

## The Link between Heaven and Earth

Isaiah 6.

J. G. Bellett.

Christian Friend vol. 14, 1887, p. 80.

The link between heaven and earth has been signified from the beginning in various ways. Visions, dreams, and audiences, introducing the spirit of man to unseen regions, did this in their way. Angelic visits did it still more palpably. But more strikingly still, the appearances of the Son of God at all times; in patriarchal days very specially, but also in the days of the nation of Israel.

The translation of Enoch told of this link between heaven and earth; and so did that of Elijah, leaving behind him, as he became the heavenly man, his mantle, with its mystic virtues, for the use and endowment of one who was to know his place only in the earth.

Moses too called up to the elevation of the Lord of Israel, and there, as with the eye of the Lord, surveying the tribes of Israel - the citizens of the earth — beneath him. All this tells the same; and all this tells the nearness of these different regions of the divine presence. They are but the several parts of the same temple, and, though separated, it is but a veil that lies between. And all this in figure teaches the mystery, even "the mystery of His will, which He hath purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in Him."

But if the passage be short, the title to make it is simple. The link between heaven and earth is seen; the descending of the Prince of life, who is the Son of man, has made it so. But the link between the glory and the poor sinner is seen also, the blood of the same blessed One makes it so.

Isaiah is brought into the presence of the glory. The throne of the Lord is seen, and His train fills the temple, while the seraphim, with veiled faces, worship. Nature in the prophet is overwhelmed. He takes knowledge of the glory and of his own uncleanness, but of nothing else. This was nature, and it is nature still. Nature does not rise out of these thoughts, it comes short of the glory of God. It takes knowledge of the two things — the *divine presence*, and *our unfitness for it*, like Adam, but that is all, and the distance is felt to be infinite.

But there was an *altar* in the scene to which the prophet was led as well as a *throne*, and the Lord's train, and the seraphim, and the smoke that filled the place, and the angelic worship, but the prophet knew nothing about it; and yet its virtue was such that, in the twinkling of an eye, it links what had been felt to lie at infinite distances. The live coal touches his lips, and there is no longer any mention of his uncleanness, no longer any sense of distance, no dismay of soul, no amazement, but such full and entire liberty, that the prophet forgets himself altogether, save as one who was now *free to serve*. "By faith he is free, by love he is subject." "Here am I, send me," says the delivered prophet, having boldness in the holiest; for "by faith the Christian rises to God, by love he descends to man." These fine conditions of soul Isaiah here represents, and we learn in him, as in a figure, that there are links between the glory and the sinner which can stand and answer the shock and the trial which conscience and the law and the accuser may occasion. J. G. B.