



SUNDAY READING

MORNING.

Unto thee lift I up mine eyes; O thou that dwellest in the heavens.
Behold, even as the eyes servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; even so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until He have mercy upon us.

Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us; for we are utterly de-
Our soul is filled with scornful reproof of the wealthy; and with the despatch of the proud.

Antem.

Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. All ye that pass by, come see if ever sorrow was like unto His. O Lamb of God, we bless Thee; Thy sore humiliation, for us who now confess Thee has wrought a great salvation; O King of Kings, we praise Thee, with heart and voice we raise Thee, now and through every generation, loud songs of ceaseless adoration.

Lesson. St. John xx, 13.

Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had said so, he showed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, peace be unto you; as my Father has sent me even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose soever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, we have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe.

And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, peace be unto you. Then said he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus said unto him Thomas because thou hast seen me thou hast believed.

And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God: and that believing ye might have life through his name.

HYMN.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty,
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, holy, holy, Merciful and Mighty,
God in Three Persons, Blessed Trinity.

Holy, holy, holy, all the saints adore Thee,
Casting down their golden crowns around a glassy sea;
Cherubim and seraphim fallen down before Thee,
Which wert art and evermore shalt be.

Holy, holy, holy, though the darkness hide Thee,
Though the eye of sinful men Thy glory may not see,
Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee
Perfect in power, love, and purity.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty,
All Thy works shall praise Thy name, in earth and sky;
Holy, holy, holy, Merciful and Mighty,
God in Three Persons, Blessed Trinity.

SERMON.

The Emperor's Visit.

BY THE REV. THOMAS HAYNE, FREE CHURCH, KEEPCHOILL.

"He came to His own and His own received Him not." But as we have seen Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.—John 1, 11-12.

They say that the reception given to the emperor of Germany resembles that given to the emperor of France in 1855, when Napoleon was kissed by our queen and otherwise honored by royalty and nobility of the land. And it is possible, say some, that the next generation may have reason to regard the reception given to the emperor of Germany with the same bitter resentful feelings as those with which the Englishmen of today regard the reception that was given the emperor of France. Now, while we would not go that length, we do not honestly confess that we have little sympathy with such flares up as that which has been experienced in England within the last week or two. We would not deny the emperor the privilege of coming to see his dear "grandmamma," our honorable queen, and his not over-honorable uncle, the Prince of Wales, or the privilege of attending the marriage of his cousin; yea, we would not object to people showing reasonable honor to an emperor of a powerful friendly nation, who honors us with his visit. Yet we cannot but express our disfavor with such ridiculous extravagance and absurd ceremony as has characterized the imperial visit. Judging from the descriptions given in the public prints, simply of the various changes of uniforms and the varied kinds of dresses in which members of royalty and their attendants have appeared at different times of each day, the wonder is that we don't hear of more than the Prince of Wales being unable to pay their debts. And supposing the debts are paid, we are naturally led to ask whence they get the money to meet such extravagance? In what kind of business are they engaged, or what offices do they fill from which they can honestly obtain such remuneration, as to enable them to keep up such lavish expenditure? And if they get it not earning it, where then do they get it? Their dear "mamma" and "grandmamma" as they call her, can hardly be expected to

pay it all, seeing that she requires no less a sum than £9000 to pay for her fortnight's visit to Grasse. If nothing better comes of this grand reception, it will, we trust, lead the tax-payers to enquire whether they have anything to do with the up-keep of the ever-increasing number of princes and princesses in the countries of Europe.

So far as the emperor himself is concerned, we would not say much about his person and character. Seeing that I have German blood in my veins, it would hardly be loyal to speak disrespectfully of the Emperor of Fatherland. Still I must confess that I have not formed a very favorable impression of his character. It may be that my felt-want of my own parents, whom I lost when very young, has caused me to over-estimate the respect which, I imagine, I would have shown them, had they been now living. Somehow I have come to this, that I can never hold persons in great respect who show disrespect to their parents. Now, it has been declared without contradiction that the emperor showed disrespect to his parents, both before and after the government was laid on his own shoulder. It is said when the father was ill, the son entered into an intrigue to prevent his own father from ascending the throne on the ground that the family law of the Hohenzollerns made it impossible for one suffering from an incurable disease to hold the sceptre of Prussia. The main reason for this discovery it is believed, was to destroy the influence of his mother, who as an English woman, was imbued with liberal ideas of government which were also shared by her husband. But this malignity of the young man against his father did not end at death; for instead of the state funeral with the usual ceremony, the Emperor Frederick's body was conveyed to the burial ground in secrecy, so far as the public were concerned. Now, the man who would treat his parents in such a manner is not the man to be trusted to treat others with consideration, unless he gives evidence of a change by grace. The emperor appears to be a man of bodily force and strong resolution. It is said that he inherits from his progenitors a nature which may be called half-divine and half-demoniacal, which swings between genius and madness. An emperor then with a nature like that, is a person to be reckoned with and watched, and all the more, that notwithstanding his perpetual talk about the maintenance of the peace of Europe, he seems to find his greatest pleasure in reviewing troops, and that even on Sabbath days; and in comparing and contrasting armies. As to what will be the effect of his visit it is hard to say. It is thought it will intensify the friendly relationship between England and Germany. To that we would say "amen," so be it. In a few cases it may result in conferring of honors and bestowing of presents and heirlooms; and it will probably have left some trades people and pickpockets richer than they were; but we have our doubts as to whether the moral and spiritual results of the visit will be all that could be desired.

Therefore, believing that the visit would be occupying many minds we thought it advisable to draw the congregation's attention to a visitor much superior to the emperor, and whose visit will be followed by results of eternal importance to all mankind, and on doing so we shall base our remarks on words which you will find in John's gospel 1, 11-12: "He came to His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." Here we have an account of the greatest and most stupendous visit that was ever witnessed. The visit of the Son of God to earth. The visitor was the second person in the ever-blessed Trinity. The Eternal Son of God; and, being such, He was omnipresent, and hence there must be some peculiar meaning implied in the statement of His coming to a place where He already was. Previously He was there, so to speak, *incognito* or unknown. As may have often been the case with the Emperor of Germany when visiting his "grandmamma," without the nation as such being cognizant of the visit. But when we read of the coming to His own, it implies that there was something significant about His coming. And so there was. When the emperor visited England a fortnight ago, he came in state with all the pomp and show possible to distinguish him as a kingly visitor. But when Jesus paid a special visit to men, He on the contrary laid aside His glory, emptied Himself, and came clothed in our nature: "Though He was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, yet He made Himself of no reputation, but took on Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man." But though He laid aside His glory, He did not lay aside His divinity. The two natures were mysteriously blended so that He could do what ever was in keeping with God, or with a sinless man. What visitor could compare with Christ? The Divine clothed in flesh; the Creator in the form of a creature. He was the true transfiguration. His shining on the mount before the amazed disciples was but His natural appearance; but in the manger and in the carpenter's shop, and on the cross we see Christ transfigured indeed. His coming to earth indicates a place from whence He came. This word shows that Christ's birth was not the beginning of His existence—as the scripture in many places affirms—but simply the assuming of our nature. When we speak of the emperor's visit, we understand that he came from some place. Well, whence came Christ? He came from heaven—from the bosom of His Father with whom He held uninterrupted ineffable intercourse. He came from the glory of heaven, and the worship and the adoration of angels His constant attendants. Had we visited Germany we might of described to you the

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splendid palatial residence of the emperor, and the grand retinue of attendants that await his bidding, and the honor in which he is held, and the homage which is done him. But there would be a limit to our description of his glory, honor and happiness. We might see or imagine where improvement could be made on his palace. We might hear of a Prince Bismarck and others who were as Mordecai to the ambitious emperor. We might discover, if we gain his confidence, that "uneasy lies the head that wears a crown;" and that to pay a visit to Britain afforded him greater pleasure than staying at home. If the emperor found an elysium in this palace, think you that he would go gadding about the earth as he is doing. Analyse his motive, and I think you will find it is more the love of self than the love of men, that makes him leave his home and visit strangers far away. But can you imagine, much less describe, the glory of the house with many mansions which Christ left: can you conceive of the honour in which Christ is held, and the homage done Him? There are no malcontents there. There once was, but they were hurled out, "How are thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning."

Earthly monarchs have at times to resort to cruel means to find out whether their attendants are plotting their life, but in heaven there was not a thought that was not in loving subjection to Christ, otherwise it would have been known to Him who knows all things. Yea, so perfect was his glory and happiness in heaven that the remembrance of it led Him, when on earth, to pray, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Such was the glory that Christ left to visit this earth. Then, what visitor can compare to this Heavenly Visitor, the beloved Son of God, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the Emperor of Emperors.

"He came to His own, and His own received Him not." "To His own" in a peculiar sense: for all the nations of the world were His own by creation. But the Jews were His own by relation of blood. He was born of the house of David. The Jews were to have the honor of calling Jesus their brother. And then they were His own as the chosen people of God, to whom were committed the oracles of God, and in whom the church has been preserved. He came to the Jews when they were in their lowest and worst condition both nationally and ecclesiastically. Once they had been an enriched, triumphant, glorious and envied nation, and a terror to all their enemies. When He came, however, they were but a remnant—scattered, conquered, and captured—only two tribes remaining out of the twelve; and they in bondage to Rome, by whom they were fleeced and peeled. They were perfect slaves in their own country. The custom among men is to visit others when they are great and prosperous, because their favor is profitable, and disfavor formidable. "I have no friends," sighed the poor man. "Humph!" said the millionaire, "you can have as many as you like of mine." It is often out of kindness to themselves that men visit others and not always out of kindness to those they visit. Hence, how much appreciated are the exceptions to the rule—such as the visiting the culprits in prison by Howard, and the visiting of the humble poor by our gracious Queen. Yea! instead of visiting and caring for the needy the tendency is to leave and disown them. And as with individuals, so with kings on their visits to other nations. It is not generally when most required that a state visit is paid. The Queen of Sheba might not have visited Solomon had he been in an inglorious position. She went to see his glory. Well, so far as the state visit of the emperor was concerned, I don't know what his motive in coming to Britain. I don't think we were particularly requiring him. There may have been a period in our history when Ireland needed the visit of some foreign potentate in the month of July: but at the present stage I think the Queen and those in her command are quite able to meet our country's foes both at home and abroad. I would recommend the emperor to pay a visit to that country in South America where the people are butchering each other. A visit from him might do some good there. However, he has come, and he has gone, and it might have been as well if his advent had been as quiet as his departure. It is possible that if he had come as he went he might have gone as he came—that is, it there had been less pomp at the commencement of his visits, there might have been more show at the close thereof. Christ, however, came when he was needed, and when it was a disgrace to be associated with the Jews. At that time the Jews were peculiar, not only in that God had separated them from other nations, but in that other nations had separated themselves from the Jews. And then their corruption as a church was equal to their temptable state as a nation. Their teachers were hypocrites, for, while they sheltered behind the ritual of Moses, they deserted the truths and principles which those ceremonies shadowed forth. How strong, then, must have been the love of Christ to come to a people in this condition, who were not seeking His aid, and whom He knew would even repel it.

Seeing, then, that He could have nothing but the most loving motive in coming to His people, one would have expected such a welcome and joyous reception as was never given to a king on earth. And yet we read "He came to His own, and His own received Him not." And why did they not receive Him? Well, just because He did not visit them in the form of an earthly king, in some or other of the multifarious uniforms donned by earthly potentates. They expected a temporal prince—a belief still present among the Jews. They believed that all nations in serving Him would serve them, and be their slaves. They expected that the wealth of nations would be brought unto them. The very disciples seem to have clung long to such a belief; hence their talk about sitting at His right hand and left hand in His kingdom, and who should have the great-est office and place under Him. Now, with such ideas as these, how could it be expected that they would be willing to accept one whose person and teaching was quite the opposite to what they had anticipated. He was the poorest of men Himself, having no where to lay his head, and He taught that people should practice self-denial, and not set their hearts upon earthly glory and wealth, but seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all other things should be added to them. They, moreover, objected to Him because He appeared to be opposed to Moses, their law-giver. They had no idea when He came He would impose the law of Moses, as they understood it, upon all nations. Whereas, He told them that He had come to fulfill the ceremonial law. That the end for which it had been given had been answered, and now it was to be abrogated, since men could not be saved by divers washing and offering of sacrifices: yea, that God had got wearied with the abuse that had been made of these things, and that He had come to fulfill all the types and shadows by His death, and now men were to be saved by faith in His death, followed by the washing of regeneration, and the consecration of a holy life. Moreover His teaching divested them of hope of salvation from the merely outward observance of the moral law; for He told them that it was only kept when obeyed from the heart—that it applied to the thoughts and desires, as well as to the words and deeds. At the hearing of all this, such became their resentment that they sought to kill Him, believing that in so doing they were honoring their law and doing God service. The absurdity of the Jew's rejection of Christ appears obvious. And yet in spite of all reason and scripture, the Jews in general hold doggedly to their belief that Christ will yet come to their nation as a mighty prince, subduing their foes. And as one writer says: "You might as well read a lecture on music or astronomy to an ox or an ass as go about to persuade them that their Messiah was going to plant His kingdom in men's hearts; and by infusing them into the grace of humility, temperance and heavenly-mindedness, to conquer their corruptions and reign over their carnal affections." Had their eyes not been blinded with this fancied notion of temporal good they might have seen in Christ the true Messiah. For, as the prophet had foretold, He just appeared when the sceptre had departed from Judah, and at the end of the weeks of which Daniel spoke. One of the learned Rabbis said, fifty years before Christ appeared, that it was impossible for the Messiah's coming to be deferred more than fifty years. Daniel is also understood to have declared that after the coming and cutting off of Messiah the temple should be destroyed, which, having taken place, ought to have convinced the Jews of subsequent years that Christ was the Messiah. And then besides His purely unselfish life, His miracles ought to have convinced all, as they did Nicodemus, that he was from God.

Now all nations to whom the gospel is preached are as really Christ's own as the children of Abraham, and we are as capable of having Christ come to us, not in the same manner it is true, but for the same purpose. He comes to us in His word, in the sacraments, and in all the benefits of His incarnation. And these exhibit Him as really as if you saw Him with your eyes. Don't let us, then, condemn the Jews, and in doing so condemn ourselves, by saying that if we had been in their place we would have acted differently. Men reject Christ today, and as really as the Jews did, and that for the same reason too. They know that to receive Him would interfere with their worldly spirit, and gratification of appetites, and their trust is self-righteousness, and just incurs the same condemnation that the Jews incurred. Yet, considering the training of the Jews under their false teachers, it is possible that they may be more excusable than we are. Men come to God's house and listen to the gospel of the grace of God, and that under influences favorable to their reception of Christ, and yet they persevere in the indulgences of certain sins which condemn them as much as the very act of crucifying Christ. Now, if we reject Christ, a doom similar to that which befell the Jews will befall us. God will reject us, and we shall be banished from His presence and the glory of His power.

But if we receive Christ, the converse of that will be the case, for we read: "But as many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God." To become a son of God all we require to do is to receive Christ. What a simple way of reaching a great result. In a transaction between the giver and receiver, the receiver generally makes a smaller figure, and men do not like to make a small figure in their moral struggles any more than in their business, nor in their welfare. They want results associated with some heroism. Some deserving effort which shall throw them into prominence. And it is just at this point that the gospel economy makes its issue. When men emphasize doing, it emphasizes receiving. All the old economies are in a ferment of doing—temple building, pouring out of purchase money, consulting oracles going on pilgrimages, in order to win this divine sonship. The receiving is to come after all this. After the sacrifice has been made, after the treasury has been drained, and the penance undergone. In the new christian order the receiving comes first. Man does not become a son after he has painfully worked his way up to God. He has no power to work up, he must receive it from God. Some may object that this is faith without works, for some persons are very anxious to have some merit in working out their salvation. But men need not fear that Christ will turn work out of doors when He is received into their heart. He just puts work into its right place, and makes it the fruit of the new life instead of the cause thereof. Doing does

not make us the sons of God, but being made the sons of God make us the most active of men. The christian's life is made up of faith and works but faith comes first and works second. John is here, however, just telling us how, as prodigals, we may get back to God as sons, and to do that we must receive Christ. Now receiving Christ is just believing Him. If I believe on the physician who ministers to me, and in the potency of his medicine, I receive his treatment and his medicine. He does with me what he pleases—I merely receive. It is only our receiving of gifts that makes us differ from other men. A man feels an impulse to be an artist, etc., and acting on that impulse he thereby receives Christ. But there are words receiving Christ. But there are many who have this impulse after Christ and holiness who never put it into force, and the result is that they die unsaved. Those who receive an impulse after intellectual pursuits may be comparatively few: but by the influence of the Holy Spirit, a measure of which is given to every man to profit withal, there is not an individual but at one period or other of his life feels this impulse after Christ and holiness, and who might therefore receive Christ. Thus why all are not saved is not because they are the gift of God, and therefore become the sons of God. It is not because Christ fails to knock at the door of every heart that all don't become sons, for in every good impulse and desire, by whatever cause we hear Christ knocking, and it is because our refusing promptly to open the door and let Him in that we are kept outside the family of God. When we let Christ into the heart God takes us into the family. Some men reason with themselves in this way: when they feel the impulse or desire of salvation, "I must give up the drink shop, the brothel, the gambling table;" or, if not so outwardly wicked, they say "I must be more attentive to God's house, my Bible, private prayer, and then accept Christ." Now that is just putting the cart before the horse. What you have got to do is just to unbolt the door of your heart and let Christ in, and He will keep the heart, and guide your life, and then the publican and the harlot and the bookmaker will wait in vain for your return, and the heartless routine of attendance at church, reading of the Bible, and praying in private, will become as pleasurable as the taking of food by a healthy man. To do God's will, will be your meat and drink. Before Lord Salisbury received the emperor to his mansion at Hatfield, he engaged men and went to great expense to have the royal suite of rooms magnificently upholstered. That is just what some would do with the hearts before letting Christ in. They might as well save themselves the trouble, for they cannot make their hearts pleasing to Christ. The only thing to do is to leave it to Himself, and He will clean and garnish it and furnish it to suit Himself. Just receive Christ, my friends, and He will take on Himself the whole task of preparing you for the kingdom of heaven, and will present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. And so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Being made sons, we are heirs of God, and joint-heirs of Christ. What honor, then, can be compared to this, conferred on those who receive Christ. We have hinted that honors have been conferred by the imperial visitor on certain favored individuals, and a few persons after this will be proud of a German title, the meaning of which few English will understand, and which in itself may be of little worth. But

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it were possible for the German emperor to confer honors on all who receive him, hence it is most certain that there will be heart-burnings on the part of some who have thought themselves slighted. But, thank God, though the emperor could not confer honors on all who received him, Jesus Christ can confer on all who receive Him greater honor by far than earthly king ever bestowed. I don't suppose that any honors conferred by the emperor would entitle a person to a crown and kingly standing; and yet the honors conferred by Jesus Christ makes us kings and priests to God. And this honor hath all saints. They complain about the number of princes and princesses in Germany, and well they may. It might relieve the glut if a few more of the princes would marry actresses, and give up the title of prince; and a few of the princesses would follow up the suggestion of the Prince of Wales's daughter and marry brewers, whom their "grandmamma" would create peers. In heaven, however, we shall all be kings and priests, and yet there will be no felt inconvenience. No jealousies, for we all shall have the same honor. And when earthly honors, and even those who conferred them, are no longer known by their earthly titles, our crowns will still be bright and unfading on our brows. Because Christ and such honor will be yours.

HYMN.

Unto them that fear My Name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise.

Christ whose glory fills the skies,
Christ the true and only light,
Sun of Righteousness arise,
Triumph o'er the shades of night,
Day-spring from on high be near,
Day-star in my heart appear.

Dark and cheerless is the moon
Unaccompanied by Thee;
Joyless is the day's return
Till Thy mercy's beams I see,
Till Thy inward light impart,
Glad my eyes and warm my heart.

A Prayer.

Almighty God, by whose gracious Providence Thy servant John the Baptist was sent to prepare the way of Christ: make us to follow his teaching that we may truly repent of our sins: and after his example constantly speak the truth, boldly rebuke wrong doing, and patiently suffer for conscience sake. Amen.

Benediction.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with us all evermore. Amen.

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