

Andrew Murray:

And He brought us out from thence, that He might bring us in, to give us the land which He sware unto our Fathers." -Deut. 6:23.

I have spoken of the crisis that comes in the life of the man who sees that his Christian experience is low and carnal, and who desires to enter into the full life of God. Some Christians do not understand that there should be such a crisis. They think that they ought, from the day of their conversion, to continue to grow and progress. I have no objections to that, if they have grown as they ought. If their life has been so strong under the power of the Holy Ghost that they have grown as true believers should grow, I certainly have no objection to this. But I want to deal with those Christians whose life since conversion has been very much a failure, and who feel it to be such because of their not being filled with the Spirit, as is their blessed privilege. I want to say for their encouragement, that by taking one step, they can get out into the life of rest, and victory, and fellowship with God to which the promises of God invite them.

Look at the elder son in the parable. How long would it have taken him to get out of that state of blindness and bondage into the full condition of sonship? By believing in his father's love, he might have gotten out that very hour. If he had been powerfully convicted of his guilt in his unbelief, and had confessed like his prodigal brother, "I have sinned," he would have come that very moment into the favor of the son's happiness in his father's home. He would not have been detained by having a great deal to learn, and a great deal to do; but in one moment, his whole relation would have been changed.

Remember, too, what we saw in Peter's case. In one moment, the look of Jesus broke him down and there came to him the terribly bitter reflection of his sin, owing to his selfish, fleshly confidence, a contrition and reflection which laid the foundation for his new and better life with Jesus. God's word brings out the idea of the Christian's entrance into the new and better life by the history of the people of Israel's entrance into the land of Canaan.

In our text, we have these words:-"God brought us out from thence (Egypt), that He might bring us in" into Canaan. There are two steps: one was bringing them out; and the other was bringing them in. So in the life of the believer, there are ordinarily two steps quite separate from each other;-the bringing him out of sin and the world; and the bringing him into a state of complete rest afterward. It was the intention of God that Israel should enter the land of Canaan from Kadesh-Barnea, immediately after He had made His covenant with them at Sinai. But they were not ready to enter at once, on account of their sin and unbelief, and disobedience. They had to wander after that for forty years in the wilderness. Now, look how God led the people. In Egypt, there was a great crisis, where they had first to pass through the Red Sea, which is a figure of conversion; and when they went into Canaan, there was, as it were, a second conversion in passing through the Jordan. At our conversion, we get into liberty, out of the bondage of Egypt; but, when we fail to use our liberty through unbelief and disobedience, we wander in the wilderness for a longer or shorter period before we enter into the Canaan of victory, and rest, and abundance. Thus God does for His Israel two things:-He brings them out of Egypt; and He lead them into Canaan.

My message, then, is to ask this question of the believer:-Since you know you are converted and God has brought you out of Egypt, have you yet come into the land of Canaan? If not, are you willing that he should bring you into the fuller liberty and rest provided for His people? He brought Israel out of Egypt by a mighty hand, and the same mighty hand brought us out of our land of bondage; with the same mighty hand, He brought his ancient people into rest, and by that hand, too, He can bring us into our true rest. The same God who pardoned and regenerated us-is waiting to perfect His love in us, if we but trust Him. Are there many hearts saying:-"I believe that God brought me out of bondage twenty, or thirty, or forty years ago; but alas! I cannot say that I have been brought into the happy land of rest and victory?"

How glorious was the rest of Canaan after all the wanderings in the wilderness! And so is it with the Christian who reaches the better promised Canaan of rest, when he comes to leave all his charge with the Lord Jesus-his responsibilities, anxieties, and worry; his only work being to hand the keeping of his soul into the hand of Jesus every day and hour. and the Lord can keep, and give the victory over every enemy. Jesus has undertaken not only to cleans our sin, and bring us to heaven, but also to keep us in our daily life.

I ask again:-Are you hungering to get free from sin and its power?-Anyone longing to get complete victory over his temper, his pride, and all his evil inclinations?-Hearts longing for the time when no clouds will come between them and their God?-Longing to walk in the full sunshine of God's loving favour? The very God who

brought you from the Egypt of darkness is ready and able to bring you also into the Canaan of rest.

And now comes the question again:-What is the way by which God will bring me to this rest? What is needed on my part if God is really to bring me into the happy land? I give the answer first of all by asking another question:-Are you willing to forsake your wanderings in the wilderness? If you say "We do not want to leave our wanderings, where we have had so many wonderful indications of God's presence with us; so many remarkable proofs of the Divine care and goodness, like that of the ancient people of God, who had the pillar to guide them, and the manna given them every day for forty years; Moses and Aaron to lead and advise them. The wilderness is to us, on account of these things, a kind of sacred place; and we are loath to leave it." If the children of Israel had said anything of this kind to Joshua, he would have said to them (and we all would have said):-"Oh, you fools: It is the very God who gave you the pillar of cloud and the other blessings in the wilderness, who tells you how to come into the land flowing with milk and honey." And so I can speak to you in the same way; I bring you the message that He who has brought you thus far on your journey, and given you such blessings thus far, is the God who will bring you into the Canaan of complete victory and rest.

The first question, then, that I would ask you is,