

The Old and New.

The natural and the spiritual, both, are elements of God's plan. Some make too much of the one and some too much of the other. If we would keep balanced we should carefully avoid extremes. First the natural and afterward the spiritual, is God's law of development, both of dispensations and persons; and the natural is first also in the sense that the spiritual grows out of it – not developed by the power of the natural itself, but by the power of the spiritual, with which the natural is impregnated. In God's order there can be no spiritual without first the natural, hence the spiritual is in one sense dependent on the natural. This gives us a clear application of the principles: "The elder shall serve the younger," spoken concerning Esau (the elder) and Jacob (the younger). Gen. 25:23. They were twins; and thus intimately related, clearly represent the relation between the natural and the spiritual, Esau, as the natural, first, and afterward Jacob.

The Jewish and Gospel dispensations stand so related to each other. As Esau for pottage sold Jacob his birthright and Jacob received the blessing of the firstborn, so natural Israel by desiring only the things adapted to an earthly condition, lost the kingdom, and it is given to another nation – the Gospel church – the true Israel of God. But the Gospel church grew out of the Jewish; the remnant saved being the nucleus around which the Gospel church was gathered. Christ, his apostles and all the remnant were Jews, they received the Holy Spirit and became the light beams to the Gentiles: "Salvation is of the Jews." John 4:22. The natural is the elder, but the elder serves the younger.

The natural and the spiritual are related thus to each other in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, reckoning from the beginning

of his earthly life. As one born of the flesh (the natural) he was natural, but when he was born from the dead by the Spirit he was spiritual, and he is our Leader in the order of development. This order, in Christ is the key to the whole plan, and is the basis of Paul's statement concerning our resurrection. "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." 1 Cor. 15:44,46. The natural could not of itself become spiritual, neither could there be the spiritual, in God's order without "First the natural." The natural or "vile body" changed becomes the glorious body; changed by the power of the Spirit indwelling. Rom. 8:11 and Phil. 3:21.

The relation of the grub and the butterfly is a good illustration of the Christian in his two stages of existence. It is first the grub and afterward the butterfly, the grub changing into a butterfly on account of the butterfly nature which the grub possesses. So when a man has the Divine or spiritual nature, in due time he will "bear the image of the heavenly," a glorious form, (1 Cor. 15:49). But a mere natural man has no germ of the spiritual, and hence he needs a Saviour – he needs the life giving power of the Second Adam.

Adam was a mere natural man and in harmony with this fact was on trial only for natural life, which the typical tree could prolong. There is no intimation in the bible that spirituality or immortality was placed before him as of possible attainment. If it be said, "God's plan cannot change, and therefore God intended from the first that man should develop from the natural to the spiritual." I answer by admitting the premises, and urging in consequence that God intended that man should receive spiritual life by the Second Adam. As man had only natural life when created, a redeemed or ransomed life can only be natural; and as a naturally dead man can not develop into spiritual life, man needs a Redeemer, and must either be actually redeemed if dead, or counted redeemed if under sentence, in order to receive the spiritual life. We may thus be able

to see great light and beauty in the fact that in Christ are combined both the natural and the spiritual, for man needs a Redeemer from the curse "Dying thou shalt die," and also a spiritual Life-giver. We are compelled to believe that Christ is man's Redeemer from natural death, because He gave his natural life (Gr. psuchee) a ransom for the many; and natural life could not redeem spiritual life nor spiritual redeem the natural, as the law requires "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." But we are asked was it not God's plan to raise man from natural death? We answer, yes; but it was as much his plan to raise them by a Redeemer, as to raise them at all, or as it was his plan to give men spiritual life by the Second Adam. It is evidently a part of the plan to save or deliver man from the natural death, and so far at least God saves the old man. It seems to us a misapprehension of the relation between the natural and the spiritual, that leads to the idea that there is no provisions for the salvation of the old man. If God raises the dead "distinct from Christ," or without a Redeemer, he saves them without a provision; but even with this view, the recovery of the natural man from natural death in order to give him spiritual life is as much a necessity as in our view, that God saves men by a Redeemer. It seems strange that any one should say that God has made no provision to save the natural man. Pray tell us who needs saving if not poor lost, sinful mortal man. The spiritual man needs no Saviour; he is the saved man. To restore is to save from death; in this sense he saves all mankind. To give spiritual life is to save by preventing the second death. "On such the second death hath no power." "Neither can they die any more." Rev. 20:6 and Luke 20:36.

This is the great, the special salvation and is to believers only; and the principle involved is, THE OLD MADE NEW. If God does not save the old man he saves nobody. And if the new creation does not consist in making the old man new, by the power of the spirit, then our glorified Saviour is not the man Christ Jesus who went

about doing good; who learned to sympathize with his brethren, because "he was tried in all points like as we are;" and who gave himself a ransom for all, by his obedience unto death; and was therefore highly exalted. Phil. 2:8,9. If he does not save the old man by making him new, then there is neither resurrection nor change – the putting on of immortality. The butterfly may or may not remember his grub life, but as he flutters in the air with his beautiful form and gaudy dress, he is the very same creature that once wallowed in the soil of earth.

Our change will indeed be great, well may it be called a "New Creation;" (to form anew or give a new form.) "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." 1 Jno. 3:2. We would doubtless be greatly surprised could we in vision see ourselves in glory: these vile bodies changed, and fashioned like unto his glorious body; but no one need be afraid of losing his identity. When we look back, and realize what God hath wrought in redeeming out of every kindred, and in making us Kings and Priests, well may we then exclaim: "Oh death where is thy sting, Oh grave where is thy victory. Thanks be unto God that giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." And as Jesus by the memory of his suffering can sympathize with the sorrowing and the tempted, so will we by the trials which we have overcome, be prepared with him to share in the administration of power, to succor and bless the nations of Earth in the millennial day.

All hail, to our mighty Redeemer and Friend;
Who saves the redeemed to a life without end.
In thy kingdom of glory, may we share with the few
In bringing mankind from the old to the new.

J. H. P.