

the Holy Ghost, is dangerous, and leads men to substitute an imaginary Christ for the true Lord, and a self-wrought faith for the faith which is the gift of God. To dwell exclusively on the election of the Father and the work of the Spirit (and by exclusively I mean viewing Christ in a secondary and subordinate manner to these) is to conceal Christ as the open Door, the Saviour of the lost, the Fountain free and open to "whosoever." To dwell on the Father's love and the Saviour's grace, and not on the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, is the source of that want of assurance or fulness of faith which is always seeking for testimony and confirmation in that which is changeable, instead of recognizing the testimony of God's Spirit to our spirit that we are the children of God. It is also the source of a low standard of obedience and service. Forgetting that we have received the Spirit, in order that we may walk in the Spirit, we rest satisfied with our unfruitful condition; and instead of living in newness of life, and doing the works of Christ, we walk as men, and the power of Christ's resurrection is not manifested by us.¹

Thirdly, Let us consider our *character* in the light of the name. We are children of the Father, and therefore exhorted to be followers of Him. Christ exhorts us to be generous, bountiful, forgiving, to love the ungrateful, to give for the sake and joy of giving, to cherish kind thoughts and benedictions towards our enemies, that we may be the children of

¹ 1 Cor. iii. 3.

our Father which is in heaven, for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. And He adds the great word, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."¹

Be, not become. It is not a gradual process of self-improvement; it is not a slow ascent of our own exertion, to which the Lord here exhorts us. By virtue of our adoption and engrafting into Christ, we are to behold continually the Father, and at all times to walk in the Spirit, and not according to the flesh. Nature calls that good which is imperfect; but grace calls none good but God, and cannot rest satisfied except in the Divine image. The very thought of the Father should fill the heart with sweetness and love, and should make us fatherly and godlike.

We are called to be *sons*. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God." We are one with Christ; therefore we are to be Christ-like. And this is to be Christ-like, to possess and manifest the filial Spirit. He sought the Father's glory in the salvation of man. To Him service was liberty and joy. He was Neighbour to all who needed His help and consolation. He went about doing good. He published the glad tidings, the acceptable year of the Lord. He had only one aim, and was always about His Father's business. Harmless and undefiled, holy and perfect, He was the Friend of sinners, and the

¹ Matt. v. 43-48; Eph. v. 1.

Consoler of the penitent. He said to His disciples (on ten different occasions), "Follow Me." And His path was through obedience and suffering to glory.

We are called to be Christians, that is, men anointed with the *Holy Ghost*. We are separated from the world by the Spirit as well as the blood of Christ. Often we forget that we are the "children of the Spirit."¹ We are gloomy and desponding, and forget that we have received a free and royal Spirit. We speak our own words, and are anxious, trusting in our own wisdom and prudence, and forget that we have received the Spirit to speak in and by us. We do the works of the flesh, and forget that the fruit of the Spirit is the manifestation of Christ's life and power. We have received the Spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind. It is written, "The Spirit and the bride," because the Church is to be like the Spirit, even as she is conformed unto Christ. We are called spiritual² because the Holy Ghost dwelleth in us.

Thus are we not merely to trust in the name Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, but to sanctify and to represent that name in our characters and lives.

NOTE.—*The doctrine of the Trinity and the modern Synagogue.*

The doctrine of the Trinity is the great stumbling-block to modern Jews. It is the boast of the Synagogue of recent times that the great mission of Israel is to testify of the unity of God among the nations of

¹ Luke ix. 55.

² Comp. Author's *Christ Crucified* (1 Cor. ii.), p. 135.

the world; and they represent this as the treasure committed to their guardianship—to teach the one supreme God. The claim has no solid foundation, and rests upon important misconceptions.

The apostles of the Saviour, brought up in the Scriptures, true Israelites, proclaimed the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost among Jews and heathen, without fear of coming into collision with the monotheism of their own brethren, or of being mistaken by polytheistic pagans; so deeply rooted was their doctrine in the teaching of Moses and the prophets, so thoroughly in harmony with the divine manifestations given unto the fathers, and with the true spirit of the worship in God's ancient people; so thoroughly distinct from, and opposed to, every species of polytheism, so strong in its assertion of the unity of the Godhead.

And the Gentile nations, who since the dispersion of Israel to this day have given up idolatry, and learned to adore the only true God who spake to the fathers by the prophets, have derived their knowledge, *not from the synagogue, but from the Church*; and the name of Jesus, the attractive power of His dying love, has been the influence which has brought light and love to the hearts of them who sat in darkness and in the shadow of death. Thus Israel ought to learn from history, that the central power which, according to prophecy, is to attract and renovate the heathen world, is not in the Synagogue, which rejected Jesus, but in that very Jesus, the rejected Nazarene, who is

Lord, the Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of His people Israel.

But not only is it the triune name of God by which the unity of God has been proclaimed among all the nations of the earth, but Israel has, by the rejection of Messiah, lost the knowledge of Jehovah, for in the latter days they shall *seek* the Lord and their King.¹ The Synagogue lays emphasis upon the unity of God (or rather, to use a word of Coleridge, unicity, for the Church is constantly testifying of the one Godhead). How different from their abstract idea of One is the God of Scripture, the God of the fathers, of Moses and the prophets! He is the covenant-God, living with and among His people; He reveals Himself as the Redeemer; He influences the heart by His Holy Spirit; He promises and prepares fuller self-manifestation, the new covenant of forgiveness of sin, and the indwelling of the Holy Ghost.

The Lord God and Israel had a history, progressive and living; and the true people of God waited for the coming of the Lord and of His Spirit. Since the rejection of Jesus, Israel has been in the wilderness, without prophecy, without high priest, without temple. Tradition and scepticism have reigned among them. The phrase, Israel's mission is to proclaim the unity of God, is shallow. In rejecting the Lord Jesus, and hardening themselves against the Messianic predictions quoted by the Church, the Jews rejected also the opinions and testimonies of their fathers. Such

¹ Hosea iii. 4, 5.

an expression of Raschi as the following is by no means isolated—"Our Rabbis have expounded it of the King Messiah,"¹ "but it is better to expound it further of David himself, *in order to answer heretics.*" Thus Psa. ii., xlv.; Isa. ix.; Zech. xii., and other passages in which the divine dignity of the Messiah is declared, were rightly interpreted by the ancient Synagogue.² Alas! modern Jews, as a rule, do not understand the force of the Saviour's question—"How does David call Him Lord?"

The testimony of Jewish writings to the doctrine of the Trinity is not inconsiderable. In the Targumim, we find that Israel understood the teaching of Scripture concerning Wisdom and the Word. For instance, Gen. i. 1 is translated *Bechukmetha*—"By wisdom God created heaven and earth," identifying wisdom with the beginning. Again, Exod. iii. 8—"God redeemed Israel by the Word" (*memra*). Again, Num. xxiii. 21—"The word of Jehovah is their help, and the Shechina of their King is among them," and another Targum renders it "the shout of their King Messiah."

That Israel retained the knowledge of a plurality of Divine Persons—of the Mediator, the Word or Wisdom, the Metatron, by whom and for whom all things were made, that they connected this Word with the Messiah and with redemption, appears from

¹ Psa. xxi.

² Compare the late Dr. M'Caul's most interesting and instructive tract, *The Doctrine of Isaiah liii.* Also his work, *Rabbi David Kimchi's Commentary on the Prophecies of Zechariah.*

many passages of the *Sohar* and other Jewish writings. It is taught that the Metatron is the image which was erected by God; and that this Word or Wisdom is the Mediator between God and man; that He is called the Angel of the Lord, who went before Israel—the Gate by which the righteous enter. Of Him it is said, “And Jehovah went before them.”¹ He is spoken of as the oldest in the house of God, the beginning of the creation, who rules above all, who restores peace in the heavens,² who comprises in Himself all gradations of creation, and is the bond of all. He is represented as the exact manifestation of the hidden God. As God is, so is the Shechina, or the glory of God.

The following is a specimen of Jewish speculation on the divine name:³—“Hear, Israel, Jehovah our God is one Jehovah. The Holy One, blessed be He, is called One; but the expression of His name is in three letters. How do I know that He is one, and that all His names and praises are in threefold form? Because His name is threefold—Jehovah, our God, one Jehovah; behold His name is threefold. Jehovah, Jehovah, God full of mercy;⁴ behold, His name is threefold. Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah of hosts;⁵ behold, His praise is threefold. Great is Jehovah, and worthy to be praised, and His greatness unsearchable; behold, His praise is threefold. Then *sang*

¹ Exod. xiii. 21.

² Job xxv. 2.

³ Zunz, *Gottesdienstliche Vorträge*, 168, quoted by Delitzsch.

⁴ Exod. xxxiv. 6.

⁵ Isa. vi. 3.

Moses this *song*: I will *sing*; behold His praise is threefold. And thus the Song of Songs consists of song, and of two songs, a threefold song.”

On the divinity of the Messiah, the *Sohar* says—“Thou art the Son, faithful Shepherd; of Thee it is said, ‘Kiss the Son.’ Thou art the Lord of Israel, the mighty One on earth, Lord of ministering angels, Son of God and of the Shechina, which is mercy.” In another place we read—“The question was asked, What is the Messiah’s name? Rabbi Aba bar Cabana said, The Lord; for the Scripture saith, ‘And this is the name by which He shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness.’”¹ Another Rabbi said on this passage, “And who is it that will speak to Jerusalem to comfort her? Is it not the Lord our Righteousness, is it not the King Messiah?”

The following old *midrasch* on the suffering Messiah is translated literally by Delitzsch, and is most interesting, as showing the circle of thought in which Jewish minds moved—“In Thy light we see the light, saith the Psalmist. It means the light of the Messiah. When Scripture says, God saw the light that it was good, it teaches thereby that the Holy One, blessed be He, even before the creation of the world, thought of the Messiah and His works, and that He hid under His throne of glory the primeval light for the Messiah and His age. Then said Satan before the Holy One, blessed be He, For whom is the hidden light under Thy glory throne? He answered, For Him who shall

¹ Jer. xxiii. 6.

one day conquer thee, and confound thee with shame. Then Satan asked to see the light; and when he saw it, he trembled, and fell on his face. Yes, verily (he exclaimed), this is the Messiah, who shall hurl me and all who are heathenish into hell. For it is written, He shall destroy death for ever, and God the Lord shall wipe all tears from their faces.¹ . . . The Holy One began to make a compact with the Messiah after He had created Him, Those who are to be preserved with Thee shall bind Thee with iron bands by their sin-guilt; they shall cause Thee to suffer like a calf, whose eyes become dim, and put Thee to death by their unrighteousness. And on account of their iniquity Thy tongue shall cleave to the roof of Thy mouth. Art Thou willing to undertake it? The Messiah asked, How long is this suffering to last? The Holy One replied, One week² I have assigned to Thee; after Thy soul has endured the utmost agony, I shall deliver Thee from all woe. Then exclaimed the Messiah, Lord of the world, With rejoicing of heart and thanksgiving I undertake the suffering, on condition that none of Israel shall be lost, not only of the living, but those who in My day shall have died, and those who shall afterwards be created by Thee."

These passages,³—and many more might be added,—show that amidst much darkness, imperfection, and

¹ Isa. xxv. 8.

² Dan. ix. 26, 27.

³ Delitzsch, in *Saat auf Hoffnung*, ix. p. 84. Auszüge aus dem Buch Sohar. Berlin, 1857. Philosophie der Hebräer v. Otinger.

confusion, the Jews, both before and since the Christian era, possessed some knowledge of the mystery of the Father, and Son, and Spirit, of the Word of God, the Mediator, the Messiah, and of the nature of His work.

May the Church of Christ, with ardent and longing love, and with continual prayer, remember the Jews, still beloved for the fathers' sake, and still reserved for great mercy and spiritual and national restoration!¹

¹ The author begs to refer the reader to his Tract *Who is the Apostate? A Passover Story* (Religious Tract Society), for a popular description of the present spiritual condition of the Jews; also to his Sermon *All Israel shall be Saved*.

CHAPTER VI.

The New Obedience.

“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.”—MATT. xxviii. 20.

WE must first know the name of God, before we can love God and keep His commandments. We must first enter into the blessedness of the new covenant, before we can bring forth fruit and glorify the Father. Jesus, therefore, reveals to us first the name of God, that then we may be taught to observe all things whatsoever He hath commanded us.¹

Jesus reminds His disciples in these words of what He had so emphatically taught them before—“One is your Master, even Christ.”²

The Jews felt it their pride and glory to be the disciples of Moses. Can we wonder at it? Like a sublime mountain height, Moses towers above all the servants and saints of God who preceded the advent of our blessed Saviour. Whether we regard his marvellous history, from the little ark of bulrushes to his mysterious death on Mount Nebo, or his unique position in the kingdom of God as mediator of the old covenant, or his wondrously Christ-like character,

¹ “Da, quod jubes, et jube quod vis, Deus meus.”—AUGUSTINE.

² Matt. xxiii. 8.

we feel constrained to exclaim, “There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, with whom God spake face to face, until He appeared who is over all, God blessed for ever, the Messiah of whom Moses testified, the only Son of the Father, and only Master of the new covenant Church.”

Moses was the mediator of the old dispensation. Dedicated to God by believing parents, in whom the faith of Abraham was burning with the fervour of heroic courage and hope, guarded by the unseen hand of loving Omnipotence on the cruel cradle of the Nile, sheltered and trained by Pharaoh’s daughter, and instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians—by a free choice of faith, which had grown with his growth, Moses, the only free man of his nation, espoused the cause of his brethren, because they were God’s people, and esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of the world. And after the earth-born elements of his fiery zeal, in the premature manifestation of the royal spirit with which God had endowed him, had been subdued by the stillness and discipline of his shepherd life in the wilderness of Midian, he was called by the God of his fathers, who revealed Himself as Jehovah, to deliver His people out of the house of bondage. By faith he obeyed. And during forty years he was faithful as a servant over all God’s house. God spake to him face to face; through him He gave the law to Israel, and the commandments and statutes which they were to keep; into his hands He intrusted the guidance and

government of the people. With him as a mediator, God spake and dealt; and by his intercession the wrath of God was turned from His disobedient and rebellious children. Moses united the prophetic, priestly, and royal dignity; the name, the favour, and the will of God, were declared by him to the people of Israel.

How much in this history and position of Moses reminds us of our Lord! He also, as an infant, was the object of the cruel hatred and persecution of a heathen prince. He also was protected miraculously, and sheltered in the land of Egypt. Voluntarily, Christ, who was rich, made Himself poor, and without hesitation or struggle rejected the temptation which offered Him all the kingdoms of this world, and in obedience and reverence He chose the path of suffering and reproach. "A prophet like unto me shall the Lord raise up unto you from among your brethren." Such was the description of the Messiah Moses could give. And in that God spake unto Moses as a man speaks with his friend; in that Moses possessed the spirit of self-sacrifice and love, which regards only God's glory and the salvation of his brethren; in that Moses was meek above all men, and lowly in heart; in that Moses was both prophet and priestly king, whom God appointed to be obeyed implicitly, he is an eminent type of the Saviour.

But even more striking than the points of resemblance are the points of contrast. The one is called Moses, or saved from the water; the other, Jesus, or

the Saviour, who, needing no redemption Himself, is the Author of salvation to all who believe in Him. The one runs before he is sent, and his zeal is partly carnal; the other, born of the Spirit, is filled with the love of God, and no admixture of earth-born self-love for a moment disturbs the purity of His aim and the humility of His heart. The one prays to die instead of his people; the other is both able and willing actually to lay down His life, and shed His blood for the lost, whose nature He has taken upon Himself. Moses dies in the wilderness; he cannot lead the Israelites into the promised land, because his heart failed to rise to the height of God's pardoning love, to comprehend the depth and breadth of the divine thought of forgiveness. He did not sanctify the name of God before the people, when, instead of announcing simply the loving-kindness of Jehovah, who freely and tenderly forgives, and delighteth in mercy, he was angry, and rebuked the transgressors. Jesus declared the name of God fully; when He died on the cross, He revealed the hatred of God against sin, but Himself absorbed and exhausted the fearful cloud in His own person. Towards the people who crucified Him, towards the penitent thief who appealed to His help, towards the world of sinners, He declared nothing but love and perfect redemption. Therefore is He the true Joshua, who leads us out of Egypt's bondage into the land of perfect peace and blessedness.

But the chief contrast between Moses and Christ

is this—that the law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.¹

Moses was a servant; Jesus is the Son. Moses speaks in the name of God; Jesus says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you." Moses brings the law written on tables of stone; Jesus, by the Holy Ghost, writes the law of God on renewed hearts. Moses has the ministry of condemnation; Jesus gives remission of sins and eternal life. The law declares the sinner must die; Jesus declares that He has died, the just for the unjust. There is no grace for them that are under the law; there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.

Jesus has left the world, but He has not left His disciples in darkness. When Moses, the mediator of the old covenant, left Israel, and ascended Mount Sinai, the people forgot God, and fell into idolatry

¹ The law was a shadow of future things. The very name Jehovah refers to the future manifestation of God. The significance of the law was not so much for the time of the law as for the time of the gospel, to which it is not merely a contrast, but of which it was also a shadow, an outline in bold and marked characters, although also a veil, concealing its brightness. As Ziegler says, "Moses, the first mediator, the beginner of law, predicted Christ, the second Mediator, the Author of faith and End of the law. Moses, who spoke to God face to face, and beheld Him in His appearance, testified of Him who stood infinitely nearer to God, to whom He was related as the house to its builder, as the servant to the son of the house; he could exclaim with joy, *דְּבַיַע קַמְלִי*, a prophet like unto me. As Adam is the type of Christ in the universal region of humanity; so, in the special field of revelation, Moses and Christ are both contrasts and parallels, heads in which all humanity, as far as it is reached by revelation, is comprised."—*Göttl. Offenbarung*, 151.

and sin. When Jesus left His disciples and ascended up to heaven, they returned to Jerusalem with joy; and in prayer and supplication they glorified God with one accord. And when Moses returned, the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold his face for the glory of his countenance. And yet what was that glory compared with the glory of the Only-begotten? But Moses could not communicate life and light and love to the people. Between him and them was only the law, engraven in stones; and the law could not give life,—the letter killeth: it was the ministration of death and condemnation. But between Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and His disciples, is the fiery stream of God's Spirit; the Holy Ghost, whom Jesus sends from the Father, is the bond of union; and looking up to heaven, we can now truly say, "With Thee is the fountain of life, and in Thy light we see light."

The law is holy, just, and good. It is based upon the revelation of God. The knowledge of His character and of His redemption forms the basis and is the source of the commandments. "I am holy, be ye holy. I am the Lord thy God, which has redeemed thee, and brought thee out of the land of Egypt." The law which God gave to Israel is no abstract system of ethics, it is the manifestation of the character and will of that living and loving God who had adopted Israel as His people. His¹ authority is the founda-

¹ On the commencement of the Decalogue, Ziegler says, "We see God begins His law not *rationaliter*, not with universal, cosmopolitan,

tion on which it rests. The law is summed up in what is exactly opposed to law, and can never be obtained and called forth by law: in love, love to God, undivided, with all thy heart, deep and all-penetrating, with all thy soul, continuous, active, and co-extensive with all the energies and relationships of life, with all thy strength. And this love to God in thought, word, and action is inseparably connected with love to man, for God's sake, and in God. Israel was to be kind and considerate to the stranger, to the blind, to the helpless, because "I am the Lord thy God." On these two commandments, essentially and inseparably connected, hang all the law and the prophets.

Love to God and to man is the sum and substance of the law. This is the centre. But the circumference of the law embraced the whole social and political life of the Jewish nation. Separated from all idolatrous nations, dedicated unto Jehovah, they were to be a priestly people, serving God as their King. Israel was a kingdom in which God was King, and in which therefore, all laws were divine commandments. The whole civil and ceremonial law was therefore essentially moral. In all the details of life, in their food, in their garments, in their method of cultivating the

or abstract *a priori* words, but in a very limited, special, historical, and at the same time religious, dogmatic manner. The whole morality of the law is based on dogma and history; she is the daughter of both; that the one-sided, abstract, rational moralists, who are opposed to positive religion, may learn at last to be ashamed of their shallowness."

land, in all their occupations and relations of life, they were to sanctify the Lord their God; they were to remember and show forth that they were separate from the nations, dedicated unto Jehovah; whether they ate or drank, or whatsoever they did, all was under the law of God, and unto His glory.

So perfect, comprehensive, and homogeneous was the law which God gave to His people. And as it was exceeding broad, it was also exceeding deep. Outward signs were only representatives of inward realities; outward observances only symbols, mementoes and seals of inward acts. Israel knew that God desired truth in the inward part, that the true burnt-offering, the truly acceptable sacrifice, was a broken and a contrite heart, the surrender of the will to God in loving obedience; they knew that the real worship of God was in spirit and in truth, and that from the utmost corner of the land the voice of prayer would reach His ear; they knew that there was a circumcision made without hands, even the renewal of the heart by the Lord Himself. The law, which was so comprehensive and multiform, was also most concentrated in its depth, most sublime in its height. It reached down into the inmost source of human life, the heart; it reached to the very throne of God, and demanded righteousness in the sight of the Holy One.

The unity of the law, proceeding from one Author, pursuing one object, animated by one spirit, renders a perfect obedience necessary. "Cursed is he who remaineth not in all the commandments of the law

to do them. If a man shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." If this appear harsh and severe, a few moments' reflection will show that it is inevitable and necessary. For the law is built upon the authority of the holy and perfect Lawgiver. We obey, not because the command approves itself to our reason, our conscience, our moral sense, but because we recognise the voice of Him who is Lord and God, whose right it is to command. Hence, whatever command we transgress, we disregard the authority of Him whose honour is the aim of the whole law. We have broken, not *one* law, but *the* law; we have transgressed, not merely the law, but we have offended the majesty of the Lawgiver.¹ Again, infinite wisdom, ever mindful of the chief and central end of the law, and always regarding the good of the whole, has so framed the law that it forms an organic unity; and as the sufferings and disease of one member disturb and affect the health and well-being of the whole body, it is not

¹ The whole point and glory of the law is our relation to the Lawgiver. "This is to fulfil the law: to fall on our knees before the Lawgiver, and say, Thou alone art He, whose right it is to command; for me it is to obey. This is the sublime grandeur of the true moral relationship between God and man: that man in his poverty and littleness—and were he the highest he is still little, and were he the richest in gifts he is still poor—can look up to the eternal God, and bring his life and action into harmony with His holy right, and be in concord with the eternal Majesty, which is the only supreme rule as long as creation lasts. But this true sublimity of heart-morality can be felt only by him who recognises a living, personal God as the source of law."—ROTHE.

possible to break one of the commandments without transgressing the whole law.¹ And thirdly, he who transgresses one law has thereby rendered himself unable to observe the rest. For to have favourite commandments is only a different form of expression for having favourite sins. So inexorable, by the very nature of the case, is the demand of the law for an entire and perfect obedience.

Such are the most obvious features of the law which God gave unto His people by Moses. And what was the purpose of the law? The law was perfect, holy, and good; but men are fallen, sinful, and impure; they are carnal, and sold under sin. The object of the law was to convince man of sin, to show him his wretched and guilty condition, to pronounce judgment and condemnation against him—in short, to leave him hopeless, speechless, helpless in the sight of God. The object of the law is to kill and to wound. And in proportion as men attempted to keep the law, this object was attained.

The Pharisees, who first overlooked the spiritual meaning and depth of the law, who regarded merely the surface of the commandment, and rested satisfied with an outward observance of regulations, never looked into the bright mirror, and never beheld their own image. Hence they were at peace and contented; nay, they had even the infatuation that they

¹ Comp. James ii. 10, 11—"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all," etc., with evident reference to the Lord's saying, Matt. v. 19, "Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments," etc.

could do more than God commanded, and acquire a measure of merit. They needed no physician; they thanked God that they were not like other men, and approached Him without crying out of the depths. Such is the contented state of natural men. So little at home in the secret chambers of their hearts, they so little reflect on the true character of their lives and the inner motives of their conduct, they so little reflect on their relation to God, they so little measure themselves by the standard of God's law, that, though they admit their faults and imperfections, they do not feel that they are guilty and sinful in the sight of God, that they are vile and wretched like lepers, and that there is not merely uncertainty as to their future state, but that there is most certainly, even now, the wrath of God resting upon them. No wonder that the piercing cry is not uttered by them, "What shall I do to be saved?" The law has not killed them yet.

As the law brings condemnation, so there is nothing in the law to renovate the soul, to strengthen and vivify it, to enable it to rouse itself to obedience. That young man who fancied he had kept all the commandments of God from his youth, and who wished to do some great and extraordinary thing to insure God's reward, went away sorrowful. And why? Because he loved riches. His strength failed him. With eager impatience he demanded a high aim, a difficult task, a great exertion, worthy of his ambition and exalted sanctity. And when Christ

tested him, and asked him to give up all for God, he went away in sadness, because while conscience understood the demand, the heart would not yield. The law left him powerless to serve God.

And this was the twofold experience of Saul of Tarsus, who in most emphatic and heart-touching language explains to us the true nature of the law in many of his Epistles. He found that the law was not the death of sin, but the strength of sin. He did not know what sin was until the law came and said, "Thou shalt not covet." The commandment which was ordained to life he found to be unto death. He expected to obtain righteousness by the works of the law. He found that the law pronounced judgment. And as the law revealed sin and death, it revealed nothing else. It could not go beyond. Moses did not enter Canaan; so the Law left him in the wilderness. It could neither remove the curse nor give life. It announces condemnation, but utters no message of pardon; it reveals death, but possesses no quickening power.

And yet how important and great is the mission of the law! The preaching of the law is very different from the preaching of morality; and the preaching of the law remains without effect until the Holy Ghost applies it to the conscience. Without the Holy Ghost the law does not kill, even as without the Spirit the gospel does not quicken. But when the Spirit applies the law and convinces of sin, the grace of God is drawing nigh. Second to the blessedness of con-

solation and joy in Christ is the blessedness of godly sorrow, contrition, and fear. And why? Because it is *God* who kills and wounds. True, the soul is in the depths, but out of the depths the soul cries unto God. The very depths are deep because the height from which we are fallen, and for which God has created us, is so great—because the Love against which we have sinned yearns over us with such infinite, tender, and holy jealousy. And as we feel humbled and abased by the law of God, we do not feel *degraded*; with a deeper reverence, and with a more solemn love, though overwhelmed with sorrow and contrition, we think of ourselves, and of mankind, as created in the image of God; and this only appears to us degrading, that so long we have been content without the knowledge, love, obedience of God, that we have denied our royal nature, and forgotten our heavenly origin and calling. Nor is the fear of punishment, of God's displeasure and wrath, to be thought ignoble and self-centred; there is in this fear the element of reverence and of love, the acknowledgment that in and with God alone is blessedness, and that it is a bitter thing to depart from the Fountain of life, peace, and joy.

The law itself contained the gospel, so that the broken-hearted might be healed and comforted until the true Consolation of Israel appeared. God's mercy and covenant-salvation, like the bright-blue sapphire sky above the darkness and clouds of Mount Sinai,¹

¹ Exod. xxiv. 9, 10.

continually irradiated the old economy, and in the sacrifices, festivals, and chosen representatives and types of the Messiah confirmed the promises of grace and of redemption. Thus there is a twofold element in the law—condemnation and the promise, type and instalment of redemption. Both elements were given in love; in both the purpose was one of mercy. But when the primary object of the law had failed, when men remained proud, self-satisfied, cherishing and excusing sin, without humility and repentance, men failed also to see and enjoy the comfort of this promise, the meaning and substance of the Type. Thus they who walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless were the very Israelites who waited for the *redemption* in Jerusalem; *they honoured the law, and therefore longed for the gospel.*¹

Christ is come; and now instead of condemnation behold grace, instead of shadow and type behold perfection and fulfilment, that is truth.² And first of all, let us remember that in Christ only the law of God found its realisation and fulfilment. It had hitherto been only an idea seeking embodiment, a problem awaiting its solution, an outline looking for substance and life. The holy and perfect law of God descends out of the sphere of love, and cannot but demand that which is only to be attained in the region where love reigns, where the Spirit breathes, where liberty is order and obedience is filial. They who seek to obey the law arrive at last at the painful knowledge

¹ Luke i. 5, 6; ii. 25, 37, etc.

² John i. 17.

of the corrupt root, the defiled source from which nothing good and clean can proceed. They find that the law demands of them, not merely to do good, but to be good. The deepest confession of the contrite heart is the exclamation, Behold, I was born in iniquity!

The children of the first Adam *cannot* fulfil the law. But God in His marvellous love hath sent His own Son, born of the Virgin Mary, conceived by the Holy Ghost. A new beginning is given unto us, a second Adam, through whose obedience life cometh unto all who believe in Him. The holy child Jesus, the incarnate Son of the Most High, was under the law. It was written on the tablets of His heart. *We* learn the will and character of God chiefly by contrast. For we start with the knowledge and love of sin and the world. Chiefly by negative commandments, by forbidding sinful works, words, thoughts, and feelings, does the law address us, the God-estranged children of Adam. But Jesus started with the knowledge and love of God. It is this *world* which appears to Him a strange thing, which gradually reveals itself to His astonished mind as opposed to God and alienated from Him. Such was His mind from His earliest childhood; and from the very commencement of His life the will of God was His joy. "How is it that ye have sought Me? Must I not be in the things of My Father?" In these words He expresses the radical difference between Himself and mankind. He starts with the knowledge, love, and joy of God,

and thus meets the world. We start with the knowledge and love of sin, and thus meet the law of God. Hence we, in reading the commandments of God, are inclined to look at the sinner's difficulties, taking his part against God, contracting the dimensions of God's requirements according to the narrow thoughts of our heart. Jesus, with the eyes of His heart, saw the law in its breadth and depth; He joyfully filled the entire outline; His willing mind, His loving heart, His filial Spirit entered into the whole mind of God, and penetrated to the depth and substance of God's Word.

And as He perfectly understood and loved the law of God, so in His life, in His words and works and sufferings, He fulfilled it. For He manifested God's name.¹ And is not this the highest fulfilment of God's law?—"Be ye holy, even as I am holy." His life was love, love to the Father and love to man—a love which infinitely transcends the love demanded by the law; for it was the love of the Son of God, a new love, which, having its source in eternity, manifested itself on earth in the midst of sin and sorrow, showing its divine fulness and glory wrought into all that is sinlessly human, and revealing through the death of the cross the boundless and secret love of God, which embraced, before the foundations of the world were laid, the guilty and fallen. And as in His whole life He was a burnt-offering, giving Himself for us a sacrifice to God for

¹ John xvii. 6.

a sweet-smelling savour;¹ so His obedience culminated in His death on the cross, when He became the sin-offering, and laid down His life as a ransom for many. He who fulfilled the law bore the curse of the law in our stead.² As for our sake the Son of God had humbled Himself, and taken the position of a servant, fulfilling all righteousness; so in our stead, and for our acquittal, He suffered the penalty of the law we had transgressed. By His obedience we are made righteous, by His death we are acquitted; or, as the apostle teaches us, we have died in Him to the law. The handwriting of ordinances, which was against us, which was contrary to us, is blotted out, and taken out of the way—it was nailed to the cross. Christ has redeemed us who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

All men are under the law, until through the death of Christ they are freed from it. Christ is to us who believe the End of the law for righteousness. The law condemns; the gospel brings deliverance and salvation. The law begins with commands, and speaks of blessings which are afar off on mountain-heights, which fallen and guilty man is not able or willing to reach. The gospel begins with the promise of eternal life; it announces pardoning grace and redeeming love; it bestows perfect, divine righteousness. Henceforth we are no longer under the law; we are made the righteousness of God in Christ. And yet we do not make void the law, but we

¹ Eph. v. 2.

² Gal. iii. 13.

establish it; for the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us. The law could not give life; it could not minister unto us the Holy Ghost. Christ hath quickened us, and by His Spirit dwells in our hearts. And therefore we are able to love. Love is the fulfilment of the law. And as the law could not attain it, so the love which our Lord gives us is something higher and deeper than the law demanded or foreshadowed.

It may be asked, What can be higher than the love which God demands in the law—love with all our heart, all our soul, and all our strength? Nothing can be higher in the region of *creation*. No angel can do more than give God undivided and uninterrupted love, manifesting itself in obedience. But through Christ we are raised into a higher region than that of creation. The incarnation of the Son of God has invested us with a new nature, and elevated us to a new and infinitely higher region. "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." Why doth He call it new? Because He adds, "As I have loved you." This is the source, the measure, and the strength of the love which Christ commands and gives to His people.

We are to love with the love wherewith God loved us. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." And this mind can be in us, first, because we, through this very love, have been reconciled to God; and secondly, because this very love of Christ is implanted in us by the Holy Ghost

—the Spirit of God and the love of Christ come together. “Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit.” And again, “Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, because we love one another.” The gospel *implants* in us love, by giving unto us, through Christ, the Holy Ghost. “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.”¹ The love whereby we dwell in God, and God in us, is His Spirit. God is love; and this is the blessing of the new covenant in Christ the incarnate Son, that He hath given us the Spirit, in whom is bestowed the love which is the fulfilling of the law.

The obedience of the Christian is thus in every respect new and evangelical, not legal. All the exhortations of the apostolic Epistles set this forth in clearest light. We are not to continue in sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace. We are to have our fruit unto holiness, because we are alive unto God through Jesus Christ, and having died to the law by the body of Christ, are married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead.² We are not to lie one to another, not merely because the law forbids falsehood, but because we are in Christ members one of another. The Christian is to live in chastity and purity, mindful that the body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and that he is in vital union with the Lord Jesus. Thus our holiness in

¹ Rom. v. 5.

² Rom. vi. vii., specially vi. 14, vii. 4-6.

life and our walk before God are uniformly based on the redemption of Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, and not on the commandments of the law, although the child of God reverences and loves the law, meditating on its breadth and depth, and deriving from it instruction and guidance. Between Christ the Vine and the fruit-bearing branches the law of Moses cannot intervene. Not law, but the Holy Ghost, is the connecting link between the Saviour and the disciple, even as the manifestation of the new life is called fruit of the Spirit. And as the Apostle Paul explains in his Epistles (especially to the Romans and Galatians), that righteousness is the gift of God in Christ Jesus, received by faith, bestowed freely in grace on all who believe—that it is not through the law or of works—so he likewise emphatically teaches us that it is the grace of God, and not the law, which now disciplines us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to walk soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; that it is Christ in us, that it is the Holy Ghost by whom we bring forth fruit unto holiness; that ours is the life of faith in the Son of God, who loved us and gave Himself for us; the new life in the power of Christ’s resurrection, in whose death we have died, and who was raised up by the glory of the Father, that we should walk in newness of life. Isaac and Ishmael, Sara and Hagar, Jerusalem which is the mother of us all, and free, and Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children, are *contrasts*; it is

impossible to combine them. Christ is the end of the Law, both as righteousness and sanctification.

Christ is our Master. What a wonderful honour and dignity to be the disciples and servants of the Lord Jesus! In Him the divine idea of man is perfectly realised. He is the true King, the true David, whose heart was not lifted up above His brethren, who, as a Shepherd-King, rules in the righteousness of grace and meekness. In Him are united holiness and mercy, strength and tenderness, zeal and patience, courage and lowliness. He is the fairest among the sons of men, He is altogether lovely. Who would not love to follow Him? who would not be thrilled with deepest joy to be numbered among His people? He is the Perfect Guide, who was tempted in all things as we are, and yet without sin; the Conqueror at all times, strong and invincible in the purity of His love; who suffered, who endured contradictions from sinners, who was tried by sorrow, and the unfaithfulness and ingratitude and hatred of the world, who learned obedience even unto death. All His experience on earth, and all the manifestations of His perfect love here below, draw us to Him as our one Master.

He is the only Master, good and perfect, for He is the Son of the Most High; *our* Master, for in His wondrous love He became ours,—He became our Brother to be our Head.

He is our Master, for by His indwelling Presence He is our life and strength; He who commands is,

by His Spirit, the power within us to obey His Word and to imitate His perfect example. He is always ministering unto us, that we may serve Him out of the fulness of His grace. Christ, the Son of God, the Son of man, is also the glorified Head of the Church.

“All things whatsoever He has commanded.” As the law is one, indivisible and harmonious, an organic unity, pervaded by one Spirit, so are the commandments of Christ essentially and inseparably connected. Christ Himself is the Spirit of all commandments; all His words are spirit and life. Call no commandment unimportant, for in what we think least, the most central and vital principle is involved. Call no command outward, for in all that Jesus commands us concerning our words and works, He desires truth in the inward part, and points to the heart, out of which are the issues of life. If we are one with Christ, then the inward unity of all His commandments will be increasingly clear to us, and as one has said,¹ “We shall know the warm life-blood, which, as the soul, flows throughout all Christ’s precepts; we shall taste, I might almost say, their indissoluble unity.” Yea, we shall see the one undivided Christ, who was crucified for us, the one Love which has redeemed us, and which desires to form us after its blessed image.

The commandments of Christ are full of light, easily understood and easily remembered. They bear the impress of their heavenly origin. In their

¹ Rothe.

lucid simplicity, and in their comprehensiveness and depth, they appeal at once to our reason and conscience. We assent to them immediately, and we never forget the precept after we have heard it once, so strongly and instantaneously do we feel that it is right, that it is from above. And the heart also responds, It is good, it is loving; in keeping thereof there would be great peace.

The commandments of Christ may be summed up according to the various aspects of the inner and outer life.

If we look at the heart, the root and source of life and action, all Christ's commandments are contained in His most touching appeal, "*Abide in Me.*" Leave Me not. I am yours. In the glorious union of My Godhead and manhood, in My death on the cross, in My resurrection peace and power, in My faithful and all-prevailing intercession, and in the constant and uninterrupted outflowing of the Holy Ghost into you, I am yours. Abide in Me. Let neither doubt nor presumption, neither fear nor sorrow, neither sin nor temptation, neither duty nor rest, disturb you and beguile you to leave your only haven and heaven—*Me.* Abide in Me, and then all My words shall abide in you. In the inmost sanctuary of the soul this is the whole secret of life, peace, and power.

If we look again at the manifestations of life, all Christ's commandments are summed up in His simple words, "*Follow Me.*" That is, copy and imitate Christ; let Christ's whole life and walk on earth be before the

eyes of your heart and imagination, the sweet image of His humility and saving obedience, and let Christ guide you in your daily path. Let Him choose your task and your work; leave it to Him to select your cross and trial. Let Jesus go first, and, never leaving Him, trace His footsteps.

If we look at our relation to God, prayer, meditation, and communion, Jesus' commandments may be summed up in one word—*in secret*; "Enter into thy closet, and shut the door." Banish the multitude of thoughts which crowd the chamber of the heart and mind, and seek, even when with other believers, to realise the presence of Him after whom the soul thirsteth. Thus speaking to Him in prayer, and hearing His voice in the Scripture, the light of the Father will shine on thy heart and path. For the Father seeth in secret, He regardeth the heart, He seeketh worshippers in Spirit and in truth. Alone with God—this is the true source of sincerity; and the only condition of peace and strength.

If we consider our relation to the world, the commandments of Christ are summed up in one word—*mission*. "I send you; as the Father hath sent Me, so have I sent you;" "Ye are the light of the world;" "Go and teach all nations that are without;" "Be fishers of men;" give no offence, but adorn the doctrine of the gospel of grace. As the Son Himself came not to do His own will, as He remembered and revealed the Father in all His words and actions, seeking only His glory, thus are we to be apostles

of Jesus, His representatives on earth, His message to the world. We are His epistles, declaring the power of His love; we are to reflect His image, and, walking as the sons of God, win the souls of men to the Only-begotten of the Father, the only Lord and Saviour. Jesus sent us, "Occupy till I come;" and as He was always in the things of His Father, always sowing the seed, and working while it was day, so our mission is only ended when the Master calls us home.

If we look again at the aim and purpose of our energies and lives, it is summed up in the word *heaven*—"Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven;" "Set your affections on things that are above;" "Be rich toward God;" "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Seek to attain to the resurrection from among the dead. Give up all, that in the regeneration of the world ye may receive the reward of Christ.

If we ask, What does Christ command us with regard to our sinful self? the commandments are summed up in the word *death*—"If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out: if thy right arm offend thee, cut it off;" "He that loveth his life shall lose it; he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it;" "Crucify the old man;" "Mortify the members which are upon earth;" "Die daily."

Christ says unto us, "Give." The very simplicity and apparent vagueness of the command invest it

with comprehensiveness. We are not told to whom to give, because we are debtors to all, and called to be imitators of God, who causeth His sun to shine on the just and the unjust. We are not told when to give, because as long as we are below, stewards of the gifts of God, and members of the Church of Christ—as long as there are the sick, the poor, the lowly, the helpless, it is both our duty and blessedness to give. We are not told what we are to give, for all that we have, from the cup of cold water to the gold and silver, and all that we are, our affection and sympathy, we are to give. We are not told *how* to give, because we are to give simply for giving's sake, hoping and looking for nothing to recompense us; as God giveth because He delighteth in giving.

Christ had nothing on earth, yet He gave constantly until He gave Himself. He had not merely compassion, but He fed the multitude. He not merely wept over the city, but went into its wretchedness, and ministered unto the needy. He saith unto us, "Give." And if, like Philip, we are discouraged because we have so little to give, and the multitude is great and the need manifold, let us learn faith, and then see the marvels which a gracious Lord is pleased to work through the ministry of His disciples. Let us give what we have—time, strength, money—above all, and in all, love.

Love must precede obedience; faith must precede love. Or, in other words, grace comes first. God gives all, and of Him is our fruit found. But we

must not merely dwell on the distinction between the root and the fruits ; we must also, and that continually, bear in mind the vital and essential *connection* between the love of faith and the obedience of love. "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature." If we are born again as the children of God, as the brethren and disciples of Jesus, as anointed with the Holy Ghost, we must walk in newness of life. Men may lay a false stress on good works,¹ but we cannot attach too great importance to them. Our Lord Himself, who came to save, whose whole message was love, who gave Himself to be our life, our all in all, continually and most solemnly reminds us that the true reception of His grace, the true possession and enjoyment of His rest and of His life, must manifest itself in obedience, in good works, in fruit. "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven." Again, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." Again, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." "Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." And the disciple who dwells most on the mystery of our new birth, and of that Eternal Life

¹ "We are calumniated," says Melancthon in the *Apology*, "as not teaching good works. We not merely insist on good works, but also show *how they can be done*." No preaching is practical except the preaching of free grace and justification by faith ; for, as John Berridge quaintly remarked, he "preached morality till there was not a moral man in his parish." The love of God in Christ Jesus is the only power of obedience.

which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us, speaks most simply and fully—"Let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also." Likewise the Apostle Paul, who so clearly distinguishes between law and gospel, and so boldly declares the liberty and perfection of grace, exhorts us in all his Epistles to walk in Christ, to be zealous of good works, to have our fruit unto holiness.¹ The Epistle of James explains to us in solemn and piercing language that we are to be doers, and not merely hearers of the Word, and that we who are begotten again of God's own will by the word of truth, are to be, as it were, first-fruits of His creatures, living in the spirit and power of holiness and glory.

It is just because nothing can take the place of Christ Jesus as the Foundation ; it is for the very reason that there can be no substitute for the renewal

¹ "Oh, it is a living, mighty, busy, active thing, this faith, that it is impossible it should not do good continually ! It does not ask many questions, what good things are to be done ; but before you ask the things are done, and faith is always doing. But he that doeth not good works is a man without faith, and knoweth not what faith is, and what are good works, though he may talk about them. Faith is a living, joyous confidence in God's grace, so certain, that it could die for it a thousand times. And such confidence and knowledge of divine grace makes us joyous, vigorous, and courageous before God and man, so that without compulsion man becomes willing and cheerful to serve his neighbour, and to suffer all things, only to please and praise God, who has shown his soul mercy ; so that it is impossible to separate faith and works, as little as you may separate light and heat from the fire."—LUTHER.

of the heart and the indwelling of Jesus by the Holy Ghost, that the absence of good fruit is so alarming, for "every good tree bringeth forth good fruit."¹

We are always brought back to the feet of Jesus, to His dying love and quickening grace. Rooted and grounded in His love, we live and bring forth fruit; for have you not discovered yet that Christ's commandments are channels of blessings, that they are gifts and privileges? Christ asks us to give, in order that He may enrich us with the true treasures, and reward us hereafter with a plenteous harvest. He asks us to serve and labour, in order that our souls may have the true Sabbath, and be refreshed with the meat which alone can strengthen. When He tells us to go and bring forth fruit, it is that we may abide in Him, and be more rooted and grounded in love. When He bids us welcome reproach and suffering, when He insists on our denying and abasing ourselves, it is that we may more abundantly possess the royal spirit of God's children and heirs. We are peaceful and joyous, strong and rich only in obeying our one Master. Christ's commandment is a canopy of love over us. It was thus that Jesus Himself abode in His Father's love, by keeping His commandments. Is it not too much our habit to seek rest, peace, and enjoyment in another way? Do we not dwell exclusively and arbitrarily in the promises of the Saviour, building to ourselves an harbour, weaving garlands of beautiful and fragrant

¹ Comp. Matt. vii. 15-27.

flowers, and then taking rest and comfort and encouragement to ourselves? Yet is this Christ's rest? Is it a true peace, which flows like a living river, increasing in breadth and fulness, fertilising the shores on either hand, and issuing in the boundless ocean of divine love? Is it the rest which Christ has connected with His *yoke* and His *burden*? Is it the repose which makes us strong, able to bear the reproach of the world, the storm of affliction, the assaults of the wicked one; vigorous in the active service of God and ministry of Christian charity? We are at present sowers. Now men do not sow flowers, but seed. And Jesus is the Sower who went forth bearing precious seed. He Himself was the seed. He gave all, He gave Himself; He loved, and He died. And they who are His, learn to give themselves unto the Lord and the brethren; and while they give they are blessed, and at Christ's coming they shall reap abundantly and in fulness of joy.

If our conscience says, It ought to be so; if the heart responds, Oh that it were thus with me! let our will also, enlightened and influenced by the Holy Ghost, say, I will obey Christ. Christ is not Moses, bringing us commandments engraven on tablets of stone; He, by the Holy Ghost, dwells within us; and the disciple is able to do all things through Christ who strengtheneth him. We are not our own, because Christ is our *Master*; we are not our own, because Christ is our *life*.