

"Good-bye, Lisa, and don't be such a long time before you come again. I'm sure Mr. Pedder would like you to come in and warm yourself any time when you're passing by." Lisa did not reply, only by a nod and smile, as she passed on her way. "Poor little Lisa!" said the boy to himself. "It seems almost a shame for me to be here safe and warm with plenty to eat, and good clothes, and no trouble, while she's hungry and out in the cold, and hardly any clothes, to wear. I've been almost forgetting that there's trouble for anybody just 'cause I've been so comfortable myself. But there's Lisa's trouble to think about, if I haven't got any of my own; and I shall always speak very kind and gentle to her when I see her, and perhaps that'll help her to bear it, poor little girl!"

(To be continued.)

ASSOCIATIONAL SERMON.

The final perseverance of the Saints.

THE ASSOCIATIONAL SERMON PREACHED BEFORE THE N. S. WESTERN BAPTIST ASSOCIATION ON MONDAY, JUNE 18TH, 1877, BY REV. F. GALLAHER.

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"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."—John vi. 37.

That our age is very religious is clear to everybody, but whether it is very scriptural is an open question. It is clear that a large portion of the religious teaching of this age is in no sense Pauline. All is not gold that glitters. There are gems of sparkling brightness whose glory is seen in the hands of the lapidary, and there are miserable imitations which sparkle to deceive. On every hand we see agencies of a religious nature active. Their name is legion for they are many. When beholding them we almost clap our hands for joy and exclaim: The Millennium is at hand. We say: The Arch Fiend is being driven from his strongholds. The dark places of the earth, which have been the habitations of cruelty, are being enlightened and blessed; in a word, 'The kingdoms of this world are becoming the kingdoms of our God and his Christ.' That these are facts is clear, and they shine as stars in our religious sky. As facts, they console thousands of Christians, who are giving of their substance to Christ's cause, and they cheer the Master's faithful labourers, who are seeing his pleasure prospering in their hands. But granting all this and more, it is questionable whether our age is much better, Christianity considered, than its predecessors. It has a very large number of agents and means. Its preachers, and books, and tracts, and prayers, and advantages, and fields of labour, and fostering forces are far beyond, in number, its predecessors; but whether it has the measure of light, and heat, and zeal, and love of the truth which those had is doubtful. That there is shallowness of thought in much of the preaching of our time is seen in the fact that the high and deep truths of the Scriptures are seldom, if ever, declared. The great truths which were the life of the Puritans are put by many in the background. Brethren, this ought not so to be. Our God loves every word and doctrine of Holy Scripture. The Bible is His; He is its Author, and says: "If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." If much of the preaching of our age is as we describe, why is it so? Is there anything to prevent the preachers of our times from viewing the heights and depths and lengths and breadths of the meaning of the words of God? Is not our age a time of religious freedom? Surely if there ever was a time when men were free to think and give expression to their thoughts it is now. Now, if ever, men may be faithful to God themselves, and their fellow-creatures. Now, if ever, the strong holds of Satan may be taken by the soldiers of the Cross, if they will use the Sword of the Spirit. But can we call our age a time of war—a time of much real fighting! Blessed be our God! we can. There are tens of thousands of soldiers of the Cross in open field to-day, who are not merely "holding the fort," but are steadily advancing on the enemy. Success to them! They are the men of

David. But there are many soldiers, so called, whose movements do not alarm anybody. These indicate that there is but little animosity between the powers of light and of darkness. That Satan is respectable beyond our conception; that human nature is not absolutely depraved; that Adam did not fall, he only stumbled; that he is not a palace in ruins—only the inside a little dilapidated; which, by a little plastering and embellishment, will appear in its former splendour. The old idea of hell has become obsolete, or if it exists, and is a place of fire, the Dutchman's idea of it is, perhaps, the most correct. That souls shall be "just close by, or near enough the fire to be comfortable."

All the doctrines of God's Word have suffered mutilation; not so much from the infidel's knife, as from the lances of friends, so called. The divinity of Christ is rejected not only by Unitarians and a large number of Universalists, but even by men who are in the ranks of orthodoxy. We had placed in our hands some time ago, by a friend, a book, whose author is a Baptist Deacon of a city church, who says, in speaking of the Sonship of Christ, chapter i: "Before any creation, there existed from eternity the One Almighty, self-existent, omniscient Deity. At a period in the existence of this eternal God, before any other creative act known to us, He brought forth, or begot, a being of the nature, powers, and senses, such as He afterwards breathed into the body of Adam when he became a 'living soul.' In other words, He begot a perfect human soul. The next act of the eternal God was to take this begotten being into perfect union with himself; in other words, He incorporated this human soul into His own being, so that the two beings, with their distinct natures and wills, became by this union one. Separately they were two, but by this union one."

Men who hold this and similar views are to be found in the ranks of orthodoxy; and are tolerated through what is called Christian charity.

Surely if Solomon were on the earth to-day he would not say, "There is nothing new under the sun." Thoughtful men are asking for the old paths. The Puritans had their faults, but, verily, they were the men of David. If ever men loved the truth, and preached it, the Puritans were the men. Their sermons are full of the substantial truths of God's Word. They loved the doctrines of grace. To them there was nothing repulsive in the doctrine of election, predestination, the perseverance of the saints—in a word, that beautiful chain of truths which Paul brings before us in Romans viii:

"Whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called, and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth."

These truths were the life of the Puritans. Why they are so much despised to-day is seen in the fact that human nature is what it was in the day when Jesus preached the sovereignty of God.

"But I tell you of a truth many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias when the heaven was shut up three years and six months when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of them was Elias sent save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus, the prophet and none of them was cleansed saving Naaman the Syrian. And all they in the synagogue when they heard these things were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built that they might cast him down headlong."

As men were in those days in their opposition to the doctrines of grace, so they are now. But why should men oppose these doctrines. We sometimes hear persons say "they are both unreasonable and unjust." What is unreasonable in them? Is it unreasonable that God should do as he will with his own? What injustice is in them? Do they wrong anybody? No; but they rectify millions. No man has a claim on God; but all are guilty before Him. It is God's prerogative to save or to condemn; to kill or make alive; to wound or to heal. Surely we must give God the liberty which we claim for ourselves in ordering our affairs in our own way. It remained with God, when He viewed man in his lost condition, when men had become obnoxious to His wrath; to save all, or some, or none.

Now, are we left in the dark as to the divine conduct in this all important matter? No. Blessed be God! He has laid His will before us in unmistakable language. The text is clear concerning it, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. Now we must notice three things in this text, which, by the way, are so clear that he who runs may understand them.

First, That the Father has given a definite number of souls to his Son.

Secondly, That all this number, under the divine influence, shall come to the Son.

Thirdly, That when they come to the Son, he will receive them, and in no wise, or for no reason, cast them out.

First, The Father has given a definite number of souls to His Son. Please notice that the Father is the donor; souls the donation; and the Son is the receiver. Now, the Son being the receiver, is placed in a remarkable position; a position which is complex, and which requires explanation. That the Son is the "Word," or "Logos," who is spoken of in the first chapter of this Gospel is extensively admitted. It is said of him, "He was in the beginning with God," and that "he was God," "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." Paul, when speaking of this glorious person says, in his letter to the Colossians:

"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature. For by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." The same Apostle, in his letter to the Hebrews, says of the Word, or Son, "And thou, Lord, in the beginning hadst laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands; they shall perish, but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."

These Scriptures prove conclusively the divinity of Christ. There is no higher proof of Omnipotence than the work of creation. God often appeals to that work to prove that he is the true God in opposition to idols. It follows, then, that the Son is the Creator. Now, in the text, the Son or Word, who is, according to John and Paul the Creator, is also the receiver. How comes this? The Creator receiving from the Creator. No; for the Creatorship has been vacated, and a Creatorship adopted and assumed; which gives us in the man Christ Jesus, two natures—the divine and the human—the Logos and the Son of Mary. John says, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." That this vacation of place, and assumption of human nature, was the means to a grand end is clear from the Scriptures. John says, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil." Jesus has said, "The Son of Man is come so seek and to save that which was lost." And again, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Jewish ritual, when viewed and explained by the Apostle Paul, is fully descriptive of the mission of the Son of God. We read, in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

"For the law, having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never, with those sacrifices which they offered year by year, continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they have ceased to be offered, because the worshippers once purged should have no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sins thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God. By which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the blood of Jesus Christ once for all."

The end, then, of the mission of the Son of God, was the salvation of the world, or, in plainer language, Jews and Gentiles. The "All" of the text were

given by the Father to the Son to be redeemed by His blood. The Son has redeemed them. They all are in his hands—in his Mediatorial and Sacrificial hands—in the hands of his mercy; in the hands of his patience; in the hands of his long-suffering; in the hands of his power—hands which, blessed be God, are wide enough to contain them, and strong enough to protect them. There is another sense in which Christ receives them; he receives them as the reward of his toil and suffering. Isaiah says,

"When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin he shall see his seed; he shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." In these passages we have Christ's reward, as, also, in Ps. xi. 8, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." And in Deut. xxxii. 9, "The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."

This idea of reward is, perhaps, more plainly brought before us in the church's names; she is called "the Bride," "the Lamb's Wife," "His Body," "His Love,"

His "Dove," His "Sheep," His "Jewels" with which he decks himself. Observe, then, that when Jesus entered his Father's vineyard to labour, he had a view to his wages, his reward, his recompense, which is an innumerable number of souls—the "All" of the text, "All that the Father giveth me."

Secondly. That all this number shall come, under the divine influence, to the Son. In the exposition of this we must give some attention to the verb 'shall.' In the second and third persons 'shall' implies command, or determination. When 'shall' is uttered with emphasis, it expresses determination in the speaker, and implies an authority in the speaker to enforce the act. That this is the sense of the verb in the text is clear from other Scriptures. Jesus says, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." In Psalm cx. 3, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power." In the former passage the human will is unyielding, chaining the soul, as it were, and keeping the mind back from Christ; in the latter, the will is overcome by the power of the Spirit of God, and the soul yields to Jesus. That our willingness to be saved is the effect of divine agency is clear from vs. 44 of this chapter, "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him. The term 'draw' denotes an act of God, without which the sinner cannot come to Christ. It might be well, in order to a fuller understanding of this great truth, to view the Jews' reasoning—ff vs. 41 and 42, "The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the Son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven? Jesus therefore said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him. In the reasoning of the Jews we see the darkness of their minds. They needed light. The mists of ignorance and prejudice lay upon their minds and hearts. Their privileges were both great and numerous. They had the law, and the prophets, and the types, and, above all, Christ and his Apostles. Still, they were in darkness. Enough had been said to convince them, but they were not convinced. Who will say, then, that praying, and the distribution of religious literature is enough. No, brethren, the greatest of preachers preached, and prayed, and wept over his hearers, but they did not believe. Verily, no man can come to the Son until he is drawn of the Father; then he shall come, "Paul planted, Apollos watered, and God gave the increase." But if this is so, say some, man is but a machine. That our text is clear and true, we believe; but that man is a mere machine is neither true nor clear. Man is a responsible creature, who shall be judged according to the deeds done in the body. It would be good for thousands if they were mere machines. Men have desired to be anything but what they were. One of whom we have read wished he were a dog; indeed, he would gladly be anything but what he was. Man is not a machine. One of our poets has said, "Man is a harp of a thousand strings." If he is, God must play upon him—must pass His fingers over the strings of his soul—before he can yield

the music of Canaan. "No man could sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, but the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth." Another objector says, "Is not a man forced against his will to believe?" No; but the man is made willing by being enlightened to see the glory of Christ, the needs of his soul, and the importance of preparing for eternity. We are not to suppose that God takes a man by the shoulder and moves him heavenward, while the man all the while cries, I won't! I won't! The bride, in Solomon's song, puts the thing very plainly, "Draw me, and we will run after thee." Compulsion is not required when a man beholds his danger. It is even as Satan says, "All that a man hath will he give for his life." When God, who caused the day-spring to know his place, sheds his light upon the soul, it is delighted with what it beholds, and says, "Come and hear all ye that fear God and I will declare what he hath done for my soul."

Some time ago, two trains were dashing on in opposite directions—the up and down trains. A little way down the line, at a crossing, a gentleman, seated in his carriage, awaited the passage of the down train. And when it had passed, he whipped his horse to cross the line. An observer, on the other side of the line, seeing his danger from the up train cried, "Stop! stop!" He looked, and stopped, and was saved. So it is, brethren, God calls with the voice that wakes the dead; we hear and look, and stop, and are saved. Brethren, we must give all the glory of our salvation to our God.

'Twas the same love that spread the feast That sweetly forced us in; Else we had still refused to taste, And perished in our sin.

Thirdly, That the Son will receive all who come to him, and will in no wise cast them out. This head requires more of our attention than the former; because it has been viewed in lights which, if true, rob the text of the great truth it was designed to teach, viz: God's sovereign act in disposing of men according to his own will. You know, brethren, that the vast majority of Christians think that while it is true that "all" who are given to Jesus will come to him, it is also true that the way is still open for others to come if they will. This reasoning is plausible, but childish. The 44th verse teaches in unmistakable language that no one can come to Jesus unless he is drawn by the Father. Supposing the way were ever so clear for others to come, would they come? Are they not "lame," and "blind," and "dead"? Jesus, then, would not say, "I will in no wise cast them out," when he knew they would never come to him. The reasoning of persons who hold this view, suppose a measure of power in man to move in the way, or, at least, to take a few steps therein. Now, if a sinner can take a step, or a few steps, towards Christ, without the drawing, or grace of God, is there any reason to doubt his ability to go all the way? What saith the Scripture, "No man can come to me except the Father who hath sent me draw him." The clause, "I will in no wise cast out," respects those who come to Christ, and who are received by him. Christ, having received them, will in no wise, or, for no reason, cast them out.

Mr. Barnes is misty in his exposition of this clause. He says, "This expression does not refer to the perseverance of the saints, but to the fact that Jesus will not reject or refuse to help any sinner who comes to him." That Jesus will not refuse to help, or reject any sinner who comes to him is a great truth; but it is not the truth of this clause. The clause teaches that Christ will not, for no reason, cast out whom he has received in. A sinner coming to Christ for help and salvation is different from a sinner who is in Christ. Believers are in Christ, and he will never cast them out. What Mr. Barnes says the clause does not teach is what it does teach, viz: The perseverance of the saints. That the perseverance of the saints, or, in other words, their protection during life, and their complete salvation, is the thing implied, is clear from vs. 39, "And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." The Father has given the people of the text to his Son with the understanding that he should receive and keep them, which he does.

That we may see more fully the beauty of the clause we give an extract from Dr. Gill's "Cause of God and Truth," pp. 89, "The doctrine," says Gill, "of the saint's final perseverance may be established on this text: for such who come to Christ in a spiritual manner, and are brought to believe in