

Milk & Honey

Vol. XXXII July 2018 No. 7

Spiritual Food and Encouragement for Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ

Bethany

C. H. Mackintosh

It is deeply touching to mark the two groans of our Lord, as He moved toward the tomb of His friend. The first groan was called forth by the sight of the weeping mourners around Him. “When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, He groaned in the spirit, and was troubled.” The margin reads, “He troubled Himself.”

How precious is the thought of this to the crushed and sorrowing heart! The sight of human tears drew forth a groan from the loving, sympathising heart of the Son of God. Let all mourners remember this. Jesus did not rebuke Mary for weeping. He did not rally her on account of her sorrow. He did not tell her she ought not to feel; that she ought to be above everything of that sort. Ah, no! this would not be like Him. Some heartless folk may talk in this style; but He knew better. He, though Son of God, was a real man; and hence, He felt as a man ought to feel, and He knew what man must feel, while passing through the dark vale of tears.

Some of us talk largely and loftily about being above nature, and not feeling the snapping of tender links, and much in that strain. But in this we are not wise. We are not in sympathy with the heart of the Man, Christ Jesus. It is one thing to put forth, in heartless flippancy, our transcendental theories, and it is quite another to pass through the deep waters of grief and desolation with a heart exercised according to God. It will generally be found that those of us who declaim the loudest against nature, prove ourselves to be just like other people, when called to meet bodily sickness, sorrow of heart, mental pressure, or financial loss.

The great point is to be real, and to go through the stern realities of actual life with theories will not stand the test of real sorrow, trial, and difficulty; and nothing can be more absurd than to talk to people, with human hearts, about not feeling things. God means us to feel; and — precious, soothing, consolatory thought! — Jesus feels with us.

Let all the sons and daughters of sorrow remember these things for the consolation of their sorrowing hearts. “God comforts those that are cast down.” If we were never

cast down, we should not know His precious ministry. A stoic does not need the comfort of God. It is worth having a broken heart to have it bound up by our most merciful High Priest.

“Jesus groaned” — “Jesus wept.” What power, what divine sweetness in these words! What a blank there would be were these words erased from the page of inspiration! Surely we could not do without them, and therefore our own most gracious God has, by His Spirit, penned these unspeakably precious words for the comfort and consolation of all who are called to tread the chamber of sorrow, or to stand at the grave of a friend.

But there was another groan evoked from the heart of our blessed Lord. Some of the Jews, when they heard His groan, and saw His tears, could not help exclaiming, “Behold how He loved him!” But alas! others only found, in such affecting proofs of true and profound sympathy, occasion for the display of heartless scepticism — and scepticism is always heartless. “Some of them said, could not this man, that opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?”

Here the poor human heart lets itself out in its ignorant reasonings. How little did these sceptics understand either the person or the path of the Son of God! How could they appreciate the motives that actuated Him either in what He did, or in what He did not do? He opened the eyes of the blind, in order that “the works of God might be made manifest in him.” And He did not prevent the death of Lazarus, that God might be glorified thereby.

But what did they know about all this? Absolutely nothing. The Blessed One moved at far too high an elevation to be within the level of knowledge of worldly religionists and sceptical reasoners. “The world knew Him not.” God understood and appreciated Him perfectly. This was enough. What were the thoughts of men to One who ever walked in calm communion with the Father? They were utterly incapable of forming a correct judgement either of Himself or of His ways. They carried on their reasonings in that thick moral darkness in which they dwelt.

Thus it is still. Human reasonings are begun, continued, and ended in darkness. Man reasons about God; reasons about Christ; reasons about Scripture; reasons about Heaven, about hell, about eternity; about all sorts of things. But all

Continued on Page 3

The Light of the Lampstand

Numbers 8:1-4

Warren Henderson

The Israelites time at Sinai was nearly over. The people had received God's Law, His design for the tabernacle and its many articles, and His precepts concerning the offerings and the Aaronic priesthood. With the dedication of the Bronze Altar in the previous chapter, the only thing remaining prior to the cleansing and dedication of the Levites to commence tabernacle service was the lighting of the seven lamps in the Golden Lampstand. This activity symbolizes the provision that God's people must possess to engage in ministry which pleases Him. For only ministry which is enabled by the Holy Spirit and projects the glory of Christ has value to God.

The abrupt appearance of the tabernacle's Lampstand into the narrative would seem misplaced, if it were not for its typological meaning associated with the cleansing, the sanctification, and the dedication of the Levites that followed:

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: "Speak to Aaron, and say to him, 'When you arrange the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light in front of the lampstand.'" And Aaron did so; he arranged the lamps to face toward the front of the lampstand, as the Lord commanded Moses (Num. 8:1-3).

Previously, Moses had discussed the Lampstand's blue covering when being transported, but at this juncture the Lampstand is fully functional before the Lord in the holy place. The Lampstand was beaten from a single piece of gold and was the only source of light in the tabernacle. The Lampstand's light represents the Holy Spirit's perfect testimony of truth centered in Christ (2 Cor. 1:20; Rev. 4:5, 19:10). The flowing olive oil supplied to each of the seven burning wicks represents the perfect enabling power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish the will of God (Zech. 4:6). The Lampstand typifies the Person and work of Christ; consequently, each of the seven lamps was to be positioned in such a way as to cast their full light before the Lampstand (v. 4).

The Holy Spirit's work in the Church now, as in Israel then, was and is completely dependent on Christ. Every ray of light that radiates God's glory in the life of believers today flows from Christ as empowered by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the appearance of the Lampstand just prior to the cleansing and dedication of the Levites reminds us of what God values in service to Him – that which is Christ exalting and Spirit enabled.

C. H. Mackintosh highlights the practical implications of this truth for Christians desiring to live for God today:

The very finest evidence which can be afforded of true spiritual work is that it tends directly to exalt Christ. If attention be sought for the work or the workman, the light has become dim, and the minister of the sanctuary must use the snuffers. It was Aaron's province to light the lamps; and he it was who trimmed them likewise. In other words, the light which, as Christians, we are responsible to yield, is not only founded upon Christ, but maintained by Him, from moment to moment, throughout the entire night. Apart from Him we can do nothing. The golden shaft sustained the lamps; the priestly hand supplied the oil and applied the snuffers. It is all in Christ, from Christ, and by Christ. And more, it is all to Christ. Wherever the light of the Spirit – the true light of the sanctuary – has shone, in this wilderness world, the object of that light has been to exalt the name of Jesus Christ. Whatever has been done by the Holy Spirit, whatever has been said, whatever has been written has had for its aim the glory of that blessed One.

It was fitting then that the light of the Lampstand be mentioned before the Levites were dedicated to the Lord for service. Only that service which God enables to reflect His glory will please Him. In the wilderness, the only light of the sanctuary came from the seven burning wicks of the Lampstand. Likewise, spiritual darkness today is dispelled by the illuminating testimony of Christ in spirit-filled believers (Eph. 5:18).

This is why the Lord Jesus taught His disciples before commissioning them, that they must shine out life-changing truth for others to see: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). They were to imitate Christ's own Spirit-enabled ministry. The Lord had been previously anointed and empowered by the Holy Spirit to accomplish His appointed ministry: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me" (Luke 4:18) and "Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee" (Luke 4:14). As Paul summarizes, the spiritual darkness in the world is overcome today by the illuminating Spirit-supplied ministry of God's Son through His people:

*

Milk & Honey Information

There is no charge for Milk & Honey. It, like all ministries of Spread The Word, is supported entirely by the freewill offerings of the Lord's people. All gifts are tax deductible.

Publisher: **Spread The Word, Inc.**

3237 Faire Wynd Pl, Dover, PA 17315

Editor: Stephen Hulshizer

Fax/Phone (717) 467-5729 phone

Web/Contact www.FoodForSaints.com

Continued from Page 1 - *Bethany*

his reasonings are worse, far worse, than worthless. Men are no more capable of understanding or appreciating the written Word now, than they were of understanding or appreciating the living Word, when He was amongst them. Indeed, the two things must go together.

As the living Word and the written Word are one, so to know the one we must know the other; but the natural, the unrenewed, the unconverted man knows neither. He is totally blind, in utter darkness, dead; and when, without reality, he made a religious profession, he is “twice dead” — dead in nature and dead in his religion. What are his thoughts, his reasonings, his conclusions worth? They are baseless, false, ruinous.

Nor is there the slightest use in arguing with unconverted people. It only tends to deceive them by leading them to suppose that they can argue. It is always the best way to deal solemnly with them as to their own moral condition before God. We do not find our Lord taking any notice of the unbelieving reasonings of those around Him. He only again groans and goes on His way. “Jesus therefore, again groaning in Himself, comes to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.”

This second groan is deeply affecting. He groaned, at first, in sympathy with the mourners around Him. He groaned again over the hardness and dark unbelief of the human heart, and of the heart of Israel in particular. But, be it carefully noted, He does not attempt to explain His reasons for not having hindered the death of His friend, although He had opened the eyes of the blind.

Blessed, perfect Servant! It was no part of His business to explain or apologise. He had to work on in the current of the divine counsels, and for the promotion of the divine glory. He had to do the Father’s will, not explain Himself to those who could not possibly understand the explanation.

This is a weighty point for us all. Some of us lose a quantity of time in argument, apology, and explanation, in cases where such things are not the least understood. We really do mischief. Better far pursue, in holy calmness of spirit, singleness of eye, and decision of purpose, the path of duty. That is what we have got to do, not to explain or defend ourselves, which is sorry work at best for any one.

But let us look a moment at the tomb of Lazarus, and there see with what lovely grace our adorable Lord and Master sought to associate His servants with Himself in His work, in so far as that was possible; though, even here, too, He is sadly intruded upon by the dark unbelief of the human heart. “Jesus said, Take ye away the stone.” This they could do, and hence He graciously calls upon them to do it. It was all they could do, so far. But here unbelief breaks in and casts its dark shadows over the heart. “Martha, the sister of him

that was dead, says to Him, Lord, by this time he stinks; for he has been dead four days.”

And what of that? Could the humiliating process of decomposition, even if completed, stand for one moment in the way of Him who is the resurrection and the life? Impossible! Bring Him in, and all is clear and simple; leave Him out, and all is dark and impracticable. Let but the voice of the Son of God be heard, and death and corruption must vanish like the darkness of night before the beams of the rising sun.

“Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

How magnificent! What are death, the grave and decomposition in the presence of such power as this? Talk of being dead four days as a difficulty! Millions that have been mouldering in the dust for thousands of years, shall spring up in a moment into life, immortality, and eternal glory, at the voice of that blessed One to whom Martha ventured to offer her unbelieving and irrational suggestion. *

Free Booklet Marks of a New Testament Church

This 13 page booklet presents four major marks of a N.T. church. These marks involve the Scriptures, the saints, the Savior, and the Spirit. Easy reading and so all should be able to understand.

Write for a few free copies.
STW, 3237 Faire Wynd Pl, Dover, Pa 17315

Shepherding Conference September 20-22 Greenwood Hills Bible Conference

Fayetteville, PA 17222
Mike Attwood, Brian Gunning
Keith Keyser, Mike Stoudt
Men of all ages
Register @ GreenwoodHills.net
(717) 352-2150

Milk & Honey

A non-profit ministry of
Spread The Word, Inc., 3237 Faire Wynd Pl
Dover, PA 17315

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 333
York, PA

FoodForSaints.com

July 2018

The Bible

This book contains: The mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. Its doctrine is holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter. Here Heaven is opened, and the gates of Hell disclosed. Christ is its grand subject, our good: its design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, and health to the soul, and a river of pleasure. It is given to you here in life, it will be opened at the Judgment, and it is established forever. It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the greatest labor, and condemn all who trifle with its sacred content. Unknown

There is a comfort in the fact that God can never be taken by surprise.

Frank Gabelein

Shepherding Conference

September 20-22

Greenwood Hills Bible Conference

Fayetteville, PA 17222

Mike Attwood, Brian Gunning

Keith Keyser, Mike Stoudt

(717) 352-2150

THE CROSS AND CHRIST'S LOVE

..the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. Galatians 2:20

Looking at our Lord on the cross, what I see above everything else is the love that made Him do it all. "Love so amazing, so divine." What does it mean? Let the apostle himself answer the question. This is how he puts it: "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commends His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (Romans 5:6-10).

It comes to this, my dear friends: He is dying there because of His love for you, His love for me, His love for those who are sinners, those who are rebels, those who are enemies. He died for people who hated Him. As He was dying there, Saul of Tarsus was hating Him, but He was dying for Saul of Tarsus. As Paul puts it later: "...the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Galatians 2:20) He did not wait until Paul was converted before He loved him. He loved him even when Saul of Tarsus was blaspheming His holy name, ridiculing His claim that He was the Son of God and the Lord of Glory, ridiculing the idea that He came to teach us and to die for us and to save us, pouring his blasphemous scorn upon Him. While Paul was doing that, Christ was dying for Paul. And He was doing the same for you and for me.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones