



New Year's Address to Christians

Delivered by George Müller at the Gospel Hall, St Nicholas Road, St Paul's, Bristol, on Sunday morning, January 9th, 1898

Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump [or renewed], as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us:

Therefore, let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. – I Cor v, 6, 7, 8.

We have been reading in the 12th chapter of the Book of Exodus about the institution of the Passover and what it was; and here in this portion, which I have just now read, we find what we have to understand by the Passover; in itself setting forth in type, and setting forth in figure, our Lord Jesus Christ. We will now go through these verses with the object of seeing their connection with the Lord Jesus Christ.

We will read again, therefore, this portion verse by verse. The Book of Exodus, chapter 12: “And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, ‘This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.’” Here we find, in one particular, how the Lord Jesus Christ is referred to in type. The moment the sinner sees that he is a sinner, and condemns himself before God as one who deserves nothing but punishment, and at the same time puts his trust alone in Jesus Christ for the salvation of his soul, he becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. Through this faith in the Lord Jesus Christ we are regenerated, we are born again, we obtain spiritual life; and therefore become completely different from what we were.

Before that, the sinner lives in sin; he is, as the Scripture calls it, “dead in trespasses and sin,” and knows nothing really and truly of God; but when his eyes are opened by the power of God the Holy Spirit, and he sees the wretched, miserable condition in which he has been all his life long, and is made to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, a new life begins – that is, a spiritual life begins; he is an altered man altogether. Now this is set forth in figure, in the chapter, by the month in which the Passover lamb was instituted, and was being celebrated. It becomes the first month. A new year begins; the state of things is completely altered when we are brought to believe in Jesus Christ.

The third verse: “Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, ‘In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house.’” Here we have to observe that, on the tenth day, this lamb was to be taken from the flock. It was to be a spotless lamb, a perfect lamb; there was to be no blemish in it, else it was not to be taken for the Passover lamb, because all the animals that were used for offering were to be without blemish. Now, although the lamb was taken on the tenth day, it was only to be slain on the fourteenth day; it was not to be slain on the same day that it was chosen from the flock. There is a meaning in this! The Lord Jesus Christ, when He came into the world, was perfectly holy, perfectly spotless, perfectly sinless; but He had to stay here thirty-three years, in order that this might be proved, and seen by everybody. The powers of darkness were to see it; and the holy, spotless, elect angels of heaven were to see it; and the godly of human beings were to see it - that He was the perfectly Holy, Spotless One. Therefore He had to stay here for a good while, that this might be proved.

This is set forth by the fact that the lamb was to be a spotless lamb, chosen on the tenth day of the month, that opportunity might be given to see further and further on those days to the fourteenth day that it was spotless. “Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, ‘On the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house.’” Every man a lamb,” that is the household – the head of the family was to choose a lamb! Now, it might happen that there were only five or six in the whole family, possibly only four, and yet they were to gather round the lamb, the whole lamb, nothing short of the lamb. Around the lamb they were to gather; the whole lamb, roasted as it was, was to be brought

on the table, and was to be eaten, with the legs, and with the purtenances thereof – that is, the heart, the lungs, and the kidneys. The whole lamb they were to have about them.

Therefore, what was to be done if the family were small? They were to invite the neighbour next to them; not the uncle, or the aunt, or the cousins. But the neighbour next to them was to be invited, with his family, in order that there might be sufficient persons for the consumption of the lamb. Now this is very remarkable. It shows to us that they were to live till the Passover time came again in peace! It was a very awful thing if they were to quarrel with their next neighbour; then to invite him to come. This indicates that it was expected that they who gathered around the lamb were living in peace. Now this is just how it should be in the heavenly family. Those who feed on the work of the Lord Jesus Christ should be on good terms with their next-door neighbour; not on good terms only with their uncle, or aunt or their cousins, but with their next-door neighbour. The whole heavenly family should be altogether on good terms, not merely with the rich among themselves, and the poor among themselves, but all, rich and poor alike, no matter whatever their position in life, whatever the amount of education they have had. As assuredly as we belong to Christ, we should love one another, and we should be on good terms with our neighbours. The question should not be, “Is this one an educated person, or a rich person?” but “Does he or she belong to Christ?” “Does he or she love the Lord Jesus Christ?” That is the point; and then, if such be the case, we should love one another as brethren and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ. A very, very instructive point that the next-door neighbour was to come in, and make up the number of those to eat the lamb.

“If the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it, according to the number of the souls, every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish [as all the sacrifices are to be], a male of the first year; ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats.” “A male of the first year.” This is the stronger, and this in type sets forth the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was really and truly *A Man*, sin only excepted; but at the same time He was really and truly *GOD*, as the Father. “Ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats and ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month.”

“And the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.” This is particularly to be noticed. It is not that merely certain persons need the Lord Jesus Christ, and that other persons can do without Him! No one will go to heaven without Christ! No one is a real, true believer, except he puts his sole trust for salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ! This is set forth by the fact that “the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.” They all have a part in connection with the Passover, and as assuredly as we are believers in Christ, so surely do we trust in the Death, in the Atonement, of the Lord Jesus Christ; and whosoever does not put his sole, and whole, trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, does not believe in Christ, and therefore is yet in his sins.

“And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it; and they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire.” It was not to be eaten raw, nor was it to be eaten sodden with water, but “roast with fire.” This brings before us in type the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ was exposed to the wrath of God, that not merely nominally, but really and truly, He had to pass through all the agonies, the torments, the sufferings through which we ought to have passed on account of our numberless transgressions in action, in word, in thought, in feeling, in desire, in purpose, and in inclination. This is set forth by the lamb being “roast with fire.”

With unleavened bread they should eat it. We have been reading in the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians what is set forth by the unleavened bread. There leaven, as leaven, signifies malice and wickedness; but the unleavened bread signifies sincerity and truth. And this is what we have particularly to aim at, that we are found in a state of uprightness! Uprightness is brought before us by this unleavened bread. The very opposite to guile, the very opposite to hypocrisy. Uprightness of heart, this is what God desires in His children! God bears with the weakness of his children, the infirmities of His children; but He does not bear with hypocrisy, with guile, with insincerity. He wants us to be upright, sincere, and without guile; and therefore we have to ask God continually that, in the riches of His grace, He would give unto us real, true, spiritual sincerity and uprightness and truth –

that is, if really and truly we care about the revelation that He has been pleased to make in the Holy Scriptures, and seek to act according to the Word of God. A deeply important point this is – that we do not go our own way; that we do not seek to please ourselves; that we do not think we may do this, that, or the other thing, for God will not be particular. God will be particular! He cares about the Truth which He has put into our hands in the Holy Scriptures!

Then not merely was the lamb to be roast with fire and eaten with unleavened bread, but “with bitter herbs” they were to eat it. With bitter herbs. What might these be? I judge the herbs to be the deep consciousness the poor sinner has of his former life and deportment. We have forgiveness when we trust in the Lord Jesus Christ; all our numberless sins are forgiven! But though God has forgiven us, we cannot, so to speak, forgive ourselves; we continually remember all the ungodly life, and the ungodly ways, in which we went before our conversion. It is now seventy-two years and six weeks that I have been a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and for these seventy-two years I have known that every one of my numberless transgressions is forgiven, and that not one of my numberless transgressions, in my unconverted days, shall be brought against me. But while I know that God has forgiven me perfectly, I cannot forgive myself! Day by day, more or less, my ungodly ways before I was converted, and all my numberless failings and shortcomings since my conversion, I remember against myself! These are the “bitter herbs” which I have while I am feeding on Christ! God has forgiven us; but we cannot, so to speak, forgive ourselves. We continually remember all our former ungodliness.

“Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof.” The purtenance being the heart, the lungs, the kidneys. All must be roasted, and the whole lamb was to be brought on the table. And around the whole lamb they were to gather; not around a roasted leg, or a shoulder, but round the whole lamb. Now, there is a meaning in this, and the meaning of it is that we have the whole Christ, with all His offices, with all the virtues of His blessing, and the benefits to be had from Him. He is our Teacher; He is our Guide; He is our Comforter; He is our Helper; He is our Strength; He is our Redeemer; He is our Brother; He is our Friend; He is our Bridegroom; He is our Husband. The believer has Christ in all His offices.

This is set forth by the Israelites gathering round the whole lamb; not a piece cut up. But there is more than what I have said in this. It is this, that we have not to think we have to do with a part of the Saviour, or a part of the blessing of the Saviour; but that just as we need, poor, feeble, worthless worms as we are, whatever we require for our soul. It is to be found in the Lord Jesus Christ. And we never need in spiritual things to despair because our necessities are so great! However great our spiritual necessities are, all, all that we require is to be obtained through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; through feeding on the Lord Jesus, through eating spiritually His flesh, and drinking spiritually His blood. All this is set forth by the fact that the Israelites were to gather round the whole lamb.

There is another point of great instruction. The believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and believers in Him alone, are those who should be baptised. “Believer’s baptism,” therefore, is the right ordinance, and the only right ordinance, regarding baptism. It is not a question how old we are, but the question is, that we are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ when baptised. Now, while this is the right attention to the ordinance, we have to guard against this, that we do not assemble together as “baptised believers;” but that we assemble together as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not a part of the Truth of God round about which we have to meet, but round about Jesus we have to meet. That is the point. That is the set point. All believers must gather round the Whole Lamb! It is not this part of truth, or another part of truth. For instance, the truth of God is that the Lord Jesus Christ will come again before the Millennium, and will not come again after the Millennium has commenced; but He will come to introduce the Millennium, and there will be no Millennium without the Lord Jesus Christ; so that the Lord Jesus Christ in person is coming again! This is the truth of God, and which on no account we have to give up. But while this is so deeply important a truth, we should not meet together as those who hold this truth, but we should meet together as believers in Christ. We should meet together as those who trust in the Atoning Death of the Lord Jesus Christ! It is round about Christ we should meet! These are the points that are set forth in the fact that the whole lamb was to gathered round about.

“Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire.” And the head was not to be cut off previously. “His head with his legs.” They were not to be cut off, but all roasted, and then brought on the table. “And with the purtenance thereof.” “And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning, ye shall burn with fire; and thus shall ye eat it, with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand, and ye shall eat it in haste; it is the Lord’s Passover.” Here the statement brings plainly before us the way in which persons are to be dressed and attired when going on a journey. The large loose gown was to be girded to the loins, that the traveller’s marching or walking might not be retarded. Then, his shoes on! Because there might be a rough road; all kinds of things might be in the way, thorns, sharp stones, which would hurt the feet; therefore they were to put on their shoes! Then, the staff in the hand: another thing that is found in the traveller.

Now, this brings before us the deeply important truth that the moment we become believers in Christ, or for the first time feed on Christ, our own Passover Lamb, from that moment we become strangers and pilgrims in the world; we belong no longer to the world, for this world abides with the wicked one, is in intimate connection with the devil, and with the powers of darkness. From it, therefore, we are separated the moment we belong to Christ, and feed for the first time on the Lord Jesus Christ. Then we become strangers on earth; we set out on the journey, and this journey is heavenward. The end of the journey will be heaven! O how precious is this! My beloved brethren and sisters in Christ, do you all enter into this, that heaven is your home. I have, for seventy-two years, looked at it in that way, and it has made me a very happy man. Trials and difficulties, sorrows and afflictions, and disappointments I have had a great many of; I might say I have had them by hundreds, if not by thousands, but, notwithstanding all, I have been during the seventy-two years and the six weeks I have now been a believer in Christ an exceedingly happy man, because I have always looked to the end of the journey. I am as certain that I shall be in heaven as if I were there already; not a shadow of a doubt about it, and I have never had a shadow of a doubt about it during the last seventy-two years.

And this is what, my beloved brethren and sisters, you should seek more and more to aim at, if you have not already attained to it; though I have no doubt that very many, if not most of you, have done so. But if there is anyone here who has not yet attained to it that heaven is their home, let them cry mightily to God that they may be sure of it, that heaven is their home. Now, I walk up and down in my room, and say to myself I am a sinner, a great sinner, and deserve nothing but punishment, but I shall not be punished, because my precious Lord Jesus was punished in my stead, and because I put my trust in Him. Therefore, nothing remains to me but heaven, and every day brings me a day nearer to it. See how precious is this. That is what we should feed on continually, and ponder continually. Consider what the Lord Jesus has done in our room and stead, and that salvation is completed by Him, and He will see to it that you and I, as assuredly as we are believers, shall be in heaven. And all this is perceived, and is set forth, in this verse. It is the person who believes in Christ setting out on a journey. He may have long to travel, but the end is what he has to look at. The end; and the end will be glory, the end will be heaven! We, poor miserable sinners, deserve nothing but punishment, but if we put our trust in the Lord Jesus the end of the journey will be glory, will be heaven! And we shall be for Eternity with the Lord Jesus Christ! O how precious this is; and I, by the grace of God, have been enabled for these seventy-two years to look at it in that way, and it has made me for all these years a very happy man!

The 12th verse, “For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both men and beast.” Let us ponder – the firstborn of the king, the firstborn of the poor. “And against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord.” The judges, the princes, and the great ones of the earth, who are said to be the representatives of God here on earth, they shall be slain. Not merely the poor, but the lords therein, and every one of the kings, the princes, the judges, the great ones of the land.

Now the last verse, and a remarkable one it is; and we should seek particularly to ponder it. “And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are, and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you, to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.” Here we see what brought salvation, deliverance, safety to the Israelite! It was the blood of the Passover Lamb, which had been put on the door posts! Now, thus our salvation depends not upon our alms deeds, not on church or chapel-going, not on what we have given, or intend to give to the poor; on none of these things depend the salvation of the soul, but

simply, solely, entirely, only, on the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for the remission of our sins, if we trust in it, depend upon it, look to it, and to it alone, for the salvation of our souls. That is the first point that we gather from this last verse. But there IS something else. “The blood shall be to you for a token on your houses where ye are, and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and the plague shall not come nigh to you.” The eye of man might not be able to see the blood, but God saw the blood; the people inside the house might not be able to see it, the people outside the house might not be able to see it, but God saw it!

And now that brings before us that there may be among you, dear, true children of God, nervous ones, and very often, as a believer in Christ, I have clearly pointed out to them, for such and such reasons, they are truly believers in Christ, yet these nervous persons may not be able to see it! Now, must they go to hell because they cannot see it clearly regarding themselves? No! No! God, your Heavenly Father, He sees that, after all, you are really, truly, sincerely, alone looking to the blood of Jesus Christ; but on account of your nervous state you never come to the assurance you ought to, that you are saved; and for your comfort, I say that just as God in the dark night saw the blood, so God sees now, though these sincere, honest, upright, dear children of God, on account of their nervousness, do not see it.

Now, in conclusion, “Are we all convinced that we are sinners needing a Saviour?” Let us ask ourselves, young and old, male and female, aged and young, “Do I see that I am a sinner?” If not, O ask God to show it to you. No one can get to heaven without seeing that he is a sinner. All the people who go to hell have only a good opinion about themselves, and see nothing at all of their sinnership! You must come to see that you are a sinner – you must come to it, and see that you deserve punishment; and if you have not yet come to it, you won’t get to heaven without it! Therefore, ask God to show you clearly that you are a sinner, that you are a sinner needing a Saviour. And what will you come to when you see it? You will seek to live a better life, but to make up for your past misconduct you will never be able to do. Never! Never! There is but One Who can make up for our transgressions; that is Jesus, Who yielded His perfect obedience to God, His own life, Who suffered the punishment which we deserve on account of our numberless transgressions. And if we trust in Him, and depend on Him for salvation, that is enough.

Therefore, the next point is to believe in Christ. That means to trust in Him for salvation, and if you say “I wish I could do that, but I am not able to do it,” and you are sincerely wishing to put your trust in Him, He will show you, He will help you. But, remember, when we have come to it that we see we are sinners, we are to put our trust in Christ! One point more, and that is, that we seek for the whole remainder of our life to live to the praise, and honour, and glory of our Saviour, and that we ask Him day by day to aid us! May He bless us for His Name’s sake. Amen.

The logo for Mullers is written in a large, elegant, black cursive script. The letters are fluid and connected, with a prominent 'M' at the beginning and a long, sweeping tail on the 's'.

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