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"AND YE SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH, AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE."—John viii:32.

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A CHRISTMAS SERMON

THE IMMORTALITY OF GOD

By Rev. Edward William Carpenter

"Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? when I called, was there none to answer? Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? behold at my rebuke, I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness: their fish stinketh, because there is no water, and dieth for thirst.

"I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering.

"The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.

"The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.

"I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting."—Isaiah 50:2-6.

There was no one to take up the divine challenge: no one to answer for guilty man. To the call of God for one who could save, there was no answer, but the echo of his voice. See who it is that comes to rescue man: Jehovah interposes to save; but he appears in a special manner.

The Lord himself draws the portrait. View it with solemn attention.

I. Behold the Messiah as God

1. He comes in fullness of power. "Is my hand shortened at all?"

2. His power to save is equal to that with which he destroys. Let Egypt be the instance: "I dry up the sea," etc.

3. His power is that which broadens the phenomena of nature. "I clothe the heavens with blackness."

4. This should excite deep gratitude, that he who rebukes the sea was himself rebuked; he who clothes the heavens with blackness was himself in darkness for our sake.

5. This should excite confidence for he is evidently Lord of the sea and the sky, the dark and the gloom.

II. Behold Him as the Appointed Teacher

1. Instructed and endowed: "the Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned." He knows, and he imparts knowledge.

2. Condescending to the need: "to him that is weary."

3. Watchful of each case: that I should know how to speak a word in season." This is a rare gift: many speak, and perhaps speak in season, but have not learned the right manner.

4. Constantly in communion with God: "he wakeneth morning by morning." "He that hath sent me is with me." Should we not be heartily attentive to his teachings? "I will speak."

III. Behold Him as the Servant of the Lord

1. Prepared by grace: "he wakeneth mine ear to hear." He spoke not his own words, but those which he had heard of his Father.

2. Consecrated in due form: "hath opened mine ear," boring it to door-post. This was publicly done in his baptism, when in outward symbol he fulfilled all righteousness.

3. Obedient in all things: "I was not rebellious." In no point did Jesus refuse the Father's will, not even in Gethsemane.

4. Persevering through all trials: "neither turned away back." He did not relinquish the hard task, but set his face as a flint to carry it through.

5. Courageous in it all: as we see in the verse following our text. What a model for our

service! Consider him, and copy him.

IV. Behold Him as the Peerless Sufferer

1. His entire submission, his back, his cheeks, his hair, his face.

2. His willing submission: "I gave my back to the smiters." "I hid not my face."

3. His lovely submission, bearing the felon's scourge, and the utmost of scorn: "Shame and spitting."

4. His silent submission: Not a word of reproach, or resentment. Grace had taught him effectually, and he suffered perfectly.

It may bring out important truths very vividly if we make combinations of the four subjects which have come before us. Place the first and the last together: the God and the Sufferer. What condescension! What ability to save!

Place the two middle terms together: the Teacher and the Servant, and see how sweetly he serves by teaching, and teaches by serving.

Put all together, and let the blended characters ensure ardent affection, obedient reverence, and devout delight.

A Golden Lecturer's Word
I imagine myself placed in the world at the time when the Christ was expected, commissioned to announce to it that God was about to send his own son, having endowed him with the "tongue of the learned."

What excitement in all the schools of philosophy! What gatherings of the sages of the earth! What expectations of the discoveries with which science was about to be enriched! "Now," say they, "shall long-hidden secrets be revealed: now shall we penetrate the laboratories of nature, and observe all those processes of which at present we see only the results. For what purpose can the tongue of the learned have been given to a Divine Person, if not that he may expound mysteries to the world, that he may tell us what the wise have been unable to detect, and the studious labored in vain to unfold?"

But this Divine person shall speak for himself to the assembled throng of philosophers and sages: "Yes, the Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned; and I have descended that I might speak with that tongue to every nation of the earth. But he hath not given me the tongue that I might tell how stars and planets roll, or settle the disputes of the wise. He hath not given me the tongue that I should know how to speak a word to you, ye disputers of this world; but simply that I should know how to speak in season to him that is weary."

Oh, how fallen are the expectant countenances of philosophers and sages! "Is this all?" they exclaim. "Was it only for this that the tongue of the learned was bestowed? Does this require, or can this employ, the tongue of the learned?"

Nay, men of science, turn not angrily away! With all your wisdom, you have never been able to do this. The weary have sought you in vain. They have found no "word in season," no word of comfort and sustenance; and why, then, should you be indignant at the province here assigned to "the tongue of the learned?"

What tongue but "the tongue of the learned" could speak "a word in season" to a world oppressed with this universal weariness? The tongue must be one which could disclose the mysteries of the Godhead, prove the immortality of the soul, and be charged with intelligence as to the pardoning of sin, and the mode of reconciliation between man and his Maker: things into which angels

had in vain striven to look.

My friends, let us as we study the birth of Christ at this season of the year, not forget our subject, "The Immortality of God," which we wish to express the unchangeable God. As we conclude our thoughts, may our hearts be filled to the very full with the joy and grace of God.

Christ said to his Father, "Thou lovest me before the foundation of the world." John 17:24. At that mysterious date, not of time, but of everlasting love, God "chose us in Him." Before the world began, God, that can not lie, gave the promise of eternal life to Him for us, and made with Him for us "a covenant ordered in all things and sure." Eph. 1:4; Titus 1:2; II Samuel 23:5.

The leading provisions of that covenant were, a Lamb for our atonement and a King for our government—a dying and a living Saviour. This God, the Father, did for us, and His own divine interest is strongly indicated in the typical word, "God will provide Himself a Lamb," and "I have provided me a King." Gen. 22:8; I Sam. 16:1. So the source of the Kingship of Christ is God Himself, in the eternal counsels of His love. It is one of the grand "thoughts of God." As we approach another New Year, let us pray in the following thought or some other that may be pleasing to God:

"Reign in me, Lord Jesus! Oh, make my heart Thy throne!

It shall be Thine forever, It shall be Thine alone!"

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THE REV. THOMAS H. LACKLAND PASSES TO HIS REWARD

By Rev. D. A. Henry

The Rev. Thomas H. Lackland, retired minister of the Presbyterian Church, passed away December 4, 1936, at his home in Amelia County, Va., after an illness of only a few days.

The Rev. Mr. Lackland was born in Buckingham County, Va., August, 1859. He attended Hampton Institute and later entered Lincoln University where he graduated from the College and Theological Departments.

His first pastorate after graduation from the Seminary was at Southampton, N. Y., among the Shinnecock Indians, where he served for three years as preacher and teacher.

He was next appointed by the Presbytery of Southern Virginia to Allen Memorial and Mt. Zion churches, Amelia County, where he rendered effective service for five years.

His next charge was at Charlie Hope, Va., serving the Ogden and Great Creek churches. Here he labored very successfully for eleven years in church and school.

His last field of labor was Albright church, Amelia County. After having served for five years, he retired on account of failing health. He continued a faithful worshipper at this church until his death.

He was married to Miss Nena M. Harris, November, 1898. To this union eight children were born. His widow and six children survive him.

Funeral services for Rev. Lackland were conducted from Albright Presbyterian church, Amelia County, Va., December 8, at two o'clock, and well attended by many of his fellow Presbyterians and friends, despite the inclement weather. Those participating in the ceremony were Rev. T. A. Robinson, of Petersburg; Rev. W. H. Stitt, Nottoway; Rev. W. H. Shepperson, Jetersville; Dr. H. W. McNair, Principal of Ingleside-Fee Institute, Burkeville; Rev. C. M. Dusenbury, Drakes Branch; Rev. R. L. Hyde, Amelia C. H. and Rev. D. A. Henry, who presided and delivered the principal eulogy.

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RACE RELATIONS DISCUSSED AT FEDERAL COUNCIL MEETING

Asbury Park, N. J., Dec. 9.—The challenge to Church leaders to change racial attitudes by engaging more deeply in the struggle for equality of rights and opportunities of minority racial groups, especially the Negro group, was the keynote of the 15th Annual Meeting and Interracial Dinner of the Department of Race Relations at the Biennial Meeting of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, held in the Berkeley-Carteret Hotel here tonight.

Dr. Allan Knight Chalmers, minister of the Broadway Tabernacle church of New York, made his first public statement regarding the year's accomplishments of the Scottsboro Defense Committee of which he is chairman. At the invitation of the Federal Council of Churches he reported tonight for the information and inspiration of Church leaders assembled.

Bishop Beverdy C. Ransom, of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, in a brief address said he hailed the power of Jesus Christ through the Federal Council of Churches which had opened doors and set new standards of fellowship by its welcoming Negro churches on terms of equality and championing the cause of race relations on a Christian basis through its Department of Race Relations.

Mrs. George T. Scott, chairman, New Jersey Interracial Committee of Church Women, described the program carried out in that State to help white and Negro women break down barriers and become real friends and to help local communities in sections of New Jersey break down the bars against better race relations and to lead in direct action in such work as securing opportunity in public hospitals for nurse training for Negro girls.

Bishop C. H. Phillips, of the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church, expressed the value of personal contact in changing racial attitudes.

Bishop L. W. Kyles, of the A. M. E. Zion Church, reviewed the history of interracial organizations and efforts in America during the past twenty-five years, and concluded from his historical study that "more far-reaching in its influence in changing racial attitudes than any other force is the power of religion acting through the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. . . . Working as a motor force in the churches to influence and help them apply the principles of Jesus Christ in a definite, active and practical way, to the social, political and economic life of every community, it has performed some definite tasks in race relations in every section of the country."

Dr. W. H. Jernagin, chairman of the Department of Race Relations, who presided, with Dr. George E. Haynes, Executive Secretary, and Miss Katherine Gardner, Associate Secretary, gave summaries of the closing of the 15th year of work in the field of better race relations. Among other matters they pointed out that the Department had called attention to discriminations against minority groups; had carried out the program of securing justice in industry and agriculture, with special action to improve conditions among tenants and share-croppers in the South. They described the aggressive campaign by churches and auxiliary groups to secure adequate federal and State anti-lynching legislation. They stressed the work to open opportunities for training and employment of Negroes in tax-supported institutions and educational work in consumers cooperatives as a technique for interracial understanding and cooperation.

FIFTY YEARS OF SERVICE

(Dr. George F. Bragg, in The Church Advocate, Baltimore)

Of course, we are humbly grateful to our God for the mark of favor shown us. We were brought into being for the service of our fellow man. It is through such service that we vindicate and prove our love to God.

Surely, it is a mark of God's favor when one is privileged to round a half century of service for God, and, during all that time, have the love, presence and help of one woman, and the comfort and consolation, still alive, of the whole number of children which blessed and sanctified the union of two hearts. And the ground for humble gratitude is increased from the consideration that during the entire period the salary given has been inadequate for the demands imposed by such diversified service.

Again, the favor of Heaven is made manifest in that it is not a common occurrence for one to be permitted to yield so long a service. The service of the rector of St. James, for 45 years in one parish, in the entire history of the country is exceeded only by one individual, rector of a colored parish. That individual, when a babe, was baptized in St. James church. A few years ago, when the Rev. Dr. Hutchens C. Bishop retired from the rectorship of St. Philip's church, New York, he had been in the service of that parish 47 years.

Ours has not been the simple service of a parish, but it has been, at one and the same time, a service to the Community, the Diocese and the National Church. And, by the help of God, we have never looked over our shoulders to see whether there were anyone to agree with us, when God made it inwardly plain what course should be pursued. And the continued offering up of our life of service has brought us that joy and peace which no man can take from us.

In the language of that Queen among American women, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper: "After all, whether they encourage me or discourage me, I belong to this race, and when it is down I belong to a down race; and when it is up I belong to a risen race."

While we have at all times been loyal to our own group, we have been a firm believer that "the whole is greater than any of its parts."

It is interesting to recall at this time what the community where we were brought up, thought of us fifty years ago.

In January, 1887, the Daily Index-Appeal, of the city of Petersburg, in chronicling our ordination, had the following to say:

"Last Wednesday St. Stephen's church was well filled by the members of the congregation and the many friends, white and colored, who came to witness the ordination of Mr. George F. Bragg, Jr., to the order of deacons. Mr. Bragg is editor of the Afro-American Churchman, the only religious newspaper published by colored churchmen in America. He possesses rare talent, and is one of whom his people as well as the Church of which he is a minister, should be highly proud. He leaves this city to take charge of the Church of the Holy Innocents, Norfolk, Va., and carries with him the kindest wishes and commendation of the community from whose midst he goes."

Pherson charged that the women had been subjected to daily insults from passersby and had caused the race to be held in contempt. He blamed WPA officials for the situation, saying that the women could not help it because they were unemployed. The women are attired in overalls and jumpers, caps, heavy shoes, and gloves and do regular men's work on the streets.

BIRMINGHAM PROTESTS WPA WOMEN AS STREET LABORERS

Birmingham, Ala., Dec. 11.—Protest to the WPA officials in Washington has been lodged by the Birmingham Branch of the N. A. A. C. P. against the working of colored women in overalls as street laborers on WPA projects.

In a speech before the Negro Baptist ministers' conference, Dr. Charles A. J. McPherson, Secretary of the N. A. A. C. P. here, pleaded not only for a protest to Washington from the ministers, but for an aroused public sentiment in Birmingham to secure other employment for the women. Dr. Mc-