

The Wicket Gate Magazine

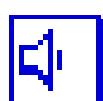
A Continuing Witness



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Aspects of Regeneration

The Pastor's Letter (August 1976)

Dear Friends,

Following on from the good reception of an earlier article on the Nature of the rebirth, we thought that we would now look at two other aspects of regeneration, namely, the **necessity** and the **method** of being born again. One of the clearest passages with regards to these truths is that one in John chapter three, dealing with the interview between our Lord Jesus Christ and that man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus. In the third verse of that chapter, the necessity of the rebirth is clearly announced by the Lord, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;” and then, in the seventh verse, that truth is once again stated, this time preceded by an exhortation not to marvel at such a thing being the case - “Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”

Now, one of the most essential things to grasp with regards to those words of our Lord to Nicodemus is this – our Lord was not telling Nicodemus **what he must do**, but **what must happen to him** in order for him to enter into the kingdom of God. How little this seems to be realised; and there are many preachers and ministers in our day who claim to be preachers of the rebirth, but who continually make and perpetuate this mistaken notion. So, you can hear John chapter three being preached from and the preacher asking men and women to be “born again” as though they were to fulfil a condition of their soul’s salvation that is within their own power and ability to fulfil. This is not the truth of John three, and therefore, is not the preaching of the necessity of the rebirth as our Lord Jesus uses and states that truth before this leader of the Jewish nation.

Remember verse seven? As we said, that is the second usage of the phrase, Ye must be born again; and as we said, it is preceded by an exhortation not to marvel at this truth of the necessity of having to be born again of the Holy Spirit of God. And the main reason that we are not to “marvel” at this truth is contained in the previous verse, in verse

six, where our Lord says, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit;” therefore , verse seven, “Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.” In other words, we understand the truth of the necessity of our “second” birth on the back of another truth – the truth of our “first” birth and where that leaves us in relation to our God and the things of our God. “That which is born of the flesh is flesh,” says our Lord”, and that which is born of the Spirit it is spirit.” And when our Lord uttered those words He was pointing Nicodemus to the two great dividing families of mankind – that of the flesh and that of the Spirit. They are continuously feuding families; “The flesh warreth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh.” And into that family of the flesh we are all, each and every one of us, born by our first birth in our first parents Adam and Eve. As far as spiritual things pertaining to our God are concerned, we all, each and every one of us, by nature, manifest the same family characteristics – blindness, deafness, lameness, deadness – and a dozen-and-one other traits that mark us out and which are all summed up under “the flesh.” Therefore, if that which is born of the flesh is flesh, then, indeed, our Lord says aright, “Marvel not that I said unto you – you **must** be born again.” This is what must happen to you – you must have a new birth, because there is nothing whatsoever belonging to that old first birth that can do anything other then “war” against the ways and will of your God who is in heaven above.

Now, as I say if we would grasp that, first of all. We make a great mistake in setting the work of salvation forth as a “rescue operation” on fallen man. As one has pictured it – it is not as though the sinner is splashing about in the waves of the sea waiting for some one to throw him a life-belt and rescue him; he is not splashing about on the waves, he is lying on the floor of the ocean – for he is a dead man in the things of salvation! That lovely text out of the Revelation is so often taken as a summary of all gospel preaching - “Behold I stand at the door and knock,” and so forth. “There you are,” people say, “the sinner must open the door and let the Saviour come in; the sinner must be able to do that, for Jesus wouldn't knock if that wasn't the case; and as that saying goes, 'The handle's on the inside of the

door – the man inside must open the door.” Well, we might reply by saying, What's a sinner doing reading a Christian's mail; for those words are pronounced to a church of the living God who, by the grace of God has the life of God still remaining within her, and, therefore, able to bestir herself in life to the voice of her beloved. But that picture never belongs to the sinner, for whether the “handle” is on the inside of the door or not is completely irrelevant, because the “occupant” of the house, the sinner, is lying and dead stiff on the floor of the room! He is “born of the flesh;” marvel not that he **“must** be born again.” He cannot walk, for he is lame, he cannot see, for he is blind, he cannot hear, for he is deaf, he cannot stir, for he is dead. He is “born of the flesh”, he must be born again, of the Spirit; that is absolutely necessary, that is final, that is what must happen to him.

You remember that word of the Lord about not “marvelling” at this truth? “Marvel not that I said unto thee ...” Surely our Lord foresaw the great potential in human nature to fail to see what man is naturally like and therefore what he must be spiritually made. Long ago in the eastern countries it was the custom to set a corpse at the head of a table during a great feast. The purpose of this eerie presence was to remind the participants in the feast of the brevity of life. How much we need constantly reminded of the deadness of the human nature that we are called to work and witness among with the things of the gospel. A due consideration of this fact would keep us from running after those “embalming spirits” of our modern methods of evangelism and so forth. Man by nature is only flesh, and he must be “born again.” No matter how much you dress up a corpse, it is a corpse still. It is time we paid heed to what the Saviour said to that man of the Pharisees so long ago, regeneration is absolutely necessary; as surely as we are born into the family of the flesh through the operations of the flesh, so we are and must be born of the spirit by the Holy Spirit of God. Many would look on this as a hard doctrine and one that doesn't hold out any hope whatsoever for the sinner outside of Christ. Let it be stated quite clearly, it is the doctrine that our Lord was preaching to this man, and that man – still in his flesh – openly railed against it, “How can a man be born when he is old” etc.? And yet, was that not the man that did that daring deed in openly

confessing the Lord when together with Joseph of Arimathea he took His body and buried it in that new sepulchre? It is our duty to state the truth before the hearts and minds of men, and there is no greater truth than this, that a man or woman must be born again before they can enter the kingdom of God. And when, by the grace of God, a person is born anew, then, that person will more than likely rather thank than blame any Christian who told it truly as it is. If you are an unconverted reader of this, then, my friend, you ponder well these words of the Saviour “Ye must – ye **must** – be born again.” No words are more calculated to lay the sinner low before his God, and surely, that is one of the first processes of regeneration taking place in a sinner's life.

Could we just take a few lines now to consider the method of the rebirth? How is a man born again? And of course, we have made reference to this already, and our Saviour makes it absolutely clear before Nicodemus: he is “born of the Spirit”; “Of water and of the Spirit,” says our Lord. Let it be said that the “water” there mentioned has nothing whatsoever to do with baptism; it is what is called in another place, “the washing of regeneration by the Word.” When the Holy Spirit works in a soul He works in a cleansing way, like water – just as He also acts in a burning way like fire. Our Lord makes this clear; and He also makes it abundantly clear that when the Spirit works in regenerating a soul He works in a completely “sovereign” fashion – verse eight, “The wind bloweth where it pleases … so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” And God's method in regenerating a soul excludes anything belonging to that old first fleshly nature, and it is something wrought spiritually and by the Spirit of God alone.

One of the great statements regarding the Spirit's work is found later on in the gospel of John where our Lord sets Him forth as convincing of sin righteousness, and judgment. That is a good statement: in the work of regeneration, the Holy Spirit stands like an advocate before the sinner and lays all the charges of sin before him. This is done “objectively” in the reading and the preaching of the Word of God, for that is God's truth regarding the sinner and his sin.

But, it is also done “subjectively”, when that objective truth of the Word of God makes the sinner realise his sinnership before his God. When that occurs, the sinner then enters a plea of mercy before the Judge whom he now knows he has wronged and sinned against. John Bunyan, in his Holy War has a classical illustration of this process. Mansoul is the city under siege by the thundering legions – the Law of God etc. The city begins to shake under this siege, but the walls are not breached – for no man was ever saved through the Law – the law only makes the sinner appear sinful. Then comes Immanuel, and with persuasive words he makes an entrance into the city and sets himself in the castle of Mansoul. On seeing this, the inhabitants of the city send out a deputation to sue for mercy; the deputation consists of Mr Desires-awake, and Mr Wet-eyes. Their plea for mercy is accepted by the prince Immanuel, peace is declared for Mansoul, and a new governor, Mr God's-peace, is appointed for that city.

That is, in fact, the ways of our God in new-creating a soul. The law comes with its battering rams and slings; Christ is brought to us in the gospel, and the Holy Spirit of God arouses the spiritual man of His creating to see the Christ whom we had despised and rejected.

Remember the names of Bunyan's deputation? Mr Desires-awake and Mr Wet-eyes. How true to the Word was the old Bedford Tinker, for there is “repentance and faith” beginning to come forth to petition the King - “Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner.” Such pleas and declarations sincerely made are never refused; for it is the Spirit's work to create them in bringing a soul from death to life in the operations of regeneration which are absolutely necessary if a man or a woman will ever see God as their God and Saviour.

“For Thou hast made the blind to see,
The deaf to hear, the dumb to speak,
The dead to live; and lo, I break
The chains of my captivity.”

Yours sincerely,
W. J. Seaton

Gleanings in the Psalms

(Psalm 74 concluded)



Verse 10, “**O God, how long shall the adversary reproach? Shall the enemy blaspheme thy name for ever?**” The sinner never leaves his sin until his sin first leaves him; if death did not put a stop to his sin, he would never cease from sin. This may be illustrated by a similitude thus: A company of gamesters resolve to play all night, and accordingly they sit down to their card-table; their candle is accidentally put out, or burns out, and they are forced to give up their game and go to bed in the dark; but had the candle lasted all night they would have played all night. This is every sinners case with regards to sin; did not death put out the candle of life, the sinner would sin still. If the sinner should live for ever he would sin for ever, and, therefore, it is a righteous thing with God to punish him for ever in hellish torments. Every impenitent sinner would sin to the days of eternity, if he might live to the days of eternity. The psalmist implicitly says, Lord, if Thou dost but let them alone for ever, they will certainly blaspheme Thy name for ever and ever.

From Thomas Brooks.

Verse 13. “**Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters.**” Infinite power split the Red Sea in twain. Israel delighted to rehearse this famous act of the Lord. Monsters long accustomed to the deep found themselves left high and dry. Huge things of the sea-cave and coral grot were deprived of their vital element, and left with crushed heads upon the dry channel bed. There, too that old dragon Pharaoh was utterly broken, and Egypt herself had the head of her power and pomp broken with an Almighty blow. Even thus is that old dragon broken by Him who came to bruise the serpent's head, and the sea of wrath no longer

rolls before us, so that we can pass through it dry-shod. Our present faith is often revived by glad memories of the past.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon

Verse 19. “O deliver not the soul of thy turtledove unto the multitude of the wicked: forget not the congregation of thy poor for ever.” The people of God are here taught how to sharpen the edge of their prayers, and make them vigorous – to wit, by disclaiming any ability or sufficiency in themselves; by styling themselves a congregation of poor, silly, weak doves, in no way able to encounter an army of bestial, crafty enemies. This plea the people of God make use of: “With thee the fatherless findeth mercy.”

Langly

Verse 19. “O deliver not ...” *Prayer:* - An arrow, if it be drawn up but a little way in the bow, does not go very far; but if it be pulled up to the head, it flies swiftly and pierces deep. Thus prayer, if it be only dribbled forth from careless lips falls at our feet. It is the strength of the ejaculation of strong desire which sends a prayer to heaven and makes it pierce the clouds. It is not the arithmetic of our prayers – how many they are; nor the rhetoric of our prayers – how eloquent they be; nor the geometry of our prayers – how long they be; nor the music of our prayers – how sweet our voice may be; nor the logic of our prayers – how argumentative they may be. Fervency of spirit is that which availeth much.

James Gray

Verse 20. “Have respect unto the covenant: for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.” Those persons and preachers who decline to think and speak of gospel mercies and free salvation as secured by *covenant*, deprive themselves and others of much needed and blessed comforts from God's Word.

William Plumer

Verse 22. “**Arise, O God, plead thine own cause: remember how the foolish man reproacheth thee daily.**” The strength of our heart is when we know that the cause we are engaged in is really the Lord's own cause in the gospel and any reproach that we endure is truly a reproach for righteousness sake. Then we can lean on such a word as this and know that God Himself will intervene in His own good and appointed time As old John Newton has it: -

“Rejoice believer in the Lord,
Who makes your cause His own;
The hope that's built upon His Word,
Can n'er be overthrown.”

Verse 23. “**Forget not the voice of thine enemies: the tumult of those that rise up against thee increaseth continually.**” If we are compelled to close our most solemn and urgent devotions, and our most earnest supplications, without seeing one ray of light beaming upon our path, it may comfort us to remember that so this pious psalmist closed this complaint. To hope against hope is the most blessed kind of hope.

William Plumer

The Baptists in Scotland (Part 4)

An Heritage to Follow.

Having stated our conviction that there is a great gulf fixed between what the founding fathers of the Scottish baptist witness believed and practiced, and what are the general trends today, we now go on to look at something of the kind of “bridges” that would have to be built in our day if ever we would span that gulf and take on to follow in the heritage of those who have gone before. We remember of course, that the early baptists in Scotland were fallible men, and to their natural eccentricities we need feel in no way bound. But if we are to look

upon ourselves as baptists at all in following their historic line, we are completely under obligation to join ourselves with them at those points of belief and practice which rest solely and squarely on the word of God's revealed truth in the scriptures. If ever anything marked out those early baptist pioneers it was their desire to be governed only by this principle, "What saith the scriptures?" It was said of Christopher Anderson, in relation to his searching the scriptures, "to be convinced of the right, was with him to do the right." That spirit very much pervaded in those early days, especially with regards to those matters pertaining to the salvation of the Church of Christ, and its establishment and purpose – both towards God and towards men. And if ever we are to be truly baptist, in the historic and biblical understanding of that term, then we must also learn to "walk by the same rule" and "mind the same things."

As far as the question of salvation goes, to a man the early baptists were believers in and upholders of the truth that, "Salvation is of the Lord;" that "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." In a word they were all "Calvinistic" in their understanding of the gospel of God's free redeeming grace to sinners. When Robert Carmichael asked Archibald McLean in 1763, "What do you think of baptism?" he didn't have to ask him, "what do you think of salvation?" That particular truth of the word of God had long-since been settled in both men's hearts and minds. In fact, three years earlier, McLean had just re-issued from his publishing works in Glasgow one of the writings of the great Puritan divine, John Owen, and a glance at any of the Articles of Faith, of the early churches will clearly show that those baptists were of a different ilk to that which is current today. For example, from "The Particular Baptist Church," founded in Glasgow in 1801:- "God, from all eternity," says their 6th article, "to glorify his own free grace and mercy, holiness and truth, elected part of mankind in his own Son, to be partakers of grace here, and glory hereafter." The very title, "Particular" baptists, meant that they were upholders of the doctrine of Particular Redemption – Limited Atonement, and whereas, they saw themselves clearly "closed-up" to the acceptance of this most humbling truth, they also rejoiced in the certainty of the success of it, that Jesus would "see of

the travail of his soul and be satisfied.” So, the 8th article: “All that in the councils of peace were given to Jesus, and redeemed by him, are in due time, by the ministry of the Word and Spirit, convinced of their sinfulness and obnoxiousness to God's wrath, and are enlightened in the knowledge of Jesus as the only Saviour.” Needless to say, such articles would be difficult to find today, except as museum pieces in some churches whose buildings and properties are “tied” by them.

The same convictions with regard to the doctrine of salvation, are what lie behind the works and labours of the Haldanes which helped to shed light on a very much benighted Scotland and Europe of that day. Dr. Reuben Saillens outlines the three “main characteristics” of what became known as “Haldane's Revival” in the city of Geneva: - (1) it gave a prominent emphasis to the necessity of a personal knowledge and experience of grace; (2) it maintained the absolute authority and Divine inspiration of the Bible; (3) it was a return to Calvinistic doctrine against Pelagianism and Arminianism ...” Robert Haldane himself assures us that such were his intentions; in writing to the irate Professor of Divinity at Geneva, concerning those students who had come under his teaching, the Calvinistic baptist makes his position clear: “As far as I was enabled, I endeavoured to lay open to them the rich stores of religious instruction contained in the Epistle to the Romans ... In studying this Epistle, I turned their attention to the great doctrines of the gospel, so successfully revived at the Reformation by Luther and his associates, as well as by Calvin, with whose writings, though the founder of their church, they had no acquaintance, and whose theological sentiments they had been taught to regard as altogether antiquated. In discarding the instructions of these Reformers they had been led to understand that they were following the superior illumination of the present age. I did not attempt, however, to make them disciples of Calvin or of any other man ... but to bring them to be followers of Christ, to sit at the foot of His cross, and to learn of Him, 'who spake as never man spake.'”

It was the description of the kind of instruction that Haldane outlines there that fired the enthusiasm of the zealous Thomas Chalmers. 1845 was only the second General Assembly of the Free Church of

Scotland which had come into being with the Disruption of 1843; two of the speakers at that Assembly were Frederic Monod and Merlin d'Aubigne, and as they spoke of the pattern of things in Geneva, Chalmers declared that “thus to sit round a table, with the Bible, was his *beau ideal* of the study of theology.” Indeed, there can be no theology outwith that Bible, and if ever the Lord grants His Spirit again to the baptists of Scotland in general on this matter, they will learn what their fathers in the faith were assured of, “by grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.”

Now, we may be assured of this one fact, that a man's theology with regards to how men are saved and added to the church of Christ, will very much determine what goes on within the context of the church's life. The apostle Paul very much wants us to learn how we “ought to behave ourselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God the pillar and ground of truth.” And so, he envelopes us in “the mystery of godliness.” (1 Timothy 3 verses 15 forward) It is a small wonder, then, that on the back of Arminian, man-centred views of the works of salvation among the new generation of Scottish baptists, there should come a form of church worship more akin to the theatre or concert hall than to that place which Paul there calls “the pillar and ground of truth.” Dear old Peter Grant used to play the fiddle for the entertainment of his fellow-parishioners at the Church of Scotland at Abernethy. But one day he hid among the bushes alongside the gravel pit at Grantown-on-Spey, where the baptists of that area had to meet at that time, and as he lay there, his heart rose to the rugged strains of their singing:

“This is my rest, here still I'll stay;
For I do like it well.”

“Ah, yes,” he said in his heart, as he moved away at the end of the worship, “This is *my* rest, here still I'll stay.” Oh, he did not give up his fiddle, and could still find pleasure in it; but as an instrument of entertainment, it stayed at home when he “joyed” to “go up to the house of the Lord.” We wonder how the old Grantown pastor would

feel today with twangs and bangs and screeching zings, and booms and bhams and bumps!

There is an interesting account of the ordination services of the pastor of the Particular baptist church in Glasgow mentioned earlier, it is contained in the form of a letter, sent by the newly inducted pastor, James Lister, to a friend. “Dear Sir, According to promise, I now write you an account of the settlement of our little church, and a copy of the articles in which we are agreed. Last Sabbath, one of our Ministers came from Paisley, and preached all day. On Monday morning, by half-past eight, the church met for the purpose of being set in order; strangers and several brethren from Paisley being present, James Taylor presided on the occasion, and observed the following order: he began by singing, then prayer; then he declared the occasion of the meeting. Singing. Prayer by a brother. He then read the scripture qualifications of a pastor and a deacon and signified, that as the church had agreed in the choice of James Lister as pastor, and James Deakin as deacon, they should now confirm that election by uplifted hands; which was done. Being thus chosen, he set them apart to their offices by an appropriate prayer, during which, he laid his hands on both, to commit them to the divine care and blessing. Sung an hymn. He then gave three distinct and full charges to the pastor, the deacon, and the people, to perform, as in the sight of God, their respective duties. The addresses were truly solemn and impressive. Sung an hymn and prayed; recommending all to the Word of God's grace. The whole service was closed by a hymn of praise. On this form I shall add no reflections: I hope it will commend itself to every enlightened mind.”

Now, is that not an interesting remark? “On this form I shall add no reflections: I hope it will commend itself to every enlightened mind.” Not a choir, solo, trio or group in sight. The day of “novelty” had not yet dawned. The old baptists knew that “the chief end of man” was to “glorify God.” And they knew also that nowhere is God meant to be glorified more than in the gathering together of the blood-bought in the united worship and praise of His name.

“Great fear in meeting of the saints,
Is due unto the Lord;
And he of all about him should
With reverence be adored.”

Our baptist fore-bears new what they ought to desire to take place with any “heathen” that come into the gathering of the church of God – namely what Paul spoke about, that the unbeliever should “fall down on his face and worship God.” Nowadays, however, the unbeliever has become the “centre-piece” in the house of the Lord and in order to retain his presence there the churches indulge in an endless round of so called evangelistic specials with the Word “slipped in” where there is an available space. “I hope it will commend itself to every enlightened mind,” said James Lister in that letter. We sincerely and sadly wonder how the present “form” of baptist worship can commend itself to any enlightened mind that God's word has enlightened. As Mr. Spurgeon put it, “put away your baby garments, and quit yourselves like men.”

But, to come back to the original “cause and effect.” It is undoubtedly the removal of the doctrines of God's free grace to men that has resulted in the shift of emphasis in the churches' worship from God to men. It is clear that as the churches moved away in their belief in a sovereign God who redeemed men for the praise of His name, then that purpose of redemption was also blurred. The final aim of a sinner's salvation is to be where Christ is in glory, to “behold” His glory. during the church's time on earth, she is “serving out,” as it were, her apprenticeship. And what she will be engaged in, in heaven, is what she should be engaged in now – no matter how imperfectly she is able to follow that pattern. Without any irreverence whatsoever, we refuse to believe that the church in glory will be treated to a solo from Elijah, or a trio from Peter, James and John, or the massed choirs of the Berean and Thessalonian churches! We are open for any to show us that the churches in the new Testament conducted their worship in any way related to the type of popular evangelistic services that are with us today. That might seem irrelevant, but we would humbly remind all that it is the revelation of God's truth that we are

dealing with in the Bible. But, again, therein lies the whole issue: let us depart from the Word of God in our doctrine, and it will only be a few short steps that will carry us away from the practice, as well.

Of course, there might well be the response that the baptist churches in general have not moved away – either from the doctrines of an earlier day, or the practices, as far as the church's worship is concerned. Indeed, there is a great tendency for many baptists to claim that they are, in fact, “Calvinistic” when it comes to their views of the gospel of salvation. But we have no hesitation in saying that such “Calvinism” as results in our modern type of evangelistic service is, at best, highly defective, and really void of the terms and conditions involved in the phrase.

There is usually a fear expressed that the holding of strong views on God's sovereignty hinders the desire to spread the gospel of Christ. This we will deal with next time: not only did the early baptists spread the gospel, they knew it was the gospel they were desiring to spread.

[Next edition - “An Heritage to Follow Yet”.](#)



Dear Boys and Girls,

There was once, long years ago, in the land of Judah, a young king called Josiah. Josiah was a good king, and he decided to clear out God's house, the Temple, of all the idols that had gathered there

during the time that his father and grand-father had been kings of Judah. They were foolish and bad kings, and did not lead the people well.

As the High Priest was clearing out the Temple, he came upon a "book" tucked away in a corner out of sight. It was the Book of God's Law, written by Moses, telling the people how to live. He discovered that it should have been read regularly to the people. Long years must have passed since it had been read, and Josiah discovered that God would judge the people because they had forgotten His Law. He commanded all the people to gather at the Temple, then, he stood up and read aloud out of the Book. Josiah himself promised to obey God's word, and told the people to do the same.

Wasn't it a sad thing, that God's Book could have been lost like that for so many years? But, you know, boys and girls, that God's word can be "lost" for us, too! I remember a little boy who was reading the Bible one day, and his mummy asked him about what he was reading. This is what he said, "I don't now, I'm reading but I'm not listening." I wonder are you like that sometimes? Are the words of the Bible – God's promises and God's judgements – "lost" to you? You have the Bible, even in your very own hands, but the truth is "lost", because you are not "listening."

I trust that we might all be able to hear God's voice speaking to us through the Bible, and be like Josiah, and not the other boy. When we read God's Word – *listen*: and then, *promise* in our hearts to obey it.

Love,
Mrs Seaton



Snippets

More Thought-provoking Thoughts.

Blessings and Burdens.

"It often comes to pass that, by clipping a promise, we shear off a blessing which we might have had if our faith had accepted the Sacred Word in its entirety. Oh, for a comprehensive faith as to all that is in the glorious covenant! Have you looked long enough at the promise to see all that is in it? What sheaves of blessing are tied up in a single promise, though it may only consist of a dozen words. I like to make up my troubles into bundles. Do you ever do that? If a man has nine, ten, twelve, fourteen parcels to carry, they may be all little ones, but what a worry they are to him! Here are some in this pocket and some in that, and they are more than he can manage, for they drop about everywhere. If he is a wise man, he finds a bag and puts the separate items together. True, they are no lighter, but they are much easier to carry. Bind your troubles into one burden, and then roll it upon the Lord, with your mercies do just the opposite; cut the string, and open the package. They will be no more, but they will give you more joy as you count them, and examine them one by one. Take care that your faith grasps the whole mass of blessings stored away in the promise, and mind you believe that it shall be even as God has told you."

C. H. Spurgeon

The Bible.

"The Bible is not designed to indulge our curiosity, but to be the guide of our faith and the rule of our life. Like the pillar given to the Israelites, which was not intended to amuse them as naturalists, but to conduct them as travellers, to the land flowing with milk and honey."

William Jay

The Song of Songs.

"The Song of Solomon is 'The Song of Songs,' as the choicest both of all the songs of the sons of men, and of all that Solomon sung: the chief of his thousand songs and five: the sweetest, the simplest, the highest, the deepest of the songs of the church in the house of her pilgrimage; above all others her song in the night until the day break and the shadows flee away. Said one who knew it well, 'Grace alone teaches it; experience alone can learn it.'"

A. Moody Stewart.

