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the heavens and the earth,' was due to the writer of the first chapter or to the translator of the Babylonian text, there are no materials for deciding. But the geographical extract was composed at a time when the kingdom of Assyria had not as yet come into existence, and the geographical point of view throughout is that of a West Semite living in a Babylonian city, like Ur or Babylon, which stood on the Euphrates. After the disuse of the cuneiform system of writing in Palestine, the fact that Eden was 'the plain' of Babylonia would have ceased to be known.

In the Study.

Ears of Corn.

THE places where ears of corn are mentioned are Gn $41^{5-7.\ 22-24}$ (Pharaoh's second dream); Lv 2^{14} 23^{14} (the meal offering); Dt 23^{25} (plucking the ears of standing corn); Ru 2^{2} (gleaning); 2 K 4^{42-44} (a gift for the man of God); Job 24^{24} and Is 17^{5} (illustrations from harvesting); and in the N.T., Mk 2^{23}, with parallels, Mt 12^{1}, Lk 6^{1} (the disciples plucking the ears of corn), and Mk 4^{28}.

1. 'And there came a man from Baal-Shalishah, and brought the man of God bread of the first-fruits, twenty loaves of barley, and fresh ears of corn in his sack (mg. the husk thereof). And he said, Give unto the people, that they may eat. And his servant said, What, should I set this before an hundred men? But he said, Give the people, that they may eat; for thus saith the Lord, They shall eat, and shall leave thereof. So he set it before them, and they did eat, and left thereof, according to the word of the Lord' (2 K 4^{42-44} R.V.).

It was a time of famine in Israel when this incident took place. The famine was so sore that even the sons of the prophets were suffering seriously from it. The people must themselves have been at the last extremity before letting their ministers of religion suffer to this extent. If the event occurs at the same time as the one that precedes it in the same chapter, the prophets were driven to the use of herbs of which they were ignorant and were just saved from being poisoned. Elisha and some hundred men in the College of the Prophets at Gilgal were face to face with the possibility of starving of hunger when a man came from Baal-Shalishah, bringing with him twenty loaves of barley and fresh ears of corn.

The gift was timely. Elisha, who could not meet the famine single-handed, was able, when strengthened in faith and hope by this man's visit, so to use the contents of the sack that it served to satisfy all the men that were with him. But the gift was not only timely and abundant, it was an Israelite's sacrificial gift to God. Notice that it contained *fresh ears of corn.*

2. The ears of corn are the spikes which contain the flower or the seed. They are called sometimes heads of corn, and sometimes simply the corn, the stalk on which they grow being the straw. In old Scotch the form of the word was *icker* (not always spelt in one way). Murdoch Nisbet in his *New Testament in Scots* of 1520 translates Mt 12^{1}, 'his discipilis hungrit, and began to pluk ekiris of corn, and to ete.' And Burns addresses the mouse whose nest he had turned up with the plough:

> I doubt na, whiles, but thou may thieve;
> What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
> A daimen icker in a thrave
> 's a sma' request:
> I'll get a blessin' wi' the lave,
> And never miss't.[1]

3. The earliest occurrence of the word is in Pharaoh's dreams. His first dream was about cattle; the second about ears of corn. He thought he saw a stalk of corn upon which there appeared seven ears, one after another, that were rank and good. Then on the same straw there came up other seven ears, one after another, that were thin and blasted. And the thin ears made the rank ears disappear before them, so that it looked as if they had swallowed them up. Now one of the few things that are certain about dreams is that we dream by night of what we are thinking about by day. Pharaoh dreamed of cattle and of corn. He

[1] The thrave is two shocks or stooks, so that 'a daimen icker in a thrave' is an occasional ear of corn in every four-and-twenty sheaves.

was evidently interested in agriculture.[1] And that would make the story of his dreams one which the Hebrews would the more delight to relate. For they were agriculturists themselves. They proudly said of one of their own most glorious kings, Uzziah, King of Judah, that he 'loved husbandry.' To possess cattle and corn was to enjoy plenty; to have them swallowed up was to be faced with famine. And the best gift that they could give to God or man was always a gift of cattle or of corn.

4. They had their own way of giving. When they reaped their fields their custom was to leave the gleanings for the poor. Naomi returned from the land of Moab desolate and poor. But she brought Ruth the Moabitess with her. And Ruth said to Naomi, 'Let me now go to the field and glean among the ears of corn.' The gleaning was often good, and is so still (see the illustration below[2]). But Ruth was particularly lucky. Her 'hap' was to light on a field belonging to Boaz. And by night, when she had carried home her gleaning and beaten it out, she found she had an ephah, or almost a bushel, of barley.

The modern farmer's method is different. He carefully gathers up all the rakings and threshes it out with the rest. And then he gives to the poor in another way. That saves waste; and the poor do not suffer. But it is easier now for a Nabal to escape. And it is a well-known fact that except in time of famine, there were no poor in Israel who were quite so destitute as many of the poor in England.

Besides the harvest gleanings, the poor sometimes got a corner of the field with all the corn on it. And, again, if a farmer forgot a sheaf in taking his harvest home he could not return to fetch it. It was no longer his; it belonged to the poor.[3]

But the difference lies not so much in the different customs as in this. When the Hebrew farmer gave to the poor he gave to God. The law of the gleanings was God's law. More than that, the cattle and the corn were His. When the man came from Baal-Shalishah he brought fresh ears of corn with him. They were the firstfruits of his harvest. No doubt Elisha and the prophets were in urgent need of it. And the man was glad to cut the very first sheaf that could be cut and bring it. But in bringing it to Elisha he brought it to God. The first sheaf was his acknowledgment that the whole field was His, and the most obvious way of giving God His own was to relieve the want of Elisha and the men who were with him.

5. The gleaners did not have to glean the straw as well as the corn. For the Israelites did not cut their corn by the root as we do. They cut off

[1] Sir Thomas Browne has a famous essay on Dreams, in the course of which he says: 'However dreams may be fallacious concerning outward events, yet may they be truly significant at home; and whereby we may more sensibly understand ourselves. Men act in sleep with some conformity unto their awaked senses; and consolations or discouragements may be drawn from dreams which intimately tell us ourselves. Luther was not like to fear a spirit in the night, when such an apparition would not terrify him in the day. Alexander would hardly have run away in the sharpest combats of sleep, nor Demosthenes have stood stoutly to it, who was scarce able to do it in his prepared senses. Persons of radical integrity will not easily be perverted in their dreams, nor noble minds do pitiful things in sleep. Crassus would have hardly been bountiful in a dream, whose fist was so close awake. But a man might have lived all his life upon the sleeping hand of Antonius.'

[2] When a village possesses lands in common at some distance from the village, the whole of the inhabitants go there and build huts (*'arâish*), and live there for several months round the threshing-floor; the main village is then almost abandoned, and only a few guardians remain to take care of the things (generally of no great value) which are left behind. But whether it be far or near, all the women, rich or poor, go to glean behind the reapers. Though the name *lukata* (*t*) is sometimes used for the gleaners, they are better known as *seyâfât*, *i.e.*, 'summer-enjoyers or gatherers.' The ears, when gathered, are tied into small round bundles like a bouquet of flowers, and the bundles are carried home by the woman on her head, where she threshes out the wheat with a stone. A diligent gleaner can gather more wheat than would be her usual pay for a day, especially in a fertile field where many stalks are left. In the plains of Philistia the gleaners are more numerous than the reapers, and it is difficult to keep them away from the sheaves; a North African is therefore employed to watch and to remonstrate with them when they become too impertinent, 'but' (as a *nâtûr*, 'watchman,' said to me) 'what can one young man do before so many young women? Besides, there is so much scolding and cursing, and where goes the blessing?'*

[3] See the beautiful story of the Boaz-hearted Hebrew farmer who is so delighted to have forgotten the sheaf, as it is told by Dr. Schechter in *Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology*, and repeated in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES for March, p. 245.

* P. J. Baldensperger, in *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement*, January 1907, p. 18.

the heads and left the straw standing. This agricultural custom provides two striking figures of speech which Job and Isaiah use. They are none the less striking that they are used for opposite purposes. Isaiah predicts the fall of Syria and of Israel, the two nearest enemies of the kingdom of Judah. It will be as clean and complete, he says, as when the harvestman gathers an armful of the standing corn and snips off the heads with his other hand. Job also has seen the process, and has been struck with the cleanness and the ease of it. It is an illustration to him of the death of the wicked, a death that is often quick and painless, when surely in all fairness it ought to be a long drawn out agony.

6. The only reference to ears of corn in the New Testament, beyond the use of the word in the Parable of the Corn (Mk 4^{28}), is found in the account of a certain occasion upon which Christ and His disciples entered a field of standing corn, and the disciples plucked the ears and ate, rubbing them in their hands. The Pharisees challenged our Lord for allowing them to do it. Not, however, because they plucked the corn, but because they did it on the Sabbath day. For the law was laid down in Deuteronomy (23^{25}) that any one might walk into a field of standing corn and pluck and eat, the only restriction being that he must not use a sickle to mow it down.

The Pharisees were concerned about the Sabbath, not about the corn. We are more concerned about the corn than about the Sabbath. We allow hungry men to eat lawful food on the Sabbath, but we do not allow them to take what belongs to another on any day. Are we more anxious to render to man the things that are man's than to God the things that are God's? We may be. But let us remember two things: (1) It was Christ Himself that turned the law of the Sabbath into liberty. He said that the Sabbath was made for man. But He said also that the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath. We may use the Sabbath, then, but not abuse it, because we must answer to the Owner for the use of it. (2) The modern farmer is concerned to prevent waste; not, if he is a good farmer, that his barns may be fuller, but that he may have the more to give to the poor. And if he recognizes, as the Hebrew farmer did, that what he gives to the poor he lends to the Lord, then he does not even make the distinction between what is God's and what is man's. He presents the cattle and the corn which he gives to the poor as an offering to God, and it is a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour.

7. Now return to the man from Baal-Shalishah. And notice two things about his gift.

1. It was a sacrificial offering. The sacrifices of the Old Testament may be most easily divided into bloody and unbloody offerings. They were either cattle or corn. The unbloody sacrifice, which is curiously called the *meal offering* in the Revised Version, and yet more curiously the *meat offering* in the Authorized, is described in Lv 2^{14} as 'corn in the ear parched with fire.' 'bruised corn of the fresh ear.' The official offering had oil poured upon it and frankincense laid over it. The man from Baal-Shalishah may not have seasoned his offering with oil or scented it with frankincense. For as he did not bring it to the priests, it may not have been an official offering. But it was an offering to God, an unbloody sacrifice. It cost him something to bring it; and he brought it to the man of God, who accepted it in the name of God.

2. He gave before he gathered. Our method usually is to gather in the harvest, including the gleanings, before we give to the poor. If we give it is because our barns are full. And then, just because it is all safely gathered in, we sometimes forget to give, or do not see the necessity. Sometimes we use the best for ourselves, and give to God the refuse. 'Don't wait,' says Thomas Champness, 'till you have churned and give God the buttermilk.' That is not the way the Hebrew farmer was taught to give. The unbloody offering had to be of the firstfruits. This is a point which the Israelite could not mistake, the law is so clear and emphatic. 'Ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor fresh ears, until ye have brought the oblation of your God' (Lv 23^{14}). The man from Baal-Shalishah did not make a mistake. He brought, we are told, 'bread of the firstfruits.' It was made of the very earliest ears that could be gathered. His gift consisted largely of the ears themselves, the first fresh ears that he could find. Thus he gave before he gathered, and was able to say with Burns:

> I'll get a blessin' wi' the lave,
> And never miss't.

The Constraint of Love.

MATERIALS FOR THE STUDY OF 2 COR. v. 14.

'For the love of Christ constraineth us.'

1. Is there anything that will enable a man to do what he knows he ought to do? 'I see and approve the better things, I follow the worse,' is an old saying, and it gives a picturesque expression to a wide human experience.

The literature of the nations is rich in the expression of moral truth, and in the vision of what conduct ought to be. The history of the peoples shows at every point that they have not realized their ideals. It is not necessary to illustrate this fact at any length. Take the writings of Confucius or the legends of the Buddha, take the Egyptian Book of the Dead, or the writings of the Stoics, and out of any of these a rich and full ideal of what human life ought to be may easily be drawn. In fact, man has never been left without a vision of what he ought to be, but the difficulty lay in the lack of moral power to carry out the ideal of what conduct ought to be.[1]

1. What motives have been tried to make men do their duty? Self-interest has been urged, in one or other of its many forms. Has it succeeded?

The drunkard knows that drinking will destroy him, and yet he gets drunk. The spendthrift knows that extravagance will ruin him, and yet he throws away his money. I do not believe, says Charles Kingsley, that self-interest ever kept any man from any *sin*, though it may keep him from many an imprudence. Will the hope of heaven do it? That depends on what you mean by heaven. What people commonly mean by going to heaven is not going to hell. Does the fear of hell, then, make men do right? How can it? The right thing is the loving thing, and neither the fear of hell nor the hope of heaven will teach a man to love.[2]

2. Another motive that has been tried is the love of Christ.

It is almost always 'love' which comes to the rescue of our otherwise wasted and aimless life, and binds its feeble and dissipated energies into one, banks up the channel of its scattered streams, and bids it flow in one strong volume on to the sea which lies before it. It may be love of school, or love of country; it may be love of science or of nature; it may be love of children; or that love of one for one which poetry and romance are never tired of celebrating. It is, as a fact, only when love comes to his help that a man can feel that life *is* worth living; only then that he attains to any depth or unity of purpose in living. Above all these, solitary, triumphant, never failing (as they do), never leading to disappointment, never misleading, never dying out, never altering in the least, is the love of Christ. That is *the* motive of all motives, *the* attraction of all attractions, *the* constraining principle which binds the life into one perfect and enduring unity.[3]

2. How does the love of Christ enable a man to do his duty?

1. Gratitude, the rarest of all virtues, and the most sanctifying, is brought to life within him. 'We love him because he first loved us.' 'The gratitude which our Lord desires above all else consists of a responsive affection, a humble, thankful devotion, which offers Him not so many duties and services but its own burning love in return.'

We find in the Heidelberg Catechism—one of the characteristic documents of Reformation theology—that the whole section concerned with Christian ethics is placed under the head of 'Gratitude.' The Reformers knew how 'good works' which are done in any lower spirit degenerate into a legal bondage, a painful, formal routine, until such works are not 'good' any longer, but 'dead.'[4]

2. The love of Christ not only awakens gratitude; it also brings us into personal sympathy with the living Christ. We recognize that we are surrounded by a great crowd of witnesses. But much more than that, we have the encouragement of the living Lord Jesus Christ Himself at every step we take, before every temptation we meet.

In a great fire a child was seen in an upper window. The fireman tried to save her, but was driven back by the terrific heat. Suddenly some one in the crowd cried out, 'Let us give him a cheer.' Up went the cheer, and up went the man on the wings of the cheer, and the child was saved.[5]

3. But the full explanation lies beyond the feeling of gratitude and beyond the sense of the sympathy of an ever-present Christ watching over us. It lies in the fact that the love of Christ, by bringing us into touch with Him, lifts us out of ourselves. For it is simply self-interest that prevents a man from doing his duty under all circumstances. And when a man feels the love of Christ take hold of him, he finds himself in fellowship with One who on every occasion pleased not Himself, and in response he also learns not to please himself, but to 'please his neighbour for his good to edifying.'

There are four kinds of life, says James Vaughan, which people live. There is the life entirely and almost confessedly

[1] J. Iverach, *The Other Side of Greatness*, p. 238.
[2] Charles Kingsley, *Sermons on National Subjects*, p. 230.
[3] R. Winterbotham, *Sermons*, p. 2.
[4] T. H. Darlow, *The Upward Calling*, p. 250.
[5] D. Hague, *The Life worth Living*, p. 66.

for self. It is excused on the plea of health or nerves. This is the lowest type of respectable life. Next, there is the life of those who have their work to do. They are kind in their families and considerate with their dependants. Yet it is self. Their family is their own; their servants minister to their self-interest. Thirdly, there is the benevolent section of society. They do good works; they are generous almost to a fault. Yet much of their conduct is selfishness. To relieve sorrow and to increase others' joy may be to some almost as much an indulgence as it is to others to spend their money upon themselves. The high motive is wanting, the motive that takes them out of themselves. The fourth class live for Christ. Their life is an unselfish life. They 'live not unto themselves' because they 'live unto Him.'[1]

3. The love of Christ makes itself felt in two ways. It is both *expulsive* and *impulsive*. It drives out the evil, and it introduces the good. 'There is a famous sermon by Dr. Chalmers on the expulsive power of a new affection.' Readers of that sermon will remember how that great preacher dwelt on this profound thought.[2] But the love of Christ is also positive. It gathers into itself all the forces of the man, directs them to new ends, and furnishes them for a larger growth. Especially does the love of Christ enlarge the operation of a man's interests till they are coextensive with the interests of Christ Himself.

A passionate attachment to wife and children will make it impossible for a man consciously to do anything inconsistent with their highest welfare. A patriot will never consent to do anything which would tend to injure his own country. So it is with all passionate attachments: they purify within their own range. But then, outside their own range they are powerless. A man devoted to his own household may not hesitate to do something inconsistent with the welfare of other households. Nay, in the interest of his own family he may not hesitate to injure the families of other people. A patriot devoted to the interests of his own country may, through the influence of that devotion, be the enemy of another country.[3]

4. The word which Paul uses for the operation of the love of Christ is a strong one. He says the love of Christ *constraineth* us. He means that it keeps us within bounds, prevents us from wandering to other objects than the service of God and man.[4] The only other occurrence of the word in the Pauline Epistles is Ph 1^{23}, 'I am in a strait betwixt the two,' which Lightfoot paraphrases, *I am hemmed in on both sides, I am prevented from inclining one way or the other.* The figure is that of a road between two walls or of a river between its banks.

I often think of Paul and the great Yangtsze together. On its way to the sea the mighty stream has to encounter many obstacles, and flows in varied channels. In its upper courses, its bed in many places is uneven and narrow; but it never stops. Now it dashes against the rocks like a mad thing, and now it rushes through a narrow gorge at a mill-race speed. Then it emerges into a wide and even channel, and flows on quietly, calmly, and majestically to the sea. But its flow is ever onward, continuous, irresistible. Try and turn it back, and you will find it impossible. Tell it to stop, and it will tell you that it cannot. Ask it why, and it will reply: 'A mighty law has taken possession of me, and is carrying me onwards, ever onwards. The law of gravity *constraineth* me.' So it was with the great Apostle. The love of Christ, like a mighty law, had taken possession of him, and was carrying him onwards, ever onwards. He could not turn back, he could not stop, he could not help himself. The love of Christ constraineth *me*.[5]

5. But what is this love that constrains us? Is it our love for Christ, or Christ's love for us? There is no question that it is Christ's love for us. Of course we must respond to the love of Christ. Otherwise its sweetness is wasted on the desert air. But the love of which Paul felt the pressure was the redeeming love of Christ for him.

The genitive of the person after 'love' (ἀγάπη) is in St. Paul's Epistles always *subjective*.[6] The passages for the love of God are Ro 5^5 ('the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts') 8^{39}, 2 Co 13^{14}, 2 Th 3^5; and for the love of Christ Ro 8^{35} ('who shall separate us from the love of Christ?'), Eph 3^{19} ('to know the love of Christ'). St. Paul often uses the verb to love (ἀγαπάω) to express man's love to God, but never the substantive. St. John's usage, on the other hand, varies, the genitive being sometimes objective, sometimes subjective.[7]

The advantage of this is obvious. We are able to persevere in unselfishness. Many Christian men endeavour to rouse themselves into energy by the strength of their own devotion. Hence their energy is fitful, and depends upon excitements. The constraint of Christ's love suggests not an emotion in a man, but a power not his acting upon him—an atmosphere surrounding his spirit and pressing on it from every side.[8]

[1] See J. Vaughan, *Brighton Pulpit*, No. 839.
[2] J. Iverach, *The Other Side of Greatness*, p. 244.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 245.
[4] A. Plummer, in *Cambridge Greek Testament.*
[5] Griffith John, *A Voice from China*, p. 51.
[6] See Cremer, *Biblico-Theological Lexicon*, p. 594.
[7] J. H. Bernard, in *Expositor's Greek Testament.*
[8] See E. L. Hull, *Sermons Preached at King's Lynn*, i. 102.

I cannot do it alone,
The waves run fast and high,
And the fogs close chill around,
And the light goes out in the sky;
But I know that we two
Shall win in the end,
Jesus and I.

Coward and wayward and weak,
I change with the changing sky;
To-day so eager and brave,
To-morrow not caring to try;
But He never gives in,
So we two shall win,
Jesus and I.

Virginibus Puerisque.

Ex Ore Infantium.

Little Jesus, wast Thou shy
Once, and just so small as I?
And what did it feel like to be
Out of heaven, and just like me?

Didst Thou kneel at night to pray,
And didst Thou join Thy hands, this way?
And did they tire sometimes, being young,
And make the prayer seem very long?

And dost Thou like it best, that we
Should join our hands and pray to Thee?
I used to think, before I knew,
The prayer not said unless we do.

And did Thy Mother at the night
Kiss Thee, and fold the clothes in right?
And didst Thou feel quite good in bed,
Kissed, and sweet, and Thy prayers said?

FRANCIS THOMPSON.

Francis Thompson had a hard life. He was at first intended for the priesthood. A Lancashire man by birth, he was educated at Ushaw. When he decided that he had no vocation for the Church, he turned his thoughts to the profession of medicine, and for some time studied at Owen's College, Manchester. This, however, was less satisfactory. He could not bear it. So he came to London and gave his life to letters. And if this life afforded him an outlet for his flights of thought and imagination, if in a large measure it satisfied the hunger of his soul and the thirst of his mind, it failed him altogether in his care for his poor body. He tasted poverty in its lowest dregs. Many and many a time he was on the cruel streets of London at night with nowhere to rest his head. He sold matches and held horses' heads to get a few pence to buy food. I will not dwell further on the sad picture, except to say that about the time of his thirty-first year a good Samaritan came to him who lifted him from the depths, and made him write; and published his work, and saw to it that he should always know where to find a meal and welcome.

But the poet ever lived alone, alone and yet not alone, alone with himself and God and Our Lady and the Saints. He always remained poor, though he did not again go down the deep pit of despair as heretofore. The fruits of his risen life of reason are now bequeathed to mankind in his three books of poetry: *Poems*, published in 1893; *Sister Songs*, in 1895; and *New Poems*, 1897. He also wrote a little book in prose called *Health and Holiness*, a Study of the Relations between Brother Ass the Body, and his Rider the Soul. This was in 1905. One more poem, contributed to the new series of the *Dublin Review*, completes the record of Francis Thompson's work. He died in 1907.[1]

[1] Thomas J. Gerrard, in the *Catholic World*, February 1908, p. 613.

The Day of the Crucifixion.

BY THE REV. DAVID SMITH, D.D., BLAIRGOWRIE.

ALL the Evangelists agree that our Lord was crucified on a Friday and rose on the ensuing Sunday; and, were the Synoptics the sole records, it would be no less certain that the Friday was Passover-day, 15th Nisan, and the supper which He had eaten with His disciples in the Upper Room the previous evening, the regular Paschal meal (Mt 26^{17} = Mk 14^{12} = Lk 22^{7}). But, turning to the Fourth Gospel, one finds what looks like a different representation. (1) Jn 13^{1} seems to put the Last Supper '*before the Feast of the Passover*.' (2) Next morning, when they