

God's Jewels

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Moses was told by the Lord when he was first sent into Egypt, that he should lead the people out, and they should serve God upon that mountain where he had seen the burning bush. If you look in the third chapter of Exodus, you will see that that place was "the mountain of God, even Horeb."

We have journeyed with the Children of Israel through the "great and terrible wilderness," we have followed the pillar of cloud and fire, we have eaten with them of the manna, we have drunk of the Rock, and now we have come to "Horeb, the mount of God."

The Lord had fulfilled His word: He had brought His people to the place that He promised. And now, upon the mountain where He had first appeared to Moses in the burning bush, the Lord called him again, and gave him a message for the people. He said:—

"Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings and brought you unto Myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people for all the earth is Mine. And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and on holy nation."

These words of the Lord must have been in the mind of Moses whom, long afterwards, reminding the people of the Lord's tender care for Israel in "the waste howling wilderness," he said: "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him."

And now that He had shown them His great love, His tender care, His Almighty power to keep and to defend them, He told them that He wanted to be their King, and to make them His peculiar treasure. Who would not have such a mighty King, such a loving Saviour, such a tender Shepherd. One in whom they could rest "from all want and danger free"?

But there was one condition. What was it that was to make them God's peculiar treasure? "If ye will obey My voice, and keep my covenant."

God's covenant, or promise, was that He would give them the victory over all their enemies, that all that would harm them should be destroyed, and that He would give them the whole world for an everlasting possession. Now He said to them, "Obey My voice, and keep My covenant." How could they?—how can we—keep God's covenant? Only by believing His promise; for "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

This promise was made to Abraham, but "the promise that it should be the heir of the world was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith."

That is, it was not anything they could do, but it was simply believing what God could and would do, that was to make them His peculiar treasure, and give them an everlasting home in the world to come.

God is "no respecter of persons." So wherever there is one who believes in Him, that one is His peculiar treasure. He says: "Every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of My covenant, even them will I bring to My holy mountain."

The Sabbath, which is God's gift to us, is the sign of His power to fulfil His covenant. When we keep it holy, and rest upon it. We show that we have ceased from our own works, from all our vain efforts to save ourselves, and are trusting only in the power of Him who created all things by His Word, to make us "new creatures in Christ Jesus."

In doing this, we are taking hold of, and keeping God's covenant, and He will make us anew, pure and holy, and bring us to His holy mountain; that

"Beautiful Zion, built above;
Beautiful city that I love,"

about which you often sing. By and by this beautiful city will come down upon the earth made new, which will be the everlasting home of all who put their whole trust in Jesus to save them.

These will be, as God said to Moses, "a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation," and together they will sing: "Unto Him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins by His blood; and He made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto His God and Father, to Him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

Because the Lord had done so much for them, the Children of Israel were in danger of thinking that He cared for them only, and did not love any other people. Indeed, this was the great mistake that they made all through their history, and it led them to despise other people so much that they would not even eat with those of another nation, for fear that it would defile them. Thus they became like the heathen themselves, many of whom, as you may have read, have so separated themselves one from another by what they call caste, that they cannot mix freely, even with those of their own nation.

But that was not what God wanted Israel to do, and if they had given heed to these words that He spoke to them from the mount, they could never have made this great mistake. God said only that they should be His peculiar treasure, above all people,—which showed that all are His treasure and He loves all.

He wanted to teach the Israelites this, and so He added, "for all the earth is Mine."
"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

But those who take what He gives so freely to all, those who take Jesus to be their Saviour, are His peculiar treasure above all others. God wanted Israel to be a missionary people to carry to the ends of the earth the Gospel, the "good tidings," of this mighty Saviour, so that all the world might become, like them, His peculiar treasure.

"Little children, little children,
Who love their Redeemer,
Are His jewels, precious jewels,
His loved and His own.

"Like the stars of the morning,
The bright crown adorning,
They shall shine in their beauty,
Bright gems for His crown."