

PRIDE AND HUMILITY

NO. 97

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*“Before destruction the heart of man is haughty and before honor is humility.”
 Proverbs 18:12.*

ALMOST every event has its prophetic prelude. It is an old and common saying, that “coming events cast their shadows before them.” The wise man teaches us the same lesson in the verse before us. When destruction walks through the land, it casts its shadow, it is in the shape of pride. When honor visits a man’s house, it casts its shadow before it. It is in the fashion of humility. “Before destruction the heart of man is haughty.” Pride is as surely the sign of destruction as the change of mercury in the weatherglass is the sign of rain. And far more infallibly so than that, “Before honor is humility,” even as before the summer, sweet birds return to sing in our land.

Everything has its prelude. The prelude of destruction is pride and of honor, humility. There is nothing into which the heart of man so easily falls as pride and yet there is no vice which is more frequently, more emphatically and more eloquently condemned in Scripture. Against pride Prophets have lifted up their voices, evangelists have spoken and teachers have discoursed. Yes, more—the everlasting God has mounted to the very heights of eloquence when He would condemn the pride of man. The full gushing of the Eternal’s mighty language has been most gloriously displayed in the condemnation of the pride of human nature. Perhaps the most eloquent passage of God’s Word is to be found towards the conclusion of the book of Job., where, in most splendid strains of unanswerable eloquence, God hides pride from man by utterly confounding him. And there is another very eloquent passage in the 14th chapter of Isaiah where the Lord’s holy anger seems to have risen up and it waxes hot against the pride of man, when He would utterly and effectually condemn it.

He says concerning the great and mighty king of Babylon, “Hell from beneath is moved for you to meet you at your coming. It stirs up the dead for you, even all the chief ones of the earth. It has raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall speak and say unto you, Are you also become weak as we? Are you become like unto us? Your pomp is brought down to the grave and the noise of your viols: the worm is spread under you and the worms cover you. How are you fallen from Heaven O Lucifer, son of the morning! How are you cut down to the ground, which did weaken the nations! For you have said in your heart, I will ascend into Heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the most High. Yet you shall be brought down to Hell to the sides of the pit. They that see you shall narrowly look upon you and consider you, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms?”

Mark how God addresses him, describing Hell itself as being astonished at his fall, seeing that he had mounted so high. And yet declaring, assuredly, that his height and greatness were nothing to the Almighty, that He would put him down, even though, like an eagle he had built his nest among the stars. I say there is nothing more eloquently condemned in Scripture than pride and yet there is no trap into which we poor silly birds so easily flee, no pitfall into which like foolish beasts of the earth we so continually run. On the other hand, humility is a grace that has many promises given to it in the Scripture. Perhaps more promises are given to faith and love which are often considered to be the brightest of the train of virtues—yet humility holds by no means an inferior place in God’s Word and there are hundreds of promises linked to it.

Every grace seems to be like a nail on which precious blessings hang and humility has many a mercy suspended from it. “He that exalts himself shall be abased and he that humbles himself shall be exalted.” “Blessed are the poor in spirit,” and in multitudes of other passages, we are reminded that God loves the humble but that He “brings down the mighty from their seats and exalts the humble and meek.” Now, this morning, we shall have a word to say concerning *pride and humility*. May the Holy Spirit preserve us from the one and produce in our hearts the other.

I. In the first place, we shall have something to say concerning the vice of PRIDE. “Before destruction the heart of man is haughty.” Pride, *what is it?* Pride, *where is its seat?* The heart of man. And pride, *what is its consequence?* Destruction.

1. In the first place, I must try to *describe* pride to you. I might paint it as being the worst malformation of all the monstrous things in creation. It has nothing lovely in it, nothing in proportion but everything in disorder. It is altogether the very reverse of the creatures which God has made, which are pure and holy. Pride, the first-born son of Hell, is indeed like its parent—all unclean and vile—and in it there is neither form, fashion, nor comeliness.

In the first place, pride is a *groundless thing*. It stands on the sands. Or worse than that, it puts its foot on the billows which yield beneath its tread. Or worse still, it stands on bubbles which soon must burst beneath its feet. Of all things pride has the worst foothold. It has no solid rock on earth whereon to place itself. We have reasons for almost everything but we have no reasons for pride. Pride is a thing which should be unnatural to us, for we have nothing to be proud of. What is there in man of which he should glory? Our very creation is enough to humble us—what are we but creatures of today? Our frailty should be sufficient to lay us low for we shall be gone tomorrow. Our ignorance should tend to keep pride from our lips. What are we, but like the wild ass’s colt which knows nothing?

And our sins ought effectually to stop our mouths and lay us in the dust. Of all things in the world, pride towards God is that which has the very least excuse. It has neither stick nor stone whereon to build. Yet like the spider, it carries its own web in its bowels and can, of itself, spin that wherewith to catch its prey. It seems to stand upon itself for it has nothing besides where it can rest. Oh, man, learn to reject pride, seeing that you have no reason for it. Whatever you are, you have nothing to make you proud. The more you have, the more you are in debt to God—and you should not be proud of that which renders you a debtor.

Consider your origin—look back to the hole of the pit from where you were dug. Consider what you would have been, even now, if it were not for Divine Grace. And consider that you will yet be lost in Hell if grace does not hold you up. Consider that among the damned, there are none that would have been more damned than yourself, if grace had not kept you from destruction. Let this consideration humble you, that you have nothing whereon to ground your pride.

Again, it is a *brainless thing* as well as a groundless thing for it brings no profit with it. There is no wisdom in a self-exaltation. Other vices have some excuse, for men seem to gain by them. Avarice, pleasure, lust have some plea. But the man who is proud sells his soul cheaply. He opens wide the flood-gates of his heart to let men see how deep is the flood within his soul. Then suddenly it flows out and all is gone—and all is nothing—or one puff of empty wind, one word of sweet applause—the soul is gone and not a drop is left. In almost every other sin we gather up the ashes when the fire is gone—but here, what is left?

The covetous man has his shining gold, but what has the proud man? He has less than he would have had without his pride and is no gainer whatever. Oh, man, if you were as mighty as Gabriel and had all his holiness, still you would be a complete fool to be proud, for pride would sink you from your angel station to the rank of devils and bring you from the place where Lucifer, son of the morning, once dwelt, to take up your abode with hideous fiends in perdition! Pride exalts its head and seeks to honor itself, but it is of all things most despised. It sought to plant crowns upon its brow and so it has done—but its head was hot and it put an ice crown there—and it melted all away. Poor pride has decked itself out finely sometimes. It has put on its most gaudy apparel and said to others, “how brilliant I appear!”

But, ah, Pride, like a harlequin dressed in your colors, you are all the more fool for that—you are but a gazing stock for fools less foolish than yourself. You have no crown, as you think you have, nothing solid and real—all is empty and vain. If you, O Man, desire shame, be proud. A monarch has waded through slaughter to a throne and shut the gates of mercy on mankind to win a little glory. But when he has exalted himself and has been proud, worms have devoured him, like Herod, or have devoured his empire, till it passed away—with all its pride and glory. Pride wins no crown. Men never honor it, not even the menial slaves of earth, for all men look down on the proud man and think him less than themselves.

Again, pride is the *maddest thing* that can exist. It feeds upon its own vitals. It will take away its own life that with its blood it may make a purple cape for its shoulders. It saps and undermines its own house that it may build its pinnacles a little higher—and then the whole structure tumbles down. Nothing proves men so mad as pride. For this they have given up rest and ease and repose to find rank and power among men. For this they have dared to risk their hope of salva-

tion, to leave the gentle yoke of Jesus and go toiling wearily along the way of life, seeking to save themselves by their own works. And at last they stagger into the mire of fell despair. Oh, Man, hate pride—flee from it, abhor it, let it not dwell with you. If you want to have a madman in your heart, embrace pride, for you shall never find one more mad than he.

Then pride is a *protean thing*. It changes its shape. It is all forms in the World. You may find it in any fashion you choose. You may see it in the beggar's rags as well as in the rich man's garment. It dwells with the rich and with the poor. The man without a shoe to his foot may be as proud as if he were riding in a chariot. Pride can be found in every rank of society—among all classes of men. Sometimes it is an Arminian and talks about the power of the creature. Then it turns Calvinist and boasts of its fancied security—forgetful of the Maker—who alone can keep our faith alive.

Pride can profess any form of religion. It may be a Quaker and wear no collar to its coat. It may be a Churchman and worship God in splendid cathedrals. It may be a Dissenter and go to the common meeting house. It is one of the most universal things in the world. It attends all kinds of chapels and churches. Go where you will, you will see pride. It comes up with us to the house of God. It goes with us to our houses. It is found on the mart and the exchange, in the streets and everywhere. Let me hint at one or two of the forms which it assumes. Sometimes pride takes the doctrinal shape.

It teaches the doctrine of self-sufficiency. It tells us what man can do and will not allow that we are lost, fallen, debased and ruined creatures, as we are. It hates Divine Sovereignty and rails at Election. Then if it is driven from that, it takes another form—follows that the doctrine of free grace is true but does not feel it. It acknowledges that salvation is of the Lord alone but still it prompts men to seek Heaven by their own works, even by the deeds of the Law. And when driven from that, it will persuade men to join something *with* Christ in the matter of salvation. And when that is all rent up and the poor rag of our righteousness is all burned, pride will get into the Christian's heart as well as the sinner's—it will flourish under the name of self-sufficiency, teaching the Christian that he is “rich and increased in goods, having need of nothing.”

It will tell him that he does not need daily grace, that past experience will do for tomorrow—that he knows enough, does enough, prays enough. It will make him forget that he has “not yet attained.” It will not allow him to press forward to the things that are before, forgetting the things that are behind. It enters into his heart and tempts the Believer to set up an independent business for himself. And until the Lord brings about a spiritual bankruptcy, pride will keep him from going to God. Pride has ten thousand shapes. It is not always that stiff and starched gentleman that you picture it. It is a vile, creeping, insinuating thing that will twist itself like a serpent into our hearts.

It will talk of humility and prate about being dust and ashes. I have known men talk about their corruption most marvelously, pretending to be all humility, while at the same time they were the most proud wretches that could be found this side the gulf of separation. Oh, my Friends, you cannot tell how many shapes pride will assume—look sharp about you, or you will be deceived by it and when you think you are entertaining angels, you will find you have been receiving devils unawares.

2. Now, I have to speak of *the seat of pride*—the heart. The true throne of pride is the heart of man. If, my dear Friends, we desire, by God's grace, to put down pride, the only way is to begin with the heart. Now let me tell you a parable, in the form of an eastern story which will set this Truth in its proper light. A wise man in the east, called a dervish, in his wanderings came suddenly upon a mountain. And he saw beneath his feet a smiling valley, in the midst of which there flowed a river. The sun was shining on the stream and the water as it reflected the sunlight, looked pure and beautiful. When he descended, he found it was muddy and the water utterly unfit for drinking.

Hard by he saw a young man, in the dress of a shepherd, who was with much diligence filtering the water for his flocks. At one moment he placed some water into a pitcher and then allowed it to stand. After it had settled, he poured the clean fluid into a cistern. Then, in another place, he would be seen turning aside the current for a little and letting it ripple over the sand and stones, that it might be filtered and the impurities removed. The dervish watched the young man endeavoring to fill a large cistern with clear water and said to him, “My son, why all this toil?—what purpose do you answer by it?” The young man replied, “Father, I am a shepherd. This water is so filthy that my flock will not drink of it and therefore I am obliged to purify it little by little so I collect enough in this way that they may drink, but it is hard work.”

So saying, he wiped the sweat from his brow, for he was exhausted with his toil. “Right well have you labored,” said the wise man, “but do you know your toil is not well applied? With half the labor you might attain a better end. I should

conceive that the source of this stream must be impure and polluted. Let us take a pilgrimage together and see.” They then walked some miles, climbing their way over many a rock, until they came to a spot where the stream took its rise. When they came near to it, they saw flocks of wild fowls flying away and wild beasts of the earth rushing into the forest—these had come to drink and had soiled the water with their feet.

They found an open well which kept continually flowing, but by reason of these creatures, which perpetually disturbed it, the stream was always turbid and muddy. “My son,” said the wise man, “set to work now to protect the fountain and guard the well which is the source of this stream. And when you have done that, if you can keep these wild beasts and fowls away, the stream will flow of itself, all pure and clear and you will have no longer need for your toil.” The young man did it and as he labored the wise man said to him, “My son, hear the word of wisdom—if you are wrong, seek not to correct your outward life but seek first to get your heart correct, for out of it are the issues of life and your life shall be pure when once your heart is so.”

So if we would get rid of pride, we should not proceed to arrange our dress by adopting some special costume. Or to qualify our language by using an outlandish tongue—but let us seek of God that He would purify our hearts from pride and then assuredly, if pride is purged from the heart, our life also shall be humble. Make the tree good and then the fruit shall be good. Make the fountain pure and the stream shall be sweet. Oh that God might grant us all, by His grace, that our hearts may be kept with diligence, so that pride may never enter there lest we be haughty in our hearts and find that afterwards comes wrath!

3. This brings me to the other point, which is the *consequence of pride*—destruction—a fact which we can prove by hundreds of instances in Scripture. When men have become proud, destruction has come upon them. See you yon bright angel chanting the loud anthem of praise before his Maker’s throne? Can anything tarnish that angel’s glory, rob him of his harp, despoil him of his crown? Yes, see there enters a destroyer whose name is Pride. He assaults the angel and his harp-strings are snapped in two. His crown is taken from his brow and his glory is departed—and yon falling spirit descending into Hell is he who once was Lucifer, son of the morning.

He has now become Father of nights, even the Lord of Darkness, Satan, the Fallen One. See you again that happy pair walking in the midst of luscious fruits and flowery walks and bowers of Paradise? Can anything spoil Eden and ruin those happy beings? Yes, Pride comes in the shape of a serpent and asks them to seek to be as gods. They eat of the forbidden fruit and Pride withers their Paradise and blasts their Eden. Out they go to till the ground, whence they were taken to beget and to bring forth us who are their children—sons of toil and sorrow.

Do you see that man after God’s own heart, continually singing his Maker’s praise? Can anything make him sad? Can you suppose that he shall ever be laid prostrate on the earth, groaning and crying and asking, “that the bones which God has broken may rejoice?” Yes, pride can do that. It will put into his heart that he will number his people, that he will count the tribes of Israel to show how great and mighty is his empire. It is done and a terrible pestilence sweeps over his land on account of his pride. Let David’s aching heart show how destruction comes to a man’s glory when he once begins to make a god of it. See that other good and holy man who, like David, was much after God’s own heart? He is rich and increased in goods. The Babylonian ambassadors are come and he shows them all he has.

Do you not hear that threat, “Your treasures shall be carried away and your sons and your daughters shall be servants to the king of Babylon”? The destruction of Hezekiah’s wealth must come because he is proud thereof. But for the most notable instance of all, let me show you yonder palace, perhaps the most magnificent which has even yet been built. In it there walks one who, lifting up his head on high, as if he were more than mortal man, exclaims, “See you this great Babylon that I have built?” Oh, Pride, what have you done? You have more power than a wizard’s wand! Mark the mighty builder of Babylon creeping on the earth. Like oxen he is devouring grass—his nails have grown like birds’ claws, his hair like eagles’ feathers and his heart has gone from him. Pride did all that—that it might be fulfilled which God has written—“Before destruction the heart of man is haughty.”

Is yours heart haughty, *Sinner*, this morning? Do you despise God’s sovereignty? Will you not submit yourself to Christ’s yoke? Do you seek to weave a righteousness of your own? Are you seeking to be or to do something? Are you desirous of being great and mighty in your own esteem? Hear me then, *Sinner*—destruction is coming upon you. As truly as ever you exalt yourself, you shall be abased. Your destruction, in the fullest and blackest sense of the word, is

hurrying on to overwhelm you. And oh, Christian, is your heart haughty this morning? Are you come here glorying in your graces? Are you proud of yourself, that you have had such high frames and such sweet experiences?

Mark you, Brother, there is a destruction coming to you, also. Some of your proud things will be pulled up by the roots, some of your graces will be shattered and your good works, perhaps, will become loathsome to you and you will abhor yourself in dust and ashes. As truly as ever you exalt yourself, there will be a destruction come to you, O saint—the destruction of your joys and of your comforts—though, by His grace, there can be no destruction of your soul.

Pride, you know, is most likely to meet with destruction because it is too tall to walk upright. It is most likely to tumble down because it is always looking upward in its ambition and never looks to its feet. There only needs to be a pit-fall in the way, or even a stone and down it goes. It is sure to tumble because it is never contented with being where it is. It is always seeking to be climbing and boys that will climb must expect to fall. Pride is foolhardy and will venture upon scaling any rock. Sometimes it holds on by a brier and that pricks it. Sometimes by a flint and that cuts it. There it goes, toiling and laboring on, till it gets as high as it can and then, from its very height, it is likely to fall.

Nature itself tells us to avoid high things. Who is he that can stand upon a high hill without a reeling brain and without a temptation to cast himself down? Pride, when most successful, stands in slippery places. Who would choose to dwell on a pinnacle of the temple? That is where pride has built its house and verily it seems but natural that pride should fall down if pride will go up. God will carry out this saying, “Before destruction, the heart of man is haughty.”

Yet Beloved, I am persuaded that all I can say to you, or to myself, can never keep pride from us. The Lord alone can bolt the door of the heart against pride. Pride is like the flies of Egypt—all Pharaoh’s soldiers could not keep them out—and I am sure all the strong resolutions and devout aspirations we may have cannot keep pride out unless the Lord God Almighty sends a strong wind of His Holy Spirit to sweep it away.

II. Now, let us consider briefly the last part of the text, “BEFORE HONOR IS HUMILITY.” SO then, you see our heavenly Father does not say that we are not to have honor. He has not forbidden it. He has only forbidden us to be *proud of it*. A good man may have honor in this life. Daniel had honor before the people. Joseph rode in the second chariot and the people bowed the knee before him. God often clothes His children with honor in the face of their adversaries and makes the wicked confess that the Lord is with them in deed and in Truth. But God forbids our making that honor a cloak for pride and bids us seek humility which always accompanies as well as precedes true honor.

1. Now let us briefly enquire, in the first place, *what is humility*? The best definition I have ever met with is, “to think rightly of ourselves.” Humility is to make a right estimate of one’s self. It is no humility for a man to think less of himself than he ought, though it might rather puzzle him to do that. Some persons, when they know they can do a thing, tell you they cannot—but do you call that humility? A man is asked to take part in some meeting. “No,” he says, “I have no ability.” Yet, if you were to say so yourself, he would be offended at you. It is not humility for a man to stand up and depreciate himself and say he cannot do this, that, or the other, when he knows that he is lying.

If God gives a man a talent, do you think the man does not know it? If a man has ten talents he has no right to be dishonest to his Maker and to say, “Lord, you have only given me five.” It is not humility to underrate yourself. Humility is to think of yourself, if you can, as God thinks of you. It is to feel that if we have talents, God has given them to us and let it be seen that, like freight in a vessel, they tend to sink us low. The more we have, the lower we ought to lie. Humility is not to say, “I have not this gift,” but it is to say, “I have the gift and I must use it for my Master’s glory. I must never seek any honor for myself for what have I that I have not received?”

But, Beloved, humility is to feel ourselves lost, ruined and undone. To be killed by the same hand which, afterwards, makes us alive. To be ground to pieces as to our own doings and willings, to know and trust in none but Jesus, to be brought to feel and sing —

*“Nothing in my hands I bring,
Simply to Your Cross I cling.”*

Humility is to feel that we have no power of ourselves but that it all comes from God. Humility is to lean on our Beloved, to believe that He has trod the winepress alone, to lie on His bosom and slumber sweetly there. It is to exalt Him and think less than nothing of ourselves. It is in fact, to annihilate self and to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ as All in All.

2. Now, what is *the seat or throne of humility*? The throne of humility must be the heart. I do hate, of all things, that humility which lives in the face. There are some persons who always seem to be so very humble when you are with them.

But you can discover there is something underneath it all and when they are in some other society, they will brag and say how you told them your whole heart. Take heed of the men who allow you to lay your head in their lap and betray you into the hands of the Philistines. I have met with such persons. I remember a man who used to pray with great apparent humility and then would go and abuse his servants and make a noise with all his farming men. He was the stiffest and most proud man in the Church, yet he invariably used to tell the Lord, in prayer, that he was nothing but dust and ashes—he would lay his hand on his lips and his mouth in the dust and cry, “Unclean, unclean.”

Indeed he talked of himself in the most despairing way, but I am sure if God had spoken to him, He must have said, “O, you that lie before My throne, you say this, but you do not feel it, for you will go your way and take your brother by the throat, exalt yourself above all your fellow creatures and be a very Diotrephes in the Church and a Herod in the world.” I dislike that humility which rests in outward things. That is a kind of oily, sanctimonious, proud humility which is not the genuine article, though it is sometimes extremely like it.

You may be deceived by it once or twice, but by-and-by you discover that is a wolf dexterously covered with sheep’s clothing. It arrays itself in the simplest dress in the world. It talks in the gentlest and humblest style. It says, “We must not intrude our own peculiar sentiments but must always walk in love and charity.” But after all, what is it? It is charitable to all except those who hold God’s Truth and it is humble to all when it is forced to be humble. It is like one of whom, I dare say, you have read in your childish books—

*“So, stooping down, as needs he must
Who cannot stand upright.”*

True humility does not continually talk about “dust and ashes,” and prate about its infirmities, but it *feels* all that which others say, for it possesses an inwrought feeling of its own nothingness.

Very likely the most humble man in the world won’t bend to anybody. John Knox was a truly humble man, yet if you had seen him march before Queen Mary with the Bible in his hand, to reprove her, you would have rashly said, “What a proud man!”

Cringing men that bow before everybody are truly proud men but humble men are those who think themselves so little, they do not think it worth while to stoop to serve themselves. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were humble men for they did not think their lives were worth enough to save them by a sin. Daniel was a humble man—he did not think his place, his station, his whole self—worth enough to save them by leaving off prayer.

Humility is a thing which must be genuine. The imitation of it is the nearest thing in the world to pride. Seek of God, dear Friends, the gift of true humility. Seek to have that breaking in pieces by the Holy Spirit, that breaking in the mortar with the pestle which God Himself gives to His children. Seek that every twig of His rod may drive pride out of you so that by the blueness of your wound, your soul may be made better. Seek of Christ—that He may take you to Calvary and that He may show you His brightness and His glory—that you may be humble before Him.

Never ask to be a mean, cringing, fawning thing. Ask God to make you a man—those are scarce things nowadays—a man who only fears God, who knows no fear of any other kind. Do not give yourselves up to any man’s power, or guidance, or rule—but ask of God that you may have that humility towards Him which gives you the noble bearing of a Christian before others. Some think that ministers are proud when they resent any interference with their ministry. I consider they would be proud if they allowed it for the sake of peace, which is only another word for their own self-seeking. It is a great mercy when God gives a man freedom from everybody—when he can go into his pulpit careless of what others may think of him.

I conceive that a minister should be like a lighthouse keeper—he is out at sea and nobody can suggest to him that he had better light his candles a little later, or anything of the kind. He knows his duty and he keeps his lamps burning—if he were to follow the opinions of the people on shore, his light might be extinguished altogether. It is a merciful Providence that they cannot get to him, so he goes on easily, obeys his regulations as he reads them and cares little for other people’s interpretation. So a minister should not be a weathercock that is turned by the wind, but he should be one who turns the wind. He should not be one who is ruled by others but one who knows how to stand firm and fast and keep his light burning, trusting always in God—believing that if God has raised him up, He will not desert him, but will teach him by His Holy Spirit, without the ever-changing advice of men.

3. Now, in the last place, *what comes of humility?* “Before honor is humility.” Humility is the herald which ushers in the great king. It walks before honor and he who has humility will have honor afterwards. I will only apply this spiritually. Have you been brought today to feel that in yourself you are less than nothing? Are you humbled in the sight of God, to know your own unworthiness, your fallen estate in Adam and the ruin you have brought upon yourself by your own sins? Have you been brought to feel yourself incapable of working out your own salvation, unless God shall work in you, to will and to do of His own good pleasure? Have you been brought to say, “Lord, have mercy upon me, a sinner”?

Well, then, as true as the text is in the Bible, you shall have honor by-and-by. “Such honor have all the saints.” You shall have honor soon to be washed from all your guilt. You shall have honor soon to be clothed in the robes of Jesus, in the royal garments of the King. You shall have honor soon to be adopted into His family, to be received among the blood-washed ones who have been justified by faith. You shall have honor to be borne, as on eagles’ wings, to be carried across the river and at last to sing His praise, who has been the “death of deaths and Hell’s destruction.” You shall have honor to wear the crown and wave the palm one day, for you have now that humility which comes from God.

You may fear that because you are now humbled by God, you must perish. I beseech you do not think so. As truly as ever the Lord has humbled you, He will exalt you. And the more you are brought low, the less hope you have of mercy, the more you are in the dust—so much the more reason you have to hope. So far from the bottom of the sea being a place over which we cannot be carried to Heaven, it is one of the nearest places to Heaven’s gate. And if you are brought to the very lowest place to which even Jonah descended, you are so much the nearer being accepted. The more you know your vileness—remember the blacker, the more filthy, the more unworthy you are in your own esteem—so much the more right have you to expect that you will be saved.

Verily, honor shall come after humility. Humble souls, rejoice! Proud souls, go on in your proud ways but know that your end is destruction. Climb up the ladder of your pride—you shall fall over on the other side and be dashed to pieces. Ascend the steep hill of your glory—the higher you climb the more terrible will be your fall. For know you this, that against none has the Lord Almighty bent His bow more often and against none has He shot His arrows more furiously than against the proud and mighty man that exalts himself.

Bow down, O man, bow down! “Kiss the Son, lest He be angry and you perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little.” Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.

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