

No.
173.

"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.

R E J A R D S.

An Address (revised) at

Walham Green.

5th January, 1914.

by

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An Address by Mr. P. W. Heward,
At Walham Green,
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OUTLINE:-

1. "Thy Exceeding Great Reward", Gen. 15. 1.
2. "The Character of Reward", See Rom. 4. 4.
3. "No Reward", Matt.6.1. "Their Reward", Matt.6.2.
4. "His Reward", Matt. 10. 42; 1 Cor. 3. 8.
5. "Great is Your Reward in Heaven", Matt.5.12; Ps.19.11.
6. "A Sure Reward", Prov. 11. 18
7. "Such a Reward", 2 Sam. 19. 36.
8. "A Full Reward", 2 John 8; Ruth 2. 12.

A reward without work would be, in the ordinary usage of words, hardly comprehensible. A reward contrary to the work would be unfitting. A reward in accord with the work is that which God has again and again marked out. And so, we have in Scripture a stress upon evil rewards. We are told for example in Psalms 40 and 70 that sinners will have a reward according to their sins. We remember too that Balaam has many followers in the way of seeking earthly reward, which is not only earthly but evil because it sets on one side the things of God which alone are valuable and true in the realization of those who by grace have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

But I do not want this afternoon so much to speak of a sinner's reward, the sinner's punishment, but rather of rewards with respect to God's dear blood-bought people. The first passage in front of us is Gen. 15. 1. Abraham in the fourteenth chapter has met the king of Sodom AFTER the king of Salem. He has been enabled by grace to emphasize his relationship to the Most High God, Possessor of heaven and earth. Who wants Sodom's goods when he has the possessor of heaven and earth? Why should we seek the things which make to themselves wings, when we have those blessings which cause us to mount up with wings? The Possessor of heaven and earth causes us to regard little Sodom's fulness of bread and Sodom's luxuries - they are but the grapes of Sodom that deceive and never satisfy. Abraham had, by grace, emphasized his confidence in God; he had said, I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet. (What an interesting subject are the shoelatchets of Scripture). The servant of God had shown much confidence and concern for God's honour, "Lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich". He would do nothing that might be misunderstood. His riches were in the Lord. "After these things", says Gen. 15. 1, "the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision saying, Fear not, Abram, I am thy Shield and thy Exceeding Great Reward. And Abram said, Lord God, WHAT WILT THOU GIVE ME?" Oh, there is a beautiful expression of faith in these words. God says, "I am thy Shield. No credit to thee in the battle thou hast fought; the threehundred and eighteen could not have done it, nor could those who belonged to the

district of Mamre. I am thy Shield and thy Exceeding Great Reward - instead of all that Sodom can offer and instead of all that a man could secure from the kings of the East".

"Lord God", says Abram, "what wilt Thou give me? I take thee at Thy word; Thou art my Reward, Thou art my All in all - what wilt Thou give me?" The offered gifts of Sodom had been refused that the Lord's gifts might be sought. And then we are told how God gave Abraham a special promise that his seed should be as the stars of heaven, and Abraham believed in the Lord and He counted it to him for righteousness. Thus we have brought before us the man who put on one side the things of earth and who enjoyed God as his Reward, and God graciously made clear that He would meet EVERY need and that He would carry out the good pleasure of His goodness. Beloved friends, this aspect of reward needs to be emphasized first. We are not to be taken up with "things" but with a "Person". We are not to value, as if all-important, even the blessings of the Lord, but to esteem the Blessor from whom all the blessings come.

"I am thine Exceeding Great Reward" - to Him we look. He does all things for us, and therefore we can say, not with a grumbling of unbelief, but with the assurance of faith, "What wilt Thou give me?" "Ask what I shall give thee", says the Lord in another place, and we are told elsewhere that every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights with Whom is no variableness neither shadow (that is cast) by turning. "He That spared not His own Son but delivered

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Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things". Let us realize this aspect of life. Such a standpoint will save us from a thousand snares, it will save us from a thousand disorders, if only, by the grace of God, we become clear as to this one fact - that in GOD we have everything, that we are not an earthly people with earthly hopes, but a heavenly people with a heavenly standpoint and a heavenly prospect. Earth has many magnets but they will not prevail in their power over those who have felt the Divine drawing of Him Who was lifted up to draw unto Himself. "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love", He says to His people, "therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee". Listen to the precious words - "Draw me, we will run after Thee", and this desire means, a leaving those things which are behind and to press forward to those things that are in front, to the prize of the high calling, for, as we shall see a little later on, if we emphasize the Lord aright, the Lord emphasizes His wondrous riches which He will give us both now and in That Day.

I have already said a word or two as to the character of rewards, but we can estimate them more fully from the precious fourth chapter of the letter to the Romans. This passage is the more striking because evidently Gen. 15 was in the apostle's mind. The chapter begins with "Abraham our father" and goes on to speak of Abraham believing God and the fact that it was counted to him for righteousness. This, as we have seen, is a quotation from Gen. 15 where God is mentioned as the Exceeding

Great Reward. The apostle adds, "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace but of debt, but to him that worketh not but believeth on Him That justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Here is a gracious unveiling of God's method of justifying a sinner - not by works, not by what the sinner does, but "to him that worketh not, his faith is counted for righteousness". All merit is shut out, all praise is shut in. But this further gives us a key to many Scriptures. Reward is linked with works even as we read, "My reward is with Me to give to every man according as his WORK shall be." Reward, therefore, is not counted in the same way as grace. Reward is a word rather associated with works. "To him that worketh is the reward reckoned of debt". I do not mean that in one sense God is any man's Debtor, when He Himself speaks of rewarding His people, but if He has graciously pledged Himself to give them a certain reply to their obedience He cannot prove unfaithful to His own gracious words. He will never break His words, and therefore we have grace brought before us giving us a standing in Christ and afterwards reward as we walk in Christ Jesus the Lord. If the character of rewards is thus marked out, what are we to say concerning Gen. 15 to which this refers? God there says to Abraham, "I am thy Exceeding Great Reward", - "thy Exceeding great Reward for thine act of obedience", but when we have the stress on righteousness it is not "Abraham OBEYED and he was righteous" but "Abraham BELIEVED God". Thus all merit is the more definitely removed, and thus we have a

beautiful anticipation in the pages of the first book of Scripture, of God's method of salvation now. "By him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be declared righteous or justified in the law of Moses".

Matthew's Gospel brings before us rewards in that wondrous address on the mount as well as in the further address of Matt. 10. How often the address on the mount is misused. How often it is misunderstood. It is plainly addressed to the Lord's people. Last evening, a constable, on refusing a tract, remarked to me that he had been informed by one who had been at our open-air that if ~~he~~ were right he would no longer keep on the uniform which he was wearing, that he could not be a Christian and retain that uniform. I told him that he had misunderstood what was said to him, although I could not tell him what the exact words to which he referred were. If anyone identified with the Lord's work committed to us had spoken to him, the language would have been different. Should we not have said that when one is a new creature in Christ Jesus there becomes an entire change of life, and that, for ourselves, we could not exercise any force or carry out any judgment. He asked me what would happen in the world if every-body believed the same thing. He at once saw that he had answered his own question. There would be no need for a Police Force then. But this led on to a little talk on the address on the mount in which he said that he was no socialist, he had heard a socialist claim, as they frequently do, this precious portion of Scripture. It was

pointed out to him that the beginning of the address is "Seeing the multitudes He went up into a mountain, and when He was set HIS DISCIPLES came unto Him". It was, moreover, pointed out that the address on the mount deals with secret sins, sins of thought, with which no socialism can attempt to cope. It was, moreover, pointed out that it laid a stress on private prayer, which again was foreign to the teaching of socialism. But how often this portion of Scripture is wrested, and largely because God's dear people do not attempt to put it fully into practice. The principle of grace which has been extended to them affects their life, or should affect it, with regard to every day. They should not use force or power, but be willing to be the downtrodden ones of earth because they possess a heavenly calling. Having received mercy, they are to show mercy; having received grace they are to illustrate grace. The address on the mount, being spoken to the Lord's disciples, can appropriately deal with rewards. This would be entirely out of place if it were generally said to sinners in the present dispensation as though they could by some works of their own have merit before God. But here we have the Lord's own instruction to His own blood-bought people in which He calls them to acts of obedience wherewith they may please Him and thereby will receive certain appointed rewards.

The first verse of the sixth chapter of Matthew says, "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men to be seen of them, otherwise ye have no reward of YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN

HEAVEN. Therefore when thou doest thine alms do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth, that thine alms may be in secret and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee". So this passage goes on to deal with prayer and with fasting, and in each case we have brought before us a reward to the Lord's people if their life is well-pleasing unto Him who, being their Father in heaven, sees in secret those things which are not an official or an officious display; but it is very solemn to have no reward for any action - or inaction. Beloved friends, it is possible for us to do right actions and undo their usefulness by wrong manners. "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men to be seen of them". The "manner" will often spoil. So is it with prayer and so is it with our activities of service in various parts of our daily life. There are many dangers in referring too much to ourselves. For instance, we are apt to become proud sooner than we think; again, we are apt to draw attention from Christ to that poor miserable self which is never to be exalted. If we do speak about what we have done it should be rather what the Lord has wrought in us. Not only however, is it dangerous lest we should do these things, but with regard to the judgment seat of Christ, we may remove the value of an action by speaking about it afterwards. I do not say that we are to entirely keep back from

our brethren the grace that God makes so manifest to us in that He enables us to labour. Paul, on one occasion, was inspired to say, "By the grace of God I am what I am"; and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain, but I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I but the grace of God which was with me". Here we see it is right sometimes to speak of what God in His mercy enables, but we have to beware lest there be anything of the sinful object to be seen of man. Our object should be SIMPLY the glory of our glorious God. Alas, there will be a hindrance to reward otherwise, for, as Matt. 6 says, thrice over, those who do their actions only before men have their reward. So it seems we can have advantages now, or we can put them on one side and have rewards then.. Of whom do we think the more? of men, or of God? If men, let us show men our actions, and men will value them and men will admire them. But if, by mercy, we think more of God, let us not display what we have done or what we are, but leave it that He Who will right our wrongs, will also deal with our acts of obedience and will grant unto us His own precious and glorious reply in the day when He Who is our precious Lord shall return. In Matt. 10 we have brought before us several VARIETIES of rewards. Says verse 40 "He that receiveth you receiveth Me and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him That sent Me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward, and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily, I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward". Here we see distinct rewards and a thought which is often forgotten. We cannot all be prophets, but he that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. It is well to recognize this. We say, How can we have the blessings that the early church received? They had apostles in their midst, they had much manifestly supernatural power, and Divinely inwrought unity. We see not our signs, we realize now that the world is upside down, and that those who bear the name of the Lord Jesus Christ are found in various camps and with a certain amount of disorder and even opposition. How can we receive the blessings that marked and characterized the early church? Let us remember that our attitude to the truth of God, revealed in Scripture, will largely affect our reward. If by grace we who have Moses and the prophets, who have Paul and the apostles in the Scriptures, deal with them in a way that truly receives and welcomes, shall we fail of our reward? Ah, beloved friends, there is held in front of us a reward far more than we can estimate, a reward far more than we can realize. Let us recognize that our God Who is all-sufficient in all His workings will not cause us to lose if we are faithful to Him. He knows our frame, He knows our needs, He knows our circumstances throughout, and He will in His infinite mercy deal with everyone of His people. At the judgment seat of Christ there will be a reward according

to works, judgment being given by Him Who exactly can estimate all. It is beautiful to remember the stress upon the reward for giving a cup of cold water. It is a little act, only a cup, and the water is cold, no great work is needed. It is water as one finds it, and only given, but it is IN THE NAME OF A DISCIPLE, and therein lies its preciousness. It is not what we do, but in whose name and HOW we do it, at which our Lord looks most. I do not mean that a right manner can put right a wrong action, but that a holy manner can make large a small action, and a godly manner can intensify a right action, whereas a failure of manner can empty that which would be full. A cup of cold water! - ah, how refreshing is this in the east. We do not live where we depend on wells. We do not live where wells' oftentimes run dry. We do not live where the water-carrier marches through our streets selling water to us. We are not months without any rain falling upon the earth. We have privileges in these respects, but let not such privileges make us forget the wondrous fulness of this precious promise. A cup of cold water, something to meet the NEED. One peculiarly beautiful illustration is found in the Earlier Scriptures. David is in the hold, and he longs for the well of Bethlehem, where he had oftentimes tended the sheep and of whose waters he had not seldom drunk. Perhaps half involuntarily, he said, "Who will give me some of the water of the well of Bethlehem?" Three of his mighty men dart through the host of the Philistines and go up toward the very garrison of the Philistines which is in

Bethlehem itself, and they draw the water from that well, and back they return with the speed of love, and present it to their beloved chief! He will not accept it. The water is poured out before the Lord. He says, Is not this the lives of these men? They went in the jeopardy of their lives. Ah, dear friends, we find in several passages beautiful illustrations of affection to David. Jonathan's close affection, to which David calls beautiful attention, is one encouraging case, but let us not forget the three mighty men. Such love may be remembered in the passage now before us, but I am sure it also reaches down to the tiny things of daily life - if done for Christ!

The expression "His reward" occurs also in 1 Cor. 3.8. In that passage the Lord's faithful ones are viewed in THREE positions. The apostle, speaking by the Holy Spirit, says, "Who then is Paul and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man. Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God That giveth the increase". The first thought therefore is, servants are nothing. Then we read, "Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one" - "nothing" with regard to God, but unitedly "one" with regard to "one another". The third view is that they are individual servants - "everyone shall receive his own reward according to his own labour". "His own reward", NOT someone else's reward. If he pleases the Lord in a certain action, the Lord will NOT forget to whom that action belongs.

The Lord is well acquainted with just what has been done by each of His own disciples. He never forgets. Oh how difficult it is for us to remember everything in connection with rewarding everyone. Yea, it is impossible, I have felt the problem oftentimes in the estimating of a series of "marks" for the Bible exercises of comparatively a small company of children, but the Lord will not forget His millions and He will give them all the right amount of reward. He will give them all the right number of marks. He never makes a mistake, He never fails!

We return in our mind to the address on the mount. Unlike socialism, that address lays a stress on HEAVEN. If persecuted down here, says the Lord, great is your reward in heaven. The opening words are that God's people who are poor in spirit are blessed. Why are they blessed? The Lord Jesus Christ Himself graciously answers, Because there is the kingdom of heaven and it is theirs. In like manner, the pure in heart shall see GOD. Socialism has no room for this occupying with God and heaven. The next chapter says, Lay not up for yourselves treasures in earth, lay up treasures in heaven. The whole position of that address is HEAVENLY. "Great is your reward in HEAVEN" "A great reward" is a precious thought, but "a great reward in heaven" intensifies it the more and reminds us of Gen. 15. 1. Beloved friends, why do we cling to the things that flee from us? Again let us come back to this thought "Great is your reward in heaven". If you are persecuted for Christ's sake and men say all manner of evil against you falsely, heaven is

a reality, and great is your reward there. The Holy Spirit emphasizes this. "An inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are being kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be unveiled in the last time". 1 Peter 1 is clear. Again, "The crown", says the apostle in 2 Tim. 4, "which is being laid up for me", and we read elsewhere (Col. 1) of the hope which is being laid up in the heavens, whereof ye have heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel. Oh, let us think of our heavenly possessions; let us have heavenly attachments, for this will mean earthly detachments. Let us know what it is to be drawn aside from the things that disappear because we endure as seeing Him who is invisible, and look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. Oh, dear friends, while speaking to you I feel how slow I myself am to appreciate all the fulness! "Great is your reward in heaven". Oh that we might not seek that which is merely enjoyable now, oh that we might not have our minds on those things which are worth so little, but that we might know what it is to have the great reward in heaven ever in front of us, as a glorious prospect linked with Him Who will soon return to our joy, and those who set their minds on things on earth will be ashamed, yea, shamed away from Him albeit in His presence. Let us seek, in the enabling of the Holy Spirit, to set our mind on things above where Christ is at the right

hand of God, not only living to make intercession for us, but expecting till His enemies be made His footstool, till He presents to Himself a church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, and His people are gathered in the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. Then there will be the fulness of joy for His people, but in view of it they have peace now amid all their difficulties and problems (John 16. 33). "Great is your reward in heaven" - what can compare with this? As the psalmist puts it in the psalm we have just heard - "In keeping of them there is great reward". Let us therefore keep within the truth, and keep along that path which the Lord has marked out for us. "In keeping of them there is a great reward", a great recompence, a great end, as the Lord suggests. The Lord has set before us this precious goal. We do not seek rewards selfishly but because He has laid stress on the subject Himself. He is at the right hand of God and let us look off unto Him the Author and Finisher of faith, Who having endured a cross and despised the shame is set down at the right hand of God! Thither would our eyes turn! With a holy alacrity we would mount up with wings as eagles, towards Whom we shall be caught up when He descends from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. And these things are not merely hopes in the vague worldly sense of the word, but hopes in the Divine sense of that encouraging peace. A precious promise wrapped up in His promises, for, as Prov. 11. 18 puts it "To him that

soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward". There is no doubt about this. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, although men count slackness.

"A SURE Reward". You may have your things put aside on earth, but thief and moth might spoil. Earth's banks are not for ever, earth's treasures will soon fade. Ah, how precious it is for us to know of a SURE reward. Everything is sure in the glory. "An inheritance that fadeth not away". A thousand years of bright prospect upon this earth are before us, for the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth when the Lord will display His hid treasure, but not only that - "A far more exceeding and ETERNAL weight of glory". Ah, let us be willing to lose the things of earth because of the things that are the Lord's, aye, because of the Lord Who has, and in Whom we have, the things. In Him is every encouragement to His people. Let us not be those who with faltering step follow afar off, but who, with spiritual and holy determination, as Caleb, wholly follow the Lord.

2 Sam. 19. 36 is suggestive with regard to one who had been faithful to exiled David. David was awhile away from Jerusalem, and Barzillai the Gileadite did all he could for his loved king. It is deeply interesting to notice the AFFECTION of Barzillai the Gileadite. He was not one of David's family particularly, he was in one sense distant, he was found the other side of Jordan and one with whom we should have expected there would have been less enthusiasm, but Barzillai

the Gileadite came with Machir the son of Ammiel of Lodebar: Machir the son of Ammiel of Lodebar was one of Saul's friends in whose house Mephibosheth had been. Did not Machir remember the love to Mephibosheth which put him at the king's table? and Machir the son of Ammiel with his friend Barzillai the Gileadite put David at their table, and when David came back to Jerusalem in peace he wanted to have Barzillai the Gileadite, and said, "Come with me". Barzillai replies, "I am fourscore years old; I cannot hear, I cannot know what I eat and drink. Why should I be a burden unto my lord the king?" Barzillai illustrated Psalm 90 - unlike Moses who wrote the Psalm, unlike some who, as Caleb, were granted to be exceptions, Barzillai indeed felt himself weak at the fourscore years, and so we read that Barzillai adds "Thy servant will go a little way over Jordan with the king, and why should the king recompense it with SUCH A REWARD?" Ah, why does our beloved Lord recompense the love to Him, while He is the rejected One, with such a reward? but such He does. He, the Greater than David, notices our care for Him, while an Absalom is in power as the god of this age, and while there is the despising of the One of Whom God says, "My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased" - SUCH a reward! Who can measure it? who can weigh it? who can count it? Such a reward. Oh that we might value it more though we cannot realize it all - SUCH a reward, in that day when the Lord's redeemed shall be the Lord's acknowledged ones in the midst of those who have fought against them and have looked

down upon them, for the Lord will vindicate Himself.

"A Full Reward" - this likewise is a precious topic. It is not for the glory of self but that our joy may be His joy, that we would seek reward: such an aspect is so important. Each crown will bring Him praise. We find in 2 John 8 a reference to the responsibility of the Lord's people to continue. The apostle says, "Have an eye to yourselves that we lose not (or it may be "ye lose not") that which we have wrought (it may be "that which ye have wrought") but that we receive (or, "that ye receive") a full reward". Is it possible to lose a reward although partly secured? "Hold fast that which thou hast that no man take thy crown". Solemn is that message. It is possible to have a crown in our grasp, as it were, and someone else to take it - LOST because of unfaithfulness. "A full reward". Ah, says the apostle, salvation all depends on grace; and therefore he never lays a stress upon man's works SECURING salvation, but we, as workers together, beseech you that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. And what does that mean "in vain"? It means "with a view to an empty reward". The apostle says, I do not want to run with a view to that which is empty. And we want a full reward - full, not a bubble - full, not with half of it removed. "Full" - how wondrous is the reward that the Lord will give to His faithful ones. We recollect how Boaz, in that precious book of Ruth, speaks to Ruth. She had left Moab, she had left her friends, and she had come to Bethlehem, the house of bread, and she had found the one

in whom was strength. Grace had laid hold of her, but because grace had laid hold of her she had wrought obedience, which was remembered by him who was gracious, and Boaz answered and said unto her, "It hath been fully showed me all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband, and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore". You remember the command to Abraham, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into a land". You remember the words of Psalm 45 echoing the book of Ruth. The bride is there instructed to forget her father's house, "So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty for He is thy Lord, and worship thou Him". So was it indeed, with Ruth. She had forgotten her own people and her father's house. What does Boaz say with his encouragement? - "The Lord recompense thy work; and A FULL REWARD be given thee of the Lord God of Israel under Whose wings thou art come to trust". Ah, sometimes we find that PEOPLE do not notice our acts of obedience. They will commend us for acts of DISobedience. They will notice our actions which are less acceptable to the Lord. Sometimes the things that please the Lord are all in the background, - the things that please Him most. But why should we be concerned? "A full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel". It hath been fully shown our beloved Lord, the Greater Boaz; it hath been fully shown to Him what we have done. Yea He knows all. "A full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel under Whose wings thou art come to trust"

God will not overlook, we can trust Him. Beloved friends, we live not for time, we live not for men, we live for the Lord Who lived and died for us.
