夜间哭泣

为什么上帝的儿女受苦

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第6章

类型

在以色列，关于初熟果的供物的条例是有其特殊性的。因此，它被命令如下："如果你献初熟果的肉祭给主，你应当为初熟果的肉祭献上尚未成熟的玉米，经过火的烘干（利未记2:11）。

基督，我们知道，是至高无上的初熟果。因此，他尤其被预表为这些经过火烘干的玉米。在这"玉米"中，我们发现了属于我们的人，它在我们的田地中生长，在我们的土壤中滋养，被我们的雨水浇灌，被我们的阳光晒熟。因此，耶稣也是。他真正是人，是神的肉，那个男人，喝了路旁的溪水。

这玉米在绿时采摘，然后经过火的烘干，而不是按照常理通过阳光的热量自然成熟。它被提前烘干，不自然的手段，暴露在人工的热量下。同样，耶稣，那个痛苦的人，被父亲的愤怒，被那个消耗灵魂的火所影响，被提前烘干，还没有到他应有的时候。他没有像《约伯记》5:26所说的"在完全的年数里，在他应得的庄稼里"，他没有在神的微笑中平静成长。他被灼热的火灼伤，内外，直到他的面貌满是皱纹，他还年轻，却已经在他的形体上显现出来，以至于犹太人说他几乎到了五十岁（约翰1:57）。

这就是他在诗篇中的看法。

在这些诗篇中，我们立刻认出了"绿玉米烘干的火"。因此，他说，"我的力量如同烧死的陶器；我的舌头粘在我的喉咙；你已经带我到死亡的废墟。"（诗篇31:9）再次，他说到，"我的眼睛因悲哀而干涸，我的心和我的胃；我将我的生命献给悲伤，让我在我的悲伤和叹息中花白：我的力量干涸了...我的骨头被消耗"（诗篇31:9）。再次，我们听到他说，"我的眼睛因悲哀而干涸，它在所有敌人中变老。"（诗篇6:7）。

这些被火烘干的玉米不仅是对主的描述，也是对圣徒的描述。当然，它们对主的描述要胜过对我们。然而，它们在这里树立起来，"在适当的季节，一捆成熟的玉米"（约伯记5:26）。他没有在神的微笑中平静成长。他被灼热的火灼伤，内外，直到他的面貌满是皱纹，他还年轻，却已经在他的形体上显现出来，以至于犹太人说他几乎到了五十岁（约翰1:57）。

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as a type of the whole Church, who are also called like JESUS, "the firstfruits."

All the members of His body from the beginning have been just such as these dried ears of green corn. Hear, for instance, one of them speaking, "I am like a bottle in the smoke"; or again, "My bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long . . . my moisture is turned into the drought of Summer" (Psalm 32:3).

By such an emblem as this was the Church's career of tribulation set before Israel. And it is most interesting for us to look at our trials in the light of so expressive a figure. Their object is to ripen us: it may be before the time; it may be in a way such as the flesh shrinks from; but still their object is to ripen us. The sorrows that compass us about are all ripening our graces, as well as withering out of us the green, rank, unripe luxuriance of earth. The heat may be great, but it shall not consume us; it will only make the ripening process a speedier one. It will shorten the way to perfect holiness and eternal glory; and shall we shrink from that which makes the process shorter?

But there was another ordinance in Israel setting forth the tribulation of the Church.

The mercy seat and the cherubim were to be both made of pure gold, "of beaten work" (Exodus 25:17, 18). Now, as the cherubim were doubtless the symbols of redeemed men, the Church of CHRIST, this type is very striking. Both the mercy seat and the cherubim were to be of one piece, for "both he who sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one."

They are of pure gold, and this denotes their exceeding preciousness. They are made of "beaten gold," to intimate the process through which they both had passed. The mercy seat was fashioned into shape and made after the pattern showed in the mount by the stroke of the hammer.

So JESUS was "made perfect through suffering." In like manner the cherubim were to be beaten into the intended shape and model. So with the saints. It is through this process that they must pass, and it is thus they are brought into that perfect shape which GOD has designed for them.

What, then, is the process through which the saints are passing now but just this? They are now under the hammer of the Spirit, that by this they may be fashioned into the likeness of cherubim, which in the Book of Revelation are set before us as the upbearers of Jehovah's throne and glory, as well as the inheritors thereof. And what is all the "beating" to which we may be subjected when compared with the glory for which it is preparing us?

There is another figure used by our Lord in speaking of His Church. He compares her to an injured, afflicted, friendless widow. Widowhood, then, is properly the Church's condition here. And this is her grief. Her Lord is absent, and His absence is one of her bitterest trials. It forms one long-continued sorrow. It makes such a blank on earth that we feel as if this of itself were grief enough, even were there none besides. And were the Church to realize fully her estate of widowhood, until the Lord come, she would find in this, no doubt, a new grief to which she was blind before, but a grief which operates with most blessed efficacy in sanctifying her and in keeping her apart from the world.
She is a stranger in a land of strangers. She is lonely and unfriended, sitting apart from earthly joy and fellowship. He whom she loves is far away. This separation is, as a saint of old expresses it, "like a mountain of iron upon her heavy heart." She longs to be with Him. She sighs for the day of meeting. And all this though sad is both sanctifying and solemnizing. It is a daily burden, a continual chastening, yet it is well. It loosens from earth. It lifts up to Heaven. It makes the world less fascinating. It prepares for the inseparable union: the meeting time - the bridal day.

There are other figures given us at the suffering Church. But let these suffice. They will help us to understand our true condition and to expect nothing else than tribulation here. No strange thing is happening to us. It is no strange thing that the green ears of corn should be dried with fire.

It is no strange thing that the cherubim should be made of beaten gold. It is no strange thing that, in the absence of the Bridegroom, the bride should mourn.

~ end of chapter 6 ~

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