

The Lord Jesus

In John xi. xii.



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THE LORD JESUS IN JOHN XI., XII.

THESE chapters show us in what different channels the Lord's thoughts flowed from those of the heart of man. His ideas, so to speak, of *misery* and of *happiness* were so different from what man's naturally are.

The eleventh chapter opens with a scene of human misery. The dear family at Bethany are visited with sickness, and the voice of health and thanksgiving in their dwelling has to yield to mourning, lamentation, and woe. But He, who of all had the largest and tenderest sympathies, is the calmest among them; for He carried with Him that foresight of resurrection, which made Him overlook the chamber of sickness, and the grave of death.

When Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick, He abode two days longer in the place where He was. But when that sickness ends in death, He begins His journey in the full and bright prospect of resurrec-

tion. And this makes His journey steady and undisturbed. And, as He approaches the scene of sorrow, His action is still the same. He replies again and again to the passion of Martha's soul, from that place where the knowledge of a power that was beyond that of death had, in all serenity, seated Him. And though He have to move still onward, there is no haste. For on Mary's arrival, He is still in the same place where Martha had met Him. And the issue, as I need not say, comes in due season to vindicate this stillness of His heart, and this apparent tardiness of His journey.

Thus was it with Jesus here. The path of Jesus was *His own*. When man was bowed down in sorrow at the thought of death, He was lifted up in the sunshine of resurrection.

But the sense of resurrection, though it gave this peculiar current to the thoughts of Jesus, left His heart still alive to the sorrows of others. For His was not *indifference*, but *elevation*. And such is the way of faith always. Jesus weeps with the weeping of Mary and her company. His whole soul was in the sunshine of those deathless regions which lay far away

from the tomb of Bethany; but it could visit the valley of tears, and weep there with those that wept.

But again.—When man was lifted up in the expectation of something good and brilliant in the earth, His soul was full of the holy certainty that death awaits all here, however promising or pleasurable; and that honour and prosperity must be hoped for only in other and higher regions. The twelfth chapter shows us this.

When they heard of the raising of Lazarus, much people flocked together from Bethany to Jerusalem, and at once hailed Him as the King of Israel. They would fain go up with Him to the Feast of Tabernacles, and antedate the age of glory, seating Him in the honours and joys of the kingdom. The Greeks also take their place with Israel in such an hour. Through Philip, as taking hold of the skirt of a Jew (Zech. viii.), they would see Jesus and worship. But in the midst of all this Jesus Himself sits solitary. He knows that earth is not the place for all this festivation and keeping of holy day. His spirit muses on death; while their thoughts were full of a kingdom with its attendant honours and pleasures.

“ Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone.”

Such was the peculiar path of the spirit of Jesus. *Resurrection was everything to Him.* It was His relief amid the sorrows of life, and His object amid the promises and prospects of the world. It gave His soul a calm sunshine, when dark and heavy clouds had gathered over Bethany; it moderated and separated His affections, when the brilliant glare of a festive day was lighting up the way from thence to Jerusalem. The thought of it sanctified His mind equally amid grief and enjoyments around. Resurrection was everything to Him. It made Him a perfect pattern of that fine principle of the Spirit of God: “ Let him that weepeth be as if he wept not, and he that rejoiceth as though he rejoiced not.”

Oh for a little more of the same mind in us, beloved!—a little more of this elevation above the passing conditions and circumstances of life!

May the faith and hope of the Gospel, through the working of the indwelling Spirit, form the happiness and prospects of our hearts!

THE REDEMPTION OF THE PURCHASED POSSESSION.

EPHESIANS i. 14.

THE earth is the subject of redemption as well as man. It is already purchased, and by-and-by, in due season, it shall be rescued or delivered. That is, it is the subject of the twofold redemption known in Scripture, redemption by *price*, and redemption by *power*.

The blood of the cross has already reconciled or purchased it. As we read, "And having made peace by the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself, by him, I say, whether they be things on earth or things in heaven." (Col. i.)

This gives the inheritance the title of "the purchased possession."

But though purchased, it is not yet

delivered. It is still under "the bondage of corruption." (Rom. viii.) It is redeemed by purchase, but not as yet by power. We therefore wait for the "redemption" of that which is already a "purchased possession."

This bright and happy truth, this mystery found among the mysteries of God, has had its pledges and foreshadowings, as well as others.

The ordinance of the Jubilee seems to set forth this twofold redemption—by price and by power. (See Lev. xxv.) For that chapter teaches us that at any time during forty-nine years, the alienated possession of an Israelite might have been purchased by the kinsman of the heir, and thus redeemed or brought back to the family to which, under God, it had belonged; but if that were not done, it would return to the heir in the fiftieth year, or the Jubilee, without purchase.

These two ordinances, again, I say, seem to set forth the mystery I am speaking of—redemption by money and redemption by power. The kinsman might redeem with money, the Jubilee would redeem without money, by virtue of its own title, by virtue of that force or autho-

rity imparted to it by Him who was the God of Israel and the Lord of the soil.*

Again, Jeremiah the prophet was commanded to purchase the field of Hanameel, his uncle's son. He did so, in the spirit and obedience of faith, though at that moment the Chaldean army was in the land, and was under commission from the Lord to tread it down, and waste it, or possess themselves of it. But when Jeremiah made inquiry respecting this strange thing, that he should be asked to lay out his money upon a piece of land thus devoted to the sword of an invader, the Lord tells him that a day of *power* was to come, and that in that land there should be redemption, and that the Lord's own people should possess it again, brought back out of the hand of every spoiler. This was the Lord's answer to His servant. And thus Jeremiah had reason to know that the purchase now made by good money of the merchant, should be made good in a coming day of power. (See Jer. xxxii.)

And let me add one other notice of this distinguished case, the purchase of Hanameel's field, for it has interested me. "Is

* We ourselves wait to be redeemed by power. Resurrection will do that.

anything too hard for the Lord?" is the Lord's challenge of Jeremiah on this occasion, as it is of Sarah in Gen. xviii. Sarah did not know how she, whose body was then dead, could have a child, for *she knew not the resurrection-strength of God*. Jeremiah did not know how he, who was laying out his money on a piece of ground which was then in the hand of the enemy, could get its value back again; for, like Sarah, *he knew not the resurrection-strength of God*.

That strength makes all simple. The victory of Christ, the resurrection of Jesus, gives us to our inheritance sure rights under the seal of a title-deed easy to be read.



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No. 5.

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.—
GEN. i. 1.

We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and
a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.—2 PET. iii. 13.

I saw a new heaven and a new earth. . . . and I John
saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God,
out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
—REV. xxi. 1. 2.

No. 6.

I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory.—EXOD. xxxiii. 18.

We all, with unveiled face beholding the glory of the Lord,
are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even
as by the Lord the Spirit.—2 COR. iii. 18.

The glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.—2 COR. iv. 6.

No. 7.

For the King's house, harps also.—1 KINGS, x. 12.

These are the singers; for they were employed in that
work day and night.—1 CHRON. ix. 33.

Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house; they will be
still praising Thee.—PS. lxxxiv. 4.

No. 8.

Take unto thee sweet spices.—EXOD. xxx. 34.

While the King sitteth at His table, my spikenard sendeth
forth the smell thereof.—CANT. i. 12.

There they made Him a supper, and Martha served . . .
Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very
costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet
with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of
the ointment.—JOHN xii. 2, 3.