

The Greatest Theme in the World

by

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CHAPTER NINE

SERVICE AND CHRIST'S ATONEMENT

When the apostle Paul speaks of himself as a "**servant of Jesus Christ**" (Romans 1:1; Titus 1:1), he uses the Greek word *doulos*, which means "*bondman*," and is so rendered in Revelation 6:15. The word comes from a root which means *to bind*, hence, signifies one who is in subjection to another; a slave, one who belongs to another. Believers in CHRIST are His slaves, for He has purchased them by His own Blood, hence they are not their own. What was the secret underlying Paul's devotion to CHRIST and his endeavor to please GOD and not men? He himself answers the question, for he says, "**If I yet pleased men I should not be the servant of Jesus Christ**" (Galatians 1:10).

He recognized he was not his own, and therefore he could not do as he liked. The same thought is seen in Paul's prohibitive utterance, when he says to Timothy, "**The servant of the Lord must not strive**" (II Timothy 2:24). Why? Because he has no right. His life belongs to another, and to that Other he is responsible not to wrangle, but to be gentle. It is this fact of His death which makes us say with Dora Greenwell:

"living, dying, let me bring,
My strength, my solace from this spring;
That He who lives to be my King,
Once died to be my Saviour." [121]

Both in CHRIST's teaching and in the Spirit's ministry, believers are reminded they are the Lord's servants and His property, as the Apostle tersely says, "**Whose I am and whom I serve**" (Acts 27:23).

1. *Recognition of the Lord, the basis of service.* "**Ye serve the Lord Christ!**" (Colossians 3:24) is the practical word of the Apostle as he charges the servants to do all they do heartily, "**as unto the Lord.**" To be influenced by the Lord as He directs in the word of His grace, is to have an influence for the Lord which is unmistakable in its blessing.

Among the knotty questions, which the Lord gave Job for his consideration was, "**Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades?**" (Job 38:31).

To bind, or limit, the influence exerted by the cluster of stars known as the Pleiades is an impossibility. The same thing is true of the gracious influence which emanates from the Cross.

Men in their ignorance imagined at one time the earth was the center of the universe; then they thought the sun was, but bye-and-bye they discovered that the sun was moving round one of the stars in the cluster known as the Pleiades. "Vast as the distance is which separates our sun from his central group - a distance which is thirty-four million times greater than the distance between the sun and our earth - yet so tremendous is the force exerted by Alycone that it draws our system irresistibly around it at the rate of 422,000 miles a day, in an orbit which it will take many years to complete."

One other thing about the Pleiades, is the meaning of the word. The Chaldaic word "*chimah*," literally means "*a hinge, pivot, or axle*," which moves round and moves other bodies along with it. Astronomers who knew nothing [122] about the meaning of the word, by a series of independent calculations, have found out that the Pleiades is the axle round which the solar system revolves.

As the Pleiades influences the planetary system so the Lord JESUS in His wondrous death upon the Cross, influences the believer in Himself.

This may be seen in many ways, but I call attention to an incident in the life of John.

When CHRIST appeared to John in Patmos, He made known to him by the revelation which was given to Him, that He was to "**shew unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass;**" and those servants are likened to "**seven stars**" which He holds in His hand. Before He explains the mystery of the seven stars, He speaks of Himself, as the "**one who was dead,**" and who is "**alive forevermore.**"

The pierced One of Calvary holds His servants in His pierced hand, as He uses them in His service. As they feel the pressure of that dented hand, they are moved as the apostle was to devoted service, when he said, "**The love of Christ constraineth me.**"

II. *Yieldingness to the Lord, the consecration of service.*

"**To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey his servants ye are**" (Romans 6:16).

In CHRIST's prayer for His people, He prays: "**For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified in the truth**" (John 17:19). The word "**sanctify**" cannot mean *to purify* when applied to CHRIST, for He had no defilement to remove. The reference is to CHRIST's consecration of Himself in willing obedience to GOD in death, on our behalf; and not only so, but He gave Himself over to death on our account, that we might in turn be consecrated to Himself, and that He might communicate Himself to us; as Godet says, "The sanctification of every believer [123] is nothing else than the communication which JESUS makes to him of His own sanctified person."

There are two things which are worthy of our special consideration, and these are the Consecrator, and the element of consecration.

As to the latter CHRIST prays we may be sanctified "**in the truth.**" Godet points out that there is no article in the Greek, and makes it read "in truth," that is, in a true way, in contrast to the Pharisaical pretensions and Levitical ceremonialism. But it seems to me that while this may be implied, there is a great deal more in the words.

We must read them in the light of what goes before. Does not the "**also**" suggest an association? As CHRIST sanctified Himself to death, so in that fact of His death for us, we should live and move, for as another has said: "Christianity stands rooted in the divine act of reparation and retrieval. We are saved not of ourselves, but by the work of another. And our salvation consists in a continual union with Him who is the abiding Refuge and Healer and Restorer of His people.

The Scriptures speak to us in many figures of that inward health and vitality which we recover in Him, who alone hath life in Himself, and who quickeneth whom He will.

Mark the, words "our salvation consists in a continual union with Him," that is, I take it, the writer means the secret magnetic force of the Christian life is found in union with Him who gave Himself over to death for us.

The thought in this case is not being delivered from the guilt of sin, nor being kept from its defilement, but it is in being lifted into a higher sphere altogether, namely, as CHRIST hallowed Himself in holy consecration to GOD for our benefit; so there should burn on the altar of our life, the holy fire of His passion, which shall inflame us in whole-hearted [124] devotion to the will and service of GOD.

This thought lifts us away from the low conception of the merely negative aspect of holiness, namely, separation from that which defiles, into the positive realm of whole-hearted consecration to GOD.

In that realm:

- our spiritual comforts do not concern us,
- our soul's salvation does not trouble us,
- our spiritual progress does not occupy us,
- our work does not annoy us,
- our religious interests do not worry us,
- our brethren do not affront us, and
- our difficulties do not depress us.

Our one attraction is the One who loved us and gave Himself for us, and we are so taken up with Him in holy activity in the will of GOD, that we exclaim with Rutherford,

"Oh, to be a thousand fathoms deep in His love!
He, He Himself is more excellent than Heaven;

for Heaven is but a creature,
and He is something more than a creature."

The other point is with reference to the Consecrator.

We cannot say in the sense in which CHRIST could, "*I sanctify myself.*" There is only one place in the whole of the New Testament where the Greek word *hagiazō* is used in relation to the believer, as suggesting he is the sanctifier, and that is in I Peter 3:15, where he is exhorted to sanctify CHRIST as Lord in his heart, and there the thought is the recognition of the Lord as the dominant power, who is to regulate the life of the believer.

In every other case where the Sanctifier is spoken of it is either the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, or the Word of GOD.

The following Scriptures from the epistles will suffice to emphasise this fact:

"Sanctified by God the Father" (Jude 1).

"Christ loved the Church, that He might sanctify it" (Ephesians 5:26). [125]

"Sanctified in Christ Jesus" (I Corinthians 1:2).

"By the which will we are sanctified" (Hebrews 10:10).

"Sanctify the people with His own blood" (Hebrews 13:12).

"Sanctified by the Word of God" (I Timothy 4:5).

"Sanctified by the Holy Ghost" (Romans 15:16).

"The God of peace sanctify you" (I Thessalonians 5:23).

Too many of GOD's children in their honest endeavor to be consecrated in this higher sense of the word, miss their purpose by their endeavoring. They need to learn the music and the meaning of what Frances Ridley Havergal says:

Church of GOD, beloved and chosen,
Church of GOD, for whom CHRIST died,
Claim thy gifts and praise the Giver!
"Ye are washed and sanctified!"

Sanctified by GOD the Father, And by JESUS CHRIST His Son, And by GOD the HOLY SPIRIT, Holy, holy Three in One.

By His will He sanctifieth,
By the Spirit's power within;
By the loving hand that chasteneth,
Fruits of righteousness to win;
By His truth, and by His promise,
By His Word, His Gift unpriced,
By His Blood, and by our union,
With the risen life of CHRIST.

"Holiness by faith in JESUS,

Not by effort of thine own, [126]
Sin's dominion crushed and broken,
By the power of grace alone;
GOD's own holiness within thee,
His own beauty on thy brow,
This shall be thy pilgrim brightness,
This thy blessed portion now.

"He will sanctify thee wholly;
Body, spirit, soul shall be,
Blameless till thy Saviour's coming,
In His glorious majesty:
He hath perfected for ever
Those whom He hath sanctified;
Spotless, glorious and holy
Is the Church, His chosen Bride."

A consecrated believer is never man-made, nor self-made, he is always a God-made one.

One of Disraeli's admirers, in speaking of him to Mr. Bright, said, "You ought to give him credit for what he has accomplished, as he is a self-made man."

"I know he is," retorted Mr. Bright, and "he adores his maker."

A believer is never a self-made man in the divine life, he must be God-made to be at all.

Chalmers recognized this, when he spoke of the "expulsive power of a new affection." But Chalmers only touches half the truth, when he speaks of expulsion; what we want is, an inclusive and conclusive reign of a new inhabitant, for it is only as the Lord Himself dominates and directs every part of our nature, that we are truly consecrated by His consecrating personality to Himself. [127]

III. *Carefulness before the Lord, the order of service.*

One of the highest appellations applied to Moses is, that he was "**the servant of God**" (Revelation 15:3).

The careful student of nature, and the prayerful student of GOD's Word, are both impressed with one fact, namely, that GOD is the GOD of Order.

"Order is Heaven's first law."

One illustration from His works, and one statement from His Word will demonstrate this truth.

The leaves on the trees are arranged in such a way as to suit the nature and circumstances of each of them; for instance, if we go into an orchard and examine a young apple or cherry tree, we shall find that the leaves are arranged round the stem spirally in series of fives, the fifth leaf, or

bud, standing directly above the first. Why is it? The leaves being evenly distributed around the stem give each a fair chance to get the light and air which are requisite for its growth and symmetry. Thus we find, not only "the heavens themselves," but the products of the earth

"Observe degree, priority, and place,
Insisture, course, proportion, season, form,
Office and custom in all line of order."

When we turn to the pages of Holy Writ we find the same carefulness - "**See that thou make all things according to the pattern shown thee in the mount,**" is the Lord's direction to Moses, regarding the tabernacle. Nothing was left to the ingenuity of his brain, nor the concept of his thought, nor the freak of his imagination, but everything was to be "**according to the pattern.**"

The Apostle Paul recognizes the same thing with regard to CHRIST's death and resurrection. There were many witnesses to the fact of CHRIST's resurrection, [128] but Paul lays emphasis on it by saying it was "**according to the Scriptures,**" for, as Godet points out, "The regimen '**according to the Scriptures,**' has its importance; the divine testimony of the Scriptures is designedly placed above all the apostolic testimonies which are about to follow. The Scriptures had said the event would happen; the witnesses declare it has happened" (I Corinthians 15:1, etc.).

Another thing of importance to observe, is the prominence given to any stated truth.

When Paul speaks of the death and resurrection of CHRIST, and uses the words "**first of all**" (I Corinthians 15:3), he not only means first in the sense of coming first, but first in importance, as Godet remarks, "We need not give the word '**first**' the temporal meaning; it is the fundamental importance of those one or two points which Paul wishes to characterise by the term."

The soldiers in a royal procession come first in the order of the march, but the king is the first one as the personage of importance. That is the sense in which we must ever view CHRIST's death and resurrection. They can never take a secondary place. They must always be foremost and first. We call attention to CHRIST's death, to the fact, that "**Christ died for our sins.**"

This must ever be first in importance, because it is the most important truth of all. All truth is of importance, but there are certain truths which have a relative importance, and there are others which have an essential importance, even as the hub of the wheel is of essential importance to the wheel, because of the position it occupies, while the spokes are of importance because of their relative connection with the hub.

The servant of the Lord, ever treasures in his heart with jealous care, the truth of the Lord's death, for it is that death which has given him a gospel to preach, hence, he [129] has a sacred trust to guard, as the Apostle indicates when he says, "**The glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust.**" (I Timothy 1:11).

IV. Resting in the Lord, the confidence of service.

CHRIST says "**the servant is not greater than his Lord**" (John 15:20). CHRIST's greatness is

seen in His lowliness. He always rested in the will of GOD, while about His work, and was empowered in the Spirit, as a result. The same holds good to us as we are in the place of lowly dependence on CHRIST. We need have no concern about our comforts, if we are occupied in His business.

The temple of Solomon was built on the place of sacrifice.

When the Lord told Abraham to take his son Isaac, He told him to "**go into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains**" (Genesis 22:2); and it was in the same place Solomon erected the temple, for we read, "**Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem in Mount Moriah,**" and it is not without significance that we further read, "**where the Lord appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshing-floor of Oman, the Jebusite**" (II Chronicles 3:1).

It was in that place David offered peace and burnt offerings upon the altar which he erected, and the Lord accepted his offerings, as was evidenced in the fire from Heaven which fell upon them, and the devastating plague being stayed.

Reading these facts in the light of the New Testament, we can see their typical import, for as the temple was built on the place of Sacrifice, which had been consecrated by the substitutionary ram offered up in the stead of Isaac, and as the averting sacrifice upon which the fire of judgment fell, stayed the avenging stroke of the Lord upon Israel; so [130] CHRIST's death in all its glorious sufficiency, is the basis upon which the believer rests for his soul's salvation; the plan which shapes him as a holy temple for the Lord's occupancy; and the source of all service.

The Greek preposition *epi* when it occurs with the dative implies *a resting in*, and a conjunction with, a thing or person. Its use will illustrate this.

It is used in speaking of:

- a person lying "**in**" a bed,
- people sitting "**upon**" the grass,
- one stone resting "**upon**" another,
- CHRIST sitting "**upon**" an ass,
- acting "**at**" CHRIST's direction,
- CHRIST resting "**on**" a well,
- a stone lying "**upon**" a tomb's entrance, and
- of persons being saved from drowning by floating "**on**" boards (Mark 2:4; 6:39; 13:2; 11:7; Luke 5:5; John 4:6; 11:38; Acts 27:44).

The meaning of the word is thus aptly illustrated by its use.

This very preposition is used again and again in speaking of the believer's trust in the Lord.

- Thus Mary confesses she rejoices "**in**" GOD, her Saviour" (Luke 1:47);
- Peter declares that "**through faith in**" the "**name**" of JESUS brought wholeness to the lame

man (Acts 3:16);

- Isaiah proclaims CHRIST as the One "in" whom the Gentiles shall trust to their blessing (Romans 15:12);

- Paul makes known the basis of the Church in speaking of it as resting "**upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief Corner Stone**" (Ephesians 2:20);

- those who "**believe on**" CHRIST obtain everlasting life (I Timothy 1:16); and

- whoso "**believeth on Him shall not be confounded**" (I Peter 2:6).

These Scriptures prove beyond all question, to faith, that CHRIST in His finished work is the only resting place for the soul's salvation, and the only basis of peace, yea, the starting point and the stopping place of all things in the divine life.

Suppose we weave the above illustrative Scriptures into the fact of CHRIST's death as [131] the resting place of the believer's faith and service.

- He is the bed of rest, where we can lie to our heart's ease;

- He is the place of supply where we can feed to our heart's content;

- He is the upholder in the place of GOD's building;

- He is the sustainer as we journey in life's way;

- He is the sure success in the carrying out of His direction;

- He is the heart's refresher when thirsty in GOD's work;

- He is the hider of death's corruption and the life of our heart's love; and

- He is the sure place in which to rest, when we are occupied about His business.

V. Looking to the Lord, the attractibility of service.

CHRIST to benefit us "**took the form of a servant**," namely, a slave (Philippians 2:7).

He took seven downward steps in serving us, and GOD caused Him to have seven corresponding steps of exaltation, as will be seen in the following contrast (Philippians 2:6-11):

1. "**Made Himself of no reputation.**"

2. "**Took upon Him the form of a servant.**"

3. "**Made in the likeness of men.**"

4. "**Being found in fashion as a man.**"

5. "**He humbled Himself.**"

6. "**Became obedient unto death.**" [132]

7. "**The Death of the cross.**"

1. "**God hath highly exalted Him.**"

2. "**Given Him a name above every name.**"

3. "**At the Name of Jesus every knee should bow.**"

4. Heaven acknowledges Him - "**Things in Heaven.**"

5. All earth owns Him "**Things in earth.**"

6. Hell submits to Him "**Things under the earth.**"

7. "**Every tongue**" confesses He "**is Lord to the glory of God the Father.**"

CHRIST is the Perfect Pattern of lowly service, and we are exhorted to let the mind that was in Him to be in us (Philippians 2:5). How can we obtain that mind? By looking to Him, that He may be the mind to think, and act, in and through us.

Thomson in addressing nature, which perhaps is an ambiguous way of speaking to GOD, says:

"O, Nature,
Enrich me with the knowledge of thy works;
Snatch me to Heaven."

The thought in the poet's mind evidently is this, heaven's truths are found in earth's secrets.

We cannot find GOD by searching in the haunts of nature, but having found Him in CHRIST, we may find illustrations of His grace and love in all His works, for as Young reminds us:

"The course of nature is the art of GOD."

The common daisy on the roadside has a voice to us, if we will but listen. We have to say to it, as Wordsworth did long since:

"Bright flower! whose home is everywhere.
Bold in maternal Nature's care,
And all the long year through, the heir,
Of joy or sorrow.
Methinks that there abides in thee
Some concord with humanity,
Given to no other flower I see
The forest through! [133]

One thing about the daisy is its responsiveness to the sun and to no other light.

In the evening hour the daisy closes its petals around its heart. The lamp-lighter lights the gas lamps, and the gas light plays upon the daisy in its bed of green, but it opens not. The moon rises and pours her silvery rays upon the humble flower of earth, and floods all around with her beautiful sheen; but there is no response on the part of her whose "cheek is tipped with a blush."

The moon sets and one by one the stars shine out from the canopy of Heaven, but still there is no response on the part of her, who is of "silver crest and golden eye."

The morning light comes, and the warm touch of the sun's beams kisses the flower of "snowy bosom sunward spread," and immediately, as Burns says, "thou lifts thine unassuming head." The sunlight did what no other light could do. Why? "Because the daisy found in the sunshine the stimulus of its vital action - the food which it assimilated," and by means of which it was able to grow the bright colors which adorned it, and made it what it was. The light! of the sun was its life.

What is true of the daisy in the natural world is infinitely more so in the spiritual realm of grace.

The one object which attracts the saint is the CHRIST of Calvary.

- In the darkness of His Cross we find the light of Heaven.
- In the bitterness of His woe we receive the joy of His salvation.
- In the poverty of His humiliation we discover the riches of His love.

CHRIST's death is:

- the death of sin,
- the begetter of love,
- the stimulus to faith,
- the gladness of hope,
- the ardor of zeal,
- the inspirer in service, and
- the fervor of testimony, which makes us say, "**My Beloved is white and ruddy.**"

White in His spotless character, and ruddy in His all-glorious death. Then with new buoyancy [134] and increased zest, we exclaim,

"This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend."
"Whom have I in Heaven but Thee, and there is none on earth I desire beside Thee."
"Looking unto Jesus .. who endured the Cross" (Hebrews 12:2)

is the attitude of the believer's life, in order to discover His attractiveness. CHRIST is the one attraction of the child of GOD, but He does not become this by a mere casual glance. There must be intensity of gaze. This is not only implied by the verb used, but also by the preposition.

The meaning of the word translated "**unto**" shares its meaning with "*into*."

It is so given in speaking of the angels who desired to "**look into**" the things relating to CHRIST's sufferings and glory which were penned by the HOLY SPIRIT in the sacred writings (I Peter 1:12).

The same thought is found in James 1:25, where we are exhorted to look "**into the perfect law of liberty!**"

So that the sentence might with equal force, yea, carry the meaning, "Looking into Jesus." Not merely "at" JESUS as the astronomer looks at a star by means of a telescope, but looking "into" Him as the scientist looks into the organism of an insect by means of a powerful microscope, which enables him to see every particle of its being.

VI. *Acting from the Lord, the power of service.*

When we act at His bidding we are sure of His blessings. "**If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ**" (Galatians 1:10), affirms the apostle. He knew the Lord and the Lord knew His servant. The centurion was a man under authority, and therefore he could say to his

servant, "**do this, and he doeth it**" (Matthew 8. 9). Being a man under authority he had authority.

The same holds good in the service of CHRIST, when we act from Him in obedience to [135] His bidding, we may be assured we shall have the power of His presence to command others. It was the CHRIST who had died on Calvary, who had authority to command His disciples to go and preach the Gospel, and that authority had been "given unto" Him because He had previously carried out the command of the Father to die for the sheep. (Compare Matthew 28:18, 19, and John 10:18, remembering the word "**power**," in each Scriptures signifies authority, and not strength, namely, the right to act.)

The consciousness of the Lord's presence and commission have ever made His servants faithful and fearless.

The disciples at Pentecost were conscious of the CHRIST of Calvary, risen from the dead, hence, they feared not the face of men. The marred face of the Saviour made the fearless faces of His servants. Bloody Nero could not burn out the fires ignited by the Cross; the cruel Inquisition could not daunt those who knew the Sufferer of Calvary; the Diet of Worms could not deter the faithful Martin Luther, for the thesis of the Gospel of Blood, was more powerful than the Pope's bull; the devoted Covenanters of Scotland were hunted from house and home, and found shelter in the mists of the mountains, for they knew the "Hind of the morning" who was hunted by the wolves of hell and nestled to His bleeding side; the fires of Oxford burned the bodies of Ridley and Latimer, but those fires only brought them into fellowship with CHRIST and His sufferings; and the saintly Samuel Rutherford immured in Aberdeen prison found the "durance vile" a means of communion with His Lord, as he said, "Welcome, welcome Cross of CHRIST, if CHRIST be with it!"

VII. *Love to CHRIST, the spring of service.*

"By love serve one another" (Galatians 5:13). The word "**serve**" signifies [136] to serve as a slave. Not to serve slavishly, that is, in a way which indicates the service is irksome, but serve as a slave because impelled by love, for as the word for servant indicates the bondage of a slave, so when applied to a child of GOD it speaks of loving devotion. This is the spirit of Him, who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life as a ransom for many.

There is a beautiful illustration of this in the Old Testament in the case of the slave who was freed in the year of jubilee, and who would not accept his freedom because he loved his master so well. When he thus declared himself, the master took his servant, and with an awl bored his ear and transfixed him to the doorpost, and he was declared to be his servant forever (Exodus 21:1-6).

The bored ear was a declaration of love, and a seal of accepted service, and the man being fixed for the moment to the doorpost, proclaimed his consecration to the master of the house, and the absolute right of the master over the servant.

The pierced ear was a mark of his love. There is an undoubted reference to this ordinance when CHRIST in speaking of Himself in relation to His sacrificial work, says, "**Mine ear hast Thou**

opened" (Psalm 40:6).

The word "**opened**," as the margin indicates, means "*digged*," and as Newberry says, "digged, or bored, *cahrithah* from *cahrah*, to dig. The word is rendered "**digged**" in speaking of Isaac's servants who "**digged a well**" (Genesis 22:25); "**bought**," when the Lord speaks of buying a woman (Hosea 3:2); "**prepared**" and "**make a banquet**" in the sense of preparing a feast (II Kings 6:23; Job 41:6); and the word is translated "**pierce**," where the Spirit in the prophetic word foretells the piercing of the hands and feet of CHRIST (Psalm 22:16).

The HOLY SPIRIT takes the passage of Psalm [137] 40:6, and directly applies it to CHRIST's incarnation, service, and substitutionary work, and makes Him say, "**A body hast Thou prepared me**" (Hebrews 10:6). The context shows, the body was prepared to be a sacrificial victim. CHRIST's loving service and devoted consecration to the will of GOD are indicated in His saying, as He Himself says, "**The Lord God hath opened mine ear! and I was not rebellious**" (Isaiah 1:5).

CHRIST's devotion even to the death, in love for us, is the inspiring cause of our devotion to Him.

No hardship is too great, no trial is too severe, no suffering is too intense, no task is too difficult, no load is too great, no cross is too heavy, and no loss is too large, when viewed in the light of the loss He sustained, the Cross He carried, the load He bore, the task He undertook, the suffering He endured, and the hardship which weighted Him, when

"In my place condemned He stood."

James Chalmers recognised this, when he proclaimed after long years of difficulty and hardship, his unalterable choice, in the following words, "I recall the twenty-one years, give me back all its experience, give me its shipwrecks, give me its standings in the face of death, give it me surrounded with savages and dubs, give it me back again with spears flying about me, with the club knocking me to the ground - give it me back, and I will still be a missionary!"

VIII. *Equipment by the Lord, the supply of service.*

When the Lord called His servants together, He gave to each of His servants a pound, that they might trade in His absence, and said, "**Occupy till I come**." (Luke 19:13-15).

The servant who gained ten pounds by his faithful trading recognized that the capital which was given him was the cause [138] of his gain, as John Trapp quaintly makes him say, "Lord, Thy pound and not my pains hath gained ten pounds."

The pound evidently represents the Gospel, with which every servant is responsible to trade, since the Lord has entrusted it to us.

The apostle frequently refers to what had been entrusted to him and others (II Corinthians 5:19; I. Timothy 6:20; II. Timothy 1:12), and that Gospel is not only seed for the sower, but bread for the eater (Isaiah 55:10, 11; II Tim: 2:6), hence, CHRIST's death is the medium of the Divine

supply, for His flesh and Blood are "**meat indeed**" (John 6:53-56).

Ignatius recognised this when He said, "I have no delight in corruptible food, nor in the pleasures of this life. I desire the Bread of GOD, the Heavenly Bread, the Bread of Life, which is the flesh of JESUS CHRIST, the Son of GOD; and I desire the Drink of GOD, namely, His Blood, which is incorruptible love and eternal life."

As it was from the smitten rock in the wilderness the water gushed forth to meet the need of famished Israel; so it is from the smitten CHRIST the blessing of divine grace flows to us.

"**Thou shalt smite the rock**" (Exodus 17:6), was the direction which the Lord gave to Moses. We refer to the direction because the word "*nakah*" rendered "**smite**" is found in connection with CHRIST as the Smitten One.

The following instances where the word is found will be of suggestive interest:

- "**They persecuted Him, whom Thou hast smitten**" (Psalm 69:26).
- "**Smite the Shepherd**" (Zechariah 13:7).
- "**I gave My back to the smiters**" (Isaiah 1. 63).
- "**My heart is smitten**" (Psalm 102:4).
- "**I was wounded**" (Zechariah 13:6).
- "**Smitten of God**" (Isaiah 53:4).

CHRIST was smitten on our account, that we might not be smitten for our sins.

Now the promise comes to us in consequence, "**The sun shall not smite thee**" (Psalm 121:6). [139]

Right through the Scriptures we find the same sequence of thought.

He is smitten, then we are sheltered.

- The ascending smoke of Noah's sacrifice brings forth the promise that the Lord will not again destroy the earth with water (Genesis 8:21).
- The blood of the paschal Lamb protecting Israel in Egypt, is followed by Israel's deliverance from Egypt (Exodus 12:23, 5 1).
- The tree cut down sweetens the bitter water of Marah, then the Israelites drink to their refreshment and rest (Exodus 15:26).
- The uplifted serpent in the wilderness brings life to the looking Israelite, then Israel can pitch their tents towards the sun-rising (Numbers 21:9- 11).
- The corn of wheat falls into the ground and dies, then there follows the "**much fruit**" of blessing (John 12:24).
- The foundation is laid, then the building is erected (I Corinthians 3:11, 12); and
- the Lamb must be slain for us, before we can have the glory with Him, for it was after He said, "**I have finished the work,**" that He prayed, "**I will that they whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me, where I am that they may behold My glory.**"

Pentecost follows the Passover, and it is because of the Passover of CHRIST's death that there is the Pentecost of the Spirit's power and presence.

The dying words of Adolphe Monad sum up the whole truth in its relative importance, he said, "All in Christ, by the HOLY SPIRIT, for the glory of GOD. All else is nothing."

"By the HOLY SPIRIT," for He it is who convinces of sin, imparts the new life, enables us to trust in CHRIST, unites us to Him, leads by His word, inspires by His praying, inflames by His love, effectually works by His power, strengthens by His grace, sanctifies by His truth, preserves by His power, and keeps us for the Lord's glory. [140]

~ end of chapter 9 ~
