

Rich in God.

J. G. Bellett.

Article 23 of 47 **Short Meditations**

(Cavenagh, 1866.)

It is well for us to acquaint ourselves with the many and deep and wondrous interests we have in God — as, for instance, in His *affections*, His *counsels*, and His *doings*. These things are taught and illustrated in Scripture.

Divine affections, Divine counsels, Divine doings, make us their object. Blessed to tell it. God's eternity that is past took knowledge of us, having been then chosen, predestinated, and written in the Book of Life. Time, in God's hand, in all its stages or successions, has concerned itself with us. God's eternity that is to come will owe much of its joy and glory to our history, to that which has been done, in abounding grace, for the redemption of us sinners.

Having chosen us ere the world was, He has been training us in the wisdom of His ways in all the ages of the world; and when the world is rolled up like a scroll, we shall still be an object. Heaven acquaints itself with our history — angels gather fresh light and joy from it; and the moral or result of it will be, the revelation and full display of the glory of God in all His manifold and infinite perfections for ever. What interests in God are these!

His *righteousness* is ours — as His *love* is ours. We are made "the righteousness of God," and with the love wherewith Christ is loved, we are loved.

People speak of their large and varied interests, their properties here and there; and they range in thought over these wealthy places, marking them well, and pleasing themselves with the clearness and sureness of their title to them. But do we survey in like delight, our possessions in God, as we have said — such as, in His affections; His counsels; His eternity, whether past or to come; in time as now under His hand and ordering; in His righteousness; in His works for us and His operations within us through His Son and by His Spirit; in the sufferings He has accomplished, and the glories He has won. What riches! What a blessed truth this is for the soul to seize upon!

The Epistle to the Romans, and to the Ephesians, among others, show us largely our interests in Divine counsels — John's Epistle shows us our interests in Divine affections. All Scripture tells us how God has been ministering to us in all His arrangements in the successive journeys that time has run, and the place we have already had, or shall have, in His *eternity*. And the Gospel preaches to us our interests in His *sufferings*, His *glories*, His *righteousness*, and the *operations of His Spirit*.

We get illustrations, as we get direct teaching, of these things. I would mark something of this, as we see it in Zechariah 3 and Luke 15 — in the prophetic parable of Joshua the High Priest, and in the Lord's parable of the Prodigal Son. There is kindredness in these parables, and yet characteristic difference in each.

Joshua represents us as having our interests in Divine counsels; the Prodigal, in Divine affections — though both of them are seen in the presence of a friend and of an accuser, as also going through the process that changes them from degradation to honour and joy.

But in Joshua we see no personal exercise. There is nothing shown us of a work of the power of God in him. Nor is there told us of any of the outgoings of the heart of the Father towards him. He is

simply the object of election, and of the work of the grace of God for him and in his behalf, (and that to a bright and marvellous degree,) while he himself has only to be passive, letting the Lord do for him and with him as seemeth Him good.

In the Prodigal, we see the work of the Spirit, the hidden, effectual virtue of the operation of God visiting and moving his soul, and turning him home, where a welcome awaits him under every form that the dearest and most thorough affection could suggest.

Indeed I might notice the narrative in John 8, in company with these parables — for there, the convicted one is in the presence of both an accuser and a friend, and is carried from the place of shame and danger to one of liberty and safety. But she is not declared to have been the object of counsels, nor is she shown as the object of affection; but the way of Christ in the Gospel is finely illustrated. Who is "blind" and "deaf" like the Lord on this occasion? — thus taking His place in the service of the grace of God to sinners, not imputing to men their trespasses. (See Isa. 42: 19; 2 Cor. 5: 19) These are illustrations of things taught us — our many and various interests in God. Divine counsels, Divine affections, Divine works and operations, make us their object. We are "rich in God."

Each one of the saints of God shares *all* these — but it is, thus, the way of Divine wisdom to illustrate the different parts of this our inheritance in God in different portions of His Word.

The saints will be rich in *circumstances* by-and-by, as now they are rich in God *Himself*. The kingdom will be established, "the world to come" will shine in its glories, and the saints shall be there. And the saints ought now to be rich *towards* God, as they are rich in Him, laying out their energies and their advantages, their talents, whatever such be, in His service — as Luke 12: 21 speaks.