

Loose Him
and
Let Him go.



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No. 118.

“ LOOSE HIM AND LET HIM GO.”

JOHN xi. 44.

TH**ERE** are many divinely-quickened souls who need to know the power of those commanding words, “ loose him and let him go ” (John xi. 44). They have been quickened out of a state of death by the life-giving voice of the Son of God, but they “ come forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes,” and their faces “ bound about in a napkin.” That is to say, they have not as yet been able to shake off the trammels of their former condition, or go on their way in the liberty wherewith Christ makes His people free. That they have received divine life, is manifest from the very struggles, fluctuations, and conflicts of which they complain. Those that are “ dead ” know nothing of such things. So long as Lazarus lay in the

silent tomb, in the cold grasp of death, he never felt his grave-clothes to be any hindrance to movement, or his napkin to be any hindrance to vision. All was dark, cold, and lifeless; and the grave-clothes were the suited trappings of such a condition. A man whose hands and feet were fast bound in the fetters of death, could not possibly feel any inconvenience from grave-clothes; and one whose eyes were fast sealed by the stern hand of death, could not feel any inconvenience from a napkin.

Thus it is with the unconverted—the unregenerate—the unawakened. They are “dead”—morally, spiritually “dead.” Their feet are fast bound in the fetters of death; but they know it not. Their hands are confined by the handcuffs of death; but they feel it not. Their eyes are covered by the dark napkin of death; but they perceive it not. They are dead. The robes of death are around them—the grave-clothes are upon them and suit their condition.

But then, in some way or another, the

persons for whom I write this paper have been acted upon by the mighty quickening voice of the Son of God—"the Resurrection and the Life." A verse of scripture, a sermon, a lecture, a tract, a hymn, a prayer, some passing event, has proved to them a life-giving voice. It has sounded upon their ears, it has fallen upon their hearts, it has penetrated to the very depths of their being. They are aroused, they know not how. They wake up, they know not why. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John iii. 8). The life is there in all its reality. The new birth has taken place. The new nature has been communicated. Those who are standing by, who know what life is, see the movements, the struggles, the heavings and workings of life, but, as yet, the grave-clothes and napkin are there. I believe there are many in this condition—many quickened—many born, who know not the privileges which attach to their birth, or

the source and object of the life which has been communicated to them. In a word, they need that voice which has already said, "Lazarus, come forth," should also say, "Loose him, and let him go." They have been *quicken*ed; they need to be *emancipated*.

Let us take an example or two from the word of God. The prodigal was quickened before he was emancipated. "I will arise and go to my Father," was the utterance of the new life—the aspiration of the new nature. When he spoke thus, he was full of doubt and uncertainty as to the mode in which the Father would receive him. He was full of legality—full of the thought of servitude instead of the thought of sonship. The new life was there, but, as yet, it was connected with numerous doubts and fears within, and the rags of his former condition were upon him. He had been acted upon by a life-giving voice, and he only needed to be emancipated. The new nature having been imparted, moved toward the source from which it had sprung, but, as yet, its movement was cramped, as it

were, by the grave-clothes, and its vision impeded by the napkin.

Now, who would think of maintaining the monstrous idea that the prodigal ought to have continued in his rags? to have persisted in his doubts, fears, and uncertainty? Who would assert that for the rest of his days Lazarus ought to have worn his grave-clothes and napkin, in order to prove that he was a living man? It will be said that the Father's embrace dispelled the prodigal's fears, for how could he fear in the arms of paternal love? But was it not the Father also, who commanded the rags to be displaced by "the best robe?" And, then, as to Lazarus, it may be urged that the voice that had quickened and raised him, commanded him to be loosed and let go. Exactly so; and is it not just the same in reference to any one who has obtained new life by believing in the name of the Son of God? Truly so. He should no longer wear the rags of the "far country," nor the trappings of the grave. His hands and feet should be unbound, so that he may serve the Lord Christ, and run in the

way of His commandments. His face, too, should be uncovered—the napkin should be removed—so that he may gaze upon the One whose voice has quickened him.

But let us take another example. In the seventh chapter of Romans we have a striking case of a quickened soul not yet emancipated. Here we see the earnest struggles of the new life—the fervent breathings of the new nature. Here we find one who can say, “I delight in the law of God after the inward man,” and yet he has to say, “I am carnal, sold under sin.” Now the believer is not “*sold*,” but “*bought*,”—“redeemed with the precious blood of Christ”—“ransomed from the power of the grave”—“delivered from going down to the pit.” Again, we find this quickened soul confessing, “what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I.” This is a condition of perpetual defeat, whereas the believer can say, “we are more than *conquerors*,” and “thanks be to God, who *always* causeth us to *triumph* in Christ” (see Rom. viii. 37; 2 Cor. ii. 14). Lastly, we hear this quickened soul ex-

claiming, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" But the believer, instead of being a "*wretched* man," seeking for deliverance, is really a *happy* man, rejoicing in being fully and eternally delivered.

In short, the seventh chapter of Romans, which has been so sadly misunderstood, is a simple picture of a soul divinely quickened, but not yet divinely emancipated—a soul not yet able to say, "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus *hath made me free* from the law of sin and death" (Rom. viii. 2). It is one who has been acted upon by the authoritative word, "Lazarus, ~~come~~ forth," but of whom it has yet to be said, "loose him, and let him go." In other words, there is life, but not liberty. There is sufficient light to see the wretched condition of "the old man," but not sufficient to see the position of the new—there is the just perception of the spirituality of the law, without the knowledge of deliverance from its condemning power. Should any rest satisfied with such a condition? Is this the true believer's proper standing?

Assuredly not. As well might we maintain that Lazarus ought to have been quite satisfied to go on, all his days, "bound hand and foot with grave-clothes, and his face bound about with a napkin." This would never do. The Lord does not do His work by halves, either as to soul or body. He never says, "come forth," without adding, "loose him, and let him go." He could never lead *His* people in bondage—"sold under sin." How could He? Were He to do so, would it not argue either that He could not, or would not, deliver them? If He were to leave His people in doubt, would it not argue that His word was not sufficient to give certainty? Assuredly. But who could assert this? None that know the love of His heart—the value of His sacrifice—the authority of His word.

And, be it remembered, that it is the self-same voice that quickens and emancipates—that gives life and liberty—that delivers from the dominion of death, and leads forth in the liberty of life. It is well to see this. The life and the liberty

are connected, as coming from the same source. The life which the believer has is not the old-Adam life improved, but new-life imparted; and the liberty in which the believer walks is not liberty for the old Adam to fulfil his horrible lusts, but liberty for the new man to walk with God, and tread in the holy footprints of Christ. How does he get this life and liberty? By the word of God, received by faith through the power of the Holy Ghost. The same voice that quickened Lazarus quickens the soul. And where is this voice heard? In the word of the truth of the gospel. The soul that believes on the name of the Son of God has received new life. What life? The resurrection life of Christ. The simple word of the gospel is the seed by which this new life is produced. And what does this gospel, this message of glad tidings, declare? That Christ died and rose again—that He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself—that He is gone into heaven—that He has, by Himself, purged our sins—that He has met every claim, every demand, every

objector—that Justice is satisfied—conscience tranquilized—the enemy confounded. This gives life and liberty—new life—divine liberty. It carries the soul entirely out of the old creation and all its belongings, and introduces it into the new creation and all its privileges, joys, and glories. The death of Christ delivers the believer from the old Adam condition in which he was *born*; and His resurrection introduces him into the new Adam condition in which he is *born again*.

Now, all this is by the Word of God—the voice of Christ—the operation of the Holy Ghost. There is no human effort in the matter. The dead body of Lazarus was acted upon by the voice of Christ. The one is as independent of man as the other. The quickening power for both soul and body is in “the voice of the Son of God” (see John v. 25, comp. with verses 28, 29). This takes all the glory out of man’s hand, and places it where it ought to be, even in the hand of the Son of God. He must bear *all* the glory, for ever, blessed be His name!

Oh! how ardently I long that those precious souls for whom I write may fully enter into what I have written. I write for quickened souls who are not yet emancipated—who have life, but not liberty—who have “come forth,” but are not yet “loosed and let go.” There are many such. There are many in the condition of the prodigal when he arose from the far country, but had not yet reached the Father’s arms—many in the seventh of Romans. I earnestly long for their full emancipation. I would affectionately remind them that the whole work is done—the sacrifice completed—the ransom paid. They have not to read another syllable in order to get settled peace. Christ has made peace. God is well pleased. The Holy Ghost bears witness. The Word of God is plain. Where, then, is the foundation for a doubt? The reader may exclaim, “Alas! it is in myself.” Yes; but, my dear friend, you have nothing to do in a matter which has already been done for you. The righteousness of God is “to him that worketh NOT.” If you had to do aught in order to get

righteousness, then Rom. iv. 5 would not be true. Remember—oh, remember, and delight in that most glorious “NOT.” It will not suffer the weight of a feather of human doings, human feelings, or human anything, to be thrown into the scales, in order to make Christ’s sacrifice available for *you*. Christ has done *all* for your present, personal, and perfect salvation.

May the Lord, the Spirit, emancipate precious souls from the grave-clothes in which they are entangled. May many hear and understand those thrilling accents, “LOOSE HIM AND LET HIM GO.”

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