



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."

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BY MY SPIRIT

By A. B. Simpson

The vision given in the 4th chapter of Zechariah is unequalled by any other portion of the Holy Scriptures for delicacy and depth of sacred meaning. It is intended to reveal to God's people the source of their strength. They were weak and their foes were strong. At this very time, through the intrigues of their enemies, a decree had come from the king of Persia, arresting for a time the progress of the work; and we are told by Ezra that an army came and "by force and power" caused the work to cease. But, like the echo of man's impotent rage answering back from the throne, God sends Zechariah to say in the very same phrase turned back again, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

Man had sent his force and power, his army and his might; but he had left God out of his calculations, and this work and this conflict is, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace, unto it."

The vision itself is a very beautiful one. As he wakens out of sleep with all his powers quickened to take in its meaning, Zechariah sees before him a golden candlestick like that which stood in the Holy Place, with its seven branches of polished gold, surmounted by a vessel of oil and a glowing flame. Then above this candlestick there is a large bowl or reservoir connected by pipes with all the lamps, and containing the supply of oil.

But how is this reservoir filled? Look again at the wondrous and exquisite mechanism. There are no oil cans, no ministering hands, no clumsy machinery, no human attendants, no conveying tubes, but two living olive trees ripening their fruit continually and pouring it in through two olive branches into the reservoir, from which it flows down into each of the lamps. How simple, how beautiful, how perfect, and how full of holy meaning!

What is its profound spiritual meaning? First, the golden candlestick represents the Church of God and the people of God. "Ye are the light of the world." "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."

Israel of old was to that generation what the Church is meant to be today, the depository of Divine truth, life and light, the true light of the world. The candlestick was all of gold, and so the true Church of Christ consists only of those who are the partakers of

the Divine nature. Gold is the type of the Divine; and only as we are restored to the image of God and filled with His light and presence can we be light bearers for the world.

The candlestick was the only light of the Temple, which had no windows. All its light came from God. And the world has no light apart from the Church of God. The holy Bible, illuminated by the Spirit, contains all that we know of God, the present and the future life. He is a foolish man who tries to deceive himself and his people by the torchlight of his own eloquence, philosophy and sensationalism.

The candlestick was one, yet manifold. And so the Church of God has infinite variety, and yet but one light and one Body. God does not level a soul down to the same pattern; He lets Isaiah and James and John be each himself; but He fills each with God and makes his life Divine, and yet perfectly natural, simple, free and human.

Every part of our nature has to pass through the new creation, but every part is preserved, sanctified and filled with God. So the whole spirit and soul and body is preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The candlestick was not luminous. It was simply a light bearer. It could make no light. It could reflect from its polished and brilliant surface, but the light must come from another source. We have no light in ourselves; we can simply receive the light and hold it. We are not ourselves the light of the world, but we are so to shine that men shall see our good works and glorify our Father which is in Heaven.

We are to reveal not our goodness and our grace but Christ in us, and let all men see how helpless and insufficient we are in ourselves, but what an all sufficient and mighty Saviour we have, and One available for them as well as for us. This is the light that the world needs to hold forth, the Holy Ghost and the person and grace of Jesus for their darkness and misery and sin.

The business of the candlestick was not to hoard the oil but to consume it, use it up, and keep it ever burning in those glowing tongues of flame. If the lamps and pipes had tried to absorb and retain the oil, they would have lost it. No, they gave it up; they used it; they consumed it in ceaseless burning. Men sometimes say to us, "Don't expend all your vitality; don't use all your strength; save yourself." Ah, that's the way to lose yourself. Only that which we give we have. That which we keep we lose.

Try to hold on to any one of God's gifts, and it will go. Try to economize and keep your

blessing for yourself, and it will disappear. Pass it on, and it will burn forever. As those lamps exhausted the oil in their little cups, the residue of the oil poured in from above, and they were always full, always fresh, always burning, and always shining.

So let us be "burning and shining" lights; and as we give out what He has given, He will replenish and supply, and we shall have enough and to spare; and we, too, shall shine in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

It is the Holy Ghost who gives us all our light and life. It is He who produces in us all our graces, and works through us all our services for God and men. Beloved, this is the test, and this is the difference between man and God. Five of the virgins were wise and five were foolish. They that were wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps; and when the Bridegroom came, this was the point of separation.

The foolish virgins were virgins, too. They were pure. They were waiting and longing for the coming of the Bridegroom. They had a little light. They had oil enough to keep the lamp burning for a time, but they had not the fullness of the Spirit; they had not the indwelling of the personal Holy Ghost, and so their lamps went out in their hour of need. They were unable to go in with the marriage procession.

The one point which seemed the happy fate of the others was simply this, that they "took oil in their vessels with their lamps." They had the Holy Ghost personally indwelling them. They had the source of grace within their hearts. They were always ready.

Beloved, let a word be sufficient for the wise, and oh, let us be filled with the Spirit so that we shall be found of Him in peace.—The Alliance Weekly.

THE CHILDREN

It is an outstanding fact that eighty-five per cent of the members of the evangelical churches of America were won to Christ before they arrived at their twenty-first birthday. If we can judge the future by the past, only a small percentage of the people of America over twenty-one years of age, not now identified with some church, will ever become Christians. This group of facts has subjected Christianity to criticism, and more than one philosopher has naively said that Christianity is not a religion which commends itself to grown people. Stung by the criticisms, churches have neglected the children and have made an unceasing effort to win the middle-aged and the old.—Watchman-Examiner.