

THE LORD'S FAMOUS TITLES

NO. 2347

A SERMON
 INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD'S DAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1894
 DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON
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*“The LORD looseth the prisoners: the LORD openeth the eyes of the blind:
 the LORD raiseth them that are bowed down: the LORD loveth the righteous:
 the LORD preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow:
 but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.”*
Psalm 146:7-9

THIS morning [See sermon #2115, The Drought of Nature, the Rain of Grace, and the Lesson Therefrom], as well as I could, looking to God for help, I tried, in Christ's stead, to persuade men to be reconciled to God. I showed that there was a great spiritual drought, and neither dew nor rain to be had except as God should send it, and I tried to press my hearers to go to God, to wait upon Him, to look to Him, and through the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ, to seek and find in God all that would be needful for their eternal blessedness.

I pressed hard, and some yielded, not to my pressure, but to a divine impulse that went with my pleading. There were some who did not yield this morning, so I am going to make another attempt to win them now, calling in our August Ally, even the Divine Spirit, without whom we can do nothing. May He bring many to God in penitence tonight!

You know that it helps men to come to a person when they know who he is, how good he is and how likely it is that they will find benefit by coming to him. My text tells us something about God, the Lord JEHOVAH. Five times the word occurs at the head of a sentence, JEHOVAH, JEHOVAH, JEHOVAH, JEHOVAH, JEHOVAH. Sometimes when a great king or prince has a high day, a herald proclaims the titles of His Majesty. He is prince of this, and lord of that, and emperor of the other—too often a lot of empty sounds. But when we come to speak of God, every title of His falls short of what is His real glory and honor.

Tonight we have five of His titles put together, five wonderful achievements of God, five things for which the Lord would have Himself noted. I want each one of you here to hear about them and to say, “That encourages me,” or “That cheers me,” or “That helps me.” At any rate, out of the five great magnets that I will try to use tonight, may one or other draw all our reluctant hearts to God, that we may find rest and peace in Him!

I. There are five famous titles of God here. The first one is, THE EMANCIPATOR.

Read the latter part of the seventh verse, “*The LORD looseth the prisoners.*”

It is God's glory that He is an Emancipator. How often in the Old Testament, and in the New too, you find the Lord loosing the prisoners! It was so notably in the case of Joseph, when God brought him out of the prison and set him up as Lord over all Egypt, and still more notable in the case of Israel in Egypt when, with a high hand, and a stretched-out arm, the Lord brought forth His people from all the tyranny of Pharaoh, whom He destroyed in the Red Sea. You may keep on reading Scripture, and you will continually find that it is true, “The LORD looseth the prisoners.”

I want some of you who are here to catch at that thought. Are you *mentally a prisoner* under gloom tonight? Did a cloud come over you a little while ago? Does it rest upon your mind still? Can no physician remove it? Listen to this word, “The LORD looseth the prisoners.” Are you in the bondage of error? Have you been misled by false teachers? Have you fallen into mistakes about the Word of God?

Are you denying the great truths which would comfort you? Are you believing the great errors which becloud your spirit? Come to God for teaching. He can emancipate you from any form of error, even though you have been brought up in it from a child. "The LORD looseth the prisoners."

Or have you come under some gross delusion? Are you the victim of some false impression which you cannot shake off? I pray you, if you are harried and worried by temptations of Satan, and he seems to have a firm foothold in your spirit and cannot be driven out, let this text, like a silver bell, ring out comforting music to you, "The LORD looseth the prisoners." Oh, that you who are in mental bonds might be set free tonight!

There are however worse bonds than those, the chains of *moral slavery*. This man is a drunkard and though he has taken the pledge, he cannot escape from the terrible craving which intemperate habits have brought upon him. Ah! friend, come you to Christ, He can take away the love of strong drink, and set you free. "The LORD looseth the prisoners," and He can do that for men and women who have given themselves up as lost.

God have mercy upon wretched women when they become the prey of strong drink! To my certain knowledge, this evil is becoming much more common than it was a few years ago. More frequently do we have to mourn over fallen sisters than we did some years back. It is sad that it should be so, but the glorious fact remains that "the LORD looseth the prisoners." Do not despair, poor women! Have hope of deliverance, God can yet loose you from the bonds of strong drink.

Has anyone here fallen into bondage to a lust? Has some evil passion got a tight hold on you and you cannot break the bonds? There is One who can set you free, ay, though you have been indulging in the evil for many years and seem to be wedded to an evil habit from which you cannot escape, still is it true, "The LORD looseth the prisoners."

Do not trust in yourself to get quit of the evil, but look to Him who died for sin upon the cross, and trust in Him, for it is written, "He shall save his people from their sins." I cannot stay tonight to mention all the kinds of moral bondage into which men and women fall, but let this sweet message be like a stray note from the harps of angels to all who are in the prison house, "The LORD looseth the prisoners."

Perhaps you are held fast in *spiritual bondage*. This is where we are all by nature, we are born slaves. Are you, tonight, my friend, conscious that you are a slave to sin? Are you fast bound by your trespasses? O spiritual slave, there is an Emancipator who can take your chains from you! "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed," and He is able to do it with a single word. Only trust Him, only yield yourselves up to Him as willing captives, and you shall be free from that moment. God make you free tonight! Ay, and He can loose you from every iniquity in which you may be enslaved!

There is another kind of emancipation which the Lord is constantly giving to the prisoners of hope, even deliverance from this present evil world. You are sick tonight. You are sad, you are cast down and troubled because of the burden of the flesh. "The LORD looseth the prisoners."

There is many a prisoner who has been loosed during the last week or two, dear members of this church who had been confined to sick beds. The Lord has opened the cage door, and the bird, set at liberty, has gone caroling up to the skies. The body has been put into the grave, and lies imprisoned there in durance vile, but He shall come, who Himself rose from the dead, and when His feet shall touch the earth again, and the angelic trumpet shall sound the summons, their bodies shall come forth—

*"From beds of dust and silent clay
To realms of everlasting day;"*

for "the LORD looseth the prisoners."

Here is a theme for a whole evening's discourse, but I do not want to take up any more time over this point. I wish rather to drive home this wedge, if you are prisoners, if you are under any form of bondage, come to God in Christ Jesus and put your trust in Him, for "the LORD looseth the prisoners."

II. We must hasten on to notice a second famous title for the Lord, that is, THE ILLUMINATOR, “The LORD openeth the eyes of the blind.”

If you will kindly look at your copies of the Bible, you will find that the words “the eyes of” are inserted in italics by the translators, so that the text really is, “The LORD openeth the blind.” Ah, He opens the very soul of the blind and lets the light in where there are no eyes! Have you not noticed that it is so? If anybody were to say to me, “Mr. Spurgeon, pick out a dozen of the happiest people that you know,” ten of them would be blind people.

We have some dear friends, members of this church, who are among the happiest souls that God has ever made. It is long since they saw the light, but God has opened their hearts in such a way that they enjoy a wonderful quietness of spirit, great placidity of mind, and an inward light and splendor which persons with eyes might well envy. I have noticed that blind people are often among the happiest people, and blind Christians certainly might take the chief place among us for their quiet and rest of mind. The Lord Jesus Christ opens the blind, He comes and sheds a light when the windows of the body are closed, and gives light within, so that they are full of brightness.

But if you like to take the text as it is in our translation, it will do very well. *When the Lord Jesus Christ was here, He opened the eyes of the blind.* He touched many a sightless eyeball, and the light streamed in. Read the evangels through, and you will find this miracle constantly recurring. Blindness is a very common ailment in the East, and the miracle of recovering the sight of the blind was therefore frequent with our Lord.

Next, *the Lord enables blind souls to see.* Here is a great mercy. The Lord has opened the eyes of many a man who could not see himself, and so proved how blind he was, and could not see the Lord, and so showed still more how blind he was. The Lord has given the inner sight to many a man who was without spiritual understanding, to whom the Gospel seemed a great mystery, of which he could make neither head nor tail. The Lord has made the scales to fall from many blind mental eyes, and enabled those who were blind first to see themselves, and then to see their Savior. Blessed be His name!

And whenever the blind of the earth fall asleep in Jesus, and enter into heaven, *they shall have no blindness in glory.* There, their eyes shall see the King in His beauty, they shall behold His face, and rejoice in His love. JEHOVAH is a great Eye-opener, cannot some of you blind people catch at this truth and say, “Then we will come to Him, for we want to have our eyes opened”?

Perhaps someone says, “Sir, I do not quite comprehend all that you say. I have been a hearer for some time, and I want to understand the Gospel. I try to grasp it, but somehow, I cannot get at the truth.” Come, in prayerful faith, to God Himself tonight, and He will explain it to you. I can hold the light to your eyeballs, yet if they are blind, I cannot make you see, but the Lord can give the sight as well as the light, and I beseech you to ask it at His hands tonight. There is nothing really difficult in the Gospel, and if you will come to Jesus like a teachable child, and ask to be instructed of Him, you will find that it is all plain to him that believeth. Of the way of holiness it is written, “The wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.”

If you come to God for grace, dear friend, He will never stint you. You need not be poor Christians, you may be “rich to all the intents of bliss.” You need not have shallow grace, you may, if you wish, get into “waters to swim in.” Giving will not impoverish Him, withholding will not enrich Him, but rather, giving enriches Him, it enriches His very heart with great joy, for He delights to give. Come and take freely, and learn the liberality of God.

I remember one who called himself, “a gentleman-commoner upon the bounty of God.” Some of us can take the same title, we have had a handbasket portion for many years, not a sack full at a time, but a full handbasket. That is a good way of living.

If a girl gets a portion from her father, and the old gentleman never gives her anything else, she does not receive so much as her sister who has a handbasket portion many days in the week. A present often comes to her from the old house at home. Father sends it every time with his love, and she receives more love and more thought, and he too, receives more gratitude in return, perhaps, than if he had given his

daughter one lump sum, and then his generosity was all over. It is a blessed way of learning the liberality of God, to be receiving freely and receiving continually from Him, "He giveth more grace."

Come then, to God by Jesus Christ, because He is, first, the Emancipator, and secondly, the Illuminator.

III. Now for the third bright title of the Lord. That is, THE COMFORTER.

Read the middle sentence of verse eight, "The LORD raiseth them that are bowed down."

Some are bowed down with *bereavement*. Well may she be bowed down who has just committed to the earth the beloved of her heart, and well may he go mourning whose firstborn son has been taken from him by a sudden stroke. Well may some lament who have lost the choicest friend that man ever had, and find that half their life is gone in the death of that beloved one, yet, "The LORD raiseth them that are bowed down."

Come, tell your grief to Him who pitied the widow at the gate of Nain. Come, pour out your sorrow before Him who wept with the beloved sisters at Bethany when Lazarus was dead. He can help you, for He, "raiseth them that are bowed down."

Some are bowed down sadly by *the burdens of life*. They have more to carry than most men have. They stagger along from day to day beneath a load that threatens to crush them into the dust. Oh, come to my Lord who gives new strength to bear burdens, for He raiseth up those that are bowed down! It is wonderful what a man can do when God has laid His hand on him and said to him, "Be strong." You are faint, and you will faint without your God, but you will be strong if you come and trust Him, for, "JEHOVAH raiseth them that are bowed down."

Maybe you are bowed down *with inward distress*. Ah, there is no cure for some forms of distress but to go straight away to God! The scandal of our ministry is the despondency that we cannot disperse. How often I have come down from talking with some dear friends here, whose minds have been distracted, and I have had to confess myself "dead beat."

God has helped me to comfort many, it is my lot, almost wherever I may be, to be followed by persons suffering in mind. I sometimes laugh and tell them that "birds of a feather flock together," and that they must think me half-cracked, and so they come to me to sympathize with them. Well, so be it, there is a kind of sympathy between me and them. But I have learned this lesson, that to bring comfort to a mind diseased is not within the preacher's power except his Master shall specially qualify him for the task, and in any case, I say to you, dear troubled friends, go straight away to Him of whom you read these sweet words, "The LORD raiseth them that are bowed down."

Have I the extreme felicity tonight, of addressing in this congregation one who is bowed down by *a sense of sin*? Where are you, Magdalene, hiding your face in tears? Where are you, poor erring prodigal, longing to come back to your Father, but too bowed down to start upon the journey? List, "The LORD raises them that are bowed down." He loves to find the poor sinner crouching on the dunghill, putting his head into the dust in very despair of heart, and He delights to come, and put His hand upon him and say, "Stand upon thy feet; fear not."

There is a great God of mercies, who glories in doing wonders of grace, forgiving even the blackest sin. I say again, I would like to ring this text like a silver bell, in the ears of every penitent sinner here and say, "The LORD raiseth them that are bowed down."

IV. We are getting on with our text, for we have come to the fourth great title. God is THE REWARDER, "The LORD loveth the righteous."

Come, dear friends, here is a wafer made with honey, here is a feast of fat things, full of marrow, for you who are the people of God, you whom He has accounted righteous because the perfect righteousness of Christ has been imputed to you.

First, "the LORD loveth the righteous" with a love of *complacency*. He takes delight in them, He loves them, not merely with a love of benevolence that desires their good, but He looks with pleasure and delight at righteous men, those whom He has made righteous, those who love Him because they are righteous, and who are like Him in being righteous.

The Lord looks at them and rejoices over them. How that ought to cheer any of you who have been made holy by God's grace! The Lord's delight is in you, He calls you His Hephzibahs, saying, "My delight is in them." Wherever there is anything of Christ, anything of righteousness, anything of holiness, there is evidence of the Lord's love. So, in the first place, "the LORD loveth the righteous" with a love of complacency.

He does more than that, He loves the righteous with a love of *communion*. Remember how the Lord puts it, by the mouth of Isaiah, "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." I doubt not that God often talks with righteous men. "The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him." He lets them speak to Him, and He speaks to them in return.

Do you know anything about this communion with God? If you do not, never say that others do not, for we are as honest and truthful as you are, and we bear our testimony that there is such a thing as walking with God, we declare, from happy, heartfelt experience, that there is such a thing as talking with God, and knowing that He loves us, and that His love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

God also loves His people with a love of *favor*. He loves them so that He will give them anything that they need. Yes, He has said, through the psalmist, "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." He loves the righteous so that, when they go into their chamber to pray to Him, He may let them plead a little while because it is for their good to do so, but He will always yield to their desires. He has said, "Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." He does do that with His people.

The Lord loveth the righteous so as to favor them with extraordinary blessings, things of which I cannot talk here, for there is many a love-passage between Christ and the righteous soul that must never be told. We do not talk of our love-passages in the streets, that would be half profane, nor can we even tell of them here. There are favors which the Lord shows to His righteous people, which they know, and He knows, but which no one else can know till that day when all things shall be revealed.

And once more, the Lord loves the righteous so that He will *honor* them. If men are righteous, the world will hate them, and as a proof of its hatred, it will begin to bespatter them. There are always some in the world who say, "Throw plenty of mud, some of it will stick," and oh, how they delight to throw it! Their hands seem to take to the dirt naturally.

But beloved, if you follow God fully, your character will never be long tarnished. Do not try to answer those who slander you. If an ass kicked you, would you kick the ass? If a fool brings a charge against you, do not reply to him. Let him rail on, God will vindicate you.

Remember that psalm from which I quoted just now, the thirty-seventh, "commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday."

It may even happen to a man that he may perform an action that will never be understood while he lives, but the true man of God lives for eternity, not for time. He says, "I do not care if it takes five hundred years for the righteousness of my action to be seen by my fellow men, it will not make it any more righteous when they do see it, nor will it be any less righteous while they do not see it. What have I to do with men? I serve the living God." If you get into that condition of heart, you can trust your reputation, your life, your usefulness entirely with God, for "the LORD loveth the righteous."

A day shall come when all the world shall know it, when they who are righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, and God shall say of them, "Well done, good and faithful servants, enter into the joy of your Lord."

Now then, will you not come to Him, since His favorites are the best people in all the world? Kings and princes have often been known to choose their associates among the worst of their subjects, men who ministered to their baser passions. The favorites of kings have often been the offscouring of the

earth, but our King loves the righteous! He will have none to be His courtiers, to come near to Him, to dwell before His face, but those who walk uprightly through His mighty grace. I think that there is something very inviting there to you who are of a true heart, something which ought to induce you to come to such a God as this, the LORD who loveth the righteous.

V. But now, last of all, and perhaps, sweetest of all, the fifth name of God is THE PRESERVER, "The LORD preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down." My time is so nearly gone that I can only just ask you to apply, by God's help, the few words that I shall say.

Notice first, that *God preserves strangers*. In all nations, in the olden time, strangers were driven out, they did not want any foreigners settling among them. In this country, in almost every village, it used to be the practice for a stranger to be regarded as a kind of mad dog, and if he happened to wear a different garb from that of the villagers, all the boys hooted him. It seems that our depraved humanity is naturally unkind to strangers.

I often hear people say even now, "Oh, he is a foreigner!" O you proud Englishman! is he not as good as you? You are a foreigner when you get to the other side of the English Channel. It was God's order to His ancient people that they were to be kind to strangers. Wherever they came, they were to be allowed to dwell, and were to be taken care of. God put it thus to Israel, "Thou shall neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt," and because God loved them when they were strangers in Egypt, they were to take special care of strangers and foreigners who came into their midst.

What a grand trait this is in God's character, "The LORD preserveth the strangers"! If any of you feel quite strangers here tonight, if you are strangers to religion, strangers to religious observances, strangers to everything that is good, if you feel, when you hear the Gospel, that you are altogether strange to it, it sounds so oddly in your ears, come along, dear stranger, "The LORD preserveth the strangers"! Come under the shadow of His wings, and you shall find shelter there. Father is dead, mother is dead, friends are all gone, and even in the very village where you were born you are a stranger, come along, your God is not dead, your Savior liveth, "The LORD preserveth the strangers."

Then notice the next sentence in our text, "*He relieveth the fatherless and widow.*" If you turn to the first books of the Bible, you will see there God's great care of the fatherless and the widow. Who had the tithes? Well, the Levites, but also the poor, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow. If you look at Deuteronomy 14:28 or 26:12, you will find that the tithes were not for the priests exclusively, but they were also for the widow, and the fatherless, and the strangers.

Besides this, the Israelites were never to glean their fields twice, for the gleanings were for the widow and the fatherless, and they were never to shake the olive tree or any fruit tree twice, but to leave what remained upon it for the widow and the fatherless.

There was also this law made, that they should never take as a pledge the raiment of a widow. That is pretty often done in London, but it might not be done then, the garment of the widow might never be taken in pledge. Wherever the legislation of God for His people touched upon the widow and the fatherless, it was immeasurably kind.

Now then, you who feel like widows, you who have lost your joy and earthly comfort, you who feel like the fatherless and say, "No man cares for my soul," oh, may the sweet Spirit of the Lord entice you to come to Him, for as I reminded you in the reading, "A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation."

But the view of God's character would not be complete if it was not added, "*The way of the wicked he turneth upside down.*" You see, the godly and they who trust God, are always in danger from the wicked, but He turns the way of the wicked upside down. Take a specimen. Joseph's brethren sell him into Egypt, and make a slave of him. God turns this arrangement upside down, and makes a prince of him. Think of Mordecai. Haman will have him hanged, he has the gallows ready, but Haman gets

hanged on his own gallows. God knows how to make the malice of men promote the benefit of those against whom they turn their cruelty. "The way of the wicked he turneth upside down."

Be you just and fear not. Rest in Christ's atoning sacrifice, trust Him only. Come you to your God, and be His servant henceforth, and for ever, and you shall see how He will break your bonds, open your eyes, and cheer your spirit, and indulge you with His love, and preserve you even to the end. "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." God bless you, dear friends, and may you all come to God tonight, through Jesus Christ our Lord! Amen.

EXPOSITIONS BY C. H. SPURGEON:

PSALM 146 AND LUKE 17:11-19

Psalm Chapter 146. Verse 1. *Praise ye the LORD.*

Or "Hallelujah." I am sorry to see that great word, Hallelujah, Hallelu-JAH, praise to JAH, JEHOVAH, become so hackneyed as it is, by talk about "Hallelujah lasses," and Hallelujah—I know not what. The Jews will not even pronounce the word JAH, or write it, it seems a great pity that it should be thus dragged in the dirt by Gentiles.

"Praise ye the LORD." Whenever you make use of the word Hallelujah, let it be with the due reverence which should be given to that blessed name, for remember, "the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain."

1. *Praise the LORD, O my soul.*

Whatever we exhort others to do, we should be ready to do ourselves, yes, our own soul should praise the Lord most of all, since, if we rightly know our obligations, no one in the world is so much indebted to God as each one of us should feel himself to be. "Praise the LORD, *O my soul,*" not my lips only, but my innermost spirit, for soul-music is the soul of music, "Praise the LORD, *O my soul.*"

2. *While I live will I praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.*

I will lisp His praises when I can do no more, when my being seems to be dried up, in the weakness of the death-throe, still, "I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being."

3. *Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.*

What is the connection, here, between praising God and not trusting man? Why, this connection, that we never praise God better than by exercising faith in Him! Quiet trust is among the sweetest music that reaches the heart of God, and when we put our trust in man, we rob God of His glory, we are giving to others the confidence which belongs alone to Him.

4. *His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.*

What is man—with a life dependent upon his breath, such a vapory thing, such a thin, unsubstantial thing is human life—what is he that we should trust in him?

5. *Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God:*

He is the happy man who has learned to trust in the invisible God.

6. *Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: which keepeth truth for ever:*

Never did His promise fail. Perhaps, dear brother, you have not pleaded the promises enough of late. Then the mercy seat is the place where promises must be pleaded, with the certainty that then they shall be fulfilled.

7. *Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: which giveth food to the hungry. The LORD looseth the prisoners:*

Souls that are in bondage will never get freedom till the Lord looses them. Oh, that prisoners of hope, who are here, this evening, might have grace to look to God! You cannot pick the lock of your prison yourself, nor force your way through the iron bars of despair, but "the LORD looseth the prisoners." Ay, but when they get loose, they are blind, for man by nature is blinded by sin! Therefore the psalmist adds—

8. *The LORD openeth the eyes of the blind:*

He will not only give you liberty, but understanding, insight into His Word, a knowledge of Himself. Ay, but when men get their eyes opened, they see much to make them sorry, and He that increaseth knowledge often increaseth sorrow! Yes, but look at the next words—

8. *The LORD raiseth them that are bowed down:*

He can take away depression of spirit, and relieve the heart of its burdens, and as the woman who was bowed down for many years, was made straight by the word of Christ, so can those that suffer from mental infirmity be restored. And best of all—

8. *The LORD loveth the righteous:*

He loves them, and His love is wealth and health. The love of God is all a creature wants.

9. *The Lord preserveth the strangers;*

When our eyes are opened, and we are no more bowed down, but feel we have a sense of God's love, yet still we know that we are exiles, banished ones, strangers and foreigners, as all our fathers were. It is comforting, therefore, to be assured that, "the LORD preserveth the strangers."

9. *He relieveth the fatherless and widow:*

He does so literally, "A Father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in His holy habitation." He also relieves such spiritually. When any feel themselves to be poverty stricken, and unable to help themselves, let them look to Him who is both able and willing to succor them, for "He relieveth the fatherless and the widow."

9. *But the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.*

Where they looked for joy, they experienced disappointment, where they expected success, they met with defeat, and whereas they thought to heap to themselves pleasures according to their lusts, they find that they have only increased their misery.

10. *The LORD shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the LORD.*

The sovereignty of God should be the delight of His people. God anywhere is blessed, but God on His throne should make His people shout their Hallelujahs with all their heart.

Now let us read in the New Testament about one who glorified God and gave thanks to Jesus.

Luke Chapter 17. Verses 11-12. *And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off:*

Lepers were allowed to enter villages, but not to go into the large walled towns. They were, however, commanded to stand at a certain distance from other people, and these men did so. This must have been a terrible sight, ten men afflicted with such a horrible disease all in one group. It shows how prevalent at that time was this disease, now happily so rare, at least among us, "Ten men that were lepers."

It seemed as if the effect of sin in men became more conspicuous in the day when the Great Healer of men was here in person. Then Satan's chain was lengthened that he might have greater power over the bodies of men, that his Master might subdue him, and that Christ Jesus the Lord might have the greater victory over the prince of darkness.

13-14. *And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, go shew yourselves unto the priests.*

There was a tacit promise in that that they should be healed, for of course, the showing themselves to the priests was not that they might be pronounced unclean, for they were so pronounced already by their own confession, but that they might be pronounced clean. They were to go to the priests and there was an implied promise that if they so went, when the priests looked upon them they would be healed.

14-16. *And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.*

He was probably the only one out of the ten that was a Samaritan. Though Jews and Samaritans did not usually agree, yet as sorrow brings a man strange bedfellows, so in this case, these partners in a general sorrow forgot their sectarianism, and were blended into one sad company. Now that they were all healed, only one felt true gratitude to God, and to his Benefactor, “and he was a Samaritan.”

It is very singular to notice that Luke tells us that this man glorified God “with a loud voice.” We have sometimes heard complaints that, at certain revival meetings, the singing was very loud, and there was even shouting. Let the converts shout, brother, let them shout! They have good reason to shout, for Christ has made them whole.

We have a great deal too much of respectable death about us, let us have a little even noisy life. I would sooner by half hear the praises of God shouted with a loud voice, than hear the mockery of praise in a tone that is scarcely to be heard, while some machine grinds out music to God's glory, and men forget to sing, or are drowned in loud bursts of wind from the instrument. Do not be ashamed to let it be known that you are saved. Praise the Lord with all your might, and if they say that you are excited, tell them that you are, and that you wonder if anybody could help being excited if he had been healed of leprosy or had his sins forgiven.

But at the same time, note the humility as well as the zeal of this man, he “fell down on his face at his feet.” I would like to see more of this action. In some revivals, there is plenty of shouting, but very little falling down on the face at Christ's feet. Oh, for deep prostration of spirit, a humble waiting upon God, a gracious, tender confession of thanks to Him for all that He has done for poor leprous sinners!

17-18. *And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.*

Often those who are thought to be the worst of people turn out the best. Many of the most precious pearls have been found in the deepest sea, and some of the most grateful hearts have been discovered among those who were most immersed in sin and error.

19. *And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole.*

Christ uses the word “whole” in an emphatic sense, “Not only thy body, but thy soul also is made whole, and thou art holy from this day.” There is a wonderful connection between these two words “whole” and “holy.” A holy man is a whole man, and he who is not holy is unsound, and not whole in the sight of God. The Lord make us wholly holy for Christ's sake! Amen.

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—202, 560, 504

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