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Risen With Christ!

By the REV. GLENN R. COIE

Pastor of Westminster Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Bend, Oregon

THE true significance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from Joseph's rock-hewn tomb has been lost in large measure by the professing Christian church of our modern world. Materialism, unbelief, doubt and worldliness have swept in like a flood upon the visible church and have made devastating inroads upon it, undermining its faith in the absolute trustworthiness of the holy Scriptures, emasculating its gospel, vitiating its witness, robbing it of its once triumphant message and leaving it helpless and powerless before a crumbling civilization, threatened with destruction by its own inherent wickedness. The dawn of Easter in the year 1941 reveals a world that in the past generation sowed the wind of unbelief and denial of supernatural Christianity, and is today reaping the whirlwind of rebellion, lust, greed and cruel hate. In the light of such world conditions, the true child of God would do well to give earnest thought to the greatest miracle of the Bible and the very keystone of our Christian faith—the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In his letter to the Colossian Christians, chapter three, verse one, the apostle Paul says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." We shall consider the apostle's words, "Risen with Christ," as they apply to "the saints and faithful brethren in Christ." We propose first to treat of the fact of Christ's resurrection; then we shall inquire as to its meaning for the believer; and finally we shall observe the benefits which

flow from it to the Christian.

The Fact of Christ's Resurrection

It should be obvious that the resurrection of Jesus Christ can have no real meaning unless that resurrection be grounded in actual historical fact. That our Lord rose from the tomb with the same physical (though glorified) body which was tenderly placed there by His faithful disciples, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, is not only asserted in Scripture but is also declared to be the fundamental truth of the gospel. For "If Christ be not risen," declares the apostle, "then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain" (I Cor. 15: 14). And again, "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins" (v. 17).

Moreover, evidence substantiating the bodily resurrection of our Lord is at once overwhelming and convincing even to the most incredulous. It was predicted in the Old Testament, for David by inspiration wrote of the Messiah, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." It was foretold by Christ Himself when He said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Repeatedly He foretold His approaching death and resurrection in such unmistakable declarations as this: "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and

The Inspiration of Scripture

By the REV. JOHN MURRAY

Professor of Systematic Theology at Westminster Theological Seminary

WHEN we speak of the inspiration of Scripture, we are not thinking of any effect that is produced in us by Scripture. Sometimes, no doubt, in common speech we use the word "inspiration" to express the intellectual, moral or spiritual stimulus which we derive from our reading of the masterpieces of literature or even from the example of great and good men. In such cases the inspiration is something that is effected in us by the quality or character of that by which we have been inspired.

At other times in common speech we do speak, in literary fashion, of the inspiration of works of human genius. For example, men speak of the inspiration of Shakespeare. This may mean several things. Sometimes it may refer to the genius of Shakespeare by reason of which he was able to write such masterpieces of literature. Or it may refer to the peculiar quality residing in the works of Shakespeare because they are the products of his master genius.

But this is not what we mean by the inspiration of Scripture. It is true that we derive from Scripture the very highest kind of stimulus. It is also true that some of the writers of holy Scripture were men of great natural genius, and this very genius was used by God so that the mark of it is left on what they wrote. The inspiration of Scripture is, however, something very different and something absolutely unique. Scripture is unique. It does not belong to a class of writings, all of which are characterized by inspiration. Scripture stands alone, or, as we often say, it stands in a class by itself. And it occupies this unique position just because of its inspiration.

The word "inspiration" when applied to Scripture refers to one of two things: (1) It may refer to the supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit exerted upon the writers of Scripture, or (2) it may refer to the quality residing in Scripture as a result of that supernatural influence exerted by the Holy Spirit. In the first case we are thinking of the divine activity by which Scripture was produced—in a word, of its divine origin and authorship. In the second case we are thinking of the result of this

divine authorship—in a word, of its divine character and authority. In either case we are led to the conclusion that Scripture is the Word of God and, therefore, infallible and inerrant. It is in the supreme sense God's Word, not man's.

An objection may very readily be urged against this latter conclusion. For have we not said that there were human writers? And if human writers, how can Scripture escape the fallibility that attaches to infirm and erring men? It is this objection that has led many to make a distinction between the human elements and the divine elements in Scripture, or, as sometimes stated, the distinction between the human element and the divine element in inspiration. And so it is held that, attaching to the human element, there is error and fallibility, while to the divine element there is attached inerrancy and infallibility.

It must, of course, be granted that there were human writers, and that is just saying that the Scripture has come to us through human instrumentality. But if that fact argues for the fallibility of Scripture, then we shall have to conclude that fallibility attaches to the whole of Scripture. For let it be remembered that there is not one word from Genesis to Revelation that has come to us apart from human instrumentality. So far as *Scripture* is concerned, and it is with Scripture we are now dealing, every part has come to us through some human writer. The distinction,

then, between the human element and the divine element will not give us any basis for the discovery of the divine and infallible element as distinguished from the human and fallible element. We must face the issue squarely. If the human instrumentality renders inerrancy or infallibility impossible, then we do not have an infallible word from Genesis to Revelation.

We must fully recognize the fact that Scripture came through human writers. But what we must also recognize is that the Holy Spirit used human writers in such a way that what they wrote they wrote under an all-pervasive supernatural influence, so that Scripture is wholly the Word of God. There are, therefore, no exceptions to, or degrees of, that influence we call inspiration.

Whence do we derive this notion of inspiration? The answer to that question is just the asking of another. Whence do we derive our notion of, or authority for, any doctrine? The answer is plain. From the Scripture itself. And so we derive our doctrine of inspiration from the Scripture. We might quite properly say that we derive our doctrine of inspiration from Christ and His apostles. The attitude exemplified and inculcated by our Lord and His apostles must be our attitude. No one may dare to deviate one whit from what Christ, who is the truth, the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person, taught and commended. But our knowledge of what Christ and His apostles taught comes to us through Scripture, and so ultimately we must say that we derive our doctrine of inspiration from Scripture.

We shall have to limit ourselves to one or two of the high points of Bible teaching on this question. We shall take up, first of all, II Peter 1:16-21. In this passage Peter says that "no prophecy of scripture is of private interpretation. For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but as borne by the Holy Spirit men spake from God" (20, 21). Here Peter fully acknowledges the human authorship. Speaking of Scripture he does say "men spake." This fact makes all the more significant what he says in addition. We may be inclined to argue that human authorship impairs the stability of Scripture and that it detracts from the divine authorship and character. It

Young People's Topics

THE article on this page will be an aid in studying the young people's lessons published by the Committee on Christian Education of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, which may be secured from the Rev. Burton L. Goddard, Box 73, Carlisle, Massachusetts. Topics now being studied are:

April 6th—THE IMPORTANCE OF A CORRECT VIEW OF SCRIPTURE.

April 13th—THE SCRIPTURE'S CLAIM FOR ITS OWN INSPIRATION.

April 20th—THE NECESSITY OF SCRIPTURE.

April 27th—WHAT IS INSPIRATION?

was not so with this apostle, who learned of Him who said to His disciples, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). For while, on the one hand, Peter says "men spake," he on the other hand makes three very astounding statements—"no prophecy of scripture is of private interpretation," "no prophecy ever came by the will of man," "as borne by the Holy Spirit men spake from God."

When Peter says that Scripture is not of private interpretation, he does not refer to our interpretation of Scripture but rather to Scripture as a product. It is not the mere product of human reflection or imagination. Again, when he says that it was not brought by the will of man, he excludes mere human volition and determination. And finally, when he says "borne by the Holy Spirit," he becomes quite positive in affirming, in Dr. B. B. Warfield's words, that "the men who spake from God are here declared, therefore, to have been taken up by the Holy Spirit and brought by His power to the goal of His choosing. The things which they spoke under this operation of the Spirit were therefore His things, not theirs. And that is the reason which is assigned why the 'prophetic word' is so sure."

Perhaps the most amazing feature of this passage in II Peter is what he says in verse 19, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy." The more sure word of prophecy is the Scripture with which he deals in the succeeding verses, and that with which it is compared as more sure or steadfast is the word that Peter, together with James and John, heard spoken from heaven on the Mount of Transfiguration when the Father gave witness to the Son, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." There could not possibly be any question in Peter's mind as to the stability and infallibility of that word that Peter with the others received on the holy mount. It was the voice of the eternal Father. And Peter was profoundly aware of all the solemn implications of the privilege and responsibility that was his. In virtue of all this he introduces the subject by telling his readers, "We did not follow cunningly devised fables."

But the astounding fact is that Peter also says, "We have a more

steadfast word of prophecy." The written Word gives ground for stronger and more stable assurance than the very word spoken on that occasion. He is affirming the absolute trustworthiness of Scripture. In Scripture, Peter and his readers have not simply a word spoken on a particular occasion, but the Word of God that has received, because it is Scripture, permanent form and authentication. Could anything more emphatically express the security, trustworthiness and infallibility of Scripture? May anyone question the infallibility of the Father's witness to His well-beloved Son? Scripture possesses similar infallibility, and only on such a basis could Peter say, "And we have the word of prophecy made more sure."

The next passage we shall study is II Timothy 3:16, where Paul says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." Our English phrase, "given by inspiration of God," quite properly conveys the thought of the Greek word, namely, that Scripture owes its existence to a *divine* activity. That is the main emphasis and it is borne out by our English phrase. But there is also something in the Greek word that is not fully expressed in our English version. The Greek word means, literally, "God-breathed." "All Scripture is God-breathed"—it is breathed out by God. Paul is not speaking of an inbreathing on the part of God into Scripture. Nor is he speaking of any influence which is breathed into us through the medium of holy Scripture. Indeed, Paul is not even speaking of an inbreathing on the part of God into the human writers of Scripture. But what he is saying, in the most emphatic and terse way, is that Scripture is breathed by God. It is God's mouth, God's breath, God's oracle. Paul could not have adopted a word that more simply and directly affirms that Scripture is spoken by God, that it is the speech or word of God.

In speaking thus of Scripture he makes no reservations and no qualifications. He does not say that Scripture merely contains such words of God. He does not say that Scripture is the vehicle by which such words of God are conveyed to us. He does not speak of degrees of inspiration. No, what he affirms is that all Scripture is God-breathed. It may very well be that we should translate it thus, "Every scripture is God-

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breathed." But this rendering makes no difference in the effect. For if every particular part of Scripture is thus inspired, then the sum-total of Scripture partakes of the same character. The whole will not have less of this character of inspiration than do the individual parts that compose that whole.

We must not fail to grasp the force of this testimony of the apostle. Breath is a very direct expression of the life that is in us. Scripture stands in as close a relation to the truth and will of God as does breath to us.

It might be asked, What is the scope of that Scripture of which Paul says that it is God-breathed? In the preceding context Paul speaks of the holy scriptures which Timothy knew from a child. These must, of course, be the Old Testament scriptures. We know the scope of the canon of Scripture accepted and approved by our Lord and the apostles. It was the Jewish canon, coextensive with our Old Testament. Of nothing less than that does Paul say that it is given by inspiration of God. But Paul may also be thinking of all that could properly be embraced in the category of Scripture, even though all of the New Testament scriptures were not yet written. In any case, he speaks thus of the Old Testament. And that establishes a principle; it fixes a doctrine, namely, the doctrine of Scripture. If the Old Testament could be thus characterized by an apostle, can we believe that the scriptures of the New Testament, which are the embodiment of the revelation God gave to men through the incarnation of the eternal Son and the pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit, belong to a lower category? Can we believe that the New Testament economy, characterized as it is by the more

abundant effusion and operation of the Holy Spirit, does not possess what the older economy had, namely, an influence of the Spirit that provides us with a God-breathed and infallible Scripture? The questions carry their own answer. We can surely say of

the whole Bible that it is "given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:16, 17).

God Deals With Disobedience

A Meditation in the Book of Jeremiah
By the REV. BURTON L. GODDARD

For I earnestly protested unto your fathers in the day that I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, even unto this day, rising early and protesting, saying, Obey my voice. Yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, but walked every one in the imagination of their evil heart: therefore I will bring upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do; but they did them not (Jer. 11:7, 8).

THE duty of obedience is a subject to which children and adults alike commonly listen with distaste, even with rebellion. As long as it harbors sin, the human heart never will love obedience to God. Just as in the case of our first parents, sin and disobedience always go hand in hand. Only a miracle of grace can cause a reversal of attitude and bring about a love for obedience. Thus, when the negro preacher said to his congregation, "Brethren, what eber de good God tell me to do in dis blessed book, dat I'm gwine to do," we can be quite certain that God's grace had transformed his heart.

His Instructions

In that same "blessed book," God has specifically directed men what to do and what not to do. There is nothing vague about His requirements. Some things He commands; other things He forbids. Indeed, it would be a herculean task to attempt the tabulation of all the things either allowed or prohibited in the Word. Each separate command is of importance, and we do well to search the Scriptures that we may know just what God requires of us.

Occasionally, however, God's instructions to us are brought within the compass of a single statement and, for the moment, the individual requirements are lost to sight. The burden of the message entrusted by God to the prophets was often such an one. In Jeremiah 11:7 the text of the message is found. No words are

wasted. It is comprehensive, brief, to the point. This is what God says: "Obey my voice."

After all, the important thing is a heart-attitude of obedience, for if the heart's resolve is to obey God's voice, the individual will be ready for any specific command or request God may address to him. Like a pure fountain which sends forth only clear, sweet waters, a heart which is tuned to obedience will produce obedience at every point tested. Or, like the regenerate nature which cannot but issue in good works, its fruit will always be conformity to each expression of the divine will.

If only we might learn to obey God! That is what God wants. As revealed by Samuel's denunciation of Saul's disobedience, to obey is better in the Lord's sight than sacrifice. Nor is it only what God *wants*; it is also

His *due*. Moral responsibility was emphasized in Paul's statement, "We *ought* to obey God." "Ought" is today a neglected word, but it is neglected only because of the general apostasy of our age. It should be revived, and it should be applied to the filial obedience due unto our Heavenly Father, for He is indeed the great Sovereign of the universe. We belong to Him. All we have has come from Him. He gives us life and sustains that life. He sent His Son to purchase our salvation. He directs us by His Spirit. We *ought* to obey Him!

The command was not a new one in Jeremiah's day. No, he was one of the last of the prophets. Perhaps he preached from that text, "Obey my voice," but so had the many prophets before him. What we read in his memoirs is that God had communicated the same instructions to Israel ever since they had found deliverance from Egyptian bondage. Every prophet had preached obedience to God. The message had been emphasized and reemphasized. God's servants had diligently proclaimed His desire for an obedient people. He Himself had been greatly concerned in the matter, for we read that He "earnestly protested . . . rising early and protesting."

His Protest

The tragedy was that the prophetic command, "Obey my voice," did not seem to have borne much fruit. When a God-fearing sovereign came to the throne, most of his time was occupied in trying to undo the works of disobedience on the part of his predecessors. Pagan altars had to be broken down; pagan images had to be destroyed. There was little time left for a program of implanting the desire for obedience in the individual heart. As a result, obeying God had never become entirely habitual with Israel. Once in a great while the lesson of obedience would appear to have been learned, only to have the succeeding generation become more sinful in this respect than ever. And so God said to Jeremiah, "They obeyed not, nor inclined their ear."

Like so many today, they were interested in other things. They much preferred a religion in which they could make their own choices, an easier religion, more ceremonial, less moral in character. They liked gods who did not point out their sins, who did not issue commands, who did not

Westminster Commencement

THE eleventh annual commencement exercises of Westminster Theological Seminary will be held on the afternoon of Tuesday, May 6th, at the campus in Laverock, Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia. The commencement address will be delivered by Dr. Gordon H. Clark of the Department of Philosophy, Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois. A most cordial invitation is extended to all friends of the seminary to be present at this important gathering.