

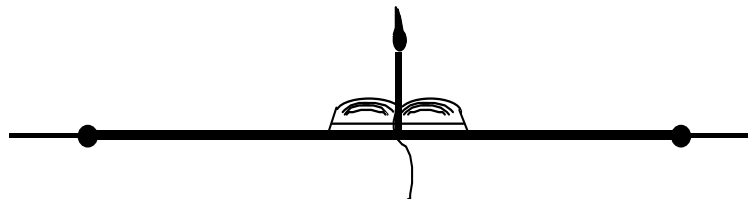
SCRIPTURE STUDIES

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"Come now, let us reason together," says the Lord..." Isaiah 1:18

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Old Testament Study: Exodus 14:13-31

Crossing the Red Sea, pt. 2 by Arthur W. Pink (1886-1952)

¹¹And they said unto Moses, "Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? Wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? ¹²Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, 'Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians?' For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness."

¹³And Moses said unto the people, "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will show to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. ¹⁴The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace."

¹⁵And the LORD said unto Moses, "Wherefore criest thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward: ¹⁶But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. ¹⁷And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honor upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen. ¹⁸And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten me honor upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen."

¹⁹And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: ²⁰And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night.

²¹And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. ²²And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

²³And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after

them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. ²⁴And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the LORD looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, ²⁵And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the face of Israel"; for the LORD fighteth for them against the Egyptians.

²⁶And the LORD said unto Moses, "Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen." ²⁷And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. ²⁸And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them.

²⁹But the children of Israel walked upon dry [land] in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. ³⁰Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. ³¹And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and His servant Moses. (AV).

"Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, 'Let us alone that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness'" (v. 12). Behind the rage of Pharaoh and his hosts who were pursuing the Israelites, we are to see the enmity of Satan against those whom Divine grace has delivered from his toils. It is not until a sinner is saved that the spite of the Devil is directed against him who till recently was his captive. It is now that he goes forth as a roaring lion seeing to devour Christ's lamb. Beautiful it is to see here the utter failure of the enemy's efforts. Now that the Divine righteousness had been satisfied by the blood of the Lamb, it was solely a question between God and the enemy. Israel had to do no fighting — God fought *for* them, and the enemy was utterly defeated. This is one of the outstanding lessons of Exodus 14 — "**If God be for us who can be against us?**" (Rom. 8:31).

Vitaly important it is for the believer to lay firm hold on this soul-sustaining truth. How often it occurs (exceptions must surely be few in number) that as soon as a sinner has fled to Christ for refuge, Satan at once lets fly his fiery darts. The young believer is tempted now as he never was in his unregenerate days; his mind is filled with evil thoughts and doubts, and he is terrified by the roaring of the "lion," until he wonders who is really going to gain possession of his soul — God or Satan. This was precisely the issue raised here at the Red Sea. It *looked* as though Jehovah had deserted His people. It *seemed* as though they must fall victims to their powerful and merciless foes. But how deceptive are appear-

ances? How quickly and how easily the Lord Almighty reversed the situation? The sequel shows us *all* Israel *safe* on the other side of the Red Sea, and *all* the Egyptians *drowned* therein! But how was this brought about? Of deep moment is every word that follows.

“And Moses said unto the people, ‘Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will show to you today; for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more forever’” (v. 13). The first word was, **“Fear not.”** The servant of God would quieten their hearts and set them in perfect peace before Him. **“Fear not”** is one of the great words recurring all through the Scriptures. **“Fear not”** was what God said to Abraham (Genesis 15:1). **“Fear not, neither be thou dismayed”** was His message to Joshua (see Joshua 8:1). **“Fear not”** was His command to Gideon (Judges 16:23). **“Fear not”** was David’s counsel to Solomon (1 Chronicles 28:20). This will be the word of the Jewish remnant in a day to come: **“Be strong, fear not, behold, your God will come”** (Isaiah 35:4). **“Fear not”** was the angel’s counsel to Daniel (10:12). **“Fear not little flock”** is the Lord’s message to us (Luke 12:32). **“I will fear no evil”** said the Psalmist (23:4), **“for Thou art with me.”** But how is this to be attained? *How* is the heart to be established in peace? Does not Isaiah 26:3 sum it all up? — **“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed in Thee because he trusteth in Thee.”**

“Stand still” was the next word of Moses to Israel. All attempts at self-help must end. All activities of the flesh must cease. The workings of nature must be subdued. Here is the right attitude of faith in the presence of a *trial* — **“stand still.”** This is impossible to flesh and blood. All who know, in any measure, the restlessness of the human heart under anticipated trial and difficulty, will be able to form some conception of what is involved in standing still. Nature must be *doing* something. It will rush hither and thither. It would feign have some hand in the matter. And although it may attempt to justify and sanctify its worthless doings, by bestowing upon them the imposing and popular title of “a legitimate use of means,” yet are they the plain and positive fruits of unbelief, which always shut out God, and sees nought save every dark cloud of its own creation. Unbelief creates or magnifies difficulties, and then sets us about removing them by our own bustling and fruitless actions, which, in reality, do but raise a dust around us which prevents our seeing God’s salvation.

Faith, on the contrary, raises the soul above the difficulty, straight to God Himself, and enables one to **‘stand still.’** We gain nothing by our restless and anxious efforts. We cannot make one hair white or black, nor add one cubit to our stature. What could Israel do at the Red Sea! Could they dry it up? Could they level the mountains? Could they annihilate the hosts of Egypt? Impossible! There they were, enclosed within an impenetrable wall of difficulties, in view of which nature could but tremble and feel its own impotency. But this was just the time for God to act. When unbelief is driven from the scene, then God can enter; and in order to get a proper view of His actings, we must **‘stand still.’** Every movement of nature is, so far as it goes, a positive hindrance to our perception and enjoyment of Divine interference on our behalf” (C.H.M.).

“And see the salvation of the Lord.” It is surprising how many have, missed the point here. Most of the commentators regard this word as signifying that Israel were to remain passive until the waters of the Red Sea

should be cleft asunder. But this is clearly erroneous. Hebrews 11:29 tells us that it was **“by faith they passed through the Red Sea,”** and faith is the opposite of sight. The mistake arises from jumping to the conclusion that **“see the salvation of the Lord”** refers to *physical* sight. It was *spiritual* sight that Moses referred to, the exercising of the eyes of the heart. Faith is a looking not at the things which are seen, but a *looking “at the things which are not seen”* (2 Corinthians 4:18) — strange paradox to the natural man! As we read in Hebrews 11:13, **“These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off.”** And of Moses we read, **“he endured as seeing Him who is invisible”** (Hebrews 11:13) — that is, seeing Him with the eyes of faith. To **“see the salvation of the Lord”** we must first **“stand still”** — all fleshly activity must cease. We have to be *still* if we would *know* that God is God (see Psalm 46:10).

“For the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more forever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace” (vv. 13, 14). Notice the repeated use of the future tense here: **“He will show you....ye shall see them again no more.... the Lord shall fight for you.”** How this confirms what we have just said! Jehovah’s **“salvation”** had first to be seen by the eye of faith before it would be seen with the eye of sense. *That “salvation”* must first be revealed to and received by **“the hearing of faith.”** **“Which He will show you today”** was the *ground* of their faith. Striking are the closing words of verse 14: **“and ye shall hold your peace,”** or, as some render it, **“ye shall keep silence.”** Six hundred thousand men, besides women and children, were to remain motionless in the profound silence which befitted them in a scene where so unparalleled a drama was to be enacted, moving neither hand, foot, nor tongue! How well calculated was such an order to draw the trembling heart of Israel away from a fatal occupation with its own exigencies to faith in the Lord of hosts!

“And the Lord said unto Moses, ‘Wherefore criest thou unto Me? Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward’” (v. 15). **“Go forward”** does not contradict, but complements the **“stand still.”** This is ever the spiritual order. We are not ready to **“go forward”** until we have first **“stood still”** and *seen* the salvation of the Lord. Moreover, before the *command* was given to **“Go forward”** there was first the *promise*, **“see the salvation of the Lord which He will show you today.”** Faith must be based on the Divine promise, and obedience to the command must spring from the faith thus produced. Before we are ready to **“go forward”** faith must *see* that which is invisible, namely, the **“salvation of the Lord.”** and this, *before* it is *actually* wrought for us. Thus **“by faith Abraham went out, not knowing whither he went”** (Hebrews 11:8).

“But lift thou up thy rod and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea: and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left hand” (vv. 16-21, 22). The best commentary upon this is Hebrews 11:29: **“By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land.”** It is beautiful to observe another word in Hebrews

11:29 — “The children of Israel *walked* upon dry land in the midst of the sea.” They did not rush through at top speed. There was no confusion. With absolute confidence in the Lord they crossed in orderly procession.

“And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, and took off their chariot wheels, that they drove them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, ‘Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians.’ And the Lord said unto Moses, ‘Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.’ And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them” (vv. 23-28). The practical lesson to be learned from this is very plain: Those who attempt to do without faith, what believers succeed to do by faith — those who seek to obtain by their own efforts, what believers obtain by faith — will assuredly fail. By faith, the believer obtains peace with God; but all of the unbeliever’s efforts to obtain peace by good works, are doomed to disappointment. Believers are sanctified by the truth (John 17:19); those who aim to arrive at holiness without believing are following a will o’ the wisp. In the little space that remains let us summarize some of the many lessons our passage sets forth.

Typically the crossing of the Red Sea speaks of Christ making a way through death for His people. “The Red Sea is the figure of death — the boundary-line of Satan’s power” (Ritchie). Note the words of God to Moses: “Lift thou up *thy rod*, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it; and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea” (v. 16). Moses is plainly a type of Christ, the “rod” a symbol of His power and authority. The Red Sea completely destroyed the power of Pharaoh (Satan) over God’s people. Hebrews 2:14 gives us the antitype — “That *through death* He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil.” The *effect* of Moses lifting up his rod and stretching forth his hand is blessed to behold — “And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground; and *the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left*” (v. 22). Not only had that which symbolized *death* no power over Israel, but it was now a *defense* to them! This very sea, which at first they so much feared, became the means of their deliverance from the Egyptians; and instead of proving their enemy became their friend. So if death overtakes the believer before the Lord’s return it only serves to bring him into the presence of Christ — “Whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; *all are yours*” (1 Corinthians 3:22). But deeply solemn is the other side of the picture: “By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by

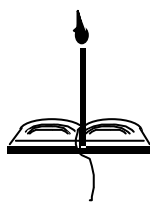
dry land: *which the Egyptians assaying to do, were drowned,*” for the natural man to meet death in the power of human confidence is certain destruction.

Evangelically the crossing of the Red Sea tells of the completeness of our salvation. It is the sequel to the Passover-night, and *both* are needed to give us a full view of what Christ has wrought for us. In Hebrews 9:27 we read, **“It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.”** For the believer this order is reversed, as it was with his Substitute. It was during the three awful hours of darkness, while He hung on the cross, that the Lord Jesus endured the **“judgment”** of God against our sins. Having passed through the fires of God’s wrath, He then **“yielded up the spirit.”** So in our type. On the Passover-night, we see Israel sheltered by blood from the judgment of God — the avenging angel; here at the Red Sea, we behold them brought safely through the place of death. The order is reversed for the unbeliever. **“After death the judgment”** for him.

Doctrinally the passage through the Red Sea sets forth the believer’s union with Christ in His death and resurrection. **“I am crucified with Christ”** (Galatians 2:20), refers to our judicial identification with our Substitute, not to experience. That Israel passed *through* the Red Sea, and emerged safely on the far side, tells of resurrection. So we read in Romans 6:5, **“If we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.”** And again, **“When we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and raised us up together”** (Ephesians 2:5, 6).

Practically the deliverance of Israel from the Red Sea illustrates the absolute sufficiency of our God. The believer to-day may be hemmed in on every side. A Red Sea of trial and trouble may confront him. But let him remember that Israel’s God is *his* God. When His time comes, it will be an easy matter for Him to cleave a way through for you. Take comfort from His promise: **“When thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee”** (Isaiah 43:2). God can protect His people in the greatest difficulties and dangers and make a way of deliverance for them out of the most desperate situations.

Dispensationally the passing of Israel through the Red Sea foreshadows the yet suture deliverance and restoration of the Jews. The **“sea”** is a well known figure of *the Gentiles* (Psalm 65:7; Daniel 7:2; Revelation 17:15) Among the Gentiles the seed of Abraham have long been scattered, and to the eye of sense it has seemed that they would be utterly swallowed up. But marvelously has God preserved the Jews all through these many centuries. The **“sea”** has not consumed them. They still dwell as **“a people apart”** (Numbers 23:9), and the time is coming when Jehovah will fulfill the promises made to their fathers (Ezekiel 20:34; 37:21, etc.). When these promises are fulfilled our type will receive its final accomplishment. Israel shall be brought safely *out of* the **“sea”** of the Gentiles, into their own land.



A Classic Study: The Danger of Prosperity

A Classic Study by William Bates (1635–1699)

[Here we continue a study by the eminent English Puritan William Bates, concerning the danger of prosperity.]—*Ed.*

The Danger of Prosperity, pt. 8

The prosperity of fools shall destroy them. (Prov. 1:32, AV).

The second thing to be considered is the folly of prosperous sinners. Folly is the cause of their abusing prosperity, and the effect of their prosperity abused. The most proper notion of folly is, that the understanding mistakes in judging and comparing things, from whence the will slides into error, and makes an unworthy choice: And according to the weight and consequence of things, the more remarkable is the degree of folly in not discerning their differences. Now, when men value and are delighted in temporal prosperity as their happiness, and heaven with its glory and joys is neglected and vilified in the comparison, it is folly above all wonder—folly of so rare and singular a nature, that if the judicative faculty were not corrupted, it were impossible they should be guilty of it. This will appear by considering the essential and inseparable properties of man's felicity:

1. The perfection of man does principally consist in the excellencies of his spiritual and immortal part. As in the various kinds of creatures, there is something that is their proper excellency, something for which they were made, and accordingly are valued: as strength or beauty, swiftness or courage. So, the first and chief and proper excellency of man is the rational mind, which distinguishes him from other creatures, and gives him a natural and regular dominion over them. It is the highest and most divine faculty of the soul; and from hence the deduction is clear, that our felicity consists in the perfection of the mind. If the excellencies of all other creatures were united in man, they could derive no true worth to him, because they cannot adorn and perfect what is his proper excellence.

Now, according to the quality of the objects, about which the mind is conversant, it is either tainted and depreciated, or purified and exalted. To apply it to sensual worldly things, how to *increase riches, and make provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts* (see Rom. 13:14), is more truly vilifying, than if a prince should employ his counselors of state, and the judges of his courts, in the offices of his kitchen, or to dig in the culprits. The mind is corrupted and debased by application to inferior perishing things, as gold

and silver are allayed, and lose of their purity and value, by a mixture with copper and tin. God alone is the sovereign object of the mind, with respect to its dignity and capacity, its superior and noblest operations: and by contemplating His glorious attributes and excellencies, who is best in himself, and best to us; the mind is enlightened and enlarged, renewed and raised, made holy and heavenly, full of beauty, order, and tranquility, and transformed into the likeness of the divine perfections.

2. All the prosperity in the world cannot bring true satisfaction to him that enjoys it. This is so clear by reason, that it may seem as needless and impertinent to insist on it, as to use arguments to prove that gold and diamonds are the proper food the body. But the self-deceiving folly of the carnal heart, so enamored with the vanity of the world, makes it necessary to inculcate known truths, that men may timely prevent the sad consequences of such folly, and not be accessories to their tormenting conviction by experience. It is true that carnal and material things pleasantly affect the outward man; yet such a vanity is in them, that they are neither a pure nor a prevalent good, with respect to the natural and civil state of man here. Riches, and honors, and sensual pleasures, are not without a mixture of bitterness, which corrupts the contentment that men expect in them. They are not efficacious to remove or allay the evil to which all are exposed in this open state. A sharp disease makes all the joys of the world insipid and despicable. But suppose the riches be in their elevation, they still cannot supply the wants and exigencies, nor satisfy the desires of the soul. They cannot restore men to the favor of God, and blessed communion with Him; nor renew the image of His holiness in them. They are but a vain name, a naked shadow of felicity, and entirely depend upon the simplicity and fancies of men for their valuation. The Apostle therefore tells us that they **“that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish lusts”** (I Tim. 6:9). Those who resolve and labor to get riches, thinking to find felicity in them, are misled by a gross folly, as those who resume by their costly preparations to turn brass and lead into gold. For if it be folly to desire and attempt what is impossible, it is equally so in those who seek for joyful satisfaction in wealth, and in any other secular things, as in the alchemists, that waste their real estates for imaginary treasures.

Besides, the happiest condition here, as it is like the moon, that at the brightest is spotted and imperfect; so eclipses are not less strange to it than to that planet. The world is at the best of a transient use, and the pleasant error of the carnal mind will be of short continuance. Within a little while, that which was declared with such solemnity by the angel in the Revelation—**“He lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that lives forever, that time shall be no more”** (Rev. 10:5-6)—will be true of every mortal person. The rich man that was surveying his estate with carnal complacency, and extending his hopes of voluptuous living to many years, was surprised with the fatal sentence: **“You fool, this night shall thy soul be required of you: then whose shall those things by which you has provided?”** (Luke 12:20). Now, can that be our happiness that is of such an uncertain tenure, that every house may be snatched upon us, or we from it? If one should with great expenses build a mansion,

and plant gardens in a place subject to frequent earthquakes, that would overturn all into confusion, would not his folly be conspicuous? Yet how many practice themselves what they would deride in others? They set their heart upon the things of the world, which are liable to a thousand changes, and must shortly be parted with forever. The slaves of honor, which are so swelled with airy titles of greatness, and the flattering respects of others, must shortly be divested of all; and when laid in their tombs, the trophies of vanity, will be insensible of the renown and applause of the world. Alexander the Great is long since dead to the pleasure of his immortal name. And death will make a final separation between the rich and their treasures, and put an end to all the delights of men. Now, what folly is it to prefer a felicity that is deceitful in the enjoyment, and leaves the soul empty when it most fills it, and that is so vain and transitory, over an eternal heaven: a blessedness that surpasses our hopes, that secures our fears, that satisfies our immense desires; a blessedness that the humane understanding in all the capacity of its thoughts is not able to comprehend; a blessedness becoming the majesty and magnificence of God that bestows it. What madness to despise heaven, as if the eternity of the next world were but a moment, and to love this world as if this momentary life were an eternity. The full aggravation of this dyes the love of the world with the deepest tincture of folly, as will become apparent by considering:

A. It is a voluntary chosen folly. Thus the divine wisdom with passion reproaches wretched sinners, **“How long you simple ones, will you love simplicity?”** (Prov. 1:22). This heightens their character to love, so obstinately, what is so unlovely and unbecoming the reasonable nature. The light of reason and revelation discovers the vanity of the world: it is not for want of evidence, but for want of using the light, that men do not discern their wretched mistake. God complains in the prophet, **“My people do not consider”** (Isa. 1:3). The means of restoring men to a sound mind is by due consideration. The soul, retired from the world, and makes a solemn enquiry: For what end am I created? For what do I consume my time? If my endeavors are all for the earth, what remains for heaven? What do I prepare, what shall attend me, what shall I meet in the next state? How long will it be before I must leave the visible world, and after the irrevocable step into the next, immediately appear before the enlightened tribunal of God, whose judgment is so strict, that the **“Righteous are scarcely saved”** (see I Pet. 4:18), and so heavy that the strongest sinners cannot endure? Can the world prevent my doom to hell, or release me from it? Will the remembrance of enjoyments here, afford any refreshment in everlasting burnings? By such sad and frequent soliloquies, the vicious sensual affections are eradicated, and the heart is transplanted from earth to heaven. If men would wisely ponder things, if conscience, the sincere and unsuspected judge did hold the balance, and put into one scale the glory, the riches, and pleasures of this world; and into the other the promises that belong to godliness here and hereafter how despicably light how will they be found? It was truly said, that false scarlet appears with luster, until compared with the rich and true; so the fictitious felicity of this world is very specious, and ravishes the mind of men, until compared

with celestial felicity. Worldly honor is counterfeit, because it is no certain argument of inherent worth. Vain-glory and real infamy, often meet in the same person: yet it is admired, and ambitiously sought, until compared with the *Honor of the saints*. What is a reputation and honor with the worms and moles of the earth, compared with the honor that comes from the esteem of God, and angels, and other blessed spirits above, who incomparably exceed all mortals in number, and infinitely in understanding? What is a vanishing shadow of reputation, against an eternal inestimable weight of glory? What are the riches of this world, gold and silver, and jewels, for gaining of which so many lose their souls, but vile trash compared with the sacred treasures of heaven, the graces of the saints? What are the empty delights of the senses compared with the **“peace of conscience, and joy in the holy ghost”** (Rom. 14:7), that can sweeten all our sorrows here, and the fullness of joy that springs from God’s presence in heaven? If men would make judicious comparisons, their affections would cool towards perishing vanities. But they will only look upon what is pleasant and attractive to the world, without regarding its miserable defects, without considering what is infinitely better, and most worthy of their ardent desires and vigorous endeavors. They are so pleased with their error, so engaged in the sweet capacity of the world, that they cannot extricate themselves if they would, because they will not if they could.

B. It is a culpable and guilty folly. Children prefer things of luster before things of value, their childish toys, before real treasures. They choose a little present enjoyment, before a future good that is incomparably better, their folly is innocent, because reason cannot display its operations in them. But when men, who are capable to distinguish between the things that **“are seen and temporal, and the things that are not seen and eternal”** (see II Cor. 4:18); when they sottishly prefer sensual things before the spiritual, notwithstanding the vast difference between them, both in the quality and duration, their choice is so criminal, as deserves an everlasting hell. If Esau had been a child when he sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, his folly would have been excused; for he was compelled by hunger; and the glorious dignity of the birthright was disproportionate to his appetite and understanding. But in his mature age, when capable to understand his interest, to part with so sacred and precious an advantage, for a little sensual satisfaction, was so profane an act that he was justly deprived of the divine blessing that was annexed to the birthright. That beasts are wholly led by their sensual appetites is natural and regular. Their voracity and cruelty, folly and filthiness, envy and fury, are not vicious passions, because sense is the superior faculty in them. But when men are so brutish that the objects that please their eyes and carnal senses are the only attractives of their affections, it is unnatural and monstrous, because reason should have the supremacy in them. The body considered as the seat of the senses, has natural appetites, and might enjoy what is suitable to them according to their capacity; but united with an immortal spirit, that is stamped with the living image of God. Its desires must be limited and directed by the mind, and the pleasing of sense in actions forbidden of the mind, is rebellion against the ruling faculty. If one be under a disease that wine inflames and increases, and the physician forbids it as

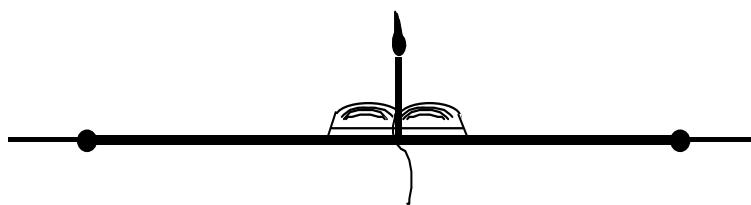
deadly, yet the patient will judge only by his palate whether wine be good for him; were it not a kind of brutishness worthy of the evil that attends it? Such perverse folly are men guilty of in their sensual satisfactions, whereby the soul is unspeakable wronged, and God highly dishonored, who has given to man a more excellent spirit, than the fowls of the air, that he may judge of things, not as they appear, but as they are.

C. It is the most ignominious folly. Shame arises from the sense of a debased excellence: the understanding is the most excellent faculty in man, and nothing brings a greater disreputation to him, than when he is deceived by the ignorance or inconsiderateness of his mind. And the delusion is most shameful in matters of great moment. Now for a man to exchange his soul, that is of angelical eminence, for transitory vanities: O folly! How enormous, how astonishing! The Lord Jesus, who as the Creator, and Redeemer of Souls, perfectly knew their worth, puts the question, so as to imply the strongest denial, **“What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or, what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”** (Matt. 16:26). The vanity of purchase, and the value of the loss, is such that no man, conscious of his immortality in the next state, can help but acknowledge that he is an infinite loser, and a prodigious fool, who gains the world by the loss of his soul. It is said of the ancient Germans, that in their commerce with the Romans, receiving silver for their amber that has no virtue but to draw straws to it, they were amazed at the price. And certainly the great tempter cannot but wonder at the foolish exchange that men make, in giving their immortal souls to him for perishing vanities; and having this scornful advantage, will much more upbraid them hereafter, than ever he allured them here. The shame that attends this folly is sometimes felt by sinners in this world, when they are shaken out of their stupefying slumber, and fully awaked to discover their evil choice. Thus the apostle speaks, **“What fruit had you of those things whereof you are now ashamed, for the end of those things is death?”** (Rom. 6:21). When the memory of sin is revived, with a true judgment of it, that which has emptiness in the beginning, and death in the issue, must have shame in the middle. The prophet tells us, **“He that gets riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool”** (Jer. 17:11). He was a fool all along that deceived others, though reputed worldly wise, but in the issue, when that which he gained cannot be kept (and the soul being lost, can never be recovered), by the conviction of his conscience, he is a fool and reflects upon his past folly with confusion. But at the last day, the shame of foolish sinners shall be displayed before the eyes of the whole world. It is foretold, that **“some shall rise to shame and everlasting contempt”** (Dan. 12:2). Obscurity is the mask of shame, but to be exposed, a spectacle of scorn before a thronged theatre, is the aggravation and eminence of the shame. How confounding will the shame of sinners be in the universal confluence of angels and saints, and the presence of the glorious God, the judge of all? The sense of their guilt and folly will sting them forever.

D. It is the most woeful folly. Here such mischievous effects proceed from it as deserve the saddest lamentation. The understanding, the high-

est faculty, the beauty and excellency of man, is blinded, the will is fettered by corrupt passions, and the whole man miserably enslaved to Satan. What a spectacle of compassion was Samson in the slavery of the Philistines? He that had been the general and judge of Israel, was deprived of his sight, and divine strength: his warlike hands, which had been of equal power with an army, and performed such glorious achievements, were employed in turning a mill, the work of a beast. And his misery was pointed and made sharper by the insultation of his enemies. The true emblem of the degenerate state of Men; the soul that was created in the image of God, and had a peaceful sovereignty over the sensual appetites, a superiority over sensible things, is now enslaved and employed in the vile drudgery of sin, and become the derision of the devils. This is little thought of, or lamented, but therefore the more woeful. The loss of the kingdom was not so dismal a judgment to Nebuchadnezzar, as the loss of his understanding. When his reason was taken away, and the heart of a beast was given to him, it was the lowest and saddest degradation.

But hereafter the misery of foolish sinners will be extreme. The apostle tells us that the love of the world causes men **“to fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition”** (1 Tim. 6:9). The expressions are full to exaggerate the horror of their ruins, and to signify that it is absolute and irrecoverable. The lusts of men are equally foolish and pernicious; they please themselves in the enjoyments of the world, and are secure, as if bathing in the fountains of felicity, when ready to be swallowed up the whirlpool of death. By sensual vanities they are estranged from God, careless of their duty, and are finally separated from his blessed presence. And as the enjoying God, without a possibility of losing him, is our consummate happiness; so to lose Him, without hopes of ever enjoying Him, is extreme misery. The foolish sinner is not affected with this now; while he lives in pleasure, he is content to be without God in the world; but hereafter, when he shall be deprived of these slight short-lived pleasures, and shall know the invaluable loss of his happiness, sorrows will overwhelm him forever. As it befell that infidel in 2 Kings 8, he saw the plenty, but was not suffered to taste of it; so the damned shall see the glory of heaven shining in the saints, but shall not partake of it.





New Testament Study: Matthew 23:1-12

Jesus Denounces the Religious Leaders

¹Then Jesus said to the crowds and to His disciples:
²“The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. ³So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. ⁴They tie up heavy loads and put them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.

⁵“Everything they do is done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; ⁶they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; ⁷they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them ‘Rabbi.’

⁸“But you are not to be called ‘Rabbi,’ for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. ⁹And do not call anyone on earth ‘father,’ for you have one Father, and He is in heaven. ¹⁰Nor are you to be called ‘teacher,’ for you have one Teacher, the Christ. ¹¹The greatest among you will be your servant. ¹²For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”

Jesus had been teaching in the Temple, during the Passover week. In chapter 23 of the book of Matthew, Jesus ends His teaching session in the Temple with a discourse against the religious leaders of the time: the Pharisees, and the Teachers of the Law. As we shall see, His discourse is very frank and pointed, containing harsh denunciations against the religious leaders. “The whole chapter is a signal example of boldness and faithfulness in denouncing error. It is a striking proof that it is possible for the most loving heart to use the language of stern reproof” [Ryle, 297]. Primarily, Jesus excoriates the religious leaders for their hypocrisy. “We find not Christ, in all His preaching, so severe upon any sort of people as upon these Scribes and Pharisees; for the truth is, nothing is more directly opposite to the spirit of the gospel than the temper and practice of that generation of men, who were made up of pride, worldliness, and tyranny, under a cloak and pretence of religion” [Henry].

The section here, the first twelve verses of the chapter, is addressed to

Jesus' followers, telling them how to respond to the religious leaders: **"Then Jesus said to the crowds and to His disciples: 'The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. They tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them'"** (vss. 1-4). Interestingly, Jesus seems to acknowledge the authority of the religious leaders to teach the people. He said that they **"sit in Moses' seat"**, meaning, they held the office of instruction in matters concerning the Law of God. Jesus also said, **"So you must obey them and do everything they tell you."** It is a sad fact that, since all men are sinful, it is sinful men who must be put in authority to teach the things of God. But their sinfulness does not necessarily nullify the truth of what they teach. "Note, we must not think the worse of good truths for their being preached by bad ministers; nor of good laws for their being executed by bad magistrates. Though it is most desirable to have our food brought by angels, yet, if God send it to us by ravens, if it be good and wholesome, we must take it, and thank God for it" [Henry]. Paul noted that there were those preaching the truth of Christ, yet not from pure motives: **"It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill... The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice"** (Phil. 2:15-18). Paul rejoiced that God's message could still get out, even though it was spoken by those with impure motives.

Often one hears from non-Christians that one reason they don't go to church, or don't believe in Jesus Christ, is that the church is full of hypocrites. But in the eyes of God, this is not a valid excuse. His truth gets out, by His Spirit, even through hypocrites and sinful men. The hypocrisy of the messenger is no excuse for ignoring sound teaching. If anything, the hypocrisy and sinfulness of even the best of Christians, validates the Christian world view: all men are sinful, and in great need of a Savior.

Although the Jews of the time were to heed the valid teaching of the religious leaders, they were not to follow their bad example of living. Jesus said: **"But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach"** (vs. 3). "We must often disregard a teacher's evil example, and heed his correct precept" [Broadus, 468]. Of course, this does not excuse teachers who live less than exemplary lives. All teachers of the things of God must strive to teach, not only through their words, but also through their actions. "How much better, for teacher and for hearers, when he that says, also does!" [Broadus, 468]

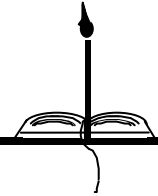
It seems also that the religious leaders, though they were teaching some of the truths of God's law, they were lacking in their teaching con-

cerning the grace and love of God: **“They tie up heavy loads and put them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them”** (vss. 4). Apparently, they would condemn the people for not following the law, but would offer no grace, love or encouragement in guiding the people to carry out God’s precepts. Their mode of teaching the Law was to **“tie up heavy loads and put them on men’s shoulders”**. They taught the law as a heavy burden. The law of God, however, is not meant to be a heavy burden. Rather, it is meant to be the way to a pure and fulfilling life. Jesus taught the law the way it should be taught. Living a life of sin is a heavy burden. Living a life of obedience to God’s law trades the heavy burden of the life of sin, for the light burden of living a life in purity and holiness in obedience to God. As Jesus said, **“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light”** (Matt. 11:28–30).

Jesus faulted the religious leaders for making a show of their religion: **“Everything they do is done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them ‘Rabbi’”** (vss. 5–7). “Jesus expects His followers so to live that they bring glory, not to themselves, but to God (see Matt. 5:16). Many of the things the Pharisees did were undoubtedly worthy, but they did them with their attention fixed on what people would think of them. They did them for show, and such deeds are not meritorious in the sight of God” [Morris, 574]. “We must do such good works, that they who see them may glorify God” [Henry].

Jesus continued His instruction, speaking on humility: **“...they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them ‘Rabbi’. But you are not to be called ‘Rabbi’, for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth ‘father,’ for you have one Father, and He is in heaven. Nor are you to be called ‘teacher,’ for you have one Teacher, the Christ. The greatest among you will be your servant. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted”** (vss. 8–12). Jesus faulted the religious leaders for glorying in their titles. They loved the ego-boost they received when they were called **“Rabbi”**. This is the wrong attitude. We are instructed by Jesus to strive for humility. We are not to be called **“Rabbi”**, or **“Master”**, or **“Father”**, or **“Teacher”**, as a means of showing our superiority over others. Rather, as Jesus said, we **“are all brothers”**, equals in the family of God, our heavenly Father. To Him belongs all the obeisance and glory; to Christ all the exaltation.

A Topical Study: On Prayer



[As we continue our series on prayer, here we continue a study in which Richard Baxter gives us general directions concerning prayer.]

Directions for Prayer in General, pt. 2 by Richard Baxter (1615-1691)

Direction 7. Search your hearts and watch them carefully, lest some beloved vanity alienate them from the work in hand, and turn away your thoughts, or prepossess your affections, so that you lack them when you should use them. If the mind be set on other matters, prayer will be a heartless, lifeless thing; alas, what a dead and pitiful work is the prayer of one that hath his heart ensnared in the love of money, or in any ambitious or covetous design! The thoughts will easily follow the affections.

Direction 8. Be sure that you pray for nothing that is disagreeable to the will of God, and that is not for the good of yourselves or others, or for the honor of God; and therefore take heed, lest an erring judgment, or carnal desires, or passions, should corrupt your prayers, and turn them into sin. If men will ignorantly pray to God to do them hurt, it is a mercy to them if God will but pardon and deny such prayers, and a judgment to grant them. And it is an easy thing for fleshly interest, or partiality, or passion, to blind the judgment, and consequently to corrupt men's prayers. An ambitious or covetous man will easily be drawn to pray for the grant of his sinful desires, and think it would be for his good. And there is scarce an heretical or erroneous person, but thinketh that it would be good that the world were all reduced to his opinion, and all the opposers of it were borne down. It is like the religious leaders during the days of the early church who had a persecuting zeal for God (see Rom. 10:2), and who did pray according to that zeal, as well as persecute; as it is like that Paul himself prayed against the Christians, while he ignorantly persecuted them. And they that think they do God service by killing His servants, no doubt would pray against them, as some do at this day. Be especially careful therefore that your judgments and desires be sound and holy, before you offer them up to God in prayer. For it is a most vile abuse of God, to beg of Him to do the devil's work; and, as most malicious and erroneous persons do, to call Him to their help against Himself, His servants, and His cause.

Direction 9. Come always to God in the humility that beseemeth a condemned sinner, and in the faith and boldness that beseemeth a son, and a member of Christ: do nothing in the least conceit and confidence of a

worthiness in yourselves; but be as confident in every lawful request, as if you saw your glorified Mediator interceding for you with His Father. Hope is the life of prayer and all endeavor, and Christ is the life of hope. If you pray and think you shall be never the better for it, your prayers will have little life. And there is no hope of success, but through our powerful Intercessor. Therefore let both a crucified and glorified Christ be always before your eyes in prayer; not in a picture, but in the thoughts of a believing mind. Instead of a crucifix, let some such sentence of holy Scripture be written before you, where you use to pray, as in John 20:17, **“Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.”** Or Heb. 4:14, **“We have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God”**; ver. 15, 16: **“that was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin: let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy,”** etc. Heb. 4:9,20: **“Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and that entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered.”** Heb. 7:25: **“He is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.”** John 14:13,14: **“If ye ask anything in My name, I will do it.”** Christ and the promise must be the ground of all your confidence and hope.

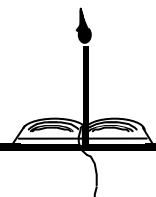
Direction 10. Labour hard with your hearts all the while to keep them in a reverent, serious, fervent frame, and suffer them not to grow remiss and cold to turn prayer into lip-labour, and lifeless formality, or into hypocrisy, if it be not carefully watched. **“The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much,”** (James 5:16). A cold prayer showeth a heart that is cold in desiring that which is prayed for, and therefore is unfit to receive the mercy: God will make you know that His mercy is not contemptible, but worthy of your most earnest prayers.

Direction 11. For the matter and order of your desires and prayers, take the Lord’s prayer as your special rule; and labor to understand it well. For those that can make use of so brief an explication, I shall give a little help.

It is apparent that the method of the Lord’s prayer is circular, partly analytical, and partly synthetical: beginning with God, and ending in God; beginning with such acknowledgements as are prerequisite to petition, and ending in those praises which petition and grace bestowed tend to; beginning with our petitions for God’s interest and the public good, according to the order of estimation and intention, till we come to the mere means; and then beginning at the lowest, and ascending according to the order of execution. As the blood passing from the greater to the smaller numerous vessels, is there received by the like, and repasseth to its fountain; such a circular method hath mercy and duty, and consequently our desires.



A Study in Wisdom: Job 1:1 (pt. 4)



[Here we continue a reprint of a small portion of Joseph Caryl's study in Job. Mr. Caryl wrote twelve volumes on the book of Job. His study is a great example of how deep one can dig into the truths of the Bible.]

Job 1:1 - Good Character, by Joseph Caryl

¹...and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed evil...

We will observe hence somewhat in the general first, and then somewhat more particularly. You see here when God comes to describe a man and to set him forth in his glory and excellency, where the spirit of God begins. The chief and first thing which God takes notice of, is his grace. When he would set forth what a man Job was, how blessed and how happy, here he sets his pen first, to describe what his spiritual estate was. Hence then this in the general.

1. *Gracious habits and spiritual blessings are the chiefest of all blessings.* If God has given a man grace, he has the best and the choicest of all that which God can give. God has given us His son, and God has given us His spirit, and God has given us the graces of His spirit. These are the finest of the flower, and the honey out of the rock of mercy. If you do not have children as Job did, and do not have the inventory to sheep and camels and oxen and asses that Job had, if you are in the first part of the description, that you have a perfect heart and upright life, and the fear of God in your inward parts, and a holy turning against every evil, your lot is fallen in a fair place, and you have a goodly heritage. They that have this need not be discontented at their own, or envious at the condition of any other. They have the principal verb, the one thing necessary.

Again, when God describes a gracious man, you see He is thorough: He sets him forth in everything that concerns his spiritual estate, *Perfect and upright, fearing God and eschewing evil.* From hence, note this also in general:

2. *Where one grace is there is every grace.* Grace is laid into the soul in all the parts of it, and there is somewhat of every grace laid into the soul. We have not one man, one grace, and another man another grace, but every man has every grace that has any grace at all. I do not say that every man has every grace, or that the same man has every grace in the same height and degree. Grace in some is more eminent than in others, and the same man may have one grace more eminent than another. He may have one grace (like Saul among the people) higher by head and shoulders than the rest in his throng of graces; yet that man has somewhat of every grace that

has any grace. All grace goes together. Thus in the general.

Particularly: this man was “**perfect**”. That is (as we have explained it) he was sincere and plainhearted. Observe hence, 1. *It is sincerity that especially commends us to God*, as Job’s graces are preferred in his description before all his other graces.

Sincerity is that which makes us so acceptable and pleasing unto God: He was a man that was “**perfect**”, you see that is put in the first place. And indeed, whatsoever a man be besides, if a man is just in his dealings, and suppose a man worships God in all His ordinances, and avoids all manner of evil, yet if there be doubling and falseness in his spirit, all is cast off, all is rejected of God as abominable. Therefore here the foundation is laid, here is the bottom grace: perfection, sincerity. Whether it be a distinct grace, or whether it be that which does accompany very grace, and gives it life and beauty in the eye of God (for my own part I conceive sincerity is not properly a distinct grace, but the perfection of every grace) it is that which does commend a man unto God. Christ tells the angel of the church of Sardis, “**I have not found thy works perfect**” (Rev. 3:2). Not full, says the Greek text. There wanted somewhat within. Sincerity is the filling up of all our duties. Without that, they are but empty sounds, as sounding brass, and as a tinkling symbol.

He was “**perfect**”, that is, he was sincere. Observe then, 2. *Sincere and sound hearted persons are in God’s esteem perfect persons*. It is not all that you can do, or all that you can say, or all that you can suffer, or all that you can loose, that can make you perfect in the esteem of God without sincerity; add sincerity but to the least, and it gives you the denomination of perfect. God accepts the very Goat’s hair, the least offering from one that is sincere. He accounts it a rich present, and calls the presenter perfect. But He will not receive the greatest riches, whole droves of cattle for offerings, the greatest and mightiest services from one that is unsound. Truth of grace is our perfection here, in Heaven we shall have perfection as well as truth.

Furthermore, upon this perfectness and plainness of heart there is presently added uprightness. Observe from thence.

1. *Where the heart is sincere towards God, the ways are just and honest before men.*

2. *It is a great honor and an ornament unto our professions of godliness, to be just and upright in his dealings towards men.* This is put as a special part of Job’s excellency, that he was upright in his dealings. There is much scandal cast upon the profession of the name of God through a defect in this. The world says, these men profess, they take the name of God upon them, but they are as unanswerable to their promises, as unjust in them, but they are as unanswerable to their promises as unjust in them, but they are as unanswerable to their promises, as unjust in their tradings as any other. Then make proof of your perfection in profession, but the uprightness of your conversation.

“**Perfect and upright, one that feared God.**” Here we have fearing God, added to perfect and upright. Observe hence:

1. *Moral integrity and moral honesty without the fear of God can never render us acceptable to God.* There are some that please themselves in this, that they are plain-hearted (it is possible for a man in a sense to be so, and yet not to fear God), or they give every man his due, etc. These are good, but in Job, we may learn on what these must be founded, whence they

come, when we please God in them. They come from the fear of God, which must be the spring of uprightness and perfection, else they are only heathen virtues, not Christian graces.

God delights in nothing we do, unless we do it in His fear. As Joseph said to his brethren when they feared some hard measure from him, I **“fear God”**; when this fear of God ties our hands it shows the love of God that fills our hearts. Not to wrong man, because we fear God is an argument of more than man.

“Fearing God.” You may observe:

1. *Holy fear contains in it every grace we receive from God, and all the worship we tender up to God.* Fear is a comprehensive word; it is more than a particular grace. When Abraham had offered up his son Isaac, that was a work of mighty faith, and the faith of Abraham is wonderfully commended by it; but God speaks thus, **“Now I know you fear me”**. Fear contains faith, and fear contains love too. Though **“perfect love casts out tormenting fear”** (1 John 4:18), yet perfect love calls in obeying fear: **“Hear the conclusion of all,”** says the preacher, Eccl. 12:13, **“Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man, or this is the whole man.”** Fear is all duty, and every grace.

Job **“feared God and eschewed evil.”** Hence this from the connection:

1. *Holy fear keeps the heart and life clean.* The fear of the Lord is clean, says David, Psalm 19. Clean not only in itself, formally clean, but also *effectively* clean: it makes clean and keeps clean the heart and life. Fear is as an armed man at the gate, which examines all, and stops everyone from entering who is unfit. It stands as a watchman on the tower, and it looks every way to see what’s coming to the soul; if evil come, fear will not admit it. And therefore in Scripture you shall have these two often put together, *fearing God and eschewing evil*. Nay, eschewing evil is not only put as an effect of the fear of God, but is put into the very definition itself of the fear of God, **“The fear of the Lord is to depart from evil”** (Job 28:28).

“He eschewed evil.”

From hence, observe also,

1. *Godly persons do not only forbear sin, but the abhor sin.* They have not only their hands bound from it, but they have their hearts set against it. Holy enmity against sin is the temper of a godly mans heart, he eschews evil.

2. *A godly man’s opposition of sin is universal: it is against all sin.* Job eschewed evil, all evil, there was no picking of this for that particular evil to oppose, but whatsoever came under the name and notion of sin, Job’s spirit turned against it: *enmity is against the kind*.

3. *Godly persons do not only avoid the acts of evil, but all the occasions of evil.* Job eschewed evil, whatever led him to evil, all the appearances of evil, as the Apostles speaks: we cannot avoid the sin, if we will not avoid the occasion. When Solomon cautions to take heed of the path of the wicked, he used four expressions and all to the same purpose, **“Avoid it”** (says he) **“pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away”** (Prov. 4:15). He does this to show us, that if we are to keep from the acts of sin, we must keep from the way of sin.

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Faith and a Solid Demeanor

"Some men are like the leaves of a tree, which every wind sets a-shaking and trembling; or like a bone out of joint, which a man cannot stir without pain: if the world do but frown upon them, you may see it in their faces, they are quite dejected with sorrow. Oh, how heavy presently are their hearts, as if they had lost their bough! It is to be feared that bough is rotten, which breaketh if but a little weight be hung upon it. A godly man should be like a rock, immovable, though high winds and boisterous waves of providence blow and beat upon him; and like a die, however he be thrown, always to fall upon a square. The traveller need not murmur, though his inn afford him but mean fare, and a hard bed, when he knoweth that he must be gone next morning. The ox is not happier, which hath two or three mountains to graze on, than the bee which feedeth upon that dew which falleth daily from the storehouse of heaven. If thou hast secured thine everlasting estate, the boundless God is thy portion, and surely then thou mayest be like a spring full, under the most scorching providence."

-- George Swinnoek (1627-1673)

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