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This is generally recognized by those who see an individual in ch. 53, as the first appearance in Israel of a hope for a personal resurrection. No explanation is given, however, of the forces which led to its appearance here, nor is it placed in any relationship to the eschatology of the remainder of the book. The outstanding characteristic of the eschatology of the prophet is his anticipation of the immediate advent of the Day of Yahweh. In 56^{9}–59^{15} he regards the Day as held back by the sins of the people, but from 59^{15} on he regains his former intense expectation. In ch. $66^{7ff.}$ he conceives present sufferings as the pains of birth in which the new and purified nation is to be born. In $50^{7.\ 8}$ he is sustained in his own sufferings by his conviction of the closeness of Yahweh's advent.

If this prophet had followers, we may assume that they would be inspired by a like hope. The death of their leader would not change their eschatological hope. They would expect the great Day to dawn at any moment. Is it not at least within the realm of possibility that they should expect their leader to be with them in the happy days which were to come so soon? Could they believe that God would let the act of murderous men deprive him of participation in the New Age to whom alone they owed their hope and their faith? To maintain faith in the justice of God, they could believe nothing else than that their leader should share in the imminent justification. Thus the idea of a personal resurrection would be not the product of religious speculation, but a belief born in the impact of death upon religious hope. One or the other had to give way, and death proved the weaker of the two.

If this interpretation of the individual in 50 and 53 be possible, all basis for the current theory of an individual *Servant* is removed and much light is thrown upon the history and character of the last great prophet of the Old Testament.

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

The Time-Signal.

By the Reverend R. Oswald Davies, Leicester.

'Herod ascertained from them the time.'—Mt 2^{7} (Moffatt).

'Redeeming the time.'—Eph 5^{16}.

1. Not long ago on the wireless the time-signal went wrong. When it comes from Greenwich, as you know, it is given out in the form of six pips. On this occasion, however, only five pips were heard; and a little later in the programme the announcer apologized for the mistake. Not many people would have noticed such a slight mistake as that. After all, what difference could it make? However, the truth is that quite a number of people noticed it and even sent urgent messages to the B.B.C. to inquire about it! What they particularly wanted to know was whether it was the first or the last pip that had been omitted! Fancy ringing up the B.B.C. in order to know which pip had been left out! But, as Rudyard Kipling says, 'There's more here than meets the eye.' For the people who sent these messages were sailors and astronomers—people to whom exact time is a matter of extreme importance. For it is the last pip which actually indicates the exact Greenwich time; and so it *was* important for them to know which pip had been omitted.

When, for instance, a ship is at sea, it is very necessary for the captain to know the exact time. He may run into a fog and fail to see his way. Then he will have to make certain calculations in which time is an important factor; and the very safety of his ship and of all lives on board will depend upon the exactness of the time. Otherwise he may come to disaster and find his ship on the rocks!

Think again of the astronomer who watches the movements of the stars in the heavens, how he has to work out big sums of the most precise nature. Perhaps he wants to know how long it will take a certain planet to travel a particular distance in the heavens. But he must know the exact time to the very second before he can ever make his calculation.

You see now *how a seemingly unimportant thing may really be of great importance.*

Think of the little Child who was born in Bethlehem over 1900 years ago. Only a few people knew who He was. To the world at large His birth was an insignificant event. And when the boy Jesus lived and played in Nazareth, how many of the Nazarenes knew that there was growing up

in their midst the Saviour of the world? But out of that life came the greatest blessing to mankind. It was that life that changed the world.

2. *Again, in this incident behind the microphone we are taught the value of exactitude.*

Exactitude in life is not an easy thing to attain; and you may wonder whether it is worth while.

Sir Ronald Ross was one of the great benefactors of mankind. It was he who tracked down to its source the scourge of malaria which affects human life so profoundly in the tropical parts of the world. The amazing exactitude of the man astonishes us. Mosquitoes were suspected of carrying the malarial germ, and thousands upon thousands of them were carefully examined by him through the microscope until in the end his eyesight threatened to fail. At last the culprit was found; it was a particular kind of mosquito known as the female anopheles mosquito. And as a result of that most exact and precise investigation by Sir Ronald Ross one-fourth of the world, hitherto uninhabitable, was made habitable to men, and thousands of lives were saved.

That is the secret of the man of science—he is always exact. But if it is important for the scientist to be exact in his work, how much more important it is in life. What we should always ask is, Is it right? For right is right and wrong is wrong, and they cannot be mixed.

But how easy it is not to be exact and to try and mix them in our lives. You believe in truthfulness as a fine thing; you want to be truthful. But sometimes a slight untruth creeps in. Then you console yourself by saying: 'It is a small thing, after all; it doesn't matter so much.' You are not exact; and sometimes it is the beginning of moral disaster. Let us make Jesus our example. He was always exact, entirely upright, believing always in the right and never deviating from the path of truth. That was His secret, and He never went wrong. As Ronald Ross rid the world of the scourge of malaria and made one-fourth of the world habitable to men, so Jesus through the perfect exactitude of His life and His wonderful sense of rightness rid the whole world of the scourge of sin and made it for ever habitable for girls and boys.

3. *This incident tells us something of the control of life.*

The time-signal is broadcast because it is the Greenwich time, and that means the right time, the true time. When we hear it we set our watches to it and put our clocks right again. If we didn't do that, our lives would soon be in chaos and confusion. Our time, then, has to be corrected by the true time.

It is so in life. We have to be corrected and controlled; if not, our life would soon be in chaos. But how and by whom can it be done? Jesus Christ alone can do it. There is something about Him that controls and regulates men's lives in a wonderful way. Some, like the watch, travel too fast along the road of life. Like that young man, the Prodigal Son, they live at far too fast a rate to be good for them. But coming under the power of Jesus Christ they will be arrested in their progress and saved from disaster.

Or, some of you may be too slow, not moving fast enough along the road of goodness and true progress. You need speeding up. Jesus is the One to help you. He will go before you, and if you will try and follow Him you will find your steps getting quicker and your pace accelerating along the road of goodness.

As the world sets its clock to the Greenwich time, so let us set our lives to keep time with Jesus Christ, the regulator and controller of life. Thus and thus alone will come order and beauty into them.

Safety in Temptation.

By the Reverend Luke Hicks, Belmont, Surrey.

'The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.'—Jn 14^{30}.

There is a story of an Indian gentleman who met the devil on the high road, and did not give him a greeting. 'Why do you not salaam?' said Satan. 'Because,' replied the Indian gentleman, 'you are the cause of all the trouble and mischief in the world.' 'Not at all,' said Satan, 'you are entirely mistaken. Come with me.' They went together to the Bazaar where all things are sold, and Satan entered a sweet shop. On the floor in the middle of the shop was a pan of treacle bubbling over a slow fire. Satan put his finger in the treacle, which he could do safely, being used to hot things, and he then made a mark with the treacle on the wall of the shop. Presently flies began to gather about the treacle. Then lizards came from their nooks and crannies after the flies; then the shop cat began to chase the lizards; then the neighbour's dog chased the cat, and upset the pan of treacle all over the floor of the shop. The sweet seller was in a rage, and complained to the dog's owner. Words led to blows; the neighbours took sides, and this led to a riot, and much damage being done.

'There you are!' said the Indian gentleman to

Satan. 'Did I not say that you were the cause of all the trouble and mischief in the world?' Satan answered: 'I only put a little treacle on the wall of the shop.' Only a little treacle! Thus the flies went after the treacle; the lizards after the flies; the cat after the lizards; and the dog after the cat. Then followed trouble and confusion, blows and bruises. There was something in that treacle that appealed to the fly and drew it. Lizards like flies, and cats like chasing lizards as dogs like chasing cats. Satan tempts us always with something he knows we like, something like treacle to a fly.

Satan desires us, great and small,
As wheat to sift us, and we are tempted.
No one, however rich or great,
Is, by his stature or estate, exempted.

We do not fall to temptation unless there is something in our hearts that Satan can appeal to. A little girl said when Satan comes all the naughtiness in me springs up. But if we pray, 'create in me a clean heart,' and Jesus makes our heart clean, we shall be safe from Satan, for we shall not want anything he can offer. Satan tempted our Lord, but our Lord did not want anything that Satan could offer. 'The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.'

If the Lord Jesus dwells within us, we shall want only what He desires, and Satan cannot tempt us to fall. We do not fall to the temptation to waste time unless we are lazy, and we do not fall into any kind of gambling unless we covet wrong things. If the Lord guards our heart we shall be safe, and sin shall not have dominion over us.

Lord, make me pure.
Only the pure shall see Thee as Thou art,
And shall endure.

On Getting up Early.

Some time ago I heard an address to children; where the text came from I do not know—certainly it is not in the Bible, although it is a very good one: 'Get up! there are great things to do to-day.'

I do not remember what the minister said about it, but I know afterwards he told me he was sorry he had chosen such a text, for his wife wouldn't let him forget it, especially in the early hours of the morning!

Well, now, it is all very well getting up on a glorious summer morning, especially when we are on holiday and we want to make the best of our time. It's wonderful how early we can get up when there is something we want to do! But on dark, cold mornings, when we have school in front of us, it is quite another matter.

Perhaps we may even feel like Mr. Gladstone's little grandchild, Dorothy Drew, who at one time was not at all fond of getting up in the morning. Her wise grandfather, who believed in early rising, had a serious talk to her about it.

'But,' said the little maid, 'the Bible says we ought not to get up early.' Mr. Gladstone, who knew his Bible as well as any one, was greatly puzzled, for he had never heard of such a text.

At last the little girl found the words and showed him: 'Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning.' Yes, it's in the Bible right enough. But, like many an older person, Dorothy did not finish the text and only took as much as she wanted. For it goes on to say, 'that they may follow strong drink.'

Well, better stay in bed all day long than get up for such a purpose. It really depends, you see, what we get up for that settles whether we can get up early or late. If we feel that there are great things to do, it is quite easy to get up. But then we do not always know just when these are coming along. So many great things have been done on quite ordinary days.

Grace Darling had no idea that wild morning when she rose up in the lighthouse off St. Abb's Head, and saw the wreck on one of the islands, that she was going to do a great deed of bravery which would sound her name down in history. But she never would have done it if she had not got up ready to do her duty.

Jack Cornwell never dreamed that he was to become one of the heroes of the Great War when he rose up that morning on board H.M.S. *Chester*, which was to witness his brave faithfulness and his heroic self-sacrifice.

These 'great things to do' come as a rule quite suddenly and unexpectedly, and the chief thing is whether they find us 'up and doing, with a heart for any fate.' But really, if we only remembered, every day there are great things to do—because good deeds are always great things, though the world may not talk about them.

And there are always good—*i.e.* kind, helpful, loving—things to do. Why should we not take the motto of the Scout movement for our own, whether we are Scouts or not? 'To help others, and to do at least one good turn every day.' Then we should find it much easier to get up in the morning, knowing that 'there are great things to do to-day.'[1]

[1] F. W. Robertson Dorling, *Treasures from the Sands*, 20.

The Christian Year.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Loyalty to God.

'Joab had turned after Adonijah, though he turned not after Absalom.'—1 K 2^{28}.

Most of us start with early ideals of faith in God and man which, in the generous hours of youth, we pledge ourselves to hold in practice as well as in theory. We are prepared to stand by them. But although our inexperience will hardly credit it, ideals may be lost, and lost they will be unless we renew our hold of them as life opens out into responsibilities and interests which repeatedly create a new situation for our moral growth. If we imagine that faithfulness to God or man goes on by a momentum of its own, we are in danger of the error which covered Joab with sudden disgrace at the end of his career.

Joab has been called the Douglas of the house of David. He was the staunch and skilful general, without whose aid the monarchy would not have been established. He had his faults. He was vindictive and imperious, but he was fiercely loyal to the king, and at the critical moment when Absalom's rebellion broke out he saved the situation by siding with David and refusing to swerve from his chief. He turned not after the brilliant young Absalom. Yet, some years later, towards the close of David's reign, when another rebellion tested his principles, *he turned after Adonijah.* This time he failed. He sided with the upstart and was ignominiously put to death as a traitor. The pity of it! To tarnish his record on the last page! To grow infatuated over a poor creature like Adonijah after resisting the fascination of Absalom.

Yet people may thus succumb to the temptations of mature life, after passing successfully through earlier seductions. Why is that true of many careers? Partly because people are not sufficiently alive to the changing forms and phases of temptation. These vary, in character or in intensity, with successive periods in life. Youth, for example, is more in danger of recklessness and impulsiveness; age, of obstinacy or of a disposition to cultivate its own garden, indifferent to the troubles of other people. 'I could be sorry for these men,' says the ex-Abbot Boniface at Dundrennan, 'ay, and for that poor queen; but what avail earthly sorrows to a man of fourscore?—and it is a rare dropping morning for the early colewort.' Feeling is less easily stirred as we mature, and this accounts for a change of our temptations. Ridicule, again, tells more upon our early years than on our later, as a rule. Vanity, which is one of the most serious dangers to loyalty, reappears in old age as well as in youth. But a fault like avarice is more common in mature life, and so is cynicism, which is rarely anything but an affectation in young people. There are even physical reasons why certain temptations to irritability and sluggishness acquire a firmer hold upon the more advanced phases of human character. In short, temptations to selfishness or compromise or self-indulgence, which ten or twenty years ago would have been brushed aside, may appeal to us to-day with an unwonted power of attraction which it requires all our moral strength to resist. Marriage, family life, the duties of a profession, the pressure of new responsibilities, the anxieties of a high position, the larger freedom of success—these may create a moral situation which requires to be thought out afresh in the light of our devotion to God.

There is a profound wisdom in this resolve to renew the early loyalty from time to time. But when the first flush of consecration is upon us, we find it difficult to take such warnings seriously. It is natural to think we have decided our future, and that the lower self, over which we have triumphed, cannot reassert itself. The consciousness that we have taken our stand openly, at some cost to ourselves, thrills us with a sense of permanence. Instinctively we protest, with Peter, 'Though all shall be offended in thee, I will never be offended.'

Only as we enter into life, faith in God presents itself as a much more complex business than it at first appeared; besides, old temptations have a way of rising up again, after the romance of the start has subsided; a time arrives when we have to encounter resistance, the apparent indifference of many to what we cherish, the subtle temptations which incline us to consider self-sacrifice rather quixotic after all, and enthusiasm a fever of childhood. These things have to be met. They may embitter our zeal, or shake our faith, or cool our interest. They can turn—they have turned—men and women from early loyalty to God and from chivalrous devotion to the interests of their fellow-men. And if they are to be surmounted by us without faltering, it must be by taking the oath of loyalty over again, with a more intelligent grasp of all that it involves. 'Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.' Joab fell. And any one may swerve from loyalty if he pre-

sumes upon his past exploits, or assumes that the momentum of yesterday will avail of itself to carry him through the seductions of to-day.

No one, however experienced, can afford to live on the mere memory and credit of an earlier devotion. Circumstances alter, and we will do well to suspect that our characters may have also altered—not always for the better—that we may have become insensibly less disinterested and trustworthy. The call is to renew our vows in face of the novel circumstances. We do that instinctively at the outward crises of life, when we are married, when our children are born and when they go to school, on the occasion of a death in the home, or when our work is altered. But there are crises which are equally momentous, though they are not so well marked—crises which are profoundly significant for moral and spiritual loyalty. The man who has a faithful conscience will be on the look out for these imperceptible changes, lest they render his will unstable or dim his powers of judgment. Particularly as the conditions of his lot grow comparatively prosperous and smooth, he will take care in case the fibre of self-sacrifice be softened, or the heart grow callous.

'Joab turned after Adonijah, though he turned not after Absalom.' He had perhaps one excuse which is never ours. He can hardly have found much in David by this time to command his hero-worship, and this may explain in part his unaccountable lapse from loyalty. The Son of David to whom our fealty is pledged puts no such strain upon His followers. On the contrary, we find more and more reason for our loyalty to His service, as the rising problems of every age call out fresh aspects of the gospel which inspire self-sacrifice and elicit the highest energies of mind and soul in Christian men. If we turn aside from Christ, or abate our confidence in His cause, ours is the discredit of the lapse. For what is faithfulness to God or man worth if it is not faithfulness to death, a faithfulness that will not betray Him or desert Him in the afternoon or in the evening any more than in the morning hours?[1]

SEPTUAGESIMA.

The Labourer with the Evil Eye.

'Is thine eye evil, because I am good?'—Mt 20[15].

This parable is not an economic tract. Jesus did not attempt to lay the rails on which the trains of industry should run. He lived instead a life so divinely compassionate that industry must ultimately make peace with Him or suffer torment. But, though this parable does not prescribe industrial methods, we cannot read it, even casually, without seeing the fingers of Jesus probing beneath the surface of the vast realm of 'business.' Is a man out of work because he will not work? Jesus has no saving grace for such a man except the saving grace of adversity. Is a man out of work because of the callousness of a society which will not seriously grapple with the curse of unemployment? That tragedy smites Jesus to the core! He could never have told this story if He had not been moved with pity as He saw men idle in the market-place. What would Jesus say, were He here in the flesh, to the corporation which dismisses men without direst necessity; or to a labour union which 'strikes' on a negligible pretext; or to business brains too absorbed with profits to address themselves to the poor man's problem of insecurity of occupation? This is not an economic tract; but it is a demand that industry shall exist for man, and not man for industry.

At sunset the labourers in the vineyard receive their wages. Those who were hired last were paid first (the vineyard keeper's eccentric humour comes into play); and to their glad surprise they receive a denarius, a full day's wage. Those who worked three hours, six, or nine, are given the same amount. Finally those who have worked all day—a denarius is their payment! The agreement is fulfilled; they bargained for a denarius. But the good fortune of those who have worked one hour, three, or nine, excited their ill-tempered complaint.[2]

Aesop's dog in the manger, and our Lord's labourer with the evil eye, are two companion portraits. Aesop's famous fable taught the very same lesson in ancient Greece that our Lord's present parable taught to Israel in His own day, and still teaches to Christendom in our day.

Is thine eye evil? said the good husbandman to the murmuring labourer. Now, an 'evil eye' is just our old Bible English for the Latin word 'invidia.' Is thine heart so selfish and so envious as that? was what our Lord said to this man who could not enjoy his own wages for grudging and growling at his neighbour's wages. Both Aesop's dog and our Lord's dog-like labourer were sick of that strange disease—their neighbour's health. This wretched creature was so full of an evil eye that every one must have seen it. Even if he had held his peace every one must have seen his evil heart running out of his eye. For envy, like love,

[1] J. Moffatt, *Reasons and Reasons*, 95.

[2] G. A. Buttrick, *The Parables of Jesus*, 161.

will out. And, as our Lord is always saying to us, it will out at the eye. 'As to the motive of those attacks on Goethe,' says Heine, 'I know at least what it was in my own case. It was my evil eye.' Now, who is our Goethe? Who is our fellow-labourer in our own special line of life? 'Potter envies potter,' says Aristotle. Who is our companion potter?

Envy so parched my blood, that had I seen
A fellow-man made joyous, thou hadst mark'd
A livid paleness overspread my cheek.
Such harvest reap I of the seed I sow'd.
O man, why place thy heart where there doth need
Exclusion of participants in good?

If he is rightly reported, a Greek commentator who bears a great name makes a very shallow remark at this point. He says that it is difficult for him to believe that any man who is really within the kingdom of heaven himself, and is in its service, and is receiving its rewards, could have an evil eye at another man for his work and for his wages in that kingdom. A more senseless and self-exposing annotation was never made. A young friend of Mr. George Meredith's once came to him in an agony of pain and shame. 'This is too bad of you!' he cried. 'Willoughby is me!' 'No, my dear fellow,' said the great writer, 'Willoughby is all of us.' And in like manner, instead of it being difficult to believe that there was ever such a dog in the manger as this murmuring labourer, we are all such dogs, and he who does not know and confess it—the shell is yet on his head. Yes, Willoughby is all of us. The truth is, an evil eye, like this labourer's evil eye, is not only in all our hearts, but it is the agony of every truly good man's heart that it is so. Instead of there being no envy among the disciples of Jesus Christ, and among those who labour in His Father's vineyard, as this stupid old annotator would have us believe; instead of that, the true hellishness of envy is never tasted by any man till he is far up in the kingdom of heaven, and is full of its mind and spirit. Dante was far up on his way to Paradise when the fine dialogue on envy and on love took place. Dante sounds his deepest depths in his heart-searching cantos on envy, even as his most seraphic flights are taken in his cantos on love.

'Behold we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?' That miserable speech of Peter's, which gave occasion to this parable, utterly vitiated all Peter's previous work for his Master, however hard he had worked, and however much he had forsaken for his Master's cause. For it is yet another of the absolute principles of this noble vineyard that it is *motive* in its labourers that counts with its Master.[1]

That witch of Alexandria, walking the streets armed with a pitcher of water and a flaming torch, and crying, 'Would that I could quench hell with this water and burn heaven with this torch, so that men would love God for Himself alone,' was mistress of a white magic, not of a black art! Church-going which goes to church to be wrapped in a warm glow of emotion, or in the hope that church-going may be counted unto it for righteousness, debases worship into gross selfishness. So many prayers—so much of heaven; so many good deeds—so much reward! The blasphemy of the *quid pro quo* in religion endures in the Pharisaism of every age! Small wonder that in the Reformation the world demanded an ampler doctrine of 'grace' instead of the dreary rubric of 'works'! The generous soul

. . . throws himself on God, and unperplexed
Seeking shall find him.

Such souls, in Wordsworth's eyes, were the donor and the architect of King's College Chapel, Cambridge. While penurious spirits wondered if such lavish outpouring of money and talent, on a chapel intended only 'for a scanty band of white-robed scholars,' would ever be warranted by commensurate returns, the poet rallied to the defence of people who are prodigal for God:

Give all thou canst; high Heaven rejects the lore
Of nicely-calculated less or more.

The lines summarize the message of the parable.

Not from the hope of gaining aught,
Not seeking a reward;
But as Thyself hast loved me,
O ever-living Lord.
So would I love Thee, dearest Lord,
And in Thy praise will sing;
Solely because Thou art my God,
And my most loving King.

SEXAGESIMA.

The Parable of the Soils.

'Some [seed] fell.'—Lk 8[8].

1. The Synoptists agree that the parable was spoken from a boat on the shore of the Lake of

[1] A. Whyte, *Our Lord's Characters*, 213.

Galilee. It is reasonably safe to assume that this was on the north-east side of the Lake, somewhere between Capernaum and Bethsaida. Those who have seen the district will recognize the soils alluded to as those of the adjacent countryside.

The ground on the north-east side of the Lake is at least six hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean, and at one time it must have been completely under water. It is situated at the extremity of a volcanic range, at one time in active eruption. These factors give peculiar geological strata to the soil, which is very fertile in spots where the lava settled upon the limestone foundation, and very barren in places where the watershed bared the rock. In the same field may be found a deep rich soil, a gravel soil, and bare rocky patches.

Of the prickly plants which infest the land only a few need be mentioned; the Nubek or Jujube is very common, so are also the thistles. Some of these cannot be eradicated easily, and are left to grow in the field.

The sowing of wheat takes place during the months of December and January. While it is, as a rule, fairly cold in Palestine during the sowing season, the Lake district is warmer than other parts, and during the sowing season it is even oppressively warm. Seed falling upon shallow ground germinates quickly, but the strong sun parches such growth, as it is lacking in moisture. All the conditions of growth with which the people of the countryside were familiar are given their value and place in the parable.

2. Holman Hunt's picture of 'The Master at the Door' goes to the heart of the lesson. The human heart is a closed door, which can be opened from within only. The disciples of Jesus were plain folk and they required plain teaching. Jesus tells them by means of the parable that their conception of the office and function of the Messiah is erroneous. He will not force Himself into the hearts of people. Further, His ministry is not to be the unqualified success which they had been led to think it would be. It is, indeed, to be a partial failure, and it cannot be otherwise unless God abrogates the right given to man of freedom of will. The Messiah's function is that of casting abroad the seed; always it is good seed; but in certain soils it will not grow at all, and only in the best soil will it yield a hundredfold. This was the seed-thought planted thus early in the disciples' minds—a thought not to yield fruit for many days, but destined to make all things new for them, and for the world.

Is there not a lesson for the teacher in this parable? Who had a better right to success than our Master? Who had a message like His? Yet He knew that the human heart was not to be taken by storm, nor yet captured by oratory. It is enough for the servant to be as his Master. Since it has pleased God to create a domain into which He cannot enter save by invitation, let us not think of forcing it, lest by so doing we fall into the error of the Jews, that God will establish Himself in the human heart by physical or moral force. His method is not force, but pleading, self-sacrifice, and love, and by the application of these, and these alone, can we hope to be doing the Master's work.[1]

Mr. Spurr in his latest book, *A Preacher's Notebook*, says: 'The apostles and early evangelists followed the way of their Master. They all taught, and upon the basis of their teaching made their appeal. The greatest evangelists of the ages have followed the same method: St. Dominic and the Friars, Luther, Wesley, Whitefield, Finney, Chalmers, Drummond, and hundreds more. The enduring evangelism has always been of this order. Evanescent evangelism has omitted teaching, and has played with the emotions, or its teaching has been false to the mind of Christ. Jonathan Edwards won 600 converts by one sermon, but the teaching of that sermon was false; God was misrepresented, and men, believing a lie, were terrified into religion. Within two years they had abandoned their religion, and the New England town became notorious for its wickedness. The converts of that revival turned upon Edwards and drove him from their midst. Men who are anxious for quick results at all costs would do well to recall that bit of history.

3. But it is hearing, not teaching, that is the primary interest in the parable. The first word of the story challenges attention—'Hearken!' The last word repeats the challenge—'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.' Hearing is an urgent business. We assume that because initiative is with the speaker a message controls the hearer. But the parts may be reversed: the hearer may control the message. An appeal, even the appeal of Jesus, may be frustrated by unreceptiveness. This is the salient truth of the parable and the ground of its terse counsel: 'Take heed, therefore, how ye hear.'

By some perversity we are quick to blame the sower or the seed, and correspondingly slow to blame the soil. The factors of initiative are

[1] N. Levison, *The Parables: Their Background and Local Setting*, 15.

cankered, so our hearty accusation runs, while the factors of receptiveness are incorruptible. Thus we condemn our political or social leaders when the fault may be in their followers. 'Every man,' said Russell Lowell, 'is a prisoner of his date'; and every leader, we might add, is a prisoner of the visionless sloth of those whom he would rally to his cause. Not that the light of a great man can be utterly quenched: he comes bearing divine fire. He cannot be explained in mundane terms: the sky of heaven's intention opens to let him through. Yet his message may be maimed, his achievement circumscribed, by a stiff-necked generation. 'He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.' Similarly we blame the institution rather than the man. We have keen eyes to discover grievous faults in old forms of government, but blind eyes for faults within the governed. Establishing with enthusiasm a new city charter, but leaving unimproved the old quality of citizenship, we are pained at our failure to induce forthwith a heaven on earth. We can detect innumerable flaws in the institution of marriage, but few in married people. Therefore, we cry, 'Away with marriage,' or, if our laws miscarry in justice, 'Away with laws.' A man suffering from indigestion might as wisely cry, 'Away with food.'

But our bitterest quarrel is with the prophet and his message, and our imperturbable complacence is with the hearer. If the prophet would only speak vigorously for this 'cause' or strike lusty blows at that corruption!—by which we mean that religion must become an economic crusade, and be robbed of its essential mysticism. Or if the prophet would 'only stick to the gospel'!—by which we mean that he must take an innocuous orthodoxy for an airing every Sunday, that religion must never be *applied* religion, and that in particular it must never come within telescopic range of modern business or pleasure. If only the prophet were a different man and his message a different message!—on that text, as our magazines (their sensitive finger meanwhile on the pulse of circulation) are well aware, we are always glad to hear a sermon.

Let the sins of the prophets and the impoverishment of the message be frankly admitted. The genuine prophet, conscious of unworthiness, will be first to make confession. But this fact remains: There was once a Messenger who spake 'as man never spake' the words of eternal life—and they nailed Him to a Cross! The fault then was not in the factor of initiative, but in the factor of response; not in the Sower or the seed, but in the soil. The hearer was to blame: 'Neither will they be persuaded, if one rose from the dead.'[1]

Good is the seed the sower sows:
But should it fall on hardened soil,
Birds snatch it ere the seedling grows,
And bootless is the sower's toil.

Good is the seed: but should it light
On rocky ground where soil is thin,
The blade of rash unrooted height
Dies for a lack of sap within.

Good is the seed: but should it drop
On unprepared or thorny ground,
The sower, seeking, finds a crop,
But choked by briars trailing round.

From hardened heart, from shallow soul
Where faith may fade for lack of root,
From choking cares, Lord, keep me whole,
To bear, with patience, perfect fruit.

QUINQUAGESIMA.

Vision and Life.

'For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.'—1 Co 13^{12}.

Is it not true that one of the most perplexing things in connexion with earthly life is the limitation of our knowledge?

Some years ago one of the ablest of our diocesan bishops said: 'We live in an age of immense scientific discovery; yet what do we know? We know nothing.' This brings to mind the avowal made by the great French savant, Professor Richet, to Sir William Barrett: 'We think we know, but we know nothing, nothing whatever.' It cannot be imagined that they meant that we are left without real guidance in life or any spiritual reality that we can believe in. They simply meant that the mystery of existence is not one whit less a mystery for all our increase of knowledge of the way in which Nature works.

We are apt to think we know more than we do because we become accustomed to the presence of fathomless mysteries all around us; we label them with fine names and then half-delude ourselves into believing that we know something of what they essentially are, which is just what we

[1] G. A. Buttrick, *The Parables of Jesus*, 41.

do not know. Take the most insignificant flower in the garden. When we examine it under a powerful microscope, how much wiser are we? What do we really know of the reason why that flower blooms, if there be a reason, or what it is that is shaping its growth, designing its pattern, causing it to rise out of the earth and unfold itself in the particular form it assumes?

That there should be a God is not one iota more difficult of comprehension than that there should be a universe. Yet here is the universe, not to be explained away, and we ourselves belong to it and are no small part of the mystery.

Let us see what light this text has to throw upon it. In the context a somewhat arresting statement is made. The Apostle says that the thing that is real in itself is love; it is not a mode of anything else; it will not become merged into some higher reality to be revealed by and by. 'Love,' he says, 'never faileth.' If we lay fast hold of love, and build that into our souls, we may know of a surety that we are in contact with the heart of the universe. Knowledge of any other kind is more or less ephemeral.

Our knowledge of life is like a child's puzzle picture formed of a hundred different pieces. If we were to pick up one piece only, however highly coloured, however attractive-looking in itself, we could not infer the whole from our observation of that one piece. It is only when we see that piece fitted into its proper place with all the rest that we really understand what it is; we no longer think of it as merely an irregularly shaped bit of wood or cardboard; perhaps we do not think of it at all; it is now viewed in conjunction with the whole to which it pertains; that which is in part is done away.

The metaphor employed in the text is not dissimilar: 'We see through a glass, darkly.' This is explained by most commentators as meaning that a man looking into a mirror with a darkened surface sees but a vague outline of his own features. The mirror might be a piece of metal or polished wood such as was often used for the purpose in New Testament times, and of course the reflection given would be very imperfect. But it is more likely that the Apostle is speaking of looking through a dull glass at something that lies on the other side—'we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face.' We are, let us say, in a darkened room into which a little light struggles through an almost opaque window-pane. The sun is shining outside; all is gloriously beautiful there; we can dimly discern the features of a friend who is waiting for us there. Presently he will open the door and we shall go forth and greet him face to face.

When the veil is lifted, we shall know as God now knows us. Know what? Know everything that God knows? The text does not say so; it may be so or it may not. What it says is this: We are to come face to face with our divine friend; we are to know God as God knows us, and in that knowledge all else that we need to know will become clear.

We can know now in some degree the truth that we shall finally come to know in perfection. This is really the governing thought of the text. We can know what God is. A man might have all the skill, all the ability, all the power of the most outstanding among the leaders of men and the pioneers of great achievements, and yet fail to lift even the tiniest corner of the veil that hangs between us and the eternal source of all that is. 'Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away . . . but now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.'

It is an astonishing fact that there is a kind of faith on which all men are at one, namely, faith in the authority and supremacy of goodness. This is vitally connected with our thought about God. For what is God if He be not this? In the abstract it is conceivable that God might not be good; and men have often toyed with that idea. At the present day the favourite conception with those who doubt the validity of the Christian view of the nature of God is not so much that He is cruel as that He neither knows nor cares anything about us; but it was not always so. For instance, the great Greek legend of the fate of Prometheus is an excellent illustration of the point. Prometheus was represented as one of the immortals who, for having conferred upon mankind a benefit that increased the sum of earthly happiness, was for that reason chained to a rock for ages by the supreme god Zeus, a vulture being set to prey upon his vitals. This terrible punishment was for doing good; it has often been regarded as in principle an anticipation of the Cross of Christ and been compared thereto. Shelley in his great poem, 'Prometheus Unbound,' represents the sufferer as unyielding, thereby showing himself a higher and nobler being than the malignant deity who had the power to torture him. And the poem concludes on this note. This *is* God, this that requires man's utmost devotion, this in whose vindication cross and shame are willingly accepted and borne; and

this it is which has the last word, no lesser power; there is indeed no other God.

To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;
To defy Power, which seems omnipotent;
To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates
Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;
This, like thy glory, Titan! is to be
Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory!

That in substance is the meaning of the text too. God is the best that imagination can conceive or heart adore. We all see it now, dimly, gropingly, uncertainly; we know it in the worship that we spontaneously accord to all that is lovely and tender, noble and sublime, in human character and life. But we know it best of all in Christ. If Christ had never fought His fight with the powers of darkness we should not be crowning Him with many crowns to-day. It has sometimes been said that the task before Him in Gethsemane and on Calvary was not as hard as ours, because He knew what lay on the other side of it as we do not. That is not true. He knew in part, but full knowledge was withheld from Him just as it is from us, or there would have been no glory in His triumph over death and hell. Our blessed Redeemer had gone unfalteringly and alone to Calvary's foot, and now when He was helpless in the hands of His foes, the Father stooped in the infinitude of His might and bore Him through the dread ordeal which has seated Him on the throne of power for ever more.

This, in our degree, is what God is now doing with us, and it is what we would wish Him to do if we could know as we are known. The things to be gladdest about in this world are not those that come easiest, but those which have called forth what is most Christ-like in will and deed. We know better than any one can tell us just what those things are, and we are never alone in dealing with them however much it may seem to be so. It is often hard to be unfaithful to one's heavenly vision, to escape the struggle and the strain. No doubt some of us are so at this very moment. We want to avoid sacrifice, to be and do something other than in our inmost soul we know we ought to be and do. We know what is required of us to-day, but we cannot see to-morrow; and we say to ourselves, 'Oh, if I could but get a glimpse of what is on the other side of the mystery; if I could but know for certain what life is making for; if I could be as sure of the outcome as I am of the problem!' That we cannot be; it would not be well that we should. That is why faith is of so much more importance than sight in this world. Its appeal is higher; its results are finer. Let us determine, then, that from this time forth our lives shall be committed into the hands of Christ to do with as He sees best; determine that in His name we shall do, not that which cowardice or selfishness or worldliness would prompt us to do, but that which we know our Lord expects of us.[1]

We know not when, we know not where,
We know not what that world will be;
But this we know—it will be fair
To see.

With heart athirst and thirsty face
We know and know not what shall be:
Christ Jesus bring us of His grace
To see.

Christ Jesus bring us of His grace,
Beyond all prayers our hope can pray,
One day to see Him face to Face,
One day.

[1] R. J. Campbell, *Vision and Life*, 5.

A New Phase of New Testament Study.

By the Reverend R. W. Stewart, B.D., B.Sc., Aberdeen.

Scientific study of the New Testament, which is what is meant by that awkward technical word criticism, has to-day entered a new phase. It is being realized that the hunt for the original texts or documents underlying the Gospels could yield results of only secondary value. Undoubtedly the first three Gospels are recensions and combinations of older documents; and the literary processes involved can to some extent be described. But such inquiry has not brought any prospect what-