

THE CATERPILLARS AND THE GOOSEBERRY-BUSH;

OR,

A TRUE FIGURE OF THE BAD PASSIONS AND
THEIR MISCHIEVOUS EFFECTS;

TOGETHER WITH

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THEIR ORIGIN AND CURE.

IN THREE DIALOGUES,

BETWEEN A FATHER AND HIS SON.

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YOUNG Samuel was about twelve years old, when, walking one fine May morning in his father's garden, he observed a favourite gooseberry-bush devoured by caterpillars: its green leaves were all eaten up by the rapacious plunderers, and no longer could administer to the growth of the fruit, which was now half formed, and for want of the protecting and nourishing leaves, was withering away and ready to fall to the ground. Samuel stood still, struck with equal surprise and concern at the unhappy fate of his favourite tree, the luscious flavour of whose excellent fruit in the foregoing year he had not forgotten. The tears began to trickle down his cheeks at the sight of the melancholy object, and, at the same time, it was plain to see, from his serious and thoughtful aspect, that many thoughts were at work in his mind concerning the *cause* which had so suddenly

blighted all his young hopes with the leaves and fruit of his beloved gooseberry-bush. Whilst he was thus musing, with a countenance of sorrow, over the destruction of his promised delights, his father, a venerable clergyman, approached the spot, and observing the disturbed looks of his child, inquired into the occasion of his disquietude.

Samuel.—I am grieved, father, at observing my favourite gooseberry-bush thus devoured by the greedy caterpillars, and I was thinking why God Almighty, who, you have so often told me, does every thing well, should have created such rapacious animals, and permitted them to devour the fruits of the ground.

Father.—I am equally concerned with you, my child, at the loss of my summer fruits, but I am rejoiced to find that it has been the occasion of leading your mind to reflect on that great and holy Being, whose name I have so frequently taught you to think upon with veneration.

Samuel.—I hope I shall ever be thankful for all the lessons of instruction which you have given me on the subject; but I fear I have been a bad scholar, if I may judge from the perplexity of my present thoughts, for I confess I am puzzled how to reconcile the destruction of my favourite tree with the ideas which you have suggested to me concerning the goodness of God.

Father.—God, my child, who *caused the light to shine out of darkness*, can give clearness to your perplexed thoughts, and enable you to see more distinctly the wisdom of His works, by the confusion and doubt in which they are now presented to your mind. Let me earnestly request you, therefore, never to cease to think upon God, and endeavour always to justify His providence, though your young mind may at times be puzzled with His counsels. Remember where it is written, "*My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the LORD.*" (Isaiah lv. 8.)



Samuel.—But it appears to me impossible that I should ever be able to comprehend the reason why God has made *caterpillars* to devour the fruits of the ground.

Father.—Be not in too great a hurry, my child, to decide upon possibilities and impossibilities. You are at present young, and many things that now perplex you may, by and by, become clear and satisfactory. What, for instance, if these caterpillars should have been designed of God to teach you a lesson of instruction and of caution respecting yourself?

Samuel.—But what lesson of either instruction or caution can caterpillars teach me?

Father.—The wise man, you know, sends the sluggard to be taught by the ant; "*Consider,*" says he, "*her ways, and be wise.*" (Prov. vi. 6.) And Jesus Christ admonishes His disciples to "*consider the ravens.*" (Luke xii. 24.) If, then, the ant can teach the sluggard a lesson of wisdom; and if the ravens can supply the disciples of Jesus Christ with a subject of consideration; how do you know but the caterpillars may teach you the same or a similar lesson, and supply you with a subject of consideration equally edifying?

Samuel.—I confess I cannot at present see what wisdom is to be learnt, or consideration supplied, from such mischievous and rapacious little animals, but if your better eyes can see it, I should esteem it a particular favour if you would endeavour to open mine to see it also.

Father.—What if the Almighty, my child, designed the caterpillars which devour the gooseberry-bush, as *figures* to remind you of, and to guard you against, *other caterpillars* which may devour yourself? Would you not think, in this case, that the caterpillars were reading you a lesson of wisdom?

Samuel.—I am at a loss to understand you, father. What is it you mean by the caterpillars that may devour

myself? Am I in any danger of being eaten up like this gooseberry-bush?

Father.—I mean what I say, my child, that the caterpillars which have devoured your favourite tree are but *figures* of those more terrible caterpillars which may devour you; and that, therefore, the Almighty shows Himself both wise and merciful, in permitting the former to remind and caution you concerning the latter.

Samuel.—You are surely not serious, father. What can you mean by one sort of caterpillars being the figures of another?

Father.—Rather, you are not sagacious, Samuel, or else you would have seen, before this time, that the caterpillars I allude to, are your own bad passions, corrupt tempers, and inclinations, which, if you are not upon your guard, will leave you as bare of the leaves and fruits of virtue, as the caterpillars have left your gooseberry-bush. Not that I would insinuate that you are worse than other boys of your age, for all boys have by nature their peculiar corruptions; nor yet would I argue that you are a bad boy, merely because you are born to bad propensities; for it is not the bad propensity which makes you bad, nor yet the good propensity which makes you good, but your cherishing and indulging it. All that I wish to observe is, that there are corrupt and rapacious principles in your mind, answering to the devouring and destructive spoilers of your gooseberry-bush, and tending to produce similar effects, but of a far more awful and tremendous sort.

Samuel.—Would you say, then, father, that I am like a tree or shrub, and that every bad passion, every corrupt temper and inclination, like a greedy caterpillar, eats my leaves and fruits?

Father.—Yes, my child, you are like a tree or shrub in this respect, that you are intended to bear

the immortal fruit of love towards God, and charity towards your neighbour; and as a preparation for bearing this blessed fruit, you are first to put forth the leaves and blossoms of heavenly science or knowledge in your understanding, without which the fruit of love and charity can never be formed and ripened. Every passion, temper, and inclination, therefore, which tends to obstruct your growth in heavenly wisdom, is like a greedy caterpillar,—it devours your leaves, and, in the end, destroys your fruit!

Samuel.—I must acknowledge, father, that I feel myself sometimes disposed to quarrel with people if they do not please me, and sometimes to bear malice and hatred in my heart when they provoke me. Sometimes I am impatient if I have not immediately what I want, and sometimes I am slothful and unthankful when my wants are satisfied. I was once angry with you because you would not indulge me in going to see a horse-race; I am often disposed also to be vain of my fine clothes, and to despise others who are not so well dressed as myself; and at the same time to envy those who are better clad and happier than myself.—Are these the caterpillars you allude to?

Father.—Yes, my child, whensoever you are disposed to quarrel, to bear malice and hatred in your heart, to be impatient, slothful, unthankful, disobedient to your superiors, vain, or envious at the prosperity of others, you may depend upon it the caterpillars of destruction are entering your garden, and about to devour the leaves and fruits of your choicest plants.

Samuel.—I hope, in future, through God's grace, which you have so often taught me to pray for, I shall be more on my guard against these terrible devourers. But you were saying, father, that the caterpillars on my gooseberry-bush are but *figures* of the caterpillars in my mind, and intended to be so by the Almighty. How am I to understand this?

Father.—I will answer your question some other opportunity, for I am now called to visit one of my parishioners who is lying on his deathbed, and therefore I shall leave you at present to reflect upon what you have already heard.

DIALOGUE II.

SAMUEL was very eager the next day to watch the time when his father went to take his usual walk in the garden, and observing him to go out at an early hour, he immediately followed him, and taking him by the hand, reminded him of the promise he had made at the close of the last conversation: upon this the venerable old man resumed his discourse as follows:—

Father.—Cannot you comprehend, my child, that the Almighty God is infinitely wise and good?

Samuel.—Yes, father, this I can comprehend.

Father.—Cannot you comprehend, therefore, that He must needs do every thing according to infinite wisdom and goodness?

Samuel.—Yes, this I can also see plainly.

Father.—Cannot you then as plainly perceive, that infinite wisdom and goodness must needs be manifest in all the works of GOD; in other words, that there is nothing in creation, whether animal or vegetable, which is not a form to exhibit to view the eternal principles from which it had birth, agreeably to the testimony of St. Paul, where he says, "*For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even HIS ETERNAL POWER AND GODHEAD.*" (Rom. i. 20)

Samuel.—I think I comprehend this also.

Father.—Cannot you see, then, plainly, that all things, in the outward creation, are *figures* of the internal things in which they originate, and intended by their Creator for the manifestation of those things unto man? Thus the sun in the firmament is a *figure* of the Sun of Righteousness, (Mal. iv. 2.) and intended to make manifest that Divine and Eternal Sun. The firmament, too, is itself a *figure* of the angelic heaven, and every bright star which enlightens and adorns its sphere is a *figure* of some angelic society. In like manner, all beautiful, useful, and innocent animals and vegetables, are *figures* of some heavenly graces and virtues, and intended to present them to man's mental view, and encourage him to cherish and to multiply them in his own bosom. Jesus Christ therefore calls his disciples *sheep and lambs*, (John x. 1—17, chap. xxi. 15, 16,) and the prophet, speaking of the spiritual graces which should abound in the church under the Gospel covenant, says, “*I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah-tree, and the myrtle, and the oil-tree; and I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the box-tree together.*” (Isa. xli. 19.) You are not, therefore, to suppose that GOD has made these plants and flowers in my garden for no other end than that we might admire their beautiful forms and colours, and be regaled by their perfumes, for GOD certainly intended them to teach us lessons of wisdom and of holiness, by leading us to behold Him and His operations in them; and therefore Jesus Christ says, “*Consider the lilies of the field how they grow.*” (Matt. vi. 28.)

Samuel.—I can very easily conceive, father, that GOD has made sheep and lambs, together with beautiful plants and flowers, as you say, to lead us to reflect on His goodness and wisdom, and to see Him in all His works: but I cannot so easily conceive this of wolves and tigers, of poisonous serpents and devouring caterpillars, or of thorns and briars; and therefore I could wish, father,

that you would instruct me why GOD made these terrible animals and plants, which cannot possibly be figures either of Him or the things of His kingdom?

Father.—But if they cannot, as you justly observe, be figures of GOD and of the things of His kingdom, they may be figures of the great enemy of GOD and of the things of his kingdom, and thus justify and demonstrate both the wisdom and the mercy of GOD in their creation.

Samuel.—I cannot see how a wolf, a serpent, a caterpillar, or a briar, can either justify or demonstrate the wisdom or the mercy of GOD.

Father.—Do not you allow that, by nature, there are many evil propensities both in yourself and all mankind?

Samuel.—Yes, I know from experience that they are in myself.

Father.—Will you not allow further, that whatsoever tends to show you the ugliness, to demonstrate the danger, and to excite in you a just horror at the consequences of those evil propensities, must needs be a great benefit and blessing to you?

Samuel.—Yes, this also I am disposed to grant.

Father.—What now if the Almighty GOD intended all mischievous animals and plants for these purposes? Would not you say, in this case, that GOD showed Himself both wise and merciful?

Samuel.—Assuredly. But what reason is there to suppose that GOD designed them for such purposes?

Father.—The very best reason of all others, namely, because in His own Word He Himself tells you so; for in His own Word He perpetually calls the evil propensities in man's heart by the names of various mischievous animals and noxious plants, and under those names both teaches you the deformity, and warns you of the dangerous and destructive consequences, of those propensities.

Samuel.—Be so kind, father, to point this out to me in some instances.

Father.—John the Baptist, you know, calls the Jews a generation of vipers; (Matt. iii. 7.) and JESUS CHRIST calls them both serpents and vipers. (Matt. xxiii. 33.) For the same reason you find king Herod called a fox, (Luke xiii. 32.) and all wicked and unbelieving people, wolves, (Matt. x. 16.) and in another place, tares, (Matt. xiii. 25, 38.) And, in general, the great adversary of man, the devil, or satan, is figured and described as a lion, (1 Pet. v. 8.) a wolf, (John x. 12.) a dragon and a serpent, (Rev. xii. 9.) Now it is impossible to assign a reason why the Jews should be called by GOD serpents and vipers, king Herod a fox, the wicked and unbelieving, wolves and tares, and the great adversary of man, a lion, a wolf, a dragon, and a serpent, but because of their evil propensities answering to the natures and propensities of those mischievous animals and plants; and hence, therefore, you may conclude that all evil propensities in man's heart are described by GOD under the figures of such animals and plants; and, consequently, that all mischievous animals and plants are such figures.

Samuel.—But would it not be better for the earth if it was without thorns and briars, and without hurtful birds, and beasts, and insects?

Father.—The question is not what would be better for the earth, but what would be better for its inhabitants, that is, for you and for me, and for all who dwell on the earth. And I am persuaded that you will agree with me in this, that if you, and I, and all mankind, have disorders in our minds, it is then better for us that those disorders should be made visible in things around us, as in the disorders of our bodies, in the disorders of the elements, such as storms, tempests, earthquakes, &c., and also in mischievous animals and plants, because when we see our mental disorders thus manifested to our bodily senses, we may be more upon our guard against them, and also discover more of their mischievous and destructive tendencies. For let me ask you, do you not feel

more alarmed at the sight of a snake, a lion, or a tiger, than at the thought of sin?

Samuel.—Yes, father, I confess I do.

Father.—Are you not more afraid also of bodily pain and disease than of any pain or disease in your mind?

Samuel.—I confess I am.

Father.—Does not a tempest, or an earthquake, likewise frighten you more when you observe them in the elements than when you only feel them excited in yourself by your passions?

Samuel.—Yes.

Father.—Is it not, then, an astonishing proof of God's mercy, that in the snake, the lion, the tiger, the bodily pain and disease, the tempest, and the earthquake, He has been pleased to teach you what you would not otherwise have so well known, namely, how terrible a thing sin is; in other words, how much to be dreaded is every disorderly passion, affection, inclination, and thought, since, if indulged in, they will produce the same dreadful effects in your mind or soul that the snake, the lion, the tiger, the bodily pain and disease, together with tempests and earthquakes, have a tendency to produce in your body?

Samuel.—Am I then to suppose that all bodily disorders are from sin, and intended to be figures of the effects and consequences of sin?

Father.—Yes, my child; we read of no sickness in Paradise, but when man became disobedient to his Maker, it was then said,—“*The Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance. Moreover He will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt; also every sickness and every plague which is not written in the book of this law.*” (Deut. xxviii. 59; 60.) And when Paradise shall be restored by a right reception of the gospel life and spirit, operating to the removal of all

the disorders of sin in men's minds, then, there is every reason to suppose, sickness and pain will be banished again from their bodies; and man will recover, at the same time, both spiritual and corporeal health. JESUS CHRIST, therefore, the great Physician both of mind and body, in healing the distempers of the latter, meant to demonstrate His power to heal also those of the former; and when He gave His apostles authority to cure all manner of sickness and disease, He intended to teach mankind this edifying lesson, that the reception of His life, and spirit, and doctrine, in their hearts, was the most effectual method of extirpating all infirmity and distemper from their constitutions. You have reason, therefore, to be ever thankful to your Heavenly Father, that, by the pains and diseases of your body, He thus perpetually admonishes you concerning the more terrible pains and diseases which sin has a tendency to introduce into your soul or spirit.

Samuel.—I thank you, father, for thus instructing me concerning the nature and use of bodily distempers, for I have often wondered whence they came, and why they were permitted by a merciful God so cruelly to punish and torment us; but I now plainly see that they were intended to do us good, by leading us to serious reflection about the great original disorder of sin, and I hope, that henceforth, whensoever I have the headache, or any other complaint in my body, I shall not fail to remember what you have told me on the subject.

Father.—I hope so, too, my child; and that you will henceforth be enabled to see that your Heavenly Father has, of infinite mercy, permitted all natural evils, such as sickness, pain, famines, earthquakes, storms, tempests, together with all the varieties of mischievous and unclean animals and plants, to instruct you and all mankind concerning the nature, varieties, and tendencies of spiritual evils, and to excite in you a greater horror at their consequences. It is, indeed, to be lamented, as well as to

be wondered at, that men in general are blind to these uses of all natural figures, so that they see little or nothing but the outsides of things: but I trust that you, my son, will see with better eyes, and that henceforth, when you behold either animals or plants, or any other parts of the visible creation, you will not be content with looking only on their outward forms, but consider diligently and attentively what they are within, and what their outward forms thus speak to you in the language of figure. When you look at the sun, for instance, let the wonderful object which you behold lead you to reflect on the Sun of Righteousness. When you survey the firmament and the stars, learn to extend your view through them to those angelic societies which they were designed to figure and make manifest to you. In short, whatsoever object of outward creation affects your bodily senses, let it not affect your bodily senses alone, but serve to awaken in your mind reflections of wisdom, and sentiments of devotion towards the Great Creator. All outward things will thus become your daily instructors, by leading you to distinguish between good and evil, between wisdom and folly; whilst, at the same time, they are so many glasses, in which you may behold either the eternal things of the kingdom of God, which you are called to love and cherish, or the eternal things of the kingdom of darkness, which you are called to hate and reject. Thus, too, the creatures, as they were intended, will be to you as the ladder which the patriarch Jacob saw in a vision, *"which was set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven, and behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it;"* (Gen. xxviii. 12.) and then, too, you will be able to ascend and descend with the angels on this wonderful ladder, because every thing which your eyes see will be the means of elevating your heart to God, and of bringing down God and His blessings nearer to you.

DIALOGUE III.

A FEW days after the last conversation with his father, Samúel rose early one morning to water his young aurículas, and had been employed some time, when his father observing him, approached the spot, and wished him a good morrow.

Samuel.—I got up early this morning, father, to water my aurículas, for since your last discourse with me in the garden, I find that I take greater pleasure than ever in looking at my plants and flowers, for I now endeavour, as you told me, to look through them, whilst I am looking at them, and thus to see the living and eternal things of which you say they are the *figures*. In this pink, therefore, and this rose, I now discover uses and beauties which I could not see before; because I now discover in them something of Heaven and heavenly life, which they present, continually, both to my sense of smelling and of seeing, and which they invite me so sweetly to cherish in myself. The caterpillars, too, are now become my instructors, by leading me to attend to those more terrible caterpillars in my own mind which they were designed, as you say, to call to my recollection. But still there is one thing which puzzles me, and which I was just thinking of when I saw you approach, and I should esteem it a particular favour if you could satisfy me on the subject, as you have already done concerning the destroyers of my gooseberry-tree.

Father.—I trust you will always find me ready and willing, Samuel, to answer all your inquiries, because nothing can be more delightful to your father than to guide you in the paths of wisdom and of virtue. Tell me, therefore, at once, what is the difficulty that perplexes you?

Samuel.—I can easily conceive, since you have explained it to me, that God intends the caterpillars in my garden to remind me of the caterpillars in my mind, and that therefore the former caterpillars are the effects and productions of the latter. But what at present puzzles me is to conceive whence the caterpillars in my mind first had birth, or how it came to pass that so many evil tempers, affections, and inclinations, are alive within me. Am I to suppose that they are all from God?

Father.—No, my child; for you know it is written, that when "*God saw every thing that He had made, behold it was very good;*" (Gen. i. 31) and therefore it is impossible that there could be any mixture of evil at that time in the works of God.

Samuel.—I cannot conceive, then, whence, or how, evil came, if it did not come from God.

Father.—There are many things, my child, which at present you are not capable of apprehending, and this concerning the origin of evil is one; but I hope, as your understanding acquires strength by growing in heavenly wisdom, you will be enabled to see this more distinctly. It will be sufficient for you at present to know, that your evil tempers, affections, and inclinations, are not from God, but from God's enemy, that is, the devil, as JESUS CHRIST teaches in the parable of the tares and wheat, when He says that "*the enemy who sowed the tares is the devil,*" (Matt. xiii. 39.) and as it is written concerning our first parents in paradise, that they were seduced by the serpent, (Gen. iii. 1, 13.) that is, the devil.

Samuel.—But why did God give power to His enemy, the devil, to seduce our first parents, and to fill them and their children with corrupt inclinations?

Father.—God, my child, created our first parents free, either to serve Him or His enemy, and if He had not so created them, they would not have been

men, but machines. They had, therefore, the power either to love GOD or not to love Him, either to think of GOD or not to think of Him, either to obey GOD or not to obey Him, and it was in consequence of abusing this power that they fell into evil, lost Paradise, and communicated their corruptions to all the generations of their children. GOD, therefore, did not give His enemy power over man either to deceive or hurt him, but man, by forsaking GOD, lost the divine power in himself, which was intended for his preservation, and, of necessary consequence, became subject to the power of sin and the devil, from which the grace and power of GOD would have continually preserved him.

Samuel.—Would all mankind, then, have remained still in Paradise, if our first parents had continued to love and serve GOD as they were created to do?

Father.—Yes, my child, it is sin alone which keeps us out of Paradise, as it was sin alone which first expelled our original parents, and whensoever sin is again banished from the world, then Paradise will be again restored.

Samuel.—I wish our first parents had never sinned, for then we should all have been good and happy, and then there would have been no caterpillars either to hurt me or my gooseberry-trees.

Father.—You may be good and happy still, and drive all the caterpillars away, if it is not your own fault, notwithstanding the sin of your first parents, and notwithstanding all your own corrupt inclinations and propensities.

Samuel.—Is it possible I should be good and happy whilst I have corrupt inclinations and propensities about me?

Father.—Your corrupt inclinations and propensities will not make you less good, as I hinted in a former conversation, if you do not cherish them; and since

God gives you the power not to cherish them, therefore, as I said, it is your own fault if you are not still good and happy by loving and serving God as your first parents were intended to do. It is your own fault, too, if you do not re-enter into Paradise, and dwell in the happy garden, and eat of the fruit of the *tree of life*, and *live for ever*; for Paradise is still near you, notwithstanding the sin of your first parents, and notwithstanding the corruptions also which they have entailed upon you, and you may find Eden, and will find it, whensoever you are in earnest to oppose your corruptions, agreeably to the words of JESUS CHRIST, where He says, "*To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.*" (Rev. ii. 7.) You see, therefore, that the great thing that concerns you, is to *overcome* your corrupt tempers, affections, and inclinations.

Samuel.—I am rejoiced to hear that Paradise is so near me, and that I may eat of *the tree of life* whensoever I am disposed; but still I am afraid I shall never be able to *overcome* my bad passions, tempers, and inclinations.

Father.—You will never be able to overcome them whilst you are *afraid*; and, therefore, you must learn to be of good courage, and put your trust in God, who will not fail to give you His grace to help your infirmities, whensoever you sincerely ask it of Him, and in His grace there is omnipotence, and through that omnipotence you may do all things.

Samuel.—How may I be assured that God will give me His grace?

Father.—God, my child, since the fall of our first parents, has given abundant promises unto mankind, that He will assist with His grace, or Holy Spirit, all such as sincerely ask it of Him, with a desire to subdue their evil propensities, that they may love Him above all things, and their neighbour as themselves, and thereby

fulfil all His righteous and holy will. Immediately after the first transgression, therefore, He declared to the serpent, "*I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; IT SHALL BRUISE THY HEAD, AND THOU SHALT BRUISE HIS HEEL.*" (Gen. iii. 15.) The seed of the woman, here spoken of, is manifestly that GREAT SAVIOUR whose name is JESUS CHRIST, who is "GOD manifest in the flesh," to give all men power to become the sons of GOD, to recover Paradise, and attain eternal life. In this great manifested God, therefore, if you believe in Him, and keep His commandments, you may depend upon always finding a supply of divine grace and power to overcome your corruptions.

Samuel.—Am I, then, to trust in JESUS CHRIST, that He will preserve me from the caterpillars in my mind by His omnipotence?

Father.—Yes, my child; but then you are to remember, that JESUS CHRIST cannot preserve you from your caterpillars unless you work together with Him for their destruction, in like manner as you cannot preserve your gooseberry-tree but by first destroying the greedy plunderers. Now, as the sure way to save your gooseberry-tree would have been to pluck off the caterpillars as soon as they appeared, and to have cast them to the ground, and trampled them under foot, so the only sure way to save yourself is to do the same by your caterpillars.

Samuel.—But how am I to pluck them off my tree, and cast them to the ground, and trample them under foot?

Father.—Whensoever you feel in yourself any bad passion at work, or any corrupt temper and inclination, you must regard it as an infernal caterpillar, because JESUS CHRIST has declared it to be so, and you must further look and pray unto JESUS CHRIST for His grace to enable you to hate and abominate it, and the more

you hate and abominate it, the more you will cast it to the ground, and trample it under foot; for what you hate and abominate, you may depend upon it, makes no part of you, but is cast out; whereas what you love and cherish, must for ever remain with you, notwithstanding all the grace and power of JESUS CHRIST labouring to remove it.

Samuel.—But I have heard some people say, that the blood of JESUS CHRIST is sufficient of itself to wash me from my sins, and that, therefore, I need only rely on that blood and I shall be altogether perfectly clean from every evil.

Father.—You have often heard it said, too, and with truth, that nothing but water can make your body clean from filth; but do you conclude, from hence, that it is sufficient only to rely upon water for this purpose? Is it not necessary that you should wash yourself with the water, and exert the powers which God has given you for that end?

Samuel.—Yes, to be sure; the water will not wash me clean of itself unless I use it.

Father.—Cannot you see, then, in like manner, that the blood of JESUS CHRIST will not make you clean of itself unless you use it?

Samuel.—But how can I wash myself in the blood of JESUS CHRIST?

Father.—The blood of JESUS CHRIST, my child, is not, as some vainly suppose, only the *material* blood which was shed upon the cross, but it is an expression, used in the Sacred Scriptures, to denote His whole life, and spirit, and word, and sufferings, and death, and example; and therefore JESUS CHRIST said to His disciples—“*Now ye are clean through THE WORD which I have spoken unto you,*” (John xv. 3.) which is the same thing as if He had said, Now ye are clean through *My blood*. But as the disciples were made clean through the word of their Divine Master, only because they had

kept it in their hearts and lives, cherishing His life, guiding themselves by His spirit, and imitating His example, in like manner you can never hope to be clean through the blood of JESUS CHRIST, but by doing the same. And in this sense it is, that you are to wash yourself in His blood, or, as He Himself expresseth it, to *drink His blood*; (see John vi. 35, 54.) for to drink His blood is to incorporate it into your own life, and this you cannot do but by purifying yourself through it, that is, through the Word of JESUS CHRIST, from all your own corruptions; for thus were His disciples made clean.

Samuel.—Does drinking the blood of JESUS CHRIST, then, mean the same as believing in Him, and keeping His Word or commandment?

Father.—Yes, my dear child; the Word or commandment of JESUS CHRIST is the divine, the living, and eternal Truth proceeding from Him, teaching you that He is the GREAT and ONLY GOD of HEAVEN and EARTH, and the ONLY GIVER of ETERNAL LIFE; and teaching you, further, what things you ought to shun, as evil and infernal, because contrary to Him; and what you ought to love and cherish, as good and heavenly, because of Him, from Him, and agreeable to Him. In proportion, therefore, as you keep this Word and commandment in your heart and life, by believing in JESUS CHRIST as the GREAT and ONLY TRUE GOD, and by shunning all evils because they are contrary to Him, and loving, thinking, and doing, all that is good, because it is of Him, and leads to conjunction with Him, in the same proportion you *drink the blood* of this GREAT SAVIOUR GOD, and are cleansed thereby from all sin, and created anew in all holiness. Therefore, my child, take the advice of a father who loves you, and let it be your wisdom, through every part of your future life, *to cease to do evil, and learn to do well*, believing in JESUS CHRIST, and cherishing in your heart and life His Holy Spirit, together with all His holy precepts, words,

and commandments. Remember that repentance and faith can never be separated without destroying both; *Repent, therefore, and believe the Gospel*, and then the God of the Gospel will be your God, and will be always present with you, and will make your spiritual garden, with all its trees and plants, to flourish and bear their proper fruits; for then His sun will continually shine upon you, and He will water you with rain out of Heaven, and thus He will do with you as He did with your first parents, He will "*take you and put you into the garden of Eden, to dress it and keep it.*" (Gen. ii. 15.) and you will find Paradise restored, and with the destruction of your caterpillars, you will see fulfilled in yourself, to your unspeakable joy, the divine promise, where it is written of Zion, "*I will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord.*" (Isaiah li. 3.) AMEN.



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