

The King's Highway.

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

And an Highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness.—Isa. 35-8

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THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, ISAAC, AND JACOB

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Exodus 3:15: "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, the Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations."

God has declared that He will never cease to be known as the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. It is a memorial to all generations. We, today, thousands of years after this declaration was made, are as much interested in the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob as the children of Israel were when Jehovah came to them in this revelation to Moses.

May I say this: that the distinction between the Testaments as old and new is not right. The word New Testament really means New Covenant, and it is the so-called Old Testament which predicted the New Covenant. But the old covenant with its institutions prefigured the new covenant. Our New Testament invariably calls the book which we today call the Old Testament, the Holy Scripture. Take that passage in the Acts concerning the Bereans: "They searched the Scriptures," that means the Old Testament.

Then if the Old Testament is Holy Scripture, what is the New? It is the apostolic commentary on the Holy Scripture; the apostolic key to the Holy Scripture. You can't understand the New Testament unless you go back to the Old. Matthew begins with "The Book of the generation of Jesus Christ." What does Christ mean? It means Messiah, Anointed. We have to go back to the Old Testament to find out what Christ stands for. The Son of David, the Son of Abraham. Who is David, and who is Abraham? And why is Jesus Christ introduced as the Son of Abraham and the Son of David? God made a covenant with Abraham and confirmed it with an oath. This covenant had to do with the seed of Abraham; and Jesus as the Christ is the seed of Abraham and David, and is the fulfillment of this covenant made with Abraham and David. And so, "the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," we have to remember that this is God's name forever.

Now, what can we learn from this name which God says He will never abandon? On the face of it, it shows this: That God is the God of separate individuals. That was a tremendous truth coming to light in that day. When these words were first uttered, the individual did not amount to very much. He was only of importance as part of his family or clan or nation. Hence, it was an unheard of thing when the call of God came to Abraham: "Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred." It made him, undoubtedly, a man

deliberately separate from his country and from his family. But God would teach the world this tremendous lesson that He concentrates on the individual, and the individual man or woman is of tremendous importance in His eyes. "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."

If man had written the story of Genesis, he would have written a very different story. Think of man writing about the domestic and business affairs of three cattle raisers! But God would show us that in dealing with individual men or women, everything about them is of interest to Him, the details of their lives are noticed by Him. God never confuses one individual with another individual. That, you get in the Book of Genesis. I can say with the Psalmist, "O God, thou art MY God." God sustains personal relations with individual men. Now that truth, unfolded so long ago, needs to be reaffirmed in our day.

After all, the biggest thing is this: that God is a personality and He reveals Himself to the separate personalities of men and women. Modern science, though, is turning away from this great truth. God is revealed as a personality in the Old and New Testaments. He has a heart to feel and a hand to help. That was the religion of our ancestors. It was that which made them tremble before the commandments because behind the commandments they saw the Commander.

Then another thought that I gather from these words and it is this: that God is the God not only of individuals, but of different kinds of individuals. The God of the Bible is the God of nature, and there is an infinite variety in nature. In the New Testament you have not only the Apostle Paul, you have the Apostle Peter, and you have the Apostle John, and they all make their contribution. And when you come to the description of the city of God, it has twelve gates looking in all directions. That means that the mystic east may come, and black Africa may come, and all may bring that which is peculiar to them. God loves variety, and every human being, if in the hands of God—if he will not be an echo of an echo—would be an original. We imitate each other. God did not want Isaac to imitate Abraham. He wanted Abraham to be Abraham, and Isaac to be Isaac, and Jacob to be Jacob, for He had need of these different types of men.

Abraham was a pioneer and got the vision splendid and was not disobedient to the heavenly vision and he became the father of the nation. Isaac never left the land where he was born and the only thing that is recorded of him is that "he digged again the wells his father had digged."

But what about Jacob? Oh, I know what you are saying—a regular Jew. But God made an Israel of him! God has need of different individuals, even of Jacob with his infirmities. His name means "to follow after,"

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by the heel." God crippled him so that he could not catch people by the heel any more. The angel blessed him and after that he calls Himself more often by the name of God of Jacob than by any other name in the Bible. The Psalmist says, "Happy is the man that has the God of Jacob." There is room in the church for the Abraham-type, and for the Isaac-type, and for the Jacob-type. They keep each other in balance. We need them all.

"I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob! * * * This is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations." Every time you preach the Gospel, either to the sinner or to the saint, preach the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob. The story of God's dealings with each of these three men illustrates God's dealings with men. We are told that God called Abraham while he was yet in Ur of the Chaldees. And Paul says, "Whom He called, them He also justified," and so Abraham became the man that God justified. He was brought into the land and he got the promise that he would be the father of a son. And, you remember, one night he was told to go out of his tent and count the stars. In the Holy Land the stars are not like the stars in this climate. As he counted the stars, he got bewildered, and said: "I can count an hundred thousand." And God said, "So shall thy seed be." Thus we read: "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." Abraham stands for Calling and Justification.

But it would be a poor thing to be merely justified. I would want to be regenerated as well as justified. Isaac comes in and stands for regeneration. Isaac was born as life out of death; he was born as the evidence of the quickening power of God. Isaac stands for the new life begotten by the power of God.

What about Jacob? Jacob sets forth how God sanctifies the nature. How was it that God could do that with Jacob and not with Esau? After all of Jacob's faults, which are very easily discovered, he had longings after God. Why didn't Esau have a dream of a ladder between earth and heaven? How was it that Jacob could have such a dream—that deceitful man? We dream at night of the things we have been day-dreaming about. And Jacob, with all his faults, longed after the divine, the eternal; and so God could bring him out of his carnality and give him a new name. Jacob could have said, "O love that will not let me go." That precious "I will never leave thee" promise was first made to Jacob. Every one who enters the Israel-life centers that life with him. You did not get the blessing by your own effort, but entirely because all you could do was to cling to the one who had mastered you. He stands first

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