

# *Living Water*

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"*Living Water*" is edited by Mark Lemon & published by Stone Publishing Trust (Registered Charity 1034689) 'The Eagles', Headcorn Road, Staplehurst, Kent, TN12 0BU

Correspondents in the UK are welcome to use the Free-post address:-  
Stone Publishing Trust,  
FREEPOST TN3448, Staplehurst, TONBRIDGE,  
Kent, TN12 0BR

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Printed by Christian Design & Print,  
34, Prior's Way, Coggeshall, Essex. CO6 1TW. UK

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(Some 80 years ago T. Willey put together a collection of ministry from different authors under the title "Streams of Living Water". The two items below are extracts from this book. God willing, further extracts will be printed through 1999.)

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## ENCAMPMENTS IN THE JOURNEY OF FAITH—PART 2

### THE ENCAMPMENTS OF THE WILDERNESS

Exodus 15: 27 - 16:1

Exodus 16: 13,14

Numbers 21: 1 - 3

During the journey of the children of Israel from Egypt to Canaan there were many encampments and each journey and encampment was dependent on the commandment of God. When the tabernacle was set up and when the cloud was on the tabernacle they rested; when it lifted they journeyed. Numbers 33 shows that there were 45 encampments during the wilderness journey. Of these, three of them were between Egypt and the Red Sea, and probably well over 30 involved the setting up and the dismantling of the tabernacle.

The object of their journey can be summed up in God's word: "Let my people go, that they may serve me" (Exodus 8:1). I know that they were going to Canaan which was to be a land of blessing for them but primarily their journey was that they might serve God.

What was the point of their encampments? First of all an encampment was a place where the tabernacle would be set up, the place of God's dwelling, where priestly activities Godward could take place. Then for the people it afforded a resting place, a place where the lessons of the wilderness could be absorbed, lessons of failure as well as lessons of a new discovery, all with the intention of forming in them a deeper knowledge of God. Every one of these encampments was essential to their journey.

But if the encampments were essential to the journey of the children of Israel here, it is also essential that there are encampments for the believer in the present day in the journey of faith.

The early chapters of the book of Exodus typify a believer, young in the faith, proving his God in the wilderness journey. Up until they have to fight Amalek in chapter 17 everything was done for the children of Israel. In Exodus 12 they had nothing to do but shelter under the blood. At the Red Sea all they had to do was

to "Stand still, and see the salvation of Jehovah". In chapter 15, they are at the waters of Marah and they are shown wood; they had nothing to do. In chapter 16, manna was rained down from heaven to them and in the next chapter the rock was smitten and water flowed. Everything was done for them. If we look at these early wilderness experiences we will discover that God is for us. "If God be for us, who against us?" (Romans 8:31). These encampments were to demonstrate not the murmuring of the children of Israel but that even in the midst of the murmurings and exercises, God was to be proved as the God who was for them.

Whatever stage you are at in your christian experience, hold onto this that God is for you, and what a God! Somebody has said about the wilderness that there are three questions - what? where? and how? The answer to them all is faith in God. For the children of Israel Egypt was behind them, Canaan in front of them, around them the wilderness; where could they look for help? To the Man who came down from heaven, the One typified in the manna!

The three encampments before the Red Sea would not have been very restful ones; the people would have known that the enemy had not given up but when the Red Sea is crossed and they look back and the enemy is sunk beneath the waters there is a song of victory, a song of triumph. It is the believer's song in celebration of Christ's victory over death. Somebody has described the span of this song as like a rainbow, one end of it dipping in the sufferings of Christ, and the other end of the arc dipping in the glory. If you look at the detail of this song it is just like that. It celebrates, in type, Christ's victory as having gone into death to deliver me as a sinner but it takes me into a new position. It says, "I will bring them in and plant them in the mountain of mine inheritance". Christ's victory not only is to deliver me from Egypt but is to bring me in and plant me in that goodly, that heavenly land.

So they sing the song of victory. It is interesting that there is no song on the banks of the Jordan. I think, when you come to the Jordan, the concentration is all on the ark, on the Person of Christ. It is not so much what has been achieved, the great triumph; that is the Red Sea. At the Jordan, the glory, the worship, the homage is due to the Person who has achieved it all. So that whilst the heart is

triumphant at the Jordan it is subdued by the fact that the might of death has been met by the true ark of the covenant — Christ. That calls forth a note of subdued adoration from my heart but, at the banks of the Red Sea, the song is in celebration of the wonderful matter that not only has He rēdeemed me with His blood but He has saved me from the power of Egypt, the power of the world.

The song had hardly died on their lips when they were brought to the encampment at Marah. It is as if when you celebrate the song of victory, the song of being a believer in Christ, God would say, 'I am going to test how real that is in the circumstances of life'. These next few encampments are places where there was no water, where there was no food, and again where there was no water. Very soon in the journey of faith you are tested as to whether Egypt has been destroyed in you? I have been saved from Egypt, but what comes up in experience is this - is Egypt still in me? That is where the people failed. In these encampments they hanker after what they had experienced in Egypt. They had forgotten quickly the triumph of the victory at the Red Sea; they hanker after Egypt. What has God to do to set them on the right course? In principle He shows them the Man that has gained the victory at the Red Sea; He shows them Christ; He shows them the wood. The bitterness of Marah cannot be tasted. He shows them the wood and Moses casts it in; the waters become sweet.

The children of Israel move on to Elim. I think it was at Elim that they really began to enjoy the victory that had been wrought at the Red Sea. Elim had twelve springs and seventy palm trees. There must have been an atmosphere of enjoyment. It typifies the believer's enjoyment of the victory that Christ has secured, the victory over the world. These early experiences on the wilderness pathway are ground which breeds overcomers, ground which causes overcomers to appear. Egypt may have been met by Christ's death but is Egypt still in me? I need to be an overcomer!

They begin to murmur in chapter 16 and that is why I read about this encampment between Elim and Sinai. They are but a month out of Egypt and they find no food; they find that in this wilderness into which they have been led there is nothing to sustain them. They are trying, as we so often do, to sustain the wrong man so they murmur. What is the answer to this murmuring? The answer is that

the manna falls on the dew. It does not fall on the earth. The Man that came down, there was nothing of the earth about Him at all. He was the second Man out of heaven. Oh, let us come to this encampment in our experience when we discover that there is a Man out of heaven, and God spreads His table in the wilderness with this Man as our food.

I can look at the wilderness in a different way because I can see the Man who walked in the same wilderness in which He would have me walk. The One who came down, who emptied Himself, who humbled Himself, who became obedient unto death and that the death of the cross - I can feed on this blessed Man; I can have as much of Him as I want. That is what makes an overcomer.

Dear young brethren, the Lord Jesus is looking for you to become an overcomer as far as this world is concerned. His final words to His own in John's gospel, when He had all His own together, addressed to them directly were, "I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). If you look at John in detail you will discover that these are the last words He addressed to His own collectively. In chapter 17 He is speaking to His Father but in John 16 He is leaving them with a word of encouragement, a word of cheer. He is saying, 'I have been an overcomer in the world in which I am leaving you'. John takes up this theme as he writes his letter; he writes to the young men as I seek to speak to the younger brethren today but it applies to us all. "I write to you," John says, because ye "have overcome the world, and, the word of God abides in you" (see 1 John 2:13-14). How are you going to have the word of God abide in you? You are going to have it by becoming a manna gatherer. Oh, I trust today that every one of us here is a gatherer of the manna. As I said, you can have as much of it as you want. It is taken according to the measure of their eating, the measure of the eating of the household. What is your measure? You start off with a little; a little child cannot eat as much as a grown-up. You start with a little; how much can you cope with? You can have as much as you like of this fine, granular food.

What does it say about it? "And when the dew that lay round it was gone up, behold, on the face of the wilderness there was something fine, granular, fine as hoar-frost, on the ground." Yes, when He was here He was so different. Everything about Him was different. He displayed these graces that we spoke about this

afternoon. Compassion, kindness, meekness, lowliness — that was the manna! Have you fed on Him?

God would have us look at the wilderness differently. In one sense it is a barren place but the provision is there in the manna to sustain us from encampment to encampment. They said 'no water, no food' then 'no water' again. They get to Rephidim, the rock smitten, and there is a new power given, a new energy with which to go through the wilderness. So the young believer is fully furnished as feeding on a Christ come down from heaven and having the Spirit indwelling him. He is fully furnished to go through the wilderness encampment by encampment.

I pass on to Numbers because as we enter the second year of their sojourn in the wilderness, if my arithmetic is right, we discover that the tabernacle is ready, set up, and the main influence in their encampments from then on is the tabernacle. That is why I read those few verses in Numbers.

There is the individual experience that the christian has. When you come to the tabernacle set up, you are looking out on what is described in Hebrews 9 (footnote) as the vast scene of God's glory, on what is for God's pleasure, God's dwelling place. That is to be reflected in Peterhead, in Aberdeen, and in every local meeting. I thought we should consider the encampment here, the instruction here. Just picture a godly Israelite at the door of his tent in the stillness of the night; his tent is afar off and he is looking over toward the tabernacle. He is perhaps thinking, 'My hand contributed something to God's dwelling place. I provided some of the gold, some of the copper, that has gone in to the place where God dwells'. A godly woman might be saying, 'I spun some of that colour; I provided some of the material that was to go into those curtains'. The godly Israelite has got his tent, his own tent, but he is impressed by this tabernacle, the tent of meeting. Outwardly it is not attractive; it has these skins and the blood is there; there are ram skins dyed red, goat skins, badger skins. But inside, if he could have looked inside, he would have discovered something that was so attractive and becoming to the dwelling place of God. I think we should look at the local meeting differently. We should see features of the tabernacle there, features that

reflect the dwelling place of God. Where is it to be worked out? It is to be worked out in our local meetings.

Perhaps if the Israelite looked he might see the smoke of the brazen altar. There it was at the entrance and the burnt offering on it, and despite the fact it was night, the fire on the altar of burnt offering was never to go out; it was to be kept burning all night until the morning. The excellence of Christ is to be forever a fragrance to God. So it has been in the long night of Christ's rejection; the excellence of Christ has been there every moment of the night of Christ's rejection.

Further in, past the laver, he would come to a curtain, and inside the curtain the holy place, with the candlestick lighting up the holy place. What does the candlestick speak of? It speaks of Christ and His light shining on the table of shew bread, the twelve loaves, speaking of all the saints of God. Such a godly Israelite would grow in love and appreciation of the people of God.

The candlestick would also shine on the golden altar, the altar from which the incense rose to God as it was put on the burning, speaking of the delightfulness of Christ to God. Then he would look around on the curtains, all the colours, the blue, the purple, the scarlet, the twined byssus, speaking about the delightfulness and beauties of the Lord Jesus. Then the veil (and remember, he could not go in!) with its colours, speaking about the glories of Christ, the One through whom you and I can go right into the presence of God. Inside that veil, what do we find there? The ark and the mercy seat, the ark covered round in every part with gold.

May we have an expanded impression as to what the tabernacle in all its intricate detail meant to the God of Israel; transferred to our dispensation it is all to be found in what Christ and the saints mean to God.

*Alex Mowat*

*Extract from an address at Peterhead, October 1997*



## O LORD THOU WAST FORSAKEN

O Lord Thou wast forsaken  
That I might never be!  
Rest, rest my soul, Lord Jesus,  
My weary soul, on Thee.  
When all those thou hadst served  
Forsook and fled from Thee,  
Then, Lord, Thou wast forsaken  
That I might never be.

When man had done his utmost  
To cause Thee misery;  
Had filled Thy cup with anguish,  
With pain and ignominy,  
Then, left alone completely  
And hanging on the tree  
Twas then Thou wast forsaken  
That I might never be.

Thou of Thy God forsaken!  
Unfathomable grief,  
The horror of great darkness,  
Of wrath without relief.  
My sin, - Thyself, - and Satan:  
Transaction none might see:  
O Lord, Thou wast forsaken  
That I might never be.

I cannot be forsaken,  
Forsaken, Lord of Thee,  
Whate'er my sin, my failure,  
Despair, despondency;  
They only bring me closer  
My Saviour, unto Thee,  
For Thou hast been forsaken  
That I might never be.

*Mrs. G. R. Cowell*

## I WILL GIVE THEE THE TREASURES OF DARKNESS"

The day has been long, and with faith growing weak,  
By trials discouraged, Thy face, Lord, I seek.  
I welcome the night when from turmoil set free,  
With holy delight I may contemplate Thee.

To see Thy perfection and surpassing worth  
Is dearer to me than the things of this earth,  
For in Thee are hid precious treasures divine,  
I hear Thy voice bid me accept them as mine.

The world's vain attractions no longer are seen,  
In faith looking upward with nothing between,  
In wonder I view Jesus seated on high,  
That blessed One who salvation brought nigh.

I thank Thee, dear Lord, for Thy wonderful love  
Which bought us eternal riches above;  
I thank Thee for night visitations down here  
Which bring us fresh light from Thy glorious sphere.

*Betty Taylor*

SEE! THE SON

See! the Son in manhood's form,  
Jesus; of a virgin born,  
Doth the path of God pursue,  
Holy, sinless, faithful, true:  
Light and life and holy love,  
Come in Him from God above,  
Glory shines in all His ways;  
Jesus, God to man displays.

See! the Son stoops lower still,  
His delight is God's blest will;  
Veiled His glory to the eye,  
Jesus, come to earth to die;  
Perfect in obedience, He,  
Nailed upon the accursed tree,  
Bore our sins Himself, and died,  
God in Him is glorified.

See! the Son who came to save;  
Now victorious o'er the grave;  
He has met all man's deep woe,  
Smitten every deadly foe.  
He has suffered, died, and bled.  
God has raised Him from the dead  
And in Him our sins forgives,  
E'en in Him, who ever lives.

See! the Son, in glory now—  
Heaven's hosts before Him bow—  
Sits in victory on God's throne,  
All the glory His alone.  
Jesus, His own heart's delight  
Crowned before Him! wondrous sight!  
Glorious Christ, of untold worth,  
Setting all God's glories forth.

See! the Son, God's chosen king,  
With His praise the world shall ring.  
He shall come, the Lord of all,  
And His foes before Him fall.  
He shall reign with all His own,  
Crowned with glory on His throne.  
Jesus, God's beloved Son,  
Who for Him the victory won.

*E H Chater*

## GLAD TIDINGS

Forgiveness all may have,  
For it is freely given;  
A Saviour strong to save,  
For all men under heaven.

Make haste and claim Him now,  
The day will soon be past;  
Then to the Saviour bow,  
The night is closing fast.

The world to come awaits  
Where pain will all be o'er;  
Faith sees the golden gates,  
And hope, the golden shore.

All tears from every eye  
There God shall wipe away;  
Nor death, nor grief, nor cry,  
Shall mar that blissful day.

God and the Lamb shall dwell,  
Where love alone shall rest;  
And every heart shall swell  
With joy supremely blest.

*Jethro Jay*

## A NEW WAY OF BECOMING A NUN

This article was written by the daughter of Count Stenbock. She was the heir to the Kalk estates in Estonia. As a first-hand account of the early days of the Russian revolution it has a historical interest of its own but as record of a spiritual journey it is even more interesting.

The writer's latter days were spent in a camp for displaced persons in Germany from where she was taken to be with the Lord.

This account of my personal experiences might begin with the explanation that the Russian word for 'monk' means 'that which is different'. Over the whole of my life I could write, 'It all came differently', and I may add that, by God's mercy, all came far better than could in any way be expected. This will be seen from the short narrative that follows. My God had His own thoughts for me, and being indeed the God of circumstances, He overruled everything perfectly, and brought the result that He had willed from the beginning.

I was born into a noble family and lived in the lap of luxury. I was a disappointment to my parents from the very first, for instead of being the expected heir to my father's estates, I was a girl and owing to an accident I was lame from birth. However what seemed a misfortune at the time, proved to be a God-given safeguard against many dangers I would most probably have incurred in the world. I have learned to be particularly thankful for these limitations.

My dear grandmother, who was a sincere and devoted christian, though endorsing the doctrine and practice of the Greek Orthodox Church, brought me up under the influence of all that was best in that religion. She read the New Testament and the lives of the saints to me and took me to all the churches of St. Petersburg where I lived while I was at school. Her fondest wish for me was that I should become a nun.

My young mind was filled with idealism; my heart burned for a life of self-sacrifice and devotion to the poor. The quiet ecstasy of praying in dimly lit temples, fragrant with incense, and resounding to the strains of the most beautiful singing I had ever heard, satisfied my longing for worship. So I seemed to be on my way to becoming a very genuine nun, but 'it all came differently'.

When I was about twelve I began asking questions. I started by asking for information from the priest who taught us the catechism at school, but he only wanted us to learn things by heart and, I daresay, I often annoyed and perplexed him with my persistent wish to know and to understand. I then turned to my grandmother. I wanted to know why our life was so different from the lives of the saints whom she had taught me to admire and to reverence, and why we did not act more on the Lord's words in Matthew 19:21, "If thou wouldest be perfect, go sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come follow me".

As a matter of fact I was beginning not only to feel for the poor but to be heartily ashamed of our opulence and when, after the church service was over, I was given a handful of small coins to give the beggars waiting at the church door, I could not bring myself to look upon their faces. Once I was severely reprimanded for suddenly kissing a little beggar child, and I was well scrubbed in a hot bath afterwards for fear of dirt and germs. Yet had not the deeds of pious men been held up to me as an example? Such had not only served lepers but had kissed their sores! I was puzzled and disheartened and gradually lost my childish fervour, not finding anything definite to replace it. I grew up with rather vague aspirations to adhere to the sermon on the mount and thought I was a practising christian; however I felt dissatisfied with myself all the time.

I did not realise that I was trying to do a hopeless thing. I was endeavouring to perfect myself, and did not know that I had to be displaced instead, judged utterly worthless in the light of the cross, and buried out of sight in baptism. I had never once heard the glorious gospel of Christ, where righteousness is accounted ours by faith in His accomplished work. The church I belonged to did not teach that at all.

I have only lately come to understand what a dangerous state I was then in, for my 'house' having been more or less swept and garnished by a religious upbringing, and being empty of the occupant who alone sanctifies and hallows our inner being, I might have fallen an easy prey to quite another kind of idealism, whose author is undoubtedly the devil—that of communism. So many have been misled by its slogans and it seemed to be full of promise to those who had been disappointed by christianity in its public aspect.

A short time after I left school Lenin arrived in St Petersburg setting fire to all the evil lusts of the crowds that assembled to hear his 'gospel' of freedom which

was to be brought about by murder and vengeance. Millions were deceived by the seemingly brilliant theory of communism, but for me, by mercy, this too 'came differently'. Before I had time to go to a single political meeting I was invited by a friend to go to hear something that was quite new to us at that time; in fact the friend said that she had never heard anything so strange and new before and she wanted me to come with her and hear it too.

I went with her and found a young christian who was addressing a very mixed multitude in a large public hall. It was the first gospel preaching I had ever heard and I will never forget it. Outside in the street there was the sound of gunfire, breaking glass, running feet, and shouting, angry voices—the 'voice of the people' which as the Russian saying goes is the 'voice of God'. Inside the hall part of that same crowd listened intently and with a fierce hungry longing in which lurked a challenge, as to what that unknown young man could have to say at such a momentous crisis. It seemed that if he disappointed or failed them he would be mercilessly swept away by the same crowd that was meting out justice outside.

He spoke of Lazarus, of death in trespasses and sins, of the process of corruption and degradation, of the invisible power of our arch-enemy, of sin and its consequences—death. His assertion that the earth stank with blood needed no other substantiation than the noise from the street outside. The devastating effects of the fury of vengeance and of murderous hatred were all around us. It was a danger that could not be forgotten for a moment. He then asked the question, 'Is it too late?' It was indeed a question of life and death, and he asked it again and again.

Then he proclaimed the glorious gospel of the Son of God, whose quickening voice raises the dead. He, so to speak, put us alongside the Son of God, watching in faith, and in the sure hope of seeing the glory of God in resurrection, in the swallowing up of death in victory. This word preserved me from politics for the rest of my life. When, years later, a prominent communist tried to persuade me, and flatter me into going with them, I was emboldened to refute his assertion that the practice of christianity and the practice of communism were almost identical by pointing out that these two doctrines were opposed to each other. The communist says: 'You rogue, all that is yours is mine,' while the approach of the christian is, 'Brother, all that is mine is thine'.

To my sorrow I was obliged to return to Estonia in 1919. Here I led a happy busy life, having lost all my earthly possessions, and was working hard to maintain



my self and some loved ones. I felt the tragedy of what was happening to Russia keenly, and I wished I knew what to do to stand for truth and righteousness at such a terrible time. Then it was that I heard my second gospel preaching.

A well known evangelist, exiled from Russia after having been imprisoned for preaching the gospel, came to Estonia. I felt that I could trust this man for, so to speak, he had come from the burning house next door. He had acted in faithfulness and love and had come to us with an urgent message. I thought that this man would be able to tell me what to do, so I went to him with a whole list of questions, hoping to find guidance for a better and more useful life, but it all 'came out differently'.

When I told this dear man of God what I had come for he pointed me to John 6:29, "What should we do to work the works of God?" "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he has sent." When I said I believed, he asked me whether I believed Jesus was risen and lived? On hearing that I believed this, he asked me a very simple question, which put me in the presence of One in whom I professed to believe, yet did not know. His question was: 'If you indeed believe Him to be alive, why do you ask me, a mere man, what to do, instead of asking Him?'

This was quite unexpected. Such a thought had never occurred to me. I was overjoyed at such a possibility. After a very earnest talk, we both knelt to pray. My prayer was simple; a mere child might have uttered it but the result was wonderful. Rising from my knees I was filled with such unutterable peace, such festive joy, as if I had heard Him whose face I had come to seek, say His own solemn and conclusive 'Amen' to my prayer for acceptance. The next day I heard the gospel preached from the word: "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine: He feedeth his flock among the lilies" (Song of Songs 6:3) and "Set me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thine arm: For love is strong as death" (Song of Songs 8:6). This word became the keynote of my christian pathway, when the Lord Himself became my Song of Songs.

*Miss Stenbock*

## SIX THINGS IN THE DAILY LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN - PART 6

### DAILY ENCOURAGEMENT

“Exhort [encourage] one another daily” (Hebrews 3:13)

There is immense need for such an exhortation as this, for there is a constant tendency in our hearts to be “discouraged because of the way”. The young especially need daily encouragement and it is a great privilege from the Lord to be able to “encourage one another”. I am afraid that many souls backslide and drift away simply because we are not near enough to the Lord and have not sufficient affection to give them a word of encouragement.

It is no use trying to set the ‘old man’ down; you may lecture and hammer at him with all your might, but he can stand all the blows that you give him. You must keep your eye on that which is of God in the saints and lay yourself out to encourage that. There is no other way to help one another. There is something which is of God in every saint; it may be very weak and small, but we must build on that—we must encourage that.

You will see what I mean in the epistles. Take the Galatians; they were in an awful state, in danger of leaving the very foundations of christianity, and yet Paul says, “I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded” Galatians 5:10. We have to look at the saints from a divine standpoint, and we shall then recognise, as Balaam did, what they are in God’s thoughts and purposes, and we shall count upon His Spirit’s work in them, in spite of much that would turn our hearts from them if we judged after the sight of our eyes and the hearing of our ears.

We must count on the work of God in the souls of His saints, and seek to help and encourage that which is of Himself in every way. As the Spirit’s work in the soul prospers, Christ supersedes and displaces the flesh and the world, and this is the way of true sanctification.

Let none of us think that this is only for teachers and ministers of the word; we are to “encourage one another”. This applies to every one of us in our individual contact with each other. I have often been encouraged by simply meeting a believer in the street. A kindly word of interest and of cheer often goes a long way. A hearty grip of the hand is in itself an encouragement; when the Holy Spirit says, “Salute one another with a holy kiss”, He refers to the common salutation of the country which answers to our shake of the hand. We might have

thought the reference to such a thing beneath the dignity of christianity, but not so the Holy Spirit. There are a thousand ways in which we can "encourage one another" if we are near the Lord ourselves.

And, remember, this is to go on "daily". We are not to be spasmodic. It is an easy thing to make a flash like a meteor, but if we are to be fixed stars shining with a steady light from day to day for the encouragement of others we must ourselves daily abide in Christ, and walk in the Spirit. Then, instead of there being a falling off as to this, we should be "encouraging one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching" (Hebrews 10:25).

*C. A. Coates*

*(This concludes the series.)*

## EXTRACTS FROM 'STREAMS OF LIVING WATER'

### Part 1: Perfect Goodness Displayed in Christ

"I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word."  
(John 17:6)

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What grace, O Lord, and beauty shone  
Around Thy steps below;  
What patient love was seen in all  
Thy life and death of woe!

For ever on Thy burdened heart  
A weight of sorrow hung;  
Yet no ungentle, murmuring word  
Escaped Thy silent tongue.

Thy foes might hate, despise, revile,  
Thy friends unfaithful prove;  
Unwearied in forgiveness still  
Thy heart could only love.

O give us hearts to love like Thee,  
Like Thee, O Lord, to grieve  
Far more for others' sins than all  
The wrongs that we receive.

*Edward Denny*

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The whole heart of Christ, as well as of God, was revealed by His death; for there was nothing in us to draw out His affection, to move Him to take our place, and to redeem us with His precious blood.

“In the same night in which he was betrayed, he took bread and gave thanks”, and founded the memorial of His accomplished sacrifice. Thus side by side we behold His perfect goodness and man’s perfect evil, but the full exhibition of what man was could not hinder the manifestation of what He was. No, just as the light of the sun when shining on a dark thundercloud seems all the more bright and intense, so the love, grace, and goodness of Christ are magnified by the unmitigated evil which, on man’s part, brought Him to the cross.

*Edward Dennett*

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In the desert the Lord taught His disciples how to minister to the need which is found in this world. “He began to teach them many things” and His hand supplied their need.

Now the disciples were not fully in the mind of their Master: they would send the multitude away in their need, and He could not do that. Hence He says: “Give ye them to eat”. But they are not in the secret of heavenly grace; they are looking to earth for supplies. They say: “Shall we go and buy”? Note the Lord’s answer, “How many loaves have ye?” What have you got? Only five loaves! Very little! But the Lord takes them.

We may know very little of the things of Christ, but it is a great thing to apprehend that He can enlarge the little we have. The disciples had but five loaves yet He took them and looked up to heaven and blessed.

It was the bounty and blessing of heaven and He used His disciples to distribute it, as well as teaching them the fulness of resource they had in Him.

*T. H. Reynolds*

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## Part 2: The Lowly One

**“But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men”** (Philippians 2:17)

Christ, the perfect servant, ever delighted when in this world to do His Father’s will and in His love and grace, though He be glorified, remains a servant still. He is gone into heaven to appear in the presence of God for us (Hebrews 9:24).

It is in this character that He maintains unwearied intercession on our behalf whereby He secures for us those continual ministrations of mercy and grace—mercy for our weakness and grace for our succour when we are tempted—which we need as people passing through the desert of this world.

It is most consoling to raise our eyes and behold Christ invested with His priestly girdle. for thereby we are assured that He will save us all the way through in safety, and introduce us into the rest of God.

*Edward Dennett*

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Learning from Christ Himself is the true qualification for service: “Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest to your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Here are three things in their divinely beautiful order. The exhortation of Christ: “Take my yoke upon you and learn from me”, the example of Christ: “For I am meek and lowly in heart” and the encouragement of Christ: “Ye shall find rest to your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Let us no longer deny that learning is the qualification for service but let us insist that it is not that of the schools and colleges but the learning at the Master's feet.

*Anon.*

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The Lord Jesus Christ was the only perfect Man that ever trod this earth. He was all perfect—perfect in thought, perfect in word, perfect in action. In Him every perfect quality met in divine and, therefore, perfect proportion. No one feature predominated. In Him were exquisitely blended a majesty which overawed and a gentleness which gave perfect ease in His presence.

The scribes and the Pharisees met His withering rebuke while the poor Samaritan and "the woman that was a sinner" found themselves unaccountably attracted to Him. No one feature displaced another for all was in fair and comely proportion. This may be traced in every scene of His perfect life.

*C. H. Mackintosh*

## THE ROBBER SAVED

Luke 23:39-43

We do not find, save during the three hours of darkness on the cross, that the Lord Jesus was ever hindered by any sorrow, weariness, or trial, from entering into the sorrow of others.

No one could put Him in a place (except when working out atonement) where He did not enter into human suffering. Such is the unweariness of love we see in Christ.

He was light; and the more we look into His history, the more comes out the terribleness of the heart of man. It was never manifested till then. There are amiable natures and unamiable natures; but we never learn what the heart of

man is till then. The thing that tries the human heart is, 'What is its object?' not, 'What are its mere natural qualities?' "There is none that seeketh after God" (Romans 3:11). Man saw no beauty in Christ. There is nothing in the heart that looks at the Lord so as to find in Him an object and a delight. There is no root till the conscience is reached. There may be attraction, but until the conscience is in the presence and sight of God, nothing is done; it is like the morning dew which passes away. "The same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself" (Matthew 13:20).

Wherever the conscience is reached by God, there is some sense of goodness. Fear and terror may predominate, but there is attraction, and the heart cannot let it go. Faith always gets both: God is love, and yet He reaches the conscience. There is that which reaches the conscience, and that which inspires confidence, when the eye is on Christ.

On the authority of Christ Himself we have the certainty of salvation, that is, the christian state; and no other suits the christian. It is the only real christian state which the word of God owns. The condition of the christian is the effect of the work of Christ. It is not that there is no conflict, but that Another has taken my responsibility. My place before God is not the effect of what I have done, but of what Christ has done. Christ is the ground on which I stand before God. If it be so, what has He done for us? He died for our sins; then they must be put away. He is the Judge, but He cannot judge what He has put away. That we might walk with God in peace, God has sent the One who is to be the judge first to be the Saviour. Confidence is connected with righteousness now.

In the history of the robbers we have both sides.

In the other malefactor taunting Christ, we see how the heart of man is enmity to God. It was the triumph for the moment of the first man and of Satan too. It is sad to think what our hearts are, if left to themselves. When the heart is let out, where will it stop? Satan is over us. Here then we have the triumph of the wickedness of man over the goodness of God. We cannot get rid of Satan's power yet: we may bind it in a sense. The heart of man cannot bear the presence of God. There is not a vanity, not a bit of dress or money, that has not more power over the heart of man than all that Christ has done or is. You never yet found a man enjoying himself who would hear of Christ. The world would not

have Him when He came in grace, nor would it now; but it must have Him when He comes in judgment. Take the majority of people in this city, and suppose them let into heaven! They would get out as fast as they could!

In the repentant robber, on the other hand, we see grace. He was crucified on a gibbet; but no matter, gibbet or no gibbet, when God and the soul meet, we have the simple and immense fact that the soul is brought at once into His presence. When God has dealt with the conscience, we make no more promises for the future. Unlike the naughty child that says, 'I will be better to-morrow,' the soul confesses sin to-day. "Dost not thou fear God?" is the word, not "Are you not ashamed of being a thief?"

Have you ever been brought into God's presence? "The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom." If you have not been consciously in God's presence, wisdom has not begun for you. Before Christ you must be, and you must be there in truth: the difference is whether you are before Christ in the fulness of His grace, or before Him in judgment.

"We indeed justly" says the repentant thief. He did not say that the world was guilty, but that he was the guilty one; it is not simply that sin is sin, but that I am a sinner. His thought is that he himself is justly there. It is a personal thing, not merely that God is holy, nor merely that the world is guilty, but that you are guilty.

"This man hath done nothing amiss". He would guarantee the whole life of Christ—it was a divine revelation to the soul. Who is there that is a christian that would not lay down his life for this? "This man hath done nothing amiss." It was a divine revelation of the perfectness of Christ's Person. Could your soul answer for Christ in that way? Here is a man who does so when everybody is deserting Jesus: here is divine faith that He was perfectly sinless: his eye is opened, his heart brought to the consciousness of it. It is not only that he has the fear of God, but he sees the perfectness of Jesus. Heaven was opened when Christ came out for public service; there never was a man before of whom God could say, 'That is all I want.' Has your heart echoed, and said, 'That is all I want?' Nowhere else can the heart so rest when we see the evil around, and the imperfections even of saints. The robber's mind, having got hold of Christ, finds rest in Him. All around is a wide waste of waters; the heart would get wearied, but it turns to



Him; and what a rest! Things would be unbearable but for this, but the heart, when it turns there, enters its sanctuary.

“Remember me,” said the converted robber. What sign was there that Jesus was Christ the Lord? There was not a cloud on this man’s heart, because he was divinely taught. One heart recognises that He is Lord in spite of everything. Pilate had washed his hands before all the people, and given Him up to the Jews; He was denied by one of His disciples, betrayed by another. Everything was against it. “Lord, remember me”. Without a sign, the robber owns Him—how bright to faith! This man had no time to grow, or serve, or walk but there was thorough conversion, full faith, a sense of what the Messiah was, and belief in His coming in His kingdom. Faith in itself is always certain; it may lead us to doubt about other things, but it is always absolutely certain. The believer has set to his seal that God is true; he does not say, ‘Perhaps He is true.’ Whatever I receive as the word of God, I receive with absolute certainty; if it be not so, I do not receive it as the word of God at all.

“Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.” His whole concern was that Christ should remember him. We see in him boldness towards the other malefactor, lowliness as to himself, a sense of the perfectness of Jesus and the knowledge that He would come in His kingdom. Happy are we if we are in the state of this robber! If you were in suffering, in trial, is it the only thing you would care about, that Christ should remember you?

Another thing is Christ’s answer to him: “Today shalt thou be with me in paradise”. The character of Luke is to bring in present blessing. Before ever the kingdom came, he would go straight to paradise. Faith never looks at my heart but at the object God reveals. When brought to the consciousness of what I am, my eye rests on Christ Himself. When the thief looks to Christ, he has Christ’s answer. The rest given to our souls is the positive answer of God. We have the positive declaration that this robber, taken up for his crimes, was that day absolutely fit for paradise; so perfect is the work of Christ.

Observe this robber, and the woman that was a sinner; how they understand Christ, because they want a Saviour! When I come to God with Christ in my hand (like Abel with his lamb), God says to me, ‘You are righteous.’ By faith I see Jesus is sitting on the right hand of the majesty on high. When did He go

there? "When he had by himself purged our sins" (Hebrews 1:3). Then I know my sins are purged before God. There is no progress here, no such thing as being fitted for heaven. There ought to be growth in us, if left here, progress in likeness to Christ but it is never in Scripture connected with fitness for heaven: Christ is my title.

There is growth, but it is never treated as our fitness. This robber was fit for paradise at once; he went there, any way, that day. I suppose he was fit for it, since he was fit to be with Christ! Suppose I were to make all the progress the most blessed saint ever made, could I say I was fit thus for Christ? God forbid! Yet I am fit. Death for the believer is simply that he has done with all that is mortal and sinful.

How little the outside is the truth! The Jews sent soldiers to break the robbers' legs: how little they thought they were sending the robber straight to heaven, to be the first companion (there were Old Testament saints, of course) that followed the blessed Lord!

It would be well for us if we were as close to Christ as that poor robber. When the veil was rent, the whole thing was changed. The Old Testament was a declaration that man could not go to God. God did not come out, and man could not go in. The gospel says that God did come out and man can go in. We have "boldness to enter into the holiest through the blood of Jesus" (Hebrews 10:19). If sin is there, how can I enter into the holiest? I am in Christ, not in the flesh. Our sins He bore; we have died with Him, and should enter into the holiest. Access is free, the veil being rent; we are accepted in the Beloved.

Until the work was done, He did not give up the ghost. Now, as a present thing, we have boldness to enter into the holiest. Are you there? The veil is rent; you cannot have God afar off. There is no more a veil; we are before the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. So full and complete is the revelation, that I see God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ, the witness of salvation accomplished. The glory is in the face of the One who bore my sins. In the presence of the absolute light and righteousness of God you must stand, or you cannot stand at all. The world may blind your eyes, but there is no veil on the presence of God.

*J. N. Darby*

## WHAT PAUL WAS AND WHAT HE BECAME—(A.V.)

yet brought up in this city (Jerusalem) at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers. Acts 22:3

Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews. Philippians 3:5

I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Acts 26:9

As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison. Acts 8:3

And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. Acts 9:14

I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee. Acts 22:19

Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. Philippians 3:6

And I punished them oft in every synagogue. and compelled them to blaspheme: and being exceedingly mad against them. I persecuted them even unto strange cities. Acts 26:11

how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it. Galatians 1:13

But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. ... and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. Philippians 3:7,8

But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. Galatians 6:14

Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice. Philippians 1:18

But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. Galatians 1:23

according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction. 2 Corinthians 13:10

And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. Acts 9:20

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ. Galatians 2:16

Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. Ephesians 3:8

And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved. 2 Corinthians 12:15