

On our present view, the energy of the constitution of the ether is incredibly and portentously great, every cubic millimeter of space possessing what, if it were matter, would be a mass of a thousand tons and an energy equivalent to the output of a million horsepower station for forty million years.

Sir Oliver Lodge.

The fifth part of an American five-cent piece, if we could entirely disassociate it in one second, would give an energy equal to six milliards, eight hundred million horsepower, the energy of a moving body being equal to half the product of its mass by the square of its velocity.

Gustav Le Bon.

Chapter V: The Resurrection and the Power of God

The resurrection of Jesus is the New Testament unit of power. Back of the New Testament are the Hebrew Scriptures (our Old Testament), with their tremendous emphasis on the power of God. He is the Almighty Creator. He never grows weary. For Him nothing is impossible. In the very initial stage of the history of the chosen people, the father of the race was asked, “Is anything too hard for Jehovah?” Interesting enough, the occasion was one when life from the dead was in question.

The mighty hand of God was revealed in the overthrow of Pharaoh, and the deliverance of Israel from the land of Egypt. In song the Redeemer from bondage was praised thus:

“Who is like unto thee, O Jehovah, among the gods?
Who is like unto thee, glorious holiness,
Fearful in praises, doing wonders?”

In the realm of experience, it may be said that the Exodus was the Old Testament unit of God’s power, or perhaps better, the measure of God’s power. It is frequently referred to as an indication of what He could do.

Perhaps the book of Job magnifies God’s power as much as any other part of the Old Testament. Here, as in other portions, observation of the forces of nature led to recognition of the omnipotence of the Creator and Preserver of the universe. A typical expression of this is found in Job, twenty-sixth chapter, where after a graphic description of the power of God as displayed in nature, the writer says:

“Lo, these are but the outskirts of his ways:
And how small a whisper do we hear of him!
But the thunder of his mighty power who can understand?”

The Psalms are full of instruction about the person and nature of God. DeWitt, in the Introduction to *A new Translation of the Psalms*, asserts that they are fuller of instruction about God than even the New Testament, and that the New Testament assumes this previous revelation as not needing to be repeated. Here is one selection,

“God hath spoken once,
Twice have I heard this,
That power belongeth unto God.” (Psalm 62:11)

The prophets are unsurpassed in the consideration which they give to the power of God. For example, the great fortieth chapter of Isaiah, having comfort as its objective, dwells on the wisdom, tenderness and power of God. It says, in part: “Jehovah will come as a mighty one. Who hath meted out heaven with the span? ... and weighed the mountains in scales? Behold the nations are as a drop of a bucket ... behold he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.” Referring to the stars of heaven, he says, “Lift up your eyes on high, and see who created these, that bringeth out their host by number; he calleth them all by name; by the greatness of his might, and for that he is strong in power, not one is lacking.”

Referring to the resurrection, our Lord said to the Sadducees, “Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.” Certainly they did not know their Scriptures about God’s power or they would not have questioned His ability to raise the dead. They evidently also had little personal experience of God’s power, else they would have been more receptive of His Son and His message. Who but Sadducees will raise a question about the God of the Bible being equal to the problem of Easter?

The Apostle Paul uses four different words in one verse to indicate the activity and accomplishment of God Almighty, and all of them with respect to Easter. The verse is the nineteenth of the first chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians. Three expressions are found in the prayer of which this verse is a part. They are: “His calling,” “his inheritance,” “his power.” This great Christian and leader of men wishes for his friends and all Christian believers that they may have the eyes of their heart opened to know “what is the exceeding greatness of his *power* [dynamite] to us-ward who believe, according to that *working** [energy] of the *strength* of his *might* which he wrought [exercised] in Christ when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right

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* Thayer says that this word is in the New Testament used only of superhuman power.

hand.” No portion of the Bible of equal length has such a heaping together of words for power. Let us never forget it. God is able. He giveth it a body.

The reader is earnestly advised to pursue the study of the verses in Ephesians following the one quoted above. Ignore the division of chapters, and note how the power of God manifested in the resurrection of Christ is followed by an exhibition of that same power in the case of believers who are referred to in the second chapter. The parallel is striking. Christ was raised and exalted to the right hand of God in the heavenly places (Ephesians 1:20). Believers are made alive together with Christ and raised up with Him and made to sit with Him in the heavenly places (Ephesians 2:5, 6). Resurrection and ascension are both there for both Christ and believers. They rise from the dead and go with Him to the heavenlies. The entire programme of redemption, as here, is continually in Paul’s mind. He looks forward to the ages to come (2:7) and lives in the presence of the revelation of the exceeding riches to come, of God’s grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

The words of Dr. David Cairns, quoted in the foreword, may fittingly be used again as we bring this brief study to a close. “In belief in the resurrection is the spring of that new life of faith of which to-day the Church stands in so much need.” Shall we not seek this spring whose refreshment not only we ourselves personally so sorely need, but also the multitudes who spend their earnings for that which satisfies not?

“Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price.” Our Saviour’s Spirit beforehand moved the prophet to call thus like an auctioneer. Were ever such valuable holdings thus offered? In the fullness of time in a house of mourning He Himself said: “I am the resurrection of the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live.”

Christmas, Good Friday, Easter. The Incarnation, The Atonement, The Resurrection. The last of these is greatest in the sense that once the message of Easter obtains, the others follow. And more, for Easter is not the last of this series. Resurrection is followed by Ascension, Intercession, Procession (the gift of the Holy Spirit), Revelation, Manifestation, Restoration of all things.

Nor is Christmas the first in this indissoluble order. Jesus Christ had a past. God promised to Good News afore through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, concerning His Son, who was born of the seed of David, according to the flesh, who was demonstrated to be the Son of God in power according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead (Romans, first chapter).

We must go even further back, for this Son, who was promised by prophets, is He in whom were created all things in the heavens and upon the earth. He was in the beginning with God, and being the whole beaming image of God's glory, and the very expression of God's substance, He was God. He is the Alpha and the Omega with all the letters between. He is the first and the last, only begotten Son of God, and Ultimate Man.

The Resurrection Chapter of the Bible is First Corinthians, fifteenth. From the beginning, middle and end of it the words below are selected as fittingly concluding this Easter message.

“For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures.... But now hath Christ been raised from the dead.... For he must reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death.... Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

THE END



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