

Yielded Bodies

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CHAPTER NINE

THE HEART OF THE HUMAN BODY

"Create in me a clean heart, O God" (Psalm 51:10).

"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23).

**"For from within, out of the heart, proceed evil thoughts,
adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness,
deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:
All these things come from within, and defile the man"**

- Mark 7:21-23.

**"But the LORD said unto Samuel,
Look not on his countenance,
or on the height of his stature;
because I have refused him:
for the LORD seeth not as man seeth;
for man looketh on the outward appearance,
but the LORD looketh on the heart"**

- I Samuel 16:7.

**"O generations of vipers, how can ye, being evil,
speak good things?
for out of the abundance of the heart
the mouth speaketh"**

- Matthew 12:34.

DEFINITION OF THE HEART

What would the physiologist say the heart is? This, I suppose: "The heart is the central organ of the vascular system, a hollow muscular structure that propels the blood by alternate contractions and dilations."

Common usage would set forth the heart as the seat of the affections and passions as

distinguished from the intellect and will, or the emotional nature.

Literary usage would declare that the human heart is the source of wit, courage, grief, pleasure -- and kindred emotions.

The heart is used in the Scripture as the figure of the seat of man's moral being -- the center and the source of the outward life, the character and the motives and the love from which the actions flow as from a fountain. Its natural character is said to be deceitful and desperately, or incurably, wicked (Jeremiah 17:9).

Our LORD teaches that the heart is the fountain from which flows the issues of life (Matthew 15:19). That means the thought, conduct and speech of man come from the heart. And it is a veritable cesspool of evil unless controlled by the HOLY SPIRIT.

Let us note the

PHYSIOLOGICAL HEART

By this I mean what the physiologist tells us of the physical heart. And here we have revealed to us wonders beyond words fully to portray. The heart, a mass of muscle, weighing only about three-quarters of a pound, has the hardest job of any organ in the body. Hold out your hand, clench the fingers into a fist. Let the fingers relax slightly, then squeeze them together powerfully. Imagine yourself repeating this operation seventy times a minute, unremittingly, hour after hour, from long before your birth to the instant of your death. That is the appalling assignment of the human heart, a task which it performs so uncomplainingly that few of us are aware of its burden until we run upstairs too fast or until our physician wags his stethoscope at a mitral murmur. The heart beats or contracts from 60 to 80 times a minute -- or an average of 72 times a minute, 4,320 times an hour, some 100,000 times a day, or 40,000,000 times a year. Dr. Arthur I. Brown says it exerts enough energy every twenty four hours to raise a two-pound weight twelve miles in the air.

The task of the heart is to keep blood moving through the body. Like the pumping station which keeps water flowing through the mains of a city, the heart forces blood through the body's arteries and veins. The arteries carry oxygen-charged blood pumped fresh from the lungs; the veins return turgid, venous blood for purification. Connecting the arteries and veins is a spongy mass of minute vessels, the capillaries, interlacing among the cells. they are inconceivably numerous.

No part of the body can be cut without puncturing one or more of them. Opened and spread out, they would cover a plot of ground 240 feet square -- about three thousand times the surface of the body. End to end, the capillaries would extend four times around the earth -- would fall only a few thousand miles short of reaching half the distance to the moon. Through this amazingly complex and elastic system of pipelines the heart pumps blood continuously more than ten tons every twenty-four hours.

Normally, the heart forces about five quarts of the body's blood through the circulatory system about once a minute. This can fluctuate from four quarts a minute when the body is at rest, and

nine quarts a minutes when in moderate exercise, up to sixteen quarts a minute during violent exercise or exertion. A drop of blood can make its round trip through the circulatory system in twenty-two seconds.

The heart, performing each day work equivalent to lifting a one-ton elevator to a height of eight stories, keeps going this river of blood in the body. On that stream are five million little boats, corpuscles and what-not that are constantly at work, loading and unloading, fighting, uniting, dividing, carrying on commerce, building and wrecking, bringing up brick and mortar as it were, for the various works along the banks and taking away debris. Day in and day out this faithful handmaiden of the body works, while we work, while we play, when we eat, when we rest, when we run, when we are mean, when we are good. How we abuse it! How we overwork it! How we make it hard for it to do its work!

But I would have us think now of what we may appropriately call the

SCRIPTURAL HEART

The Scripture speaks of many kinds of hearts -- such as faint heart, foolish heart, willing heart, proud heart, wise heart, pure heart, discouraged heart, set heart, astonished heart, hard heart, glad heart, stout heart, trembling heart, fearful heart, failing heart, rebellious heart, merry heart, contrite heart, hating heart, rash heart, understanding heart, whorish heart, large heart, stony heart, perfect heart, new heart, double heart, lowly heart, sad heart, meek heart, hypocritical heart, slow heart, broken heart, congealed heart, froward heart, whole heart, subtle heart, clean heart, perverse heart, deceitful heart, heavy heart, sound heart, enlarged heart -- and other kinds which I shall not mention.

But -- what is the Scriptural heart? What does the Bible mean when it speaks of the heart? It means more than that little fleshly engine of energy within the breast, which pumps blood through the arterial system of the body. What does the Bible mean when it says: "**Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life?**" What does GOD mean when he says: "**Give me thine heart?**" What did David mean when he said: "**Create in me a clean heart?**" When Paul said to Simon Magus, "**Thy heart is not right in the sight of God,**" did he mean Simon's heart was a physically diseased heart? No.

The heart consists of the intellect, the sensibilities, the will and the conscience -- not just the engine of energy within the breast, rather one's entire nature and understanding.

The heart *thinks*:

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12).

"And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?" (Matthew 9:4).

The heart *reasons*:

"But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?" (Mark 2:6-8).

The heart *understands*:

"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Matthew 13:15).

The heart *believes*:

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed" (Romans 10:9-11).

Since the intellect thinks, reasons, understands, believes, we know that it is included in the heart. As to thinking, reasoning, understanding, believing, how many intellects are wrong!

The heart has *sensibilities*. These sensibilities express love and anguish, and denote feeling.

"Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matthew 22:36-39).

"For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you" (II Corinthians 2:4).

These Scriptures show conclusively that with the heart we love, and that the heart has anguish.

The heart *wills, purposes, determines*:

"Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord" (Acts 11:23).

"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (II Corinthians 9:7).

These Scriptures show that the heart wills and purposes.

The heart is the *seat of conscience*:

"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37).

"For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God" (I John 3:20-21).

Again, when Peter was preaching in Jerusalem, he discussed the exaltation of CHRIST: **"When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them"** (Acts 5:33). Here we see the conscience can be pricked, condemned, cut. So when GOD says, **"Keep thy heart with all diligence,"** GOD is asking that we keep our intellects, our sensibilities, our wills, our conscience, according to His will and righteousness. When he says, **"Give me thine heart,"** GOD is asking that we give to Him our intellects to think as He would have us, to reason as He would have us to reason, to understand as He would have us. He asks for our sensibilities, so that we may love according to His standard. He asks for our wills so that we may do His will.

I think Dr. Crane must have had this Scriptural conception of the heart when he wrote:

"The human heart is a wide moor under a dull sky, with voices of invisible birds calling in the distance. The human heart is a lonely lane in the evening, and two lovers are walking down it, whispering and lingering.

"The human heart is a great green tree, and many strange birds come and sing in its branches; a few build nests, but most are from far lands north and south, and never come again.

"The human heart is a deep still pool; in its depths are fishes of gold and silver, dancing playfully, and slow-heaving slimy monsters, and tarnished treasure hoards, the infinite animalcular life; but when you look down at it you see but your own reflected face.

"The human heart is an undiscovered country; men and women are forever perishing as they explore its wilds.

"The human heart is an egg; and out of it are hatched this world and Heaven and hell.

"The human heart is a tangled wood wherein no man knows his way.

"The human heart is a roaring forge where night and day the smiths are busy fashioning swords and silver cups, mitres and engine-wheels, the tools of labor, and the gauds of precedence.

"The human heart is a garden, wherein grow weeds of memory and blooms of hope, and the snow falls at last and covers all.

"The human heart is a meadow full of fireflies, a summer western sky of shimmering distant lightnings, a shore set round with flashing lighthouses, far-away voices calling what we can not understand.

"The human heart is a band playing in a park at a distance; we see the crowds listening, but we catch but fragments of the music now and again, and can not make out the tune.

"The human heart is a great city, teeming with myriad people, full of business and mighty doings, and we wander its crowded streets unutterably alone; we do not know what it is all about.

"The human heart to youth is a fairy-land of adventure, to old age it is a sittingroom where one knows his way in the dark.

"The human heart is a cup of love, where some find life and zest, and some drunkenness and death.

"The human heart is the throne of GOD, the council-chamber of the devil, the dwelling of angels, the vile hearth of witches' Sabbaths, the nursery of sweet children, the blood-spattered scene of nameless tragedies.

"Listen! You will hear mothers' lullabies, mad men's shrieks, hymns of CHRIST, the roaring of lynch mobs, the kisses of lovers, the curses of pirates. Bend close! You will smell the lily fragrance of love, the stench of lust; now odors as exquisite as the very spirit of violets, and now such nauseous repulsions as words cannot tell. Nobilities, indecencies, heroic impulses, cowardly ravings, good and bad, white and black -- the mystery of mysteries, the central island nescience in a sea of science, the dark spot in the lighted room of knowledge, the unknown quantity, the X in the universal problem."

And now let us consider the importance of the

KEPT HEART

We are urged to keep the heart with all diligence. Why? Because "**out of it are the issues of life.**" JESUS said:

"For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within, and defile the man" (Mark 7:21-23).

"For out of *the heart* proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Matthew 15:19).

When a man's heart is vile, his hands will be unclean.

When a man's heart is crooked, his feet will walk in crooked ways.

When a man's heart is wrong, he will have ears dull and deaf and fat to the voice of GOD.

When a man's heart lacks spiritual vision, his eyes will be evil eyes.

Before the hand of the thief stole, the thievery was in the heart.

Before a man went his way after an evil woman, the lust was in his heart.

Before the tongue moved to profanity or blasphemy, profanity and blasphemy were in the heart.
Before the ear gave heed to a naughty tongue that malignity was in the heart.
Before the eye got out of its calling and out of GOD's keeping, that which caused it so to be was in the heart.
Before the knee refused to bow in prayer, that irreverence was in the heart.
Before the shoulder refused to receive a load and carry it for GOD, that refusal was in the heart.
Before the neck was withheld from the yoke of GOD, the stubbornness was in the heart.
The *heart* is the birthplace of all the evils that other members of the body do. The *heart* is the incubator in which the Devil hatches out his foul plots.

The supremacy of the heart kept for CHRIST must ever be recognized since the heart is center and spring of character.

Men rob municipalities, pillage coffers, scandalize civilization and blacken the pages of history because they have hard, cold selfish hearts. Before a Christian becomes a tight-lipped, buttoned-up, boxed-in, closed-handed soldier, dying of spiritual suffocation, there is something wrong with the heart.

The kept heart is a warm heart, a burning heart that glows with fervent love toward the LORD, as He is revealed through the Word.

"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself . . . And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures" (Luke 24:25-27, 44-45).

How sad when men and women have cold hearts, and sustain all relationships of life, discharging all duties, without the heavenly fire of deep and tender affection. The kept heart is a tender heart. How tragic when within men's bosoms beat hearts that are dead and miserable and insensible hearts that remind you of a tombstone, only not so white. The kept heart is a large heart. When we have largeness of heart, we can say: **"The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts"** (Romans 5:5).

To make sure of this largeness of heart, we will not let sin reign in the heart, for sin contracts the heart, withers and blights it.

To make sure of this largeness of heart, we will eschew the vanity and pleasure of the world which always narrows the affections and loyalties of the heart.

And, of course, we know that selfishness -- the insanity of existence, the abnormality of life -- shrinks life to the narrow dimensions of the miniature and sends men out in pursuit of personal advantage, "elbowing others aside as they push their way to the front, making men wolves to other men." The selfish heart never treasures truth: **"And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also"** (I John 4:21).

Wise was Watkinson who wrote: *"We cannot walk with CHRIST, and have small hearts. The heart of our LORD was as big as the world, and broke for its redemption; and it is impossible to live in fellowship with Him without acquiring a proportionate magnanimity. We cannot walk with CHRIST, and have cold hearts. Our whole duty will then be performed not with frigid conscientiousness but in the power and delight of a throbbing, bounding, constraining love. We cannot walk with CHRIST, and have hard hearts. The love of GOD, so wonderfully kind, will fill us with tender sympathy and melting pity. The school of the heart is the school of CHRIST; its great lesson-book, the New Testament; its grand symbol, the Cross."*

Now let us think upon the truth that

GOD'S EYES ARE UPON THE HEART

"But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (I Samuel 16:7).

"Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways. Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments" (Psalm 119:1-6).

This Psalm shows how GOD understands the heart -- the intellect, the thoughts, the reasonings, the will, the conscience. Mr. Moody used to say: "Suppose a man should advertise to take photographs of the heart -- would he get many customers?" And if our hearts had glass walls, would we want curtains drawn over them? The Pharisees outwardly appeared beautiful, but they received the severest censure and condemnation that JESUS ever gave. **"They say, and do not"** (Matthew 23:3). They were dogs in the manger.

"But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in" (Matthew 23:13).

They seized the property of widows.

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widow's houses, and for a pretence make long prayer; therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation" (Matthew 23:14).

They made proselytes to their ritualistic sham.

"Woe unto you, scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold the child of hell than yourselves" (Matthew 23:15).

They were clean on the outside.

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (Matthew 23:25-28).

They were experts in adorning tombs with after-death tributes.

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Matthew 23:29-33).

"The Lord looketh on the heart" (I Samuel 16:7). He looked on Cain's heart when He said: "Where is Abel thy brother?" He looked on Elijah's heart when He said: "What doest thou here, Elijah?" He looked on Thomas' heart when He said: "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands." He looked on Philip's heart when He said, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?" He looked on Peter's heart when He said, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" He looked on Saul's heart when on the Damascus road He said: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"

The Bible is simply full of evidence of GOD's concern for the inward appearance, and the world is reeking with unholy evidence that man looketh on the outward appearance. Is GOD right, or is the world right?

Believers, and especially those in definite service for CHRIST, should neither deceive nor be deceived by appearance. The minister who preaches to a fashionable congregation should not use honeyed words of flattery out of a hypocritical heart to soothe the guilty consciences behind diamond studs and shimmering silk. The hypocrite in the pulpit is even a bigger sinner than the one in the pew! Hell fire is just as appropriate a subject for the up-and-out as for the down-and-out. Certainly the MASTER thought so.

And GOD, whose eyes are upon the heart, asks for the heart. He says: "Give me thine heart." GOD asks for the heart because He knows that mere culture will not change it. He knows that there must be an impartation of the divine nature. In the new birth, in the radical change of the heart whereby and wherein we become new creatures in CHRIST JESUS, GOD yokes His holy nature with our fallen, helpless nature. GOD asks for the heart, because the only safe way of life for us is to yield our heart with all its wonderful power of affection and emotion and energy to divine control.

GOD says: **"Keep thy heart."** But He also says: **"Give me thine heart."** It seems a strange way

to keep the heart by giving it away. But history teaches there is such a thing as keeping by giving away. Napoleon left Egypt and went to the eastern shore of the Mediterranean with his army. He took Joppa as he passed and was about to take Acre also. The Turks knew they could not hold Acre alone. They signaled to the British fleet for help. English stores and men came quickly. Turkey gave it to England in time of peril, and got it back when the danger was past.

The Fiji Islands are in the southern seas. This small group has 100,000 inhabitants, but is a wonderfully rich and productive territory. Some years ago their leading men looked out upon the world and felt they were in danger of losing their freedom. They saw France, Germany, Holland seizing all the territory they could find. Their turn would come next. They thought of a plan. England gave her colonies liberty. So they wrote to Queen Victoria and asked her to take under her protection the Fiji Islands. In 1874 they came under the English flag. They gave themselves to England to retain their liberty, to be protected from tyrannical foes. The heart of man is never held by himself -- either evil or GOD will reign there. CHRIST knows all about the human heart. None can cleanse it and rule it and sweeten it as He can.

And we should not forget as we think of the body and the heart thereof that some day the heart
will be a

DEAD HEART

Death is abroad, stalking his way to the door of hut and palace. Death comes -- sometimes with the swiftness of lightning, sometimes inch by inch through the slow erosion of disease. But death is busy -- in the city, in the country, everywhere.

"Death is a black camel which kneels at the door of all." "Death hath so many doors to let out life." Sir Thomas Browne speaks of "the one thousand doors that lead to death."

Robert Burns wails: "Fell Death's untimely frost, that nipt my flowers so early." And Bryant in "Thanatopsis" says: "All that tread this globe are but a handful to the tribes that slumber in its bosom." Gay in "Fables" says:

The prince who kept the world in awe,
The judge whose dictate fixed the law,
The rich, the poor, the great, the small,
Are leveled. Death confounds them all.

Hall said:

Death Borders upon our birth,
And our cradle stands in our grave.

Heber writes:

Death rides on every passing breeze,
He lurks in every flower.

Mrs. Hemans writes:

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north winds breath,
And stars to set - but all
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, O Death.

Pope wrote:

Out - out are the lights - out all!
And, over each quivering form,
The curtain, a funeral pall,
Comes down with the rush of a storm,
And the angels, all pallid and wan,
Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy 'Man',
And its hero the Conqueror, Worm.

All these are but saying in different words that the heart of the body will one day be a still heart. and then the eyes will see no more, the feet will walk no more, the ears will hear no more, the hands will work no more, the knees will bend no more, the mouth will speak no more.

Since this is true, let us say to GOD: **"Thy word have I hid in mine *heart* that I might not sin against thee."** Let us make real these words of Paul:

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God" (Ephesians 3:17-19).

Remembering that the darkest spot on earth is a grave, let us have the cleaving heart (Acts 11:23). A heart that cleaves to the Lord is a heart that maintains unshaken faith and full confidence in the LORD's person and work. Such a heart will never accept any belittling statement concerning CHRIST's deity, will never admit any compromise in respect to His redeeming work, will always be closed against every form of error in respect to the person and work of CHRIST, whether it be destructive criticism or legalism. Such a heart will be utterly devoted to JESUS CHRIST.

LORD, GIVE ME SUCH A HEART!

Since of all the darkened glasses which mock us, the tombstone is the most opaque, since death is preluded by pain and terror, since its presence is accompanied by the agonies of separation -- let us have the open heart, which is a believing heart. And a believing heart is a purified heart -- flooded with the love of GOD.

"For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to

them a God, and they shall be to me a people" (Hebrews 8:10).

"And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshiped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul" (Acts 16:14).

Since death is the strangest and bitterest of all enigmas, let us rejoice -- as we give GOD our hearts, as we yield them to Him as instruments of righteousness -- that there is the

DESTROYER OF DEATH

"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (I Corinthians 15:26). **"Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel"** (II Timothy 1:10).

That shows that JESUS CHRIST hath entered the arena. He who is Son of man without sin and Son of GOD with power has championed our cause. Single-handedly against the malignant horde of hell, He fronts them in man's behalf -- and puts **"all enemies under his feet."** Before the majestic aspect of His brow and beneath the uplifting of His mighty hand they fall. But is it, for Him, mere child's play? Nay, but it is a fierce and bloody conflict. Did not CHRIST at the outset, and for a moment, Himself go down covered with blood? Was not His visage more marred than any man's -- and His countenance more than the sons of men? But, mustering the resources of the Godhead, did He not come up again to the dread encounter? And has not the strong enemy, death, for nearly two thousand years kept the field against the Son of GOD? Does not this enemy, entrenched in the depravities of the human heart, sheltered under the ramparts of the perverse human will, maintain a desperate defense against the advancing CONQUEROR?

But shall not "all enemies" -- that old serpent, the Devil, and death, and hell, and sin -- be put under CHRIST? Shall they not be cast down into the lake of fire? Shall not the time come, the blessed time, when **"there shall be no more death?"** Yes. The destruction of death will be the achievement of JESUS CHRIST. **"The redemption of the body"** is the last factor in the redemption and recovery of redeemed man from all the consequences of the fall. When the grasp of death upon their flesh is broken, the last vestige of the unhappy consequences of sin, so far as they are concerned, will disappear.

Yes, for them who believe on His name, death will be forever dead. Death's overthrow will be the last stroke of the great Champion and omnipotent Deliverer -- the last triumphant blow in behalf of those oppressed by the darkness and terror thereof.

Then the chains of death will fall off.

Then will the prisoners of the grave go free.

Then the cry of a child at the couch of the dying mother will be heard no more.

Then the wail of the wife gazing upon her dead husband and her orphaned children shall rend the air no more.

Then the heartbroken husband, robbed of the wife of his bosom, will never be heard.

Then the tears will be wiped away from the faces of the sorrowing.

Then shall there be no more crying, nor sorrow, nor any pain, because **"the former things are**

passed away."

Then the saved of the LORD shall **"enter in through the gates into the city"** and **"have right to the tree of life."**

Then shall man be again in the garden of delights, with no flaming sword point thrusting him back from the tree. The crowned Conqueror of death gives His people a crown of life. Victorious over death through Him, they reign throughout all the ceaseless ages, "while the years of eternity roll."

Therefore, in the light of this truth, I beg you to be of **"a willing heart toward God," "to serve him with all your heart,"** to **"do his commandments with all your heart."** to remember that **"the Lord is nigh to them that are of a broken heart,"** to **"praise the Lord with all your heart,"** to have **"the understanding heart that seeketh knowledge,"** to have **"the heart that is right with God,"** to **"purpose in your heart not to defile yourselves,"** to have **"the heart that believeth unto righteousness,"** to have **"gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come to the mountain of the Lord, to the mighty One of Israel,"** to say now to GOD:

"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalm 139:23-24).

~ end of chapter 9 ~
