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The Ark and Obedience

Anonymous

1 Chron. 13, Acts 20

There are two portions of Scripture in which we may see the blessedness of obedience and the sorrow of disobedience, or neglect of obeying. In the second, the order is reversed. Paul committed the dear ones he was about to leave to God and the word of His grace. Oh, that we knew more subjection to that word!

In Joshua 3, when the priests came to the river of Jordan, its waters rolled down to the Dead Sea, and left a passage some miles wide, quite a contrast to the passage of the Red Sea. The waters of judgment are stayed by the **ark**; all the praise is His! The Jordan crossed, they, in figure, are risen with Christ. On the resurrection side, they get to Gilgal, and there circumcision is carried out, the flesh judged, and their whole confidence is now to be set on the One Who had stayed back the Jordan, and brought them into the promised land.

Let us contrast Egypt with the land. In Numbers 11 they lusted after six things. "We remember" (said they, forgetting the hard bondage) "the fish which we did eat in Egypt freely, the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions and the garlic." They all belonged to Egypt, and they were all low down. Egypt's prosperity depended on the Nile, but they did not know the source of it. The land God brought them into drank water of the rain of heaven. Seven things grew in that land that could be gathered without

stooping: "Wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive and honey" (Deut. 8: 7). When they were circumcised the manna ceased, and they ate the corn of the land — type of Christ risen.

In Numbers 34 we are told the boundaries of the land; on the north a great mountain—the world and its power; on the east a great river—the world and its prosperity; on the south, a great wilderness—the world and its sterility; on the west a great sea—the world and its lawlessness. It is a type of the land into which we are brought, but there are always contrasts between type and antitype. Abraham could walk through the land, but we get lengths and breadths and depths and heights, immeasurable, "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ," (Eph. 1:3). Do we realize and value this? We are already thus blest.

Let us just turn to the prayer of the apostle for these saints (Eph. 3: 16 to 19). The words "length, breadth, depth, and height," are often applied to the love of Christ, but I do not believe that this is the meaning, for he goes on to say, "and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge". It is according to the riches of His glory, not from it that He desires they should "apprehend" (not "comprehend") the vastness of all this blessing, and then know the love of Christ.

But Israel had to be warriors, and to fight the Lord's battles in that land; their warfare was against flesh and blood, but ours are far mightier foes, even "principalities and powers, the rulers of the dark-

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ness of this world, spiritual wickedness in high places", and we are no match for these in ourselves. God forbid that we should ever trust in ourselves, for we are only earthen vessels. In Eph. 6 we get our equipment for this warfare. There is never anything lacking on God's side. He has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness. We can always praise Him, though we have so much to mourn over in ourselves. In this armor there is, as has often been pointed out, nothing for the back. Never turn your back on the foe. We are always more than conquerors if our confidence is in the Lord. "Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth." Let us become acquainted with it, let us hold it tighter; it is strength-giving when we have it tight about ourselves.

"And having on the breastplate of righteousness" this is practical righteousness. So Paul exercised himself to "always have a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men".

"Taking the shield of faith" — the Roman shield was generally sufficiently large to cover the whole body. Let us use it well — "wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one". Satan cannot touch you if faith is kept up, together with prayer. "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might". It is the very same word in Paul's prayer in chapter one, "the exceeding greatness of His power ... which He wrought in Christ". That power which stayed the Jordan is what these must have who fight these battles.

Jericho was the first obstacle to the Israelites after crossing the Jordan, and the **ark** goes with them, "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might". On the seventh day the people surrounded the city seven times, and then a great shout went up from those who became "more than conquerors", for they had spoil. It is when we are obedient that we are strong in the Lord. Then we have the other side, Ai. They fall back on their own understanding, and do not seek the Lord's mind. They only send a few men up and get defeated. They had not on the breastplate of righteousness. They could not cover up the Babylonish garment and the wedge of gold from His eyes. They were not strong in the Lord. They had to be searched and the sin judged, and Achan and his family stoned, before they were clear of the evil in their midst.

Now turn to 1 Chron. 13; David makes much more of the **ark** than Solomon. Solomon makes more of the brazen altar, but David is on a higher level. David was always able to turn to the Lord. In his

darkest hour, when Ziklag was destroyed, he encouraged himself in the Lord. It is a gloomy picture we have of Solomon's old age, but David's last words are very bright. He constantly recovers. He has a nimbleness of faith, which leads him always to the Lord.

Very often when the Lord has enabled us to shine for Him our darkest hour is at hand. When David had escaped from Saul, he said in his heart, "I shall now one day perish by the hand of Saul"; all declension begins in the heart.

Here in 1 Chron. 13, "David consulted with the captains and with every leader", a natural thing to do, but he should have sought the Lord's mind first. A sad path is thus begun. He put those first and the Lord last (verse 2). We should always put Him first, and throughout.

We may do a right thing in a wrong way. We all know how before this the Philistines had adopted this course, for they knew no better. They sent the **ark** home on a new cart. It was very well for them, for God had not given them instructions. Let us beware of human reason. Do not let us be imitators of apparent success. Let us be subject to the word of God, and let us do nothing without it. We get on broad, dangerous, sinful ground if we get away from it. Do not ask, "What does it condemn?" but "What does it enjoin?" "And when they came to the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the **ark**, for the oxen stumbled. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzza, and He smote him, because he put his hand to the **ark**: and there he died before God." That could not have occurred if they had not had the new cart. "And David was afraid of God that day, saying, How shall I bring the **ark** of God home to me?" What a contrast between the experience of Obed-Edom and that of David!

Now we find David was being trained. In 1 Chron. 14, "David inquired of God". This was better than consulting captains, however able. So a breach is made on his enemies, not on Uzza; and again he gets God's mind (verses 8 to 4).

God has said, "I will instruct thee and teach thee." What a shame if we do not get His guidance! "David did as God commanded him", so he proved the blessedness of getting His mind and carrying it out.

In the next chapter, having learned his lesson, he can now say, "None ought to carry the **ark** of God, but the Levites, for them hath Jehovah chosen to carry it". "For because ye did it not at the first,

Jehovah our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought Him not after the due order" (verses 2, 12, 13). What a lesson is this for us! It is not simply to show us David's mistake, but for our sakes also it is written. May we ever seek to do things in "the due order". There is no failure in the love that gives the light for every circumstance; let us get it. Have we not often been tripped up and led astray by relying on the counsel of others instead of seeking the light of God's word.

"God helped the Levites." We may sometimes shun that which is not very easy for us by slipping aside from the path of obedience, but oh, what a blessing for them to have His help and power! It led to worship. May this be our portion too.

"And Michal the daughter of Saul . . . saw king David dancing and playing: and she despised him in her heart." We may be despised by the world, but what matters if we have the Lord's approval?

The Man NOAH Gen.6:9

Alex Dryburgh

Noah was a man who built two things. He built an **Ark** and he built an **Altar**. God told him to build the ark. God did not tell him to build the altar. If there had not been an ark there certainly would not have been an altar. In the ark we see what the Lord did for Noah and in the altar we see his appreciation for what God did for him He built an altar and took of every clean bird and every clean beast and offered a sacrifice. If there had been no John 11, where Lazarus was raised from the dead, there certainly would have been no John 12 with the worship of Mary. Notice four things about Noah.

1. The favor he found.
2. The testimony he bore.
3. The communion he enjoyed.
4. The obedience he rendered.

THE FAVOR HE FOUND

"Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord," (Gen. 6:8). Let us never forget what the grace of God has done for us, what it is doing for us, and what it will yet do for us. It saves us, Eph. 2:8: "For by grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." It strengthens us. 2 Tim.2:1, We have to be "strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus". It sanctifies us. Titus 2:11-13: "The grace of

God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world". It satisfies us. 2 Cor.12:9: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." "Why have I found grace in thine eyes ... seeing I am a stranger?" (Ruth 2:10).

"Twas grace that wrote my name,
In life's eternal book:
Twas grace that gave me to the Lamb;
Who all my sorrows took."

"By the grace of God I am what I am" (1 Cor. 15:10).

THE TESTIMONY HE BORE

He was a righteous man. Perfect, blameless, and upright in his generation. One of the first things said about Noah was he was a righteous man (Gen. 6:9). One of the last things said about Noah is that he was "a preacher of righteousness" (2 Pet. 3:10). What the man was, the man preached. He was a man that had the approval of God. He was a man of integrity.

THE COMMUNION HE ENJOYED

"Noah walked with God.

To wait on God, no time is lost.
Wait on, Wait on.
To talk with God, no breath is lost.
Talk on, Talk on.
To walk with God, no strength is lost.
Walk on, Walk on."

"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength," (Isa. 40:31). He who speaks most to God speaks best for God. Enoch walked with God when the patriarchs went astray. Noah walked with God when the world went astray. Job walked with God when his family went astray. Gaius walked with God when the assembly went astray.

THE OBEDIENCE HE RENDERED

"Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him so did he," (Gen. 6:22).

"Trust and obey, for there's no other way;
To be happy in Jesus; But to trust and obey."

If you turn to Ezekiel 14:14, you will find three men in one verse, and they were men that were righteous, Noah Job and Daniel. Noah was righteous when the world went astray, Job righteous when his family went astray, and Daniel righteous when the nation went astray.

THE SACRIFICES HE OFFERED

He took of every clean beast and of every clean bird and he sacrificed them on the altar, (Gen. 8:20). This shows us the purity of the sacrifice. Everything about Christ was pure. His thoughts were pure. Whatsoever things were pure was the meditation of his mind. His words were pure. "The words of the Lord are pure words", (Ps. 12:6). His heart was pure. "Clean hands and a pure heart," (Ps. 24:4). His feet were pure;

"A perfect path of purest grace,
unblemished and complete;
Was He the spotless Nazarite,
pure even to the feet.
In softness unresisting
the rough and ruthless touch;
In purity consisting
as not another such.
In every feature flawless,
in every aspect fair
The search of sinners lawless,
could find no blemish there."

Have you ever noticed that where Christ is presented as the sin offering, His sinlessness is also presented? Notice 1 John 3:5: "He was manifested to take away our sins, and in him no sin". 1 Pet. 2:22-24, "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth ... Who His own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree". Then 2 Cor. 5:21: "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we may be made the righteousness of God in him". In Isa. 53, where Christ is seen as the sin offering and the trespass offering, in that chapter we read, "He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth" (Isa. 53:9). In Lev. 6:17 where you read about the meal offering, we are told it is most holy, as is the sin offering and the trespass offering.

"Without a trace of Adam's sin
as man unique in origin
All fair without, all pure within,
Our blessed Lord."

(to be continued)

THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST

E. W. Rogers

We did not live in those days when the Ruler of the old Roman world was called LORD. The notion of the divine right of Kings has been temporarily exploded, though to be sure it will be revived in days yet to come, when the Man of Sin will set

himself up in the temple of God claiming that he is God, and demanding the worship of all within his jurisdiction (2 Thess. 2:4; Rev. 13:15).

The believer, by the Spirit of God calls Jesus "Lord" (1 Cor. 12:3) and rightly so, because not only is He so spoken of in the Old Testament (Psalm 110:1 and Matt. 22:22, 43 and 44) but by His resurrection from the dead "God has made (i.e. vindicated) that same Jesus ... both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). At His birth it was announced that the One born was "Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11), yet during His lifetime it was evident that man in general, and the disciples in particular, did not fully understand the fact. After He was raised from the dead Thomas called Him "My Lord" (John 20:28), and Peter so proclaimed Him, but the mass of mankind did not believe it. The good news, however, was spread far and wide that "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead thou shalt be saved" (Romans 10: 9). The acknowledgment, then, of the Lordship of Christ is vital if one is to be saved from the penalty of his sins, as well as if the life is to be adjusted to the glory of God and the good of its owner. In these papers we shall seek to set out something of what the Scriptures teach touching this matter.

He is Lord of All

Thus declared Peter in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:36). This bracketed phrase must, indeed, have struck the centurion with astonishment. That the claim of universal lordship should be made for Jesus the Nazarene was nothing if not remarkable. Peter is emphatic. Of Him alone could this be said: He, and He alone, is Lord of all. And His Lordship extends not only to persons, Jew and Gentile, all men alike, but also to "all things." The limitless immensity of the universe is now-a-days acknowledged by man as the result of his scientific discoveries, but little do most scientists appreciate that the Universal Lord of all the domain, a fraction of which bewilders them, is the Christ of God, the babe of Bethlehem's manger, the sufferer on Calvary's Cross. This is a truth which should bring the utmost peace to the hearts of God's people, for that Lordship is not a mere nominal one, it is one that He actively exercises in the interests of His own now, as one day He will actively enforce it to "the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:11).

Even the winds and the waves obeyed Him. The fish brought the money to His feet. The demons released their captives at His bidding. Disease and death vanished from His presence. He, by whose word creation in the first instance came into existence, is the One who upholds it now, and by His miracles

displayed that He was and still is Lord of all things. His Lordship did not commence with His birth, much less with His resurrection. David addressed Him thus (Psalm 110:1) for He was eternal, His birth not being the commencement of His being. The Hebrew word Adon has its counterpart in the New Testament Greek word Kurios, and both words have a wide territory of meaning, such as Sir, Owner, Master. The Lord of all Power and Might condescended to enter human existence, not at its source in the days of Adam, but midway down the stream, when many generations had played their little part in life and had passed away; and thus He who was the root whence David sprang became also his offspring: hence it was that the Psalmist “in spirit” designated as his Master, One who was to be raised up out of his own tribe and family.

Not merely is He Lord of all things, but He is also Lord of all people. “The same Lord of all is rich unto all that call upon Him” (Rom. 10:12). Peter, under the direction of the Spirit, had gone outside the bounds of Judaism with the gospel of God’s grace, and though this was an initial ministry and not permanent for him—for he was the Apostle of the circumcision (Gal. 2:8), it was perpetuated by the preaching and writings of the Apostle Paul who was entrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision (Gal. 2:8). “Christ both died and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living” (Rom. 14:9). His Lordship is over all people without limitation. That is why, in a future day, every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord no matter whether they are in Heaven, on earth or in the infernal regions (Phil. 2:10-11).

There are those who voluntarily and gladly now, in time, confess Him as Lord and, indeed, call Him “My Lord.” David did so before He became incarnate (Ps. 110:1); Elizabeth did so at His incarnation (Luke 1:43); Mary did so when He was dead (John 20:13); Thomas did so when He was raised (ibid v. 28); and Paul acknowledged Him as “My Lord” when He saw Him in glory (Phil. 3:8). Have we really done this? If you will examine the lives of all these persons, despite any failures that may be detected therein, you will find that this acknowledgment affected their conduct and so molded their lives that they are worthy of our emulation. David was “the man according to God’s own heart,” whatever we, with a fallen nature that ever loves to grasp at the unsavory, may say touching his sin with Bathsheba and its shocking concomitants. Elizabeth’s long married life had been governed by the Lordship of Christ (see Luke 1:6). Whatever may be said of Thomas’ skepticism, we cannot but believe that in

reverence he shrank from implementing his own suggestion, his words expressing the deep and lasting conviction of his heart. And who can doubt that Mary’s whole life from the time of her mighty deliverance was governed by the glad surrender of herself entirely to her Owner-Lord? And the converted history of Saul of Tarsus, which began with the word “Lord” is eloquent testimony to the fact that it was not in word only, but in deed that he owned Christ Jesus as his Lord.

Indeed, it was his habit when referring to Him historically to give Him the title “Lord Jesus.” For instance, in referring to the grace of the Lord Jesus, who “though He was rich yet for our sakes He became poor” (2 Cor. 8:9), he did not speak of “Jesus” but gave Him His title. Similarly, when he says “The night in which the Lord Jesus was betrayed” (1 Cor. 11:23). How strange, then, that so many today fail to give Him His due when speaking or preaching of Him, yet they ascribe to His apostles the prefix “Saint” to which they are not specially entitled above any other of His people! We should eschew this snare.

But there are those who “deny the Lord that bought them” (2 Peter 2:1). Here, confessedly, the word “despot” is used, but the gist is the same. They repudiate His proprietary rights over them, whose they were by creation and by whom they have been purchased when “He sold all that He had, and bought the field” in order to acquire the treasure within it (Matt. 13:44). “Our lips are our own: who is lord over us?” they say (Ps. 12:4). They are utterly lawless, insubordinate, rebellious. But their day will come to an end. His Lordship implies His deity.

Implies His Deity

This is seen in the use of the word Kurios in the New Testament for the word Jehovah in the Old. Kurios is Greek and Jehovah is Hebrew, and Isaiah 40:3 is quoted in Matthew 3:3, which respectively gives these words. The identification is indubitable. John was the forerunner, preparing the way of Him who was God manifest in flesh. There are many such passages in the New Testament, and sometimes it is not easy to determine whether the title refers to the Lord Jesus or to God, the statements concerned being applicable to both because they are co-equal each with the other. This is all the more remarkable seeing that the early Christians were, for the most part, Jews and, therefore monotheistic. They could not on any account sanction the thought of more than one God, but they saw, by faith, in the person of the Lord Jesus “the true God” (1 John 5:20). In fact, it may be that James uses the

conjunction “and” in an explanatory way in his Epistle (1:1) and we might read his words as “James, a servant of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

We must not suppose that everyone who addressed the Lord Jesus by the word Kurios recognized this truth. Sometimes, indeed very often, in the days of His flesh those who approached Him thus meant no more than “sir” or “master,” an acknowledgment of superiority with the view of getting a need met. This is clearly seen in the English version of John 4:11 and the reader will discern other like cases. In John 9:36 the word “Lord” appears to have the lesser sense; but in verse 38 the greater, for the erstwhile blind man believed.

The recognition of this will give us to see the true significance of the word “worship” in its many occurrences in the Gospels. It does not always imply that the worshipper intelligently apprehend the deity of the One before him. It often was no more than an act of respect, specially in view either of need or of gratitude. But the title Lord, certainly denotes authority.

Denotes Authority

This is clearly seen in such a passage as John 13:13 and 14. The apostles called the Lord Jesus “Master (Teacher) and Lord,” but the Lord Jesus reverses the order and speaks of “Lord and Teacher.” The circumstance was that of His having washed the disciples feet: He had given them a lesson in action, not in speech. That action called for imitation, and such imitation could only be acknowledged as a binding duty if they recognized His Lordship over them. How easy it is for us all to be more occupied with the Word than with practice. Luke records “all that Jesus began both to do and to teach” (Luke 1:1), putting action before speech. The two on the Emmaus road spoke of the Lord as one “mighty in deed and word before God and all the people” (Luke 24:19), and here in the Upper Room the Lord Himself places His authority before His teaching. For if His authority be repudiated His teaching will have no effect. But own His Lordship, then His teaching at once becomes authoritative and binding.

It was this that Paul sought to press on the Corinthians, who were apt to ignore his teaching. “If any think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. If he does not recognize this, he himself should not be recognized” (1 Cor. 14: 37-38 NEB). Paul was not impos-

ing on the Corinthians his own fancies or whims, for they could never be binding. But the Lordship of Christ implies that His word has the effect of a command, and calls for prompt obedience.

Is this the reason why there is everywhere so much departure from scriptural patterns; why the writings of Paul are brought into question; why there seems to be a desire to evade the plain teaching of the epistles under the plea that they are written for conditions that then existed—which conditions do not obtain in our day? Many fail to see that such writings embody principles which are applicable at all times.

The reader would find it a most profitable study to go through Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians and note how frequently he speaks of the Lord Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ our Lord, the Lord Jesus, and so on. It is in verses 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10 of the first chapter to say nothing more of the rest of the Epistle. He speaks of the “Lord of glory” (2:8); “the mind of the Lord” (2:16); services given by the Lord (3:5); the knowledge of the Lord (3:20); the examination at the coming of the Lord (4: 4-5); and so we could go on through the whole letter. The Lordship of Christ is the authority for disciplinary action (ch. 5) and the demand of cleanness of life (ch. 6). On his authority Paul can legislate in regard to marital relationships (ch. 7). To us, he says, there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ (8:6 RV). It is the Lord who has regulated touching the maintenance in material things of His servants (9:14). No less than seven times does he use the title in connection with the Lord’s Supper (ch. 11, vv. 23-32). The title stands at the gateway of the apostolic teaching touching church gatherings (12:3) and the whole of chapters 12-14. Both Paul and Timothy work under the same Lord and their plans are subject to His permissive will (16:7-10).

One can imagine that the Lord, who walks in the midst of the lampstands (Rev. 1) would say to many today “Why call ye Me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say” (Luke 6:46). It will not suffice to say that we have preached: we have done many wonderful things; we have eaten and drunken in His presence (Luke 13:26). That will be of no avail in that day. It is all too easy for us to rest on the doctrine — and it is a scriptural one — of the eternal security of the believer and yet so to live that we repudiate day by day His claims of Lordship. That repudiation shows that we are not true believers, and are not entitled to claim the security which belongs alone to those who in truth “confess Jesus as Lord.” These are solemn thoughts, and those of

us who are most vocal and who are most before the eyes of our brethren need, of all men, to be the most careful.

Personal Responsibility

Each one has a responsibility to the Lord and this Paul enforces when dealing with matters in which believers do not see eye to eye. The reader should peruse Romans 14 and the early part of chapter 15. He speaks of the master (kurios) in 14:4; of the Lord no less than three times in verse 6; and likewise three times in verse 8. He cannot stress it too much. We are not responsible to our brethren for our actions — for our liberties or for our forbiddings, but to the Lord, and each of us will give an account of himself to God. This is often forgotten and we are prone to draw a line which our brethren must toe because it is one which suits us. But not all have the same faith or the same liberty. Some are weak in their conscience, and others are strong. We must not despise nor must we condemn. They are our brethren for whom Christ died: why then should we despise them? We are not invested with judicial authority over them: why then should we judge them? It will suffice if we can give a satisfactory account of ourselves in respect of things which we allow or disallow in our own lives. That is as much as we can manage.

HE WAS WOUNDED

H.A. Cameron

Wounds, according to the definition of the surgeon, are divisions of the soft parts of the body by a mechanical force applied externally, and they are classified by their different characteristics as (1) contused, (2) lacerated, (3) penetrating, (4) perforating, and (5) incised wounds. It is remarkable that in the simple statement, "He was wounded" (Isa. 53:5), there is included each kind of wound, as we may readily see from the examination of the scriptural records concerning the sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(1) The contused wound, a wound produced by a blunt instrument. Such would result from a blow by the rod, as foretold in Micah 5:1, "They shall smite the Judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek," and fulfilled, as recorded in Matthew 26:67, "They smote Him with rods" (Newberry margin), Matthew 27:30, "they took the reed, and smote Him on the head," and John 18:22, "one of the officers struck Him with a rod" (Newberry margin).

(2) The lacerated wound, a wound produced by a tearing instrument. Laceration of the tissues was the result of scourging, and scourging had become a fine art among the Romans at the time of the Lord's submission to its infliction. The Roman scourge was a many-tailed lash, each thong tipped with metal or ivory, so that, in the hands of a cruel expert, the sufferer might truly say, "The plowers plowed upon my back. They made long their furrows" (Psa. 129:3). The torture, the laceration, and the consequent loss of blood, often resulted in the death of the victim, but scourging, while part of our Lord's sufferings, was not to be the means of His death. Thus the prophetic word of Isaiah 50:6, "I gave my back to the smiters," finds its fulfilment as recorded in Matthew 27:26, and in John 19:1, where we read, "Then Pilate therefore took Jesus and scourged Him." And let us remember that upon His back, thus lacerated, the cross was laid as he went forth to the place called Calvary.

(3) The penetrating wound, a deep wound caused by a sharp pointed instrument. This we have exemplified in the wounds upon the head, produced by the crown of thorns. The Jerusalem thorn, from which that 'victor's crown' was platted, bore spicules four inches long, and, as the soldiers pressed down that cruel crown upon His head (Matt. 27:29; John 19:2), a circle of wounds ensued, wounds which were deepened by the blow of the reed when they smote Him on the head (Matt. 27:30).

(4) The perforating wound, from the Latin word, meaning to 'pierce through,' "They pierced My hands and My feet" (Psalm 22:16). The iron spikes were driven between the bones, separating but not breaking them. Crucifixion was not practiced as a means of capital punishment among the Jews, and the words of Psalm 22 must even have puzzled the writer, but at that early date, God was thereby 'signifying what death He would die,' for to Him, who knows the end from the beginning, the Roman subjugation of the Jews at the time of Messiah's advent, and His 'cutting off' by the excruciatingly painful death of crucifixion, were all foreknown. Yea, and to our Lord by anticipation and at last in fearful reality, "The decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem" was a matter of perfect knowledge. The prophetic words of Isaiah 53 were ever before Him, "He was wounded... He was bruised," and thus we can truly sing,
 'T'was love that sought Gethsemane,
 or Judas ne'er had found Him;
 'T'was love that held Him to the tree,
 or iron ne'er had bound Him."

(5) The incised wound, A cut produced by a sharp edged instrument. "But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water" (John 19:34). This wound was inflicted after the death of the Lord Jesus, inflicted by the practiced hand of the Roman soldier to make certain that whatever vestige of life was present would be extinguished, but while it did not cause death in His case, it is an assurance to all men that death had actually occurred, and it is also a fulfillment of the Scripture which saith, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced."

From that wound, so large that Thomas could have thrust his hand into it, "Came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bear record and his record is true." This wonderful sight awakened surprise and deep interest in John and may surely engage our attention also, namely the water that flowed from the pericardium and the blood that flowed from the heart. The pericardium is a closed sac encasing the heart and lubricated by a small amount of fluid (about a teaspoonful) to facilitate the motion of the heart. How could John, it may be asked, distinguish such a small quantity of water? In answer, let me quote a significant statement from a standard work of pathology, "The normal amount of the pericardial fluid is about a teaspoonful, but it may be increased to 100 c.c. (24 teaspoonfuls) where the death agony is prolonged." Here then is a possible explanation. The water bears mute testimony to the intense suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ. And what shall we say to the fact that, contrary to nature, blood flowed from One who had died? Is it not to show that in death, "He vanquished death and did not see corruption?" Thus the last wound, the last indignity offered to the body prepared for Him, proclaims both purification and redemption for, "The very spear that pierced His side, drew forth the blood to save."

Israel is described in Isaiah 1:6 as exhibiting to God's eye "From the sole of the foot even unto the head... wounds," and our Lord Jesus Christ, in submitting to this perfection of wounding from head to foot, was made in this sense like unto His brethren and 'perfect through sufferings' (Heb. 2:10).

May the contemplation of these wounds, whereby His body was broken and His blood was shed, deepen our love for Him who was "wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities," and cause each of us, like Thomas, to worship and acclaim Him as "My Lord and My God" (John 21:28).

"It was the sight of Thy dear cross
First weaned my soul from earthly things,
And taught me to esteem as dross
The mirth of fools, the pomp of kings."

QUOTATIONS & POEMS

I may no longer depend on pleasant impulses to bring me before the Lord. I must rather respond to principles I know to be right, whether I feel them to be enjoyable or not.

Jim Elliott, Missionary to Ecuador

A careless reader of the Scriptures never made a close walker with God.

R. C. Chapman

Meditation on the Word of God is the chief means of our growth in grace: without this even prayer itself will be little better than an empty form. Meditation nourishes faith, and faith and prayer are the keys which unlock the hidden treasures of the Word.

R. C. Chapman

Called out and cast out

He called me out, the Man with garments dyed,
I knew His voice, my Lord, the crucified
He showed Himself, and Oh I could not stay!
I had to follow Him, had to obey.

It cast me out, this world when once it found,
That I within my rebel heart had crowned
That Man it had rejected, spurned and slain,
Whom God in wondrous power had raised to
reign.

And, we are "without the camp", my Lord and I,
But O, His presence sweeter is than any earthly
tie;

Which once I counted greater than His claim,
I'm OUT not only from the world, but to His
Name.