



TO-DAY—FOR ME—

THE

CROSS OF THE GLORIFIED ONE.

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G. MORRISH, 20, PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

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MY DEAR BROTHER,

You ask me for a few lines from (what you call) my "Patmos." When John was in Patmos, he seemed to have been rudely pushed thither by the persecutor ; but if so, and if Satan was the instigator of that piece of wickedness, our God had His counsel and His plan to accomplish therein. The wickedness of enemies to the truth cast the servant out of intercourse with man and saint into solitude : and God took occasion thereof to pour contempt on His enemies and to give to His servant a revelation and a service quite peculiar. What would you and I have done without that fruit of wisdom, grace, and love divine which comes down to us from John in Patmos ? Moreover without it the testimony of grace and the word would not have been complete.

It behoves me to consider well what

I pen after such an introduction, and it behoves you too to judge what I write. But the God of John not only divinely inspired him to write what he wrote, and guarded him in doing so, but He wills also that His children should, in brotherly love one toward another, for His name's sake, and in humbleness of soul, watch the one for the other and be one another's keepers—first by prayer and then by ensample, but also by exhortation. So I feel free to write, and do you discern how far what I suggest is according to Him and the word of His grace.

We grow in capacity to understand the difficulties of the days we live in, but . . . . (I will not finish the sentence which I seemed about to write, but) I will make a few practical remarks. It seems to me that we have now one want in common. I think, too, that God is bringing it up before our minds, and, by various circumstances in various places is teaching us that there is *to His eye* something wanting in us; and, by the film that many an eye finds over it

when looking forth and forward, is pressing upon us the importance of the deficit: and often, because of the film and mist, many of us cannot see whereabouts God is above in these things.

The cross of the Lord Jesus Christ: has it its due place in the souls of the saints now? Has it had its due place in *my* soul? I judge that "No" is the only truthful answer which conscience, or spiritual instinct, can give, and so I give it. Has it had its due place in *your* soul? Answer for your own self: and then point out to me those in whom, theoretically and practically, it seems to you to have its due place. I write not as a mystic who supposes that the Spirit of God will ever cease to give to the believer, while down here, larger and larger perception of the import and meaning of the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ; but I write as one that has his all in Christ as one of the faithful among the heaven-called people, one who has past Pentecostal blessing before his mind, and the faith and life down here of a man of like passions with himself

in Paul, and that blessed hour too, when the Spirit and the Bride having said "Come," will be ready for her Lord.

It is not mysticism that God has said of us in Romans vi., "crucified together with Christ," "dead together with Christ," "buried together with Christ:" all that is of the first Adam thus separated from the believer, through the humiliation and death of Him who is the last Adam. Well, as it seems to me, it is only when faith *acts* on these things and that a man *reckons* himself to be dead—dead as to guilt and dead as to sin—that that side of the cross is duly held by any of us. Nor is it mysticism, again, as to the new man, that it is written we have been "quicken together with Christ," "raised up together with him," and "made to sit with him in heavenly places." (Eph. ii.) Who of us are so one with Him as to be walking down here as He walked? Surely such only wear, *duly*, the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I do not say, nor do I mean, that the benefits of the cross and of the resur-

rection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ for eternity belong only to the believer who understands and is consistent with his principles. Not so. But what I *do* say and press is that all they that are sons of God and heirs of God, quickened, sealed, and dwelt in by the Holy Spirit, are the objects on whom Christ's heart and eyes are fixed continually; and that, if they live, He says they "should live unto him who died for them and rose again." Ponder the principles of Paul (Gal. ii. 20), "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me"—and you will see what I mean.

By the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ I do not mean the cross of One a-dying, but not yet dead (as many a modern thinks of it); nor of one hanging dead on the cross, nor of Him taken down and carried and laid in a grave (as a Jew or a Romanist may think of Him), but of the old scriptural doctrine of God,

where His determinate foreknowledge and counsel were made good, when Jew and Gentile crucified the Nazarene who died and rose again. The cross of the Lamb of God seen in the light of the glorious presence of Him who, though once laid low in death, is gone up out of the grave in the power of being Himself the resurrection and the life—in the light of whose presence as He now sits at the right hand of God, the awful, solemn, and yet blessed doctrine of the true cross is seen. So seen by faith, it has power over the heart and conscience of the believer and must have, for it is *taught of God*; and it is the grand subject of the Spirit of God's teaching.

If they in the North and they in the South-West have not as individuals honoured the cross, how can they (not moulded individually by the cross) be built up together aright according to the heavenly calling, or the mystery; the coming of the Lord or the patience and hope of the kingdom?

The solidity of the Northern races and the imaginative liveliness or dreamy

musings of other races find, each for itself, the remedy and the death-sentence in the cross alone. It is God's test of everything and of everybody. It sentences and would check flesh and its worldly energy drawn from within and not working from and through resurrection from the dead, amid things (in appearance) good. And it would detect and condemn, and stop flesh and selfish indulgence in acknowledged evil too. The adversary can hold his own against everything down here, except the cross and the blood of the ascended Christ; and the Holy Spirit knows no power over man as man apart from the same. He forms the soul by it for good, and He detects what is not of Christ; whether it be of the adversary, the world, or the flesh, by the application of the cross to it—the cross down here, the mind when down here of Him who now is glorified.

A company or an assembly must be affected by the individual state of each component part of the whole. This, true in nature, is true also in grace. The

building of God is of living stones ; the body of the Christ is of quickened members ; the family of God have all eternal life. I do not, in urging this, forget for a moment, but I now refer to it as giving additional weight to what I have said, that whatever the converts at Pentecost had been, they were converted then and had received forgiveness of sins as well as faith and repentance and the gift of the Holy Ghost ; and this fitted them to be parts of that edifice in which the Holy Spirit dwelt. Paul and each of his beloved Ephesians was a member in particular of that body, the glorified Head of which was and is the Lord Jesus Christ seated in heaven. And the eternal life which was with the Father before the world was, is the portion of each child of God, individually, a member of that family which the Lord God Almighty is not ashamed to own as His ; nor does the Lord Jesus Christ hesitate to declare Himself as the first-born among many brethren in it. We are all, and we know it, through faith, blood-bought, and the congregating

and centralising power is the Holy Spirit dwelling among us—but then He is here as sent down from God and the Lord Jesus Christ as a witness, according to the thoughts of God, of the personal worth and the value of the work of the once crucified but now risen and ascended Son of man. That the Spirit, in the power of His own gracious presence, does keep evil in check—and may Himself be grieved and quenched and resisted is also true; but His standard of truth is not Himself, but the import, worth, and value of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The cross of the Lord Jesus Christ is a greater leveller of *self* in the flesh of man in the system of the world which man and Satan have formed for human self when out of God's presence; and the same cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, when seen in the presence of God as of His providing, gives shelter to the conscience and salvation from the world, self, and Satan, and God's wrath to come to every one that finds grace to receive it and God's instruction about it.

Let us see it in its detective power. Human mentality of the highest sort is as much part of fallen flesh as is the senseless creating and pampering the cravings of the human body. Not so offensive, but as much of it. Pathos is to the natural mind admirable; what would fallen human nature be without pathos? When a man does well for himself, all men speak well of him. Men's praise would hardly now be openly expressed of the course of the drunkard, adulterer, fornicator. Yet all these have their root in the self-willed independency of fallen human nature. But everything that is in it is judged and condemned (as well as the man who stands before God upon it) which is inconsistent with Him who willingly was obedient unto death, the death of the cross.

If the Lord were to go through with you, or with me, whatever scenes we may severally have passed through since we were together, I judge that He would let out many thoughts that would astonish us, to the origin of troubles being want of honouring the cross in

this one or that one ; and also as to our realised weakness at such and such an hour, resulting from a want in us as to the cross. He measures out trial and He is present with us in it (for destruction is not His object, but) that everything should turn to our salvation through the supply of the Spirit and prayer. There is often a surprise in the mind in finding we have been unexpectedly at our wit's end. It should not be so, for it is there faith lives and the believer should live ; for what we know not now we shall know hereafter.

Note it. There is a connection in the very nature of things between the presence of God and self-judgment in man. Without knowing God as He is (that is in Christ) no sinner can judge himself truthfully. Without abiding near God no believer, seeing what Christ was and how He walked and what He has done, will know how to use this knowledge for his own rest and walk and for the discovery of shortcoming in himself. If any have got away from God, let them return to Him.

One effect of want of self-judgment in a Christian and watching unto prayer against self or anything else (for its sake) having a place allowed to it in what should be and is (or professes to be) Christ's alone—is dimness of sight as to God and His actings. Consequently discouragement is the present portion of such. They are dim-sighted and cannot see what God's mind is, nor the cause nor the end of a wilderness, a Patmos, or a storm. Faith in a believer can hardly be lively as to details of the pathway or any part of it (past, present, or to come) save where self-judgment is maintained.

I believe that God allows many a storm to rise, forms many a wilderness and Patmos too, for the blessing of His people. He will have *reality*. We must have it too. The purging out of chaff, the picking out of defective grain is solemn work, but needful if the merchant will have his ingathering worth much. Better for us to do it ourselves than to challenge Him, by our neglect, to do it. The moral glory of the cross is only

fully known to God Himself: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is better known in heaven than on earth; in eternity than in time. To us while here most precious, it will yet be better known and more precious in heaven, and eternity, and the presence of God, than here.

A few words upon it ere I close.

My Lord! thou knowest all about Thy cross and the revelation of God by it, and Thou by the Spirit canst guide and guard my pen.

Wonders seem to me brought to light by means of it; and brought to light too in such a way as to teach me, even me, the truth of God and the lie of Satan misleading man through the world and the flesh to destruction. I look back to the first creation, it was all very good. Invested in Adam's hand I see it all given up to a murderous rebel, Satan—and man losing himself and all. But then came out to light the mind of God against Satan that there should be One, the woman's seed, whose heel first the serpent should bruise,

but whose bruised heel should finally bruise the serpent's head. And there above, that seed of the woman, Mary's Child, now sits enthroned on the majesty of the Highest, waiting till God shall have made His foes to be His footstool. How unsearchable are God's ways and His judgments past finding out!

No creature (according to its very creation) expression of the eternal power and Godhead ever could have devised such a thing. It is the expression of a mind infinitely greater than man's. He as a creature never could rise higher than that which may be involved in His original relationship with His Creator. Who, according to the thoughts of a mere creature, could have said *how* or *why* God should make One who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him? How could it be? Alas! man's heart, now that he has heard all about it, is opposed to it. What! not *I* work, but God! Not my merits honoured, but all my vileness measured out in sore judgment upon One who knew no sin!

What, I to be blessed according to God's delight in the only obedient One! I am conscious that man likes not God to have been before him and to be altogether above him; that God's thoughts and ways stain too deeply the pride of fallen man, even in blessing him, for the heart and mind of man unreconciled to welcome it, or the truth that it is not God that wants reconciling to man, but man that wants reconciling to God. I know it all. But I must bow or be lost; must bow to the most perfect expression of the divine character, told out too just where my present ruin and lost condition are discovered. And shall I turn from the God who in pity and mercy and compassion has taken occasion of my lost estate to make it a field for the revelation of the character and ways of God, and for giving a new glory to the Son of His love, and to me a better portion than Adam lost, a share of the blessedness of His own family and glory? And see the glory that morally rests upon us when we bow to His grace. I then can say, "What has been, what is, what

ever will be most for Thy glory, O God, has been and is and ever will be most for mine too. Thine own character, Thy being love, and light, full of mercy and compassion, Father, too, of an only-begotten Son, Thy wisdom and Thy power, the Lamb that was slain alive again for evermore—it is through His cross that Thou canst be just while justifying me a sinner. The blood that makes Thy throne on high to be a mercy-seat, makes my conscience perfect in the light. We understand one another now: I have been raised through faith in Christ crucified and risen, by the intelligence given by the Holy Spirit, and can say, Thy perfect way of calling me, O God! is through grace—my divinely perfect way of coming to Thee, of standing in Thy presence, and of delighting in Thee. A ruined sinner in myself, yet can I trust Thee and hope in Thee, as Adam could not in Eden.”

At all events, the fall has subserved, through the cross, the manifestation of the glory of God. Without it there never could have been the new revela-

tion of the character of God, which salvation and redemption give. To taste mercy in its reality, one must be either the one that shews it or one that receives it. No channel for mercy but God manifest in flesh, slain on the cross as Son of man.

Individuality, if not selfishness in its higher and better connections, finds its gains here, and here alone. The cross has broken all my bondage, baffled Satan of his prey, slain the *me* that was, and, in Christ, crucified the world to me and me to the world, and He who bore it has become my life and my portion. Besides this, there is the moral glory and attractive beauty of the truth. And both of these presented to the conscience and heart of man to lure and draw him. Still, and it is that which goes beyond all, He that bore the cross gained by it for Himself as Son of man the glory where He is, and He has made us partakers of the divine nature, and put of His own Spirit in us. That Spirit rules and reigns in us, even the Spirit which He that was crucified gave to us: it

needs be then that (if for privilege as He is so are we in this world, so) our walk down here should be the fruit of our position, and as His *was*; and so, "For me, to-day—the cross of the glorified One." What can I suffer, what do for Him and His?

Yes, the cross of the Christ now ascended has broken my heart, broken Satan's power, stained the world that was guilty of it, shewn out the contrast between His flesh who was holy, harmless, undefiled, spotless who knew no sin and was therefore fit to be a sin-offering, and mine; all, all, all within and all about me has become as dung and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Him and His righteousness. May I live here below in the fellowship of His sufferings being made conformably unto His death until I am in His very presence and Himself as the prize. Amen and Amen.

PAREPIDEEMOS.

Off the Azores.

7. 2. 72.

*By the same Author.*

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