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Mary, the Sister of Lazarus

The names of many godly women have been left on record in God's Word. This is true of the Old Testament as well as of the New. The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of inspiration, saw fit, for the instruction and encouragement of the Church in every age, to record the names and deeds, not only of men of renown but of women also. Of one woman it was said by the Saviour, "Verily I say unto you, whosoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she has done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." What notable examples there have been of eminent women in whose heart was the fear of God. The names of Sarah, Rahab, Deborah, Ruth, Esther, Mary, Lois, Eunice and many others are enshrined in the pages of Biblical history as those who were eminent in faith and godliness in their day and generation.

It is especially to Mary, the sister of Lazarus, that we would like to refer this month, and particularly to that description given of her in Luke Chapter 10, verse 39: "Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word." How highly descriptive and eloquent these words are, conveying as they do to us the picture of one whose heart was wholly set upon the Master whom she served. Here was one whose mind, at least for the present, was diverted from ministering to the needs of the household, and was wholly taken up with receiving nourishment and strength for her own soul from the words which the Saviour spoke. Whether Mary or Martha served Christ better on this occasion is a question that has been settled for ever by the Saviour Himself.

The example of Mary sitting at Jesus' feet is left on record for our instruction. May we learn from it and often be found at Jesus' feet. This is a safe place to be. It is our wisdom to keep near to Him, if we have been found of Him. If we remain at a distance we lose much. Is He not worthy of this — that we should sit at His feet? Did not John the Baptist

say of Him, "There standeth One among you, whom ye know not. He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose." We have reason indeed to humble ourselves before Him, and to count it our highest privilege to sit at His feet. Though He has now ascended into heaven yet we are not precluded from doing so, for to wait upon Him in the Courts of His House or at a Throne of grace is to be found where Mary was, if we are also in an expectant frame of heart waiting to hear the words that fall from His lips.

Mary was at Jesus' feet for the express purpose of hearing His word. With this she was wholly taken up — and well she might be for "never man spake like this Man." It was also said of the Saviour that "He taught as one having authority and not as the scribes." His words were life-giving. The woman of Samaria found His words to be so to her. She had to say: "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" Mary's soul was being fed as she sat at Jesus' feet. And so will your soul be fed, too, if you follow Mary in her waiting upon the Saviour. The Saviour's own soul was also being fed as He ministered to Mary's need. Did He not say to His disciples after He had been speaking to the woman of Samaria, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." He delights in feeding His people and in making Himself known to them. He warmly invites to Himself all who will come to Him. "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest, Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls for my yoke is easy and my burden is light." May we, by divine grace, respond to that invitation, so that like Mary we may be found sitting at Jesus' feet, hearing His word.

Sermon

By the late Rev. Donald Macfarlane, Dingwall

"And I will betroth thee unto Me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the Lord." — Hosea 2:19-20.

Here is a promise given to the children of Israel that notwithstanding that they had forsaken the Lord who had brought them into a covenant relation with Himself. He will bring them into a covenant relation which cannot be broken — I will betroth thee forever.

In speaking from the text we shall notice —

(I) The betrothal.

(II) The manner in which it is made.

(I) The Betrothal: Although to betroth means to enter into a contract with a view to marriage, here it signifies to marry. So it is rendered in the Gaelic translation. It is in this sense we are to use it. We shall notice:

1. The parties to be betrothed. Among the human race parties marry who are of equal rank in society, but it is not so in this case. There is an infinite difference in rank between husband and the spouse. The former is infinite in His being and attributes, while the latter is a creature whose creator is God. "Thy Maker is thine Husband; the Lord of Hosts is His name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall He be called" (Isaiah 54:5). What a glorious husband the church has; there is none like Him, none so good, so powerful, and so wealthy. "The earth belongs unto the Lord and all that it contains" — for supplying all the temporal needs of His church, and He has unsearchable riches of grace for supplying her spiritual needs. The party to be betrothed is not only a creature but a sinful creature. This is true of all the human race by nature. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." They were shining in the beauty of holiness as they came forth from the hand of the Creator, but are now by sin uglier than any creature on the earth. As it was to the Jews the promise was primarily made, it is a wonder that God would betroth them to Himself, for they were guilty of spiritual adultery. The Lord was their first husband, but they forsook Him, broke the marriage covenant and married another husband — a false God. "If a man put away his wife, and she go from him and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? Shall not that land be greatly polluted: but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the Lord" (Jer. 3:1). This is a wonder indeed, but the God of all grace deals thus with sinners. What a wonder that the Lord God would look upon such sinful creatures and bring them into union with Himself. The church, in her natural condition, was not only sinful but miserable, liable to all the miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever. If the husband was rich, she was poor. She lost all the riches given her in her first creation. Nothing belonged to her in her fallen condition but sin and death, yet this is the very person to whom God says, "I will betroth thee." Like the Jews, we as a nation were brought into a covenant relation with God, but we broke the covenant, forsook our good husband who did great things for us, and married a cruel husband who cannot do us any good but much evil. We

joined ourselves to idols, yet He calls us back by the Word of the Gospel to betroth us to Himself, if we return to Him with faith and repentance. We ought to wonder at this, but all His works are works of wonder.

The consent of the woman is necessary to marriage. What way or ways did God take to gain the consent of his intended spouse? He hedged up her way with thorns and built a strong and high wall which made it impossible for her to take any further steps after her lovers. When the Lord begins to bring sinners to Himself He makes this world a wilderness to them, so that they find by sad experience that it will not yield to them the happiness they expected to find in it. He convinces them by His Spirit of their sin and misery. He uses His Word and providence in dealing with them, and reminds them that it was He Himself and not their idols that gave them the temporal mercies they enjoyed. "For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal. Therefore will I return and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof, and will recover my wool and my flax given to cover her nakedness. And now will I discover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and none shall deliver her out of my hands. I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts, and I will destroy her vines, and her fig trees, whereof she hath said, these are my rewards that my lovers have given me; and I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall eat them. And I will visit upon her the days of Baalim, wherein she burnt her incense to them, and she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and she went after her lovers, and forgot me, saith the Lord" (vv. 8-13). This way of dealing with her had the effect of making her see the vanity of idols, and the bitterness of the sin of idolatry, and of commending God to her as the giver of all good. Like the prodigal, she finding herself in the miserable position into which she had brought herself by forsaking God, and remembering that even the servants in the heavenly Father's house were better off than she — she by the teaching of God's Spirit resolved to return to her first husband; whom she had foolishly deserted. "I will go and return to my first husband; for then was it better with me than now" (v. 7). Her consent was gained at last, she was "made willing in the day of God's power."

Who performs the work of betrothal? Ministers join parties in marriage, but it is God only that does this work; for He says, "I will betroth thee." If you are united to God in spiritual marriage it is He that did it."

(II) The manner of the betrothal. There are seven things in the manner:

1. It is forever. In marriage the covenant relation lasts till the death of either party or both. It is of the law of marriage that the Apostle Paul speaks when he says, "The law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth" (Rom. 7:1). But, in the case of the spiritual marriage, neither party ever dies. This is true not only of God, but it is also true of the church. "He that believeth in Me hath everlasting life" (John 6:47). If you come to Him today to receive Him, and be brought into covenant relation with Him, that relation shall be everlasting. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us" (Rom. 8:35-37).

2. In righteousness. It is a righteous or just thing of God to save sinners and bring them nigh to Himself. "He is a just God and a Saviour." He is as just in saving as He is in punishing. He does it in righteousness also inasmuch as the bride is not only accepted on the ground of Christ's righteousness, but because it is with the white robe of Christ's righteousness she is clothed."

3. In judgment. The betrothal takes not place rashly, without previous consideration; everything in it was well considered and arranged in the court of God's will; and in the covenant of grace, which is well ordered in all things and sure.

4. In lovingkindness. In the Gaelic translation the word lovingkindness is rendered into two words, *caoimhneas* agus *caomhgradh* — that is kindness and tender love. Kindness is a disposition to be good to another person or persons, and is the effect of love. The love of God is the great source of salvation and the cause of all the kindness that He shows to His people. David loved Jonathan so much that he showed much kindness to his son Mephibosheth on Jonathan's account. In every right marriage there is love, mutual love in both parties. Here there is love on the part of God, and there is love on the part of the church. It is the love of God that is meant here which is the cause of her love to Him.

5. And in mercies. Mercy has respect to misery. The church before her betrothal was in misery, but the Lord had mercy on her. "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us" (Titus 3:4-5). Mercy in God flows forth to sinners through the atonement of Christ.

6. In faithfulness. In keeping the marriage covenant fidelity or faithfulness is required. Faithfulness here signifies (i) truth. The betrothal was to be accomplished not in a mere outward profession but in reality and

truth. (ii) Faithfulness in fulfilling all that He promised to do to His church. "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it" (1 Thes. 5:24).

7. Knowledge of the Lord is necessary in order to the betrothal. "Thou shalt know the Lord". No sensible woman marries a man of whom she is ignorant as to what kind of man he is. Although the church was in the state of nature ignorant of God, she is taught by the Spirit and Word to know Him; her mind is enlightened in His knowledge as He revealed Himself in the Old and New Testaments. "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6). In her time of ignorance, she could make no distinction between the true God and Baal. But now she knows the Lord. And, not only so, but she is able to realise her relation to Him, and to call Him "Ishi," or "my Husband." Although she may not be able at all times in the full assurance of faith to say this, yet there are times in which she has no difficulty in saying it, and when she cannot say it in words her conduct speaks for her. After her betrothal she renounces forever Baal, who was formerly her lord and husband. His names are taken out of her mouth by her new husband. "For I will take the names of Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be remembered by their name" (v. 17). Those who keep up the memory of false gods or goddesses prove by their conduct that the living and true God is not their husband. There are many in our day who celebrate the memory of Easter, a heathen idol that was worshipped by those who were ignorant of the true God. It is lamentable that in this 20th century this false goddess is still worshipped in the land of the Gospel, and is worshipped even in Dingwall at a time which they call Easter, but which they cannot find in the Word of God. The term Easter is indeed found in Acts 12:4, but it is indeed a mistranslation of the original. The word in the original is pascha, which means passover and not Easter.

Concluding remarks: The promise of betrothal includes Gentiles as well as Jews. "I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy" (v. 23). The Apostle Peter applies this to the Gentiles. "Which in times past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy" (1st Peter 2:10). The Apostle Paul speaks of this as a mystery. "Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men." That the Gentiles should be made fellow heirs and of the same body, and partakers of His promise by Christ in the Gospel (Eph. 3:5-6). How thankful we ought to be that the Gospel came to us who are of the

Gentiles. And it has been blessed to us in bringing us into the covenant relation with God of which we have spoken, we have still more reason to thank the Lord and praise Him for His goodness to us. In our state of nature we were not His people, and, in that state, we had no right to call Him our God and our Husband, but if we obtained mercy we are His people and He is our God. Before parties marry they have thoughts about it, and this is true of the spiritual marriage. God had thoughts about it from all eternity, and the sinner who is betrothed had thoughts about it previous to the day of his espousals. He began to think about it when he was awakened to a sense of his need of Christ revealed in the Gospel. He was by nature married to the law as an husband; but when he broke the law it began to curse him, and he found out that he could not by anything he might do or suffer come to peaceable terms with that husband; but having been informed by the Gospel that Christ the Son of God died that sinners might be saved, his thoughts were directed towards Him, in the hope that He might bring him into saving union with Himself.

Parties intending to marry not only think about the matter, but they speak of it. God spoke of it and still speaks of it in the Scriptures, and the sinner spoke of it also, especially in prayer, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Or, "Oh, that I might be found in Christ, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but the righteousness of Christ; the righteousness which is of God by faith." Many were speaking and thinking of marrying that never married, but that is not the case of those that are saved. They in God's good time believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and were saved. Their new husband broke down the tie between them and their old husband, the law, so that they are no longer under it as a covenant of works. Every time the Gospel is preached sinners are invited to come to God that He might betroth them to Himself. We now invite you to come as you are, sinful, miserable, and lost. What response are you prepared to give to His gracious call? If you refuse to comply with the invitation, and continue to refuse to the end of your life, your punishment shall be greater than that of the heathen who never heard the Gospel. "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear, forget also thine own people, and thy father's house" (Psalm 45:10).

Christ gives last knocks. When your heart becomes hard and careless, then fear lest Christ may have given a last knock.

R. M. McCheyne

The Manner of Preaching

By the late Rev. Walter Scott, Chesley, Ontario

(1) Singing the Gospel. Christ has not left it as a matter of indifference whether the Gospel be sung, read, or preached by His official servants. The ostentatious zeal of some has recently led them to "sing the Gospel." (Moody and Sankey). The phrase is new to the Church, and we are made to wonder where authority has been obtained for such a device. The very rudiments or first principles or religion teach us that without faith it is impossible to please God, and that faith rests upon the Word of God. But where or what portion of Scripture does faith rest upon, when the minister of God sings the Gospel? If no command exists in the perfect law of God we cannot do otherwise than esteem the practice to be will-worship, and those who maintain and uphold it, to be teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. It may be felt to be attractive. It may bring many together who would otherwise despise or neglect religious assemblies; there may be a pious look about it, and we do not deny that it may produce a type of devout feelings. But, after all, this kind of preaching is only as "a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal," as the voice of "a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play skilfully on an instrument," and the solemn question may be appropriately addressed to the votaries of this novelty: "Who hath required this at your hand?"

(2) Reading Sermons. This custom, not a little prevalent in ecclesiastical bodies, has been characteristically described by an eminent divine of the seventeenth century, as "this offensive innovation." This may be taken as a fair expression of popular opinion on the subject. Scripture does not inform us without a reason that Christ, when in the synagogue of Nazareth, closed the book before commencing His sermon. Sometimes the monosyllable "speak" is employed to denote "preach". Hence the prayer of the Apostle, "Grant unto Thy servants that with all boldness they may speak Thy Word" (Acts iv. 29); and again in verse 31: "they spake the Word of God with boldness." We are told of Christ Himself, "and He spake many things unto them in parables." Now speaking is opposed to reading; when we speak to any one we do not read to him; to speak is to employ language extempore. "Praying that God would open unto us a door of utterance to speak the mystery of Christ." Thus we have Scripture interpreting Scripture, and proving that the preaching which is spoken of in the Bible, and which is incumbent on every

minister of the Gospel, is not reading. No Scriptural warrant can be found for the latter. This conclusion is supported by both the nature and the matter of preaching, and is opposed to the exercise of those gifts which God has ever given, and has promised to give, to His ambassadors. If it be eloquence that is the gift of the preacher, as in the case of Apollos, where is the scope for eloquence in reading? If it is the exercising of reasoning that the minister — like Paul — excels in, then, by reading the reasoning loses that vigour and power which are so essential to it? Neither can we conceive of James and John — the sons of thunder — preaching after such a manner. The minister of the sanctuary has no right to exclude the exercise of the memory from that part of the Gospel worship in which God claims a special propriety, and challenges the bringing into His service of every power and faculty of the mind.

The Editor of Calvin's Letters, speaking of Farel, whom he described as "the most illustrious missionary in French Switzerland", says: "Farel was a genuine orator. All his contemporaries speak with admiration of his eloquent discourses, of his beautiful exhortations, and of his prayers, so fervent that no one could hear them without being charmed. But it appears that his discourses were all extempore; none of them has been preserved, but they had a few of the defects of improvisation. Their fault was prolixity. Calvin, in his preface to the Psalms, paid, among other things, a brilliant tribute to the eloquence of his friend, and to those thunders of the Word (*tonitrua*) by which he had been enchained at Geneva."

Further, read sermons are calculated to hinder the edification of the people. There ought to be the eye of the preacher, meeting the eye of his audience, and a kindled animation that will not only fascinate the attention, but that will make the words of the preacher living words, and that will give them such force and power as that they will be sent home, and retained, at least, by the memory, if not by the judgment and affections; whereas in reading, the voice gets strained and uniform, and the people dull and listless.

Reading the Gospel, instead of preaching, appears to have been unknown in the primitive Church. The late Dr Lee, in his speech in the Established Church Assembly, pleading in defence of his innovations, though not sanctioned, points to other things allowed in the Church without any authority. He says: "You read your sermons. There is no law on that subject, but in the early period of the Church the reading of sermons was unknown, and the first man that attempted it in the High

Church of Edinburgh is characterised by Baille as a 'presumptuous puppy.'

The tendency of this innovation has been to degenerate sermons into elaborate essays, and to give more attention to rhetoric, philosophy, and logic, than to the affectionate and suitable setting forth of Gospel truth to the varied capacities of the people.

We will close this sketch with a quotation from one of Calvin's Letters, addressed to the Protector, Somerset, who was Regent of England under the minority of Edward the Sixth. The letter is dated from Geneva, 22nd October, 1548, and is not at all complimentary to those ministers who at that time read their sermons. Calvin says: "What I have thus suggested as to the manner of instructions is only that the people be so taught as to be touched to the quick, and that they may feel that what the Apostle says is true (Heb. iv) that 'the Word of God is a two-edged sword, piercing even through the thoughts and affections to the very marrow of the bones.' I speak thus because it appears to me that there is very little preaching of a lively kind in the Kingdom, but that the greater part deliver it by way of reading from a written discourse. I see very well the necessity which constrains you to that; for, in the first place, you have not, as I believe, such well approved and competent pastors as you desire. Wherefore, you need forthwith to supply this want. Secondly, there may very likely be among them many flighty persons who would go beyond all bound, sowing their own silly fancies, as often happens on occasions of a change. But all these considerations ought not to hinder the ordinance of Jesus Christ from having free course in the preaching of the Gospel. Now, this preaching ought not to be lifeless, but lively, to teach, to exhort, to reprove; as the Apostle Paul says in speaking thereof to Timothy (II Tim. iii). So, indeed, that if an unbeliever enter he may be so effectually arrested and convinced as to give glory to God, as Paul says in another passage (I Cor. xiv). You are also aware how he speaks of the lively power and energy with which they ought to speak, who would approve themselves as good and faithful ministers of God, who must not make a parade of rhetoric only to gain esteem for themselves; but that the Spirit of God ought to sound forth by their voice, so as to work with mighty energy."

"If ye never had a sick night and a pained soul for sin, ye have not yet lighted upon Christ".

Samuel Rutherford

The Theology of John Bunyan

By Rev. John M. Brentnall

This year marks the 350th anniversary of the birth of John Bunyan, 'the immortal dreamer'. Despite the existence of numerous Bunyan biographies, studies of Bunyan characters, and editions of Bunyan's allegories, the theology of the Bedfordshire tinker is little known. This is a serious lack, for Bunyan was both the author of no less than 59 titles and a thoroughly Reformed divine. The fact that he was unlearned in the academic methods of the 'schools' detracts nothing from the depth and soundness of his theology. Bunyan learned all he knew from a prayerful study of the Scriptures, a few choice books, local ecclesiastical tradition, and close contact with life in Puritan rural England. Indeed, it was the uniqueness of his personal spiritual experience of the Truth, coupled with his keen observation of 17th century life and character, which stamp his writings with that peculiar vigour, freshness and richness of imagery which has endeared him to thousands of readers over the years and in many lands. In this series of articles, we shall endeavour to trace the leading features of Bunyan's theology, following the outline provided by Dr R. L. Greaves in his recent study of the Puritan preacher.

Bunyan's God

Because his religion was intensely experimental and only barely intellectual, Bunyan made no attempt to systematise the attributes of God. When he mentions them, it is only to tell us that they are 'inconceivably perfect and infinite, not to be comprehended by things in earth or things in heaven', and that 'though by the Word we may distinguish, yet may we not divide them, or presume to appoint them their places in the Godhead', for 'wisdom is in His justice, holiness is in His power, justice is in His mercy, holiness is in His love, power is in His goodness'. When he distinguishes them, it is primarily to express his own sense of awe in contemplating them: 'the Name of God is dreadful to us,' he writes, 'specially when He is discovered to us by those names that declare His justice, holiness, power and glory'. In particular, His holiness can 'not give way for such unclean wretches' as we are 'to abide in His sight', and His justice 'once offended, knoweth not how to show any pity or compassion to the offender', and will inflict eternal punishment 'unless infinite satisfaction be given to it'.

It was a terrifying sight of the holy justice of God which first drove

Bunyan to seek refuge in His mercy. Hence mercy became to him a peculiarly precious attribute. 'If there had been no mercy,' he cries, 'there had been no redemption'. Similarly, his remarks on God's grace spring straight from his own experience: 'There is nothing in heaven or earth' he writes, 'that can so awe the heart as the grace of God. 'Tis that which makes a man fear, 'tis that which makes a man tremble, 'tis that which makes a man bow and bend, and break to pieces'. Likewise, when he speaks of the love of God, it is usually in terms of sense rather than of description. It is, he says, 'better felt and enjoyed than talked of'.

If any attributes loom larger in Bunyan's thinking than others, they are justice and mercy. Accordingly, he depicts Prince Emmanuel setting up the white flag of mercy on Mount Gracious, 'to give notice to Mansoul that He could and would yet be gracious if they turned to Him', and the red flag of wrath on Mount Justice, in the care of Captain Judgment, 'whose scutcheon was the Burning Fiery Furnace'. By this imagery, Bunyan would teach us that God's mercy could never favour those whom His justice opposed. Hence a way must be found by which justice would be executed for sin, and mercy bestowed on the sinner. The solution was the atonement made by Christ as His people's Substitute.

Redemption Accomplished

'Mansoul is mine by right of purchase. I have bought it, O Diabolus, I have bought it to myself . . . Nor did I do this to the halves; my Father's law and justice, that were both concerned in the threatening upon transgression, are both now satisfied, and very well content that Mansoul should be delivered'. And as grace in the Father 'moved Him to give Christ a ransom for sinners', so grace in the Son constrained Him 'to do this great service for man'. Jesus Christ is therefore the only One 'from whom, by, or through whom, the grace of God doth come to us'. 'What grace was manifest in Thy condescension!' he exclaims; 'Grace brought Thee down from heaven; grace stripped Thee of Thy glory; grace made Thee poor and despicable; grace made Thee bear such burdens of sin . . . Grace was in all Thy tears; grace came bubbling out of Thy side with Thy blood'. Grace is thus the fountain, as well as the fruit, of the atonement.

But could not 'the promise and God's grace, without Christ's blood . . . have saved us?' For Bunyan, even the possibility of God being merciful to sinners without an atonement was unthinkable. 'How can He pardon' he asks indignantly, 'without He be presented with that satisfaction for sin that to all points of the highest perfection doth answer the

demands of this infinite and eternal justice?' 'The justice of God is so pure, that if it be not completely satisfied in every particular, it giveth nothing but curses'. When Christ, therefore, 'stood before God in our sins', grace and justice were reconciled in the salvation of sinners. 'Our salvation is grounded in justice, because merited by blood'.

But for whom did Christ die and make satisfaction? Bunyan's reply is emphatic. He 'reconciled to God in the body of His flesh, as a Common Person, all and every one of God's elect'. Bunyan's belief in a limited, rather than a universal, atonement, is strikingly expressed when he writes: 'All the elect did mystically hang upon the cross in Christ', and 'the blood of Christ is sprinkled upon the elect for the justice of God to look on'. Though Christ's death was sufficient to save all, it was intended to save only some.

Redemption Applied

Bunyan saw the Christian life as a journey along the way of salvation, beginning with a departure from the City of Destruction, continuing through the Wicket Gate, on to the Palace Beautiful, and culminating in a glorious entry into the Heavenly Jerusalem. This journey involved two deliverances: first, 'from the guilt of sin . . . to be set free therefrom before God'; second, 'from all those hazards that we run betwixt our state of justification and our state of glorification'. No sinner, however, will set out on this journey unless he has been chosen to it, for 'the Father, by His grace, hath bound up them that shall go to heaven in an eternal decree of election'. This decree includes both the end and all the means which God makes effectual to lead to that end. A specific number of sinners, therefore, being 'chosen in Christ to salvation', are certain not only to begin this journey, but also to reach their destination, having survived all hazards. The rest God leaves 'in their sins to perish by His judgments'.

(a) Effectual Calling

The question arises as to how this journey is begun, and this hinges on the state of man's will. 'The will, which way that goes, all goes: if it be to heaven or hell'. If the will is free, it will lead the soul to heaven by its natural inclination — this is Pelagianism; if it can cooperate with offered grace, it will share with God the task and honour of taking the soul to glory — this is Arminianism; but if it is in complete bondage to sin, and unable to take one step towards heaven, how can the soul even begin its journey? For Bunyan, who was a strict Calvinist, the answer lay in the

sovereign potency of divine grace. 'I am not a Free-willer' he states unequivocally, 'I do abhor it'. 'The soul, where grace is wanting, is not at liberty to act simply, but is biassed by the power of sin'. Not until the Word of God, 'attended with an arm that is omnipotent', enters the soul, can the elect sinner begin his journey for heaven. This Word, by which the dead sinner is quickened and enabled to go on his way rejoicing, is 'Jesus Christ held forth to us, and offered to be our righteousness'. Bunyan believed in the Free Offer of Christ in the Gospel, 'without money and without price'. 'The waters (of grace) are common', he exhorts, 'but you must come to them', and where the Spirit is given, sinners 'shall drink it in by vehement thirst, as the parched ground drinks in the rain'. And 'when this living water is received, it takes up its seat in the heart, whence it spreads itself to the awakening of all the powers of the soul'. It is not 'the over-heavy load of sin, but the discovery of mercy; not the roaring of the devil, but the drawing of the Father, that makes a man come to Jesus Christ: I myself know all these things'. Bunyan learned by experience that 'salvation is of the Lord'. Not all men, however, are effectually called. Some 'despise the offer of His grace'. The penalty for this refusal is eternal damnation, where the condemned sinner will be forced to acknowledge: 'The fault was mine, His grace I did refuse'. Nevertheless, his damnation is due not merely to his own sin, but also to his having the sin of Adam imputed to him, and ultimately, to his eternal reprobation, for in the last analysis, God 'had a mind to damn him for his sins, and therefore would not let him see nor have a heart to repent for them, lest he should convert, and his damnation, which God had appointed, should be frustrate'.

(b) Faith, Justification and Repentance

The exhibition of Christ in the Gospel is made effectual by the Holy Spirit to beget faith in the heart of His elect. 'God mixeth it with the Word, when He absolutely intendeth the salvation of the sinner', so that, as Luther says: 'faith taketh hold of Christ, and hath Him present, and holdeth Him inclosed, as the ring doth the precious stone'. In particular, it enables the sinner 'to look' away from all creature-righteousness 'to the perfect righteousness of Christ for life'. Hence, God makes a man righteous by 'putting the righteousness of God upon him', and this righteousness being received by faith, 'we are justified by faith . . . by the righteousness of faith, that is, by that righteousness that faith embraceth, layeth hold of, and helpeth the soul to rest upon, and to trust to, for justification'. Thus God 'justifies us, by bestowing upon us, not by

expecting from us. He justifies us by His grace, not by our works'. The language of the believer, therefore, on his journey to heaven, is always that of Christian: 'As for this coat that is on my back, it was given me by the Lord of the place whither I go, and that . . . to cover my nakedness with. And I take it as a token of His kindness to me, for I had nothing but rags before'. To be clothed in this garment is to be freed from the guilt of sin, the condemnation of the law, and the eternal wrath of God.

Henceforth, faith is the great 'principle of life by which a Christian lives', the great 'principle of motion by which it (i.e. the soul) walks towards heaven in the way of holiness'. With this great truth in mind, Bunyan gives Captain Credence (who is not a native resident of Mansoul but one of Emmanuel's officers, and whose colour-bearer is Mr Promise) complete command over the captured town: 'I have made thee the Lord Lieutenant over all the forces in Mansoul, so that from this day forward, all men in Mansoul shall be at thy word, and thou shalt be he that shall lead in, and that shall lead out, Mansoul . . . and at thy command shall the rest of the captains be'.

Like faith, repentance is a life-long principle of grace in the heart, by which the believer, having received a change of mind about sin, turns 'from nature to grace, and . . . from the imperfections which attend a state of grace, to glory'. He will not stop in the middle chambers of Solomon's temple, but will go right on to the top of the stairs, climbing every step with a contrite spirit, self-loathing, and hatred to sin.

(c) Sanctification and Perseverance

It was Bunyan's deep conviction that true 'grace leaves no power, faculty, or passion of the soul unsanctified'. So we find Emmanuel commanding 'that the image of Diabolus should be taken down from the place where it was set up, and that they should destroy it utterly . . . And that the image of Shaddai His Father should be set up again, with His own, upon the castle gates'. The Father and the Son, by the Spirit, accomplish the sanctification of the justified sinner by 'possessing him with a principle of righteousness' which, branching out into all the graces — especially faith, repentance, love, obedience and hope — purifies him from sin, and produces holiness of heart and conduct, which is the pilgrim's path to eternal life.

In view, however, of the numerous hazards bestrewing the way, how shall the pilgrim ever arrive at his heavenly destination? The Palace Beautiful provides the answer: 'Interpreter took Christian . . . into a place, where was a fire burning against a wall, and one standing by it

always, casting much water upon it to quench it: yet did the fire burn higher and hotter . . . This fire is the work of grace that is wrought in the heart; he that casts water upon it, to extinguish and put it out, is the devil; but in that thou seest the fire notwithstanding burn higher and hotter, thou shalt also see the reason of that: so he had him about to the back side of the wall, where he saw a Man with a vessel of oil in his hand, of which he did also continually cast, but secretly, into the fire'. Thus Christ secretly pours the oil of His grace into the believer's soul, preserving him from destruction, and enabling him to persevere. Our preservation is as much of grace as is our justification and our sanctification.

For Bunyan, this preservation is guaranteed by the intercessory work of Christ within the veil, as His people's covenanted Great High Priest, for 'the durableness of His intercession proves that the covenant, in which those that come to God by Him are concerned and wrapt up, is not shaken, broken, or made invalid by all their weaknesses and infirmities'. After all, he points out, the door of the ark was shut by God, not Noah, and 'if God shuts in or out, who can alter it?' With the destination assured, Bunyan urges that 'true Christians should persevere right on, and not turn back, whatever they meet with in the way'.

(d) The Two Covenants

Among the many hazards to which the Christian pilgrim is exposed, doubts, fears, and spiritual desertions play no small part. Bunyan's personal experience of these things led him to examine the exact nature of the relationship between the believer and his God, in order to clarify those marks which distinguish him from the unbeliever or the Gospel hypocrite. This relationship he understood best, like most of his Puritan contemporaries, in terms of the the Biblical scheme of covenants.

By nature, we are all included in *the Covenant of Works*, made by God with Adam our representative head in Eden, the terms of which promised life upon perfect obedience to the law and threatened death upon disobedience. This law being engraven on our hearts, we naturally turn to it for justification, even when our first parent's 'breach of the law' has broken that covenant and forfeited all right to life by it. But 'it is forced, as it is just, to pass sentence of condemnation on everyone that in every particular fulfils it not'. The Mosaic law, being but an enlarged republication of the law originally given to Adam, serves precisely the same function towards sinners of mankind, for as 'the chief and most pure resemblance of the justice and holiness of the heavenly Majesty', it 'doth

hold forth to all men the sharpness and keenness of His wrath'. This is why, when 'Christian turned out of his way to go to Mr Legality's house for help . . . his burden, now, seemed heavier to him than while he was in his way. There came also flashes of fire out of the hill, that made Christian afraid that he should be burned'. In his attempt to impress this truth upon children, Bunyan quaintly draws our attention to a 'fair and comely' Moses who can by no means whiten the blackness of his wife's skin, adding:

'The law is very holy, just and good,
And to it is espoused all flesh and blood:
But this its goodness it cannot bestow
On any that are wedded thereunto'.

Our only hope, therefore, lies in *the Covenant of Grace*, for 'the king and His Son foresaw all this long before, yea, and sufficiently provided for the relief of Mansoul . . . This Son of Shaddai, I say, having stricken hands with His Father, and promised that He would be His servant to recover Mansoul again, stood by His resolution . . . The purport of which agreement was this: to wit, that at a certain time prefixed by both, the King's Son should take a journey into the country of universe, and there in a way of justice and equity, by making of amends for the follies of Mansoul, He should lay a foundation of her perfect deliverance'. And since 'all the conditions' of this covenant 'are already fulfilled for us by Jesus Christ, . . . every promise that is a new covenant promise if there be any condition in it, our Undertaker hath accomplished that for us', so that what was a covenant for Christ becomes a free gift to us. Being grounded in 'the unchangeable purpose of God, and the efficacy of the obedience of Christ', this covenant is everlasting and unbreakable. 'My sins' wrote Bunyan with evident comfort, 'break not the covenant: but them notwithstanding, God's covenant stands fast with Him'. 'The way', therefore, 'to prove ourselves under grace' is by believing in Jesus Christ . . . to triumph over the devil, sin, death and hell'.

This would have satisfied any Antinomian as a solution to the doubts and fears of the deserted believer. Not so Bunyan. 'The doctrine of the new covenant' he affirms, 'doth call for holiness, engage to holiness, and maketh the children of that covenant to take pleasure therein. Let no man therefore conclude . . . that the doctrine of the Gospel is a licentious doctrine'. Hence, Emmanuel counsels Mansoul to 'make thyself by my law straight steps for thy feet'. While no longer the ground of our acceptance, 'the whole law, as to the morality of it, is delivered into the hand of Christ, who imposes it now . . . as a rule of life to those that have

believed in Him'. On this point, as on virtually all the forementioned doctrines, Bunyan's teaching is that of the strict Calvinistic Puritans, the Covenanters, and the Marrowmen. By distinguishing the morality of the law from its ministration on Sinai, Bunyan gives us to understand that the clearest evidence of being in a state of grace is the possession and practice of commanded holiness in heart and life.

The Palace Beautiful

(a) The Church

During his journey between the City of Destruction and the Heavenly Jerusalem, Christian 'lifted up his eyes, and behold, there was a very stately palace before him, the name whereof was Beautiful, and it stood just by the highway side. So . . . he made haste and went forward, that if possible he might get lodging there . . . Then said Christian to the Porter: Sir, what house is this? and may I lodge here tonight? The Porter answered: 'This house was built by the Lord of the hill, and he built it for the relief and security of pilgrims'. In these allegorical terms, Bunyan introduces us to the Independent congregation, the society of the godly he knew. His concept of the Church was that of a 'particular congregation of professing Christians', visibly expressing that universal Church of Christ which 'comprehendeth all the parts of it, even from Adam to the very world's end, whether in heaven or earth'. It was beautiful to Bunyan as 'the place in which God doth beget all those that are the children of His' and then build them up in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation. Should a spiritual pilgrim be in favour of 'separating from the unconverted and open profane', he would be introduced to 'one of the virgins of this place, who', if she liked his talk, would bring him 'in to the rest of the family, according to the rules of the house. So Watchful the porter rang a bell, at the sound of which came out at the door of the house a grave and beautiful damsel, named Discretion'. The congregation itself was thus 'to judge of persons by their words and lives . . . and . . . if in word and life a man be as he ought, he is to be accounted a visible saint, and orderly ought to be received of the Church as such'.

This principle of visible separation from the world Bunyan accepted wholesale from the Bedford congregation to which he first joined himself and later ministered. On admission into the Separatist Church, members 'determined to walk together in the fellowship of the Gospel' and 'after prayer and seeking God as before, with one consent they jointly first gave themselves to the Lord, and one to another by the will of God'. No

coercion was ever to be used, but the two rules to be applied to all prospective members were: (i) 'faith in Christ and holiness of life, without respect to this or that circumstance or opinion in outward and circumstantial things', and (ii) willingness 'to be gathered into their body and fellowship'.

Since strict holiness, or 'the word of faith, and . . . good works, moral duties Gospelised' was required of every member, discipline was enforced to ensure its maintenance. Spiritualising the snuffers by the candlesticks in Solomon's temple (1 Kings 7:50), Bunyan remarks: 'If our snuffs are our superfluities of naughtiness, our snuffers then are those righteous reproofs, rebukes and admonitions which Christ has ordained to be in His house for good'. Should these fail to reclaim the erring, the congregationally-administered ban was solemnly pronounced, and the offender excommunicated 'by the holy compulsion of the Church . . . and by the judicial judgment of God'. Only thus can the honour of Christ and the purity of His Church be preserved.

(b) The Ministry

'When God ordained a word of grace to save us', writes Bunyan, 'He also in His decree provided ministers to preach it to us to that end'. Accordingly, when Christian stood still, because he knew not which way to go, Evangelist came to his aid, and 'pointing with his finger over a very wide field', said: Do you see yonder wicket gate? The man said: No . . . Do you see yonder shining light? He said: I think I do. Then said Evangelist: Keep that light in your eye, and go up directly thereto, so shalt thou see the gate; at which when thou knockest, it shall be told thee what thou shalt do'. Ever since Pastor John Gifford played the role of Evangelist in his own conversion, Bunyan held the Christian ministry in the highest esteem. The Lord's messenger in the Lord's message would therefore be fitted with certain necessary qualifications: he would be sound in doctrine, exemplary in faith and holiness, apt to teach, reprove, and exhort, and be capable of conducting public worship acceptably. Indeed, the minister in Bunyan's eyes was no less than a co-worker with God in the awful business of admitting souls to, and excluding them from, His kingdom — he ministerially, the Lord efficaciously. It was therefore with a deep and solemn sense of his accountability for souls that, when called in 1672 'to the pastoral office or eldership' in Bedford, he gave up himself 'to serve Christ, and His Church in that charge'.

While utterly opposed to the priestly ideals of Archbishop Laud and his Restoration successors, Bunyan was equally antagonistic to the

anticlericalism of the sects. We notice also that he found a place in the Church for the Scriptural office of ruling elder. The Independent pastor was the congregation's sole teacher, and with him, the elders were overseers. Hence it was unnecessary for pastor and people to keep a fine balance between clerical tyranny and congregational anarchy, as in much present-day Independency.

(c) The Sacraments

'Two sacraments I do believe there be,
Baptism and the Supper of the Lord:
Both mysteries divine, which do to me,
By God's appointment, benefit afford:
But shall they be my God? or shall I have
Of them so foul and impious a thought,
To think that from the curse they can me save?
Bread, wine, nor water me no ransom bought.'

This poetic doggerel, the opening coupled excepted, conceals rather than expresses Bunyan's sacramental views, which were decidedly Zwinglian in tone, quite confused, and very tenaciously held. In the first place, he rejected both sacraments as means of grace, holding that they were no more than two of a number of ordinances, each somehow useful to the Christian life. Similarly, he provoked the enmity of Baptists and Paedobaptists alike by denying that baptism is the form of our initiation into covenant with God and of our admission into the visible church, claiming that it is 'no part of church-worship' at all, and a matter for the individual conscience. This error sprang from several mistaken notions: (i) that 'circumcision in the flesh was a type of circumcision in the heart', so that, the type being fulfilled in the New Testament believer, baptism is rendered unnecessary. Circumcision, however, was not a type at all, but a sign and seal of the Covenant of Grace, as is baptism. Colossians 2:11 makes it abundantly clear that both circumcision and baptism signify regeneration; therefore baptism is to be retained in the Church as the New Testament counterpart of circumcision; (ii) that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is sufficient for Church membership, but Bunyan offers neither explanation nor warrant for this Enthusiastic notion; (iii) that men who lack 'light' on the subject should not be refused Church-membership, especially as baptism is merely an outward ceremony. Suffice to say that Bunyan was rightly rebuked by his Calvinistic contemporaries for making men's 'light' the warrant of faith rather than

God's precepts. This is a distinctively Quaker principle and a denial of the sole authority of Scripture.

Bunyan's confining of baptism to only adult 'visible saints' should not surprise us, since he denied both children and the sacrament any relation to the Covenant of Grace.

Bunyan's views on the Lord's Supper are quite as confused and unorthodox as those on baptism. What was designed as the great nourishing sacrament of the Church became for Bunyan simply an expression of believers' 'communion with their Head, and with one another as members of Him', a communal commemorative meal 'incumbent upon the Church, as a Church'. Inconsistently enough, Bunyan would admit 'visible saints' to church membership without 'light' on baptism, but not without 'light' on the Lord's Supper. Candidates at Bedford underwent examination not only on their spiritual experience, but also on the nature of the Lord's Supper, as Bunyan conceived it.

(d) The Christian Life

Bunyan saw the life of the Christian pilgrim, once he was visibly separated from the ungodly into the society of believers, as wholly sustained by divine grace. 'As water is that element in which the fish liveth', he writes, 'so grace is that which is the life of the saint'. It is by grace that he seeks 'to live by the grace of God', 'to do and suffer . . . according to the will of God', and to finish his course to the glory of God. The Christian's foremost duty, therefore, is to 'get more grace' — more faith, love, patience, zeal, humility, self-denial, reverence, righteousness. Two effects, he claimed, will always follow the possession of grace: 'the more grace . . . the greater trials', and the more 'laborious for God in this world'. Grace is thus a sanctifying, active principle bestowed by the Lord upon His elect, to enable them to suffer their fore-ordained trials and to fulfil their predetermined tasks; and 'a good improvement' he concludes, 'of what we have of the grace of God at present, pleases God, and engages Him to give us more'.

Conclusion

From the foregoing survey, it may be seen that John Bunyan's theology is a colourful blend of distinctive ideas and tendencies gleaned from Scripture, Luther, Calvinism, and the founding principles of the Bedford Separatist Church, transformed by his own unique experience, and expressed in direct, colloquial Anglo-Saxon.

Bunyan himself saw his thought as wholly Biblical: 'I have not writ at a venture', he claims, 'nor borrowed my doctrine from libraries. I depend upon the sayings of no man: I found it in the Scriptures of Truth, among the true sayings of God'.

Of uninspired writings, Luther's Commentary on Galatians left the deepest imprint on his soul: 'I found my condition', he testified, 'so largely and profoundly handled as if his book had been written out of my heart', and consequently, he recommended it warmly as 'most fit for a wounded conscience'. It was especially Luther's view of God and salvation, expressed in terms of justice and mercy, wrath and grace, and justification by faith, which laid the foundation of his theological thinking.

Bunyan's debt to Calvinism lay chiefly in the realm of the scheme of the covenants, of predestination and reprobation, and of the satisfaction and limited atonement of Christ. Dent's 'Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven' and Bayly's 'Practice of Piety', both of which, he says, 'begat within me some desires to religion', his ministerial association with men such as Dr John Owen, and the formative influence of John Gifford and John Burton, his pastoral predecessors in Bedford, all helped to form Bunyan, under the Holy Spirit, into a Calvinist of the strict, rather than moderate, kind.

Bunyan's ecclesiology was almost entirely the heritage of the Bedford Independent Baptist tradition, with its voluntary and Separatist principles, and its low view of the sacraments.

While, therefore, no single theological label will fit Bunyan, one thing about him is certain. The centre of all his thinking was the free and sovereign grace of God revealed in His beloved Son, and it was his own personal experience of this grace, coupled with his wonderful gift for the imaginative, direct and colloquial expression of truth, which has given Bunyan his endeared place in the affections of all Christians who have read him.

Obituary

The late Mrs John Martin, Wick

Mrs Martin passed away to her eternal rest with the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, about twenty months after the death of her worthy husband, Mr John Martin, Elder, Wick. This was also an unexpected loss and grief to the family and the Wick congregation.

She was born at Leacklee, Stockinish, Harris, on the 29th November,

1906, being the youngest member of a MacCuish family of thirteen children. A few days before she died, she travelled to Inverness to be with her daughter and son-in-law, Dr and Mrs James Tallach. Being a weekend there, she took unwell on Monday, 13th February, 1978, and was removed to hospital, and died early Tuesday morning, 14th February.

Mrs Martin trained as a teacher in Edinburgh and taught in the Western Isles, before settling in Glasgow. She married in 1936. Many years later, after coming to Wick with her husband, she taught for a time in Wick High School.

She became a member of the Wick congregation in April, 1962, and in the testimony of her spiritual experience she quoted the words of Job: "I know that my Redeemer liveth". And she gave continual evidence until the day of her death, that she knew, loved and followed her Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ. She was devoted to the Word and Worship of God in her home and in the house of God. The gospel of the Redeemer was obviously what her heart was set upon and in which she found bread for her soul and encouragement. Her place in the Church or Sabbath was seldom empty and this was true of her respecting the weekly prayer meeting also. During the prayer meeting which she attended before leaving for Inverness, an address was given from the words: "Whom having not seen, ye love" (1 Peter, ch. 1), during which it was observed that the time was coming when those who loved the Lord would be like Him and *see* Him as He is in heaven. Little did anyone present that evening think that Mrs Martin would soon be 'absent from the body and present with the Lord'.

Mrs Martin was like-minded with her late husband in connection with the Word of God and the gospel and in showing great kindness and hospitality to friends. As a widow, she lived alone by choice in her home in Wick for nearly two years, and the members of her family devotedly kept in regular touch with their mother. She must have felt a sense of loneliness at times. This we discussed now and again when visiting, but she never complained: the Lord upholding her by His gracious presence.

The family were greatly privileged in their parents, who gave them a Christian and wise example and exercised a tender care for their spiritual welfare and their good and prosperity otherwise.

The funeral service was held in the Church, Wick, and a goodly number of people were present to show their sympathy to the family and other relatives. They, and we as a congregation, need to be comforted and enabled to follow on to know the Lord until our end come. R. R. S.

Eadar-Mhineachadh Air Salm CXXX

(2.) Tha mothachadh ro dhomhain aca de chudthrom nan gnothuichean so. Tha gach uile dhuine coimh-ionann feumach air gràdh Dhé agus air maitheanas peacaidh. Ach gidheadh tha sinn a' faicinn a' chuid mhòr de dhaoineibh cho baoghalta as nach toir iad ach ro bheag aire do na nithibh so. Cha-n 'eil aon chuid ciont peacaidh, no fearg Dhé, no bàs, no ifrinn, a' cur cùraim sam bith orra. Ach aig anamaibh gràsmhor tha mothachadh beò do chudthrom nan nithe spioradail; agus sin do bhrìgh,—

1. Gu bheil *solus slàinteil agus spioradail* aca, anns am bheil iad comasach air a bhi breithneachadh fìor nàduir a' pheacaidh agus uamhais an Tighearna: oir, anns a' chor a tha nis r'ar n-aghaidh, ged a chaill iad solus comhfhurtail an Spioraid, gidheadh cha-n 'eil iad gu bràth a' call soluis naomhachaidh an Spioraid, an solus sin trid am bheil iad comasach air nithibh spioradail a brheithneachadh air mhodh spioradail; cha-n 'eil so gu bràth 'gam fàgail gu tur. Anns an t-solus so tha iad a' faicinn gu bheil am peacadh "ro pheacach," Rom. vii 13. Le so is aithne dhoibh "uamhas an Tighearna," 2 Cor. v. II; agus gur "ni eagalach tuiteam ann an làmhaibh an Dé bheò," Eabh. x. 31. Anns an t-solus so tha iad a' faicinn òirdheirceis gràidh Dhé ann an Crìosd, a chaidh thart gach uile eòlas, ged a tha iad a nis gun mhothachadh sòlasach aca dheth. Le so tha iad air an teagasg a bhi 'cur meas air uile thoraidhibh bàis Chrìosd, ged a tha mòran dhiubh a nis nach urrainn iad a bhi 'mealtuinn. Tha iad so uile, ma seadh, agus nithe eile de'n nàdur cheudna a' toirt beò-mhothachaidh dhoibh de chudthrom an gnothuichean spioradail.

2. Tha cuimhne aca air *na chost e dhoibh roimhe* gnothuch a dheanamh ri Dia timchioll peaciadh; agus uime sin tha fios aca nach e gnothuch eutrom a tha air an làmhaibh. Feumaidh iad tòiseachadh air an t-seann obair a rìs, agus an seann chupan a ghlacadh a rìs 'nan làmhaibh. Tha aiseag anama o dhoimhneachdaibh cosmhuil ri dara iompachadh. Tha e gu tric a' mothachadh mar gu'm bitheadh e 'dol troimh 'n iomlan de'n obair a rìs. Agus tha cuimhne aige air cia cho làn uamhuinn, agus eagail, agus trioblaid, as a bha i, air chor as gu bheil a dheuchainnean nuadha a' toirt crìothnachaidh air. Agus a rìs,—

3. Tha an Spiorad Naomh a' toirt mothachaidh as ùr a dh' anamaibh bochda de chudthrom nan gnothuichean so, chum gu'm bitheadh iad air an cur thuige ann an cur aghaidh dhùrachdaich air Dia annta. Is e 'obair-san a th' anns an iomlan, agus tha e 'ga toirt air a h-aghaidh le meadhonaibh a tha freagarrach air son a bhi 'coimhlionadh na crìche sin

a tha 'na rùn; agus leis na meadhonaibh sin tha anam gràsmhor air a thoirt chum an t-suidheachaidh a dh' ainmicheadh. A nis, tha iomadh ni fa leth a' comhchuideachadh a chéile mar aobhar an t-suidheachaidh sin:—

Anns a' cheud àir,— Tha *smuaintean iomguineach* a ghnàth anns an anam timchioll a' choir thruaighe anns am bheil a dhoimhneachdan a nis air a chur. Air do gheurmhothachadh a bhi aige d' a chor, tha e ghnàth 'na smuaintean, tha 'inntinn a' luidh air gun tàmh. Is amhuil a tha Daibhidh a' cur an céill d' a thaobh féin, “Shàthadh do shaighdean annam, agus tha do làmh trom orm. Cha-n 'eil fallaineachd a' m' fheadail air son d'fheirge,” Salm xxxviii. 2-6. Tha mi-shuaimhneas, agus an-shocair, agus dubhachais anama, air am faotainn anns a' chor so. Tha Dia air a bhrosnachadh, tha am bàs dlùth do làimh, tha saorsa fada uaithe, agus uime tha dorchadas ag ladhachd. “Chaill mi mo shìth,” deir e, “agus m' aoibhneas, caithream mo chiùil anns an oidhche. Ciod a their mi mu m' dhleasdanas? Am feud dithis imeachd le chéile mur bi iad réidh? Am feud mi nis imeachd maille ri Dia annta, agus gu'n d' rinn mi dhomh féin mo nàmhaid dheth? Ciod a their mi ri òrduighibh a thighe? An tairbhe dhomh-sa bhi ann an Ierusalem, mur faic mi gnùis an Rìgh? am bheil mo shòlas fo fhrithealadh òrduighean, gun Rìgh nan naomh teachd annta 'nam chòdhail? Nach maith a dh' fheudar leam eagal a ghabhail gu'n dean an Tighearn a Spiorad Naomh a bhuntuinn uam gus am fàgar mi 'nam thruaghan gun leigheas?” Le an samhail so de smuaintibh, ma seadh, tha an t-anam sin air a luasgadh a tha fo iomguin peacaidh.

Anns an dara àit,— Tha sinn a' faicinn gun bheil am meadhon féin trid am bheil iad a' cur aghaidh air a' coimhsheasamh ann an *ùrnuigh a' chriedimh*, no glaothaich ri Dia. A nis, tha so deanta le dlan-dhùrachd inntinn; aig am bheil toradh dà-fhillte,—Air tùs, *Liosdachd*; agus, a ris, *Seasmhachd*.

Tha e air innseadh dhuinn mu ar Slànuighear beannaichte, 'nuair a bha e 'na dhoimhneachdaibh féin timchioll pheacaidhean a shluaigh, gu'n d' rinn e “urnuighean agus athchuingean, maille ri h-àrd-éighich agus deuraibh, ìobradh suas,” Eabh. v. 7. Tha “àrd-éighich agus deuraibh” a' cur an céill an dlan-dhùrachd spioraid a's ro mhò. Agus tha Daibhidh 'ga ainmeachadh le bhi “bùireadh,” mar a nochdadh roimhe; agus mar an ceudna le “osnaich agus plogartaich.” Tha an t-anam anns a' chor so a' luidh sìos fa chomhair an Tighearna le osnaich, agus caoidh, agus glaothaich, agus deuraibh, agus bùireadh, a réir oibreachaidh eugsamhuil a chridhe, agus cudthruim nan nithe sin 'na shùilibh a tha aige r'a dheanamh; agus tha so a' toirt cleachdaidh,—

Air tùs,—Do *liosdachd*. Rinn ar Slànuighear a thaisbeanadh air dhòigh iongantach an cumhachd a th' ann an liosdachd a' chreidimh, Lucas xi. 5-10, agus mar an ceudna, caib. xviii. 1. Tha an ùrnuigh liosda gun teagamh 'na h-ùrnuigh bhuadhaich; agus tha an liosdachd féin, mar gu'm b' ann, a' coimh-sheasamh anns an dà ni so,—a bhi *gu tric* ag asluchadh agus a bhi 'cleachdadh *iomadh gnè* thagraidhean. Thig fear na liosdachd thugad seachd uairean 's an aon là air a' ghnòthuch cheudna: agus 'na dhéigh so uile, ma thig cùis-thagraidh as ùr ri aghaidh inntinn, pillidh e a rìs, ged a rùnaicheadh e roimh sin gun tighinn tuilleadh. Is amhuil sinn anns a' chùis so. Bithidh daoine ri asluchadh tric agus a' cleachdadh iomadh gnè thagraidhean. Theid na h-anama so a dh' ionnsuidh Dhé; ach cha-n 'eil iad riaraichte leis na rinn iad, agus theid iad ann a rìs; gidheadh cha d' rinneadh an cridhe falamh fathast, agus theid iad ann a ris, ionnus nach toir iad fois dha.

Notes and Comments

A New Pope

The conclave of Roman Catholic Cardinals appointed Cardinal Albino Luciani to be the new Pope. He has taken the name Pope John Paul. The choice of Cardinal Luciani was unexpected as he had not held office in the Roman Curia, the controlling body of the R.C. Church. It may indeed have been this very fact that contributed to his election. He will be dependent on the present holders of office in the Curia for advice and he has, in fact, confirmed them in office. This will allow them to carry on their present policy of seeking an accommodation with the Communist Governments of Eastern Europe.

From all appearances Pope John Paul is more like Pope John than Pope Paul, who were his predecessors. This will make him all the more dangerous as the ecumenical movement received a strong pro-Romanist bias during Pope John's reign. Pope John Paul has already expressed himself as clearly committed to ecumenism. The danger to Protestantism from this source is very real, especially in view of the present weak state of the Protestant Churches.

Church Notes

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Northern: At Bonar Bridge, on 17th October, at 3 p.m.

Skye: At Portree, on 24th October, at 11 a.m.

Western: At Laide, on 24th October, at 12 noon.

Southern: At Glasgow, on 21st November, at 6 p.m.

Protest

Rt. Hon. George Thomas, M.P.
The Speaker,
The House of Commons,
Westminster, London.

14th July 1978.

Dear Mr Speaker,

On behalf of the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, I wish to lodge a most emphatic Protest against the Mass conducted by Cardinal Hume in the Crypt Chapel of the Palace of Westminster on Thursday, 6th July, 1978. This was the first time that such a deplorable event took place since the Reformation when the people of this Country were delivered and set free from the superstitions and errors of the Church of Rome.

The Mass is a direct insult to the glory of Christ as well as to the well-informed intelligence of our Christian people. Both the creeds of the Church of England and the Church of Scotland join in expressing this fact. Article XXXI of the *Articles of Religion* of the Church of England states: "Wherefore the sacrifices of Masses, in the which it was commonly said, that the Priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, were blasphemous fables, and dangerous deceits." In Chapter XXIX of the *Westminster Confession* of the Church of Scotland, Section II clearly concurs when it states: "In this sacrament (ie of the Lord's Supper) Christ is not offered up to his Father, nor any real sacrifice made at all for remission of sins of the quick or dead: but only a commemoration of that one offering up of himself by himself, upon the cross, once for all, and a spiritual oblation of all possible praise unto God for the same: so that the Popish sacrifice of the mass, as they call it, is most abominably injurious to Christ's one only sacrifice, the alone propitiation for all the sins of the elect."

It is to be hoped that immediate steps will be taken to secure that such a sad episode will not be repeated in the Palace of Westminster.

Yours sincerely,
Donald MacLean
Clerk of Synod.

Acknowledgment of Donations

The Publications' Treasurer, Mr R. W. M. MacKenzie, C.A., Hilton of Cadboll, Fearn, acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:—

Free Distribution Fund: Anon. per R. Campbell, Treasurer, St Jude's, £4; Anon., Lairg postmark, £6.

Welfare of Youth Fund: Anon. (per St Jude's Treasurer), £6.

The Treasurers of the following congregations desire to acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:—

Aberdeen: Anon. (envelope in Church plate), £5 for Hall Repairs.

Dunoon: Miss Christina Bank's Will, per Finance Committee, £2,387.13 to Congregational Funds for repairs and expenses in view of Church being demolished by Local Authority for New Clearance Scheme, and being allocated another building or site; Mrs E. Livingston (Mrs B.L.), Dixon Avenue, Dunoon, £25 towards repairs and decoration of Local Church at Argyll Road.

Edinburgh: Mr C.F., U.S.A., £30 for Sustentation Fund per Congregation Treasurer.

Fort Willam: Envelope in plate addressed Rev. J.A. MacDonald from Caol Friend for minibus expenses, £5; Envelope in plate for minibus, £2; MacL., Tyndrum per D.M., £5; Friend, Portree, £10; Mr and Mrs I.C., Lochaline, £20; Mrs Nicolson, Ballachulish, £10 (all per Rev. J.A. MacDonald); Friend, Kirkhill, £10 for Church painting per Rev. J.A. MacDonald.

Glendale: From Will of late Mrs Annie W. Matheson legacy of £1,000 for general congregational purposes; Old Adherent, £5 for Sustentation Fund per W.M.

Greenock: Friend, Greenock, £100 for Church Funds and Congregational Purposes (in collection plate).

Laide: Glasgow Friend, £20; Gairloch Friends, £10; Gairloch Friend, £5; Two Dutch Friends, £10; In memory of loved ones, £10; Skye Friend, £10; Two Friends, Dingwall, £10; C.M., £5; Laide Friend, £20 (all for Laide Manse Fund).

North Harris: A Hearach in Exile, Anon., £20 for Church and Manse Property; Friend, Tarbert, £46.90 for Car Fund; Friend, Tarbert, £5 for Church and Manse Property; A Friend, Inverness, £10; Two Friends, Greenock, £5, both for painting Church Property (last three per Rev. A. MacKay); A Friend, Glasgow from Leacklee, £5 for Sustentation Fund per R. MacCuish; A Friend, Leacklee, £15.45 (£8.75 for Sustentation Fund and £6.70 for Home Mission Fund, per Wm. D. Fraser); A Friend, Leacklee, £30 (£17 for Sustentation Fund and £13 for Home Missions); A Friend, Tarbert, £13 (£6 for Sustentation Fund and £1 each for other funds); A Friend, Tarbert, £7.60 (£5 for Door Collection and £2.60 divided for various funds).

North Uist: Friend, £5; Friend, North Uist, £5; D.J.M., Portree, £10; Miss M. MacA., Glasgow, £5; Friends, Finsbay, £5; Friends, Northton, £5; Friend, £10; Uist Friend, £40; Friend, North Tolsta, £5; Inverness postmark, £10; Friend, Stockinish, £5; Friend, £20; Uist Friend, £15; F.P., Staffin, £5; Mrs C.C., Bothwell, £5; Toronto Friend, £5; Friend, Edinburgh, £5; Two Friends, £20 (all for Manse Extension and all per Rev. A. Morrison).

Portree: Miss C.M., £3; Wellwisher, £5 (both for Communion Expenses and both per F.M.); Anon., £5 in Church plate; Anon., £10 for Foreign Missions in Church plate.

Raasay: Mr and Mrs Nicolson, £10 for Sustentation Fund per M.D. MacKay; Mr D. MacS., Glasgow, £5 for Sustentation Fund; J.F., £20 for Foreign Missions; Raasay Friend, £5; Friend, Raasay, £1; In memory of a beloved mother, Ps. 40:5-7, £20; A. MacL., £5 per J.M. MacLeod (last four for Property Fund).

Staffin: Friend, Portree, £1; Envelope in plate, £3; Friend, Portree, £5 (for Church Door Collection); Two Friends, Inverness, £10; Anon., Raasay, £10; Anon., Raasay, £1 (last three for Congregational Purposes); Two Friends, Portree, £10 for Communion Expenses (all per Rev. J. McD.); J.N.D., Portree, £10 per M.M.I. for Sustentation Fund; "William" in appreciation, £5.

Stornoway: Two Friends, Inverness, £10; Anon., Stornoway, £5 (both for Communion Expenses and both per Rev. J. MacLeod); R.J.D., £5 for Communion Expenses per Rev. J. MacLeod.

Tomatin: Envelope in plate, £30; Envelope in plate £1 for Congregational Purposes.