bickerings, parties. Now Paul says, "The foolishness of God is wiser than men". I love this. "And the weakness of God is stronger than men." Where do we see it? At the cross. What a way God took to accomplish our salvation and blessing. It meant that His Son should die on the cross. There never was a spectacle of weakness like it. It is not the worldly way. Men, and women too, want to be seen as strong and powerful and clever. God has blown on the whole of that. The cross has exposed the whole of that—the "place of a skull." Now Paul reminds them that "of him are ye ...". He was made sin for us, but here He is made to us "wisdom from God". That is beautiful. "Wisdom from God".

I think of Solomon in his reign. God gave him a choice, He said, "Ask what I shall give thee" (1 Kings 3:5). Solomon requested "an understanding heart"; he asked for wisdom. Solomon's wisdom was tried. Remember the incident of the two women who came to Solomon with a baby, both claiming it as their own. How was he to decide who was telling the truth? He drew on the wisdom given him of God. He proposed to cut the child in two and so brought out the feelings of the real mother and exposed what was unreal. Let us be among those that are real in our committal to Christ.

There is nothing like the wisdom of God. It is as different from the wisdom of the world as can be. The christian's way of thinking is reversed. Instead of self-seeking, it is a race to see who can go farthest down. Jesus said, "I am in the midst of you as the one that serves" (Luke 22:27). J. N. Darby put it this way, 'Self likes to be served, and thinks itself great. Love serves, and is great'. Love does not have to be told to serve; it is spontaneous.

What Christ has been made does not stop at wisdom; "righteousness, and holiness and redemption" are added too. I think these three things are covered within the wisdom of God. First there is "Righteousness"; we have already spoken about that. "That we might become God's righteousness in him". That is the way that God has taken to make us fit for His presence. It is in Jesus. Immediately you are converted you are right with God. You do not have to wait twenty years to improve.

Next there is holiness; holiness is formed by love and is progressive. I pray that what we are saying tonight might help us all to be more holy in our lives as we are occupied with Jesus.

Lastly we come to redemption. We have spoken about the redemption of our souls already, but redemption is very comprehensive and includes the redemption of the body. That is future and we wait for it. We are going to be like Him. There is not going to be a shade of variation. The completeness of the work of Christ is wonderful. We are awaiting the redemption of the body, the complete thought, and He might come tonight. Is this your hope? It is the hope of the church. Sometimes it is forgotten by us because we are so busy thinking about other things. This is our hope; we are sealed with the Spirit until the day of redemption. Are we waiting for it? We are "complete in him" (Colossians 2:10). Completion will not be reached until that redemption is complete and we are made like Christ. What a company will be seen then, the myriads of those that have believed. You will be amazed at the people in Bromley who have believed, people that you did not know were believers, but they will be there and they will be reflecting something of the glory of Christ, the One who loved them and died for them. Let us follow Him, let us love Him, let us serve Him. What a Man He is! I have no more to add to what I have said, except to praise His glorious and most worthy name. Amen.

*Billy Cowie.*

**"Worthy is the Lamb that has been slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."**  
(Revelation 5:12).



## A HOUSEHOLD FOR THE LORD — 2

Luke	6 : 46 - 49
Genesis	18 : 1 - 5
Deuteronomy	22 : 8
Daniel	6 : 10

These scriptures each refer to a house (or tent) and I want to say something as to what the christian's house should be. I am not now referring to the bricks, mortar or the furnishings (none of which matter greatly) but to what a house should be as a place where Christ is honoured. In these scriptures there are practical exhortations for our dear young brethren who are married today in setting up a household together (and lessons for us all). The Lord Jesus draws attention in Luke 6 to something that is of more vital importance than the buildings and the furnishings and that is hearing His words and doing them. He says, 'I will show you what it is like. A man built a house on the rock and he dug and went deep.' It is quite evident that many have not done that. The history of the christian testimony shows how many have disregarded the words of the Lord, and the public position of the church in its ruin is a testimony to the departure of the church from the words of the Lord Jesus.

I would stress today that each one of us should get back to the rock, the foundation of the Lord's own words, that we should learn to build upon them, we should dig and go deep. Everything that we need for our christian pathway is contained in the Lord's ministry. When He went above He left a completed testimony that was sealed by the Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4). Everything is in the Lord's word that we need and I would exhort — and —, together with us all, to search the Lord's own ministry and to read it. In it will be found the words of salvation to which Hebrews 2 exhorts us to "give heed more abundantly" if we are going to stand the storms and the stresses of the christian way. The Lord says, "the stream broke upon that house, and could not shake it, for it had been founded on the rock." Let us get back then to the firm foundation of the words of the Lord for they are unassailable. All the power of Satan cannot prevail against the house that is built upon the Lord's own words. I commend this to each one of us.

You find in the other three scriptures certain features of the house of a christian. First of all there is a door. Abraham was sitting at his tent door in

the heat of the day when he saw some visitors coming. If you look at Hebrews 13:1 & 2 you will find that the writer calls attention to this passage. He says, "Be not forgetful of hospitality; for by it some have unawares entertained angels". What is your house for? You say, 'It is to live in.' What else is it for? It is for the enjoyment of christian fellowship together. Be prepared to entertain therefore, not only those that you might think of as important people but humble persons, and your local brethren in particular. Be hospitable towards them; learn to care for them. That is the activity of the house; that is what makes for practical christian fellowship, which we can enjoy together.

How active Abraham was; he did not leave all the work to his wife; he told her to do certain things but he did some himself. He lent his help, for a husband and wife are to be helpers together. It is a great thing to learn, as husbands, to help our wives, it will make for prosperity in the house; for happy conditions and for prosperity in the local christian company.

The next thing we read about in Deuteronomy 22 was a roof and a parapet. How important that is. No one should be damaged morally in a believer's house. If you come into the house you are to find a sphere of salvation, where the Lord's rights and all that connects with His testimony are preserved and kept in holiness. You need a parapet so that no one should fall. How much damage can be done in households that are set perhaps for other things. If we get an eye on the world and its allurements; damage will come in. Our dear brother and sister will, I believe, build a parapet round the roof so that the great treasures of christian blessings, all that the Lord has given by way of truth and light may be preserved and protected. Such preservation starts in our hearts and in our houses.

The next thing referred to is windows, in Daniel 6. What do you want windows for? You may reply, 'To let the light in', —true enough, but they are also to let the light out. The light of Christ is to shine out from our households. Daniel had windows which were open towards Jerusalem. It was his chief interest. He was in Babylon, far from his country and his home but he kept his windows open towards God's chief interest at that time. I commend that to our brethren in their prayers together. His interest was connected with God's chief interest. I commend that to our brethren and to everyone of us here, that we might have our eyes directed to God's chief interest. Keep your heart towards all the saints; keep your eyes towards "Jerusalem above" and

keep your feet in the narrow path. If you stray from it you will do damage to yourself and you may do damage to others. May the Lord help in these things, for His name's sake.

*David Bond*

## CHRIST ON HIGH

### Hebrews 12:1-3

In Hebrews it speaks of Jesus as "set down at the right hand of the throne of God". That is the place of power, the glorious supremacy of our Lord Jesus Christ. In this epistle there are four references to the Lord Jesus at God's right hand—chapters 1 and 8 and 10 and 12—different ways in which He is presented to us as the object of faith for the believer on Him. We do need an object for our faith. We need a Man for our object, not a set of teachings or doctrines. The Lord Jesus is presented to us as an object of faith for the attention of the christian down here as we go through the scene of testimony. The Lord Jesus Himself has been through this scene.

His was the pathway of the most wonderful faith. It says, "the leader and completer of faith". That is, He has set the whole thing on, He has exemplified a life of faith in God and He has completed that course. Wonderful perfection! The word 'leader' means originator or author, one who sets a thing on and completes it. How gloriously our Lord Jesus Christ has set on and completed everything that man should be in dependence upon God down here. Manhood has been beautified and adorned by our Lord Jesus Christ. God has been glorified by that blessed Man. There has been no man like Him. However many men may appear in chapter 11 of Hebrews, remarkable personages, Abel, Abraham, Moses and all the rest that are spoken of in the variety of their faith, the Lord Jesus Christ stands supreme.

We are to consider *well* it says; the word means to weigh so as to judge the value. Judge the value of this glorious, blessed Man. To look *steadfastly* on Him (again the translator's note helps) we are to look away from other things and fix our eyes exclusively on Him. How many things occupy our hearts and

attention? During the day and the week, how many other persons? This scripture is giving us an incentive, an exhortation to look away from other things and to fix our eyes on one glorious Person. I love to commend Him to you, the wonderful, glorious, blessed Man, our Lord Jesus Christ. He has gone through a scene of testing. The writer warns us here against things which entangle us and weigh us down. A brother recently said of this scripture that whilst it is a race from earth to heaven, perhaps we can say that it is a race from here to Jesus! Is it not lovely that we have a Person for the affections, to look upon and to run towards. In olden days, when they held races, the prize, the trophy, was at the finishing line. When you crossed the finishing line the trophy was there. As you run this race, there is a glorious Man to be occupied with, a Man who has gone through the trials and testing of the way.

Think of the shame—it says, He “endured the cross, having despised the shame”. Think of the endurance of our Lord Jesus Christ, the way that He has gone, the sufferings that He has undertaken, what He has borne by way of contradiction. The apostle refers to *great* contradiction from sinners against Himself that He endured. Think of the awfulness of man’s heart and man’s treatment of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord endured that. He endured the cross. What a mighty work He accomplished. There is not only what *man* caused Him to suffer, but God’s holy judgment of sin was heaped upon Him. He endured the cross! What it cost Him! How He felt those sins. How He felt the forsaking of God. How much He endured in those hours of darkness. What an object He is for our affections. The Spirit would engage us with One who has gone through and is there, crowned at God’s right hand, “set down at the right hand of the throne of God”. He has completed everything.

We are still down here. It says we are not to be weary, fainting in our minds. That is where it happens. We get fatigued in our mind, our affections get disturbed and distracted. Things may get a bit much for us; the going may be heavy. Just look to Jesus, “...looking steadfastly on Jesus the leader and completer of faith”. It is a question of whether I have judged that to be worth while, in my experience, whether I have found *Him* to be enough for my affections. Surely He is. He will fill our affections for all eternity. May He fill our affections tonight, this glorious Person, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Leader and Completer of faith.

*Malcolm Wallach*

## THE HOLY SPIRIT

O who has seen the glory of the holy place within  
Where Jesus Christ has entered, having made an end of sin?  
Or who has heard that greeting of the Father for the Son  
When the pathway all was over and the will of God was done?

O who has seen the mansions, where the sons are yet to dwell,  
The richness of the favour of the Father's house to tell?  
Who else could know the feelings, or express them, who but One,  
The Spirit of the Father and the Spirit of the Son?

And who unto the church can make those holy secrets known?  
O, blessed Holy Spirit, none but Thou, and Thou alone.  
None else can tell the rapture of the joy that's gone before,  
Nor yet the coming glory. — Holy Spirit we adore.

Doris Markham

## THE LOVE OF JESUS

Jesus' love it was that led Him,  
Steadfast on to Calvary's tree,  
To secure from Satan's thralldom,  
Those He loved, with Him to be.

Jesus' love it is that guides us,  
Ever on our pilgrim way,  
And we only prove it sweeter,  
On a dark and dreary day.

Jesus, soon we shall behold Thee,  
In that scene of brightest light,  
Jesus, Thou the Same, unchanging,  
Our blest theme, and heaven's delight.

Joy we now to stand here for Thee,  
Thee whom men despise, deride.  
Keep us, Saviour, ever cleaving,  
Closely to Thy piercéd side.

David Bass

## THE GIFT OF THE SPIRIT

(An extract from the letters of Lady Powerscourt)

### Background

The short extract which follows is typical of the depth of feeling and understanding of spiritual things which shine out in so many of her letters.

May 30<sup>th</sup> 1828

.... It is said, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Then, since we are sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, we are led by the Spirit. What a gift is this Spirit! The Comforter which shall abide with us for ever. Not only shall He teach us things freely given us of God, but He shall seal us as His—an earnest of our inheritance—will not suffer sin to have dominion over us: shall dwell in us as a well of water springing up into everlasting life—upwards, in love, joy, peace; overflowing, scattering round, in long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance. What better confidence can we have that we are His, than having been delivered from the spirit of bondage, and given the spirit of adoption? His Father our Father; His God our God .....

Theodosia Powerscourt

## THE CONVERSION OF A KERRY SHEPHERD

On a cold February night J. N. Darby received a call from a man whom he did not know. The man said he had come at this late hour because he had a son who was ill and he feared that he was dying and he wanted Darby to come and see him. Together they went out into the winter weather and after about an hour of difficult walking they came to the cottage where the man lived. On entering he found the youth huddled on a bed of straw in the corner of the room. Darby wrote:—

I approached, and saw a lad of about seventeen or eighteen years of age evidently in a state of extreme suffering and exhaustion, and it was to be feared in the last stage of consumption. His eyes were closed but he opened them on my approach and stared at me with a kind of wild wonder, like a frightened animal.

I told him as quietly as possible who I was, and for what purpose I had come, and put a few of the simplest questions to him respecting his hope of salvation. He answered nothing, he appeared totally unconscious of my meaning. On pressing him further, and speaking to him kindly, he looked up, and I ascertained from the few words he uttered that he had heard something of a God and future judgment, but he had never been taught to read. The Holy Scriptures were a sealed book to him, and he was consequently altogether ignorant of the way of salvation as revealed to us in the gospel. His mind on this subject was an utter blank.

I was struck with dismay and almost with despair. Here was a fellow creature whose immortal soul, apparently on the verge of eternity, must be saved or lost for ever; and he lay before me now, the hand of death close upon him; not a moment was to be lost and what was I to do? What way was I to take to begin to teach him, as it were at the eleventh hour, the first rudiments of christianity?

I had scarcely ever before felt such a sinking within me. I could do nothing, that I knew full well, but on the other hand God could do all; therefore I raised up my heart and besought my heavenly Father for Christ's sake to direct me in this most difficult and trying position, and to open to me by His Spirit of wisdom a way to set forth the glad tidings of salvation so as to be understood by this poor benighted wanderer. I was silent for a few minutes whilst engaged in inward prayer and gazing with deep anxiety on the melancholy object before me. It struck me that I ought to try to discover how far his intelligence in other things extended, and whether there might not be reasonable hope of his understanding me when I should commence to open to him (as I was bound to do) the gospel message of salvation. I looked down upon him with an eye of pity, which I most sincerely felt, and I thought he observed that compassionate look, for he softened towards me as I said: "My poor boy, you are very ill, I fear you suffer a great deal!"



“Yes, I have a bad cold; the cough takes away my breath and hurts me greatly”.

“Have you had this cough long?” I asked.

“Oh yes, a long time, near a year now.”

“And how did you catch it?”

“Ah” he answered, “it was about this time last year when one of the sheep went astray. My father keeps a few sheep upon the mountains and this is the way we live. When he counted them that night there was one missing, and he sent me to look for it.”

“No doubt”, I replied, “ you felt the change from the warmth of the peat fire in this close little hut, to the cold of the mountain blast.”

“Oh! that I did; there was snow upon the ground, and the wind pierced me through; but I did not mind it much, as I was so anxious to find father’s sheep.”

“And did you find it?” I asked with increasing interest.

“Oh yes, I had a long way to go, but I never stopped till I found it.”

“And how did you get it home? You had trouble enough with that too, I daresay. Was it willing to follow you back?”

“Well I did not like to trust it, and besides it was dead beat and tired, so I laid it on my shoulders and carried it home that way.”

“And were not all at home glad to see you when you returned with the sheep?”

“Sure enough they were,” he replied. “Father and mother, and the people round that heard of our loss, all came in the next morning to ask about the sheep, for the neighbours in these matters are mighty kind to each other. Sorry they were, too, to hear that I was kept out the whole night; it was morning before I got home, and the end of it was I caught this cold. Mother says I will never be better now, God knows best; anyways I did my best to save the sheep.”

Wonderful! I thought, here is the whole gospel history. The sheep is lost, the father sends his son to seek for and recover it. The son goes willingly, suffers all without complaining, and in the end sacrifices his life to find the sheep, and when recovered he carries it home on his shoulders to the flock, and rejoices with his friends and neighbours, over the sheep which is lost, but is found again. My prayer was answered! My way was made plain, and by the grace of God I availed myself of this happy opening.

I explained to this poor dying youth the plan of salvation, making use of his own simple and affecting story. I read to him the few verses in Luke 15, where the care of the shepherd for the strayed sheep is so beautifully expressed, and he at once perceived the likeness, and followed me with deep interest while I explained to him the full meaning of the parable.

The Lord mercifully opened not only his understanding, but his heart also, to receive the things spoken. He himself was the lost sheep, Jesus Christ the good Shepherd, who was sent by the Father to seek for him, and who left all the joys of that Father's heavenly glory to come down to earth and search for him and other lost ones like himself; and as the poor lad had borne without murmuring the freezing snowstorm and the piercing wind, so has the blessed Saviour endured the fierce contradictions of sinners against Himself, and the bitter scorn and insults heaped upon Him, without opening His mouth to utter one word of complaint, and at last laid down His precious life, that we might be rescued from destruction and brought safe to our everlasting home. Neither will He trust His beloved ones, when rescued, to tread the perilous path alone, but bears them on His shoulders rejoicing to the heavenly fold

My poor sick lad seemed to drink it all in. He received it all; he understood it all. I never saw a clearer proof of the power of the divine Spirit to apply the word of God.

He survived our first meeting but a few days. I had no time to read or expound to him any other portion of the Scripture. At times we could hear nothing but stifling, rending cough; at times he slumbered heavily for a little, but whenever he was able to think and listen, these verses in Luke 15 satisfied and cheered him. He accepted Christ as his Saviour, he earnestly prayed to be carried home like the lost sheep in the heavenly Shepherd's arms. He died humbly, peacefully, almost exulting, with the name of Jesus, my Saviour and my Shepherd, the last upon his lips.

“The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost”

(Luke 19:10)

*J. N. Darby*

## CHRIST AS FOOD — THE BREAD OF GOD

We come to a further food in John's gospel chapter 6 which is not referred to in the Old Testament, the reason being that in the type the people of God were either in the wilderness, or in the land. When they left the wilderness they were in the land, but in the actual experience of God's people things are not quite so definite as that. We have to be in the wilderness in certain circumstances, and then in others we may pass over to that which answers to the land. Now there is a food which will enable us to pass over and we get it brought forward in John 6, for *the living bread come down from heaven is not manna*. The food in John 6 is not for the wilderness. That is quite clear for the Lord says, "Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness and died. This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, that one may eat of it and not die." So that however valuable in its place, as relating to wilderness exercises, the manna is, it is not that which is spoken of in the sixth of John.

I believe the food in the sixth of John is that by means of which we accustom ourselves to find our life in spiritual things; that is, it has in view that we should enjoy eternal life. We are to find our life in that which death cannot touch. It is important to note that even the best of natural relationships held under the hand of God in thankfulness and purity—not spoiled as they are in the world—even these are subject to death. The happier we are in natural affections, the more keenly death is felt when it invades them. But there is an order of life and interest which may be known while we are still in this world which death cannot touch; and it is the enjoyment of these things that Scripture speaks of as eternal life in John's writings. Paul presents eternal life from the future aspect, whereas John presents it as something to be enjoyed at the present time, and this is what is typically spoken of as the land. It is the thoughts of God which His love has purposed for those whom He has taken up, standing in relation to Christ where He is, but enjoyed now in the power of the Holy Spirit; so that we pass over in our affections from the natural order of things to the spiritual order of things. The Lord says, "I am the living bread which has come down out of heaven: if any one shall have eaten of this bread he shall live for ever." He first of all presents the idea of bread as food which will be sustaining in its effect, and He Himself is the food. We are to get that clearly before us. He came down from heaven as the manna, but now He is presenting Himself as another kind of food also to be appropriated.

When He comes to the thought of our appropriating Him as the living bread, He changes the figure and refers to His flesh as meat and His blood as drink. In most scriptures where the Lord's flesh is referred to, it has in view His having deliberately come into flesh and blood condition in order by death to terminate that condition and open up for us a new order of life beyond death. I think it nearly always has that in mind. I will not say invariably because the fifth of Hebrews speaks of the "days of his flesh", but mostly where His flesh or His having come in flesh is referred to, it has in view that He deliberately took up flesh and blood condition in order to terminate it in His death. That being so, are we going to continue to try and find our satisfaction in an order of life which He has terminated? At the end of the chapter the Lord speaks of the Spirit's power to quicken. We cannot understand these things nor get the gain of them save by the Spirit. The Lord is presenting His flesh and His blood as something to be fed upon by us; that is, we are to feed our minds and affections on the fact that He has died. Not now that we might be justified and forgiven, but in order that He might have the right to introduce us by the Spirit into a new order of life set out in Himself risen from among the dead. So He says, "He that eats my flesh and drinks my blood has life eternal, and I will raise him up at the last day: for my flesh is truly food and my blood is truly drink." There may be an allusion in that both to the love of Christ as having come in flesh and to the love of God; for the blood often speaks of the love of God. The blood refers to the pleasure that God had in the life of Jesus here, so we read of the precious blood of Christ. And the blood was poured out in order that we might be brought into a new order of life in Christ beyond death. Thus we can understand that when the Lord says, "For my flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed," He is reminding us of His own personal love, and indeed of Himself, and also of the love of God which entered into the matter. The circle of the saints where the Spirit of God is, is the sphere of eternal life, but eternal life in itself is in God's Son. Then the Lord says, "and I will raise him up at the last day." That is to say, it is on this principle that we go right through, not like those whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, but as those who went through like Caleb.

*Alfred Gardiner*

## LAYING BY FOR THE FUTURE

### Laying up treasure in heaven

**“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust spoils, and where thieves dig through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven...”**  
(Matthew 6:19 & 20)

In Matthew 6:19 the Lord tells us not to lay up treasure on earth. I suppose we all have tried to do so in some measure but we find that it is true that moth and rust spoil it. It does not speak there of money but of possessions. The reference to moths would infer the matter of clothing and rust suggests that people laid up metals that were corruptible. Peter speaks in his first epistle of gold and silver being corruptible. Gold does not rust but being relatively soft it wears away in use. The Lord proceeds in verse 20 of Matthew 6 to say “but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.” In 1 Timothy 6:18 & 19 those rich in the present age are exhorted to “be rich in good works... laying by for themselves a good foundation for the future”, i.e. in heaven. A believer in Jesus, a lover of God’s Son, can look with joy to the future. If you are well-to-do here make sure you will be well-to-do in the coming day of which we are speaking. Even if you are poorly off in material things here, you can be rich in heaven. What you do as a believer by way of good works, including a readiness to communicate of your substance, by, for instance, entertaining the saints or by the entertaining of persons with a view to getting them to a gospel preaching can all be connected with laying up for the future. You are using your substance to promote the Lord’s interests. I would like to encourage everyone here to use their time in promoting the Lord’s interests. He will see to it that you are well rewarded.

We are told in Hebrews 13:16 “But of doing good and communicating of your substance be not forgetful, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.” If we use what we have in relation to the divine centre we will be well rewarded. In 1 Corinthians 3 we are told of some who will suffer loss when their work is tried by fire. They do not receive a reward like those whose work abides.

Moses, who in the ways of God was brought up in the luxury of Pharaoh’s court, comes to a point in his life when he, “refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction along with the people

of God than to have the temporary pleasure of sin". Scripture adds, "for he had respect to the recompense" (Hebrews 11:24-26). There was light in his soul that he would be recompensed for his choice. Indeed he esteemed the reproach of the Christ to be greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt. He laid up for himself for the future. Another has said he had a present as well as a future recompense.

Jacob's history is similar. He served Laban for seven years for each of his wives, then he worked for a further seven years to enrich himself. We know that God blessed him materially, but divine blessing actually is largely connected with what God does in the heart. When we come to Jacob as an old man we find how he was really enriched, having grown in his knowledge of God. He had learned God in the sorrows and experiences of life and had been formed spiritually by God in them. When he is introduced to Pharaoh he speaks of himself as a "sojourner" or "pilgrim" as it could be translated. Jacob was a pilgrim, one journeying to a better land.

Whether we are young or old we are on our way to a better land. Some here, like Jacob, are reaching the end of the journey; let us do so like Jacob as worshippers. Jacob worshipped on the top of his staff.

### Laying up for your children

**"....and I will not be in laziness a charge; for I do not seek yours, but you; for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. Now I shall most gladly spend and be utterly spent for your souls, if even in abundantly loving you I should be less loved."**

(2 Corinthians 12:14 & 15)

Paul would not be a charge on those who had come to profit from his service. He told the Corinthians, "I will not be in laziness a charge; for I do not seek yours, but you"; then he adds, "for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children". That would, in one sense, be in a material or literal way, but think of what you and I have come into, the spiritual wealth that has been ministered by those that have gone before us. Do we value it? What wealth Paul himself, as a spiritual father, laid up for his children. Indeed we might venture to speak of the fatherly features seen in the Lord Jesus when on earth. In John 21:5 He addresses His disciples as children. "Children, have ye anything to eat?" When Jesus took up manhood, He brought with Him

the wealth of heaven and bestowed lasting benefits on those who came to Him. What a fund of eternal and abiding things, hitherto unknown, came out in His ministry. What treasure is now available for ourselves and the generations to come in the Scriptures unfolded in the power of the Spirit.

### Laying up for God

**“And behold, in my affliction I have prepared for the house of Jehovah.”**  
(1 Chronicles 22:14)

In 1 Chronicles 22 we have details of the way David laid up materials to build a house for God. The burning desire from early days in David's life was to provide a habitation for the Mighty One of Jacob. Could not God care for His own affairs? All the metals on the earth are His as well as the cattle on a thousand hills, but this other side is also true. He would have His people consider for His interests and pleasure. David as a young man committed himself to promote what was for the divine interest and glory upon earth. David's interest in the ark of God started in his early days. He said, “Behold, we heard of it at Ephratah...”, no doubt referring to conversations, probably at home, about the ark. Then the verse adds, “we found it in the fields of the wood” (Psalm 132:6). He would say to himself ‘It is not suitable for the ark of God to be in the fields of the wood’, so he vowed to provide “a place for Jehovah, habitations for the Mighty One of Jacob”.

After David had been anointed by Samuel as king, he experienced about ten years of affliction, frequently pursued by Saul, sometimes betrayed by those he defended, as the Ziphites did, but in that same time of affliction he was accumulating substance in his soul which would increase his desire to provide a dwelling place for the ark of God.

After David had been anointed king over all Israel and had taken the stronghold of Zion and brought the ark there and spread a tent for it, having already his own house there, he realised that it was not right that he should dwell in “a house of cedars” while the ark was “under curtains” and he intended to use the substance he had accumulated to fulfil his lifelong desire, but God overrules this and tells David that Solomon was to build the house. Doubtless David was disappointed. I suppose we have all experienced disappointments, but the great thing is to be with God in your disappointments as David was. He accepted the adjustment and does not draw back one iota of the material he had accumulated

for God's dwelling. So David calls Solomon his son to give a summation of the material he had accumulated in his affliction, and charges him to "Arise and be doing". Later on he assembles the princes, captains, comptrollers, chamberlains and men of valour, charging Solomon to undertake the work, and finally addressing the whole congregation, saying amongst other things, "And moreover in my affliction for the house of my God I have given of my own property of gold and silver for the house of my God" and calls on all who are willing "to offer to Jehovah this day". We can all have part like that in this; do not let us be mere admirers of the truth, but let us have part practically in what is being done. In passing I would remark that David accumulated more in his affliction than he did in his affection. David in the most difficult circumstances grew in his own soul and some of his choicest psalms were written when he was a fugitive. In our own day, when the church publicly is in ruins and there is much affliction, yet essentially all remains; all that is in Christ remains.

### What the Lord lays up for us

**"For I am already being poured out, and the time of my release is come. I have combated the good combat, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth the crown of righteousness is laid up for me, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will render to me in that day; but not only to me, but also to all who love his appearing."** (2 Timothy 4:6-8)

In 1 Corinthians 2:9 we have a reference to what God lays up, or prepares, for those that love Him. The scripture goes on to say that we can have a foretaste of these things now by the Spirit, who is the earnest of our inheritance (see Ephesians 1:14). The scripture we read in 2 Timothy tells us what the Lord laid up for Paul and for those who love His appearing. Paul is speaking of the conclusion of his course; the brethren at one stage having left him, he had to stand alone. He speaks of being "poured out" doubtless referring to the drink offering as prescribed in Numbers. 15 which supplemented the burnt offering. Indeed he writes in a similar way to the Philippians (chapter 2:17). "But if also I am poured out as a libation on the sacrifice and ministration of your faith, I rejoice," The drink offering particularly has in mind God's joy. Paul here makes reference to his life coming to its conclusion and looks to the future saying "I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth the crown of righteousness is laid up for me, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will render to me in that day; but not only to me, but also to all who love his appearing."



Look at Paul in the court when he gave his first defence; we could say that spiritually he took with him the flag of God's kingdom and unfurled it there, the kingdom of the King of Kings. He kept the faith and was given power by the Lord to make the proclamation before all those of the nations. The Lord stood with him there and gave him power. Though a prisoner he really took control in that court, making the proclamation of the glad tidings which came from the throne above. Well, the crown of righteousness is laid up for him and for all who love His appearing.

*F. D. Waterfall*

### THE PEARL

“the kingdom of the heavens is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls; and having found one pearl of great value, he went and sold all whatever he had and bought it.”  
(Matthew 13:45, 46)

The scriptures are a great picture book in words—especially the Old Testament—but here the Lord Jesus draws for us just a little picture in words of how He felt. A merchant seeking beautiful pearls, and He found one pearl of great value, and He sold all whatever He had that He might possess it. Who can measure that price? It was not only, dear brethren, that Jesus gave up all that He had as a blessed Man here—He did; but He gave Himself; He laid down His precious body. Every time we come to the breaking of bread we are reminded of it—“My body, which [is] for you” (1 Corinthians 11:24), and that “for you” was addressed to a company, and not to an individual. I do not say that the Lord Jesus did not die for each one of us. Paul says, “the Son of God, who has loved me and given himself for me”—blessed be His Name! But you see, it was addressed to a company. “My body ... for you”. The whole loaf? Yes nothing less. We never want to lose sight of that, and we should be reminded every time we are together as we look upon the loaf on the table, and as we partake of the emblems. They are a fresh reminder to our hearts of that precious love that was prepared to give all that He had. But there is much more that enters into it.

He sold all whatever He had; you think of what He had! Of course, He never ceased to be who He was in deity, and He ever remains that; our hearts rejoice

in it! But we have come to know Him as a blessed Man and it is the love of a Man that we remember—His precious love; and He was prepared on that account not only to lay down that precious body in death, but think also of what He was prepared to give up in order to come into manhood! He who was in the form of God and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, He made Himself of no reputation, emptied Himself; who could measure “all whatever he had”? Found here as a lowly blessed Man in complete dependence upon His Father, the blessed Spirit with Him, as one of our hymns puts it, ‘as the power of His hand’, a lowly Man here. I would just like to challenge every one of our hearts as to how much we think of Jesus! I do not deprecate in any sense persons devoting their time, a good deal of their time, to preaching the gospel, but there is an order in things. “Let him that is athirst come” follows a reference to the Spirit and the Bride saying “Come” (Revelation 22:17)! and that is something that every gospel preacher here ought to take account of. The gospel will go out in greater power and sweetness if we have the love of Christ for the assembly in our souls. He sold “all whatever He had”—think of His being prepared to pay such a price; who could measure it?—I cannot tell you.

“One pearl.” The pearl is quite a unique type in scripture, very seldom mentioned; it is not like a precious stone. A precious stone, when it is found in its natural state has no particular beauty at all; it has to be cut and polished, and it is the expert cutting and polishing that give it its value and attractiveness, but not so with the pearl. If you touch a pearl you spoil it. That is just the difference. In one sense the Holy City coming down, the bride, the Lamb's wife, shines like a jewel—indeed the precious stones are mentioned; and think of the cutting and the polishing that has entered into it, from the time of Pentecost right until now; and I would say that the present sorrows and difficulties through which many of us have passed are all part of the cutting and the polishing in order that Christ might be reflected, that Divine light might shine out—“having the glory of God.” That is one side of it, but let us remember that the description of the heavenly city is a figure, for it is made up of persons. It is not an actual building so many thousand cubits high, it is made up of persons, and if you or I are to get any sense of the assembly and we come to one of the gates, what is the first thing that we see? That that gate is one pearl. Each several gate one pearl—twelve gates. It does not matter from which point of the compass you approach it, from whatever quarter, to enter into that city, the gate was one pearl. A reminder to our hearts of what the assembly is to the heart of Christ, the one pearl.

Now you think of the history of the assembly from Pentecost right down to the present moment, and indeed on to the rapture, you think of all the sorrow, all the upheaval, the heresies that have come in, the darkness that has entered into Christendom, the defilement that has come into Christendom; and yet at the end of it, still the one pearl—the result of the faithful service of our great Lover. And when I say ‘our’ I am not thinking of any particular body of persons, I am thinking of the assembly. Without spot in a scene of defilement, without spot or wrinkle—not a sign of age; fresh, glorious, ready for eternity indeed, no sign of age whatever, and He will present it to Himself.

It is sometimes remarked that the pearl is the product of suffering. That may be so; I would not like to say whether the oyster suffers at all; I do not think that that is the point. The point as to the pearl is that it is continually growing; it is being added to, it is just like the assembly. It is formed, we may say, out of sight of the eyes of men; the formation of the pearl goes on all the time, and as it goes on that pearl gets bigger and bigger; it is being added to all the time. That is just like the assembly; it is being builded; the persons who compose it are being set together. Right at the very outset at Pentecost it refers to the Lord adding. There is no question of adding to the beauty of that pearl—a “beautiful” pearl, it says. It is a great thing to have a sense in our souls of the attractiveness of the assembly to Christ. We are apt to look at one another—not very attractive, are we? But this is one pearl. If we want to see the Divine thought of beauty, we have to look at the assembly—“one pearl of great value”—and the Lord Jesus went and sold all whatever He had that He might have that one pearl all for Himself that He might possess it. He paid the price.

He sold all that He had and purchased the pearl. One thinks of all that was involved in it—those terrible hours of agony—that blessed Man who had come into manhood, His body taken and nailed to a cross, exposed to the world, to the derision of men. “This is my body, which [is] for you”. We think of Him more perhaps in connection with the cross as to what that meant for us. We can thank God for that, but as we meditate upon the cross we want to have a sense of the love of Jesus; not only the mighty efficacy of that work, and the power of that blood, but the love that took Him there. What held Him there? It was not the nails that held Him there, it was love—love beyond all measure—immeasurable, divine—that held Him there—the love of Christ.

*B.G. Hardingham*