

1. ALL THINGS ARE OURS

J N Darby

Every possible glory is ours.

The blessedness that is in God Himself, as far as it can be communicated, for we dwell in God and God is us. There are relative blessings, for we are children. There is associated blessedness in union with the Blessed One for we are His bride. Official nearness and glory for we are kings and priests. Human blessedness for we shall be perfect men after the image of the last Adam. Corporate blessedness for we shall have joy together. Individual for we shall have a name given which no one knows save he who will receive it; and we shall have the fulness of the Holy Spirit dwelling in us unhindered by these poor bodies; yes, clothed upon by a vessel suited to the power of the Divine Inhabitant so as to be able in full enlargement of heart to enjoy all this.

2. APPROBATION OF THE LORD, THE

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It should be a joy to anyone who loves the Lord Jesus to think of His individual peculiar approbation of our conduct in such and such circumstances, though no one knows this but ourselves who receive Divine approval. But, beloved, are we content to have an approval which only Christ knows? Let us try ourselves a little

Are we not desirous of man's commendation of our conduct? Or at least do we desire that he should know and give us credit for the motives which actuate it. Are we content, so long as good is done, that nobody should know anything about us....even in the church to be thought nothing of? That Christ alone should give us the 'white stone' of His approval,(Revelation 2.17) and the new name which no man knoweth save only he that receiveth it?

Are we content, I say, to seek nothing else? Oh, think what the terrible evil and treachery of that heart must be that is not satisfied with Christ's special favour, but seeks honour (as we do) of one another instead! I ask you, beloved which would you prefer, the Lord's public owning of you as a good and faithful servant, or the private individual love of Christ resting upon you.... the secret knowledge of His love and approval? He whose heart is specially attached to Christ will respond, the latter. Both will be ours if we are faithful but we shall value this most and there is nothing that will carry us on so straight on our course as the anticipation of it.

3. BOCHIM

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And they called the name of that place Bochim (weepers) and they sacrificed there unto the Lord (Judges 2. 5).

Years have passed away since a solemn cry from Bochim was heard. This voice is no longer heard among the weepers.

Another cry has gone up . It is the call of the Spirit of God.It calls us to Bochim. Sad that we have to gather there but it is the only place where the Lord can meet us in the manner which presses heavily on so many hearts. If we miss Bochim we shall miss the Lord for it is His appointed place of meeting.

Declension is evidenced everywhere. We have let slip, little by little, much that we have received from God. We have failed sadly in the practical expression of even that which is most certainly believed among us. The unity of the Spirit has been most feebly kept; the bond of peace wellnigh forgotten. Party-spirit has run high, spirituality been very low. We have not been perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgement. We have scarcely sought to be so joined. We have forgotten the grace and power of the Holy Spirit which abides among us. We have not been subject to Christ when we gather to His Name. Our service has been little of the work of faith. Brotherly love and confidence have languished.We have little of the Lord before us in our daily walk. Devotion to him has declined and worldliness grown. Our sad declension has been the occasion of more than one direct inroad of Satan, and the evil he has wrought there, but there is little power to meet it. Some assemblies have disciplined and excommunicated a member because they do not like him, or disagree with some of his views which do not damage basic teaching. There are assemblies where there is no love and conciliation. Declension indeed.

In the present sorrow and shame that is among us, efforts to remedy these evils have failed and jeopardised our testimony.

In this sense the Lord calls us to Bochim. He does not just call the elders and the young but all of us. The Spirit of the Lord should draw us to our knees to confess our failures. We are to confess our sins and act honestly and in unity. There is righteousness with the Lord and He is gracious to those of a contrite heart.

4. RED HEIFER, THE

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In Numbers 19, we learn the excessive jealousy of the Lord about sin, not in the sense of guilt, but defilement. This He measures by His sanctuary. We have to deal with it, and nothing unclean can be allowed. We are clean every whit, but the foot washing is needed. We belong to the sanctuary and yet are in the world; we need to have a just estimate of both. If we but touch evil, a remedy is required. It is not the question of justification, but of communion. Sin hinders and that includes my coming boldly into the holiest. How was this met ? The blood of the unblemished heifer, representing Christ who knew no sin and could not be brought under its power.

The blood was was sprinkled before the tabernacle seven times; that is before the place of communion, not of atonement. This sin offering was burned outside the camp. But the blood of the red heifer was sprinkled seven times. This speaks of the efficacy of Christ's blood. The heifer was reduced to ashes, as Christ was judged and condemned for what I am careless about; but God is not careless and makes me sensible of my sin. Christ had to suffer for it, and it is gone; but the sight of His suffering shows me the dreadfulneses of it.

God has an eye that discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart. He would have us discern them too, and without this there can be no communion. But we do not get back into communion as quickly as we get out of it. Seven days elapsed in the type before us before there was full restoration. The Spirit takes and applies the ashes (that is the remembrance of Christ's agony and what occasioned it), and makes us feel the practical horror of sin.

When I look at my sin with horror, even in the sense of the grace which has met it, it is a right feeling, but this is not communion; it is a holy judgment on sin in the presence of grace. Hence there was further sprinklings up to the seventh day and then there was communion with God. We see that perfect grace alone maintains the sense of perfect holiness. The result, in the end, is that we increase in the knowledge of God, both as to holiness and love. We must have been put out of communion before we sinned or we should not have yielded. How did I come to fall ? Because of the carelessness which left me out of God's presence and exposed me to the evil both without and within.

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