

BIBLE LESSON XXXV.

Ezekiel 4:9

SPIRITUAL IDEAS

This lesson was written down by Ezekiel as concerning the miracle-working nature of God. He hereby shows what is quite true, viz., that you do not have to deserve great and unexpected blessings before getting them. They are likely to be showered down on heathen-minded people (those who know nothing of spiritual ideas); on carnal-minded people (those who know that there are spiritual teachings, but they like money and food and clothes better); on hard-hearted people (those who care for nothing and nobody), and upon the spiritually-inclined alike.

The law of cause and effect deal with the fruits of thoughts. "He that createth the fruit of the lips." The grace and mercy and bounty of God transcend law. You will receive all these anyhow. It is a great rest for the mind to know that it is blessed with some wonderful gifts whether it deserves them or not, and that it is likely to have splendid signs of the good bounty of Jehovah any minute.

Pious people have often regretted this mystery, but they have not been able to stop it. They verily have wished that the sun did not shine quite so brightly on the circus tent

as on the camp-meeting, but it did. They have often wished that such gambling and speculating kinds of people did not get all the money and things, but they did. Sometimes quite undesirable kinds of folks have been empowered to do beautiful healing, while the highly moral have been slow at such "works." No matter how exasperating to those who think they ought to be rewarded for being better than their neighbors, it still keeps on.

Ezekiel feels the transcendently-good God speaking through him in this lesson, as, "I will call for the corn and I will lay no famine upon you, not for your sakes, but that they shall know that I am the Lord."

All good things, from shoes to synagogues, from the Gospel to the baby's prattle, are from the Lord.

Such a rest to know you do not have to be good in order to get good things. So the father and mother who refuse the boy his breakfast or dinner of supper or bed because he has been naughty are far, far from God-like.

Such a rest to know that the ravens and robins do not have to pray and praise and have faith in some kind of a god in order to get their breakfast. The good Father feeds and suns and warms them whether they praise and pray or not.

This is what makes God the Lord so beautiful. He asks you to merit nothing. There is a law of cause and effect whereby, if one keeps refusing good, he need not have it by and by, as, for instance, the mind refuses honor, integrity, and the respect of friends, so

he need not have them; but these blessings are scattered thickly. He may keep throwing away his money and home until they are gone, but he had them sent to him whether he deserved them or not.

Anybody may expect wonderful miracles of good any moment. One may be so hardened in heart that his neighbors are afraid of him and suddenly have a "heart of flesh" come into him as he tells here.

Just at the moment when he feels hardest the lightning of spirit makes a rift in the mental sphere round him and he sees how good God is (not how angry He is) and suddenly loves Him. Just when the heart is most bitter and despairing a rift is made in the cloud of ideas, and the tenderness and mercy of God (not His hardness and absence) are realized, and love and adoration quicken us. It is no use to try to scare people into being good for the sake of the rewards of goodness. Rewards do not come for being good. The stake, the rack, the jail, public scorn have always been doled out to those who have urged being good for the sake of the rewards of goodness.

Come, let us tell how bountifully indulgent God is – how He is love, whether we love or not; how He feeds, whether we praise or not; how He clothes, whether we pray or not; how He inspires us with genius, whether we have faith in Him or not. The constant description of the goodness and bounty, and mercy and tenderness, and love of God has the most marvelous effect upon the atmosphere. The

cold, feeling mind alone in some splendid room, suddenly feels the vibrating mental messages and is moved with compassion. "I love Thee for Thy goodness; forgive me. I will help my brother's children whom I have ignored. Help me to be merciful and kind."

Nobody had need to preach about how that cold, unfeeling mind had stiffened the joints, and show the rigor of cause and effect in order to heal them. They are now healed.

Ezekiel here gives one of those "treatments" to the captive Jews which, if we will read over often, will hasten the loosing of the bonds of captivity for all the earth. All men will feel their minds break open and warm at such mental messages. We might cross out his ideas of remembering our badness and "loathing our sinfulness," for God, you know remembers nothing. "Their sins will I remember no more against them forever." "They shall forget misery as waters that pass away."

All those prophets of ancient times were tinged more or less with their past teachings. Shake off everything that you have been taught. Stop remembering anything. It is one of the best practices you can undertake. Forget everything purposely for a few minutes every day. When you come to recollection again what do you suppose you will remember? That which is good. Try it. Try again. Keep it up for years. It is natural for you to remember only just the good. It is artificial to remember the bad. You must be very world-taught if you cherish the past, and

so forgetting on purpose may be the only healing practice you need. If you are in trouble and have tried many ways to get out, sit down and forget everything, good, bad and indifferent. The nature of your mind unclothed by ideas is clear with intelligence, bold with understanding, able with right action.

Success and prosperity are your divine nature. The ideas that you are clothed with are very unnecessary. Strip yourself of them at once. Carlyle said that the ideas we are clothed with are "a shadow system gathered round over me."

Ezekiel here holds up a few of his old pieces of his old shell, a few rags of his old teachings, which we will draw our pencil through, for as God never said any such thing we have no time to waste believing that we have to be hunting up how bad we used to be.

There was a man in India four years ago who could cause you to forget everything. He could hold you still in the cleansing solution of forgetfulness till you should touch mind to mind with God. Then suddenly you would spring from this mental "bath" (such as Ezekiel speaks of here), and every bone, muscle, nerve, convolution, would be smiling and dancing with health. Every thought would be entranced with its own beauty and wisdom.

People flocked to him to be healed. One woman spoke to God in such a fashion that she forgot everything except His presence and was cured of dropsy by so doing.

This washing and cleansing that Ezekiel promises we are all to have at last along with Jewry, are simply forgetting everything which the man had such a knack at making people do. Have you ever tried forgetting everything? No. Then it is time you tried it. If you are very busy all day, take the time just as you are about to sleep at night. Think nothing – nothing, on purpose. Sleep will help you. Sleep is an effort on your part to forget. Descartes, the Frenchman, learned to forget when his mind was just loaded with items. So can you.

Of course you will find written in indelible characters the good and so when you first open your eyes in the morning there will be a thought of “something good is coming to me.”

If you are awake in the night, practice forgetting. People are always kept awake in the night for their own good. “The Lord holdeth mine eyes waking.” Their whole affairs can be managed by night thoughts. By day they are tangled with other people’s ideas. By night they are alone with God. God is their friend. “There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.” Talk with this friend. Tell Him all your needs. Tell Him your plans no matter how bad your purposes are. Tell God with whom you lie awake.

Wisdom and greatness will awake in the morning with you. If you have changed your plans by morning you will still be successful. By this lesson you may know that you never made any mistakes. God was your past.

"I am Alpha." By this you may know that you never can make any mistakes. God is your future. "I am Omega." By this you may know that nothing can hurt you.

"My presence shall go with thee." By this you may not think that it is by any fault of yours at all that you have evils fallen upon you. And it will be no virtue of yours that your blessings come to recognize, "Not for your sakes."

This God who asks nothing and does all is the kind to describe to make the airs warm and the earthquakes cease; the heavens drop down kindness to every creature whether he deserves it or not, and violence to cease forever; the winds to bring you good news from a far country and youth to come again to your wasted heart: home to fold you round and right words to distil as dew from your lips. It is not the deserts of the Jews but their being that is blessed.

It is not your worthiness (praise be to the true God) but the fact of your being that shall cause you to feel this treatment of Ezekiel in its fullness. The planet is being treated to forget. The nations are being treated to forget. So the planet will cease from cyclones and the nations from carnage. "Nature abhors a vacuum." When you forget you are a vacuum, what do you suppose wishes to kiss your divine nature if freed from its memories? All good wishes toward you. What do you suppose will wish to kiss you if you forget the good and forget the good only? Why more bad things, of course, will hasten to greet their

own. So it is well to forget everything. At the uncovered center is God. God is good! And thus, "Lo! My own shall come to me."

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