

No.  
103

***"IF YE THEN BE RISEN WITH CHRIST, SEEK THOSE THINGS WHICH  
ARE ABOVE, WHERE CHRIST SITTETH ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD."***  
COL.3.1

**"SOMEWHAT AGAINST THEE"**

**or**

**LIMITATIONS THAT HINDER.**

***An Address (revised)***

***At Forest Gate, E,***

***13<sup>th</sup> Aug. 1917***

***by***

***PERCY W. HEWARD***

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***Correspondence welcome: Scriptural literature for Believers  
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"SOMEWHAT AGAINST THESE"  
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An Address by Mr. P.W.Heward,  
At Forest Gate, 13th Aug. 1917.

2 Kings 5 read.

It is on my mind, beloved friends, that we should ponder together some sad reminders in Scripture, sad reminders of failure. You will follow what I mean if I refer you to the first verse of the chapter just read. Naaman is seen as a great man, honorable, a mighty man of valor, but he is a leper, and that comes at the end of the verse and seems to cast a cloud over the whole. Now is it not true that with respect to the varied things of earth we have this sad cloud over everything? The earth brings forth plentifully, precious is the growth of the field, BUT there are the thorns. We realize the glory of the sun, as it shines brilliantly and seems to invigorate, BUT there is the SCORCHING of the sun. We look at the moon with its beautiful whiteness, pictorial of the righteousness of God's people, BUT there are DULL marks upon it. There are no dull marks on the righteousness of God which is given us. THAT is a perfect righteousness. We look upon the animal creation. There are encouragements still to be seen with respect to this. I noticed an animal today, and as I saw its obedience I thought how God appointed that the animals were ALL to be obedient to men. The dog seemed to take it for granted that mankind was on a higher level than itself, and to act with a dutiful submission, BUT we think of the wild animals, which, instead of being ruled by man destroy man. We find a "but" everywhere. The earth is full of "but's". We go a little further. Where are some wondrous characters in Scripture. Bible history is a precious study. I wonder how much we really know of Bible history. Have you ever tried to give a narrative from Scripture, in your own words, very simply and very pictorially, yet very exactly, to a little child, and as you have been going along, if you have been giving full details, you check yourself, you feel

when you get to the "small" points, "I am not quite sure what Scripture does say", and you hesitate. It would be well for us to know more of Bible facts. May I, in this connection, mention how the suggestion is being carried out that we should seek by the grace of God to increase our knowledge of one set of Bible facts each week? On the parallel papers this week you have the list of the months in Scripture and their right order. Believers should understand when the Holy Spirit refers to the month "Sivan" or the month "Ethanim" what TIME of the year is brought before us, and thus there will not be simply a wondering "What is this?" We shall at once know, and say, Oh that is the seventh month, when Israel had their day of atonement, about our September or October as it is called, and so forth. Bible facts are very precious, but in the narratives of the dear servants of God which we read in Scripture, God records the "but's". Abraham showed a beautiful character, BUT do you remember the solemn words that he went out from Haran when his father was dead? The Lord had said to him, "Get thee out of thy kindred, and from thy FATHER'S house". Abraham did believe, Abraham did obey, BUT he stayed in Haran half way, and then physical death came along, and Abraham was caused to go forward after that. It is marvellous how the Lord makes crises in our lives. A death may be made a blessing, but I long that we may never hold back from obedience and thus need to have physical trouble, it may be even death, to others, to send us forward. Abraham was spurred on by the death of his father, just as Enoch was spurred on by the birth of his son. God uses everything to speak to His people. The character of such a man as Moses is deeply encouraging, BUT Moses said, "Hear now ye rebels," and smote the rock when God told him to speak, although Moses was meek above all men on the face of the earth. Now why does the Holy Spirit record the failure of Moses? Not that we may excuse our hasty words, but that we may be humbled to see the failure and avoid it. These beacons

are given to keep us away from self-confidence, and away from the sins which are thus pointed out. Scripture is very precious, but we need to use it rightly. We read in 1 Timothy that the law is good if a man use it lawfully. There are many things in the world which are right in their right place, but dangerous out of their right place. A knife is very important in daily life, but it is harmful if used in the wrong way; a fire is desirable for cooking our food, - bring it out from the grate and let it be spread all over the room, and we shall have the house burnt down. The right thing but in the wrong place. It is therefore very important to know how to use the Scripture. What has God brought before us there as an EXAMPLE? What has God brought before us there as a WARNING? Surely the Bible is a book that can only be rightly handled by God's PEOPLE. It is in the true sense of the word a "FAMILY Bible". It belongs to the family of God. I do not mean that the Bible contains nothing with respect to the unsaved. Many of the witnesses that were given to the unsaved by the prophets are recorded in the Bible that we may pass them on to the unsaved even today, and the Gospel of John was specially written that men might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing they might have life in His Name. It is a very precious Gospel Tract.

Ah, beloved friends, if we look at all the histories aright, we shall look at them as foils to set forth more fully the preciousness of Christ, Who never failed, and we shall be humbled to think how we have failed with greater privileges than old time servants of God had. We behold a man like Job. Job was a man of consummate patience, BUT Job failed when he reached the climax of testing. Satan was permitted to do anything, provided the life of Job was spared. God does not suffer US to be tempted in the same way. Job was a man of considerably more spiritual power than many others. The greater the spiritual strength the greater may be the strain. God does not give the burdens or permit the burdens to the

youngest believer, 'tis as we grow we may expect heavier difficulties. But He giveth more grace. Job falters, he is brought to repentance, but he acknowledges he has not spoken the things that are right. As to the Lord Jesus we read that the devil finished every temptation, and departed from Him. The devil acknowledged himself as defeated, for he finished EVERY temptation, and then went away. Christ stood firm and on a second occasion He said, "The prince of this world cometh and hath NOTHING in Me". Nothing in Christ that would agree with Satan, nothing in Christ in fellowship with the devil. The flesh agrees with the devil, but the Lord Jesus Christ had no sinful flesh. He was in the LIKENESS of sinful flesh, but His flesh was pictured as the beautiful veil ~~of~~ of the temple, and we read that far from needing atonement, He made atonement in the body of His flesh. So wondrous was that perfect Saviour. Ah, beloved friends, here we have an encouragement when we look to Him we look to Him as our Saviour, we look to Him as our Lord, we look to Him as our Example; Christ never disappoints those who look to Him. We look at Him in His earthly life, and we see perfection, we look to Him in the glory and we see perfection. We look at what He went through and we see He never hesitated, we look at what He is doing now and we see He never interrupts His continual intercession for His blood-bought people. Christ is the Resting Place, and Christ is the Joy of His redeemed.

Are there any "but's" in our lives? It is difficult to speak upon this subject. I have thought of it. You will enter into my difficulty. Suppose I describe a character, and say, "BUT there is this, or there is that". The mind may be taken off the precious teaching of Scripture because the person may think, "The speaker is describing me, the address is too personal", and yet we want the addresses to be personal. We want truth to come to us with power. "Take us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vine", is in the Song of Songs, "For our vines have tender

grapes". Only little interruptions, the grapes cannot grow, they are eaten and destroyed. "Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour, so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for much wisdom". "Flies of death" says the margin, "Precious ointment" so fragrant. Flies of death taint it. Oh, beloved friends, let us realize that our life has not only an addition of actions, but multiplication, or shall I say, a compound character. It is not simply the believer has twenty things that are encouraging, and three things that are discouraging. Those three things that are discouraging entwine themselves round the others, and the compound is spoiled, through the three things; even as the fruitful garden is largely hindered through the weeds, and one feels disappointed as one looks upon it. The weeds allowed to grow up spoil the attractiveness of the whole. Oh how often our spiritual activities are marred because of the flies of death. There is some LITTLE thing which comes in and like the parasite plant seems to sap the strength of the mighty tree, it entwines itself round the trunk and hinders, and the whole lacks that spirituality that should mark every believer in everything. I want to speak to myself as well as to you. In the messages the Lord Jesus sent in Rev. 2 and 3, He gave words of encouragement, but He said, "NEVERTHELESS I have somewhat against thee". What has the Lord against us? There is a "somewhat". Where are our defects? Do we know them? Are we acquainted with the grey hairs? or like Ephraim are we ignorant of these grey hairs of spiritual failure? Do we realize where we falter? Are we conscious of our shortcomings? Oh, beloved friends, is there a "somewhat" in your life and mine? a somewhat which hinders spiritual power? It may be a little thing but it may mar the beauty of the whole life. It may affect the communion with God. It may hinder our witness to others, for others may look on our life and pick on that "somewhat", and then refuse to be affected by the OTHER part of the life.

They may be occupied with the "somewhat" of the defect, and so any influence we have for good may be negatived or removed in large measure because of the "somewhat" which comes in the way. You know what I mean. There may be real enthusiasm for the Lord, there may be a real wish to please Him, an unselfishness in many respects and yet perhaps an unguarded tongue, or there may be a knowledge of God's truth, and a desire to walk in the way of His truth, a giving of many things which grieve His Holy Spirit, and a pressing onward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling, and yet there may be a "somewhat" in a subtle inner pride which has a measure of confidence in the flesh. There may be a wish to do God's will, there may be a delight in the gathering of saints, there may be a real earnestness in speaking to the Lord in prayer, and yet there may be something to which one clings, unwilling to give up for the Lord and that "somewhat" may paralyse the power of the life. It may be a little thing before men, it may be a habit which has grown upon one, almost unconsciously, and which is still growing, and twining its ropes and holding back from the full manifestation of that spiritual power which God has so graciously provided for His people. There may be a real acquaintance with much of the purpose of God, and yet a measure of lack of purpose of heart to act in accord with the purpose of God. A "somewhat" which eats up the grapes, the tender grapes, and so there is less fruitfulness; a "somewhat" which seems to mar the harmony of the picture of a godly life; a "somewhat" which stands in the way of witness, which the world can see. The Holy Spirit through Paul said that the believers who had usefulness in the assembly were to be those who were above reproach, implying that the world will wish to pick holes in a character, that the world will defend itself by attacking the Lord's people, that the world can touch, though it be only a selfishness in some FEW things, or a hastiness of temper, or an irregularity, or an unreliability, so that there is not

a strict and spiritually forceful determination to go forward in the things of God, all these things the world can point out. An unsaved one cannot produce a godly character, but an unsaved one can see the defects in a godly character. The world can oft-times perceive when the believer himself is somewhat unconscious, but one of the precious accompaniments of an assembly is to wash one another's feet, and to point out these errors, and to seek to deal with them, and to have brotherly love in both giving receiving reproofs. You may be sure of this that if there is any petulance, or if there is any resentment when there is loving reproof, there is a usual need for more reproof. An assembly should be marked by godliness that is in such a degree children of God delight not to point out one another's errors as an amusement, or an effort of pride, but with a concern for one another's blessing. Members of one family take an interest in the physical needs of one another. Members of a spiritual family should take an interest in the spiritual needs of one another. They should be concerned for God's glory in the spiritual progress of one another, and that these defects may be removed. The path of the just is as a shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God. The character of a believer should be marked by progress. Oh, beloved friends, the heart knoweth its own bitterness, the heart knoweth more of the plague which is there than others know, or should do, and if we see in ourselves anything which is a hindrance to ourselves, a hindrance to others, let us be concerned about this "somewhat", and if we do not see it, just pray that God may show it to us, even the beam in our own eye, that we may first remove this, and then see clearly to deal with others, that there may be an all-round consistency of Christian character, a growing up unto Christ in ALL things. One word can spread discord, one look can hinder unity, an omission of enthusiasm can weaken the enthusiasm

of another, speaking when one ought to be silent can spoil the testimony of Truth, silence when one ought to speak with a heart overflowing may hinder the zeal of others for God's glory. Little "somewhats" not only mar the individual character, but mar the fellowship of a gathering, and mar the power of a witness, and mar the effect upon others whom the Lord would graciously draw out from Christendom's snares to Christ with Whom there are no snares. Oh that we might seek, by grace, to exhort one another daily while it is called today, lest any be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Let it rather be that we are softened through the truthfulness of God's word, that His instructions are borne in upon us, in the power of the Holy Spirit, and that we are concerned to come to the laver with the undiminished water, that we may wash therefrom again and again, and thus be able to worship, for unwashed worshippers were not allowed among Israel's priests. There was not only the washing of the hands and feet AFTERWARDS, but before, and so we should seek to be first reproved by the Truth, for All Scripture is profitable for reproof. It is sharper than any two edged sword, and we need to receive with meek-

ness the engrafted word. Such expressions imply that there is a "somewhat" in our character which the Lord has against us, and which He would remove, that we may bring more glory to Him in our lives, that our speech may be alway with grace seasoned with salt, that we may follow on to know the Lord, that we may adorn the doctrine of God in all things, that we may in ALL our ways acknowledge Him, that there may be this completeness of godly character in the power of the Holy Spirit. Not that we shall then boast of a perfection, for if we walk in the light the blood of Jesus Christ cleansETH. The cleansing is still needed. We never get beyond this in the present life, but it is a mercy if we live in the conscious experience thereof, so that we realize the swift cleansing, for if there be not the enjoyment of this cleansing there cannot be the enjoyment of the fullest fellowship. If we walk in the light we have fellowship, AND the blood cleanses. The two blessings are one. The thought was on my mind, and I have passed it on to you. I want that we should all seek to see wherein we are coming short, and that henceforth in the power of our gracious God we may seek for the removal of those sins which hinder our testimony, that we may have guarded words, godly thoughts, enthusiastic activity, holding back from things which grieve the Lord, pressing forward in things which please the Lord, that we may live at all times to the praise of the glory of His grace, as becometh these who are brought out of darkness into His marvellous light.

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