

GOD'S JEWEL CASE

by James H. McConkey

God's Jewel Case

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places IN CHRIST" (Eph. 1:3).

Suppose some great king were to lead you into his treasure house. From room to room he takes you, showing you his treasures. By and by he comes to the jewel room. There upon their velvet cushions flash gems of costliest kind. He picks up a gold jewel case of fabulous price and exquisite beauty. Then he begins to fill it. He moves from case to case, selecting as he moves the choicest jewel flashing from its resting place. He picks up the most beautiful pearl and drops it into the gold jewel case. He chooses a blood red garnet of enormous size and drops that in. He takes a flashing amethyst and adds that to the contents of the case. One by one he takes the most beautiful and precious specimen of each gem he possesses and lets it fall into the jewel box. At the last he lays hand upon the most magnificent diamond in the treasure house; puts it into the jewel case; snaps shut the lid and hands you the golden case with all its precious contents. All his

gracious and splendid gifts to you are now in that one case. When he gives that he bestows upon you all he has for you. It is all in the jewel case, and is now all yours because you have the case.

So it is in the spiritual realm. *Jesus Christ is, as it were, God's precious jewel case. All His priceless treasures He has hidden in Him.* Do you long for forgiveness of sins? "In Him we have forgiveness." Is your soul burdened for redemption from the dark shadow of eternal death? "In Him we have redemption, through His blood." Would you know the peace of God which floods the redeemed soul and drives out forever the fever of its fear and soul-unrest? "He is our Peace." In Him God has placed that priceless jewel too, for you to know in its fullness when you receive Him. Accepting Jesus Christ as your Saviour is simply taking Him as God's all-comprehensive jewel case and treasure house. The rest of your Christian life will be a process of discovering and appropriating all the priceless jewels which God has placed in Him "in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."

First—

*In Him Is the Precious Jewel of
FORGIVENESS*

The Holy Spirit seems to exhaust language to describe the completeness and preciousness of remission and forgiveness of sins in Christ Jesus. "In whom we have redemption, **the forgiveness of our sins**" runs the glad tidings of

the blessed Book. And that same Spirit turns this priceless jewel over and over again that the convicted soul may see all the flashing facets of beauty and comfort which the Spirit of Truth has there revealed. For example the sins of him who takes Christ as his own sin-bearer are said to be—

Cast into the Depths of the Sea

"Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:19).

As a child you have stood by the banks of the tiny brook which rippled through the meadow. How shallow it is! The stream is but a film of water. The depths are but shoals. In those shallows all things are open and revealed. Every grain of sand is bare. Each bit of shining mica is as clear as if in the open. Every tiny pebble is uncovered. Nothing in the shallows is hidden. Somewhat after this fashion do we too often view God's covering of our sins. It is as though He had cast them only into the shallows. But this is not where God in His grace has put them. For the Holy Spirit says of them, *"Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea."* And why has He chosen this figure? Just what does it signify? When we were college boys, our old professor used to tell us of a spot in the sea off our western coast which was five miles deep. Think of a solid mile of depth. Then add another mile to that. Then double this, and finally climax it with another mile on top of these four. Five miles in depth! Into those almost fathomless deeps

nothing which sinks ever comes back. All is shrouded in dense and impenetrable darkness. No eye can pierce into those black deeps of the ocean. No ray of light illumines the darkness. No message ever comes back from that which is swallowed up in this abyss. And into such a gulf of oblivion has God cast all the sins of those who accept His Son as their sin-bearer. *In Christ* His work of remission of sins is complete. Not as into the shallow depths of the brook which murmurs through the field and valley where the eye can rest upon them and the heart grieve for them, has He cast them. Nor does it please His heart of love, nor do honor to the riches of His grace that we should sorrow over them as though they were still upon our own hearts and staining our own innermost souls. But as into sea depths shrouded by a veil of impenetrable darkness did He cast them when He put them far away
IN CHRIST.

"Blotted Out As a Cloud"

"I have blotted out. . . as a cloud thy sins" (Isaiah 44:22).

There are invisible inks, so-called, with which you may write a message upon a sheet of paper. For a while the message stands out plain and clear. Then it fades away completely, and becomes invisible even to the keenest eye. It has been blotted out. But it is only seeming. For when you hold the paper up before the fire the message comes back again to its original

form. Of that which had been apparently wholly blotted out every sentence, every word, stands out in outline black and sharp as when it was first written. Even so are all our self efforts to blot out the record of past sins. For a while we may seem to succeed. A steadfast will, a mind busy with the things of the world, a heart engrossed in its gaieties—a score of other things may for the whole drive out the memory and the record of them in our own conscience. But the blotting out is only seeming. And under the fires of remorse and the burnings of an awakened conscience they come back again, like the faded writing, to stare us in the face and plague us with the realization of our utter failure and inability to put away even the memory of sin, much less its conscience, its guilt.

But what we cannot do, even in mind, God does perfectly and in reality. In Christ Jesus He blots out the guilt of sin "as a cloud." And what does that mean? Doubtless that our transgressions are as a cloud in their number and blackness. But may we not see in the figure the Holy Spirit uses this other and beautiful thought, that God blots out our sins as He blots out the cloud?

Have you ever watched the blotting out of a cloud from God's heaven? Perhaps it was after the summer thunder shower. You stood and watched to see how the great black cloud would be blotted out from the sky which it was veiling from your sight. First, there came a small patch of blue sky between the rifts in the

cloud. Then another and another. And as the blue flecks multiplied the black patches grew smaller and fewer. By and by the cloud was gone, swallowed up in mid-heaven, and you were gazing once more upon the smiling, fleckless blue sky, flooded with the glory of the sunshine, and without a cloud-spot even as big as a man's hand.

But here is the marvel of that vanished cloud. *It never returns.* You will never see the same cloud again. It has vanished forever from God's sky. And in choosing this figure to tell us how our sins have been blotted out in Christ, the Holy Spirit has chosen the most perfect picture imaginable of the completeness and absoluteness with which the guilt of our past sins has been obliterated in Christ Jesus. IN HIM is remission of sins and when we receive Him that remission becomes ours to the unspeakable peace and joy of our once sin-burdened hearts.

This sea-depth burial of our sins; this blotting out of them forever as a cloud is swallowed up in the sky; this blessed forgetfulness of them-by a gracious and loving God—all this is IN CHRIST. When we receive Him we receive it all and soon come to know the conscious joy and blessedness of it in experience.

In Christ Is the Precious Jewel of
REDEMPTION

"In whom we have redemption through His blood" (Eph. 1:7).

The Passover lamb was a great type of

redemption. All the first-born of the Egyptians were condemned to death. But there was a way of escape for the Hebrew first-born. A lamb was taken and slain. The blood was sprinkled on the door posts and lintels. Under that blood the Hebrew was safe. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you," was God's word of safety. In the lamb was redemption from death for the imperiled one. So in Christ is redemption for those who trust in Him. He is our pass-over. "In Him we have redemption through His blood." We are "redeemed," that is "bought-back" from death because He bore the death sentence for us.

At Niagara the American Falls takes its dizzy leap over a precipice of one hundred and sixty feet. Between the face of that precipice and the great, over-leaping sheet of water which forms the fall, there is a vacant space which they call the Cave of the Winds. You remember the spot. The guides robe you from head to feet in rubber garments and go before you to lead the way. You follow slowly and cautiously as they make their way literally under the fall. By and by you reach your stopping point. There, as you stand, thousands of tons of water are rushing over that precipice, with a thunderous roar and blinding splash of spray and mist. If you were down there where it falls at the foot of the precipice you would be crushed to death in an instant by the savage impact of those thousands of tons of water which have come their long journey from the far-distant Great Lakes to take their death-leap at this spot which

has been so fatal to many a poor despairing soul. But though you stand in a spot of great seeming peril you are perfectly safe. For this great veil of watery *death passes over you* and spends its fury on the cruel jagged rocks beneath. You are entirely safe because you are a *passed over man*. It is a picture of the redemption which is in Christ for us.

"NOW IS CHRIST OUR PASSOVER
SACRIFICED FOR US."

Death has passed over us because it fell upon Him the Lamb of God in our stead.

The Missing Blood

There is a beautiful story of a little Hebrew maid on that fateful Passover night. As they sat in the humble home awaiting the solemn event which God had foretold, the heart of the little maiden was troubled for her brother. Presently she said to her father, "Father, is the blood upon the door?" "Surely, my child; have no fear about that." The child lapsed into silence for a few moments. Then she spoke again. "Father, are you sure the blood is upon the door?" "Surely, my child; I charged our trusted servant Eleazar to sprinkle it there, and you know he never neglects." Again there was silence. But the child's heart was not yet at peace. She thought of the dread judgment that was about to fall in the darkness upon the whole wide land. She thought of the certain

death that would come to her beloved older brother if the crimson stain was missing from the door posts and lintel. At last she burst out with a flood of childish love and emotion:

"Oh, Father, *are you sure* the blood is on the door? For you know what will happen to dear brother if it is missing. Oh, Father, will you not please see if the blood is on the door?"

So to quiet the little heart of love the father picked up the light; walked to the door; opened it, and held up the light to the door. Behold! the *blood was missing!* The sentence of death might fall at any moment. And his boy was not under the blood. He rushed indoors; he grasped the hyssop; hastily he dipped it into the blood of the paschal lamb. He rushed to the door and sprinkled posts and lintel with the precious symbol. And then he sat down with beating pulse at the thought of the tragedy that had come so near. And the little maiden's heart was at peace, for she knew her loved brother was in the one and only place of safety—*under the blood!*

Barabbas

Someone has said that if ever a man saw atonement for sins it was Barabbas the robber. And that is true. For Jesus Christ died instead of Barabbas. And Barabbas was released to go free. Picture that fateful day. The Roman prison doors swing open, and he walks forth a free man. The sunshine blinds his eyes inured to prison darkness. He sees a great throng

hurrying through the streets. Straightway he joins them. They are on their way to gaze upon the blackest tragedy of all time, the crucifixion of the Son of God who is dying in Barabbas' place, and where Barabbas deserves to be. He follows the crowd out through the gate; up the fateful hill of Calvary; and now in front of the three crosses outlined against the sky. Immediately his eyes are riveted upon the central figure, the Man who is dying for him, Barabbas the robber. His gaze is fixed like a man in a nightmare. Nothing can turn him from that awful sight. A friend steps up and whispers, "Barabbas, you are in danger. There are Roman soldiers all around you. You would better leave at once." But he gets no reply. For Barabbas is still drinking in that awful scene. All the while he gazes, he is seeing himself in imagination as the one who ought to be hanging where the Sufferer is nailed. Again a friend steps up. He whispers, "Barabbas, you are in peril. The soldiers are watching you with suspicion. You may be taken at any moment. Don't you know you are a criminal? Don't you know the penalty for your crime under Rome's laws is death?" Then Barabbas, like a man in a dream, with gaze still unwavering, with heart beating like a trip-hammer, with its intense emotion, says slowly, deliberately, intensely. "That is true. I know I was condemned to this cruel death I now see with mine own eyes, but *there hangs the Man who is dying in my place!*"

For Barabbas' redemption from physical death was in Christ. For Christ died in his

stead. And Barabbas saw that redemption take place before his own eyes. But for all men a more wonderful redemption than this is in Christ. And that is redemption from eternal death. And he who believes in Christ "is passed from death unto life and shall not come into condemnation."

In Christ Is the Precious Jewel of
ETERNAL LIFE

"This life is IN HIS SON."

I was taking a short drive one day in a southern city. Coming homeward I began to give the Gospel to the man who was driving me. I tried to show him that eternal life was in Christ Jesus and that when he received Christ as his Saviour he would receive that life. But he could not see it. I owed him a dollar for his fare. Reaching into my pocket I pulled out a dollar bill. Then I took a small coin purse; folded up the dollar bill; put it into the purse; snapped the clasp; and handed him the purse. "William, you have the dollar I owe you, don't you?" "Yes, sir," said he. "How do you know you have?" "I saw you put the dollar into the purse, and I have the dollar because I have the purse." Well said, William! Now listen to this,

"This is the record that God hath given to us eternal life and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life."

"William, this is God's own record, that He hath given unto us eternal life. Mark, it is a gift

just as surely as I gave you that dollar, only more so, for it is a gift without price. Now God has put this eternal life in His Son. That is the record of His Book. As soon as you break with sin in your heart and take His Son as your Saviour, you will have eternal life, just because it is in Him as surely as that dollar is in that purse. Will you do this? Will you take Him now?" I held out my hand as I spoke, offering him the Son in whom the Father has placed eternal life. He took my proffered hand; the tears came into his eyes. He said, "I see it, sir;" and right there, as I verily believe, he found the Christ in whom God has put everything He has for lost men and women, the Christ in whom alone is eternal life.

Possessing our Possessions

A certain man planned to leave a southern port for a trip by coastwise steamer to the metropolis. He did not have much money. And he wanted to save all he could to have wherewithal to spend when he reached the great city. So he decided to save money on his meals. With this in view he laid in a generous supply of crackers, cheese, and dried herring to meet his needs. The voyage began. And with it his self-made dietary started. Day after day, for breakfast, lunch and dinner he stuck to his self-appointed menu. True, it kept him alive, But it was woefully monotonous. On the last day out, as they were approaching their destination he was promenading the deck. The fragrant aro-

ma of a fine meal exhaled from the dining room so overpoweringly that he succumbed to the lure of it. Stepping up to a traveling acquaintance he had formed upon the voyage he said: "C—, what do you suppose it would cost me to go in there and eat a real meal today?" "Let me see your ticket" was the response. The hungry man pulled out the little slip in which he had invested his money at the start of the voyage, and handed it to his friend. The latter scanned it a few moments. Then he passed it back without a word. But his finger was pointing to a magic sentence printed in the body of the ticket, which read like this—

"Meals and Berth Included!"

We smile at the poor fellow who was cheated out of the choicest viands an ocean steamship menu could freely offer because of sheer failure to "possess his possessions," by appropriating what already belonged to him, having been bought and paid for in advance. But men are vastly more foolish than even this, in the spiritual realm. They want forgiveness. It is in Christ Jesus, bought and paid for by His own precious blood. They long for redemption. It too is in Him, waiting only for their free acceptance as a gift from God. They seek eternal life. It is "the gift of God in Christ Jesus" to all who will accept it by faith. They are spiritual paupers, when they might be millionaires in Christ Jesus. The god of this world has blinded their eyes so that they do not reach forth and appropriate the precious jewels of

spiritual wealth which God has put in Christ Jesus for every one who will claim them.

Unsaved friend, why do you persist in demanding from Christ some volcanic eruption of feeling when the one thing needful is to receive Him? Why do you continue to offer a host of excuses so unspeakably trivial that you would be ashamed to suggest them in the ordinary affairs of life? Why do you point the finger of scorn at poor halting Christians when you well know that at that great day of assize what some other man's inconsistent life has been will not have the slightest bearing before that errorless Judge to whom "each man shall give an account of *himself*?" Why do you continue to plead "a moral life" when at its very best such a life can neither cleanse you from the guilt of sin; deliver you from the slavery of sin; nor resurrect you from among those who are dead in trespasses and sins? And why do you delay when every year of your procrastination adds another layer of steel to that dreadful hardening of the heart of which you are fearfully conscious, until by and by every weapon which God in His love has formed will simply rebound from it like leaden pellets from the massive armor of a battleship? End it all by an honest decision to "receive Him" in whom God has placed all these jewels of redemption, forgiveness, and eternal life, for

"As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name."

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