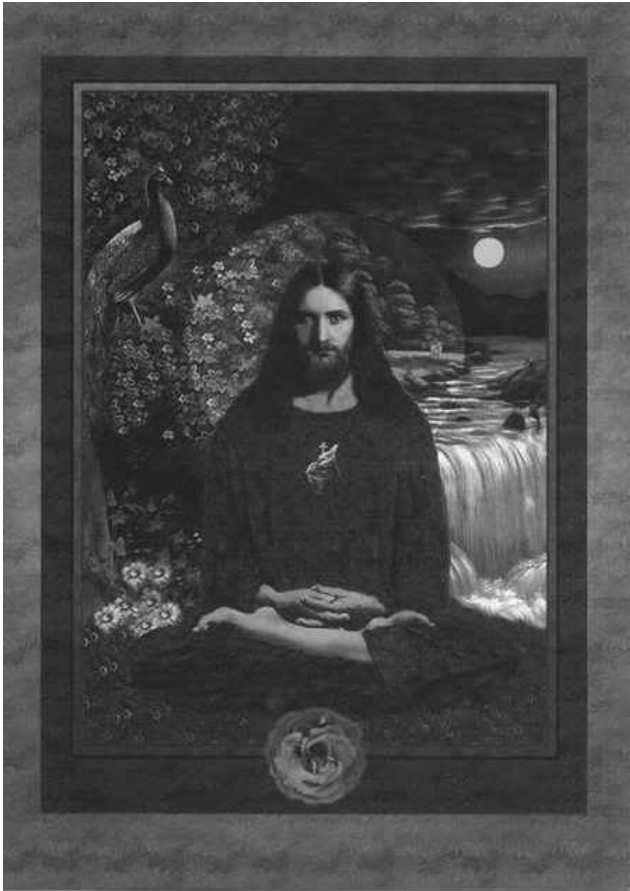


# A Life of Cultivation

By Marilyn Hughes

*The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation!*

<http://outofbodytravel.org>



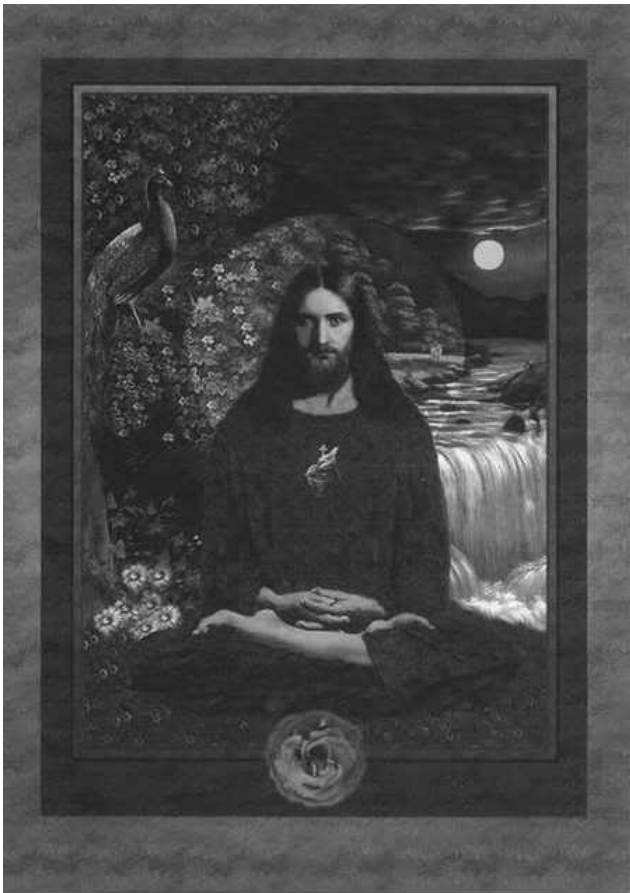


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If this book is unavailable from your local bookseller, it may be obtained directly from the Out-of-Body Travel Foundation by going to [www.outofbodytravel.org](http://www.outofbodytravel.org).

Having worked primarily in radio broadcasting, Marilynn Hughes spent several years as a news reporter, producer and anchor before deciding to stay at home with her three children. She's experienced, researched, written, and taught about out-of-body travel since 1987.

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By Marilyn Hughes

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# A Life of Cultivation

By Marilyn Hughes

## INTRODUCTION

'A Life of Cultivation' is an intrusive self-reflection and intensive examination. It requires a solitude within the self which allows for the Holy Spirit to descend, thus, allowing a deeper examination of conscience and a melting into the inner workings of our spiritual essence.

Experience the process of the cultivation of virtue from the standpoint of many of the world religions, and you might find something you didn't know was yet to be found . . . Vice is easily acquired, but virtue is hard won.

Through a cultivated life, you can *become* that which you have been seeking.

# Hinduism

Excerpts From:

## Raja Yoga

By Yogi Ramacharaka (William Walker Atkinson)

[1906]

### THE FIFTH LESSON.

#### THE CULTIVATION OF ATTENTION.

In our last lesson we called your attention to the fact that the Yogis devote considerable time and practice to the acquirement of Concentration. And we also had something to say regarding the relation of Attention to the subject of Concentration. In this lesson we shall have more to say on the subject of Attention, for it is one of the important things relating to the practice of *Raja Yoga*, and the Yogis insist upon their students practicing systematically to develop and cultivate the faculty. Attention lies at the base of Will-power, and the cultivation of one makes easy the exercise of the other.

To explain why we lay so much importance to the cultivation of Attention, would necessitate our anticipating future lessons of this series, which we do not deem advisable at this time. And so we must ask our students to take our word for it, that all that we

have to say regarding the importance of the cultivation of Attention, is occasioned by the relation of that subject to the use of the mind in certain directions as will appear fully later on.

In order to let you know that we are not advancing some peculiar theory of the Yogis, which may not be in harmony with modern Western Science, we give you in this article a number of quotations, from Western writers and thinkers, touching upon this important faculty of the mind, so that you may see that the West and East agree upon this main point, however different may be their explanations of the fact, or their use of the power gained by the cultivation of Attention.

As we said in our last lesson, the word Attention is derived from two Latin words "*ad tendere*," meaning "to stretch toward," which is really what Attention is. The "I" wills that the mind be focused on some particular object or thing, and the mind obeys and "stretches toward" that object or thing, focusing its entire energy upon it, observing every detail, dissecting, analyzing, consciously and sub-consciously, drawing to itself every possible bit of information regarding it, both from within and from without. We cannot lay too much stress upon the acquirement of this great faculty, or rather, the development of it, for it is necessary for the intelligent study of *Raja Yoga*.

In order to bring out the importance of the subject, suppose we start in by actually giving our Attention

to the subject of Attention, and see how much more there is in it than we had thought. We shall be well repaid for the amount of time and trouble expended upon it.

Attention has been defined as a focusing of consciousness, or, if one prefers the form of expression, as "detention in consciousness." In the first case, we may liken it to the action of the sun-glass through which the sun's rays are concentrated upon an object, the result being that the heat is gathered together at a small given point, the intensity of the same being raised many degrees until the heat is sufficient to burn a piece of wood, or evaporate water. If the rays were not focused, the same rays and heat would have been scattered over a large surface, and the effect and power lessened. And so it is with the mind. If it is allowed to scatter itself over the entire field of a subject, it will exert but little power and the results will be weak. But if it is passed through the sun-glass of attention, and focused first over one part, and then over another, and so on, the matter may be mastered in detail, and a result accomplished that will seem little less than marvelous to those who do not know the secret.

*Thompson* has said: "The experiences most permanently impressed upon consciousness, are those upon which the greatest amount of attention has been fixed."

Another writer upon the subject has said that "Attention is so essentially necessary to

understanding, that without some degree of it the ideas and perceptions that pass through the mind seem to leave no trace behind them."

*Hamilton* has said: "An act of attention, that is, an act of concentration, seems thus necessary to every exertion of consciousness, as a certain contraction of the pupil is requisite to every exertion of vision. Attention then is to consciousness what the contraction of the pupil is to sight, or, to the eye of the mind what the microscope or telescope is to the bodily eye. It constitutes the better half of all intellectual power."

And *Brodie* adds, quite forcibly: "It is Attention, much more than any difference in the abstract power of reasoning, which constitutes the vast difference which exists between minds of different individuals."

*Butler* gives us this important testimony: "The most important intellectual habit I know of is the habit of attending exclusively to the matter in hand. It is commonly said that genius cannot be infused by education, yet this power of concentrated attention, which belongs as a part of his gift to every great discoverer, is unquestionably capable of almost indefinite augmentation by resolute practice."

And, concluding this review of opinions, and endorsements of that which the Yogis have so much to say, and to which they attach so much importance, let us listen to the words of *Beattie*, who says: "The force wherewith anything strikes the mind, is

generally in proportion to the degree of attention bestowed upon it. Moreover, the great art of memory is attention, and inattentive people always have bad memories."

There are two general kinds of Attention. The first is the Attention directed within the mind upon mental objects and concepts. The other is the Attention directed outward upon objects external to ourselves. The same general rules and laws apply to both equally.

Likewise there may be drawn another distinction and division of attention into two classes, *viz.*, Attention attracted by some impression coming into consciousness without any conscious effort of the Will—this is called Involuntary Attention, for the Attention and Interest is caught by the attractiveness or novelty of the object. Attention directed to some object by an effort of the Will, is called Voluntary Attention. Involuntary Attention is quite common, and requires no special training. In fact, the lower animals, and young children seem to have a greater share of it than do adult men. A great percentage of men and women never get beyond this stage to any marked degree. On the other hand, Voluntary Attention requires effort, will, and determination—a certain mental training, that is beyond the majority of people, for they will not "take the trouble" to direct their attention in this way. Voluntary Attention is the mark of the student and other thoughtful men. They focus their minds on objects that do not yield

immediate interest or pleasure, in order that they may learn and accomplish. The careless person will not thus fasten his Attention, at least not more than a moment or so, for his Involuntary Attention is soon attracted by some passing object of no matter how trifling a nature, and the Voluntary Attention disappears and is forgotten. Voluntary Attention is developed by practice and perseverance, and is well worth the trouble, for nothing in the mental world is accomplished without its use.

The Attention does not readily fasten itself to uninteresting objects, and, unless interest can be created, it requires a considerable degree of Voluntary Attention in order that the mind may be fastened upon such an object. And, more than this, even if the ordinary attention is attracted it will soon waver, unless there is some interesting change in the aspect of the object, that will give the attention a fresh hold of interest, or unless some new quality, characteristic or property manifests itself in the object. This fact occurs because the mind mechanism has not been trained to bear prolonged Voluntary Attention, and, in fact, the physical brain is not accustomed to the task, although it may be so trained by patient practice.

It has been noticed by investigators that the Attention may be rested and freshened, either by withdrawing the Voluntary Attention from the object, and allowing the Attention to manifest along Involuntary lines toward passing objects, etc.; or, on the other hand, by directing the Voluntary Attention into a new field of

observation—toward some new object. Sometimes one plan will seem to give the best results, and again the other will seem preferable.

We have called your attention to the fact that Interest develops Attention, and holds it fixed, while an uninteresting object or subject requires a much greater effort and application. This fact is apparent to anyone. A common illustration may be found in the matter of reading a book. Nearly everyone will give his undivided attention to some bright, thrilling story, while but few are able to use sufficient Voluntary Attention to master the pages of some scientific work. But, right here, we wish to call your attention to the other side of the case, which is another example of the fact that Truth is composed of paradoxes.

Just as Interest develops Attention, so it is a truth that Attention develops Interest. If one will take the trouble to give a little Voluntary Attention to an object, he will soon find that a little perseverance will bring to light points of Interest in the object. Things before unseen and unsuspected, are quickly brought to light. And many new phases, and aspects of the subject or object are seen, each one of which, in turn, becomes an object of Interest. This is a fact not so generally known, and one that it will be well for you to remember, and to use in practice. *Look* for the interesting features of an uninteresting thing, and they will appear to your view, and before long the uninteresting object will have changed into a thing having many-sided interests.

Voluntary Attention is one of the signs of a developed Will. That is, of a mind that has been well trained by the Will, for the Will is always strong, and it is the mind that has to be trained, not the Will. And on the other hand, one of the best ways to train the mind by the Will, is by practice in Voluntary Attention. So you see how the rule works both ways. Some Western psychologists have even advanced theories that the Voluntary Attention is the *only* power of the Will, and that that power is sufficient, for if the Attention be firmly fixed, and held upon an object the mind will "do the rest." We do not agree with this school of philosophers, but merely mention the fact as an illustration of the importance attributed by psychologists to this matter of Voluntary Attention.

A man of a strongly developed Attention often accomplishes far more than some much brighter man who lacks it. Voluntary Attention and Application is a very good substitute for Genius, and often accomplishes far more in the long run.

Voluntary Attention is the fixing of the mind earnestly and intently upon some particular object, at the same time shutting out from consciousness other objects pressing for entrance. *Hamilton* has defined it as "consciousness voluntarily applied under its law of limitations to some determinate object." The same writer goes on to state that "the greater the number of objects to which our consciousness is simultaneously extended, the smaller is the intensity with which it is able to consider each, and consequently the less vivid

and distinct will be the information it contains of the several objects. When our interest in any particular object is excited, and when we wish to obtain all the knowledge concerning it in our power, it behooves us to limit our consideration to that object to the exclusion of others."

The human mind has the power of attending to only one object at a time, although it is able to pass from one object to another with a marvelous degree of speed, so rapidly, in fact, that some have held that it could grasp several things at once. But the best authorities, Eastern and Western, hold to the "single idea" theory as being correct. On this point we may quote a few authorities.

*Jouffroy* says that "It is established by experience that we cannot give our attention to two different objects at the same time." And *Holland* states that "Two thoughts, however closely related to one another, cannot be presumed to exist at the same time." And *Lewes* has told us that "The nature of our organism prevents our having more than one aspect of an object at each instant presented to consciousness." *Whateley* says: "The best philosophers are agreed that the mind cannot actually attend to more than one thing at a time, but, when it appears to be doing so it is really shifting with prodigious rapidity backward and forward from one to the other."

By giving a concentrated Voluntary Attention to an object, we not only are able to see and think about it with the greatest possible degree of clearness, but the

mind has a tendency, under such circumstances, to bring into the field of consciousness all the different ideas associated in our memory with that object or subject, and to build around the object or subject a mass of associated facts and information. And at the same time the Attention given the subject makes more vivid and clear all that we learn about the thing at the time, and, in fact, all that we may afterwards learn about it. It seems to cut a channel, through which knowledge flows.

Attention magnifies and increases the powers of perception, and greatly aids the exercise of the perceptive faculties. By "paying attention" to something seen or heard, one is enabled to observe the details of the thing seen or heard, and where the inattentive mind acquires say three impressions the attentive mind absorbs three times three, or perhaps three times "three times three," or twenty-seven. And, as we have just said, Attention brings into play the powers of association, and gives us the "loose end" of an almost infinite chain of associated facts, stored away in our memory, forming new combinations of facts which we had never grouped together before, and bring out into the field of consciousness all the many scraps of information regarding the thing to which we are giving attention. The proof of this is within the experience of everyone. Where is the one who does not remember sitting down to some writing, painting, reading, etc., with interest and attention, and finding, much to his surprise, what a flow of facts regarding the matter in hand was

passing through his mind. Attention seems to focus all the knowledge of a thing that you possess, and by bringing it to a point enables you to combine, associate, classify, etc., and thus create new knowledge. *Gibbon* tells us that after he gave a brief glance and consideration to a new subject, he suspended further work upon it, and allowed his mind (under concentrated attention) to bring forth all his associated knowledge regarding the subject, after which he renewed the task with increased power and efficiency.

the more one's attention is fixed upon a subject under consideration, the deeper is the impression which the subject leaves upon the mind. And the easier will it be for him to afterwards pursue the same train of thought and work.

Attention is a prerequisite of good memory, and in fact there can be no memory at all unless some degree of attention is given. The degree of memory depends upon the degree of attention and interest. And when it is considered that the work of today is made efficient by the memory of things learned yesterday, the day before yesterday, and so on, it is seen that the degree of attention given today regulates the quality of the work of tomorrow.

Some authorities have described Genius as the result of great powers of attention, or, at least, that the two seem to run together. Some writer has said that "possibly the best definition of genius is the power of concentrating upon some one given subject until its

possibilities are exhausted and absorbed." *Simpson* has said that "The power and habit of thinking closely and continuously upon the subject at hand, to the exclusion, for the time, of all other subjects, is one of the principal, if, indeed, not the principal, means of success." *Sir Isaac Newton* has told us his plan of absorbing information and knowledge. He has stated that he would keep the subject under consideration before him continually, and then would wait till the first dawning of perception gradually brightened into a clear light, little by little. A mental sunrise, in fact.

That sage observer, *Dr. Abercrombie*, has written that he considered that he knew of no more important rule for rising to eminence in any profession or occupation than the ability to do one thing at a time, avoiding all distracting and diverting objects or subjects, and keeping the leading matter continually before the mind. And others have added that such a course will enable one to observe relations between the subject and other things that will not be apparent to the careless observer or student.

The degree of Attention cultivated by a man is the degree of his capacity for intellectual work. As we have said, the "great" men of all walks of life have developed this faculty to a wonderful degree, and many of them seem to get results "intuitively," whereas, in truth, they obtain them by reason of their concentrated power of Attention, which enables them to see right into the center of a subject or proposition—and all around it, back and front, and all

sides, in a space of time incredible to the man who has not cultivated this mighty power. Men who have devoted much attention to some special line of work or research, are able to act almost as if they possessed "second sight," providing the subject is within their favorite field of endeavor. Attention quickens every one of the faculties—the reasoning faculties—the senses—the deciding qualities—the analytical faculties, and so on, each being given a "fine edge" by their use under a concentrated Attention.

And, on the other hand, there is no surer indication of a weak mind than the deficiency in Attention. This weakness may arise from illness or physical weakness reacting upon the brain, in which case the trouble is but temporary. Or it may arise from a lack of mental development. Imbeciles and idiots have little or no Attention. The great French psychologist, *Luys*, speaking of this fact, says "Imbeciles and idiots see badly, hear badly, feel badly, and their sensorium is, in consequence, in a similar condition of sensitive poverty. Its impressionability for the things of the external world is at a minimum, its sensibility weak, and consequently, it is difficult to provoke the physiological condition necessary for the absorption of the external impression."

In old age the Attention is the first faculty to show signs of decay. Some authorities have held that the Memory was the first faculty to be affected by the approach of old age, but this is incorrect, for it is a matter of common experience that the aged manifest

a wonderfully clear memory of events occurring in the far past. The reason that their memory of recent events is so poor is because their failing powers of Attention has prevented them from receiving strong, clear mental impressions, and as is the impression so is the memory. Their early impressions having been clear and strong, are easily recalled, while their later ones, being weak, are recalled with difficulty. If the Memory were at fault, it would be difficult for them to recall any impression, recent or far distant in time.

But we must stop quoting examples and authorities, and urging upon you the importance of the faculty of Attention. If you do not now realize it, it is because you have not given the subject the Attention that you should have exercised, and further repetition would not remedy matters.

Admitting the importance of Attention, from the psychological point of view, not to speak of the occult side of the subject, is it not a matter of importance for you to start in to cultivate that faculty? We think so. And the only way to cultivate any mental or physical part or faculty is to Exercise it. Exercise "uses up" a muscle, or mental faculty, but the organism makes haste to rush to the scene additional material—cell-stuff, nerve force, etc., to repair the waste, and it always sends a little more than is needed. And this "little more," continually accruing and increasing, is what increases the muscles and brain centers. And improved and strengthened brain centers give the mind better instruments with which to work.

One of the first things to do in the cultivation of Attention is to learn to think of, and do, one thing at a time. Acquiring the "knack" or habit of attending closely to the things before us, and then passing on to the next and treating it in the same way, is most conducive to success, and its practice is the best exercise for the cultivation of the faculty of Attention. And on the contrary, there is nothing more harmful from the point of view of successful performance—and nothing that will do more to destroy the power of giving Attention—than the habit of trying to do one thing while thinking of another. The thinking part of the mind, and the acting part should work together, not in opposition.

*Dr. Beattie*, speaking of this subject, tells us "It is a matter of no small importance that we acquire the habit of doing only one thing at a time; by which I mean that while attending to any one object, our thoughts ought not to wander to another." And *Granville* adds, "A frequent cause of failure in the faculty of Attention is striving to think of more than one thing at a time." And *Kay* quotes, approvingly, a writer who says: "She did things easily, because she attended to them in the doing. When she made bread, she thought of the bread, and not of the fashion of her next dress, or of her partner at the last dance." *Lord Chesterfield* said, "There is time enough for everything in the course of the day, if you do but one thing at a time; but there is not time enough in the year if you try to do two things at a time."

To attain the best results one should practice concentrating upon the task before him, shutting out, so far as possible, every other idea or thought. One should even forget self—personality—in such cases, as there is nothing more destructive of good thinking than to allow morbid self-consciousness to intrude. One does best when he "forgets himself" in his work, and sinks his personality in the creative work. The "earnest" man or woman is the one who sinks personality in the desired result, or performance of the task undertaken. The actor, or preacher, or orator, or writer, must lose sight of himself to get the best results. Keep the Attention fixed on the thing before you, and let the self take care of itself.

In connection with the above, we may relate an anecdote of *Whateley* that may be interesting in connection with the consideration of this subject of "losing one's self" in the task. He was asked for a recipe for "bashfulness," and replied that the person was bashful simply because he was thinking of himself and the impression he was making. His recipe was that the young man should think of others—of the pleasure he could give them—and in that way he would forget all about himself. The prescription is said to have effected the cure. The same authority has written, "Let both the extemporary speaker, and the reader of his own compositions, study to avoid as far as possible all thoughts of self, earnestly fixing the mind on the matter of what is delivered; and they will feel less that embarrassment which arises from the

thought of what opinion the hearers will form of them."

The same writer, *Whateley*, seems to have made quite a study of Attention and has given us some interesting information on its details. The following may be read with interest, and if properly understood may be employed to advantage. He says, "It is a fact, and a very curious one, that many people find that they can best attend to any serious matter when they are occupied with something else which requires a little, and but a little, attention, such as working with the needle, cutting open paper leaves, or, for want of some such employment, fiddling anyhow with the fingers." He does not give the reason for this, and at first sight it might seem like a contradiction of the "one thing at a time" idea. But a closer examination will show us that the minor work (the cutting leaves, etc.) is in the nature of an involuntary or automatic movement, inasmuch as it requires little or no voluntary attention, and seems to "do itself." It does not take off the Attention from the main subject, but perhaps acts to catch the "waste Attention" that often tries to divide the Attention from some voluntary act to another. The habit mind may be doing one thing, while the Attention is fixed on another. For instance, one may be writing with his attention firmly fixed upon the thought he wishes to express, while at the time his hand is doing the writing, apparently with no attention being given it. But, let a boy, or person unaccustomed to writing, try to express his thoughts in this way, and you will find that he is hampered in

the flow of his thoughts by the fact that he has to give much attention to the mechanical act of writing. In the same way, the beginner on the typewriter finds it difficult to compose to the machine, while the experienced typist finds the mechanical movements no hindrance whatever to the flow of thought and focusing of Attention; in fact, many find that they can compose much better while using the typewriter than they can by dictating to a stenographer. We think you will see the principle.

And now for a little Mental Drill in Attention, that you may be started on the road to cultivate this important faculty.

### **MENTAL DRILL IN ATTENTION.**

*Exercise I.* Begin by taking some familiar object and placing it before you, try to get as many impressions regarding it as is possible for you. Study its shape, its color, its size, and the thousand and one little peculiarities about it that present themselves to your attention. In doing this, reduce the thing to its simplest parts—analyze it as far as is possible—dissect it, mentally, and study its parts in detail. The more simple and small the part to be considered, the more clearly will the impression be received, and the more vividly will it be recalled. Reduce the thing to the smallest possible proportions, and then examine each portion, and mastering that, then pass on to the next part, and so on, until you have covered the entire field. Then, when you have exhausted the object, take a pencil and paper and put down as nearly as

possible all the things or details of the object examined. When you have done this, compare the written description with the object itself, and see how many things you have failed to note.

The next day take up the same object, and after re-examining it, write down the details and you will find that you will have stored away a greater number of impressions regarding it, and, moreover, you will have discovered many new details during your second examination. This exercise strengthens the memory As well as the Attention, for the two are closely connected, the memory depending largely upon the clearness and strength of the impressions received, while the impressions depend upon the amount of attention given to the thing observed. Do not tire yourself with this exercise, for a tired Attention is a poor Attention. Better try it by degrees, increasing the task a little each time you try it. Make a game of it if you like, and you will find it quite interesting to notice the steady but gradual improvement.

It will be interesting to practice this in connection with some friend, varying the exercise by both examining the object, and writing down their impressions, separately, and then comparing results. This adds interest to the task, and you will be surprised to see how rapidly both of you increase in your powers of observation, which powers, of course, result from Attention.

*Exercise II.* This exercise is but a variation of the first one. It consists in entering a room, and taking a hasty glance around, and then walking out, and afterward writing down the number of things that you have observed, with a description of each. You will be surprised to observe how many things you have missed at first sight, and how you will improve in observation by a little practice. This exercise, also, may be improved by the assistance of a friend, as related in our last exercise. It is astonishing how many details one may observe and remember, after a little practice. It is related of Houdin (*Jean Eugène Robert-Houdin – JBH*), the French conjurer, that he improved and developed his faculty of Attention and Memory by playing this game with a young relative. They would pass by a shop window, taking a hasty, attentive glance at its contents. Then they would go around the corner and compare notes. At first they could remember only a few prominent articles—that is, their Attention could grasp only a few. But as they developed by practice, they found that they could observe and remember a vast number of things and objects in the window. And, at last, it is related that Houdin could pass rapidly before any large shop window, bestowing upon it but one hasty glance, and then tell the names of, and closely describe, nearly every object in plain sight in the window. The feat was accomplished by the fact that the cultivated Attention enabled Houdin to fasten upon his mind a vivid mental image of the window and its contents, and then he was able to describe the articles one by one from the picture in his mind.

Houdin taught his son to develop Attention by a simple exercise which may be interesting and of value to you. He would lay down a domino before the boy—a five-four, for example. He would require the boy to tell him the combined number at once, without allowing him to stop to count the spots, one by one. "Nine" the boy would answer after a moment's hesitation. Then another domino, a three-four, would be added. "That makes sixteen," cried the boy. Two dominoes at a time was the second day's task. The next day, three was the standard. The next day, four, and so on, until the boy was able to handle twelve dominoes—that is to say, give instantaneously the total number of spots on twelve dominoes, after a single glance. This was Attention, in earnest, and shows what practice will do to develop a faculty. The result was shown by the wonderful powers of observation, memory and attention, together with instantaneous mental action, that the boy developed. Not only was he able to add dominoes instantaneously, but he had powers of observation, etc., that seemed little short of miraculous. And yet it is related that he had poor attention, and deficient memory to begin with.

If this seems incredible, let us remember how old whist players note and remember every card in the pack, and can tell whether they have been played or not, and all the circumstances attending upon them. The same is true of chess players, who observe every move and can relate the whole game in detail long after it has been played. And remember, also, how

one woman may pass another woman on the street, and without seeming to give her more than a careless glance, may be able to relate in detail every feature of the other woman's apparel, including its color, texture, style of fashioning, probable price of the material, etc., etc. And a mere man would have noticed scarcely anything about it—because he would not have given it any attention. But how soon would that man learn to equal his sister in attention and observation of women's wearing apparel, if his business success depended upon it, or if his speculative instinct was called into play by a wager with some friend as to who could remember the most about a woman's clothing, seen in a passing glance? You see it is all a matter of Interest and Attention.

But we forget that the Attention may be developed and cultivated, and we complain that we "cannot remember things," or that we do not seem to be able to "take notice." A little practice will do wonders in this direction.

Now, while the above exercises will develop your memory and powers of observation, still that is not the main reason that we have given them to you. We have an ulterior object, that will appear in time. We aim to develop your Will-power, and we know that Attention stands at the gate of Will-power. In order to be able to use your Will, you must be able to focus the Attention forcibly and distinctly. And these childish exercises will help you to develop the mental muscles of the Attention. If you could but realize the childish

games the young Yogi students are required to play, in order to develop the mental faculties, you would change your minds about the Yogi Adepts whom you have been thinking about as mere dreamers, far removed from the practical. These men, and their students, are intensely practical. They have gained the mastery of the Mind, and its faculties, and are able to use them as sharp edged tools, while the untrained man finds that he has but a dull, unsharpened blade that will do nothing but hack and hew roughly, instead of being able to produce the finished product. The Yogi believes in giving the "I" good tools with which to work, and he spends much time in tempering and sharpening these tools. Oh, no, the Yogi are not idle dreamers. Their grasp of "practical things" would surprise many a practical, matter-of-fact Western business man, if he could but observe it.

And so, we ask you to practice "observing things." The two exercises we have given are but indications of the general line. We could give you thousands, but you can prepare them yourselves as well as could we. The little Hindu boy is taught Attention by being asked to note and remember the number, color, character and other details of a number of colored stones, jewelry, etc., shown for an instant in an open palm, the hand being closed the moment after. He is taught to note and describe passing travelers, and their equipages – houses he sees on his journeys – and thousands of other everyday objects. The results are almost marvelous. In this way he is prepared as a *chela* or student, and he brings to his *guru* or teacher a

brain well developed—a mind thoroughly trained to obey the Will of the "I"—and with faculties quickened to perceive instantly that which others would fail to see in a fortnight. It is true that he does not turn these faculties to "business" or other so-called "practical" pursuits, but prefers to devote them to abstract studies and pursuits outside of that which the Western man considers to be the end and aim of life. But remember that the two civilizations are quite different—following different ideals—having different economic conditions—living in different worlds, as it were. But that is all a matter of taste and ideals—the faculty for the "practical life" of the West is possessed by the *chela*, if he saw fit to use it. But all Hindu youths are not *chelas*, remember—nor are all Western youths "captains of industry," or Edisons.

### **MANTRAM (AFFIRMATION).**

I am using my Attention to develop my mental faculties, so as to give the "I" a perfect instrument with which to work. The mind is *My* instrument and I am bringing it to a state of capacity for perfect work.

### **MANTRAM (OR AFFIRMATION).**

There is but One Life—One Life Underlying. This Life is manifesting through ME, and through every other shape, form, and thing. I am resting on the bosom of the Great Ocean of Life, and it is supporting me, and will carry me safely, though the waves rise and fall—though the storms rage and the tempests roar. I am safe on the Ocean of Life, and rejoice as I feel the sway

of its motion. Nothing can harm me—though changes may come and go, I am Safe. I am One with the All Life, and its Power, Knowledge, and Peace are behind, underneath, and within Me. O! One Life! express Thyself through me—carry me now on the crest of the wave, now deep down in the trough of the ocean—supported always by Thee—all is good to me, as I feel Thy life moving in and through me. I am Alive, through thy life, and I open myself to thy full manifestation and inflow.

# Mystery Religions

Excerpts From:

## Stolen Legacy

By George G. M. James

[1954]

### CHAPTER III:

#### **Greek Philosophy Was the Offspring of The Egyptian Mystery System.**

##### **1. The Egyptian Theory of Salvation Became the Purpose of Greek Philosophy.**

THE earliest theory of salvation is the Egyptian theory. The Egyptian Mystery System had as its most important object, the deification of man, and taught that the soul of man if liberated from its bodily fetters, could enable him to become godlike and see the Gods in this life and attain the beatific vision and hold communion with the Immortals (Ancient Mysteries, C. H. Vail, P. 25).

Plotinus defines this experience as the liberation of the mind from its finite consciousness, when it

becomes one and is identified with the Infinite. This liberation was not only freedom of the soul from bodily impediments, but also from the wheel of reincarnation or rebirth. It involved a process of disciplines or purification both for the body and the soul. Since the Mystery System offered the salvation of the soul it also placed great emphasis upon its immortality. The Egyptian Mystery System, like the modern University, was the centre of organized culture, and candidates entered it as the leading source of ancient culture. According to Pietschmann, the Egyptian Mysteries had three grades of students (1) The Mortals i.e., probationary students who were being instructed, but who had not yet experienced the inner vision. (2) The Intelligences, i.e., those who had attained the inner vision, and had received mind or nous and (3) The Creators or Sons of Light, who had become identified with or united with the Light (i.e., true spiritual consciousness). W. Marsham Adams, in the "Book of the Master", has described those grades as the equivalents of Initiation, Illumination and Perfection. For years they underwent disciplinary intellectual exercises, and bodily asceticism with intervals of tests and ordeals to determine their fitness to proceed to the more serious, solemn and awful process of actual Initiation.

Their education consisted not only in the cultivation of the ten virtues, which were made a condition to eternal happiness, but also of the seven Liberal Arts which were intended to liberate the soul. There was also admission to the Greater Mysteries, where an

esoteric philosophy was taught to those who had demonstrated their proficiency. (Ancient Mysteries C. H. Vail P. 24–25). Grammar, Rhetoric, and Logic were disciplines of moral nature by means of which the irrational tendencies of a human being were purged away, and he was trained to become a living witness of the Divine Logos. Geometry and Arithmetic were sciences of transcendental space and numeration, the comprehension of which provided the key not only to the problems of one's being; but also to those physical ones, which are so baffling today, owing to our use of the inductive methods. Astronomy dealt with the knowledge and distribution of latent forces in man, and the destiny of individuals, races and nations. Music (or Harmony) meant the living practice of philosophy i.e., the adjustment of human life into harmony with God, until the personal soul became identified with God, when it would hear and participate in the music of the spheres. It was therapeutic, and was used by the Egyptian Priests in the cure of diseases. Such was the Egyptian theory of salvation, through which the individual was trained to become godlike while on earth, and at the same time qualified for everlasting happiness. This was accomplished through the efforts of the individual, through the cultivation of the Arts and Sciences on the one hand, and a life of virtue on the other. There was no mediator between man and his salvation, as we find in the Christian theory. Reference will again be made to these subjects, as part of the Curriculum of the Egyptian Mystery System.

Now that we have outlined the Egyptian theory of salvation and its purpose, let us examine Greek philosophy and its purpose in order to discover whether there is an agreement between the two systems, or not . . .

*B. A Life of Virtue was a Condition Required by the Egyptian Mysteries as Elsewhere Mentioned.*

The virtues were not mere abstractions or ethical sentiments, but were positive valours and virility of the soul. Temperance meant complete control of the passional nature. Fortitude meant such courage as would not allow adversity to turn us away from our goal. Prudence meant the deep insight that befits the faculty of Seership. Justice meant the unswerving righteousness of thought and action.

Furthermore, when we compare the two ethical systems, we discover that the greater includes the less, and that it also suggests the origin of the latter. In the Egyptian Mysteries the Neophyte was required to manifest the following soul attributes: –

(1) Control of thought and (2) Control of action, the combination of which, Plato called *Justice* (i.e., the unswerving righteousness of thought and action). (3) Steadfastness of purpose, which was equivalent to *Fortitude*. (4) Identity with spiritual life or the higher ideals, which was equivalent to *Temperance* an attribute attained when the individual had gained conquest over the passional nature. (5) Evidence of having a mission in life and (6) Evidence of a call to

spiritual Orders or the Priesthood in the Mysteries: the combination of which was equivalent to *Prudence* or a deep insight and graveness that befitted the faculty of Seership.

Other requirements in the ethical system of the Egyptian Mysteries were: —

(7) Freedom from resentment, when under the experience of persecution and wrong. This was known as courage. (8) Confidence in the power of the master (as Teacher), and (9) Confidence in one's own ability to learn; both attributes being known as Fidelity. (10) Readiness or preparedness for initiation. There has always been this principle of the Ancient Mysteries of Egypt: "When the pupil is ready, then the master will appear". This was equivalent to a condition of efficiency at all times for less than this pointed to a weakness. It is now quite clear that Plato drew the four Cardinal virtues from the Egyptian ten; also that Greek philosophy is the offspring of the Egyptian Mystery System.

Excerpts From:

# Knowledge of the Higher Worlds And Its Attainment

By Rudolf Steiner

[1947]

## III

### *SOME PRACTICAL ASPECTS*

THE training of thoughts and feelings, pursued in the way described in the chapters on *Preparation, Enlightenment, and Initiation*, introduces into the soul and spirit the same organic symmetry with which nature has constructed the physical body. Before this development, soul and spirit are undifferentiated masses. The clairvoyant perceives them as interlacing, rotating, cloud-like spirals, dully glimmering in reddish, reddish-brown, or reddish-yellow tones. After this training they begin to assume a brilliant yellowish-green, or greenish-blue color, and show a regular structure. This inner regularity leading to higher knowledge, is attained when the student introduces into his thoughts and feelings the same orderly system with which nature has endowed his bodily organs that enable him to see, hear, digest, breath, speak. Gradually he learns to breathe and see with this soul, to speak and hear with the spirit.

In the following pages some practical aspects of the higher education of soul and spirit will be treated in greater detail. They are such that anyone can put them into practice regardless of other rules, and thereby be led some distance further into spiritual science.

A particular effort must be made to cultivate the quality of patience. Every symptom of impatience produces a paralyzing, even a destructive effect on the higher faculties that slumber in us. We must not expect an immeasurable view into the higher worlds from one day to the next, for we should assuredly be disappointed. Contentment with the smallest fragment attained, repose and tranquility, must more and more take possession of the soul. It is quite understandable that the student should await results with impatience; but he will achieve nothing so long as he fails to master this impatience. Nor is it of any use to combat this impatience merely in the ordinary sense, for it will become only that much stronger. We overlook it in self-deception while it plants itself all the more firmly in the depths of the soul. It is only when we ever and again surrender ourselves to a certain definite thought, making it absolutely our own, that any results can be attained. This thought is as follows: *I must certainly do everything I can for the training and development of my soul and spirit; but I shall wait patiently until higher powers shall have found me worthy of definite enlightenment.* If this thought becomes so powerful in the student that it grows into an actual feature of his character, he is treading the

right path. This feature soon sets its mark on his exterior. The gaze of his eye becomes steady, the movement of his body becomes sure, his decisions definite, and all that goes under the name of nervousness gradually disappears. Rules that appear trifling and insignificant must be taken into account. For example, supposing someone affronts us. Before our training we should have directed our resentment against the offender; a wave of anger would have surged up within us. In a similar case, however, the thought is immediately present in the mind of the student that such an affront makes no difference to his intrinsic worth. And he does whatever must be done to meet the affront with calm and composure, and not in a spirit of anger . . . It must always be remembered that this training is not carried out in crude outward processes, but in subtle, silent alterations in the life of thought and feeling.

Patience has the effect of attraction, impatience the effect of repulsion on the treasures of higher knowledge. In the higher regions of existence nothing can be attained by haste and unrest. Above all things, desire and craving must be silenced, for these are qualities of the soul before which all higher knowledge shyly withdraws. However precious this knowledge is accounted, the student must not crave it if he wishes to attain it. If he wishes to have it for his own sake, he will never attain it. This requires him to be honest with himself in his innermost soul. He must in no case be under any illusion concerning his own self. With a feeling of inner truth he must look his

own faults, weaknesses, and unfitness full in the face. The moment he tries to excuse to himself any of his weaknesses, he has placed a stone in his way on the path which is to lead him upward. Such obstacles can only be removed by self-enlightenment. There is only one way to get rid of faults and failings, and that is by a clear recognition of them. Everything slumbers in the human soul and can be awakened. A person can even improve his intellect and reason, if he quietly and calmly makes it clear to himself why he is weak in this respect. Such self-knowledge is, of course, difficult, for the temptation to self-deception is immeasurably great. Anyone making a habit of being truthful with himself opens the portal leading to a deeper insight.

All curiosity must fall away from the student. He must rid himself as much as possible of the habit of asking questions merely for the sake of gratifying a selfish thirst for knowledge. He must only ask when knowledge can serve to perfect his own being in the service of evolution. Nevertheless, his delight in knowledge and his devotion to it should in no way be hampered. He should listen devoutly to all that contributes to such an end, and should seek every opportunity for such devotional attention.

# Judaism

## The Babylonian Talmud

Translated by MICHAEL L. RODKINSON

*Book 10 (Vols. I and II)*

[1918]

### CHAPTER II.

Let us now try to give a few outlines of the ethical teachings of the Talmud. In the first place, concerning

#### MAN AS A MORAL BEING.

In accordance with the teaching of the Bible, the rabbis duly emphasize man's dignity as a being created in the likeness of God. By this likeness of God they understand the spiritual being within us, that is endowed with intellectual and moral capacities. The higher desires and inspirations which spring from this spiritual being in man, are called *Yetzer tob*, the good inclination; but the lower appetites and desires which rise from our physical nature and which we share with the animal creation, are termed *Yetzer hara*, the inclination to evil. Not that these sensuous desires are absolutely evil; for they, too, have been implanted in man for good purposes. Without them man could not exist, he would not cultivate and

populate this earth, or, as a Talmudical legend runs: Once, some over-pious people wanted to pray to God that they might be able to destroy the *Yetzer ha-ra*, but a warning voice was heard, saying. "Beware, lest you destroy this world!" Evil are those lower desires only in that they, if unrestrained, easily mislead man to live contrary to the demands and aspirations of his divine nature. Hence the constant struggle in man between the two inclinations. He who submits his evil inclination to the control of his higher aims and desires is virtuous and righteous. "The righteous are governed by the *Yetzer tob*, but the wicked by the *Yetzer ha-ra*. The righteous have their desires in their power, but the wicked are in the power of their desires."

#### FREE-WILL.

Man's free-will is emphasized in the following sentences: "Everything is ordained by God's providence, but freedom of choice is given to man." "Everything is foreordained by heaven, except the fear of heaven," or, as another sage puts it: Whether man be strong or weak, richer poor, wise or foolish depends mostly on circumstances that surround him from the time of his birth, but whether man be good or bad, righteous or wicked, depends upon his own free-will.

#### GOD'S WILL, THE GROUND OF MAN'S DUTIES.

The ground of our duties, as presented to us by the Talmudical as well as the biblical teachings, is that it

is the will of God. His will is the supreme rule of our being. "Do His will as thy own will, submit thy will to His will." "Be bold as a leopard, light as an eagle, swift as a roe, and strong as a lion, to do the will of thy Father, who is in heaven."

#### MAN ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD FOR HIS CONDUCT.

Of man's responsibility for the conduct of his life, we are forcibly reminded by numerous sentences, as: "Consider three things, and thou wilt never fall into sin; remember that there is above thee an all-seeing eye, an all-hearing ear, and a record of all thy actions." And again, "Consider three things, and thou wilt never sin; remember whence thou comest, whither thou goest, and before whom thou wilt have to render account for thy doings."

#### HIGHER MOTIVES IN PERFORMING OUR DUTIES.

Although happiness here and hereafter is promised as reward for fulfilment, and punishment threatened for neglect of duty, still we are reminded not to be guided by the consideration of reward and punishment, but rather by love and obedience to God, and by love to that which is good and noble. "Be not like servants, who serve their master for the sake of reward." "Whatever thou doest, let it be done in the name of heaven" (that is, for its own sake).

#### DUTY OF SELF-PRESERVATION AND SELF-CULTIVATION.

As a leading rule of the duties of *self-preservation* and *self-cultivation*, and, at the same time, as a warning against selfishness, we have Hillel's sentence: "If I do not care for myself, who will do it for me? and if I care only for myself, what am I?"

The duty of *acquiring knowledge*, especially knowledge of the Divine Law (Torah), which gives us a clearer insight in God's will to man, is most emphatically enjoined in numerous sentences: "Without knowledge there is no true morality and piety." "Be eager to acquire knowledge, it does not come to thee by inheritance." "The more knowledge, the more spiritual life." "If thou hast acquired knowledge, what dost thou lack? but if thou lackest knowledge, what hast thou acquired?" But we are also reminded that even the highest knowledge is of no value, as long as it does not influence our moral life. "The ultimate end of all knowledge and wisdom is man's inner purification and the performance of good and noble deeds." "He whose knowledge is great without influencing his moral life is compared to a tree that has many branches, but few and weak roots; a storm cometh and overturneth it."

## LABOR.

Next to the duty of acquiring knowledge, that of *industrious labor* and *useful activity* is strongly enjoined. It is well known that among the ancient nations in general manual labor was regarded as degrading the free citizen. Even the greatest philosophers of antiquity, Plato and Aristotle, could

not free, themselves of this deprecating view of labor. How different was the view of the Talmudic sages in this respect! They say: "Love labor, and hate to be a lord." "Great is the dignity of labor; it honors man." "Beautiful is the intellectual occupation, if combined with some practical work." "He who doles not teach his son a handicraft trade, neglects his parental duty." "He who lives on the toil of his hands is greater than he who indulges in idle piety."

In accordance with these teachings, some of the most prominent sages of the Talmud are known to have made their living by various kinds of handicraft and trade.

#### CARDINAL DUTIES IN RELATION TO FELLOW-MEN.

Regarding man's relation to fellow-men, the rabbis consider *justice, truthfulness, peaceableness* and *charity* as cardinal duties. They say, "The world (human society) rests on three things--on justice, on truth and on peace."

#### JUSTICE.

The principle of *justice* in the moral sense is expressed in the following rules: "Thy neighbor's property must be as sacred to thee as thine own." "Thy neighbor's honor must be as dear to thee as thine own." Hereto belongs also the golden rule of Hillel: "Whatever would be hateful to thee, do not to thy neighbor."

## TRUTH AND TRUTHFULNESS.

The sacredness of *truth* and *truthfulness* is expressed in the sentence: "Truth is the signet of God, the Most Holy." "Let thy yea be in truth, and thy nay be in truth." "Truth lasts forever, but falsehood must vanish."

Admonitions concerning *faithfulness* and *fidelity* to given promises are: "Promise little and do much." "To be faithless to a given promise is as sinful as idolatry." "To break a verbal engagement, though legally not binding, is a moral wrong." Of the numerous warnings against any kind of deceit, the following may be mentioned: "It is sinful to deceive any man, be he even a heathen." "Deception in words is as great a sin as deception in money matters." When, says the Talmud, the immortal soul will be called to account before the divine tribunal, the first question will be, "Hast thou been honest and faithful in all thy dealings with thy fellow-men?"

## PEACEFULNESS.

Peace and harmony in domestic life and social intercourse as well as in public affairs are considered by the Talmudic sages as the first condition of human welfare and happiness, or as they express it: "Peace is the vessel in which all God's blessings are presented to us and preserved by us." "Be a disciple of Aaron, loving peace, and pursuing peace." To make peace between those in disharmony is regarded as one of

the most meritorious works that secure happiness and bliss here and hereafter.

As virtues leading to peace, those of *mildness* and *meekness*, of *gentleness* and *placidity* are highly praised and recommended. "Be not easily moved to anger." "Be humble to thy superior, affable to thy inferior, and meet every man with friendliness." "He who is slow to anger, and easily pacified, is truly pious and virtuous." "Man, be ever soft and pliant like a reed, and not hard and unbending like the cedar." "Those who, when offended, do not give offence, when hearing slighting remarks, do not retaliate--they are the friends of God, they shall shine forth like the sun in its glory."

#### CHARITY.

The last of the principal duties to fellow-men is *charity*, which begins where justice leaves off. Professor Steinthal, in his work on General Ethics, remarks that among the cardinal virtues of the ancient philosophers we look in vain for the idea of *love* and *charity*, whereas in the teachings of the Bible, we generally find the idea of love, mercy and charity closely connected with that of justice. And we may add, as in the Bible so also in the Talmud, where charity is considered as the highest degree in the scale of duties and virtues. It is one of the main pillars on which the welfare of the human world rests.

The duty of *charity* (Gemilath Chesed) extends farther than to mere *almsgiving* (Tzedaka). "Almsgiving is

practised by means of money, but charity also by personal services and by words of advice, sympathy and encouragement. Almsgiving is a duty towards the poor only, but charity towards the rich as well as the poor, nay, even towards the dead (by taking care of their decent burial)."

By works of charity man proves to be a true image of God, whose attributes are love, kindness and mercy. "He who turns away from works of love and charity turns away from God." "The works of charity have more value than sacrifices; they are equal to the performance of all religious duties."

Concerning the proper way of practising this virtue, the Talmud has many beautiful sentences, as: "The merit of charitable works is in proportion to the love with which they are practised." "Blessed is he who gives from his substance to the poor, twice blessed he who accompanies his gift with kind, comforting words." "The noblest of all charities is enabling the poor to earn a livelihood." He who is unable to give much shall not withhold his little mite, for "as a garment is made up of single threads, so every single gift contributes to accomplish a great work of charity."

#### DUTIES CONCERNING SPECIAL RELATIONS.

Besides these principal duties in relation to fellow-men in general, the Talmud treats also very elaborately of duties concerning the various relations of life. Not intending to enter here into all details, we

shall restrict ourselves to some of its ethical teachings in reference to the domestic relations, and regarding the relation to the country and the community.

#### THE CONJUGAL RELATION.

"First build a house and plant a vineyard (*i.e.*, provide for the means of the household), and then take a wife." "Let youth and old age not be joined in marriage, lest the purity and peace of domestic life be disturbed." "A man's home means his wife." "Let a man be careful to honor his wife, for he owes to her alone all the blessings of his house." "If thy wife is small, bend down to her, to take counsel from her." "Who is rich? He who has a noble wife." "A man should be careful lest he afflict his wife, for God counts her tears." "If in anger the one hand removed thy wife or thy child, let the other hand again bring them back to thy heart." "He who loves his wife as his own self, and honors her more than himself, and he who educates his children in the right way, to him applies the divine promise: Thou shalt know that there is peace in thy tent." "Tears are shed on God's altar for the one who forsakes the wife of his youth." "He who divorces his wife, is hated before God."

#### PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

"Parental love should be impartial, one child must not be preferred to the other." "It is a father's duty not only to provide for his minor children, but also to take care of their instruction, and to teach his son a trade and whatever is necessary for his future

welfare." "The honor and reverence due to parents are equal to the honor and reverence due to God." "Where children honor their parents, there God dwells, there He is honored."

#### COUNTRY AND COMMUNITY.

Regarding duties to the country and the community, the Rabbis teach: "The law of the country is as sacred and binding as God's law." "Pray for the welfare of the government; without respect for the government, men would swallow each other." "Do not isolate thyself from the community and its interests." "It is sinful to deceive the government regarding taxes and duties." "Do not aspire for public offices; but where there are no men, try thou to be the man." "Those who work for the community shall do it without selfishness, but with the pure intention to promote its welfare."

#### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS.'

To these short outlines of Talmudical ethics let us add only a few general remarks. Being essentially a development of the sublime ethical principles and teachings of the Bible, the Talmudical ethics retains the general characteristics of that origin.

It teaches nothing that is against human nature, nothing that is incompatible with the existence and welfare of human society. It is free from the extreme excess and austerity to which the lofty ideas of

religion and morality were carried by the theories and practices of some sects inside and outside of Judaism.

Nay, many Talmudical maxims and sayings are evidently directed against such austerities and extravagances. Thus they warn against the monastic idea of obtaining closer communion with God by fleeing from human society and by seclusion from temporal concerns of life: "Do not separate thyself from society." "Man's thoughts and ways shall always be in contact and sympathy with fellow-men." "No one shall depart from the general customs and manners." "Better is he who lives on the toil of his hand, than he who indulges in idle piety."

They strongly discountenance the idea of *celibacy*, which the Essenes, and later, some orders of the Church regarded as a superior state of perfection. The rabbis say: "He who lives without a wife is no perfect man." "To be unmarried is to live without joy, without blessing, without kindness, without religion and without peace." "As soon as man marries, his sins decrease."

While, on the one hand, they warn against too much indulgence in pleasures and in the gratification of bodily appetites and against the insatiable pursuit of earthly goods and riches, as well as against the inordinate desire of honor and power on the other hand, they strongly disapprove of the ascetic mortification of the body and abstinence from enjoyment, and the cynic contempt of all luxuries that beautify life. They say: "God's commandments are

intended to enhance the value and enjoyment of life, but not to mar it and make it gloomy." "If thou hast the means, enjoy life's innocent pleasures." "He who denies himself the use of wine is a sinner." "No one is permitted to afflict himself by unnecessary fasting." "The pious fool, the hypocrite, and the pharisaic flagellant are destroyers of human society." "That which beautifies life and gives it vigor and strength, just as riches and honor, is suitable to the pious, and agreeable to the world at large."

Finally, one more remark: The Talmud has often been accused of being illiberal, as if teaching its duties only for Jews towards fellow-believers, but not also towards fellow-men in general. This charge is entirely unfounded. It is true, and quite natural, that in regard to the *ritual* and *ceremonial* law and practice, a distinction between Jew and Gentile was made. It is also true that we occasionally meet in the Talmud with an uncharitable utterance against the heathen world. But it must be remembered in what state of moral corruption and degradation their heathen surroundings were, at that time. And this, too, must be remembered, that such utterances are only made by individuals who gave vent to their indignation in view of the cruel persecutions whose victims they were. As regards *moral* teachings, the Talmud is as broad as humanity. It teaches duties of man to man without distinction of creed and race. In most of the ethical maxims, the terms *Adam* and *Beriyot*, "man," "fellow-men," are emphatically used; as: "Do not despise any man." "Judge every man from his

favorable side." "Seek peace, and love fellow-men." "He who is pleasing to fellow-men is also pleasing to God." "The right way for man to choose is to do that which is honorable in his own eyes (*i.e.*, approved by his conscience) and at the same time honorable in the eyes of his fellow-men." In some instances, the Talmud expressly reminds that the duties of justice, veracity, peacefulness and charity are to be fulfilled towards the heathen as well as to the Israelites; as, "It is sinful to deceive any man, be he even a heathen." It is our duty to relieve the poor and needy, to visit the sick and bury the dead without distinction of creed and race."

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Lev. xix., 18), this is, said R. Akiba, the all-embracing principle of the divine law. But *Ben Azai* said, there is another passage in Scriptures still more embracing; it is the passage (Gen. v., 2): "This is the book of the generations of man; in the day that God created man, he made him in the likeness of God." That sage meant to say, this passage is more embracing, since it clearly tells us who is our neighbor; not, as it might be misunderstood, our friend only, not our fellow-citizen only, not our co-religionist only, but since we all descend from a common ancestor, since all are created in the image and likeness of God, every man, every human being is our brother, our neighbor whom we shall love as ourselves.

The liberal spirit of Talmudic ethics is most strikingly evidenced in the sentence: "The pious and virtuous of

all nations participate in the eternal bliss," which teaches that man's salvation depends not on the acceptance of certain articles of belief, nor on certain ceremonial observances, but on that which is the ultimate aim of religion namely, *Morality*, purity of heart and holiness of life.

# Buddhism

Excerpts From:

## The Great Learning

500 BC

**Confucius**

Translated by James Legge [1893]

WHAT THE GREAT LEARNING teaches, is to illustrate illustrious virtue; to renovate the people; and to rest in the highest excellence.

The point where to rest being known, the object of pursuit is then determined; and, that being determined, a calm unperturbedness may be attained to. To that calmness there will succeed a tranquil repose. In that repose there may be careful deliberation, and that deliberation will be followed by the attainment of the desired end.

Things have their root and their branches. Affairs have their end and their beginning. To know what is first and what is last will lead near to what is taught in the Great Learning.

The ancients who wished to illustrate illustrious virtue throughout the kingdom, first ordered well their own states. Wishing to order well their states, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate

their families, they first cultivated their persons. Wishing to cultivate their persons, they first rectified their hearts. Wishing to rectify their hearts, they first sought to be sincere in their thoughts. Wishing to be sincere in their thoughts, they first extended to the utmost their knowledge. Such extension of knowledge lay in the investigation of things.

Things being investigated, knowledge became complete. Their knowledge being complete, their thoughts were sincere. Their thoughts being sincere, their hearts were then rectified. Their hearts being rectified, their persons were cultivated. Their persons being cultivated, their families were regulated. Their families being regulated, their states were rightly governed. Their states being rightly governed, the whole kingdom was made tranquil and happy.

From the Son of Heaven down to the mass of the people, all must consider the cultivation of the person the root of everything besides.

It cannot be, when the root is neglected, that what should spring from it will be well ordered. It never has been the case that what was of great importance has been slightly cared for, and, at the same time, that what was of slight importance has been greatly cared for.

# Taoist Texts: Ethical, Political, and Speculative

By Frederic Henry Balfour

[Shanghai and London, 1884]

## THE KAN YING PIEN.

THE Supreme One, Lao Tsze, said:—

Happiness and evil do not come spontaneously; it is men who bring them upon themselves. The consequences of virtue and vice follow each just as the shadow follows the form . . . Now there are spirits in Heaven and in Earth whose business it is to investigate the sins of men, and . . . their lives according as their transgressions are serious or venial . . . Advance in all that is in harmony with the right; retreat from everything that is opposed to it. Walk not in the paths of depravity, nor deceive yourselves by sinning in the dark where none can see you. Accumulate virtue, and store up merit; treat all with gentleness and love; be loyal, be dutiful; be respectful to your elder brothers and kind to your juniors; be upright yourselves, in order that you may reform others; compassionate the fatherless and widow; reverence the aged and cherish the young; do not injure even little insects, or grass, or trees. Pity the

wickedness of others, and be glad of their virtues; succor them in their distress, and rescue them when in danger; when a man gains his desire, let it be as though his good fortune were your own; when one suffers loss, as though you suffered it yourself. Never publish the failings of another, or make a parade of your own merits; put a stop to evil, and afford every encouragement to virtue; be not grasping, but learn to content yourself with little. When you are reviled, cherish not feelings of resentment; if you receive favours, do so as deprecating your deserts; be kind and generous without seeking for any return, and never repent of anything that you may give to others. This is to be a good man; one whom Heaven will defend, whom all will respect, whom blessings and honours will accompany, whom evil will not touch, and whom all good spirits will protect . . . But if any person acts in opposition to what is right and turns his back upon the truth, becoming expert in wickedness and hardened in cruelty; if he secretly injures the gentle and the good, abuses his sovereign and his parents in private, treats his elders with disrespect, rebels against his employers, deceives the simple, slanders his fellow students, brings false accusations against others, and plays the hypocrite generally, prying into the shortcomings of his own relatives and then bruiting them abroad; if he is peevish, willful, and unloving, perverse and headstrong, calling good evil and evil good, doing what he ought not to do, and leaving undone what he ought to do; if he tyrannizes over his subordinates, appropriating to himself the merit of their work,

flatters his superiors and anticipates their intentions; if he is ungrateful for kindness received, and cherishes unceasing resentment for grievances; if, as a mandarin, he neglects the welfare of the people, brings sedition into the State, rewards the undeserving, punishes the innocent, condemns men to death for filthy lucre, ruins others in order to secure their positions, slaughters those who have tendered their submission in war, degrades the upright and shelves the virtuous, oppresses the orphan and persecutes the widow, accepts bribes for violating the law, treats the straight as if it were crooked and the crooked as if it were straight, regards trivial misdemeanours as grave crimes, and waxes still fiercer against those who deserve death instead of pitying them; if he is aware of his own faults yet does not reform, knows what is good yet does not do it; if he lays his own crimes upon others, places hindrances in the way of such men as physicians, diviners, astrologers and physiognomists, blasphemes the virtuous and holy, and intimidates or insults the wise and good; if he shoots birds and hunts animals, routs hybernating insects and reptiles out of their burrows, frightens birds at roost, stops up the holes of the former and overturns the nests of the latter, injures a foetus in the womb or breaks eggs in the process of incubation; if he wishes that misfortune may come on others, detracts from their achievements and merits, exposes other people to danger and keeps on the safe side himself, injuring them in order to secure his own advantage; returns evil for good, suffers private ends to interfere with public interests, takes credit to

himself for the ability of others, conceals their virtues, mocks at their physical deformities, pries into other people's private affairs, squanders their property, makes mischief between blood-relations, tries to deprive others of what they specially love, eggs people on to commit sin, boasts of his own influence and power, puts others to shame in the desire to get the better of them, destroys crops, and upsets intended marriages; if he is arrogant on the score of ill-gotten gains, sneaks shamelessly off from the results of his own evil deeds, claims credit for kindnesses he never showed, denies the bad offices he actually performed, brings evil on others with malicious intent, schemes after unmerited reputation, hides wicked designs in his heart, effaces goodness in others and harbours vice in himself, takes advantage of his own power to vex and harass his neighbours, and complies with tyrannical designs to kill or wound; if he wantonly cuts things to pieces with scissors, slaughters animals without regard to the proprieties, throws away grain, teases and worries dumb creatures, breaks up homes and seizes all the valuables they contain, floods people's houses with water or burns them with fire, overturns and disturbs customs in order to prevent a man from accomplishing his ends, spoils implements so as to render them useless, desires to deprive others of their rank and influence and to make them lose all their wealth, conceives lustful desires at the sight of beauty, borrows money and then longs for the lender's death, hates and vilifies those who do not accede to every request he makes, attributes the

misfortunes of others to their sins, mocks their personal defects, represses those who have laudable ability and parts, injures persons by sorcery and foul arts, kills trees by means of poisonous drugs, cherishes hatred to his teachers, runs counter to his parents and elder brothers, takes away other people's property by main force, or insists upon it being given up—bent on getting it by hook or by crook; if he acquires wealth by robbery and extortion, schemes after promotion in sly and underhand ways, is unjust both in the bestowal of rewards and the infliction of punishments, overindulgent in ease and pleasure, threatening and tyrannical to his inferiors; if he blames Heaven and decries men, finds fault with the wind and curses the rain, for his misfortunes; if he is much given to going to law against others, join in friendly associations with bad men, pays heed to the talk of his wife and concubines but turns a deaf ear to the admonitions of his parents, forsakes old friends for new ones, speaks good words while his heart is full of evil, is covetous of gain, hoodwinks and defrauds his superiors, brings reproach on others by falsehood, reviles men and then plumes himself upon his candor in doing so, abuses the gods and poses as a man of integrity, runs counter to the established rule of right, neglects his own kin and transfers all his attention to those who are in no way connected with him, calls Heaven and Earth to witness about trifles, and swears by the gods about low and disreputable matters; if he repents having bestowed alms or given presents, borrows and fails to repay, schemes after and meddles with what lies beyond the scope of his

own functions, passes all bounds in lasciviousness, assumes an appearance of gentleness while fierce and cruel at heart, gives people dirt and filth to eat, puts them in positions of perplexity by left-handed dealings, uses short measures and light weights in trade, adulterates good wares with stuff of inferior quality, amasses wealth by foul means, forces virtuous folk to commit evil deeds, insults and deludes the simple; if he is insatiably covetous, if he invokes imprecations on people to get at the bottom of any difficulty, or is given to bad conduct under the influence of liquor, or wrangles and quarrels with his own flesh and blood; as a man, neither loyal nor good – as a woman, neither gentle nor compliant – the one always at logger-heads with his wife, the other disrespectful to her husband; if he is given to vaunting his own praises, and for ever envying the good fortune of others; if he treats his wife and children badly, or, in the case of a woman, if she behaves indecorously to her parents-in-law; if he conducts himself contemptuously to the Tablet of a dead person, turns a disobedient ear to the commands of his superiors, busies himself about useless matters, acts insincerely towards others, calls down curses upon himself or his fellows, cherishes unreasonable hatreds and undue partialities, steps over wells and stoves instead of walking round them out of respect to the presiding deities, jumps over any victuals or persons that may lie in his way, injures his children or destroys a fetus in the womb; if he is addicted to occult or secret practices, to singing and dancing on moonless nights or on inauspicious days

in the last month of the year, to weeping and giving way to anger early in the morning . . . if a man is guilty of any of these crimes, the God who rules over human destinies will, according as the sin is trivial or serious, abbreviate his span of life. When his time is finished, he will die; and if any of his sins be left unatoned for, they will be visited upon his sons and grandsons. If a man has laid unjust hands upon the goods of others, the responsibility will descend to his wife and family, and they will gradually drop off and die; if not, they will either be bereft of their property by water or fire, or they will lose it themselves, or fall a prey to disease, or be the victims of false accusations—in order that full satisfaction for their ill-gotten gains may be exacted. If a man puts others to death illegally, his weapons will be turned against himself, and he will in his turn be killed. If a man acquires riches by unjust means, it will be as though he had eaten poisoned meat in his hunger and drunk poisoned wine in his thirst; his appetite will not be left unsatisfied, but death will inevitably result. Now if a virtuous thought arises in a man's heart, even though it be not put into practice, he will be accompanied by good spirits; but if a thought of wickedness arises, even though it be not carried out, all bad spirits will follow in his wake. If a man, having committed some bad act, afterwards repents and reforms, avoiding sin and striving to be good and virtuous, he will eventually be rewarded and blessed, and the evil that would have come upon him will be turned into a blessing. Thus all that good men say is good, all that they look at is good, all that they do is

good; every day they live is characterized by goodness in these three forms . . . But all that bad men say is bad, all that they look at is bad, all that they do is bad; every day they live is characterized by these three forms of badness . . . Why, then, do not men force themselves to walk in the paths of virtue?

*How to Read the Foregoing Essay.*

This essay, which deals with the recompenses and retributions inseparable from virtue and vice, embodies an eternal law of Heaven; so it must not be read carelessly, as though it were no more than an ordinary essay on morals. Those who study it should sit in an erect and decent posture in a quiet room by themselves; they must put away all wandering thoughts and cultivate a reverential frame of mind, devoting their hearts to the reception of the truth; then the awakening words which are here found will be able to effect an entrance, and arouse their consciences. If this method of study be permanently persevered in, all depraved thoughts will disappear of themselves.

Now the first requisite for studying this book profitably, is unquestioning Faith. In examining the ancient standards of right and wrong and comparing them with those accepted at the present day, we find that there has never been a discrepancy of a single hair between any given action and the recompense which is its inalienable attendant. Only, some consequences follow immediately, while others are delayed; so that people have not been able to trace the

connection between them in every instance. Young folks are often so headstrong, willful, prejudiced and infatuated that they do not believe in this at all; it is only when they have arrived at greater experience and fuller age that they gradually get to understand it more clearly, and to repent of their former folly. But by that time they are old, and their bad habits are confirmed; and to attempt to put away the vice and depravity of a life-time when the sun of life is setting, is like trying to extinguish a blazing wagon-load of fuel with a cup of water—the means are wholly inadequate to the end. Therefore, it is necessary that all who would read this essay should resolutely exercise a heart of faith; for, let this faith be once formed, a root of virtue is implanted; a fresh root being planted with each succeeding exercise of faith. If the faith be small, the blessing will be small; if great, the blessing will be great; while if faith be mixed with doubt, self-injury and self-loss will be the inevitable result.

The second requisite is Diligence in Self-cultivation. Now this chapter has been compiled for the special benefit of those who wish to live a long life. It treats of the true law by which one may free oneself from the world—a law to which all who are yet upon earth, all who transmit consequences for good or evil to after generations, all who have left the world, and all who return to the world in another form after death, are subject. For instance: P'ei Pu succeeded in prolonging his span of years, while Lo Kung acted so that his life was cut short midway. Such is the law in its

application to people while they are yet in the body. Tou Shih left good deeds behind him, the rewards of which descended upon his posterity, while Lin Chi, by a vicious course, brought about the utter extinction of his family. Such is the Law in its application to those who leave a heritage of good or ill behind them after death. There are those whose treasuries are full of gold and whose granaries are well stored with rice, and who are themselves possessed of boundless influence and power; yet, when they come to die, their works will follow them—not one iota of their merits and their sins being misplaced or lost. Such is the Law in its application to those who have left the world in the ordinary course of nature . . . Wherefore those whose object it is to regain the principle by which they can bring about the sublimation of their bodies and attain to a condition of immortality, must begin by accumulating hidden virtue. To practice good deeds unknown to others; to be charitable without hoping for any reward; to save those who are in danger without taking advantage of their helplessness;—such is secret virtue. When secret virtue is abundantly practiced, the man will be able of himself to enter upon a full comprehension of this doctrine; and the eyes of his understanding being opened, he will be enabled to attain to everlasting life in another world. And even if a man take no thought for the attainment of immortality, will he not sometimes ponder upon life and death, and on what may befall his immediate descendants? Dear reader, I urge you to advance swiftly, fearlessly, and with your whole heart, in the course I have here laid down.

Know that we are surrounded on all sides by a multitude of spiritual beings, who take note of all we do; therefore, be watchful, and examine yourself strictly at all times; act in accordance with these admonitions in whatever you may have to do; then you will never fail to do justice to your real self. If, however, you do not act thus; if you progress a little way and then stop, doing good by fits and starts without seriousness and resolution,—how long do you think that you will live? How long will it take you to lay up a store of hidden virtue? You will just be the sport of surrounding influences your whole life through, and nothing further will you ever gain!

The third requisite is Determination and Perseverance. Now goodness in little things brings a speedy recompense; the rewards of great virtue come slowly. But speedy rewards consist of only trivial blessings; those which delay their coming consist of very great ones. There are people in the world who believe this, but very few who act it out with any resolution. And why? Because, after they have walked in the ways of virtue for little while, they meet with difficulties or obstacles; whereupon they are discouraged, and say, foolishly, that the laws of Heaven are really very hard to understand; so that finally they abandon all the progress they have made so far, and allow their impatience to hinder them from reaping the rewards of their well-doing.

The fourth requisite is genuine Sincerity. All who lay themselves out to do good to others must be

indefatigable, earnest, urgent, and resolute in their undertaking. In the duty of self-examination, it is necessary to be honest and true, and to avoid all self-deception. One sincere resolve is sufficient to ensure the assistance of both the heavenly and earthly Gods; but will any resolve that is *not* sincere accomplish this?

The fifth requisite is the Promulgation of these Admonitions among one's Fellows. The rewards inseparable from virtue and vice respectively are sufficient in themselves to incite to the one and dissuade from the other. This connection between actions and their consequences is the mysterious law of God Himself,—the changeless decree pronounced by the Judge of the Unseen World.

Excerpts From:

# The Buddha's Way of Virtue

By W.D.C Wagiswara and K.J. Saunders

[1920]

## § I

### THE TWIN TRUTHS

FOR the proper understanding of Buddhism these opening stanzas are all-important. One of the Buddha's key-thoughts was what modern psychologists call the "law of apperception": the value of things depends upon our attitude to them.

Part of Gautama's work of reform was a "transvaluation of values," a shifting of emphasis; and, like the Stoics, he taught the indifference of the things of sense. "Men are disturbed," said Epictetus, "not by things, but by the view they take of things."

1. Mind it is which gives to things their quality, their foundation, and their being: whoso speaks or acts with impure mind, him sorrow dogs, as the wheel follows the steps of the draught-ox.

2. Mind it is which gives to things their quality, their foundation, and their being: whoso speaks or acts

with purified mind, him happiness accompanies as his faithful shadow.

3. "He has abused me, beaten me, worsted me, robbed me"; those who dwell upon such thoughts never lose their hate.

4. "He has abused me, beaten me, worsted me, robbed me "; those who dwell: not upon such thoughts are freed of hate.

5. Never does hatred cease by hating; by not hating does it cease: this is the ancient law.

6. If some there are who know not by such hatred we are perishing, and some there are who know it, then by their knowledge strife is ended.

7. As the wind throws down a shaky tree, so Mara (Death) o'erwhelms him who is a seeker after vanity, uncontrolled, intemperate, slothful, and effeminate.

8. But whoso keeps his eyes from vanity, controlled and temperate, faithful and strenuous, Mara cannot overthrow, as the wind beating against a rocky crag.

9. Though an impure man don the pure yellow robe (of the Bhikkhu), himself unindued with temperance and truth, he is not worthy of the pure yellow robe.

10. He who has doffed his impurities, calm and clothed upon with temperance and truth, he wears the pure robe worthily.

11. Those who mistake the shadow for the substance, and the substance for the shadow, never attain the reality, following wandering fires (lit. followers of a false pursuit).
12. But if a man knows the substance and the shadow as they are, he attains the reality, following the true trail.
13. As the rain pours into the ill-thatched house, so lust pours into the undisciplined mind.
14. As rain cannot enter the well-thatched house, so lust finds no entry into the disciplined mind.
15. Here and hereafter the sinner mourns: yea mourns and is in torment, knowing the vileness of his deeds.
16. Here and hereafter the good man is glad: yea is glad and rejoices, knowing that his deeds are pure.
17. Here and hereafter the sinner is in torment: tormented by the thought "I have sinned"; yea rather tormented when he goes to hell.
18. Here and hereafter the good man rejoices; rejoices as he thinks "I have done well": yea rather rejoices when he goes to a heaven.
19. If a man is a great preacher of the sacred text, but slothful and no doer of it, he is a hireling shepherd, who has no part in the flock.

20. If a man preaches but a little of the text and practises the teaching, putting away lust and hatred and infatuation; if he is truly wise and detached and seeks nothing here or hereafter, his lot is with the holy ones.

## § II

### **ZEAL**

ZEAL or earnestness (appamādo) plays an important part in Buddhist Ethics. The way is steep, therefore let the wayfarer play the man.

Zeal may be displayed either in strenuous mind-culture or in deeds of piety – these are the equivalents of "Faith" and "Works" in the Buddhist system.

21. Zeal is the way to Nirvāna. Sloth is the day of death. The zealous die not: the slothful are as it were dead.

22. The wise who know the power of zeal delight in it, rejoicing in the lot of the noble.

23. These wise ones by meditation and reflection, by constant effort reach Nirvāna, highest freedom.

24. Great grows the glory of him who is zealous in meditation, whose actions are pure and deliberate, whose life is calm and righteous and full of vigour.

25. By strenuous effort, by self-control, by temperance, let the wise man make for himself an island which the flood cannot overwhelm.

26. Fools in their folly give themselves to sloth: the wise man guards his vigour as his greatest possession.

27. Give not yourselves over to sloth, and to dalliance with delights: he who meditates with earnestness attains great joy.

28. When the wise one puts off sloth for zeal, ascending the high tower of wisdom he gazes sorrowless upon the sorrowing crowd below! Wise himself, he looks upon the fools as one upon a mountain-peak gazing upon the dwellers in the valley.

29. Zealous amidst the slothful, vigilant among the sleepers, go the prudent, as a racehorse outstrips a hack.

30. By zeal did Sakra reach supremacy among the gods. Men praise zeal; but sloth is always blamed.

31. A Bhikkhu who delights in zeal, looking askance at sloth, moves onwards like a fire, burning the greater and the lesser bonds.

32. A Bhikkhu who delights in zeal, looking askance at sloth, cannot be brought low, but is near to Nirvāna.

### § III

#### THE MIND

33. THIS trembling, wavering mind, so difficult to guard and to control—this the wise man makes straight as the fletcher straightens his shaft.

34. As quivers the fish when thrown upon the ground, far from his home in the waters, so the mind quivers as it leaves the realm of Death.

35. Good it is to tame the mind, so difficult to control, fickle, and capricious. Blessed is the tamed mind.

36. Let the wise man guard his mind, incomprehensible, subtle, and capricious though it is. Blessed is the guarded mind.

37. They will escape the fetters of Death who control that far-wandering, solitary, incorporeal cave-dweller, the mind.

38. In him who is unstable and ignorant of the law and capricious in his faith, wisdom is not perfected.

39. There is no fear in him, the vigilant one whose mind is not befouled with lust, nor embittered with rage, who cares nought for merit or demerit.

40. Let him who knows that his body is brittle as a potsherd, make his mind strong as a fortress; let him

smite Mara with the sword of wisdom, and let him guard his conquest without dalliance.

41. Soon will this body lie upon the ground, deserted, and bereft of sense, like a log cast aside.

42. Badly does an enemy treat his enemy, a foeman his foe: worse is the havoc wrought by a misdirected mind.

43. Not mother and father, not kith and kin can so benefit a man as a mind attentive to the rights.

## § IX

### VICE

116. CLING to what is right: so will you keep the mind from wrong. Whoso is slack in well-doing comes to rejoice in evil.

117. If one offends, let him not repeat his offence; let him not set his heart upon it. Sad is the piling up of sin.

118. If one does well, let him repeat his well-doing: let him set his heart upon it. Glad is the storing up of good.

119. The bad man sees good days, until his wrongdoing ripens; then he beholds evil days.

120. Even a good man may see evil days till his well-doing comes to fruition; then he beholds good days.

121. Think not lightly of evil "It will not come nigh me." Drop by drop the pitcher is filled: slowly yet surely the fool is saturated with evil.

122. Think not lightly of good "It will not come nigh me." Drop by drop the pitcher is filled: slowly yet surely the good are filled with merit.

123. A trader whose pack is great and whose caravan is small shuns a dangerous road; a man who loves his life shuns poison: so do thou shun evil.

124. He who has no wound can handle poison: the unwounded hand cannot absorb it. There is no evil to him that does no evil.

125. Whoso is offended by the inoffensive man, and whoso blames an innocent man, his evil returns upon him as fine dust thrown against the wind.

126. Some go to the womb; some, evil-doers, to hell; the good go to heaven; the sinless to Nirvāna.

127. Not in the sky, nor in mid-ocean, nor in mountain-cave can one find sanctuary from his sins.

128. Not in the sky, not in mid-ocean, not in mountain-cave can one find release from the conquering might of death.

## § XVIII

### SIN

235. THOU art withered as a sere leaf: Death's messengers await thee. Thou standest at the gate of death, and hast made no provision for the journey.

236. Make to thyself a refuge; come, strive and be prudent: when thy impurities are purged, thou shalt come into the heavenly abode of the Noble.

237. Thy life is ended; thou art come into the Presence of Death: there is no resting-place by the way, and thou hast no provision for the journey.

238. Make for thyself a refuge; come, strive and play the sage! Burn off thy taints, and thou shalt know birth and old age no more.

239. As a smith purifies silver in the fire, so bit by bit continually the sage burns away his impurities.

240. It is the iron's own rust that destroys it: it is the sinner's own acts that bring him to hell.

241. Disuse is the rust of mantras; laziness the rust of households; sloth is the rust of beauty; neglect is the watcher's ruin.

242. Impurity is the ruin of woman; and avarice the ruin of the giver: ill-deeds are the rust of this world and the next.

243. More corrosive than those is the rust of ignorance, the greatest of taints: put off this rust and be clean, O Bhikkhus.

244. Life is easy for the crafty and shameless, for the wanton, shrewd, and impure:

245. Hard it is for the modest, the lover of purity, the disinterested and simple and clean, the man of insight.

246, 247. The murderer, the liar, the thief, the adulterer, and the drunkard – these even in this world uproot themselves.

248. Know this, O man, evil is the undisciplined mind! See to it that greed and lawlessness bring not upon thee long suffering.

249. Men give according to faith or caprice. If a man fret because food and drink are given to another, he comes not day or night to serene meditation (*i.e.* Samādhi).

250. He in whom this (envious spirit) is destroyed and wholly uprooted, he truly day and night attains serene meditation.

251. There is no fire like lust, no ravenous beast like hatred, no snare like folly, no flood like desire.

252. To see another's fault is easy: to see one's own is hard. Men winnow the faults of others like chaff: their

own they hide as a crafty gambler hides a losing throw.

253. The taints of this man are ever growing. He is far from the purification of taints (Arahatship), the censorious one who is ever blaming others.

254. There is no path through the sky: there is no "religious" apart from us. The world without delights in dalliance: the Blessed Ones are freed from this thrall.

255. There is no path through the sky; there is no "religious" apart from us. Nothing in the phenomenal world is lasting; but Buddhas endure immovable.

## § XIX

### THE RIGHTEOUS

256, 257. HASTY judgment shows no man just. He is called just who discriminates between right and wrong, who judges others not hastily, but with righteous and calm judgment, a wise guardian of the law.

258. Neither is a man wise by much speaking: he is called wise who is forgiving, kindly, and fearless.

259. A man is not a pillar of the law for his much speaking: he who has heard only part of the law and keeps it indeed, he is a pillar of the law and does not slight it.

260. No man is made an "elder" by his grey locks; mere old age is called empty old age.

261. He is called "elder" in whom dwell truth and righteousness, harmless and self-control and self-mastery, who is without taint and wise.

262. Not by mere eloquence or comeliness is a man a "gentleman," who is lustful, a miser, and a knave.

263. But he in whom these faults are uprooted and done away, the wise and pure is called a gentleman.

264. Not by his shaven crown is one made a "religious" who is intemperate and dishonourable. How can he be a "religious" who is full of lust and greed?

265. He who puts off entirely great sins and small faults—by such true religion is a man called "religious."

266. Not merely by the mendicant life is a man known as a mendicant: he is not a mendicant because he follows the law of the flesh;

267. But because, being above good and evil, he leads a pure life and goes circumspectly.

268, 269. Not by silence (mona) is a man a sage (muni) if he be ignorant and foolish: he who holds as it were the balance, taking the good and rejecting the bad, he

is the sage: he who is sage for both worlds, he is the true sage.

270. A man is no warrior who worries living things: by not worrying is a man called warrior.

271, 272. Not only by discipline and vows, not only by much learning, nor by meditation nor by solitude have I won to that peace which no worldling knows. Rest not content with these, O Bhikkhus, until you have reached the destruction of all taints.

## § XX

### THE PATH

HAPPINESS is for Gautama, as for Aristotle, "the bloom upon virtue." The path which leads to the Supreme Bliss is the path of morality defined as the Noble Eightfold Path. If a man follow this, he is happy here and hereafter.

It consists of:

Right Views,  
 Right Aspirations,  
 Right Speech,  
 Right Action,  
 Right Livelihood,  
 Right Effort,  
 Right Mindfulness,  
 Right Contemplation.

This is described by Gautama as a Middle Path between the extreme of sensuality on the one hand and asceticism on the other; or between superstitious credulity and sceptical materialism. It is a truly noble ideal: yet one must never forget that "Righteousness" throughout is Buddhistically defined: *e.g.* "Right Views" means a correct grasp of the Buddhist teaching that all is transient, all is sorrowful, all is unreal. Again, "Right Contemplation" is the practice of Samādhi, concentration of the mind upon Buddhist ideas, such as the above. The highest "Livelihood," again, is to live upon the alms of the faithful.

273. Best of paths is the Eightfold; the four truths are the best of truths: purity is the best state; best of men is the seer.

274. This is the way; there is none other that leads to the seeing of Purity (Nirvāna.) Do you follow this path: that is to befool Mara.

275. Travelling by this way you'll end your grief: it is the way I preached when I learnt to throw off my bonds.

276. 'Tis you who must strive: the Blessed Ones are only preachers. They who strive and meditate are freed from Mara's bonds.

277. "All is passing": when one sees and realises this, he sits loose to this world of sorrow: this is the way of purity.

278. "All is sorrow": when one sees and realises this, he sits loose to this world of sorrow; this is the way of purity.

279. "All is unreal": when one sees and realises this, he sits loose to this world of sorrow this is the way of purity.

280. He who fails to strive when 'tis time to strive, young and strong though he be, slothful and enmeshed in lust, the sluggard, never finds the path to wisdom.

281. Whoso guards his tongue and controls his mind and does nothing wrong: keeping clear these three paths, he will achieve the way shown by the wise.

282. From meditation springs wisdom; from neglect of it the loss of wisdom. Knowing this path of progress and decline, choose the way that leads to growth of wisdom.

283. Cut down the jungle (I do not mean with an axe!). For from the jungle of lust springs fear, and if you cut it down, you will be disentangled, O Bhikkhus!

284. Whilst the entanglement of a man with a woman is not utterly cut away, he is in bondage, running to her as a sucking calf to the cow.

285. Pluck out the bond of self as one pulls up an autumn lotus. Forge thy way along the path of safety, Nirvāna, shown by the Blessed.

286. "Here will I pass the wet season; here the winter and summer," thinks the fool, unmindful of what may befall.

287. Then comes Death and sweeps him away infatuated with children and cattle, and entangled with this world's goods, as a flood carries off a sleeping village.

288. There is no safety in sons, or in father, or in kinsfolk when Death overshadows thee: amongst thine own kith and kin is no refuge:

289. Knowing this clearly, the wise and righteous man straightway clears the road that leads to Nirvāna.

## § XXI

### MISCELLANY

290. IF at the cost of a little joy one sees great joy, he who is wise will look to the greater and leave the less.

291. Whoso seeks his own pleasure by another's pain, is entangled in hate and cannot get free.

292. Duty neglected; evil done: the taints of the proud and slothful wax ever more and more.

293. But those who are ever pondering the nature of the body, who run not after evil, who are constant in duty—in these, the vigilant and wise, taints come utterly to an end.

## § XXII

### HELL

306. THE liar goes to hell, and the villain who denies his crime; these mean ones are alike in the world beyond.

307. Though clad in yellow robe, the man of many sins who is uncontrolled is born in hell: the sinner is punished by his sin.

308. Better to swallow a ball of red-hot iron than to live uncontrolled upon the bounty of the faithful.

309. Four evil consequences follow the sluggard and the adulterer: retribution, broken slumber, an evil name, and in the end hell.

310. That way lie retribution and an evil character, the short-lived joy of trembling sinners, and a heavy penalty from the ruler. Therefore run not after thy neighbour's wife.

311. As pampas-grass clumsily handled cuts the hand, so is the community life: abused, it brings a man to hell.

312. All duties carelessly performed; all vows slightly observed; the recluse life that is open to suspicion—these bear no great fruit.

313. If a duty is to be done, do it with thy might: a careless recluse scatters contagion broadcast.

314. Better leave undone a bad deed; one day the doer will lament: good it is to do the good deed which brings no remorse.

315. As a fortress guarded within and without, so guard thyself. Leave no loophole for attack! They who fail at their post mourn here, and hereafter go to hell.

316. Some are ashamed at what is not shameful, and blush not at deeds of shame: these perverse ones go to hell.

317. They who see fear where there is no fear, and tremble not at fearful things: these perverse ones go to hell.

318. They who think evil where there is no evil, and make light of grievous sin: these perverse ones go to hell.

319. But whoso calls sin sin, and innocence innocence: these right-minded ones go to happiness.

## APPENDIX

### THE BUDDHIST IDEAL

#### (ARAHATSHIP OR NIRVĀNA)

#### AS DEPICTED IN THE DHAMMAPADA

THE "ambrosial (or deathless) path," Nirvāna, is the prize which these stanzas hold out to the strenuous: this is at once the goal of effort and its cessation, a calm haven after strenuous voyaging. The seer speaks with a quiet rapture and a serene assurance which convince us as we read, that whether it is Gautama himself who speaks, or whether it is the collective voice of his followers, here is in any case the utterance of a real experience of the soul. Can it be that these men entered behind the veil of sense and time, and that their voices ring down the ages from that mysterious Beyond to which the mystics of all ages have aspired?

We cannot say; yet it is very clear that if the metaphysical Nirvāna is a fantasy, the ethical Nirvāna is real enough: and Gautama was above all things an ethical teacher. That we shall understand Nirvāna from a perusal of those pages is not likely; that it will attract Western thinkers is not wholly to be desired; but we can at least study the ethical experience of which Nirvāna is but the description and the attempted explanation: and a grasp of what Arahatsip means is essential to the understanding of Buddhism. The Arahatsip is one who, through obedience

to the preaching of Buddha, has reached that calm state when the will no longer struggles, but is unified and at rest.

As the eagle, after long strain of upward flight, stays poised in mid-air, so the seer reaches the calm and severe heights of character. This is Nirvāna in the present world: and Nirvāna hereafter may be more mysterious, but it must be of the same kind.

Very much as the Christian, experiencing "the peace that passes understanding," interprets in the light of this experience the serenity and calm of the Hereafter, so the Buddhist "saint," having known the quiet and serenity of the unified will, projects this experience into the future.

To both alike this future is "ineffably sublime"; words fail men when they attempt to speak of the Beyond: and yet we can piece together a picture of their inmost thoughts from such fragmentary descriptions of their experience as they let fall.

Arahatship and Nirvāna, then, form one ideal, and it is with this that the Dhammapada is concerned.

We have seen that Nirvāna is ineffable (stanza 218 and note); but we have also to remember that it can be experienced here and now. In stanza 402 we read:

"He is the Brahmin who in this very world knows the end of sorrow, who has laid the burden aside and is free."

For whilst "the burden" is ultimately bodily existence, yet it is the sinfulness and egoism and pride of the flesh which make that burden so intolerable: the body is in fact a good servant but a bad master, and he who masters his body is already as it were freed from it.

"Happy is he," says the Dīgha Nikāya, "who is free of lust and beyond its power: the highest bliss is freedom from pride and self-will."

"There is no sorrow like existence, no bliss like Nirvāna," says the Dhammapada.

"The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, cries St. Paul...Unhappy man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death?"

These and similar passages are a cry for deliverance; and both teachers insist upon the same great truth, that man's bodily life, in so far as it is dominated by self-will and lust, is an evil to be escaped at any cost. Neither is Manichean: it is not the body that is evil, but the body enslaved by the tyranny of evil desires.

And for both teachers it is the perversity of the "flesh" that shapes the ideal of escape; though the one longs after the life of dissolution, and the other believes that he will be "clothed upon" with a "glorified body" hereafter.

The salient feature of the Buddhist ideal is freedom:

"Him I call Brahmin who has cut the bonds, who thirsts not for pleasure, who has left behind the hindrances."

Inasmuch as this "highest freedom" is escape from lust and other "bonds," it is an ideal for this life: inasmuch as it is escape from the round of rebirths it is an ideal for the future: here Arahatsip passes over into Nirvāna.

And in both alike the way of escape lies in the mind of man:

"All that we are by Mind is wrought,  
Fashioned and fathered by our Thought."

The Arahats has mastered his mind (that "frail and fickle thing" that in the worldling "leaps hither and thither, like a monkey seeking fruit"); and therefore he is already free from the tyranny of the flesh (*cf.* 89). For it is the mental "bonds"—lust, pride, self-will—which have bound him through the long waste of years to one body after another; and it is "knowledge" which sets him free:

"He is the Brahmin indeed who... has reached the end of rebirths, the sage whose knowledge is perfect, and who is perfect with all perfection."

This freedom of Nirvāna is envisaged as Rest: and there is in these stanzas a cry for rest which runs through all the Buddhist books like some pathetic

fugue: a desire so passionate as to be almost unintelligible to Western minds.

But to men obsessed heart and spirit with the "weary weight of the intolerable years," life after life of suffering and care, it is a real longing which here finds rhythmic expression:

"All is fleeting, all is unreal, all is sorrowful." (277-9.)  
 "There is no sorrow, like to existence: no bliss like Nirvāna, the Supreme Rest." (202.)

Worldly existence is wholly evil; but every man is free to cultivate the "otherworldly" frame of mind, and be at peace. For Buddhism is in a sense eudaemonistic; it does not flout man's desire to be happy: only it defines this happiness in terms of inward peace and self-control.

Section XV of the Dhammapada is the Buddhist analogue of the Beatitudes of Jesus, and, as an ideal of the Happy Life, ranks high indeed.

It is an ideal of kindness and serenity, of peace and unity, which is very winsome: it would be hard to pick a quarrel with the exponents of such a life!

To the Christian it seems none the less an ideal more passive and stoical, less loving and mystical than that of Jesus; and yet we cannot but rejoice that the East has had this ideal so long before it. To the Karma-haunted millions of India it has shone with a steady and alluring radiance, in time past more potent than

to-day, but even now embedded in their subconsciousness.

Its calm and cool attractiveness is beautifully symbolised in the poetic imagery of the Dhammapada:

"The good man shines like the moon escaped from clouds, he is pure as some unruffled lake." (95.)

And the company of such a leader with his disciples is

"As the moon following the path of the stars." (208.)

Another lovely moonlit scene embodies and symbolises the spirit of this ideal:

The Buddha's six chief disciples are in a park, and as they sit in the tropical moonlight they ask one another what quality in the Bhikkhu could add to the beauty of the scene. Amongst the answers are three which throw light upon the meaning of Arahatsip:

"The peace and insight of moral victory," says one,  
 "The joy and insight of Emancipation," says another;

and Sāriputta wins the Master's approval by his reply:

"When a Bhikkhu masters his heart (*cittam*) and does not let it master him."

"Hear from me," says Gautama. "Hear from me what kind of Bhikkhu could add a lustre to the wood; one who, sitting serene and controlled, resolves: "Till my heart is freed from the ferments of lust I shall not quit my seat."

This scene is most suggestive, for it throws into strong contrast Buddhist and Christian Ethics, and further it leads us into the heart of a vexed and difficult problem.

With regard to the first point, it is sufficient to say here that Buddhism teaches a rigorous and calm self-mastery, Christianity demands a passionate self-surrender.

With regard to the second, we may state the problem thus: Is Nirvāna a social ideal? Or is it an ideal of solitude and forgetfulness? The answer seems to be that Buddhism holds out no promise of the reunion of emancipated "souls"; Nirvāna is the cessation of all personal existence: yet the experience of the peace and joy of Noble Companionship—such companionship and communion of soul as is here depicted—is too good not to be desired. And this desire has tinged the ideal picture of the Beyond: in spite of metaphysics the ethical, asserts itself

"Good is the Vision of the Noble" (i.e. Arahats).

"Good is their company." (206.)

"A loyal friend is the truest kinsman:  
Nirvāna is the greatest Bliss." (204.)

To sum up the Buddhist position upon the question of "Society and Solitude" is no easy task; but we may express it tentatively thus: At first solitude is essential:

"Alone man lives like Brahma: in twos men live like gods: in threes they are as a village. More than this is a mob."

And as the Dhammapada says,

"Even for great benefit to another let no man imperil his own benefit." (166.)

But if an Arahāt is to be found, his society can do nothing but good: let the Bhikkhu resort to him. If there are a company of Arahāts, let them rejoice in communion and fellowship. And hereafter

Nirvāna is "the unknown shore." (323.)  
It is "the solitude which it is hard to love." (88.)

With all his kindness and even geniality Buddha does not disguise the fact that victory will be purchased at a heavy cost:

"One is the road leading to wealth: another is that leading to Nirvāna."

To win to the goal will mean asceticism all along the line:

"Cut out the bonds...  
 Play the man...  
 Travel stoutly alone..."

Such are his rallying-cries.

For the "Path of Safety" is beset with "evil beasts." And to win across "the torrent" to the safety of the "other side" needs courage and strenuous effort. And, having won through, men will find a great solitude, a peace, a freedom, only to be purchased by ceasing to be. Such is Nirvāna in the fullest sense.

Freedom; Safety; Rest: Calmness; Kindliness; Self-control: Solitary effort or the company of the select few. Above all, Bliss, ineffable yet traceable to its seat in the unified will. Such is Arahatsip, or Nirvāna in this present life. It is a lofty ideal, and though no Buddhist now strives to realise Nirvāna, yet there are men in all Buddhist lands gazing into the remote future to see Arahatsip shining afar off like some dim yet lovely star. And because it is ethical, therefore it is attainable:

"I ought, therefore I can."

In the days of Gautama it is clear that men reached the goal of Arahatsip, and knew the peace and joy of a mind and conscience at rest. For the contagion of his enthusiasm and the magnetism of his personality went far to energise ideals which are real enough beneath a tropic sun, and, in so far as they are ethical ideals, vital enough in all lands. And to-day

Buddhists look wistfully to a Coming One, Maitri, who shall spur them on to victory: or they put their trust in the grace of an Amida who demands only faith in his saving power.

The Christian will see in these aspirations and yearnings the promise of a speedy fulfilment, when men see the Majesty and the Love of God revealed in Christ: and he will welcome the teachings of Gautama the Buddha as the utterance of a prophet and a seer.

# Christianity

Excerpts From:

## The Imitation of Christ

By Thomas a Kempis

tr. by William Benham

[1886]

### THE FIRST BOOK

ADMONITIONS PROFITABLE FOR THE  
SPIRITUAL LIFE

### CHAPTER I

OF THE IMITATION OF CHRIST, AND OF  
CONTEMPT OF THE WORLD AND ALL ITS  
VANITIES

He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness,(1) saith the Lord. These are the words of Christ; and they teach us how far we must imitate His life and character, if we seek true illumination, and deliverance from all blindness of heart. Let it be our most earnest study, therefore, to dwell upon the life of Jesus Christ.

2. His teaching surpasseth all teaching of holy men, and such as have His Spirit find therein the hidden

man. (2) But there are many who, though they frequently hear the Gospel, yet feel but little longing after it, because they have not the mind of Christ. He, therefore, that will fully and with true wisdom understand the words of Christ, let him strive to conform his whole life to that mind of Christ.

3. What doth it profit thee to enter into deep discussion concerning the Holy Trinity, if thou lack humility, and be thus displeasing to the Trinity? For verily it is not deep words that make a man holy and upright; it is a good life which maketh a man dear to God. I had rather feel contrition than be skilful in the definition thereof. If thou knewest the whole Bible, and the sayings of all the philosophers, what should all this profit thee without the love and grace of God? Vanity of vanities, all is vanity, save to love God, and Him only to serve. That is the highest wisdom, to cast the world behind us, and to reach forward to the heavenly kingdom.

4. It is vanity then to seek after, and to trust in, the riches that shall perish. It is vanity, too, to covet honours, and to lift up ourselves on high. It is vanity to follow the desires of the flesh and be led by them, for this shall bring misery at the last. It is vanity to desire a long life, and to have little care for a good life. It is vanity to take thought only for the life which now is, and not to look forward to the things which shall be hereafter. It is vanity to love that which quickly passeth away, and not to hasten where eternal joy abideth.

5. Be oftentimes mindful of the saying,(3) The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing. Strive, therefore, to turn away thy heart from the love of the things that are seen, and to set it upon the things that are not seen. For they who follow after their own fleshly lusts, defile the conscience, and destroy the grace of God.

(1) John viii. 12. (2) Revelations ii. 17. (3) Ecclesiastes i. 8.

## CHAPTER II

### OF THINKING HUMBLY OF ONESELF

There is naturally in every man a desire to know, but what profiteth knowledge without the fear of God? Better of a surety is a lowly peasant who serveth God, than a proud philosopher who watcheth the stars and neglecteth the knowledge of himself. He who knoweth himself well is vile in his own sight; neither regardeth he the praises of men. If I knew all the things that are in the world, and were not in charity, what should it help me before God, who is to judge me according to my deeds?

2. Rest from inordinate desire of knowledge, for therein is found much distraction and deceit. Those who have knowledge desire to appear learned, and to be called wise. Many things there are to know which profiteth little or nothing to the soul. And foolish out of measure is he who attendeth upon other things rather than those which serve to his soul's health.

Many words satisfy not the soul, but a good life refresheth the mind, and a pure conscience giveth great confidence towards God.

3. The greater and more complete thy knowledge, the more severely shalt thou be judged, unless thou hast lived holily. Therefore be not lifted up by any skill or knowledge that thou hast; but rather fear concerning the knowledge which is given to thee. If it seemeth to thee that thou knowest many things, and understandest them well, know also that there are many more things which thou knowest not. Be not high-minded, but rather confess thine ignorance. Why desirest thou to lift thyself above another, when there are found many more learned and more skilled in the Scripture than thou? If thou wilt know and learn anything with profit, love to be thyself unknown and to be counted for nothing.

4. That is the highest and most profitable lesson, when a man truly knoweth and judgeth lowly of himself. To account nothing of one's self, and to think always kindly and highly of others, this is great and perfect wisdom. Even shouldst thou see thy neighbor sin openly or grievously, yet thou oughtest not to reckon thyself better than he, for thou knowest not how long thou shalt keep thine integrity. All of us are weak and frail; hold thou no man more frail than thyself.

## CHAPTER III

### OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF TRUTH

Happy is the man whom Truth by itself doth teach, not by figures and transient words, but as it is in itself.(1) Our own judgment and feelings often deceive us, and we discern but little of the truth. What doth it profit to argue about hidden and dark things, concerning which we shall not be even reproved in the judgment, because we knew them not? Oh, grievous folly, to neglect the things which are profitable and necessary, and to give our minds to things which are curious and hurtful! Having eyes, we see not.

2. And what have we to do with talk about genus and species! He to whom the Eternal Word speaketh is free from multiplied questionings. From this One Word are all things, and all things speak of Him; and this is the Beginning which also speaketh unto us.(2) No man without Him understandeth or rightly judgeth. The man to whom all things are one, who bringeth all things to one, who seeth all things in one, he is able to remain steadfast of spirit, and at rest in God. O God, who art the Truth, make me one with Thee in everlasting love. It wearieth me oftentimes to read and listen to many things; in Thee is all that I wish for and desire. Let all the doctors hold their peace; let all creation keep silence before Thee: speak Thou alone to me.

3. The more a man hath unity and simplicity in himself, the more things and the deeper things he understandeth; and that without labour, because he receiveth the light of understanding from above. The spirit which is pure, sincere, and steadfast, is not distracted though it hath many works to do, because it doth all things to the honour of God, and striveth to be free from all thoughts of self-seeking. Who is so full of hindrance and annoyance to thee as thine own undisciplined heart? A man who is good and devout arrangeth beforehand within his own heart the works which he hath to do abroad; and so is not drawn away by the desires of his evil will, but subjecteth everything to the judgment of right reason. Who hath a harder battle to fight than he who striveth for self-mastery? And this should be our endeavour, even to master self, and thus daily to grow stronger than self, and go on unto perfection.

4. All perfection hath some imperfection joined to it in this life, and all our power of sight is not without some darkness. A lowly knowledge of thyself is a surer way to God than the deep searching of man's learning. Not that learning is to be blamed, nor the taking account of anything that is good; but a good conscience and a holy life is better than all. And because many seek knowledge rather than good living, therefore they go astray, and bear little or no fruit.

5. O if they would give that diligence to the rooting out of vice and the planting of virtue which they give

unto vain questionings: there had not been so many evil doings and stumbling-blocks among the laity, nor such ill living among houses of religion. Of a surety, at the Day of Judgment it will be demanded of us, not what we have read, but what we have done; not how well we have spoken, but how holily we have lived. Tell me, where now are all those masters and teachers, whom thou knewest well, whilst they were yet with you, and flourished in learning? Their stalls are now filled by others, who perhaps never have one thought concerning them. Whilst they lived they seemed to be somewhat, but now no one speaks of them.

6. Oh how quickly passeth the glory of the world away! Would that their life and knowledge had agreed together! For then would they have read and inquired unto good purpose. How many perish through empty learning in this world, who care little for serving God. And because they love to be great more than to be humble, therefore they "have become vain in their imaginations." He only is truly great, who hath great charity. He is truly great who deemeth himself small, and counteth all height of honour as nothing. He is the truly wise man, who counteth all earthly things as dung that he may win Christ. And he is the truly learned man, who doeth the will of God, and forsaketh his own will.

(1) Psalm xciv. 12; Numbers xii. 8. (2) John viii. 25 (Vulg.).

## CHAPTER IV

### OF PRUDENCE IN ACTION

We must not trust every word of others or feeling within ourselves, but cautiously and patiently try the matter, whether it be of God. Unhappily we are so weak that we find it easier to believe and speak evil of others, rather than good. But they that are perfect, do not give ready heed to every news-bearer, for they know man's weakness that it is prone to evil and unstable in words.

2. This is great wisdom, not to be hasty in action, or stubborn in our own opinions. A part of this wisdom also is not to believe every word we hear, nor to tell others all that we hear, even though we believe it. Take counsel with a man who is wise and of a good conscience; and seek to be instructed by one better than thyself, rather than to follow thine own inventions. A good life maketh a man wise toward God, and giveth him experience in many things. The more humble a man is in himself, and the more obedient towards God, the wiser will he be in all things, and the more shall his soul be at peace.

## CHAPTER V

### OF THE READING OF HOLY SCRIPTURES

It is Truth which we must look for in Holy Writ, not cunning of words. All Scripture ought to be read in the spirit in which it was written. We must rather

seek for what is profitable in Scripture, than for what ministereth to subtlety in discourse. Therefore we ought to read books which are devotional and simple, as well as those which are deep and difficult. And let not the weight of the writer be a stumbling-block to thee, whether he be of little or much learning, but let the love of the pure Truth draw thee to read. Ask not, who hath said this or that, but look to what he says.

2. Men pass away, but the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Without respect of persons God speaketh to us in divers manners. Our own curiosity often hindereth us in the reading of holy writings, when we seek to understand and discuss, where we should pass simply on. If thou wouldst profit by thy reading, read humbly, simply, honestly, and not desiring to win a character for learning. Ask freely, and hear in silence the words of holy men; nor be displeased at the hard sayings of older men than thou, for they are not uttered without cause.

## CHAPTER VI

### OF INORDINATE AFFECTIONS

Whensoever a man desireth aught above measure, immediately he becometh restless. The proud and the avaricious man are never at rest; while the poor and lowly of heart abide in the multitude of peace. The man who is not yet wholly dead to self, is soon tempted, and is overcome in small and trifling matters. It is hard for him who is weak in spirit, and still in part carnal and inclined to the pleasures of

sense, to withdraw himself altogether from earthly desires. And therefore, when he withdraweth himself from these, he is often sad, and easily angered too if any oppose his will.

2. But if, on the other hand, he yield to his inclination, immediately he is weighed down by the condemnation of his conscience; for that he hath followed his own desire, and yet in no way attained the peace which he hoped for. For true peace of heart is to be found in resisting passion, not in yielding to it. And therefore there is no peace in the heart of a man who is carnal, nor in him who is given up to the things that are without him, but only in him who is fervent towards God and living the life of the Spirit.

## **CHAPTER VII**

### **OF FLEEING FROM VAIN HOPE AND PRIDE**

Vain is the life of that man who putteth his trust in men or in any created Thing. Be not ashamed to be the servant of others for the love of Jesus Christ, and to be reckoned poor in this life. Rest not upon thyself, but build thy hope in God. Do what lieth in thy power, and God will help thy good intent. Trust not in thy learning, nor in the cleverness of any that lives, but rather trust in the favour of God, who resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble.

2. Boast not thyself in thy riches if thou hast them, nor in thy friends if they be powerful, but in God, who giveth all things, and in addition to all things desireth

to give even Himself. Be not lifted up because of thy strength or beauty of body, for with only a slight sickness it will fail and wither away. Be not vain of thy skilfulness or ability, lest thou displeas God, from whom cometh every good gift which we have.

3. Count not thyself better than others, lest perchance thou appear worse in the sight of God, who knoweth what is in man. Be not proud of thy good works, for God's judgments are of another sort than the judgments of man, and what pleaseth man is oftentimes displeasing to Him. If thou hast any good, believe that others have more, and so thou mayest preserve thy humility. It is no harm to thee if thou place thyself below all others; but it is great harm if thou place thyself above even one. Peace is ever with the humble man, but in the heart of the proud there is envy and continual wrath.

## **CHAPTER VIII**

### **OF THE DANGER OF TOO MUCH FAMILIARITY**

Open not thine heart to every man, but deal with one who is wise and feareth God. Be seldom with the young and with strangers. Be not a flatterer of the rich; nor willingly seek the society of the great. Let thy company be the humble and the simple, the devout and the gentle, and let thy discourse be concerning things which edify. Be not familiar with any woman, but commend all good women alike unto God. Choose for thy companions God and His Angels only, and flee from the notice of men.

2. We must love all men, but not make close companions of all. It sometimes falleth out that one who is unknown to us is highly regarded through good report of him, whose actual person is nevertheless unpleasing to those who behold it. We sometimes think to please others by our intimacy, and forthwith displease them the more by the faultiness of character which they perceive in us.

## CHAPTER IX

### OF OBEDIENCE AND SUBJECTION

It is verily a great thing to live in obedience, to be under authority, and not to be at our own disposal. Far safer is it to live in subjection than in a place of authority. Many are in obedience from necessity rather than from love; these take it amiss, and repine for small cause. Nor will they gain freedom of spirit, unless with all their heart they submit themselves for the love of God. Though thou run hither and thither, thou wilt not find peace, save in humble subjection to the authority of him who is set over thee. Fancies about places and change of them have deceived many.

2. True it is that every man willingly followeth his own bent, and is the more inclined to those who agree with him. But if Christ is amongst us, then it is necessary that we sometimes yield up our own opinion for the sake of peace. Who is so wise as to have perfect knowledge of all things? Therefore trust not too much to thine own opinion, but be ready also

to hear the opinions of others. Though thine own opinion be good, yet if for the love of God thou foregoest it, and followest that of another, thou shalt the more profit thereby.

3. Ofttimes I have heard that it is safer to hearken and to receive counsel than to give it. It may also come to pass that each opinion may be good; but to refuse to hearken to others when reason or occasion requireth it, is a mark of pride or wilfulness.

## CHAPTER X

### OF THE DANGER OF SUPERFLUITY OF WORDS

Avoid as far as thou canst the tumult of men; for talk concerning worldly things, though it be innocently undertaken, is a hindrance, so quickly are we led captive and defiled by vanity. Many a time I wish that I had held my peace, and had not gone amongst men. But why do we talk and gossip so continually, seeing that we so rarely resume our silence without some hurt done to our conscience? We like talking so much because we hope by our conversations to gain some mutual comfort, and because we seek to refresh our wearied spirits by variety of thoughts. And we very willingly talk and think of those things which we love or desire, or else of those which we most dislike.

2. But alas! it is often to no purpose and in vain. For this outward consolation is no small hindrance to the inner comfort which cometh from God. Therefore must we watch and pray that time pass not idly away.

If it be right and desirable for thee to speak, speak things which are to edification. Evil custom and neglect of our real profit tend much to make us heedless of watching over our lips. Nevertheless, devout conversation on spiritual things helpeth not a little to spiritual progress, most of all where those of kindred mind and spirit find their ground of fellowship in God.

## CHAPTER XI

### OF SEEKING PEACE OF MIND AND OF SPIRITUAL PROGRESS

We may enjoy abundance of peace if we refrain from busying ourselves with the sayings and doings of others, and things which concern not ourselves. How can he abide long time in peace who occupieth himself with other men's matters, and with things without himself, and meanwhile payeth little or rare heed to the self within? Blessed are the single-hearted, for they shall have abundance of peace.

2. How came it to pass that many of the Saints were so perfect, so contemplative of Divine things? Because they steadfastly sought to mortify themselves from all worldly desires, and so were enabled to cling with their whole heart to God, and be free and at leisure for the thought of Him. We are too much occupied with our own affections, and too anxious about transitory things. Seldom, too, do we entirely conquer even a single fault, nor are we zealous for daily

growth in grace. And so we remain lukewarm and unspiritual.

3. Were we fully watchful of ourselves, and not bound in spirit to outward things, then might we be wise unto salvation, and make progress in Divine contemplation. Our great and grievous stumbling-block is that, not being freed from our affections and desires, we strive not to enter into the perfect way of the Saints. And when even a little trouble befalleth us, too quickly are we cast down, and fly to the world to give us comfort.

4. If we would quit ourselves like men, and strive to stand firm in the battle, then should we see the Lord helping us from Heaven. For He Himself is always ready to help those who strive and who trust in Him; yea, He provideth for us occasions of striving, to the end that we may win the victory. If we look upon our progress in religion as a progress only in outward observances and forms, our devoutness will soon come to an end. But let us lay the axe to the very root of our life, that, being cleansed from affections, we may possess our souls in peace.

5. If each year should see one fault rooted out from us, we should go quickly on to perfection. But on the contrary, we often feel that we were better and holier in the beginning of our conversion than after many years of profession. Zeal and progress ought to increase day by day; yet now it seemeth a great thing if one is able to retain some portion of his first ardour. If we would put some slight stress on ourselves at the

beginning, then afterwards we should be able to do all things with ease and joy.

6. It is a hard thing to break through a habit, and a yet harder thing to go contrary to our own will. Yet if thou overcome not slight and easy obstacles, how shalt thou overcome greater ones? Withstand thy will at the beginning, and unlearn an evil habit, lest it lead thee little by little into worse difficulties. Oh, if thou knewest what peace to thyself thy holy life should bring to thyself, and what joy to others, methinketh thou wouldst be more zealous for spiritual profit.

## CHAPTER XII

### OF THE USES OF ADVERSITY

It is good for us that we sometimes have sorrows and adversities, for they often make a man lay to heart that he is only a stranger and sojourner, and may not put his trust in any worldly thing. It is good that we sometimes endure contradictions, and are hardly and unfairly judged, when we do and mean what is good. For these things help us to be humble, and shield us from vain-glory. For then we seek the more earnestly the witness of God, when men speak evil of us falsely, and give us no credit for good.

2. Therefore ought a man to rest wholly upon God, so that he needeth not seek much comfort at the hand of men. When a man who feareth God is afflicted or tried or oppressed with evil thoughts, then he seeth that God is the more necessary unto him, since

without God he can do no good thing. Then he is heavy of heart, he groaneth, he crieth out for the very disquietness of his heart. Then he groweth weary of life, and would fain depart and be with Christ. By all this he is taught that in the world there can be no perfect security or fulness of peace.

## CHAPTER XIII

### OF RESISTING TEMPTATION

So long as we live in the world, we cannot be without trouble and trial. Wherefore it is written in Job, The life of man upon the earth is a trial.(1) And therefore ought each of us to give heed concerning trials and temptations, and watch unto prayer, lest the devil find occasion to deceive; for he never sleepeth, but goeth about seeking whom he may devour. No man is so perfect in holiness that he hath never temptations, nor can we ever be wholly free from them.

2. Yet, notwithstanding, temptations turn greatly unto our profit, even though they be great and hard to bear; for through them we are humbled, purified, instructed. All Saints have passed through much tribulation and temptation, and have profited thereby. And they who endured not temptation became reprobate and fell away. There is no position so sacred, no place so secret, that it is without temptations and adversities.

3. There is no man wholly free from temptations so long as he liveth, because we have the root of

temptation within ourselves, in that we are born in concupiscence. One temptation or sorrow passeth, and another cometh; and always we shall have somewhat to suffer, for we have fallen from perfect happiness. Many who seek to fly from temptations fall yet more deeply into them. By flight alone we cannot overcome, but by endurance and true humility we are made stronger than all our enemies.

4. He who only resisteth outwardly and pulleth not up by the root, shall profit little; nay, rather temptations will return to him the more quickly, and will be the more terrible. Little by little, through patience and longsuffering, thou shalt conquer by the help of God, rather than by violence and thine own strength of will. In the midst of temptation often seek counsel; and deal not hardly with one who is tempted, but comfort and strengthen him as thou wouldest have done unto thyself.

5. The beginning of all temptations to evil is instability of temper and want of trust in God; for even as a ship without a helm is tossed about by the waves, so is a man who is careless and infirm of purpose tempted, now on this side, now on that. As fire testeth iron, so doth temptation the upright man. Oftentimes we know not what strength we have; but temptation revealeth to us what we are. Nevertheless, we must watch, especially in the beginnings of temptation; for then is the foe the more easily mastered, when he is not suffered to enter within the

mind, but is met outside the door as soon as he hath knocked. Wherefore one saith,

Check the beginnings; once thou might'st have cured,

But now 'tis past thy skill, too long hath it endured.

For first cometh to the mind the simple suggestion, then the strong imagination, afterwards pleasure, evil affection, assent. And so little by little the enemy entereth in altogether, because he was not resisted at the beginning. And the longer a man delayeth his resistance, the weaker he groweth, and the stronger groweth the enemy against him.

6. Some men suffer their most grievous temptations in the beginning of their conversion, some at the end. Some are sorely tried their whole life long. Some there are who are tempted but lightly, according to the wisdom and justice of the ordering of God, who knoweth the character and circumstances of men, and ordereth all things for the welfare of His elect.

7. Therefore we ought not to despair when we are tempted, but the more fervently should cry unto God, that He will vouchsafe to help us in all our tribulation; and that He will, as St. Paul saith, with the temptation make a way to escape that we may be able to bear it.(2) Let us therefore humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God in all temptation and trouble, for He will save and exalt such as are of an humble spirit.

8. In temptations and troubles a man is proved, what progress he hath made, and therein is his reward the greater, and his virtue doth the more appear. Nor is it a great thing if a man be devout and zealous so long as he suffereth no affliction; but if he behave himself patiently in the time of adversity, then is there hope of great progress. Some are kept safe from great temptations, but are overtaken in those which are little and common, that the humiliation may teach them not to trust to themselves in great things, being weak in small things.

(1) Job vii. 1 (Vulg.). (2) 1 Corinthians x. 13.

## CHAPTER XIV

### ON AVOIDING RASH JUDGMENT

Look well unto thyself, and beware that thou judge not the doings of others. In judging others a man laboureth in vain; he often erreth, and easily falleth into sin; but in judging and examining himself he always laboureth to good purpose. According as a matter toucheth our fancy, so oftentimes do we judge of it; for easily do we fail of true judgment because of our own personal feeling. If God were always the sole object of our desire, we should the less easily be troubled by the erring judgment of our fancy.

2. But often some secret thought lurking within us, or even some outward circumstance, turneth us aside. Many are secretly seeking their own ends in what they do, yet know it not. They seem to live in good

peace of mind so long as things go well with them, and according to their desires, but if their desires be frustrated and broken, immediately they are shaken and displeased. Diversity of feelings and opinions very often brings about dissensions between friends, between countrymen, between religious and godly men.

3. Established custom is not easily relinquished, and no man is very easily led to see with the eyes of another. If thou rest more upon thy own reason or experience than upon the power of Jesus Christ, thy light shall come slowly and hardly; for God willeth us to be perfectly subject unto Himself, and all our reason to be exalted by abundant love towards Him.

## CHAPTER XV

### OF WORKS OF CHARITY

For no worldly good whatsoever, and for the love of no man, must anything be done which is evil, but for the help of the suffering a good work must sometimes be postponed, or be changed for a better; for herein a good work is not destroyed, but improved. Without charity no work profiteth, but whatsoever is done in charity, however small and of no reputation it be, bringeth forth good fruit; for God verily considereth what a man is able to do, more than the greatness of what he doth.

2. He doth much who loveth much. He doth much who doth well. He doth well who ministereth to the

public good rather than to his own. Oftentimes that seemeth to be charity which is rather carnality, because it springeth from natural inclination, self-will, hope of repayment, desire of gain.

3. He who hath true and perfect charity, in no wise seeketh his own good, but desireth that God alone be altogether glorified. He envieth none, because he longeth for no selfish joy; nor doth he desire to rejoice in himself, but longeth to be blessed in God as the highest good. He ascribeth good to none save to God only, the Fountain whence all good proceedeth, and the End, the Peace, the joy of all Saints. Oh, he who hath but a spark of true charity, hath verily learned that all worldly things are full of vanity.

## CHAPTER XVI

### OF BEARING WITH THE FAULTS OF OTHERS

Those things which a man cannot amend in himself or in others, he ought patiently to bear, until God shall otherwise ordain. Bethink thee that perhaps it is better for thy trial and patience, without which our merits are but little worth. Nevertheless thou oughtest, when thou findest such impediments, to beseech God that He would vouchsafe to sustain thee, that thou be able to bear them with a good will.

2. If one who is once or twice admonished refuse to hearken, strive not with him, but commit all to God, that His will may be done and His honour be shown in His servants, for He knoweth well how to convert

the evil unto good. Endeavour to be patient in bearing with other men's faults and infirmities whatsoever they be, for thou thyself also hast many things which have need to be borne with by others. If thou canst not make thine own self what thou desireth, how shalt thou be able to fashion another to thine own liking. We are ready to see others made perfect, and yet we do not amend our own shortcomings.

3. We will that others be straitly corrected, but we will not be corrected ourselves. The freedom of others displeaseth us, but we are dissatisfied that our own wishes shall be denied us. We desire rules to be made restraining others, but by no means will we suffer ourselves to be restrained. Thus therefore doth it plainly appear how seldom we weigh our neighbour in the same balance with ourselves. If all men were perfect, what then should we have to suffer from others for God?

4. But now hath God thus ordained, that we may learn to bear one another's burdens, because none is without defect, none without a burden, none sufficient of himself, none wise enough of himself; but it behoveth us to bear with one another, to comfort one another, to help, instruct, admonish one another. How much strength each man hath is best proved by occasions of adversity: for such occasions do not make a man frail, but show of what temper he is.

## CHAPTER XIX

### OF THE EXERCISES OF A RELIGIOUS MAN

The life of a Christian ought to be adorned with all virtues, that he may be inwardly what he outwardly appeareth unto men. And verily it should be yet better within than without, for God is a discerner of our heart, Whom we must reverence with all our hearts wheresoever we are, and walk pure in His presence as do the angels. We ought daily to renew our vows, and to kindle our hearts to zeal, as if each day were the first day of our conversion, and to say, "Help me, O God, in my good resolutions, and in Thy holy service, and grant that this day I may make a good beginning, for hitherto I have done nothing!"

2. According to our resolution so is the rate of our progress, and much diligence is needful for him who would make good progress. For if he who resolveth bravely oftentimes falleth short, how shall it be with him who resolveth rarely or feebly? But manifold causes bring about abandonment of our resolution, yet a trivial omission of holy exercises can hardly be made without some loss to us. The resolution of the righteous dependeth more upon the grace of God than upon their own wisdom; for in Him they always put their trust, whatsoever they take in hand. For man proposeth, but God disposeth; and the way of a man is not in himself.(1)

3. If a holy exercise be sometimes omitted for the sake of some act of piety, or of some brotherly kindness, it

can easily be taken up afterwards; but if it be neglected through distaste or slothfulness, then is it sinful, and the mischief will be felt. Strive as earnestly as we may, we shall still fall short in many things. Always should some distinct resolution be made by us; and, most of all, we must strive against those sins which most easily beset us. Both our outer and inner life should be straitly examined and ruled by us, because both have to do with our progress.

4. If thou canst not be always examining thyself, thou canst at certain seasons, and at least twice in the day, at evening and at morning. In the morning make thy resolves, and in the evening inquire into thy life, how thou hast sped to-day in word, deed, and thought; for in these ways thou hast often perchance offended God and thy neighbour. Gird up thy lions like a man against the assaults of the devil; bridle thine appetite, and thou wilt soon be able to bridle every inclination of the flesh. Be thou never without something to do; be reading, or writing, or praying, or meditating, or doing something that is useful to the community. Bodily exercises, however, must be undertaken with discretion, nor are they to be used by all alike.

5. The duties which are not common to all must not be done openly, but are safest carried on in secret. But take heed that thou be not careless in the common duties, and more devout in the secret; but faithfully and honestly discharge the duties and commands which lie upon thee, then afterwards, if thou hast still leisure, give thyself to thyself as thy devotion leadeth

thee. All cannot have one exercise, but one suiteth better to this man and another to that. Even for the diversity of season different exercises are needed, some suit better for feasts, some for fasts. We need one kind in time of temptations and others in time of peace and quietness. Some are suitable to our times of sadness, and others when we are joyful in the Lord.

6. When we draw near the time of the great feasts, good exercises should be renewed, and the prayers of holy men more fervently besought. We ought to make our resolutions from one Feast to another, as if each were the period of our departure from this world, and of entering into the eternal feast. So ought we to prepare ourselves earnestly at solemn seasons, and the more solemnly to live, and to keep straightest watch upon each holy observance, as though we were soon to receive the reward of our labours at the hand of God.

7. And if this be deferred, let us believe ourselves to be as yet ill-prepared, and unworthy as yet of the glory which shall be revealed in us at the appointed season; and let us study to prepare ourselves the better for our end. Blessed is that servant, as the Evangelist Luke hath it, whom, when the Lord cometh He shall find watching. Verily I say unto you He will make him ruler over all that He hath.(2)

(1) Jeremiah x. 23. (2) Luke xii. 43, 44.

## CHAPTER XX

### OF THE LOVE OF SOLITUDE AND SILENCE

Seek a suitable time for thy meditation, and think frequently of the mercies of God to thee. Leave curious questions. Study such matters as bring thee sorrow for sin rather than amusement. If thou withdraw thyself from trifling conversation and idle goings about, as well as from novelties and gossip, thou shalt find thy time sufficient and apt for good meditation. The greatest saints used to avoid as far as they could the company of men, and chose to live in secret with God.

2. One hath said, "As oft as I have gone among men, so oft have I returned less a man." This is what we often experience when we have been long time in conversation. For it is easier to be altogether silent than it is not to exceed in word. It is easier to remain hidden at home than to keep sufficient guard upon thyself out of doors. He, therefore, that seeketh to reach that which is hidden and spiritual, must go with Jesus "apart from the multitude." No man safely goeth abroad who loveth not to rest at home. No man safely talketh but he who loveth to hold his peace. No man safely ruleth but he who loveth to be subject. No man safely commandeth but he who loveth to obey.

3. No man safely rejoiceth but he who hath the testimony of a good conscience within himself. The boldness of the Saints was always full of the fear of God. Nor were they the less earnest and humble in

themselves, because they shone forth with great virtues and grace. But the boldness of wicked men springeth from pride and presumption, and at the last turneth to their own confusion. Never promise thyself security in this life, howsoever good a monk or devout a solitary thou seemest.

4. Often those who stand highest in the esteem of men, fall the more grievously because of their over great confidence. Wherefore it is very profitable unto many that they should not be without inward temptation, but should be frequently assaulted, lest they be over confident, lest they be indeed lifted up into pride, or else lean too freely upon the consolations of the world. O how good a conscience should that man keep, who never sought a joy that passeth away, who never became entangled with the world! O how great peace and quiet should he possess, who would cast off all vain care, and think only of healthful and divine things, and build his whole hope upon God!

5. No man is worthy of heavenly consolation but he who hath diligently exercised himself in holy compunction. If thou wilt feel compunction within thy heart, enter into thy chamber and shut out the tumults of the world, as it is written, Commune with your own heart in your own chamber and be still.(1) In retirement thou shalt find what often thou wilt lose abroad. Retirement, if thou continue therein, groweth sweet, but if thou keep not in it, begetteth weariness. If in the beginning of thy conversation thou dwell in it

and keep it well, it shall afterwards be to thee a dear friend, and a most pleasant solace.

6. In silence and quiet the devout soul goeth forward and learneth the hidden things of the Scriptures. Therein findeth she a fountain of tears, wherein to wash and cleanse herself each night, that she may grow the more dear to her Maker as she dwelleth the further from all worldly distraction. To him who withdraweth himself from his acquaintance and friends God with his holy angels will draw nigh. It is better to be unknown and take heed to oneself than to neglect oneself and work wonders. It is praiseworthy for a religious man to go seldom abroad, to fly from being seen, to have no desire to see men.

7. Why wouldest thou see what thou mayest not have? The world passeth away and the lust thereof. The desires of sensuality draw thee abroad, but when an hour is past, what dost thou bring home, but a weight upon thy conscience and distraction of heart? A merry going forth bringeth often a sorrowful return, and a merry evening maketh a sad morning? So doth all carnal joy begin pleasantly, but in the end it gnaweth away and destroyeth. What canst thou see abroad which thou seest not at home? Behold the heaven and the earth and the elements, for out of these are all things made.

8. What canst thou see anywhere which can continue long under the sun? Thou believest perchance that thou shalt be satisfied, but thou wilt never be able to attain unto this. If thou shouldest see all things before

thee at once, what would it be but a vain vision? Lift up thine eyes to God on high, and pray that thy sins and negligences may be forgiven. Leave vain things to vain men, and mind thou the things which God hath commanded thee. Shut thy door upon thee, and call unto thyself Jesus thy beloved. Remain with Him in thy chamber, for thou shalt not elsewhere find so great peace. If thou hadst not gone forth nor listened to vain talk, thou hadst better kept thyself in good peace. But because it sometimes delighteth thee to hear new things, thou must therefore suffer trouble of heart.

(1) Psalm iv. 4.

## CHAPTER XXI

### OF COMPUNCTION OF HEART

If thou wilt make any progress keep thyself in the fear of God, and long not to be too free, but restrain all thy senses under discipline and give not thyself up to senseless mirth. Give thyself to compunction of heart and thou shalt find devotion. Compunction openeth the way for many good things, which dissoluteness is wont quickly to lose. It is wonderful that any man can ever rejoice heartily in this life who considereth and weigheth his banishment, and the manifold dangers which beset his soul.

2. Through lightness of heart and neglect of our shortcomings we feel not the sorrows of our soul, but often vainly laugh when we have good cause to weep.

There is no true liberty nor real joy, save in the fear of God with a good conscience. Happy is he who can cast away every cause of distraction and bring himself to the one purpose of holy compunction. Happy is he who putteth away from him whatsoever may stain or burden his conscience. Strive manfully; custom is overcome by custom. If thou knowest how to let men alone, they will gladly let thee alone to do thine own works.

3. Busy not thyself with the affairs of others, nor entangle thyself with the business of great men. Keep always thine eye upon thyself first of all, and give advice to thyself specially before all thy dearest friends. If thou hast not the favour of men, be not thereby cast down, but let thy concern be that thou holdest not thyself so well and circumspectly, as becometh a servant of God and a devout monk. It is often better and safer for a man not to have many comforts in this life, especially those which concern the flesh. But that we lack divine comforts or feel them rarely is to our own blame, because we seek not compunction of heart, nor utterly cast away those comforts which are vain and worldly.

4. Know thyself to be unworthy of divine consolation, and worthy rather of much tribulation. When a man hath perfect compunction, then all the world is burdensome and bitter to him. A good man will find sufficient cause for mourning and weeping; for whether he considereth himself, or pondereth concerning his neighbour, he knoweth that no man

liveth here without tribulation, and the more thoroughly he considereth himself, the more thoroughly he grieveth. Grounds for just grief and inward compunction there are in our sins and vices, wherein we lie so entangled that we are but seldom able to contemplate heavenly things.

5. If thou thoughtest upon thy death more often than how long thy life should be, thou wouldest doubtless strive more earnestly to improve. And if thou didst seriously consider the future pains of hell, I believe thou wouldest willingly endure toil or pain and fear not discipline. But because these things reach not the heart, and we still love pleasant things, therefore we remain cold and miserably indifferent.

6. Oftentimes it is from poverty of spirit that the wretched body is so easily led to complain. Pray therefore humbly unto the Lord that He will give thee the spirit of compunction and say in the language of the prophet, Feed me, O Lord, with bread of tears, and give me plenteousness of tears to drink.(1)

(1) Psalm lxxv. 5.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### OF MEDITATION UPON DEATH

Very quickly will there be an end of thee here; take heed therefore how it will be with thee in another world. To-day man is, and to-morrow he will be seen no more. And being removed out of sight, quickly

also he is out of mind. O the dulness and hardness of man's heart, which thinketh only of the present, and looketh not forward to the future. Thou oughtest in every deed and thought so to order thyself, as if thou wert to die this day. If thou hadst a good conscience thou wouldst not greatly fear death. It were better for thee to watch against sin, than to fly from death. If to-day thou art not ready, how shalt thou be ready to-morrow? To-morrow is an uncertain day; and how knowest thou that thou shalt have a to-morrow?

2. What doth it profit to live long, when we amend so little? Ah! long life doth not always amend, but often the more increaseth guilt. Oh that we might spend a single day in this world as it ought to be spent! Many there are who reckon the years since they were converted, and yet oftentimes how little is the fruit thereof. If it is a fearful thing to die, it may be perchance a yet more fearful thing to live long. Happy is the man who hath the hour of his death always before his eyes, and daily prepareth himself to die. If thou hast ever seen one die, consider that thou also shalt pass away by the same road.

3. When it is morning reflect that it may be thou shalt not see the evening, and at eventide dare not to boast thyself of the morrow. Always be thou prepared, and so live that death may never find thee unprepared. Many die suddenly and unexpectedly. For at such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh.(1) When that last hour shall come, thou wilt begin to think

very differently of thy whole life past, and wilt mourn bitterly that thou hast been so negligent and slothful.

4. Happy and wise is he who now striveth to be such in life as he would fain be found in death! For a perfect contempt of the world, a fervent desire to excel in virtue, the love of discipline, the painfulness of repentance, readiness to obey, denial of self, submission to any adversity for love of Christ; these are the things which shall give great confidence of a happy death. Whilst thou art in health thou hast many opportunities of good works; but when thou art in sickness I know not how much thou wilt be able to do. Few are made better by infirmity: even as they who wander much abroad seldom become holy.

5. Trust not thy friends and kinsfolk, nor put off the work of thy salvation to the future, for men will forget thee sooner than thou thinkest. It is better for thee now to provide in time, and to send some good before thee, than to trust to the help of others. If thou art not anxious for thyself now, who, thinkest thou, will be anxious for thee afterwards? Now the time is most precious. Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. But alas! that thou spendest not well this time, wherein thou mightest lay up treasure which should profit thee everlastingly. The hour will come when thou shalt desire one day, yea, one hour, for amendment of life, and I know not whether thou shalt obtain.

6. Oh, dearly beloved, from what danger thou mightest free thyself, from what great fear, if only

thou wouldst always live in fear, and in expectation of death! Strive now to live in such wise that in the hour of death thou mayest rather rejoice than fear. Learn now to die to the world, so shalt thou begin to live with Christ. Learn now to contemn all earthly things, and then mayest thou freely go unto Christ. Keep under thy body by penitence, and then shalt thou be able to have a sure confidence.

7. Ah, foolish one! why thinkest thou that thou shalt live long, when thou art not sure of a single day? How many have been deceived, and suddenly have been snatched away from the body! How many times hast thou heard how one was slain by the sword, another was drowned, another falling from on high broke his neck, another died at the table, another whilst at play! One died by fire, another by the sword, another by the pestilence, another by the robber. Thus cometh death to all, and the life of men swiftly passeth away like a shadow.

8. Who will remember thee after thy death? And who will entreat for thee? Work, work now, oh dearly beloved, work all that thou canst. For thou knowest not when thou shalt die, nor what shall happen unto thee after death. While thou hast time, lay up for thyself undying riches. Think of nought but of thy salvation; care only for the things of God. Make to thyself friends, by venerating the saints of God and walking in their steps, that when thou failest, thou mayest be received into everlasting habitations.(2)

9. Keep thyself as a stranger and a pilgrim upon the earth, to whom the things of the world appertain not. Keep thine heart free, and lifted up towards God, for here have we no continuing city.(3) To Him direct thy daily prayers with crying and tears, that thy spirit may be found worthy to pass happily after death unto its Lord. Amen.

(1) Matthew xxiv. 44. (2) Luke xvi. 9. (3) Hebrews xiii. 14.

## CHAPTER XXV

### OF THE ZEALOUS AMENDMENT OF OUR WHOLE LIFE

Be thou watchful and diligent in God's service, and bethink thee often why thou hast renounced the world. Was it not that thou mightest live to God and become a spiritual man? Be zealous, therefore, for thy spiritual profit, for thou shalt receive shortly the reward of thy labours, and neither fear nor sorrow shall come any more into thy borders. Now shalt thou labour a little, and thou shalt find great rest, yea everlasting joy. If thou shalt remain faithful and zealous in labour, doubt not that God shall be faithful and bountiful in rewarding thee. It is thy duty to have a good hope that thou wilt attain the victory, but thou must not fall into security lest thou become slothful or lifted up.

2. A certain man being in anxiety of mind, continually tossed about between hope and fear, and being on a

certain day overwhelmed with grief, cast himself down in prayer before the altar in a church, and meditated within himself, saying, "Oh! if I but knew that I should still persevere," and presently heard within him a voice from God, "And if thou didst know it, what wouldst thou do? Do now what thou wouldst do then, and thou shalt be very secure." And straightway being comforted and strengthened, he committed himself to the will of God and the perturbation of spirit ceased, neither had he a mind any more to search curiously to know what should befall him hereafter, but studied rather to inquire what was the good and acceptable will of God, for the beginning and perfecting of every good work.

3. Hope in the Lord and be doing good, saith the Prophet; dwell in the land and thou shalt be fed<sup>(1)</sup> with its riches. One thing there is which holdeth back many from progress and fervent amendment, even the dread of difficulty, or the labour of the conflict. Nevertheless they advance above all others in virtue who strive manfully to conquer those things which are most grievous and contrary to them, for there a man profiteth most and meriteth greater grace where he most overcometh himself and mortifieth himself in spirit.

4. But all men have not the same passions to conquer and to mortify, yet he who is diligent shall attain more profit, although he have stronger passions, than another who is more temperate of disposition, but is withal less fervent in the pursuit of virtue. Two things

especially avail unto improvement in holiness, namely firmness to withdraw ourselves from the sin to which by nature we are most inclined, and earnest zeal for that good in which we are most lacking. And strive also very earnestly to guard against and subdue those faults which displease thee most frequently in others.

5. Gather some profit to thy soul wherever thou art, and wherever thou seest or hearest good examples, stir thyself to follow them, but where thou seest anything which is blameworthy, take heed that thou do not the same; or if at any time thou hast done it, strive quickly to amend thyself. As thine eye observeth others, so again are the eyes of others upon thee. How sweet and pleasant is it to see zealous and godly brethren temperate and of good discipline; and how sad is it and grievous to see them walking disorderly, not practising the duties to which they are called. How hurtful a thing it is to neglect the purpose of their calling, and turn their inclinations to things which are none of their business.

6. Be mindful of the duties which thou hast undertaken, and set always before thee the remembrance of the Crucified. Truly oughtest thou to be ashamed as thou lookest upon the life of Jesus Christ, because thou hast not yet endeavoured to conform thyself more unto Him, though thou hast been a long time in the way of God. A religious man who exercises himself seriously and devoutly in the most holy life and passion of our Lord shall find there abundantly all things that are profitable and

necessary for him, neither is there need that he shall seek anything better beyond Jesus. Oh! if Jesus crucified would come into our hearts, how quickly, and completely should we have learned all that we need to know!

7. He who is earnest receiveth and beareth well all things that are laid upon him. He who is careless and lukewarm hath trouble upon trouble, and suffereth anguish upon every side, because he is without inward consolation, and is forbidden to seek that which is outward. He who is living without discipline is exposed to grievous ruin. He who seeketh easier and lighter discipline shall always be in distress, because one thing or another will give him displeasure.

8. O! if no other duty lay upon us but to praise the Lord our God with our whole heart and voice! Oh! if thou never hadst need to eat or drink, or sleep, but wert always able to praise God, and to give thyself to spiritual exercises alone; then shouldst thou be far happier than now, when for so many necessities thou must serve the flesh. O! that these necessities were not, but only the spiritual refreshments of the soul, which alas we taste too seldom.

9. When a man hath come to this, that he seeketh comfort from no created thing, then doth he perfectly begin to enjoy God, then also will he be well contented with whatsoever shall happen unto him. Then will he neither rejoice for much nor be sorrowful for little, but he committeth himself altogether and

with full trust unto God, who is all in all to him, to whom nothing perisheth nor dieth, but all things live to Him and obey His every word without delay.

10. Remember always thine end, and how the time which is lost returneth not. Without care and diligence thou shalt never get virtue. If thou beginnest to grow cold, it shall begin to go ill with thee, but if thou givest thyself unto zeal thou shalt find much peace, and shalt find thy labour the lighter because of the grace of God and the love of virtue. A zealous and diligent man is ready for all things. It is greater labour to resist sins and passions than to toil in bodily labours. He who shunneth not small faults falleth little by little into greater. At eventide thou shalt always be glad if thou spend the day profitably. Watch over thyself, stir thyself up, admonish thyself, and howsoever it be with others, neglect not thyself. The more violence thou dost unto thyself, the more thou shall profit. Amen.

(1) Psalm xxxvii. 3.

# True Christian Religion

By Emanuel Swedenborg

[1771]

*Translated by John Whitehead*

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## True Christian Religion

VIII. THE REGENERATED MAN HAS A NEW WILL AND A NEW UNDERSTANDING. The church of today knows both from the Word and from reason that a regenerated man is a renewed or new man. From the Word, by the following passages: Make you a new heart and a new spirit; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? (Ezek. 18:31). I will give you a new heart and a new spirit in the midst of you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and will give you a heart of flesh; and I will put My spirit within you (Ezek. 36:26, 27). Henceforth know we no man after the flesh, therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature (2 Cor. 5:16, 17). In these passages "a new heart" means a new will, and "a new spirit" means a new understanding; for "heart" in the Word signifies the will, and "spirit," when connected with heart, signifies the understanding. The church also knows from reason that the regenerated man has a new will and a new understanding, since these two faculties constitute man, and they are what are regenerated. Therefore every man is such as he is

with respect to these two faculties, that is, he is evil whose will is evil, and still more so he whose understanding favors the evil; while the reverse is true of the good. Religion alone renews and regenerates man. Religion occupies the highest seat in the human mind, and sees beneath it the civil matters pertaining to the world; it also ascends by means of them, as the pure sap ascends through a tree to its very top, and from that height it surveys what is natural, as from a tower or mountain one surveys the plains below.

But it must be understood that while man may rise as to his understanding almost into the light in which the angels of heaven are, unless he rises also as to his will, he is still the old and not a new man. But it has been shown already how the understanding elevates the will more and more to the same height with itself. For this reason regeneration is predicated primarily of the will, and secondarily of the understanding. For the understanding in man is like light in the world, and the will is like the heat there; and it is known that light without heat does not vivify or cause vegetation, but light joined with heat. Moreover, as to the lower region of the mind, the understanding is actually in the light of the world, while as to the higher region it is in the light of heaven; consequently if the will is not raised from the lower region into the higher, and there conjoined with the understanding, it remains in the world; and then the understanding flies upward and downward, but returns every night to the will below and sleeps there; and they unite like a man and

a harlot, and beget two-headed offspring. From all this it is clear that unless a man has a new will and a new understanding, he is not regenerated.

The human mind is divided into three regions, the lowest is called the natural, the middle the spiritual, and the highest the celestial. By regeneration man is raised from the lowest region, which is the natural, into the higher, which is the spiritual, and through this into the celestial. That there are these three regions belonging to the mind will be shown in the following section. This is why the unregenerate man is called natural, and the regenerate man spiritual. This makes clear that the mind of the regenerate man is raised into the spiritual region, and there sees from the higher what takes place in the lower or natural mind. That there is a lower and a higher region in the human mind, everyone can see and recognize by a slight attention to his own thoughts; for what he thinks, he sees; and therefore he says that he has thought or thinks this and that, which would be impossible unless there were an interior thought that is called perception, which looks down into the lower which is called thought. When a judge has heard or read over a long series of arguments presented by an advocate, he collects them all into one view in the higher region of his mind, thus forming them into one general idea; and from that he then looks down into the lower region, which is that of natural thought, and there arranges the arguments in order, and accordance with the higher, presents his opinion and pronounces judgment. Who does not know that a

man may form more thoughts and conclusions in a moment or two, than he can express by means of his lower thoughts in half an hour? All this has been presented to make known that the human mind is divided into lower and higher regions.

As to the new will: it is above the old one in the spiritual region, and the new understanding likewise, this with that and that with this. In that region they are conjoined and conjointly look down upon the old or natural will and understanding, and so arrange all things therein as to moderate them. Who cannot see that if there were but one region in the human mind, and if both evils and goods and truths and falsities were there brought together and mixed together, there would be a conflict such as would arise if wolves and lambs, tigers and calves, hawks and doves, were brought together into one enclosure? What would result but a cruel slaughter, the savage beasts tearing in pieces the tame ones? This is why it has been provided that goods with their truths should be collected together in the higher region, so that they may subsist in safety, and resist assault, and also by constraints and other means may subjugate and afterward disperse evils with their falsities. This, then, is the same as was said in the preceding section, that in the regenerated man the Lord through heaven rules what pertains to the world. And the higher or spiritual region of the human mind is a heaven in miniature, while the lower or natural region is a world in miniature, and for this reason man was called by the ancients a microcosm [a little world],

and he may also be called a microuranos [a little heaven].

That the regenerate man, that is, one who is renewed in will and understanding, is in the heat of heaven, that is, in its love, and at the same time in the light of heaven, that is, in its wisdom; and on the other hand, that the unregenerate man is in the heat of hell, that is, in its love, and at the same time in its darkness, that is, in its insanities, is at this day known and yet unknown. This is because the church of today makes regeneration an appendage to its faith, and into faith reason must not be admitted, consequently it must be admitted into nothing pertaining to its appendage, which, as before said, includes renovation and regeneration. These, together with that faith itself, are to those of the present church like a house, the doors and windows of which are closed, so that it is not known what is in it, whether it is empty or is full of genii from hell, or of angels from heaven. It may be added, that this confusion has been brought about by a fallacy which has arisen from the fact that a man may by his understanding ascend almost into the light of heaven, and consequently can from intelligence think and speak of spiritual things, whatever his will's love may be. Ignorance of this truth has also caused ignorance of all that concerns regeneration and renovation of character.

From all this it may be concluded that an unregenerate man is like one who sees phantoms at night, and believes them to be men; and afterwards,

when he is being regenerated, he is like the same man seeing in the early dawn that the things he saw at night are delusions, and still later, when he is regenerated and is in the light of day, seeing them to be the offspring of delirium. An unregenerate man is like one dreaming, and a regenerate man like one awake; and in the Word natural life is likened to sleep, and spiritual life to a state of wakefulness. The unregenerate man is meant by the foolish virgins who had lamps but no oil, and the regenerate man by the wise virgins who had both lamps and oil, "lamps" meaning such things as pertain to the understanding, and "oil" such things as pertain to love. The regenerate are like the lamps of the lampstand in the tabernacle; they are like the bread of faces there with the frankincense upon it; and they are those who shall "shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever" (as said in Dan. 12:3). The unregenerate man is like one who is in the garden of Eden, and who eats from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and is therefore banished from the garden; he is indeed that very tree. But the regenerate man is like one who is in that garden and eats of the tree of life. That it is given to such to eat of it, is obvious from the following in Revelation: To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God (Rev. 2:7), "the garden of Eden" meaning intelligence in spiritual things, arising from love of truth (see Apocalypse Revealed, n. 90). In a word, the unregenerate man is a "son of the evil one," and the regenerate a "son of the kingdom" (Matt. 13:38); "the son of the evil one" there

meaning a child of the devil, and "the son of the kingdom" a child of the Lord.

IX. A REGENERATE MAN IS IN COMMUNION WITH ANGELS OF HEAVEN AND AN UNREGENERATE ONE IN COMMUNION WITH SPIRITS OF HELL. Every man is in communion, that is, in affiliation either with angels of heaven or with spirits of hell, because he is born to become spiritual, and this would be impossible unless he were born to be in some conjunction with those who are spiritual. It has been shown in the work on Heaven and Hell that as to his mind man is in both worlds, the natural and the spiritual. But neither man nor angel nor spirit knows of this conjunction, for the reason that man while he lives in the world is in a natural state, while angels and spirits are in a spiritual state; and because of the distinction between the natural and the spiritual, one is not visible to the other. The nature of this distinction has been described in the work on Conjugal Love in the Memorable Relation there recorded (n. 326-329). From that it is clear that their conjunction is not one of thoughts but of affections, and scarcely anyone reflects upon his affections, because they are not in the light in which the understanding is, and therefore its thought is; but only in the heat in which the will is and therefore the affection of its love is. The conjunction between men and angels and spirits by means of the affections of love is so close that if it were severed and they were thereby separated, men would instantly fall into a swoon, and if the relation were not restored, and their

conjunction renewed, men would die. [2] It has been said that man becomes spiritual by regeneration, but this does not mean that he becomes spiritual as an angel is in himself, but that he becomes spiritual natural, that is to say, that the spiritual is inwardly in his natural, just as thought is in speech, or as will is in action, for when one ceases the other ceases. In like manner man's spirit is in every least thing that takes place in the body, and it is that which impels the natural to do whatever it does. The natural viewed in itself is passive or is a dead force, but the spiritual is active or is a living force; the passive or a dead force cannot act from itself, but must be impelled by the active, or by a living force. [3] As man lives continually in communion with the inhabitants of the spiritual world, he is also, when he leaves the natural world, introduced immediately among such as are like those with whom he had been associated in the world. Therefore it is that after death everyone seems to himself to be still living in the world, for he then comes into the company of those who are like him as to their will's affections, and whom he then acknowledges, as kinsmen and relations acknowledge their own in the world; and this is what is meant where it is said in the Word of those who die, that they are brought together and gathered to their own. From all this it can now be seen that a regenerate man is in communion with the angels of heaven, and an unregenerate man with the spirits of hell.

It must be known that there are three heavens, and these distinct from each other according to the three

degrees of love and wisdom, and that man is in communion with the angels of those three heavens in the measure of his regeneration; and this being so, that the human mind is divided into three degrees or regions in accord with the heavens. But on these three heavens and their division in accordance with the three degrees of love and wisdom, see the work on Heaven and Hell (n. 29 seq.); and also the pamphlet on Interaction between the Soul and the Body, (n. 16, 17). Here it will be sufficient merely to illustrate, by a simile, the nature of the three degrees in accordance with which the heavens are divided. They are like the head, body, and feet in man; the highest heaven constituting the head, the middle the body, and the lowest the feet; for the whole heaven is before the Lord like one man. The truth of this has been disclosed to me by actual observation, for it has been granted me to see wholly as one man a single society of heaven, which consisted of thousands. Why then should not the whole heaven so appear to the Lord? Respecting this living experience, see the work on Heaven and Hell (n. 59 seq.). This makes clear what is meant by this, which is well known in the Christian world, that the church constitutes the body of Christ, and that Christ is the life of that body. And this also is thus made clear, namely, that the Lord is the all in all things of heaven, since He is the life of that body. Likewise, the Lord is the church with those who acknowledge Him alone as the God of heaven and earth, and believe in Him. That He is the God of heaven and earth, He Himself teaches in Matthew

(28:18); and that men ought to believe in Him, in John (3:15, 16, 36; 6:40; 11:25, 26).

The three degrees in which the heavens are, and consequently, in which the human mind is, may also be illustrated in some measure by comparisons with material things in the world. In their relative nobility these three degrees are like gold, silver, and brass, to which metals they are likened in the statue of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 2:31-35). These three degrees are also distinct from each other, like the ruby, sapphire, and agate in respect to purity and goodness; also like the olive tree, the vine, and the fig-tree; and so on. Moreover, in the Word, "gold," "ruby," and "oil" signify celestial good, which is the good of the highest heaven; "silver," "sapphire," and "a vine" signify spiritual good, which is that of the middle heaven; while "brass," "agate," and "a fig-tree" signify natural good, which is that of the lowest heaven. That there are three degrees, a celestial, a spiritual, and a natural, has been stated above.

To the foregoing this shall be added, that man's regeneration is not effected in a moment, but gradually, from the beginning to the end of his life in the world, and is afterward continued and perfected. And because man is reformed by conflicts with the victories over the evils of his flesh, the Son of man says to each one of the seven churches, that he will give gifts to him that overcometh; as to the church of Ephesus: To him that overcometh I give to eat of the tree of life (Rev. 2:7); to the church of Smyrna: He that

overcometh shall not be hurt in the second death (Rev. 2:11); to the church in Pergamos: To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna (Rev. 2:17); to the church in Thyatira: He that overcometh, to him will I give power over the nations (Rev. 2:26); to the church in Sardis: He that overcometh shall be clothed in white garments (Rev. 3:5); to the church in Philadelphia: He that overcometh I will make him a pillar in the temple of God (Rev. 3:12); and to the church of the Laodiceans: He that overcometh I will give to him to sit with Me in My throne (Rev. 3:21). Finally it may be added that so far as man is regenerated, or so far as regeneration is perfected in him, so far he attributes nothing of good and truth, that is, of charity and faith, to him self, but to the Lord only; for the truths which he gradually acquires teach this clearly.

X. SO FAR AS MAN IS REGENERATED SINS ARE REMOVED, AND THIS REMOVAL IS THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS. So far as man is regenerated sins are removed, because regeneration is the restraining of the flesh that it may not rule, and the subjugating of the old man with its lusts, that it may not rise up and destroy the intellectual faculty, for that would render man incapable of reformation, reformation being impossible unless man's spirit, which is above the flesh, is instructed and perfected. Who, if he still retains a sound understanding, can fail to see from all this that such a work cannot be effected in a moment but only gradually, just as man is conceived, carried in the womb, born, and educated,

according to what has been shown above? For those things which pertain to the flesh or the old man are inherent in man from his birth, and build the first habitation of his mind, in which lusts have their abode like wild beasts in their caves, dwelling first in the outer courts, then by turns entering into the underground rooms, as it were, of the house, and finally ascending by steps and forming for themselves chambers. This takes place gradually, as an infant grows, becomes a boy, afterwards a youth, and then begins to think from his own understanding, and to act from his own will. Who cannot see that this house in the mind thus far built in which lusts dance with joined hands, like the ochim, tziim and satyrs, cannot be destroyed in a moment and a new house built in its place? Must not those lusts with clasped hands and so sporting themselves be first removed, and new desires, which belong to good and truth, be introduced in the place of the cupidities which belong to evil and falsity? That these things cannot be done in a moment every wise man sees from this alone, that every evil is composed of innumerable lusts, and is like a fruit which beneath the surface is full of worms with white bodies and black heads; also, that evils are numerous and joined together like the progeny of a spider when first hatched; wherefore unless one evil is brought out after another, and this until their connection is broken up, man cannot be made new. These things have been cited to make clear that so far as anyone is regenerated sins are removed.

Man inclines by birth to evils of every kind and from that inclination lusts after them, and so far as he is in freedom he also does them; for by birth he lusts after dominion over others, and to possess the goods of others, which two lusts cut asunder love to the neighbor, and then man hates everyone who opposes him, and from hatred breathes revenge which inwardly cherishes murder. For the same reason he thinks nothing of adulteries, nothing of such robbery as secret theft, nothing of blasphemies, which include false witness; and he who thinks nothing of these things, is in heart an atheist. Such is man by birth; from which it is clear that he is from birth a hell in miniature. Inasmuch then, as man, in respect to the interiors of his mind, is born spiritual, as beasts are not, and consequently is born for heaven, and yet, as has been said, his natural or external man is a miniature hell, it follows that a heaven cannot be implanted in this hell, unless the hell is removed.

He who knows the relation between heaven and hell, and how the one is removed from the other, can know how man is regenerated, and also what the regenerate man is. That this may be understood it shall be made known briefly that the faces of all who are in heaven look toward the Lord, while all who are in hell turn their faces from the Lord; therefore when hell is looked at from heaven, only the occiput and back appear; and those there even appear inverted, like the antipodes, feet upward and heads down, and this although they walk upon their feet and turn their faces around; for it is the contrary direction of their

minds' interiors that produces this appearance. These remarkable facts I report from my own observation. They made clear to me how regeneration is effected, namely, just as hell is removed and thus separated from heaven. For, as stated above, as to his first nature which he has by birth, man is a hell in miniature, and as to the other nature which he acquires by the second birth, he is a heaven in miniature. And from this it follows that the evils in man are removed and separated in the same manner as heaven and hell in their large form are separated, and that evils, as they are removed, turn themselves away from the Lord, and gradually invert themselves, and that this takes place in the degree that heaven is implanted, that is, that man is made new. To this may be added, for the sake of illustration, that every evil in man is in conjunction with those in hell who are in like evil, and on the other hand that every good in man is in conjunction with those in heaven who are in like good.

From what has been presented it can be seen that the forgiveness of sins is not their being rooted out and washed away, but their removal, and thus their separation; also that every evil that a man has actually appropriated to himself remains. And since the forgiveness of sins is their removal and separation, it follows that man is withheld from evil by the Lord and kept in good, and this is what is given to man by regeneration. I once heard a certain person in the lowest heaven saying that he was exempt from sins, because they had been washed away, adding, "by the

blood of Christ." But because he was in heaven, and was in that error from ignorance, he was let into his own peculiar sins, and as they returned he acknowledged them; thereby acquiring a new belief, namely, that every man, as well as every angel, is withheld from evil and kept in good by the Lord. [2] This shows plainly what the forgiveness of sins is, that it is not instantaneous, but follows regeneration according to the progress thereof. The removal of sins which is called the forgiveness of them, may be likened to the casting forth of the filth from the camps of the children of Israel into the desert which was round about them; for their camps represented heaven, and the desert hell. It may also be likened to the removal of the nations from the children of Israel, in the land of Canaan, and of the Jebusites from Jerusalem; these were not cast out, but separated. It may also be likened to what occurred to Dagon the god of the Philistines, in that when the ark was brought in he first lay upon his face on the ground, and afterward, with his head and hands cut off, upon the threshold; thus he was not cast out, but removed. [3] It may also be likened to the demons sent by the Lord into the swine that afterward plunged into the sea; "the sea" there and elsewhere in the Word, signifying hell. It may also be likened to the throng that followed the dragon, which, on being separated from heaven, first invaded the earth, and was afterward cast down into hell. It may also be likened to a forest where there are wild beasts of many kinds which when the forest is cut down flee to the

neighboring thickets, and then the ground in the midst being leveled it becomes by cultivation a field.

XI. WITHOUT FREEDOM OF CHOICE IN SPIRITUAL THINGS REGENERATION IS IMPOSSIBLE. Who, except a stupid person, cannot see that without freedom of choice in spiritual things man cannot be regenerated? Can he without this approach the Lord, acknowledge Him as the Redeemer and Savior and the God of heaven and earth, as He himself teaches (Matt. 28:18)? Without that freedom of choice who can believe in the Lord, that is, from faith look to Him and worship Him, and adapt himself to receiving the means and benefits of salvation from Him, and from Him cooperate in the reception of them? Who without freedom of choice can do any good to the neighbor, can practice charity, or take into his thought and will other things pertaining to faith and charity, bring them forth, and put them into acts? Otherwise, what is regeneration but a mere word dropped from the lips of the Lord (John 3), which either remains in the ear, or having dropped upon the lips from the thought nearest to speech, becomes merely an articulated sound of twelve letters, which sound cannot by any meaning be raised into any higher region of the mind, but falls upon the air and is dissipated?

Tell me, if you can, whether a blinder stupidity respecting regeneration is possible than that which prevails with those who have confirmed themselves in the faith of the present day, which is, that faith is

infused into man while he is like a stock or a stone, and that when it has been infused, it is followed by justification, which is forgiveness of sins, and regeneration, and other gifts besides; and also that man's effort must be wholly excluded, that it may not do violence to the merit of Christ. In order that this dogma might be still more firmly established, they have deprived man of all freedom of choice in spiritual things, by asserting his complete impotence therein. It is, then, as if God alone were to operate on His part, and no power were given to man to operate on his part, and thus conjoin himself with God. In that case what is man in respect to regeneration, but like one bound hand and foot, like the prisoners on ships called galley-slaves? And like these, if he were to free himself from those manacles and fetters, he would be punished or condemned to death, that is, if, from freedom of choice he were to do good to the neighbor, and of himself were to believe in God for the sake of salvation. If a man were confirmed in such opinions, and yet had a pious desire for heaven, what would he be like but a specter standing and speculating as to whether that faith with its benefits has been infused into him; or if not, whether it will be infused, therefore whether God the Father has taken pity on him, or whether His Son has interceded for him, or whether the Holy Spirit is inoperative because employed elsewhere? And yet, because of his complete ignorance of the matter, he might go away and console himself by saying, "Perhaps that grace is in the morality of my life, which I have and which I retain as formerly, and in me therefore it may be holy,

while in those who have not attained to that faith it is profane. Therefore, in order that this holiness may remain in my morality, I will be careful hereafter not to exercise either charity or faith of myself;" with much more. Such a specter, or if you prefer, such a statue of salt, does everyone become who thinks of regeneration separated from freedom of choice in spiritual things.

The man who believes that regeneration is possible without freedom of choice in spiritual things, thus without co-operation, becomes as frigid as a stone in regard to all the truths of the church; or if he is warm, since his warmth arises from lusts, he is like a burning brand in a fire-place, that blazes from the combustible elements in it. He becomes comparatively like a palace sinking into the ground even to its roof, and becoming flooded with muddy water; after which he dwells upon the bare roof, making a hut there for himself of marsh rushes, and at length the roof sinks also, and he is drowned. He is also like a ship laden with all kinds of precious merchandise taken from the Word as a treasury, but gnawed by mice and moth-eaten, or thrown by the sailors into the sea, so that the merchants are defrauded of their goods. Those who are learned or rich in the mysteries of that faith, are like the venders in little shops who sell idols, fruit, wax-flowers, shells, snakes in bottles, and such like things. Those who, because of the lack of spiritual power adapted and given to man by the Lord, have no wish to look upward, are actually like beasts whose heads look downward, and which care for

nothing but to graze in the forests; and if they enter an orchard, they eat up the foliage of the trees like worms, or if they see the fruit with their eyes, or still more if they feel it with their hands, they fill it with worms; and finally they become like scaly serpents, their fallacies sounding and glittering like serpents' scales; and so on.

XII. REGENERATION IS IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT TRUTHS, BY WHICH FAITH IS FORMED AND WITH WHICH CHARITY CONJOINS ITSELF. There are three means whereby man is regenerated, the Lord, faith, and charity. These three would lie hidden like the most costly jewels buried in the earth, if Divine truths from the Word did not reveal them. They would indeed be hidden from those who deny man's cooperation even if they were to read the Word a hundred or a thousand times, although they there stand forth in clear light. As concerns the Lord, who that is confirmed in the prevailing faith sees there with open eyes the declarations that He and the Father are one, that He is the God of heaven and earth, that it is the will of the Father that men should believe in the Son, with innumerable other statements of the same kind respecting the Lord in both Testaments? They do not see because they are not in truths, and consequently not in the light in which subjects of this kind can be seen; and if light were given, falsities would extinguish it, and these truths would then escape their attention like something wholly erased, or like underground drains which are trodden upon and passed over. These things are said

that it may be known that without truths this first thing in regeneration cannot be seen. [2] As to faith, neither is that possible without truths; because faith and truth make one thing; for the good of faith is like a soul, truths constituting its body. To say therefore that a man believes or has faith, when he is ignorant of all of its truths, is like taking the soul out of the body, and talking with it when thus invisible. Moreover, all the truths that make up the body of faith emit light and enlighten, and render the features of faith visible. It is the same with charity; this emits heat with which the light of truth conjoins itself, as heat does with light in the world in the time of spring, from the conjunction of which the animals and vegetables of the earth return to their proliferations. [3] It is the same with spiritual heat and light; these in like manner conjoin themselves in man when he is in the truths of faith and at the same time in the goods of charity. For as said above in the chapter on Faith, from each particular truth of faith there flows forth a light that enlightens, and from each particular good of charity a heat that enkindles. It is also there said that spiritual light in its essence is intelligence, and spiritual heat in its essence is love; and that the Lord alone conjoins these two in man when He regenerates him. For the Lord said: The words that I speak unto you are spirit, and are life (John 6:63). Believe in the light, that ye may be sons of light. I am come a light into the world (John 12:36, 46). The Lord is the Sun in the spiritual world; this is the source of all spiritual light and heat; that light enlightens, and that heat

enkindles; and by the conjunction of the two the Lord vivifies and regenerates man.

From all this it can be seen, that without truths there is no knowledge of the Lord; also that without truths there is no faith, and thus no charity; consequently that without truths there is no theology, and where this is not, there is no church. Such is the condition today of that body of people who call themselves Christians, and who say they are in the light of the Gospel, and yet are in the veriest darkness; for with them truths lie hidden beneath falsities, like gold, silver, and precious stones buried among the bones in the valley of Hinnom. That it is so, I was enabled to see clearly from the spheres in the spiritual world that flow forth from the Christendom of today and propagate themselves. [2] One sphere is that respecting the Lord; this breathes and pours itself forth from the southern quarter, where the learned clergy and erudite laity reside. Wherever this sphere goes it insinuates itself into the ideas, and with many takes away faith in the Divinity of the Lord's Human, with many weakens it, with many makes it seem foolish; and this because it brings in with it the faith in three Gods, and thus produces confusion. [3] Another sphere that takes away faith is like a black cloud in winter, which brings on darkness, turns rain into snow, strips bare the trees, freezes the waters, and takes away all pasture from the sheep. This sphere in conjunction with the former insinuates a kind of lethargy respecting one God, regeneration, and the means of salvation. [4] A third sphere relates

to the conjunction of faith and charity; this is so strong as to be irresistible, but at the present day it is abominable; it is like a pestilence that infects everyone on whom it breathes, and tears asunder every tie between those two means of salvation, established as such from the creation of the world, and restored anew by the Lord. This sphere invades even the men in the natural world, and extinguishes the marriage torches between truths and goods. I have felt this sphere, and at such times, when I thought of the conjunction of faith and charity, it interposed itself between them and violently endeavored to separate them. [5] The angels complain of these spheres, and pray to the Lord for their dissipation, but they received the answer that they cannot be dissipated so long as the dragon is on the earth, because it is from the draconic spirits; for it is said of the dragon that he was cast down unto the earth, and then follows: Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and woe to those that inhabit the earth! (Apoc. 12:12.) [6] These three spheres are like tempest-driven atmospheres coming forth from the breathing-holes of the dragons, which, being spiritual, invade the mind and control it. The spheres of spiritual truth there are as yet few, only in the new heaven, and also with those beneath heaven, who are separated from the draconic spirits. This is why those truths are so little recognized by men in the world to-day, just as ships in the Eastern ocean are invisible to captains and shipmasters who are sailing in the Western ocean.

That regeneration is impossible without the truths by which faith is formed, may be illustrated by the following comparisons. It is as impossible as a human mind without understanding; for the understanding is formed by means of truths, and therefore teaches what ought to be believed and what ought to be done, what regeneration is, and how it is effected. Regeneration without truths is as impossible as the vivification of animals or the growth of trees without light from the sun; for if the sun did not give light at the same time that it gives heat, it would become "like sackcloth of hair" (as described in the Apocalypse 6:12), and "black" (Joel 2:10, 31), and thus mere darkness would be upon the earth (Joel 3:15). It would be the same with man without truths, which send out light from themselves; for the sun from which the light of truths flows forth is the Lord in the spiritual world. If spiritual light did not flow therefrom into human minds, the church would be in mere darkness, or in shadow from a perpetual eclipse. Regeneration, which is effected by means of faith and charity, without truths that teach and lead, would be like navigation on the great ocean without a rudder, or without a mariner's compass and charts. It would also be like riding in a dark forest at night. The mind's internal sight with those who are not in truths but in falsities, which they believe to be truths, may be likened to the sight of those whose optic nerves are obstructed, the eye still appearing sound and capable of sight, although it sees nothing; which kind of blindness is called by physicians amaurosis and gutta serena; for in such the rational or intellectual faculty is

obstructed above and open below only, owing to which rational light becomes like the light of the eye, and consequently all their opinions are imagination only and are fashioned from mere fallacies. And in such case men would stand like astrologers in the market-places with long telescopes, uttering unmeaning prophecies. Such would all students of theology become, unless genuine truths were disclosed by the Lord from the Word.

To this the following Memorable Relations shall be added. First: I saw an assembly of spirits, all on their knees praying to God to send angels to them, with whom they might speak face to face, and to whom they might open the thoughts of their hearts. And when they rose up, there appeared three angels in white standing in their presence. And the angels said "The Lord Jesus Christ has heard your prayers, and has therefore sent us to you; open to us the thoughts of your hearts." [2] And the spirits replied, "Our priests have told us that in theological matters it is not the understanding but faith that avails, and that an intellectual faith does not profit in such matters, because it springs from and savors of man, and is not from God. We are Englishmen, and we have heard many things from our sacred ministry which we believed; but when we have spoken with others who also called themselves reformed, and with some who called themselves Roman Catholics, and again with those of various sects, they all seemed learned, and yet in many things they did not agree with one another; although they all said, 'Believe us,' and some

said, 'We are ministers of God, and we know.' But as we know that Divine truths, which are called truths of faith and are the truths of the church, are no one's by birthright alone, or by inheritance, but are from God out of heaven; and as they point the way to heaven and enter the life together with the goods of charity, and thus lead to eternal life; we have become anxious, and on our knees have prayed to God." [3] Then the angels answered, "Read the Word and believe in the Lord, and you will see the truths which must be the truths of your faith and of your life. All in the Christian world draw their doctrinals from the Word as the one only fountain." But two of the assembly said, "We have read, but have not understood." The angels replied, "You have not approached the Lord, who is the Word, and also have first confirmed yourselves in falsities." The angels said further, "What is faith without light; and what is thinking without understanding? It is not human. Ravens and magpies can also learn to talk without understanding. We can assure you that every man whose soul desires it, is able to see the truths of the Word in clear light. There is no animal that does not know its life's food when it sees it; and man is a rational and spiritual animal; he sees the food of his life, not his body's but his soul's food, which is the truth of faith, provided he hungers for it and seeks it from the Lord. [4] Moreover, the substance of anything that is not received in the understanding, does not remain in the memory, but only the verbal statement of it. So when we looked down from heaven into the world, we have not seen anything, but have only heard sounds, and for the

most part discordant ones. But we will enumerate some things which the learned of the clergy have separated from the understanding, not knowing that there are two ways to the understanding, one from the world and the other from heaven, and that when the Lord is enlightening the understanding He withdraws it from the world. But if the understanding is closed in regard to religion, the way to it from heaven is closed; and then man sees no more in the Word than a blind man. We have seen many such fall into pits out of which they did not rise. [5] Let this be made clear by examples. Can you not understand what charity is and what faith is, that charity is doing rightly with the neighbor, and faith is thinking rightly respecting God and the essentials of the church; and consequently that he who does rightly and thinks aright, that is, lives well and believes aright, is saved?" To this the spirits answered that they understood. [6] The angels said further, "Man must repent of his sins in order to be saved, and unless he repents he remains in the sins into which he was born; and repentance consists in man's ceasing to will evils because they are contrary to God, searching himself once or twice a year, seeing his evils, confessing them before the Lord, praying for help, refraining from evils, and beginning a new life; and so far as he does this, and believes in the Lord, his sins are forgiven." Then some of those from the assembly said, "That we understand, and consequently what the forgiveness of sins is." [7] Then they asked the angels to give them still further information, and first of all about God, the immortality of the soul,

regeneration, and baptism. To this the angels replied: "We shall not say anything but what you will understand; otherwise our words would fall like rain upon the sand, and upon the seeds therein which wither and die, however they may be watered from heaven." And about God they said, "All who enter heaven are allotted a place there, and thus eternal joy according to their idea of God, because this idea universally reigns in everything pertaining to worship. The idea of God as a Spirit, when spirit is supposed to be something like ether or wind, is an idea without meaning; but the idea of God as a Man is the right idea; for God is Divine love and Divine wisdom, together with every quality thereof, and the subject of these is not ether or wind, but Man. In heaven the idea of God is that He is the Lord the Savior; He is the God of heaven and earth, as He Himself has taught. Let your idea of God be like ours, and we shall be associated together." When this had been said, their faces beamed. [8] Of the immortality of the soul they said, "Man lives forever, because he is capable of conjunction with God through love and faith; every man is capable of this. That this capability is what constitutes the immortality of the soul you can understand if you think a little more deeply about the matter." [9] Of regeneration they said, "Who does not see that every man has the freedom to think about God, or not to think about Him, provided he has been taught that there is a God? Thus every man has freedom in spiritual things as well as in civil and natural things. The Lord gives this to all unceasingly; therefore it is man's fault if he does not think. It is

because of this ability that man is man; while it is because of the absence of it that a beast is a beast. Man consequently has the ability to reform and regenerate himself as if from himself, provided he acknowledges in his heart that it is from the Lord. Everyone who repents and believes in the Lord is being reformed and regenerated. Man does both as if from himself; but the as if from himself is from the Lord. It is true that man cannot contribute anything to this work from himself, not an iota; nevertheless, you were not created statues but men, in order that you may do this from the Lord as if from yourselves. This one and only reciprocation of love and faith, is what the Lord above all things wishes man to make to Him. In a word, act from yourselves, and believe that it is from the Lord; this is acting as if from yourselves." [10] Then they asked whether this acting as if from himself was implanted in man from creation. An angel replied, "It was not, because to act from himself belongs to God alone, but He gives it unceasingly, that is, joins it [to man] unceasingly; and then so far as man does good and believes truth as if from himself, he is an angel of heaven; while so far as he does evil and therefrom believes falsity, which he also does as if from himself, he is a spirit of hell. You may wonder that he does this also as if from himself, nevertheless you can see that it is so, when you pray to be guarded from the devil lest he seduce you, and enter into you as he did into Judas, and fill you with all iniquity, and destroy you soul and body. But a man becomes guilty when he believes that he acts from himself, whether in doing good or evil, and not when he believes that

he acts as if from himself; for when he believes that the good is from himself, he claims as his own what belongs to God, and when he believes the evil to be from himself he attributes to himself what belongs to the devil." [11] Respecting baptism they said, that baptism is spiritual washing, which is reformation and regeneration; that a child is reformed and regenerated when, having become an adult, he does the things that his sponsors promised for him, namely, these two, repents, and believes in God. For they promise first that he will renounce the devil and all his works, and secondly, that he will believe in God. All infants in heaven are initiated into these two duties; but to them the devil is hell and God is the Lord. Moreover, baptism is a sign to the angels that a man belongs to the church." Hearing this, those of the assembly said, "We understand that." [12] Then a voice was heard from the side, crying out, "We do not understand," and another, "We do not wish to understand." Inquiry was made from whom those voices came, and it was found that they came from those who had confirmed themselves in falsities of faith, and who wished to be believed as oracles, and so to be worshiped. The angels said, "Do not be surprised; there are many such at this day; to us from heaven they appear like sculptured images made with such skill that they can move the lips and make sounds like those of the vocal organs, but do not know whether the breath which the sound comes from is from hell or from heaven, because they do not know whether it is false or true. They reason and reason, and they confirm and confirm, and yet do not

see whether anything is so or not. But know this, that human ingenuity can confirm whatever it will, even until it seems to be actually true; therefore heretics can do so, and impious persons; and atheists are more able to prove that there is no God, but nature only." [13] After this the assembly of the English, inflamed with a desire to be wise, said to the angels, "They say so many different things about the holy supper, tell us what the truth is about it." The angels replied, "The truth is, that the man who looks to the Lord and repents, is by that most holy ordinance conjoined with the Lord and introduced into heaven." Those of the assembly said, "That is a mystery." The angels replied, "It is a mystery, and yet such as may be understood. The bread and wine do not effect this; from these there is nothing holy; but material bread and spiritual bread, as also material wine and spiritual wine correspond to each other mutually, spiritual bread being the holy principle of love, and spiritual wine the holy principle of faith, both from the Lord, and both being the Lord. From this comes the conjunction of the Lord with man and of man with the Lord, not with the bread and wine, but with the love and faith of the man who has repented; and conjunction with the Lord is also introduction into heaven." And after the angels had taught them something about correspondence, those of the assembly said, "Now for the first time we can understand this also." And when they had said this, behold, a flame with light descended from heaven and affiliated them with the angels, and they loved each other mutually.

Second Memorable Relation: All who have been prepared for heaven (which is done in the world of spirits, which is intermediate between heaven and hell), when the time is completed wish for heaven with great longing; and soon their eyes are opened and they see a path leading to some society in heaven; they take this path and ascend, and in the ascent there is a gate and a keeper there. He opens the gate, and they enter in through it. Then an examiner meets them, who tells them from the president to enter still further and to look about and see whether there are houses anywhere which they recognize as their own, for there is a new house for every novitiate angel. If they find one they so report and remain there. But if they do not find one they return and say that they have not seen any. And then an examination is made by a certain wise one there whether the light that is in them harmonizes with that in the society, and especially whether the heat does; for the light of heaven in its essence is Divine truth, and the heat of heaven in its essence is good, both going forth from the Lord there as a sun. If there is in them a light and a heat different from the light and heat of that society, that is, a different kind of good and truth, they are not received. Therefore they leave that place, and through ways opened between the societies in heaven they pass on; and this they do until they find a society perfectly harmonious with their affections, and this becomes their abode forever. For they are then among their own, just as if among relatives and friends whom they love from the heart, because they are in like affections; and there they are in their life's

happiness, and in the joy of their whole bosom from peace of mind, for in the light and heat of heaven there is ineffable delight, which is shared. Thus it happens with those who are becoming angels. [2] And yet those who are in evils and falsities may ascend to heaven by permission; but when they enter they begin to catch their breath and to breathe with difficulty; and presently their sight grows dim, their understanding is darkened, they cease to think, a kind of oblivion hovers before their eyes, and so they stand like stocks. Then the heart begins to throb, the chest to be oppressed, the mind is seized with anguish, and their distress increases more and more; and in this state they writhe like serpents brought near a fire, so that they roll themselves away, and by a steep descent which then appears, they cast themselves down, and do not rest until they are in hell among their like, where they can draw breath and where their hearts beat freely. After this they hate heaven, reject truth, and in heart blaspheme the Lord, believing that their pains and torments in heaven were from Him. [3] From these few things it can be seen what the lot is of those who have no regard for the truths of faith, which nevertheless constitute the light in which the angels of heaven are, and who have no regard for the goods of love and charity, which nevertheless constitute the heat of life in which the angels of heaven are; and it will also be seen therefrom, how greatly those err who believe that anyone may enjoy heavenly happiness if only he is admitted into heaven. For it is the belief of the present day, that to be received into heaven is a matter of mercy only and

that a man's reception into heaven is like entering a house in the world where there is a wedding, and being admitted at once into its joys and festivities. But let it be understood that in the spiritual world there is a sharing of the love's affections and the thoughts arising from them, since man is then a spirit, and the life of the spirit is the love's affection and its thought; also that homogeneous affection conjoins while heterogeneous affection separates, and both to a devil in heaven and to an angel in hell heterogeneity is torture; and for this reason they are separated in strict accordance with the diversities, varieties, and differences of the affections pertaining to the love.

Third Memorable Relation: I was once permitted to see three hundred of the clergy and laity together, all learned and erudite in that they knew how to confirm faith alone even to justification thereby, and some still further. And because they were in the belief that heaven is a mere matter of admission from grace, they were given leave to ascend into a heavenly society, which however was not among the higher ones. And when they ascended they appeared at a distance like calves. When they entered heaven they were received by the angels civilly, but while they were talking a trembling seized them, afterward a horror, and finally torture like that of death; then they cast themselves down headlong, and in their fall they appeared like dead horses. In their ascent they had appeared like calves, because a vigorous natural affection for seeing and knowing appears, on account of its correspondence, like a calf; but in their fall they

appeared like dead horses because the understanding of truth appears, on account of its correspondence, like a horse, and a lack of understanding of truth pertaining to the church appears like a dead horse. [2] There were boys below who saw them descending, and in their descent looking like dead horses; and they then turned their faces away and asked their teacher who was with them, "What monstrosity is this? We saw men, and now, instead of them we see dead horses; and not being able to look at them we turned away our faces. O Teacher, let us not stay in this place, let us go away." And they went away. Then the teacher taught them on the way the meaning of a dead horse, saying, "A horse signifies the understanding of truth from the Word. This is the signification of all the horses you have seen; for when a man goes along meditating upon the Word, his meditation appears at a distance like a horse, noble and lively in proportion as he meditates spiritually, but on the other hand poor and lifeless as he meditates materially." [3] Then the boys asked, "What is meditating spiritually and materially upon the Word?" The teacher answered, "I will illustrate it by examples. When reading the Word in a reverent way, who does not think within himself about God, the neighbor and heaven? He who thinks of God from person only and not from essence thinks materially; and he who thinks of the neighbor from his outward form only, and not from quality, thinks materially; and he who thinks of heaven from place merely, and not from love and wisdom, from which heaven is heaven, also thinks materially." [4] But the boys said,

"We have thought of God from person, of the neighbor from form, that he is a man, and of heaven from place, that it is above us. Have we then when reading the Word appeared to anyone like dead horses?" The teacher said, "No; you are still boys, and cannot think otherwise; but I have perceived in you an affection for knowing and understanding, and this being spiritual you have thought spiritually; for there is some spiritual thought latent within your material thought, although you are not aware of it. But I will return to what I said before, that he who thinks materially while reading the Word or meditating upon it, appears at a distance like a dead horse, while he who thinks spiritually appears like a living horse, and that he thinks materially of God who thinks of Him from person only and not from essence. For there are many attributes of the Divine Essence, as omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, eternity, love, wisdom, mercy, grace, and others; and there are attributes that go forth from the Divine Essence, namely, creation, preservation, redemption and salvation, enlightenment and instruction. Everyone who thinks of God from person makes three Gods, saying that the Creator and Preserver is one God, the Redeemer and Savior another, and the Enlightener and Instructor a third; while everyone who thinks of God from essence makes one God, saying, 'God created us, the same God redeemed and saves us, and He also enlightens and instructs.' This is why those Who think of the trinity of God from person, thus materially, must needs, out of the ideas of their thought which is material, make three Gods out of

one. Nevertheless, in opposition to their thought, they are compelled to say that there is a union of these three by means of the essence, because they have also thought of God from essence, although, as it were, through a lattice. [5] "Therefore, my scholars, think of God from essence, and from essence of person. For to think of essence from person is to think of essence also materially; while to think from essence of person is to think of person also spiritually. Because the ancient heathen thought materially of God and therefore of the attributes of God, they not only made three gods but more, even as many as a hundred; for out of every attribute they made a god. You must understand that the material does not enter into the spiritual, but the spiritual enters into the material. It is the same with thought respecting the neighbor from the outward form and not from his quality; as also with thought about heaven from place, and not from love and wisdom, from which heaven exists. It is the same with each and all things in the Word; therefore he who cherishes a material idea of God, as also of the neighbor and heaven, can understand nothing in the Word; it is to him a dead letter, and when reading it or meditating upon it he appears at a distance like a dead horse. [6] Those whom you saw descending from heaven, having become before your eyes like dead horses, were such as have closed up the rational sight in respect to the theological or spiritual matters of the church both in themselves and in others by their peculiar dogma that the understanding must be kept in obedience to their faith; not reflecting that an understanding closed up by religion is as blind as a

mole, with nothing in it but thick darkness. And such darkness, in rejecting from itself all spiritual light, shuts out the influx of that light, from the Lord and heaven, and places before it a bar in the corporeal-sensual far beneath the rational in matters of faith, that is, it places it near the nose, and fixes it in its cartilage, so that afterward what is spiritual cannot even be smelled. Because of this some have become of such a nature that when they perceive the odor from spiritual things they fall into a swoon. By odor I mean perception. These are they who make God three. They say, indeed, that from essence God is one; and yet, when they pray according to their belief, which is, that God the Father will have mercy for the Son's sake and that He will send the Holy Spirit, they clearly make three Gods; and they cannot do otherwise; for they pray to one to be merciful for the sake of a second and to send a third." Then their teacher taught them concerning the Lord that He is the one God, in whom is the Divine Trinity.

Fourth Memorable Relation: Awaking from sleep at midnight, I saw at some height toward the east an angel holding in his right hand a paper which appeared of lustrous brightness in the sun's light, and in the center of it there was a writing in golden letters; and I saw written: The Marriage of Good and Truth. From the writing flashed a splendor which spread into a wide circle round about the paper; so that the circle or border appeared like the dawn of day in spring. After this I saw the angel with the paper in his hand descending, and as he descended the paper

appeared less and less bright, and the inscription, which was The Marriage of Good and Truth, was changed from a golden to a silver color, then to a copper color, then to an iron color, and finally to the color of copper and iron rust. At last the angel seemed to enter a dark mist and to pass through it to the earth; and there the paper, although still retained in his hand, was not visible. This was in the world of spirits where all men first assemble after death. [2] The angel then spoke to me, saying: "Ask those who are coming here whether they see me or see anything in my hand." A multitude came, one body from the east, one from the south, one from the west, and one from the north; and I asked those coming from the east and south, who were such as, while in the world, had been devoted to learning, whether they saw anyone there with me, or anything in his hand. They all said that they saw nothing whatever. Then I asked those who came from the west and north, who were such as in the world had believed in the sayings of the learned; these said that they too did not see anything; although the last of them, who in the world had been in simple faith from charity or in some truth from good, said, after the former had gone away, that they saw a man with a paper, a man in graceful clothing, and a paper upon which letters were written; and when they brought their eyes close to it, they said that the inscription was, The Marriage of Good and Truth. [3] These also spoke to the angel, and asked him to tell them what it was. And the angel said, "All things in the whole heaven, and all things in the whole world, are by creation nothing but a marriage of good

and truth, since each and all things, both the living and animate, and the lifeless and inanimate, are created from a marriage of good and truth and into that marriage. Nothing created into truth alone or into good alone is possible; either of these alone is nothing; but by means of that marriage the two exist and become a something, in quality in accord with the marriage. In the Lord God the Creator there is Divine good and Divine truth in their very substance. Divine good is the being [esse] of His substance, and Divine truth is the outgo [existere] of His substance, and they are also in their very oneness, for in Him they make one infinitely. As these two are one in God the Creator Himself, they are also one in each and all things created by Him; and by means of this the Creator is conjoined in an eternal covenant like that of marriage with all things created from Himself." [4] The angel said further, that the Sacred Scripture, which was dictated by the Lord, is in the whole and in every part a marriage of good and truth (see above, 248-253); and because the church, which is formed by truths of doctrine, and religion, which is formed by goods of life according to truths of doctrine, are, with Christians, solely from the Sacred Scripture, it is evident that the church also, in general and in particular, is a marriage of good and truth. And what has been said of the marriage of good and truth can be said also of The Marriage of Charity and Faith, since good belongs to charity, and truth to faith. When this had been said the angel raised himself up from the earth, and passing through the mist, he ascended into heaven; and then the paper, according

as he ascended, shone as before; and lo, that circle which before appeared like the day-dawn, settled down and dispelled the mist which had brought darkness upon the earth, and it became sunny.

Fifth Memorable Relation: Once when I was meditating about the Lord's second coming, there suddenly appeared a flash of light which forcibly struck my eyes; and I therefore looked up, and lo, the whole heaven above me appeared luminous, and there from the east to the west in a continuous strain a Glorification was heard; and an angel stood near who said, "That is a glorification of the Lord on account of His coming. It comes from the angels of the eastern and western heavens." From the southern and northern heavens only a gentle murmur was heard. And because all this was heard by the angel, he first said to me that these glorifications and celebrations of the Lord are made from the Word. Presently he said, "Now they are glorifying and celebrating the Lord especially by these words, which are spoken in the prophecy of Daniel: Thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, but they shall not cohere. But in those days the God of the heavens shall make a kingdom to arise which shall not perish for ages it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, but itself shall stand for ages (2:43, 44). [2] After this I heard the sound of singing, and more deeply in the east I saw a flashing of light more brilliant than the former; and I asked the angel what the glorification there was. He said it was in these words in Daniel: I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the

clouds of heaven, and there was given Him dominion, and a kingdom; and all people and nations shall worship Him; His dominion is the dominion of an age, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed (Dan. 7:13, 14). Beside this they were celebrating the Lord from these words in the Apocalypse: To Jesus Christ be the glory and the might; behold, He cometh with clouds. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the last, Who is, Who was, and Who is to come, the Almighty; I John heard this from the Son of man out of the midst of the seven candlesticks (Rev. 1:5-13; 22:8, 13; also Matt. 24:30, 32). [3] I looked again into the eastern heaven, and it lighted up from the right side, the illumination extended to the southern expanse, and I heard a sweet sound, and asked the angel what it was pertaining to the Lord that they were glorifying there; and he said that it was in these words in the Apocalypse: I saw a new heaven and a new earth, and I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of the heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them. And an angel spoke with me, saying, Come, and I will show thee the bride, the wife of the Lamb. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the city, the holy Jerusalem (Rev. 21:1, 3, 9, 10). I Jesus am the bright and morning star; and the Spirit and the bride say, Come, and He said I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus (Rev. 22:16, 17, 20). [4] After this and more, a general glorification

from the east to the west of heaven, and also from south to north was heard; and I asked the angel, "What now?" He said, "The following from the prophets": All flesh shall know that I Jehovah am thy Savior and thy Redeemer (Isa. 49:26). Thus said Jehovah the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, Jehovah of Hosts, I am the First and the Last, and beside Me there is no God (Isa. 44:6). It shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him that He may deliver us; this is Jehovah; we have waited for Him, (Isa. 25:9). The voice of one crying in the desert, Prepare ye the way of Jehovah. Behold, the Lord Jehovah cometh in strength; He shall feed His flock like a shepherd (Isa. 40:3, 5, 10, 11). Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and His name shall be Wonderful, Counselor, God, Mighty, Father of eternity, Prince of peace (Isa. 9:6). Behold the days will come when I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and He shall reign King and this is His name, Jehovah our righteousness (Jer. 23:5, 6; 33:15, 16). Jehovah of Hosts is His name, and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall He be called (Isa. 54:5). In that day Jehovah shall be king over all the earth; in that day Jehovah shall be one and His name one (Zech. 14:9). Hearing and understanding these things my heart greatly rejoiced, and I went home joyfully, and here I returned from the spiritual to the bodily state, in which I wrote out all this that I had seen and heard.

CHAPTER 11 IMPUTATION. I. IMPUTATION AND THE FAITH OF THE PRESENT CHURCH (WHICH

IS HELD TO BE THE SOLE GROUND OF JUSTIFICATION), MAKE ONE. The faith of the present church, which is held to be the sole ground of justification, is imputation; that is, in the present church, faith and imputation make one, because each belongs to the other, or each mutually and interchangeably enters into the other and causes it to be. For if faith is mentioned and imputation is not added faith is mere sound; and if imputation is mentioned and faith is not added imputation is mere sound; but when the two are mentioned together, the result is something articulate, and yet without meaning; and in order that the understanding may have a perception of some thing, a third must necessarily be added, namely, Christ's merit. These form a statement that a man can utter with some reason. For it is the faith of the present church that God the Father imputes His Son's righteousness, and sends the Holy Spirit to work out its effects.

In the present church, then, these three, faith, imputation, and Christ's merit, are one, and they may be called a triune; for if one of these three were taken away, the present theology would be reduced to nothing, since it depends on these three perceived as one, as a long chain on a fixed hook. So if either faith, or imputation, or Christ's merit were taken away, all the things said about justification, the forgiveness of sins, vivification, renewal, regeneration, sanctification, and about the gospel, freedom of choice, charity, and good works, and even life eternal, would become like desolate towns or like a temple in

ruins, and faith itself, which stands at the head of all, would come to nothing, and thus the entire church would be a desert and a desolation. All this makes clear upon what a pillar the house of God at this day is made to rest: and if that pillar were torn down the house would be overthrown, like that in which the lords of the Philistines and people to the number of three thousand were amusing themselves, when Samson pulled down both of its pillars at once, and all within it were slain or died (Judges 16:29). This is said because it has been shown in what precedes, and will be shown still further in an appendix, that this faith is not Christian, because it is at variance with the Word, and that the imputation which it teaches is absurd, since Christ's merit cannot be imputed.

II. THE IMPUTATION THAT BELONGS TO THE FAITH OF THE PRESENT DAY IS A DOUBLE IMPUTATION. AN IMPUTATION OF CHRIST'S MERIT AND AN IMPUTATION OF SALVATION THEREBY. Throughout the whole Christian church it is taught that justification and salvation thereby are effected by God the Father through the imputation of the merit of Christ His Son; that imputation takes place by grace when and where God wills, thus arbitrarily; and that those to whom Christ's merit is imputed are adopted into the number of children of God. And because the leaders of the church have not advanced a foot beyond that imputation or raised their minds above it, because of the established dogmas of God's arbitrary election, they have fallen into enormous and fanatical errors, and at length into

that detestable error respecting predestination, and still further into the abominable error, that God pays no attention to the deeds of a man's life but only to the faith inscribed upon the interiors of his mind. Unless, therefore, the error respecting imputation is abolished, atheism will invade all Christendom; and then will reign over them. The king of the abyss, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon and in Greek Apollyon (Rev. 9:11), "Abaddon" and "Apollyon" signifying the destroyer of the church by falsities, and "the abyss" the abode of those falsities (see the *Apocalypse Revealed* n. 421, 440, 442). From this it is clear that that falsity and the resultant falsities exist in an extended series, over which that destroyer reigns; for, as said above, the entire system of the present theology is dependent on this imputation, as a long chain on a fixed hook, and as man with all his members is dependent on the head. And because this imputation reigns everywhere, it is like what Isaiah says: The Lord will cut off from Israel head, and tail; the honorable, he is the head; and the teacher of lies, he is the tail (9:14, 15).

As just said, the imputation of the prevailing faith is a double imputation; but it is double in the sense that God exercises His mercy toward some, and not toward all, or that a parent exercises his love toward one or two of his children, and not toward all, or that the Divine law and its command apply to a few and not to all. One kind of doubleness, therefore, is far-reaching and undivided, the other is restricted and divided; this latter is doubleness, but the former is

miry. For it is taught that the imputation of Christ's merit is from an arbitrary election, and that to those so elected there is an imputation of salvation, thus that some are adopted and the rest rejected; which would be as if God lifted some up into Abraham's bosom, and gave some over as morsels to the devil; and yet the truth is that the Lord rejects no man, and gives no man over to the devil, but this is done by the man himself.

It may be added that the present day doctrine of imputation deprives man of all power arising from any freedom of choice in spiritual things, and does not even leave him enough to enable him to brush fire from his clothing and keep his body from harm, or to extinguish his blazing home with water and rescue his family; and yet the Word from beginning to end teaches that everyone must shun evils, because they are of the devil and from the devil, and must do good because it is of God and from God, and that he must do this of himself, the Lord working in him. Put the present doctrine of imputation condemns the power to do this as deadly to faith and consequently to salvation, lest something belonging to man might enter into the imputation, and thus into the merit of Christ; from the establishment of which doctrine has issued this satanic principle that man is absolutely impotent in spiritual matters; which is like saying, Walk, although you have no feet, not even one; Wash, though both your hands are cut off; or, Do good, but keep asleep; or, Feed yourself, even without a tongue. It is also like giving man a will that is not a will; in

which case can he not say, "I have no more power than the pillar of salt into which Lot's wife was turned, or than Dagon the god of the Philistines had when the ark of God was taken into his house; I am afraid that my head like his might be torn off, and the palms of my hands thrown upon the threshold (1 Sam. 5:4); nor have I any more power than Beelzebub the god of Ekron who, as his name signifies, can only drive away flies?" That such impotence in spiritual things is believed in at the present day may be seen above (n. 464) from the extracts respecting freedom of choice.

As to the first part of the doubleness of that imputation respecting man's salvation, namely, the arbitrary imputation of Christ's merit, and the imputation of salvation thereby, the dogmatists differ; some teaching that this imputation is absolute, from free power, and takes place with those whose external or internal form is well pleasing to God; others, that imputation takes place from foreknowledge, with those into whom grace is infused, and to whom this faith can be applied. Nevertheless, these two opinions aim at one mark, or are like two eyes that have one stone for their object, or two ears that have as their object one song. At first glance they seem to depart from each other, but in the end they unite and agree. For since man's complete impotence in things spiritual is taught by both, and everything belonging to man is excluded from faith, it follows that this grace which is receptive of faith, whether infused arbitrarily or from foreknowledge is the same as

election; for if that which is called prevenient grace were universal, man's application of it from some power of his own would come in, and this is of course rejected as leprous. Consequently a man no more knows whether from grace that faith has been given him or not, than a stock or a stone, which is what he was when it was infused; for there is no possible sign to attest it when charity, piety, the pursuit of a new life, and the free ability to do either good or evil, are denied to man. The signs attesting that faith which are put forth are all ludicrous, closely resembling the auguries of the ancients from the flights of birds, the prognostications of astrologers by the stars, or of players by dice. Such things, and others still more ludicrous, are consequences of the doctrine of the Lord's imputed righteousness, which together with faith (which is called that righteousness), is communicated to the elect . . .

V. IMPUTATION OF CHRIST'S MERIT AND RIGHTEOUSNESS IS IMPOSSIBLE. In order to know that an imputation of the merit and righteousness of Jesus Christ is impossible, what His merit and righteousness are must be known. The merit of the Lord our Savior is redemption, the nature of which may be seen above in its proper chapter (n. 114-133), where it is described as the subjugation of the hells, the orderly arrangement of the heavens, and the subsequent establishment of a church, and thus as being a work purely Divine. It is also there shown that the Lord by means of redemption took to Himself the power to regenerate and save those who believe

on Him and do His commandments; also that without this redemption no flesh could have been saved. As redemption therefore was a work purely Divine, and a work of the Lord alone, and constitutes His merit, it follows that His merit can no more be applied, ascribed, or imputed to any man than the creation and preservation of the universe. Moreover, redemption was, as it were, a new creation of the angelic heaven, and likewise of the church. [2] That the present church attributes that merit of the Lord the Redeemer to those who by grace attain to that faith, is evident from their dogmas, among which this is the chief. For it is affirmed by the hierarchs of that church and by their subordinates, both in the Roman Catholic and in the Reformed churches, that by the imputation of Christ's merit those who have attained to faith are not only reputed righteous and holy, but also are so; and that their sins are not sins in God's sight because they are forgiven, and they themselves are justified, that is, reconciled, renewed, regenerated, sanctified, and enrolled in heaven. That the entire Christian church today teaches these same dogmas is very evident from the Council of Trent, from the Augustan or Augsburg Confessions, and from the appended and accepted commentaries. [3] From the things said above when applied to that faith, what follows but that the possession of that faith is that merit and that righteousness of the Lord, consequently that its possessor is Christ in another person? For it is affirmed that Christ Himself is righteousness, and that that faith is righteousness, and that imputation (meaning thereby ascription and

application), causes men not only to be reputed righteous and holy, but to be so in reality. To imputation, application, and ascription, add transcription only, and you will be a vicarious pope.

Because, then, the Lord's merit and righteousness are purely Divine, and things purely Divine are such that if they were to be applied and ascribed to man he would instantly die and like a stick of wood thrown into the naked sun, would be so completely consumed that scarcely a particle of his ashes would be left; the Lord approaches angels and men with His Divine by means of light tempered and accommodated to the capacity and quality of each one, thus by means of what is brought down to man's level and adapted; and in the same way by means of heat. [2] In the spiritual world there is a sun, in the midst of which is the Lord; from that sun the Lord flows in by means of light and heat into the whole spiritual world, and into all who are there. All the light and all the heat of that world are from this source. From that sun the Lord also flows with the same light and the same heat into the souls and minds of men. That heat in its essence is the Lord's Divine love, and that light in its essence is His Divine wisdom. The Lord adapts that light and that heat to the capacity and quality of the recipient angel and man, doing this by means of the spiritual auras or atmospheres that convey and transfer them. The Divine Itself which immediately encompasses the Lord, constitutes that sun. That sun is far off from the angels, as the sun of the natural world is from men, in

order that it may not come into naked and thus untempered contact with them; since otherwise they would be consumed like a stick of wood thrown into the naked sun, as said above. [3] All this makes clear that the Lord's merit and righteousness, being purely Divine, can in no possible way be transferred by imputation into any angel or man; and if even the least drop thereof, not so tempered as above stated, were to touch them, they would instantly writhe as if struggling with death, with feet contorted and eyes staring, and would become lifeless. In the Israelitish church this was known by their being taught that no man could see God and live. [4] The sun of the spiritual world, such as it was after Jehovah God had assumed the Human, and had added thereto redemption and a new righteousness, is described in these words in Isaiah: The light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day when Jehovah shall bind up the breach of His people (Isa. 30:26). This chapter from beginning to end treats of the Lord's coming. What would take place if the Lord were to come down and draw near to any wicked person, is also described in the following words in the Apocalypse: They hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, Hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the anger of the Lamb (Rev. 6:15, 16). It is said, "the anger of the Lamb" because their terror and torment when the Lord draws near appear to them like wrath. [5] This may be still more evidently inferred from the fact, that if any impious person is admitted into heaven, where charity and

faith in the Lord reign, darkness invades his eyes, giddiness and madness invade his mind, pain and torment his body, and he becomes like one dead. What then, if the Lord Himself, with His Divine merit, which is redemption, and His Divine righteousness, were to enter into man? The apostle John himself could not endure the presence of the Lord, for we read: That when he saw the Son of man in the midst of the seven lampstands, he fell at His feet as one dead (Apoc. 1:17).

In the decrees of the Councils and in the articles of the Confessions to which the Reformed make oath, it is declared that God justifies the wicked man by means of the merit of Christ infused into him, when, in fact, not even the good of any angel can be communicated to a wicked person, still less conjoined to him, without being thrown back and rebounding like an elastic ball thrown against a wall, or swallowed up like a diamond sunk in a marsh; and indeed, if anything truly good was thrust upon him, it would be like a pearl fastened to a swine's snout. For who does not know that clemency cannot be introduced into unmercifulness, innocence into vindictiveness, love into hatred, or concord into discord, which would be like mixing together heaven and hell? The man who has not been born again, is in the spirit like a panther or an owl, and may be likened to a thorn or a nettle; while the man who has been born again is like a sheep or a dove, and may be likened to an olive tree or a vine. Reflect, I pray you, if you will, how a human panther can be converted into a human sheep,

or an owl into a dove, or a thorn tree into an olive tree, or a nettle into a vine, by any imputation, ascription, or application of the Divine righteousness, which would rather damn than justify him. Before such a conversion could take place, must not the ferine nature of the panther and owl, or the noxious qualities of the thorn and nettle first be taken away, and what is truly human and harmless be implanted in their place? How this is effected the Lord also teaches in John (15:1-7).

VI. THERE IS AN IMPUTATION, BUT IT IS AN IMPUTATION OF GOOD AND EVIL, AND AT THE SAME TIME OF FAITH. From numerous passages in the Word, which in part have been already quoted, it is evident that there is an imputation of good and evil, which is the imputation meant in the word where it is mentioned. But that everyone may feel certain that there is no other imputation, some passages from the Word shall be offered also, as follows: The Son of man shall come, and then He shall render unto everyone according to his deeds (Matt. 16:27). They shall come forth, they that have done goods into the resurrection of life, and they that have done evils unto the resurrection of judgment (John 5:29). The book was opened, which is the book of life, and all were judged according to their works (Apoc. 20:12, 13). Behold, I come quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every man according to his work (Apoc. 22:12). I will punish him according to his ways, and will recompense him for his works (Hos. 4:9; Zech. 1:6; Jer. 25:14; 32:19). In the day of His wrath and righteous

judgment, God will render to every man according to his works (Rom. 2:5, 6). We must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done through the body, according to what he hath done, whether good or evil (2 Cor. 5:10). [2] In the beginning of the church there was no other law of imputation, nor will there be any other at its end. That there was no other at the beginning of the church, is evident from Adam and his wife, in that they were condemned because they did evil in eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2, 3); and that there will be no other at the end of the church, is evident from these words of the Lord: When the Son of man shall come in His glory, then shall He sit on the throne of His glory; and He shall say to the sheep on His right hand, Come ye blessed, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was a hungered and ye gave Me to eat I was thirsty and ye gave Me to drink I was a sojourner and ye took Me in; I was naked and ye clothed Me; I was sick and ye visited Me I was in prison and ye came unto Me. But to the goats on His left, because they had not done good, He said, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:31-41). From these passages anyone with his eyes open can see that there is an imputation of good and evil. [3] There is also an imputation of faith, because charity which pertains to good, and faith which pertains to truth, reside together in good works; and that otherwise works are not good, may be seen above (n. 373-377). Therefore James says: Was not Abraham our father justified by

works, when he offered up his son upon the altar? Seest thou not how faith co-operated with his works, and by works faith was recognized as perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness (2:21-23).

The rulers of the Christian churches and in consequence their subordinates, have understood by imputation in the Word the imputation of faith upon which were inscribed the righteousness and merit of Christ, which were thus ascribed to man, for the reason that for fourteen centuries, that is, since the time of the Nicene Council, they have not wished to know about any other faith. Therefore such faith alone is fixed in their memories and consequently in their minds, like a thing organized, which from that time has furnished a light like that which comes from a fire at night-time, from which light that faith has appeared like true theology itself, on which all other things hang in a linked series, and these would fall asunder if that head or pillar were removed. If therefore they were to think when they read the Word, of any other than this imputative faith, that light, together with their entire theology, would be extinguished, and a darkness would arise which would cause the whole Christian church to vanish. Therefore it is left to them, Like a stump of roots in the earth, the tree being cut down and destroyed, until the seven times shall be accomplished (Dan. 4:23). Who among the confirmed leaders of the present church does not, when that faith is attacked,

close his ears as if with cotton against hearing anything opposed to it? But, my reader, open your ears, and read the Word, and you will have a clear perception of a faith and an imputation other than those which you have heretofore believed in.

It is wonderful, that although the Word from beginning to end is full of testimonies and proofs that everyone's own good and evil is imputed to him, the dogmatists of the Christian religion have, nevertheless, so closed their ears as if with wax, and besmeared their eyes as if with salve, that they have neither heard nor seen, nor do they hear or see any other imputation than that of their own faith mentioned above. And yet that faith may be justly compared to the disease of the eye called gutta serena, (and in fact deserves to be so named), which disease is an absolute blindness of the eye, arising from an obstruction of the optic nerve, although the eye appears to retain its sight perfectly. In like manner those who adhere to that faith walk as if with open eyes, and seem to others to see all things, when yet they see nothing; for when that faith enters man, since he is then like a stock, he knows nothing about it, not even knowing whether that faith is in him, or whether there is anything in it. Afterwards with eyes apparently clear they behold that faith in the pains of travail and giving birth to those noble offsprings of justification, namely, forgiveness of sins, vivification, renewal, regeneration, and sanctification, and yet they have not seen and cannot see any sign of anyone of them.

That good, which is charity, and evil, which is iniquity, are imputed after death, has been proven to me by all my experience relating to the lot of those who pass from this to the other world. Everyone, after he has waited there for some days, is examined to ascertain his character, that is, what he was in respect to religion in the former world. When this has been done, the examiners report the result to heaven, and the man is then transferred to his like, that is, to his own. Thus is imputation effected. That to all in heaven there is an imputation of good, and to all in hell an imputation of evil, was made clear to me from the arrangement of both by the Lord. The entire heaven is arranged in societies according to all the varieties of the love of good, and the entire hell according to all the varieties of the love of evil. The church on earth is arranged by the Lord in like manner, for it corresponds to heaven. Its religion is its good. Moreover, ask anyone you please who is endowed with religion and also with reason, belonging either to this quarter of the globe or one of the others, who he believes will go to heaven, and who to hell; and they will answer unanimously that those who do good will go to heaven, and those who do evil to hell. Again, does not everyone know that every true man loves a man, an assembly of many men, a state, or a kingdom, because of their goodness; and not only men, but even beasts and inanimate things, such as houses, possessions, fields, gardens, trees, forests, lands, and finally metals and stones, because of their goodness and use? Goodness and use

are one. Why then should not the Lord love man and the church because of their goodness? . . .s

VIII. THE LORD IMPUTES GOOD TO EVERY MAN, BUT HELL IMPUTES EVIL TO EVERY MAN. That the Lord imputes to man good and not evil, while the devil (meaning hell), imputes evil and not good to him, is a new thing in the church; and it is new for the reason that in the Word it is frequently said that God is angry, takes vengeance, hates, damns, punishes, casts into hell, and tempts, all of which pertain to evil, and therefore are evils. But it has been shown in the chapter on the Sacred Scriptures that the sense of the letter of the Word is composed of such things as are called appearances and correspondences, in order that there may be a conjunction of the external church with its internals, thus of the world with heaven. It is also there shown that when such things in the Word are read these very appearances of truth, while they are passing from man to heaven, are changed into genuine truths, which are that the Lord is never angry, never takes vengeance, never hates, damns, punishes, casts into hell, or tempts, consequently does evil to man. This transmutation and changing in the spiritual world I have frequently observed.

# On the Christian Life

By John Calvin

*from Institutes of the Christian Religion, Bk. 3, Ch. VI.*

tr. by Henry Beveridge

[1845]

## CHAPTER I.

### LIFE OF A CHRISTIAN MAN. SCRIPTURAL ARGUMENTS EXHORTING TO IT.

*This first chapter consists of two parts, – I. Connection between this treatise on the Christian Life and the doctrine of Regeneration and Repentance. Arrangement of the treatise, sec. 1–3. II. Extremes to be avoided; 1. False Christians denying Christ by their works condemned, sec. 4. 2. Christians should not despair, though they have not attained perfection, provided they make daily progress in piety and righteousness.*

1. WE have said that the object of regeneration is to bring the life of believers into concord and harmony with the righteousness of God, and so confirm the adoption by which they have been received as sons. But although the law comprehends within it that new life by which the image of God is restored in us, yet, as our sluggishness stands greatly in need both of helps and incentives it will be useful to collect out of Scripture a true account of this reformation lest any who have a heartfelt desire of repentance should in

their zeal go astray. Moreover, I am not unaware that, in undertaking to describe the life of the Christian, I am entering on a large and extensive subject, one which, when fully considered in all its parts, is sufficient to fill a large volume. We see the length to which the Fathers in treating of individual virtues extend their exhortations. This they do, not from mere loquaciousness; for whatever be the virtue which you undertake to recommend, your pen is spontaneously led by the copiousness of the matter so to amplify, that you seem not to have discussed it properly if you have not done it at length. My intention, however, in the plan of life which I now propose to give, is not to extend it so far as to treat of each virtue specially, and expatiate in exhortation. This must be sought in the writings of others, and particularly in the Homilies of the Fathers. For me it will be sufficient to point out the method by which a pious man may be taught how to frame his life aright, and briefly lay down some universal rule by which he may not improperly regulate his conduct. I shall one day possibly find time for more ample discourse, [or leave others to perform an office for which I am not so fit. I have a natural love of brevity, and, perhaps, any attempt of mine at copiousness would not succeed. Even if I could gain the highest applause by being more prolix, I would scarcely be disposed to attempt it, while the nature of my present work requires me to glance at simple doctrine with as much brevity as possible. As philosophers have certain definitions of rectitude and honesty, from which they derive particular duties and the whole train of virtues; so in this respect Scripture

is not without order, but presents a most beautiful arrangement, one too which is every way much more certain than that of philosophers. The only difference is, that they, under the influence of ambition, constantly affect an exquisite perspicuity of arrangement, which may serve to display their genius, whereas the Spirit of God, teaching without affectation, is not so perpetually observant of exact method, and yet by observing it at times sufficiently intimates that it is not to be neglected.

2. The Scripture system of which we speak aims chiefly at two objects. The former is, that the love of righteousness, to which we are by no means naturally inclined, may be instilled and implanted into our minds. The latter is, (see chap. ii.,) to prescribe a rule which will prevent us while in the pursuit of righteousness from going astray. It has numerous admirable methods of recommending righteousness. Many have been already pointed out in different parts of this work; but we shall here also briefly advert to some of them. With what better foundation can it begin than by reminding us that we must be holy, because "God is holy?" (Lev. xix. 1; 1 Pet. i. 16.) For when we were scattered abroad like lost sheep, wandering through the labyrinth of this world, he brought us back again to his own fold. When mention is made of our union with God, let us remember that holiness must be the bond; not that by the merit of holiness we come into communion with him, (we ought rather first to cleave to him, in order that, pervaded with his holiness, we may follow whither

he calls,) but because it greatly concerns his glory not to have any fellowship with wickedness and impurity. Wherefore he tells us that this is the end of our calling, the end to which we ought ever to have respect, if we would answer the call of God. For to what end were we rescued from the iniquity and pollution of the world into which we were plunged, if we allow ourselves, during our whole lives, to wallow in them? Besides, we are at the same time admonished, that if we would be regarded as the Lord's people, we must inhabit the holy city Jerusalem, (Isaiah rev. 8, *et alibi*;) which, as he hath consecrated it to himself, it were impious for its inhabitants to profane by impurity. Hence the expressions, "Who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness," (Ps. 15:1, 2; Ps. 24:3, 4) for the sanctuary in which he dwells certainly ought not to be like an unclean stall.

3. The better to arouse us, it exhibits God the Father, who, as he hath reconciled us to himself in his Anointed, has impressed his image upon us, to which he would have us to be conformed, (Rom. v. 4.) Come, then, and let them show me a more excellent system among philosophers, who think that they only have a moral philosophy duly and orderly arranged. They, when they would give excellent exhortations to virtue, can only tell us to live agreeably to nature. Scripture derives its exhortations from the true source, when it not only enjoins us to regulate our lives with a view to God its author to whom it

belongs; but after showing us that we have degenerated from our true origin, viz., the law of our Creator, adds, that Christ, through whom we have returned to favour with God, is set before us as a model, the image of which our lives should express. What do you require more effectual than this? Nay, what do you require beyond this? If the Lord adopts us for his sons on the condition that our life be a representation of Christ, the bond of our adoption,—then, unless we dedicate and devote ourselves to righteousness, we not only, with the utmost perfidy, revolt from our Creator, but also abjure the Saviour himself. Then, from an enumeration of all the blessings of God, and each part of our salvation, it finds materials for exhortation. Ever since God exhibited himself to us as a Father, we must be convicted of extreme ingratitude if we do not in turn exhibit ourselves as his sons. Ever since Christ purified us by the laver of his blood, and communicated this purification by baptism, it would ill become us to be defiled with new pollution. Ever since he ingrafted us into his body, we, who are his members, should anxiously beware of contracting any stain or taint. Ever since he who is our head ascended to heaven, it is befitting in us to withdraw our affections from the earth, and with our whole soul aspire to heaven. Ever since the Holy Spirit dedicated us as temples to the Lord, we should make it our endeavour to show forth the glory of God, and guard against being profaned by the defilement of sin. Ever since our soul and body were destined to heavenly incorruptibility and an unfading crown, we should

earnestly strive to keep them pure and uncorrupted against the day of the Lord. These, I say, are the surest foundations of a well-regulated life, and you will search in vain for any thing resembling them among philosophers, who, in their commendation of virtue, never rise higher than the natural dignity of man.

4. This is the place to address those who, having nothing of Christ but the name and sign, would yet be called Christians. How dare they boast of this sacred name? None have intercourse with Christ but those who have acquired the true knowledge of him from the Gospel. The Apostle denies that any man truly has learned Christ who has not learned to put off "the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and put on Christ," (Eph. iv. 22.) They are convicted, therefore, of falsely and unjustly pretending a knowledge of Christ, whatever be the volubility and eloquence with which they can talk of the Gospel. Doctrine is not an affair of the tongue, but of the life; is not apprehended by the intellect and memory merely, like other branches of learning; but is received only when it possesses the whole soul, and finds its seat and habitation in the inmost recesses of the heart. Let them, therefore, either cease to insult God, by boasting that they are what they are not, or let them show themselves not unworthy disciples of their divine Master. To doctrine in which our religion is contained we have given the first place, since by it our salvation commences; but it must be transfused into the breast, and pass into the conduct, and so transform us into itself, as not to prove unfruitful. If

philosophers are justly offended, and banish from their company with disgrace those who, while professing an art which ought to be the mistress of their conduct, convert it into mere loquacious sophistry, with how much better reason shall we detest those flimsy sophists who are contented to let the Gospel play upon their lips, when, from its efficacy, it ought to penetrate the inmost affections of the heart, fix its seat in the soul, and pervade the whole man a hundred times more than the frigid discourses of philosophers?

5. I insist not that the life of the Christian shall breathe nothing but the perfect Gospel, though this is to be desired, and ought to be attempted. I insist not so strictly on evangelical perfection, as to refuse to acknowledge as a Christian any man who has not attained it. In this way all would be excluded from the Church, since there is no man who is not far removed from this perfection, while many, who have made but little progress, would be undeservedly rejected. What then? Let us set this before our eye as the end at which we ought constantly to aim. Let it be regarded as the goal towards which we are to run. For you cannot divide the matter with God, undertaking part of what his word enjoins, and omitting part at pleasure. For, in the first place, God uniformly recommends integrity as the principal part of his worship, meaning by integrity real singleness of mind, devoid of gloss and fiction, and to this is opposed a double mind; as if it had been said, that the spiritual commencement of a good life is when the

internal affections are sincerely devoted to God, in the cultivation of holiness and justice. But seeing that, in this earthly prison of the body, no man is supplied with strength sufficient to hasten in his course with due alacrity, while the greater number are so oppressed with weakness, that hesitating, and halting, and even crawling on the ground, they make little progress, let every one of us go as far as his humble ability enables him, and prosecute the journey once begun. No one will travel so badly as not daily to make some degree of progress. This, therefore, let us never cease to do, that we may daily advance in the way of the Lord; and let us not despair because of the slender measure of success. How little soever the success may correspond with our wish, our labour is not lost when to-day is better than yesterday, provided with true singleness of mind we keep our aim, and aspire to the goal, not speaking flattering things to ourselves, nor indulging our vices, but making it our constant endeavour to become better, until we attain to goodness itself. If during the whole course of our life we seek and follow, we shall at length attain it, when relieved from the infirmity of flesh we are admitted to full fellowship with God.

## CHAPTER II.

### A SUMMARY OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. OF SELF-DENIAL.

*The divisions of the chapter are, — I. The rule which permits us not to go astray in the study of righteousness, requires two things, viz., that man,*

*abandoning his own will, devote himself entirely to the service of God; whence it follows, that we must seek not our own things, but the things of God, sec. 1, 2. II. A description of this renovation or Christian life taken from the Epistle to Titus, and accurately explained under certain special heads, sec. 3 to end.*

1. ALTHOUGH the Law of God contains a perfect rule of conduct admirably arranged, it has seemed proper to our divine Master to train his people by a more accurate method, to the rule which is enjoined in the Law; and the leading principle in the method is, that it is the duty of believers to present their "bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is their reasonable service," (Rom. xii. 1.) Hence he draws the exhortation: "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." The great point, then, is, that we are consecrated and dedicated to God, and, therefore, should not henceforth think, speak, design, or act, without a view to his glory. What he hath made sacred cannot, without signal insult to him, be applied to profane use. But if we are not our own, but the Lord's, it is plain both what error is to be shunned, and to what end the actions of our lives ought to be directed. We are not our own; therefore, neither is our own reason or will to rule our acts and counsels. We are not our own; therefore, let us not make it our end to seek what may be agreeable to our carnal nature. We are not our own; therefore, as far as possible, let us forget ourselves and the things that are ours. On the other hand, we are God's;

let us, therefore, live and die to him (Rom. xiv. 8.) We are God's; therefore, let his wisdom and will preside over all our actions. We are God's; to him, then, as the only legitimate end, let every part of our life be directed. O how great the proficiency of him who, taught that he is not his own, has withdrawn the dominion and government of himself from his own reason that he may give them to God! For as the surest source of destruction to men is to obey themselves, so the only haven of safety is to have no other will, no other wisdom, than to follow the Lord wherever he leads. Let this, then be the first step, to abandon ourselves, and devote the whole energy of our minds to the service of God. By service, I mean not only that which consists in verbal obedience, but that by which the mind, divested of its own carnal feelings, implicitly obeys the call of the Spirit of God. This transformation, (which Paul calls *the renewing of the mind*, Rom. xii. 2; Eph. iv. 23.) though it is the first entrance to life, was unknown to all the philosophers. They give the government of man to reason alone, thinking that she alone is to be listened to; in short, they assign to her the sole direction of the conduct. But Christian philosophy bids her give place, and yield complete submission to the Holy Spirit, so that the man himself no longer lives, but Christ lives and reigns in him, (Gal. ii. 20.)

2. Hence follows the other principle, that we are not to seek our own, but the Lord's will, and act with a view to promote his glory. Great is our proficiency, when, almost forgetting ourselves, certainly

postponing our own reason, we faithfully make it our study to obey God and his commandments. For when Scripture enjoins us to lay aside private regard to ourselves, it not only divests our minds of an excessive longing for wealth, or power, or human favour, but eradicates all ambition and thirst for worldly glory, and other more secret pests. The Christian ought, indeed, to be so trained and disposed as to consider, that during his whole life he has to do with God. For this reason, as he will bring all things to the disposal and estimate of God, so he will religiously direct his whole mind to him. For he who has learned to look to God in everything he does, is at the same time diverted from all vain thoughts. This is that self-denial which Christ so strongly enforces on his disciples from the very outset, (Matth. xvi. 24,) which, as soon as it takes hold of the mind, leaves no place either, first, for pride, show, and ostentation; or, secondly, for avarice, lust, luxury, effeminacy, or other vices which are engendered by self love. On the contrary, wherever it reigns not, the foulest vices are indulged in without shame; or, if there is some appearance of virtue, it is vitiated by a depraved longing for applause. Show me, if you can, an individual who, unless he has renounced himself in obedience to the Lord's command, is disposed to do good for its own sake. Those who have not so renounced themselves have followed virtue at least for the sake of praise. The philosophers who have contended most strongly that virtue is to be desired on her own account, were so inflated with arrogance as to make it apparent that they sought virtue for no

other reason than as a ground for indulging in pride. So far, therefore, is God from being delighted with these hunters after popular applause with their swollen breasts, that he declares they have received their reward in this world, (Matth. vi. 2,) and that harlots and publicans are nearer the kingdom of heaven than they, (Matth. xxi. 31.) We have not yet sufficiently explained how great and numerous are the obstacles by which a man is impeded in the pursuit of rectitude, so long as he has not renounced himself. The old saying is true, There is a world of iniquity treasured up in the human soul. Nor can you find any other remedy for this than to deny yourself, renounce your own reason, and direct your whole mind to the pursuit of those things which the Lord requires of you, and which you are to seek only because they are pleasing to Him.

3. In another passage, Paul gives a brief, indeed, but more distinct account of each of the parts of a well-ordered life: "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearance of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works," (Titus 2:11-14) After holding forth the grace of God to animate us, and pave the way for His true worship, he removes the two greatest obstacles which stand in the way, viz.,

ungodliness, to which we are by nature too prone, and worldly lusts, which are of still greater extent. Under *ungodliness*, he includes not merely superstition, but everything at variance with the true fear of God. *Worldly lusts* are equivalent to the lusts of the flesh. Thus he enjoins us, in regard to both tables of the Law, to lay aside our own mind, and renounce whatever our own reason and will dictate. Then he reduces all the actions of our lives to three branches, sobriety, righteousness, and godliness. *Sobriety* undoubtedly denotes as well chastity and temperance as the pure and frugal use of temporal goods, and patient endurance of want. *Righteousness* comprehends all the duties of equity, in every one his due. Next follows *godliness*, which separates us from the pollutions of the world, and connects us with God in true holiness. These, when connected together by an indissoluble chain, constitute complete perfection. But as nothing is more difficult than to bid adieu to the will of the flesh, subdue, nay, abjure our lusts, devote ourselves to God and our brethren, and lead an angelic life amid the pollutions of the world, Paul, to set our minds free from all entanglements, recalls us to the hope of a blessed immortality, justly urging us to contend, because as Christ has once appeared as our Redeemer, so on his final advent he will give full effect to the salvation obtained by him. And in this way he dispels all the allurements which becloud our path, and prevent us from aspiring as we ought to heavenly glory; nay, he tells us that we must be pilgrims in the world, that we may not fail of obtaining the heavenly inheritance.

4. Moreover, we see by these words that self-denial has respect partly to men and partly (more especially) to God, (sec. 8-10.) For when Scripture enjoins us, in regard to our fellow men, to prefer them in honour to ourselves, and sincerely labour to promote their advantages (Rom. xii. 10; Phil. ii. 3,) he gives us commands which our mind is utterly incapable of obeying until its natural feelings are suppressed. For so blindly do we all rush in the direction of self-love, that every one thinks he has a good reason for exalting himself and despising all others in comparison. If God has bestowed on us something not to be repented of, trusting to it, we immediately become elated, and not only swell, but almost burst with pride. The vices with which we abound we both carefully conceal from others, and flatteringly represent to ourselves as minute and trivial, nay, sometimes hug them as virtues. When the same qualities which we admire in ourselves are seen in others, even though they should be superior, we, in order that we may not be forced to yield to them, maliciously lower and carp at them; in like manner, in the case of vices, not contented with severe and keen animadversion, we studiously exaggerate them. Hence the insolence with which each, as if exempted from the common lot, seeks to exalt himself above his neighbour, confidently and proudly despising others, or at least looking down upon them as his inferiors. The poor man yields to the rich, the plebeian to the noble, the servant to the master, the unlearned to the learned, and yet every one inwardly cherishes some idea of his own superiority. Thus each flattering

himself, sets up a kind of kingdom in his breast; the arrogant, to satisfy themselves, pass censure on the minds and manners of other men, and when contention arises, the full venom is displayed. Many bear about with them some measure of mildness so long as all things go smoothly and lovingly with them, but how few are there who, when stung and irritated, preserve the same tenor of moderation? For this there is no other remedy than to pluck up by the roots those most noxious pests, self-love and love of victory. This the doctrine of Scripture does. For it teaches us to remember, that the endowments which God has bestowed upon us are not our own, but His free gifts, and that those who plume themselves upon them betray their ingratitude. "Who maketh thee to differ," saith Paul, "and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" (1 Cor. iv. 7.) Then by a diligent examination of our faults let us keep ourselves humble. Thus while nothing will remain to swell our pride, there will be much to subdue it. Again, we are enjoined, whenever we behold the gifts of God in others, so to reverence and respect the gifts, as also to honour those in whom they reside. God having been pleased to bestow honour upon them, it would ill become us to deprive them of it. Then we are told to overlook their faults, not, indeed, to encourage by flattering them, but not because of them to insult those whom we ought to regard with honour and good will. In this way, with regard to all with whom we have intercourse, our behaviour will be not only moderate and modest, but

courteous and friendly. The only way by which you can ever attain to true meekness, is to have your heart imbued with a humble opinion of yourself and respect for others.

5. How difficult it is to perform the duty of seeking the good of our neighbour! Unless you leave off all thought of yourself and in a manner cease to be yourself, you will never accomplish it. How can you exhibit those works of charity which Paul describes unless you renounce yourself, and become wholly devoted to others? "Charity (says he, 1 Cor. xiii. 4) suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked &c. Were it the only thing required of us to seek not our own, nature would not have the least power to comply: she so inclines us to love ourselves only, that she will not easily allow us carelessly to pass by ourselves and our own interests that we may watch over the interests of others, nay, spontaneously to yield our own rights and resign it to another. But Scripture, to conduct us to this, reminds us, that whatever we obtain from the Lord is granted on the condition of our employing it for the common good of the Church, and that, therefore, the legitimate use of all our gifts is a kind and liberal communication of them with others. There cannot be a surer rule, nor a stronger exhortation to the observance of it, than when we are taught that all the endowments which we possess are divine deposits entrusted to us for the very purpose of being

distributed for the good of our neighbour. But Scripture proceeds still farther when it likens these endowments to the different members of the body, (1 Cor. xii. 12.) No member has its function for itself, or applies it for its own private use, but transfers it to its fellow-members; nor does it derive any other advantage from it than that which it receives in common with the whole body. Thus, whatever the pious man can do, he is bound to do for his brethren, not consulting his own interest in any other way than by striving earnestly for the common edification of the Church. Let this, then, be our method of showing good-will and kindness, considering that, in regard to everything which God has bestowed upon us, and by which we can aid our neighbour, we are his stewards, and are bound to give account of our stewardship; moreover, that the only right mode of administration is that which is regulated by love. In this way, we shall not only unite the study of our neighbour's advantage with a regard to our own, but make the latter subordinate to the former. And lest we should have omitted to perceive that this is the law for duly administering every gift which we receive from God, he of old applied that law to the minutest expressions of his own kindness. He commanded the first-fruits to be offered to him as an attestation by the people that it was impious to reap any advantage from goods not previously consecrated to him, (Exod. xxii. 29; Exodus 23:19.) But if the gifts of God are not sanctified to us until we have with our own hand dedicated them to the Giver, it must be a gross abuse that does not give signs of such dedication. It is in vain to contend that

you cannot enrich the Lord by your offerings. Though, as the Psalmist says "Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not unto thee," yet you can extend it "to the saints that are in the earth," (Ps. 16:2, 3;) and therefore a comparison is drawn between sacred oblations and alms as now corresponding to the offerings under the Law.

6. Moreover, that we may not weary in well-doing, (as would otherwise forthwith and infallibly be the case,) we must add the other quality in the Apostle's enumeration, "Charity suffiereth long, and is kind, is not easily provoked," (1 Cor. xiii. 4.) The Lord enjoins us to do good to all without exception, though the greater part, if estimated by their own merit, are most unworthy of it. But Scripture subjoins a most excellent reason, when it tells us that we are not to look to what men in themselves deserve, but to attend to the image of God, which exists in all, and to which we owe all honour and love. But in those who are of the household of faith, the same rule is to be more carefully observed, inasmuch as that image is renewed and restored in them by the Spirit of Christ. Therefore, whoever be the man that is presented to you as needing your assistance, you have no ground for declining to give it to him. Say he is a stranger. The Lord has given him a mark which ought to be familiar to you: for which reason he forbids you to despise your own flesh, (Gal. vi. 10.) Say he is mean and of no consideration. The Lord points him out as one whom he has distinguished by the lustre of his own image, (Isaiah lviii. 7.) Say that you are bound to

him by no ties of duty. The Lord has substituted him as it were into his own place, that in him you may recognize the many great obligations under which the Lord has laid you to himself. Say that he is unworthy of your least exertion on his account; but the image of God, by which he is recommended to you, is worthy of yourself and all your exertions. But if he not only merits no good, but has provoked you by injury and mischief, still this is no good reason why you should not embrace him in love, and visit him with offices of love. He has deserved very differently from me, you will say. But what has the Lord deserved? Whatever injury he has done you, when he enjoins you to forgive him, he certainly means that it should be imputed to himself. In this way only we attain to what is not to say difficult but altogether against nature, to love those that hate us, render good for evil, and blessing for cursing, remembering that we are not to reflect on the wickedness of men, but look to the image of God in them, an image which, covering and obliterating their faults, should by its beauty and dignity allure us to love and embrace them.

7. We shall thus succeed in mortifying ourselves if we fulfil all the duties of charity. Those duties, however, are not fulfilled by the mere discharge of them, though none be omitted, unless it is done from a pure feeling of love. For it may happen that one may perform every one of these offices, in so far as the external act is concerned, and be far from performing them aright. For you see some who would be thought very liberal, and yet accompany every thing they give

with insult, by the haughtiness of their looks, or the violence of their words. And to such a calamitous condition have we come in this unhappy age, that the greater part of men never almost give alms without contumely. Such conduct ought not to have been tolerated even among the heathen; but from Christians something more is required than to carry cheerfulness in their looks, and give attractiveness to the discharge of their duties by courteous language. First, they should put themselves in the place of him whom they see in need of their assistance, and pity his misfortune as if they felt and bore it, so that a feeling of pity and humanity should incline them to assist him just as they would themselves. He who is thus minded will go and give assistance to his brethren, and not only not taint his acts with arrogance or upbraiding but will neither look down upon the brother to whom he does a kindness, as one who needed his help, or keep him in subjection as under obligation to him, just as we do not insult a diseased member when the rest of the body labours for its recovery, nor think it under special obligation to the other members, because it has required more exertion than it has returned. A communication of offices between members is not regarded as at all gratuitous, but rather as the payment of that which being due by the law of nature it were monstrous to deny. For this reason, he who has performed one kind of duty will not think himself thereby discharged, as is usually the case when a rich man, after contributing somewhat of his substance, delegates remaining burdens to others as if he had nothing to do with

them. Every one should rather consider, that however great he is, he owes himself to his neighbours, and that the only limit to his beneficence is the failure of his means. The extent of these should regulate that of his charity.

8. The principal part of self-denial, that which as we have said has reference to God, let us again consider more fully. Many things have already been said with regard to it which it were superfluous to repeat; and, therefore, it will be sufficient to view it as forming us to equanimity and endurance. First, then, in seeking the convenience or tranquillity of the present life, Scripture calls us to resign ourselves, and all we have, to the disposal of the Lord, to give him up the affections of our heart, that he may tame and subdue them. We have a frenzied desire, an infinite eagerness, to pursue wealth and honour, intrigue for power, accumulate riches, and collect all those frivolities which seem conducive to luxury and splendour. On the other hand, we have a remarkable dread, a remarkable hatred of poverty, mean birth, and a humble condition, and feel the strongest desire to guard against them. Hence, in regard to those who frame their life after their own counsel, we see how restless they are in mind, how many plans they try, to what fatigues they submit, in order that they may gain what avarice or ambition desires, or, on the other hand, escape poverty and meanness. To avoid similar entanglements, the course which Christian men must follow is this: first, they must not long for, or hope for, or think of any kind of prosperity apart from the

blessing of God; on it they must cast themselves, and there safely and confidently recline. For, however much the carnal mind may seem sufficient for itself when in the pursuit of honour or wealth, it depends on its own industry and zeal, or is aided by the favour of men, it is certain that all this is nothing, and that neither intellect nor labour will be of the least avail, except in so far as the Lord prospers both. On the contrary, his blessing alone makes a way through all obstacles, and brings every thing to a joyful and favourable issue. Secondly, though without this blessing we may be able to acquire some degree of fame and opulence, (as we daily see wicked men loaded with honours and riches,) yet since those on whom the curse of God lies do not enjoy the least particle of true happiness, whatever we obtain without his blessing must turn out ill. But surely men ought not to desire what adds to their misery.

9. Therefore, if we believe that all prosperous and desirable success depends entirely on the blessing of God, and that when it is wanting all kinds of misery and calamity await us, it follows that we should not eagerly contend for riches and honours, trusting to our own dexterity and assiduity, or leaning on the favour of men, or confiding in any empty imagination of fortune; but should always have respect to the Lord, that under his auspices we may be conducted to whatever lot he has provided for us. First, the result will be, that instead of rushing on regardless of right and wrong, by wiles and wicked arts, and with injury to our neighbours, to catch at wealth and seize upon

honours, we will only follow such fortune as we may enjoy with innocence. Who can hope for the aid of the divine blessing amid fraud, rapine, and other iniquitous arts? As this blessing attends him only who thinks purely and acts uprightly, so it calls off all who long for it from sinister designs and evil actions. Secondly, a curb will be laid upon us, restraining a too eager desire of becoming rich, or an ambitious striving after honour. How can any one have the effrontery to expect that God will aid him in accomplishing desires at variance with his word? What God with his own lips pronounces cursed, never can be prosecuted with his blessing. Lastly, if our success is not equal to our wish and hope, we shall, however, be kept from impatience and detestation of our condition, whatever it be, knowing that so to feel were to murmur against God, at whose pleasure riches and poverty, contempt and honours, are dispensed. In shorts he who leans on the divine blessing in the way which has been described, will not, in the pursuit of those things which men are wont most eagerly to desire, employ wicked arts which he knows would avail him nothing; nor when any thing prosperous befalls him will he impute it to himself and his own diligence, or industry, or fortune, instead of ascribing it to God as its author. If, while the affairs of others flourish, his make little progress, or even retrograde, he will bear his humble lot with greater equanimity and moderation than any irreligious man does the moderate success which only falls short of what he wished; for he has a solace in which he can rest more tranquilly than at the very

summit of wealth or power, because he considers that his affairs are ordered by the Lord in the manner most conducive to his salvation. This, we see, is the way in which David was affected, who, while he follows God and gives up himself to his guidance, declares, "Neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me. Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother," (Ps. 131:1, 2.)

10. Nor is it in this respect only that pious minds ought to manifest this tranquillity and endurance; it must be extended to all the accidents to which this present life is liable. He alone, therefore, has properly denied himself, who has resigned himself entirely to the Lord, placing all the course of his life entirely at his disposal. Happen what may, he whose mind is thus composed will neither deem himself wretched nor murmur against God because of his lot. How necessary this disposition is will appear, if you consider the many accidents to which we are liable. Various diseases ever and anon attack us: at one time pestilence rages; at another we are involved in all the calamities of war. Frost and hail, destroying the promise of the year, cause sterility, which reduces us to penury; wife, parents, children, relatives, are carried off by death; our house is destroyed by fire. These are the events which make men curse their life, detest the day of their birth, execrate the light of heaven, even censure God, and (as they are eloquent in blasphemy) charge him with cruelty and injustice. The believer must in these things also contemplate the

mercy and truly paternal indulgence of God. Accordingly, should he see his house by the removal of kindred reduced to solitude even then he will not cease to bless the Lord; his thought will be, Still the grace of the Lord, which dwells within my house, will not leave it desolate. If his crops are blasted, mildewed, or cut off by frost, or struck down by hail, and he sees famine before him, he will not however despond or murmur against God, but maintain his confidence in him; "We thy people, and sheep of thy pasture, will give thee thanks for ever," (Ps. lxxix. 13;) he will supply me with food, even in the extreme of sterility. If he is afflicted with disease, the sharpness of the pain will not so overcome him, as to make him break out with impatience, and expostulate with God; but, recognising justice and lenity in the rod, will patiently endure. In short, whatever happens, knowing that it is ordered by the Lord, he will receive it with a placid and grateful mind, and will not contumaciously resist the government of him, at whose disposal he has placed himself and all that he has. Especially let the Christian breast eschew that foolish and most miserable consolation of the heathen, who, to strengthen their mind against adversity, imputed it to fortune, at which they deemed it absurd to feel indignant, as she was aimless and rash, and blindly wounded the good equally with the bad. On the contrary, the rule of piety is, that the hand of God is the ruler and arbiter of the fortunes of all, and, instead of rushing on with thoughtless violence, dispenses good and evil with perfect regularity.

### CHAPTER III.

#### OF BEARING THE CROSS—ONE BRANCH OF SELF-DENIAL.

*The four divisions of this chapter are, — I. The nature of the cross, its necessity and dignity, sec. 1, 2. II. The manifold advantages of the cross described, sec. 3–6. III. The form of the cross the most excellent of all, and yet it by no means removes all sense of pain, sec. 7, 8. IV. A description of warfare under the cross, and of true patience, (not that of philosophers,) after the example of Christ, sec. 9–11.*

1. THE pious mind must ascend still higher, namely, whither Christ calls his disciples when he says, that every one of them must “take up his cross,” (Matth. xvi. 24.) Those whom the Lord has chosen and honoured with his intercourse must prepare for a hard, laborious, troubled life, a life full of many and various kinds of evils; it being the will of our heavenly Father to exercise his people in this way while putting them to the proof. Having begun this course with Christ the first-born, he continues it towards all his children. For though that Son was dear to him above others, the Son in whom he was “well pleased,” yet we see, that far from being treated gently and indulgently, we may say, that not only was he subjected to a perpetual cross while he dwelt on earth, but his whole life was nothing else than a kind of perpetual cross. The Apostle assigns the reason, “Though he was a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered,” (Heb. v.

8.) Why then should we exempt ourselves from that condition to which Christ our Head behaved to submit; especially since he submitted on our account, that he might in his own person exhibit a model of patience? Wherefore, the Apostle declares, that all the children of God are destined to be conformed to him. Hence it affords us great consolation in hard and difficult circumstances, which men deem evil and adverse, to think that we are holding fellowship with the sufferings of Christ; that as he passed to celestial glory through a labyrinth of many woes, so we too are conducted thither through various tribulations. For, in another passage, Paul himself thus speaks, "we must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of God," (Acts xiv. 22;) and again, "that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death," (Rom viii. 29.) How powerfully should it soften the bitterness of the cross, to think that the more we are afflicted with adversity, the surer we are made of our fellowship with Christ; by communion with whom our sufferings are not only blessed to us, but tend greatly to the furtherance of our salvation.

2. We may add, that the only thing which made it necessary for our Lord to undertake to bear the cross, was to testify and prove his obedience to the Father; whereas there are many reasons which make it necessary for us to live constantly under the cross. Feeble as we are by nature, and prone to ascribe all perfection to our flesh, unless we receive as it were

ocular demonstration of our weakness, we readily estimate our virtue above its proper worth, and doubt not that, whatever happens, it will stand unimpaired and invincible against all difficulties. Hence we indulge a stupid and empty confidence in the flesh, and then trusting to it wax proud against the Lord himself; as if our own faculties were sufficient without his grace. This arrogance cannot be better repressed than when He proves to us by experience, not only how great our weakness, but also our frailty is. Therefore, he visits us with disgrace, or poverty, or bereavement, or disease, or other afflictions. Feeling altogether unable to support them, we forthwith, in so far as regards ourselves, give way, and thus humbled learn to invoke his strength, which alone can enable us to bear up under a weight of affliction. Nay, even the holiest of men, however well aware that they stand not in their own strength, but by the grace of God, would feel too secure in their own fortitude and constancy, were they not brought to a more thorough knowledge of themselves by the trial of the cross. This feeling gained even upon David, "In my prosperity I Said, I shall never be moved. Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled," (Ps. 30:6, 7.) He confesses that in prosperity his feelings were dulled and blunted, so that, neglecting the grace of God, on which alone he ought to have depended, he leant to himself, and promised himself perpetuity. If it so happened to this great prophet, who of us should not fear and study caution? Though in tranquillity they flatter themselves with the idea of greater constancy

and patience, yet, humbled by adversity, they learn the deception. Believers, I say, warned by such proofs of their diseases, make progress in humility, and, divesting themselves of a depraved confidence in the flesh, betake themselves to the grace of God, and, when they have so betaken themselves, experience the presence of the divine power, in which is ample protection.

3. This Paul teaches when he says that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience. God having promised that he will be with believers in tribulation, they feel the truth of the promise; while supported by his hand, they endure patiently. This they could never do by their own strength. Patience, therefore, gives the saints an experimental proof that God in reality furnishes the aid which he has promised whenever there is need. Hence also their faith is confirmed, for it were very ungrateful not to expect that in future the truth of God will be, as they have already found it, firm and constant. We now see how many advantages are at once produced by the cross. Overturning the overweening opinion we form of our own virtue, and detecting the hypocrisy in which we delight, it removes our pernicious carnal confidence, teaching us, when thus humbled, to recline on God alone, so that we neither are oppressed nor despond. Then victory is followed by hope, inasmuch as the Lord, by performing what he has promised, establishes his truth in regard to the future. Were these the only reasons, it is surely plain how necessary it is for us to bear the cross. It is of no little

importance to be rid of your self-love, and made fully conscious of your weakness; so impressed with a sense of your weakness as to learn to distrust yourself—to distrust yourself so as to transfer your confidence to God, reclining on him with such heartfelt confidence as to trust in his aid, and continue invincible to the end, standing by his grace so as to perceive that he is true to his promises, and so assured of the certainty of his promises as to be strong in hope.

4. Another end which the Lord has in afflicting his people is to try their patience, and train them to obedience—not that they can yield obedience to him except in so far as he enables them; but he is pleased thus to attest and display striking proofs of the graces which he has conferred upon his saints, lest they should remain within unseen and unemployed. Accordingly, by bringing forward openly the strength and constancy of endurance with which he has provided his servants, he is said to try their patience. Hence the expressions that God tempted Abraham, (Gen. 21:1, 12,) and made proof of his piety by not declining to sacrifice his only son. Hence, too, Peter tells us that our faith is proved by tribulation, just as gold is tried in a furnace of fire. But who will say it is not expedient that the most excellent gift of patience which the believer has received from his God should be applied to uses by being made sure and manifest? Otherwise men would never value it according to its worth. But if God himself, to prevent the virtues which he has conferred upon believers from lurking

in obscurity, nay, lying useless and perishing, does aright in supplying materials for calling them forth, there is the best reason for the afflictions of the saints, since without them their patience could not exist. I say, that by the cross they are also trained to obedience, because they are thus taught to live not according to their own wish, but at the disposal of God. Indeed, did all things proceed as they wish, they would not know what it is to follow God. Seneca mentions (*De Vit. Beata*, cap. xv.) that there was an old proverb when any one was exhorted to endure adversity, "Follow God;" thereby intimating, that men truly submitted to the yoke of God only when they gave their back and hand to his rod. But if it is most right that we should in all things prove our obedience to our heavenly Father, certainly we ought not to decline any method by which he trains us to obedience.

5. Still, however, we see not how necessary that obedience is, unless we at the same time consider how prone our carnal nature is to shake off the yoke of God whenever it has been treated with some degree of gentleness and indulgence. It just happens to it as with refractory horses, which, if kept idle for a few days at hack and manger, become ungovernable, and no longer recognize the rider, whose command before they implicitly obeyed. And we invariably become what God complains of in the people of Israel—waxing gross and fat, we kick against him who reared and nursed us, (*Deut.* xxxii. 15.) The kindness of God should allure us to ponder and love

his goodness; but since such is our malignity, that we are invariably corrupted by his indulgence, it is more than necessary for us to be restrained by discipline from breaking forth into such petulance. Thus, lest we become emboldened by an over-abundance of wealth; lest elated with honour, we grow proud; lest inflated with other advantages of body, or mind, or fortune, we grow insolent, the Lord himself interferes as he sees to be expedient by means of the cross, subduing and curbing the arrogance of our flesh, and that in various ways, as the advantage of each requires. For as we do not all equally labour under the same disease, so we do not all need the same difficult cure. Hence we see that all are not exercised with the same kind of cross. While the heavenly Physician treats some more gently, in the case of others he employs harsher remedies, his purpose being to provide a cure for all. Still none is left free and untouched, because he knows that all, without a single exception, are diseased.

6. We may add, that our most merciful Father requires not only to prevent our weakness, but often to correct our past faults, that he may keep us in due obedience. Therefore, whenever we are afflicted we ought immediately to call to mind our past life. In this way we will find that the faults which we have committed are deserving of such castigation. And yet the exhortation to patience is not to be founded chiefly on the acknowledgment of sin. For Scripture supplies a far better consideration when it says, that in adversity "we are chastened of the Lord, that we

should not be condemned with the world," (1 Cor. xi. 32.) Therefore, in the very bitterness of tribulation we ought to recognise the kindness and mercy of our Father, since even then he ceases not to further our salvation. For he afflicts, not that he may ruin or destroy but rather that he may deliver us from the condemnation of the world. Let this thought lead us to what Scripture elsewhere teaches: "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of his correction: For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth," (Prov. 3:11, 12.) When we perceive our Father's rod, is it not our part to behave as obedient docile sons rather than rebelliously imitate desperate men, who are hardened in wickedness? God dooms us to destruction, if he does not, by correction, call us back when we have fallen off from him, so that it is truly said, "If ye be without chastisement," "then are ye bastards, and not sons," (Heb. xii. 8.) We are most perverse then if we cannot bear him while he is manifesting his good-will to us, and the care which he takes of our salvation. Scripture states the difference between believers and unbelievers to be, that the latter, as the slaves of inveterate and deep-seated iniquity, only become worse and more obstinate under the lash; whereas the former, like free-born sons turn to repentance. Now, therefore, choose your class. But as I have already spoken of this subject, it is sufficient to have here briefly adverted to it.

7. There is singular consolation, moreover, when we are persecuted for righteousness' sake. For our

thought should then be, How high the honour which God bestows upon us in distinguishing us by the special badge of his soldiers. By suffering persecution for righteousness' sake, I mean not only striving for the defence of the Gospel, but for the defence of righteousness in any way. Whether, therefore, in maintaining the truth of God against the lies of Satan, or defending the good and innocent against the injuries of the bad, we are obliged to incur the offence and hatred of the world, so as to endanger life, fortune, or honour, let us not grieve or decline so far to spend ourselves for God; let us not think ourselves wretched in those things in which he with his own lips has pronounced us blessed, (Matth. v. 10.) Poverty, indeed considered in itself, is misery; so are exile, contempt, imprisonment, ignominy: in fine, death itself is the last of all calamities. But when the favour of God breathes upon us, there is none of these things which may not turn out to our happiness. Let us then be contented with the testimony of Christ rather than with the false estimate of the flesh, and then, after the example of the Apostles, we will rejoice in being "counted worthy to suffer shame for his name," (Acts v. 41.) For why? If, while conscious of our innocence, we are deprived of our substance by the wickedness of man, we are, no doubt, humanly speaking, reduced to poverty; but in truth our riches in heaven are increased: if driven from our homes we have a more welcome reception into the family of God; if vexed and despised, we are more firmly rooted in Christ; if stigmatised by disgrace and ignominy, we have a higher place in the kingdom of

God; and if we are slain, entrance is thereby given us to eternal life. The Lord having set such a price upon us, let us be ashamed to estimate ourselves at less than the shadowy and evanescent allurements of the present life.

8. Since by these, and similar considerations, Scripture abundantly solaces us for the ignominy or calamities which we endure in defence of righteousness, we are very ungrateful if we do not willingly and cheerfully receive them at the hand of the Lord, especially since this form of the cross is the most appropriate to believers, being that by which Christ desires to be glorified in us, as Peter also declares, (1 Pet. 4:11, 14.) But as to ingenuous natures, it is more bitter to suffer disgrace than a hundred deaths, Paul expressly reminds us that not only persecution, but also disgrace awaits us, "because we trust in the living God," (1 Tim. iv. 10.) So in another passage he bids us, after his example, walk "by evil report and good report," (2 Cor. vi. 8.) The cheerfulness required, however, does not imply a total insensibility to pain. The saints could show no patience under the cross if they were not both tortured with pain and grievously molested. Were there no hardship in poverty, no pain in disease, no sting in ignominy, no fear in death, where would be the fortitude and moderation in enduring them? But while every one of these, by its inherent bitterness, naturally vexes the mind, the believer in this displays his fortitude, that though fully sensible of the bitterness and labouring grievously, he still withstands and struggles boldly;

in this displays his patience, that though sharply stung, he is however curbed by the fear of God from breaking forth into any excess; in this displays his alacrity, that though pressed with sorrow and sadness, he rests satisfied with spiritual consolation from God.

9. This conflict which believers maintain against the natural feeling of pain, while they study moderation and patience, Paul elegantly describes in these words: "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed," (2 Cor. 4:8, 9.) You see that to bear the cross patiently is not to have your feelings altogether blunted, and to be absolutely insensible to pain, according to the absurd description which the Stoics of old gave of their hero as one who, divested of humanity, was affected in the same way by adversity and prosperity, grief and joy; or rather, like a stone, was not affected by anything. And what did they gain by that sublime wisdom? they exhibited a shadow of patience, which never did, and never can, exist among men. Nay, rather by aiming at a too exact and rigid patience, they banished it altogether from human life. Now also we have among Christians a new kind of Stoics, who hold it vicious not only to groan and weep, but even to be sad and anxious. These paradoxes are usually started by indolent men who, employing themselves more in speculation than in action, can do nothing else for us than beget such paradoxes. But we have nothing to do with that iron philosophy which our

Lord and Master condemned—not only in word, but also by his own example. For he both grieved and shed tears for his own and others' woes. Nor did he teach his disciples differently: "Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice," (John xvi. 20.) And lest any one should regard this as vicious, he expressly declares, "Blessed are they that mourn," (Matth. v. 4.) And no wonder. If all tears are condemned, what shall we think of our Lord himself, whose "sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground?" (Luke xxii. 44; Matth. xxvi. 38.) If every kind of fear is a mark of unbelief, what place shall we assign to the dread which, it is said, in no slight degree amazed him; if all sadness is condemned, how shall we justify him when he confesses, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death?"

10. I wished to make these observations to keep pious minds from despair, lest, from feeling it impossible to divest themselves of the natural feeling of grief, they might altogether abandon the study of patience. This must necessarily be the result with those who convert patience into stupor, and a brave and firm man into a block. Scripture gives saints the praise of endurance when, though afflicted by the hardships they endure, they are not crushed; though they feel bitterly, they are at the same time filled with spiritual joy; though pressed with anxiety, breathe exhilarated by the consolation of God. Still there is a certain degree of repugnance in their hearts, because natural sense shuns and dreads what is adverse to it, while pious

affection, even through these difficulties, tries to obey the divine will. This repugnance the Lord expressed when he thus addressed Peter: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself and walkedst whither thou wouldst; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee; and carry thee whither thou wouldest not," (John xxi. 18.) It is not probable, indeed, that when it became necessary to glorify God by death he was driven to it unwilling and resisting; had it been so, little praise would have been due to his martyrdom. But though he obeyed the divine ordination with the greatest alacrity of heart, yet, as he had not divested himself of humanity, he was distracted by a double will. When he thought of the bloody death which he was to die, struck with horror, he would willingly have avoided it: on the other hand, when he considered that it was God who called him to it, his fear was vanquished and suppressed, and he met death cheerfully. It must therefore be our study, if we would be disciples of Christ, to imbue our minds with such reverence and obedience to God as may tame and subjugate all affections contrary to his appointment. In this way, whatever be the kind of cross to which we are subjected, we shall in the greatest straits firmly maintain our patience. Adversity will have its bitterness, and sting us. When afflicted with disease, we shall groan and be disquieted, and long for health; pressed with poverty, we shall feel the stings of anxiety and sadness, feel the pain of ignominy, contempt, and injury, and pay the tears due to nature at the death of our friends: but our

conclusion will always be, The Lord so willed it, therefore let us follow his will. Nay, amid the pungency of grief, among groans and tears this thought will necessarily suggest itself and incline us cheerfully to endure the things for which we are so afflicted.

11. But since the chief reason for enduring the cross has been derived from a consideration of the divine will, we must in few words explain wherein lies the difference between philosophical and Christian patience. Indeed, very few of the philosophers advanced so far as to perceive that the hand of God tries us by means of affliction, and that we ought in this matter to obey God. The only reason which they adduce is, that so it must be. But is not this just to say, that we must yield to God, because it is in vain to contend against him? For if we obey God only because it is necessary, provided we can escape, we shall cease to obey him. But what Scripture calls us to consider in the will of God is very different, namely, first justice and equity, and then a regard to our own salvation. Hence Christian exhortations to patience are of this nature, Whether poverty, or exile, or imprisonment, or contumely, or disease, or bereavement, or any such evil affects us, we must think that none of them happens except by the will and providence of God; moreover, that every thing he does is in the most perfect order. What! do not our numberless daily faults deserve to be chastised, more severely, and with a heavier rod than his mercy lays upon us? Is it not most right that our flesh should be

subdued, and be, as it were, accustomed to the yoke, so as not to rage and wanton as it lists? Are not the justice and the truth of God worthy of our suffering on their account? But if the equity of God is undoubtedly displayed in affliction, we cannot murmur or struggle against them without iniquity. We no longer hear the frigid cant, Yield, because it is necessary; but a living and energetic precept, Obey, because it is unlawful to resist; bear patiently, because impatience is rebellion against the justice of God. Then as that only seems to us attractive which we perceive to be for our own safety and advantage, here also our heavenly Father consoles us, by the assurance, that in the very cross with which he afflicts us he provides for our salvation. But if it is clear that tribulations are salutary to us, why should we not receive them with calm and grateful minds? In bearing them patiently we are not submitting to necessity but resting satisfied with our own good. The effect of these thoughts is, that to whatever extent our minds are contracted by the bitterness which we naturally feel under the cross, to the same extent will they be expanded with spiritual joy. Hence arises thanksgiving, which cannot exist unless joy be felt. But if the praise of the Lord and thanksgiving can emanate only from a cheerful and gladdened breasts and there is nothing which ought to interrupt these feelings in us, it is clear how necessary it is to temper the bitterness of the cross with spiritual joy.

# Islam

## Arabian Wisdom

By John Wortabet

[1913]

### A SINNER'S CRY UNTO GOD

O Thou who knowest every thought, and hearest every cry, Who art the source of all that is, or ever shall be, Who art the only hope in every trouble, The only help in every plaint and every woe, Whose treasures of bounty and word creative are one, God of all good, hear my prayer!

One sole plea I have — my need of Thee;  
 But needing Thee my need is filled.  
 One only resource I have — to stand and knock;  
 And if unheard at Thy mercy-gate, to whom shall I go?  
 Shom shall I call, what Name shall I invoke,  
 If Thy needy servant shall in vain Thy bounty seek?  
 But far be it from Thee, God of grace, to refuse a sinner's cry.  
 Too good and gracious art Thou to send me thus away.

Contrite, I stand at Thy door,  
 Believing that contrite prayer availeth much with

Thee. Suppliant, I stretch forth my hands,  
 And with all my soul look up to Thee.  
 Save me, God, from every ill, and be Thy favour ever  
 mine!

### FORGIVING OTHERS

*Koran.* God forgiveth past sins; let men forgive and pardon. Forgive freely. Forgiving others is the nearest thing to piety.

*Traditions.* He who forgiveth others, God forgiveth him.

Be merciful, and you will have mercy; forgive and you will be forgiven.

*Sayings and Proverbs.* Of all things God loveth best forgiveness when one is able to inflict harm, and forbearance when one is angry.

The pleasure of forgiving is sweeter than the pleasure of revenge.

Forgiveness is perfect when the sin is not remembered.

The most wicked of men is he who accepts no apology, covers no sin, and forgives no fault.

Small men transgress, great men forgive.

A noble man condones and pardons, and when by chance he finds out a sin, he conceals it.

A man said to another who had spoken evil of him: "If what you have said be true, may God forgive me; and if false, may He forgive you."

### CLEMENCY, FORBEARANCE, AND GENTLENESS

*Koran.* Those who worship the Merciful One are they who walk on the earth gently, and who, when fools speak to them, say "Peace." (25, 64.)

*Traditions* Be friendly to him who would be unfriendly to you, give him who will not give you, and forbear with him who would do you harm.

Next to faith in God, the chief duty of man is to treat his fellow men with gentleness and courtesy.

*Sayings and Proverbs.* Gentleness is one of the noblest traits in a man's character.

A gentle man is a man of great beauty.

One of the surest evidences of gentleness is tenderness to fools.

The fierce anger of a foolish man is checked by gentleness as a fierce fire is extinguished by water.

Gentleness is sometimes an humiliation, and he who is always forbearing and patient may be trodden down by fools.

If you honour a vile man, you disgrace the code of honour.

## **HUMILITY**

Humility is that line of conduct which is a mean between overbearing pride on the one hand and abject servility on the other, as economy is the middle term between extravagance and avarice.

Humility is the crown of nobility, a ladder to honour, and a means of procuring love and esteem.

He who humbleth himself, God lifteth him up.

When Abu-Bekr, "the righteous" (the first Khalif), was praised, he used to say: "O God, Thou knowest me better than I know myself, and I know myself better than they know me. Make me, I pray Thee, better than they suppose; forgive me what they know not, and lay not to my account what they say."

A wise man was once asked whether he knew of any good which is not coveted, or any evil which deserves no mercy, and he said: "Yes, they are humility and pride."

To despise a proud man is true humility.

**TRUE NOBILITY**

True nobility lies in high character and refined manners, not in noble birth or ancient pedigree.

A noble man is he who aims at noble ends—not he who glories in an ancestry mouldering in the dust.

A noble man is noble though he come to want, and a base man is base though he walks on pearls.

A lion is a lion though his claws be clipped, and a dog is a dog though he wear a collar of gold.

He who disregards his own honour gets no good from an honourable lineage.

Learning and high principles take the place of noble birth, and cover the shame of a low origin.

A branch tells of what stock it comes.

**SELF-RESPECT, AND THE SENSE OF SHAME**

Son of man, if you have no self-respect, do what you will.

Men see no fault in one who respects himself.

If you fear not the consequences of an evil life, and have no sense of shame, you are free to do what you will.

No, by God, life has no worth, and this world has no happiness to a man who has lost his self-respect and abandons himself to shamelessness.

There is no good in a man who is not ashamed of men.

He who has a brazen face has a craven heart.

To be ashamed before God is to obey His commandments and to avoid what He has forbidden; to be ashamed before men is to avoid all harm to them; and to be ashamed before one's self is to be chaste and clean when one is alone.

Be ashamed in your own sight more than in the sight of men.

He who does a thing in secret of which he would be ashamed if done openly, has no respect for himself.

He who respects not himself can have no respect for others.

I shall not kiss a hand which deserves to be cut off.

## **CHARACTER**

A man is truly religious when he is truly good.

A good character is a great boon.

Kind words are the bonds of love.

A kind word is like an act of charity.

If you cannot help men with money, help them with a cheerful face and a kindly bearing.

No man is entitled to consideration unless he has these three things, or at least one of them: the fear of God to restrain him from evil, forbearance with wicked men, and a good nature towards all.

There are cases where not kindness but severity is necessary.

Kindness increases the love of friends, and diminishes the hatred of enemies.

Be firm after you have been kind.

God loves the man who is tender-hearted.

An evil nature is a calamity from which there is no escape.

If you hear that a mountain has moved from its place believe it, but if you hear that a man has changed his character do not believe it, for he will act only according to his nature.

An inherited quality may be traced back to the seventh grandfather.

There are four points in a good character from which all other good traits take their origin—prudence, courage, continence, and justice.

When a woman has had more than one husband in this life, she will, in the future state, be free to be the wife of him whose character she esteemed the most.

### **BENEVOLENCE**

*Koran.* Do good unto others as God has done unto you.

Is the reward of kindness anything but kindness?

He who does a kindly act shall be recompensed tenfold.

Ye can never be righteous unless ye give away from that which ye love.

*Traditions.* The upper hand [which giveth] is better than the lower hand [which taketh].

God's creatures are the objects of His care, and He loveth best that man who is most helpful to them.

*Proverbs.* Do not be ashamed to give little, for it is less than that, if you give nothing.

If you give, give freely, and if you strike, strike boldly.

He who soweth kindness shall reap thanks.

What a man does for God is never lost.

Be merciful to him who is beneath you, and you will have mercy from Him who is above you.

The best kind of good is that which is done most speedily.

Inopportune kindness is injustice.

No true joy but in doing good and no true sorrow but in doing evil.

Cruelty to animals is forbidden by God.

A peacemaker gets two-thirds of the blows.

### **GENEROSITY**

Generosity is to do a kindness before it is asked, and to pity and give a man who asks.

A generous man is nigh unto God, nigh unto men, nigh unto paradise, far from hell.

Overlook the faults of a generous man, for God helps him when he falls and gives him when he is needy.

A man who doeth good does not fall, and if he fall he will find a support.

Be not ashamed to give little – to refuse is less.

## GRATITUDE

He is unthankful to God who is unthankful to man.

He who is unthankful for little is unthankful for much.

God continues His favours to him who is grateful.

He who is ungrateful for the good he receives deserves that it should be withdrawn from him.

Man can be thankful to God only so far as he does good to his fellow men.

If a man professes to thank God and his wealth decreases, his thanksgiving must be vitiated by his neglect of the hungry and naked.

Be grateful to him who has done you good, and do good to him who is grateful to you.

Gratitude takes three forms – a feeling in the heart, an expression in words, and a giving in return.

The most worthless things on earth are these four – rain on a barren soil, a lamp in sunshine, a beautiful woman given in marriage to a blind man, and a good deed to one who is ungrateful.

**RECOMPENSE**

To recompense good for good is a duty.

Neglect of recompense is contemptible.

If a man do you a favour recompense him, and if you are unable to do so, pray for him.

The worst kind of recompense is to requite evil for good.

Reproach faults by kindness, and requite evil by good.

There is no glory in revenge.

What you put into the pot you will take out in the ladle.

He who plays with a cat must bear its scratches.

He who lives in a house of glass should not throw stones at people.

Sins may lurk, but God deals heavy blows.

**FLAUNTING KINDNESS**

To carry a heavy rock to the summit of a mountain is easier than to receive a kindness which is flaunted.

The bane of a generous action is to mention it.

It is better to refuse a kindness than to be reminded of it.

I would not accept the whole world if I were to suffer the humiliation of being constantly reminded of the gift.

To bestow and flaunt a kindness, and to be stingy and refuse to do an act of kindness, are equally bad.

When you do a kindness hide it, and when a kindness is done to you proclaim it.

Do good, and throw it into the sea.

### **KNOWLEDGE**

*Koran.* O God, increase my knowledge. Are they who know and they who know not equal?

He who has been given wisdom has been given a great good.

What ye have been given of knowledge is only a small part.

Above a learned man there is one more learned.

*Traditions.* Learned men are trustees to whom God has confided mankind.

Stars are the beauty of the heavens, and learned men are the ornament of a people.

Angels bend down their wings to a seeker of knowledge.

*Proverbs.* The rank of the learned is the highest of all ranks.

If learning does not give wealth it will give esteem.

Knowledge increaseth the honour of a nobleman, and bringeth men of low degree into the houses of kings.

A seat of learning is a garden of heaven.

Forgetfulness is the bane of knowledge.

It is difficult for a man to know himself.

Knowledge is a lamp from which men light their candles.

A mind without education is like a brave man without arms.

Kings govern men, and learned men govern kings.

That day in which I have learned nothing, and in which I have added nothing to my knowledge, is no part of my life.

He who seeks learning without study will attain his end when the raven becomes grey with age.

To every noble horse a stumble, and to every learned man an error.

Knowledge does not save from error, nor wealth from trouble.

The owner of the house knows best what is in it.

### **WISDOM, PRUDENCE, EXPERIENCE**

Reason is a light in the heart which distinguishes between truth and error.

A wise man sees with his heart what a fool does not see with his eyes.

Men should be judged according to their lights (reason).

A wise man is not he who considers how he may get out of an evil, but he who sees that he does not fall into it.

Actions are judged by their endings. If you desire a thing, consider its end.

A man cannot be wise without experience.

No wise man will be bitten twice from the same den.

No boon is so remunerative as reason.

Long experience is an addition to mind.

Consideration may take the place of experience.

A wise man is he who has been taught by experience.

One word is sufficient to the wise man.

A cheap offer makes a wise purchaser wary.

He who considers consequences will attain his object, and he who does not carefully think on them, evil will be sure to overtake him.

Everything has need of reason, and reason has need of experience.

Mind and experience are like water and earth co-operating—neither of which alone can bring forth a flower.

Reason and anxious thought are inseparable.

A wise man is never happy. (For in much wisdom is much grief, and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow. — ECCLES. i. 18.)

### **Ignorance, Folly**

Ignorance is the greatest poverty.

Ignorance is death in life.

There is no evil so great as ignorance.

Folly is an incurable disease.

A foolish man is like an old garment, which if you patch it in one place becomes rent in many other places.

It is just as allowable to blame a blind man for want of sight as to blame a fool for his folly.

To bear the folly of a fool is indeed a great hardship.

The best way to treat a fool is to shun him.

The fool is an enemy to himself—how can he then be a friend to others?

An ignorant man is highly favoured, for he casts away the burden of life, and does not vex his soul with thoughts of time and eternity.

The most effectual preacher to a man is himself. A man never turns away from his passions unless the rebuke comes from himself to himself.

### CONSULTATION

If you consult a wise man, his wisdom becomes yours.

Confide your secret to one only, and hear the counsel of a thousand. (In the multitude of counsellors there is safety. PROV. xi. 14.)

A counsellor is a trusted man.

When men consult together, they are led by the wisest among them.

The knowledge of two is better than the knowledge of one. Two heads are better than one.

Let your counsellor be one who fears God.

Consult a man of experience, for he gives you what has cost him much, and for which you give nothing.

A man who is older than yourself by a day is more experienced than you by a year.

Consult an older man and a younger, then decide for yourself.

The wisest may need the advice of others.

He who is wise, and consults others, is a whole man; he who has a wise opinion of his own, and seeks no counsel from others, is half a man; and he who has no opinion of his own, and seeks no advice, is no man at all.

No man can be sorry for seeking advice, or happy if he blindly follows out his own thoughts.

### **SILENCE, GUARDED SPEECH**

Wise men are silent.

Silence is often more eloquent than words.

Be not hasty with your tongue. If words are silver, silence is gold.

Not all that is known should be said.

Silence is a wise thing, but they who observe it are few.

When the mind becomes large speech becomes little.

Restrain your tongue from saying anything but what is good.

An unguarded word may do you great harm.

A man who talks much is open to much blame.

The most faulty of men are they that are most loquacious in matters which do not concern them.

To guard his tongue is one of the best traits in a man's character.

Man is saved from much evil if he guard his tongue.

The tongue is a lion which must be chained, and a sharp sword which must be sheathed.

Nothing on earth is so deserving of a long imprisonment as the tongue.

Beware of saying anything of which you may be ashamed.

It is better to regret a thing which you did not say than a thing which you did say.

A slip of the foot is safer than a slip of the tongue. A false step may break a bone which can be set, but a slip of the tongue cannot be undone.

A thrust of the tongue is sharper than the thrust of a lance.

A word may cause much trouble, destroy a home, or open a grave.

A great tree grows out of a small seed.

The difference between loquacity and silence is like the difference between the noisy frog and the silent whale.

Wisdom is made up of ten parts—nine of which are silence, and the tenth is brevity of language.

A man conceals his ignorance by his silence.

He who says what he should not say, will have to hear what he would not like to hear.

He who talks much does little.

What is said at night the day blots out.

## Truthfulness

*Koran.* O ye that believe, fear God and be truthful! Verily God recompenseth the truthfulness of the truthful.

*Traditions.* Be ever truthful, for truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to heaven.

Veracity brings peace to the heart.

No man's religion can be right until his heart become right, nor can his heart become right until his tongue is right.

Keep to the truth though it may harm thee, and keep away from falsehood though it may profit thee.

A man can be perfect only when he speaks the truth and acts according to the truth.

*Proverbs.* Truth is the sword of God, which always cleaves when it smites.

Truth is armed with horns.

By truth man is saved from evil.

If falsehood saves from trouble truth saves much more.

When thou speakest be truthful, and when thou actest be gentle.

An ignorant man who is true is better than a clever man who is false.

There are two kinds of truthfulness, and the greatest of them is that which may do thee harm.

If truth and falsehood were pictured they would be represented by a terrible lion and a cunning fox.

It is better to die a truthful man than to live the life of a liar.

#### TRUTHFULNESS TO PROMISES

*Koran.* Be true to a covenant, for a covenant holds a man responsible. Be faithful to your pledged covenants and keep your oaths.

*Traditions.* A man who keeps not his word has no religion.

A true man's word is like an oath.

Be truthful in what you say, faithful to your promise, and careful of what is entrusted to you.

A pledged word is as if you had made the gift.

*Proverbs.* A true man keeps his promise.

A pledged word has the same value as a debt.

The promise of a true man is a greater obligation than a debt.

That man is a hypocrite who prays and fasts, but is untruthful in what he says, false to his word, and unfaithful in discharging a trust.

## DECEIT

Deceit does more harm to the deceitful than to the deceived.

If a man commit these three things they will rise against him in judgment and punishment—aggression, perfidy, and deceit.

To be true to the perfidious is perfidy, and to deceive the deceitful is lawful.

In deceiving your neighbour be more wary than when he is trying to deceive you.

When one would deceive you, and you feign to be deceived, you have deceived him.

He who would deceive one who cannot be deceived is only deceiving himself.

He who allows himself to be deceived by what his enemy says is the greatest enemy to himself.

A wise man neither deceives nor is deceived.

If a man believe in a stone it will do him good.

Self-deception is one of the forms of folly.

Most men think well of themselves, and this is self-delusion.

Vain desires are rarely realised, but they may give comfort in sorrow or pleasure in empty hope.

### **EXERTION, PERSEVERANCE, SUCCESS**

A man obtains only what he strives for.

He who seeks and struggles shall find.

Struggles bring the most unlikely things within reach.

When a man makes up his mind to do a thing it becomes easy for him to do it.

If you have a clear thought, be decided, and hesitate not—if you decide, hesitate not, but carry it out speedily.

You must be ready to confront difficulties if you would realise your hopes.

It is the part of man to strive, and not to rely on the favours of Fortune.

Not every one who seeks shall find, nor every one who is indifferent be denied.

Beware of giving up hope in what you earnestly seek.

A wise man perseveres, and is not easily turned away.

Not by fitful efforts, but by constancy, is an end secured.

The most profitable labour is that which is most persevering – though it may not be strenuous.

A moderate success is better than overwhelming work.

Success comes to him who abjures procrastination.

The world is the booty of the skilful.

The most wonderful thing in the world is the success of a fool and the failure of a wise man.

A pleasing manner is a great aid to success.

It is the duty of man to do his utmost, but he is not responsible for success.

Do not undertake a work for which you are not competent.

What can a tirewoman do with an ugly face?

**PATIENCE**

God is with them that are patient. God loveth them that are patient (*Koran*).

Patience is one-half of religious duty.

There are two kinds of patience – one is for something which you desire, the other in something which you hate; and he is a strong man who can combine them both.

Patience is mostly needed at the first shock.

Grief is dispelled by patience.

The device of a man who hath no device is patience.

So long as there is a claimant, no just case is ever lost.

Patience is a bitter cup, which the strong alone can drink.

A misfortune is one, but it becomes two to the impatient.

Patience is one of the gifts of heaven.

He who is impatient to hear one word will have to listen to many words.

Difficulties can be overcome only by patience.

It is a good omen when your messenger is delayed.

Rarely does a patient man fail in obtaining that which he seeks.

Be patient—every cloud dissipates, and every evil which does not continue is a small thing.

He who receives the strokes is not like him who counts them.

### CONTENTMENT

Contentment is to refrain from coveting what others have.

Contentment is a treasure which is inexhaustible.

The most thankful of men is he who is contented.

He who seeks riches must seek them in contentment.

Give freely, and be content with little.

A contented man is happy in life.

Life is a vanishing space of time, and he alone vanquishes its changing fortunes who lives in contentment.

Be content with what God has given you, and you will be the richest of men.

If you cannot have what you want, be content with what you have.

If all cannot be obtained, a part may be attained.

There is relief in despair.

### **ANGER**

The first part of anger is madness and the second is regret.

Passion and blindness are inseparable mates.

Beware of anger, for it ends in the humiliation of apology.

Anger leads to all kinds of evil.

When you are angry be silent.

It is not a trait of noble character to be hasty either in anger or in revenge.

The anger of a fool reveals itself in what he says, and the anger of a wise man in what he does.

Quarrelsomeness is a contemptible habit.

Call not yourself a man so long as you are angry.

**HATRED, MALICE**

Of all men God abhors most an implacable enemy.

Of all things nothing is so bad as the making of enemies.

Of all evils nothing is so hard to be borne as the triumph of an enemy.

Rejoice not over a fallen man—he may rise and you may fall.

Despise no enemy, however insignificant he may be—see how the shadow of the earth causes an eclipse of the moon, or how a midge brings a tear to the eye of a lion.

He who makes enemies shall have many a restless night.

He who has many enemies, let him expect a downfall.

When anger is repressed by reason of inability to do immediate harm, it retires into the heart in the form of malice and breeds these vices—envy, triumph over the enemy's ill, repulsion of friendly approaches, contempt, slander, derision, personal violence, and injustice.

**ENVY**

The difference between envy and emulation is, that in the first the desire is for the cessation of a good enjoyed by another, and in the second the desire is for the possession of a similar good.

An envious man is angry with God for His favours to other men.

Every favoured man is envied.

A lordly man is always an object of admiration or of envy.

Beware of envy, for it shows itself in you, not in him whom you envy.

Envy is a disease for which there is no cure.

Envy is a disease which does more harm to the envious than to the envied.

All enmity may be overcome except that which comes from envy.

There can be no peace in the heart of an envious man.

A man cannot be happy if he be malicious, envious, or ill-tempered.

Keep your affairs to yourself, for every favoured man is an object of envy.

Envy may be cured only by a sure knowledge that it is a cause of much pain to you and no evil to him whom you envy—so you must shun it if you would not be an enemy to yourself and a friend to your enemy.

Envy consumes man, as rust corrodes iron.

He who strains his neck to look at one above him gets nothing but pain.

Envy no man except him who is good.

### **RASHNESS**

Beware of rashness, for it has well been called the Mother of Regrets.

He who acts hastily either makes a blunder, or comes very near it.

He who is deliberate is either right, or very nearly so.

A hasty act comes from the Evil One, and a deliberate act from God.

Haste is the resort of the weak.

### **LAZINESS**

Hopes are never realized by sloth.

A lazy man can never succeed in life.

It is one of the signs of weakness to leave things to fate.

A lazy man loses what is due to him.

Weakness and sloth lead to ruin.

A man gets tired of having nothing to do, as he gets tired of work.

If work is hard, want of work is a great evil.

Youth, riches, and leisure are the great corrupters of life.

The head of an idle man is the workshop of Satan.

#### **AVARICE, STINGINESS, GREED**

Avarice and faith in God can never live together in the heart of man.

Avarice and ill-nature have no place in the heart of a good man.

Avarice is the parent of all evil dispositions.

The riches of an avaricious man go either to naught or to an heir.

He who is close-fisted shall be treated in a like manner.

A man who is miserly to himself cannot be generous to others.

An avaricious man is more lavish of his life than of his money.

A liberal man lives on his riches, a miser is eaten up by them.

A miser lives the life of a poor man in this world, and will be judged as a rich man in the world to come.

He who makes his morsel large will be choked.

Avarice is the murderer of the miser.

Greed is the mate of sorrow.

Strong wine is not more destructive to reason than greed.

An old man continues to be young in two things—love of money and love of life.

#### **COMPLAINT, BLAME**

To God alone I make my plaint of sorrow and grief  
(*Koran* 12, 86).

To bewail grief, except to God, is an humiliation.

Lamentation is the weapon of the weak.

A good man sees his own faults and is blind to the faults of others.

Censure your friend by kindness, and return the evil which he may have done to you by acts of favour.

To blame a friend is better than to lose him.

No man is free from faults.

If you count your friend's faults you will have no friend left.

An absent man has his apology with him.

He who compels you to blame him has made up his mind to forsake you.

Open blame is better than secret malice.

Blame not, nor boast, until a year and a half shall have passed away.

He who has a needle under his arm it will prick him.

There is no wood which has no smoke in it.

Among all snakes there is not one that is good.

You are your own enemy.

**MARRIAGE**

The advantages of marriage are purity of life, children, pleasures of home, and the happiness of exertion for the comfort of wife and children.

This life is a joy, and its greatest delight is a good wife.

An honourable marriage is a stepping-stone to honour.

Take a wife not for her beauty, but for her virtues.

Chastity united to beauty makes a wife perfect.

Three things contribute to long life—a large house, an obedient wife, and a swift horse.

The violence of love vanishes soon after marriage. If the love of bride and bridegroom were to endure, the Resurrection Day would be at hand.

A man has no portion in the love of women when he becomes grey, or when he loses his fortune.

The lover's eye is blind.

The disgrace of a woman is abiding.

Take the high-road, though it turn; and marry a woman of good birth, though she may have been passed by.

Happy is the woman who dies before her husband.

It is better to have a thousand enemies out of the house than one in it.

The girl who has many suitors, and makes no choice of one of them, is doomed to become an old maid.

### CHILDREN

Children are a gift from God.

A child is a flower which has come down from Paradise.

Nothing is dearer than a child, except a grandchild.

When your son is young, train him; when he is grown, make a brother of him.

That child is loved most who is young until

he is grown up, or sick until he recovers, or absent until he returns home.

Your riches and your children are a temptation to you (*Koran*).

Happy is the woman who has first daughters, then sons.

If you do not train up your child, time will do it.

The training of children is like chewing stones.

Your riches and children are your enemies—beware of them (*Koran*).

The joy of parents in their children prolongs life.

Sorrow for a child is a burning fire in the heart.

He who is not tender to his child shall find no tenderness in God to him.

Your children are not too many for Death, nor is your money too much for a rapacious governor.

#### **FILIAL DUTY**

When your father and mother become old, and you take them into your house, say not a word of impatience to them, nor rebuke them, but speak graciously, and be humble to them, and say: "O my God, be merciful to them, even as they tended me when I was young " (*Koran*).

Be dutiful to your father, and your son shall be dutiful to you.

He who is ill-mannered to his father will be ill-treated by his son.

The good-will of parents procures the goodwill of God.

The central gate of heaven is open to the man who has been dutiful to his parents.

Paradise is open at the command of mothers.

You, and all that you have, belong to your father.

A daughter is always proud of her father.

An unmarried daughter has a broken wing.

### **BROTHERS, RELATIONS**

A man who has no brother is like one who has a left arm and no right. A brother is a wing.

When evil befalls you, you will know the value of a brother.

Your brother is he who shares your distress.

The same regard is due to the eldest brother from the youngest as that which is due to a parent from his child.

God helps him who helps his brother. Who forsakes his brother will be forsaken by God.

A man is a mirror in which his brother's likeness is seen.

The best man among you is he who is best to his relations.

Blood does not become water.

Honour your tribe, for they are the wing with which you fly.

The measure of a man's greatness is that of his tribe (clan, party).

Be friendly to your relations, but do not depend on your relationship.

If it were not for my own arm, my mouth would have nothing to eat.

#### **FRIENDS, COMPANIONS**

A friend is a second self and a third eye.

A true man is he who remembers his friend when he is absent, when he is in distress, and when he dies.

A friend is known only in adversity.

Keep to your old friends—your new friends will not be so constant.

You may find in a friend a brother who was not born of your mother.

The noblest man is he whose friendship may be easily obtained, and whose enmity can be incurred only with difficulty.

He is a weak man who can make no friends, and still weaker is he who loses them.

When my vine was laden with grapes, my friends were many; when the grapes were finished, my friends disappeared.

Nothing makes us feel so lonely as solitude, and nothing makes us so cheerful as freedom from evil companions.

Without human companions, Paradise itself would be an undesirable place to live in.

A man's character is judged by the character of his companions.

Smoke is no less an evidence of fire than that a man's character is that of the character of his associates.

He who associates with a suspected person will himself be suspected.

## **DEATH**

All life ends in death.

If death be surely inevitable, be not a fool and die a coward's death.

Death is a cup which every man must drink, and the grave a door which every man must enter.

If we are hastening to death, why all this impatience with the ills of life?

This life is a sleep, the life to come is a waking; the intermediate step between them is death, and our life here is a disturbed dream.

He who dreads the causes of death, they will surely seize him – do what he will to evade them.

Death, so far as one can see, strikes at random, killing the man whom he hits, and leaving the man whom he misses to old age and decrepitude.

Death covers all faults.

When I see all paths leading men unto death, and no paths leading from death unto us – no traveller there ever returning – not one of ages past ever remaining – I see that I also shall assuredly go where they have gone.

# Bahai

## From the Writings of Baha'u'llah

The Prophets and Messengers of God have been sent down for the sole purpose of guiding mankind to the straight Path of Truth. The purpose underlying their revelation hath been to educate all men, that they may, at the hour of death, ascend, in the utmost purity and sanctity and with absolute detachment, to the throne of the Most High....

Baha'u'llah

# A Life of Cultivation

By Marilyn Hughes

*The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation!*

<http://outofbodytravel.org>



Author, Marilyn Hughes

OUT-OF-BODY TRAVEL: 'A Life of Cultivation' is an intrusive self-reflection and intensive examination. It requires a solitude within the self which allows for the Holy Spirit to descend, thus, allowing a deeper examination of conscience and a melting into the inner workings of our spiritual essence.

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