

to the Hebrew suffix *-dn*. Cainan bears the same relation to Enos, 'man,' that Cain bears to Adam, 'man.' The fourth antediluvian king of 'Babylonia' was Ammenon, which may perhaps be the Babylonian *ummanu*, 'workman.'

24. According to the Babylonians, Xisuthros, the hero of the Deluge, was similarly transported without dying beyond the waters of death, on account of his piety.

29. The etymology suggested for the name of Noah (from *nâkham*, 'to comfort'), indicates that it originally ended in *-m*, that is to say, with the minimation which is found attached to nouns in early Babylonian as well as in the Minean language of southern Arabia. There are also traces of it in Canaan; a cuneiform tablet, for instance, tells us that the word 'god' in the language of Syria was *malakhum*, which seems to be the biblical Milcom (from *melech*, 'king'). Noah really signifies 'rest,' *nukhu* in Babylonian. There was a Sumerian god called Kus, whose name was translated by Nukh in Semitic Babylonian, and who watched over the night.

32. Shem is possibly an abbreviated form of Shemu-el, and seems to be identical with the name of the god Samu or Sumu, which appears in the names of the first two kings of the Babylonian dynasty to which Khammurabi, the contemporary

of Abraham, belonged. The names of the kings of the dynasty show that it must have been of South Arabian origin, and that the language spoken by them was closely related to Hebrew. The two kings in question were Sumu-abi, 'Sumu is my father,' and Sumu-la-ilu, 'Is not Sumu a god?' Sumu-la-ilu is also written Samu-la-ilu.

Ham has nothing to do with the first element in the name of Khammurabi, as the *kheth* here is merely a Babylonian attempt to represent the *ghain* and *ayin* of Hebrew and Southern Arabic (in **ח**). Ham is doubtless the Hebrew *khâm*, 'to be hot,' which has, of course, no connexion with the Egyptian Qam, 'black,' a title which the Egyptians gave to their own country. Japhet is best explained as a shortened form of Japhet-el, from *yâphâh*, 'to be bright' or 'beautiful.'

VI. 2. In early Sumerian hymns and exorcisms we frequently find the expression: 'the man, the son of his god.'

4. In the Chaldean Epic of Gilgames, Ea-bani, the dead friend of the hero, describes Hades as the place where 'for me a crown is treasured up among those who wear crowns, who of old ruled the earth, on whom Anu and Bel bestowed terrible names,' where 'the chief and the noble dwell,' where 'dwell the heroes Etana and Ner.' Cp. Isa. xiv. 9.

## Sermonettes on the Golden Texts.

BY THE REV. G. M. MACKIE, M.A., BEYROUT.

### Wanted—a Heart.

'And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.'  
—LUKE xvii. 5.

I. THE TREATMENT OF DIFFICULTIES.—The example of the apostles is still the highest and the happiest: they turned anxiety into prayer. The difficulty arose in connection with the teaching of the Lord Jesus about forgiveness. It had outflanked all their powers of sympathy. It seemed to throw the whole view of moral life out of perspective. He had given them one of the hard sayings.

'Always and inexhaustibly be ready to forgive. Believe brightly, encouragingly, and thankfully in the recoveries and rallying-points of other lives. It

is not yours to measure the hidden things of the heart. You are not expected to supplement the Holy Spirit. The leading thought is not to hate the sinner, but to help him: not to adjudge how deep his darkness is, nor to fix the date and distance of his exile from God, but to lament his forfeiture of what has made you glad, and to rejoice over him when he returns to the light and walks in the way of peace.'

II. MISTAKEN WANTS.—While commending the prayerful example of the disciples, we must not lose sight of a truth that limits, but only to lead into the unlimited—'we know not how to pray as we ought.' What those disciples then needed was not so much faith as the love by which it works. They felt as flat as gold-leaf. They

suffered from deficiency of soul. The piety they saw around them was like a joiner's diamond—kept for scratching. Wherever it went splits followed. It could split hairs. Such instruction in the Law was piety:—not to have it was to be accursed. The disciples needed to be made conscious of having instincts leading them outwards, towards a harvest to wait for, a final triumph to fight for, a cause to be consecrated to. Not something more to be got into self, but self to be got out of.

On another occasion they came asking an artificial form instead of an organic fact. They insisted on being taught how to pray: alleging not the inward need, but the outward annoyance—that John had taught *his* disciples.

It was different during the interval of approaching Pentecost, and through those anxious days of Peter's imprisonment. Then they knew what to pray for. Their love overflowed and hid the vessel of faith that held it. They now came and said, 'We must have more of the Lord's way of seeing, feeling, and willing. We must be prepared for these awkward emergencies. Our position as disciples requires that we should know the vocabulary and metaphysic of the situation. We need such a gift of believing power, personal, resident, permanent. In fact, we need just so much faith as not to need faith.'

III. THE BEGINNING OF FAITH.—The Psalmist says, 'Blessed is the man whose sin is covered.' It is also true,—blessed is the man whose sin is uncovered. It is no part of sin to uncover itself. Consciousness of sin tells—joyful announcement—that there is something striving against sin. That which takes the name of peace, tries to take its nature also. Until a brighter dawn comes, there is a comfort as of daylight in saying, 'All of self, and none of Thee.'

The apostle testifies, 'I was alive apart from the law once.' But one day, in this heart-void as in Venezuela, the long-slumbering difficulty of ownership pushes to the front, and then what outcry and confusion! What is to be kept and what surrendered? Who must increase, and who must decrease?

IV. THE INCREASE OF FAITH.—A child cries in the dark, and the cry is nothing in itself, but by it the assurance grows that love lies around. There is one who hears and helps, comes and comforts. The child learns to pray; it is the working out of

what is wrought within. Again, it is like the work of dredging in a harbour. Ooze, silt, and deposit of every kind may be seen brought up in the endless chain of buckets, emptied into the barge, and thence into the sea. Then great vessels with precious freight can pass up and down. You want to be filled, but in what are you to hold the fulness? God sends you an argosy of emptiness.

Yes, it means much raking and scraping, and, sometimes, blasting: many sad discoveries and defeats. God's ways are not as our ways, and we like our own ways best. It should not be difficult to praise Him who knows us from the beginning, and yet loves us to the end.

V. FAITH COMPLETE.—'As a grain of mustard seed.' True, it is little, but it is alive; it is insignificant, but it has instincts. It grows from within outward. Had time not failed, it might have received mention among the heroes of faith after Gideon, Barak, Samson, and Jephthah. This tiny evangelist satisfies Carey's conditions as few do. *It expects great things from God.* A glorious sun to be shining as if expressly for it; evaporation of the great sea to be driven over the plains, and descending from its cloud-chariot to offer its services: then a sphere of its own to fill, a cross to bear, and one brief life to make sublime and full of song. Thus *it attempts great things for God*—even the greatest. It lays down its life, in sacrifice witnessing to the truth of the divine order. Its flower-blossom is a martyr-crown. This is faith in its fulness; also, how far from it we often are! 'If I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.'

### Two Kinds of Separation.

'And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.'—LUKE xviii. 13.

I. SEPARATION BY SAINTLINESS.—The publican is in the temple along with the man who counted him accursed. They are linked to each other by the affinity of contrast. The Pharisee finds it convenient to refer to his fellow-worshipper—'or even this publican'; and the latter introduces into

his heart-broken prayer the name that the saint had given him—'me, the sinner.' The Pharisee is quite at his ease in the house that belonged to him and God. He reads off the menu of moralities on which his spiritual man fared sumptuously every day. He puts a theological heading to the list of his attainments—'God, I thank Thee.' Such pre-eminence must be the result of a divine purpose. He is called and consecrated to spiritual pride, select and selfish by the will of God. He is the type of holiness without humanity, of sainthood without sympathy. There is here a first stage of hypocrisy, and then comes self-delusion. The last act of the stomach is to digest itself. The God of truth is not mocked. This is spiritual death—something that has lived and died. Such is separation from God by saintliness. How different where salvation leads to sympathy and service! God's most abject ones are those that live nearest to Him. This is the secret of the double growth at once in humility and holiness—

Two wonders I confess :—  
The wonder of His glorious love,  
And my own worthlessness.

II. SEPARATION BY SIN.—I. The publican *before God*. Like the Pharisee in the divine presence, he also tells everything—'me, the sinner.' It was what the leaders of religion said about his class. The Teacher would know well the meaning of the word, for He was in the same condemnation; it was part of the cross He bore, 'despising the shame,' to be spurned by those who were zealous for righteousness. And so the publican, in turning from the guardians of the law to its Giver, by some strange compulsion of faith comes before God with the name that men gave him. He calls himself 'the sinner.'

2. The publican *in the Roman Empire*. To appreciate the faith that brought him to the footstool of God's mercy, we must understand why the Pharisees counted him an outcast and an abomination. He was in the service of the Roman Empire in Palestine: belonging to the public company for collecting taxes on produce, transit, population, etc. He stood at every city gate, and had one word of greeting to all—Pay. Rich and poor, Jew and Gentile, the long caravan with costly freight, the busy farmer with his mule-load carefully strapped and balanced, the poor village-

woman with her basket of eggs and pots of curded milk—all had to stop, meet his claims, and, worst of all, await his convenience. With the Empire in their pay, and the Roman police at their back, the publicans soon became a powerful class, with an influence like that of the saloons in American politics—condemned, yet courted; hated, yet upheld. A Jewish tax-gatherer could neither be overcome by force, nor deceived by guile; he could only be hated.

3. The publican *before the Pharisees*. He silenced the Pharisees as the streams of Babel did the harps of Israel, reminding them of the stranger's yoke, and the divine rejection. He was condemned religiously. He was practically a heathen, for he allowed free passage on the festival-days of the gods. He was no Jew, no son of Abraham, for his interests were with his office, and his knowledge of his people was used against them. His word was not to be accepted in a court of justice, and it was no sin to deceive him when it was possible.

4. The publican *to himself*. The ancient prophet had needed a face of brass; the publican needed a heart of brass. It is a distressing thing to lose faith in human nature; to experience the wholesale revulsion that cries, All men are liars, all godliness is for gain, all truth is talk, and all ideals exaggeration! This was the publican's danger. He lived in an atmosphere of greed, cunning, and deceit. He saw the worst aspect of life, and he might have quieted his conscience by saying, This is the reality, and I am not worse than this! Others saw the breadth of the Pharisee's phylactery, but he knew its depth. And these were the men of the law who excommunicated him! Was it a forfeiture? Who cared? But the publican in the parable did not abandon God or God's law. He saw that there must be something real in religion to put a value on hypocrisy. Imitation is an evidence of the actual. And so, in spite of all in his daily life that kept him back, he came to the throne of grace, feeling that he must, and believing that there was blessing even for him.

With downcast eyes, and beating his breast, he cried, 'God be merciful to me a sinner'; and as he went home, something told him that it was good 'to fall into the hands of God.' Yes, it is true, as George Herbert says—

Solomon's sea of brass and temple of stone  
Were not so pleasing to God as—one good groan.

There are two kinds of separation from God; and it is better to be a poor sinner than a proud saint.

## The Everlasting Kingdom.

'Heaven and earth shall pass away; but My words shall not pass away.'—LUKE xxi. 33.

### I. THE MEANING OF THE PROCLAMATION.—

Heaven and earth are the standard emblems of the imperishable: yet there are words, such as despised things as words, that will survive them and sing of their successors. In the same way of forcible comparison, everything is said about our devotion to Christ when it is said to be more precious than even the family ties. So Love is set beside Faith and Hope. Faith is mighty with miracles, and Hope has the elevation of the unseen, but when Love stands beside them, the others can only bow in silence, as if saying 'Thine is the greatness.' The kingdom of Christ is everlasting, because it is the kingdom of Love and its victory.

### II. THE MAJESTY OF THE PROCLAMATION.—

Christ saw beyond the cross a joy set before Him. It was the joy of darkness dispelled, of hatred made hateful, of prison doors opened, idols cast forth, divisions healed. There would be those who would joyfully suffer for His sake. There would be distresses rejoiced in, and journeyings undertaken, and rough places made smooth, and life itself laid down. What preparation for His presence, what brotherhood in His name!

The world was to be won for God, and that not by might or multitude. And, to crown all, He saw the rising walls of the city of God, and the army that no man should think of numbering. There and then, when all would be revealed, what new names would be given to old sorrows! What surprise for men to find God's dark dealings among the garments of praise, moving with the motion of the palm branches! The explorer in search of earthly kingdoms might gaze emparadised upon a stretch of sea unsailed; but that of Christ was shoreless,—the rest, the recompense, and the reunion of the people of God.

Others before him had sought to utter the words of eternal life, but had failed. There was socialism on the plain of Shinar: there was the king of

Egypt in his sarcophagus. The iron Empire so gave eternal rule to its city, that there a man without merriment can to-day call the Gentiles *his* inheritance: finding it easier to caricature than to cancel the old tradition. The Jew also claimed eternity as the result of his righteousness, but all he could do with the word was to write it over the doorway of his graveyard.

But the kingdom of Christ was different. The word spoken on the Mount of Transfiguration, 'Hear ye Him,' has not fallen to the ground. The air of this world has caught it up, and will continue to carry it everywhere until the earth's many kingdoms become the one kingdom of the Lord Jesus.

III. THE MEDIUM OF THE PROCLAMATION.—In every age the Gospel has had the persecution of its enemies and the provincialism of its friends. From age to age the words have had a special meaning to those who heard them, or refused to hear them. Thus in the first days the offence and preaching of the cross would be after this manner: 'The culprit whom you condemned summons you to his bar of judgment. The light that you have quenched in darkness now offers you its guidance. The name you have dishonoured lays upon you the accolade of its service. The enemy you have conquered invites you to trust in his clemency.' That may not be the difficulty of the nineteenth century, but the offence of the cross remains, for self remains, and the cross is the death of self. Also from age to age the words of Christ are not less divine because many loving human associations of the Church of Christ have gathered around them. The pearl of the gospel has taken on a fresh lustre from the hands that turned it round while they told the story of its price. Amid the treasures of revelation it is touching to meet with the implements of those who laboured in the mine. The book of the love of God is not less lovable because of the thumb marks and pencillings of those who pored over its pages. The way of salvation is not hampered, but hallowed by the footprints of other pilgrims, and by the worn-out sandals at the wayside.

Every age supplies its own mould, but the spirit that fills them is the mind of Christ. This is the secret both of permanence and power. He is with His words—as His words are with His servants: 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.'

## The Church on Trial.

‘And He beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone that the builders rejected, the same is become the head stone of the corner?’—LUKE xx. 17.

I. THE STONE—ITS LITERAL MEANING.—The teaching is here drawn from the mason’s trade. A house is being built. Daily the camels bring loads of rough-hewn stones from the quarry; mules and donkeys arrive at all hours with water, sand, and lime. The plan is marked out with line and rod, and the foundation begins to rise; stone-dressers are working under the awning; and the mason on the wall from time to time calls out to the carriers the number or size of the stone he wants. After some weeks, as the work nears completion, a stone of unusual form and size is needed—a broad square block for clasping two corners of the flat-roofed building, or a wedge-shaped stone to fit into the top of an arch. For this the master-mason may himself descend to inspect the building material lying around, and a stone that has looked cumbrous and uninviting for the common row may now catch the eye as the very thing that is needed. Several things contribute to the discovery: there is a qualification in the stone itself, but there is also something that belongs to a trained eye and a clearly realised want. The rejected block becomes the head stone of the corner.

II. THE STONE—ITS MORAL MEANING.—The reference is to the 118th Psalm, whose theme is the triumph of the Lord’s cause, and the comfort of those who commit themselves to Him. There may be pressure on every side, but upwards the view is unclouded: there is nothing between. The Lord can do whatever pleases Him. He speaks and His servant hears. He becomes his strength, song, and salvation. The Lord has accepted him; and is going to use him: He knows where, when, and how. The stone is unfit for common things, because it is kept for a special and higher purpose. God hath justified; who is he that condemneth? Thus enriched, he can pity his rejecters. How could they know the high purpose of God; or common eyes behold uncommon things? It is the mystery of the gospel. ‘Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.’

III. DESTINY AND DISPOSITION.—There is

here something going on that is independent of man and above him, and which for its fulfilment makes use of man’s opposition and brings to nought the wisdom of the wise. It is a matter of destiny. But when we turn to the parable that suggested the quotation and its lesson, we find a story that runs on the lines of human disposition. The metal of desire has run into a certain mould of opportunity, and hardened into conduct and character. There is a vineyard let out to those who work in it, and who engage to give the owner the usual half or two-thirds of the return, according to the labour required by the land and its produce. From stewardship they pass to ownership. The parable is one of the most touching that Christ ever spake. It was the first nucleus of the gospel story; it was Christ’s autobiography. He was the heir. Destiny takes its course, and so does Disposition. We can understand each by itself, but only the hand of God can unite them. When we mix them, it is to make a cup of moral horror.

IV. THE SORROWS OF REJECTION.—‘God forbid,’ said the men who were pledged to the course forbidden. The promise to Abraham was one of blessing to all the families of the earth, but his descendants narrowed the promise to themselves, and sought also to make the God of the whole earth the possession of one of its families. The weight of glory was more than they could sustain. The stone fell upon them and laid their honour in the dust.

V. THE DANGERS OF TO-DAY.—Other husbandmen are at work, but the vineyard is the same; has the same Owner; and the Owner does as He did before. He sends to us His messengers from India, Africa, China, and the islands of the ocean. They ask tokens of our loyalty, diligence, and devotion. The Church of Christ is not for itself but for the world. The old impoverishment, the old sorrow is repeated wherever the denomination exists for the denomination, the Church for the Church, religion for religion: wherever the means is called an end.

To-day Heathenism is standing at the gates of civilisation; Islam is waiting to become the brightest jewel in the crown of Christ; but is the Church of Christ sufficiently united, purified, and true to receive such a blessing, to be the means of such service? That is the question. Is it not *the* question?

## The Watershed of Life.

'He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.'—LUKE xvi. 10.

I. THE FOUNTAINHEAD.—It sometimes happens that where a spring gushes out from the mountain mosses, some accidental obstacle in the tiny streamlet divides its current just where it had begun to speak of itself in the singular, and say—

I sparkle out among the fern  
To bicker down a valley.

The cleavage once made is not healed again. Each stream keeps its own course. They are henceforth called by different names, and regarded as quite different streams, but it is the same stream flowing in different directions, and in their flow they follow the same law. So in the inner landscape there is a divided will; and so hostile is the one to the other that one may call the other a different law working in the members, but both are expressions of will, and are subject to the laws of the will.

The faithful and the unfaithful alike lead from the small to the great: from the temporal to the eternal.

### II. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FIRST DIRECTION.

—The motion of one waterfall is the momentum of the next. One action, good or evil, prepares, so far, for a better or worse to follow. One difficulty mastered leaves behind it a readiness and roominess for larger problems. Notice the anxiety of the Great Teacher about giving offence to one of the little ones. 'Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not.' Beware of the indirect ways of forbidding.

How important that what they see and hear should always be a response to their best expectations, and a recognition of the momentous fact that childhood is the time of trust, inclination, and attachment. How important to be at our very best in the presence of the children! We lead them, and so they lead us.

III. THE COURSE OF THE RIVER.—When Israel entered the Promised Land, the congregation gathered at Shechem, and there in the valley of

decision, from the opposing slopes of Ebal and Gerizim, they heard both with outward ear and with inward consent the rehearsal of the blessings and curses. Then the sound of the reading voice ceased, but the inward recitation went on for ever. The items of daily life grow into a universal; the occasional passes into the continual; the taste becomes a tyranny or a triumph. What remains for a time subject to the stirring of our will eventually sets like gypsum. We have for good or evil struck upon moral necessity. These opposing lines are the diameter of eternity.

When Arthur Wellesley began his military career as a young officer in India, one of the first things he did was to take a private soldier and put him on the weighing machine, first in his ordinary clothes, and then as furnished for the march and for battle. He wanted to know how much extra was laid upon him, and how far it would affect his strength. He wanted to have the real facts of the case, so that if 1000 men would only have the force of 700, he would only reckon on 700. From that weighing machine began the path that led up to Waterloo.

It was a small detail to master the weight of a soldier's kit, but it decided the freedom of Europe.

IV. THE MEETING OF THE WATERS.—The brook thinks it will go on for ever, and it tells its secret so pleasantly that we would fain believe it true. But it is not true.

The time of fret and foam is only a time. After a while the channel needs no more deepening. That which has opposed opposes no longer. It is one thing or the other. There is a home, a resting-place, for the good; and, last mercy of the Creator, if we may apply the term where the distinguishing love is lost—there is a home also for the evil: the evil has made it. Even now we can have the foretaste of the Blessed Rest. We can be kept in perfect peace. The new creature gets an inward preference; new instincts tingle for new exploits. To do the will of God becomes at once law and impulse. The kingdom of heaven has passed within. Faithful in the least has become faithful in much.