

**OUR DAILY HOMILY.
VOLUME V: MATTHEW-
REVELATION**

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Our Daily Homily. Volume V: Matthew-Revelation by F. B. Meyer

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Our Daily Homily

Volume V: Matthew-Revelation

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PREFACE

WITH the issue of this fifth volume of "OUR DAILY HOMILY," the top stone is placed on a structure which has occupied many of my brightest hours for more than three years.

Amid the pressure of a busy life, and the inevitable demands of a considerable church-organization, it has been an untold refreshment to turn to the devout study of successive chapters of the Bible, with the view of obtaining a message for oneself, and to pass on to others.

We must all have our "Temple of Peace"; and if this may not be a spacious and well-stocked library, it may at least be that collection of sacred literature which contains the noblest thoughts of the holiest men, inbreathed and borne along by the Spirit of God. Here is the secret of serenity, the treasure of tranquillity, the clue to perennial comfort.

It has been impossible altogether to exclude the personal element from these pages, because the sheets have been printed from the types of my own daily experience, set up by the many altering circumstances of joy and grief, conflict and peace, which befall each of us. But the one refrain has been the reality of the unseen; the nearness of God; the vindication of the Christian, as the only true policy of life; the duty and blessedness of doing all God commands, and bearing all He

permits ; the uplifting and light-bringing power of simple trust in Him who liveth, and was dead, and who is alive forevermore.

None of my books is dearer to me than this, or seems to contain more of my innermost thought ; but at best it is only a handful of meal in the barrel, which may God multiply till He send rain on the earth.

F. B. MEYER.

OUR DAILY HOMILY

It is He that shall save His people from their sins.

Matt. i. 21 (R. V.).

THIS is the mission of Immanuel. He came, not as the Jews expected, to break the yoke of Cæsar and reëstablish the kingdom of David; but to break the yoke of sin, and set up the sinless kingdom of God. The Church has too often misunderstood the object of His advent, as though He meant simply to save from the consequences and results of sin. This were too limited a programme for the Son of God. To cancel the results and leave the bitter cause; to deliver from the penalty, but not from the power; to rescue His people from the grasp of a broken law, but confess Himself unable to deal with the bad virus of the blood—this were to fail. No; dare to take this announcement in its full and glorious meaning, written as it is on the portico of our Saviour's life.

What an admixture of blood flowed through His veins! Let your eye glance through the list of His genealogy. Men and women, notorious for their evil character, lie in the direct line of His descent. This was permitted, that He might fully represent our fallen race; that no sinner, however bad, should be abashed to claim His help; and that it should be clearly shown how powerless sin was to tarnish or taint the holiness of His sinless nature. Made in the likeness of sinful flesh, He knew no sin. The germs of corruption could find no welcome in His heart.

Art thou one of His people? Hast thou accepted His rule, and allied thyself with Him? For if so, He shall save thee. Though possessed with seven devils, He will drive them out.

They offered unto Him gifts, Gold. . . .

Matt. ii. 11 (marg.).

GOLD is for the king. It is meet that Matthew should tell this story: for his is preëminently the royal Gospel. Long before the Lord was born, these Eastern sages must have been started on their way, whither and to worship whom they knew not: but an ancient prophecy had foretold that to this babe should be offered of the gold of Sheba, and that kings should bring Him the riches of the Gentiles.

How useful this gold was to Joseph in the following months! It helped him to defray the cost of the journey into Egypt and back, and to maintain his precious charges there. The Heavenly Father knew what those needs would be, and met them by anticipation. If you concern yourself in the affairs of His kingdom, and will obey the warnings and directions He gives; if you dare to step out on the path of literal obedience—you will find that God will become responsible and defray all costs. Gold is naught to Him. He can make it out of common dust by a word.

It is sweet to think of all the gold presented to Jesus in after ages. The wealth of the rich, the golden ornaments taken from the person, the tiny pieces of gold which represent the patient savings of the poor—all these have made up the flowing river of which those golden gifts of the Magi were the first trickling drops. Have you given gold to Him, you who know Him, not as the babe only, but as the Man of the Cross; not as man merely, but as the Son of the Highest? You may have given Him copper in abundance, and silver in handfuls; but let your future gifts to Him be of the best. Or, if poverty restrains you, let the philosopher's stone of Love turn the meaner metals to gold.

In those days cometh John the Baptist.

Matt. iii. 1.

THE Evangelist is fond of the present tense, "cometh." Yes, these records are true to all time. You tell me that they happened nineteen centuries ago. Certainly; but they happened yesterday, and are happening to-day. Remember that He is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. He was, and is, and is to come. Christ was born into the world, but He is always being born into the hearts of men in Regeneration. John preceded and announced His advent in the wilderness of Judæa; and He is always preparing His way into the hearts and lives of men. It is doubtful whether Jesus ever comes into the heart of mature manhood without the previous work of a John the Baptist. Of days of conviction of sin, of remorse, of repentance, we may truly say, "In those days cometh John the Baptist."

John the Baptist is sadly needed to-day. Much of what we call Christianity is but christianized heathenism. It glazes over covetousness, luxurious self-indulgence, compliance with fashion and worldliness; it admits into its high places men who thrive on the oppression of the poor; it condones the oppression of the native races, the sale of opium and spirits, the shameless traffic in impurity; it rears the ideals of the world in the place of the changeless cross of the slain Christ with its divine sorrow and blood. Ah, we need that John the Baptist should come with his stern words about the axe, the winnowing-fan, and the fire. Nothing less will avail to prepare the way for a new coming of Christ.

Each age has had its John the Baptist. Now St. Bernard; now Savonarola; now John Knox. With sonorous, ringing voice the herald has prepared the way of the King: "He cometh to judge the world!"

*Jesus was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness
to be tempted of the devil.* *Matt. iv. 1.*

YESTERDAY, the open heavens ; to-day, the burning cinders of the wilderness of temptation. Then the voice of the Father owning Him as the Well-beloved ; now the hiss of the tempter. Then the teeming crowds ; now the desert solitude and silence, broken only by the cry of the wild beast. Then the Spirit as a nesting dove, but now as a compelling force. Wherever there is the Christ-life, it passes through these same experiences. The Holy Spirit often anticipates coming trial by granting some great revelation of God ; but He who gives the one leads into the other, that the precious bestowments of God's grace may be rendered permanent.

Would you give the bread of life to thousands ? You must refuse to use your opportunity to make bread for your own gratification. You cannot use your power for others and for yourself. If you elect to use it for them, you must be content to wait till the Father sends His angels to minister to you. In the meanwhile live by faith on His words.

Would you teach the magnificence of a faith that can trust God to preserve it, though it steps from the mountain brow on to thin air ? You must refuse to use it for purposes of ostentation ; and wait till God, not Satan, calls.

Would you win the kingdoms of the world ? You must obtain them, not by methods which commend themselves to human prudence, but through the death of the cross and the falling into the ground to die. There are two mountains in the Gospel : this, as it opens ; that of the Ascension at its close. The valley of death lies between. But the traversing of this valley was necessary, ere Christ could say, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth."