

eliminated from the services of the sanctuary. Far better offset abuse by the sanctified use of voice and stringed instrument. The revival of sacred music is always a sign of a higher activity of life. Christian people who do not sing and play for the glory of God wrong themselves.

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“IN SALEM IN HIS TABERNACLE.”

Salem is the abbreviated form for Jerusalem. “In Salem in his tabernacle” means in its first, literal sense, that the tabernacle which was made in the wilderness, and had been moved from place to place, had finally been brought to the top of Mount Zion, so that God’s dwelling place was within the walls of Jerusalem.

This sounds strangely to us. Involuntarily we ask: How can God be omnipresent and at the same time dwell in a given city, on a certain mountain top, in a tabernacle or temple? If in the old dispensation God had his tabernacle in Salem, and his dwelling-place in Zion, was not Israel more privileged than we? Have we then retrograded instead of advanced? Is the Gospel, which has no knowledge of Jerusalem on earth, poorer than the ritual of shadows that could point to the place of God’s presence? Especially when we read in the P’salms of “praise” that “waiteth in Zion,” and of a “doorkeeper” in the house of the Lord, clearness of insight is greatly to be desired. Though in early youth we may sing or recite these sentences thoughtlessly, with the growth of years we demand clearer understanding. This does not come by the study of history. It all depends upon personal, intentional

fellowship with the living God, which is the heart of all religion, upon the urgent desire of the soul to be ever more and more in constant touch with God. But here we always face an antithesis which we can never solve, before which all science stands helpless; even the antithesis between the infinity of God and the finiteness of every creature.

The attempt to bridge this gap has been tried in two ways. It has been vainly tried by man, and it has been brought about by God. In vain it has been tried by man in the way of the heathen, who have reduced the infinity of the Almighty to the finite form of an image. The result was idolatry which killed the spirit, and which ended in the petrification of all religion. But it has been brought about by God, who has swept away all polytheism and idolatry by originally confining his service to one place, by clearing his temple on Zion of every image of himself, and by maintaining the spiritual character of his worship; and who, when the dispensation of shadows had fulfilled its calling, gave us his temple in the incarnated Word, and on Pentecost extended this temple to his whole church, which is the Israel of the new Covenant. Along this wondrous, Divine way the end has been reached, that now, without weakening in the least, the Divine Infinity or Omnipresence, the children of God know that they have to seek access to God in Christ; that they can enjoy his fellowship in the communion of saints; and that they see their hearts more and more fashioned by the Holy Ghost into a dwelling place of God.

The clear representation, which this brings us, is, that the child of God, amid whatever dark-

ness or distress, is nowhere burdened with the oppressive thought that God is far off and that his presence can not be found in prayer. Whenever he kneels down he knows that God is there; that he is close at hand; that he listens to the prayer; that he sees and understands his child, and knows his way in every particular; and that no heart-string can vibrate either with sorrow or with joy, but God knows in advance what sound it would emit. "There is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou compassed my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways" (Ps. 139:4, 3). While on the other hand also God's child is constantly under the mighty impression of the majesty and supremacy of the Lord. In his descent to us the glory and the holiness of the Lord may never be lost from sight. To this end the Lord has made it known, that the same God who is ever close by every one of us, has his throne in the heavens, that there alone he unveils his glorious majesty, and is for no moment lost in the smallness, insignificance and finiteness of our human life. Life above and life on earth are distinctly separated, and not here, but only when we shall have passed through the gate of death, shall our eye see him in the fulness of his glory, in the Jerusalem, that is above.

The transition lies between these two. The transition in Christ, the transition in the communion of saints, the transition by the indwelling of the Spirit in our hearts; and this is the tabernacle in Salem, his dwelling place in Zion, his presence with the Israel of God. It goes on over and back. Christ in the flesh set in the heavens,

the Spirit descending into our hearts, and as well in Christ as in the Holy Ghost God Himself is worshipped by us.

This is the mystery. The son of man, who is one of us, who is our brother, who is closely related to us, and who in our nature has gone into heaven, does not stand by the side of God, but is himself God. The closest possible fellowship between God and man is thereby realized. On the other hand, while Christ is for all, the Holy Spirit descends and makes his dwelling in the heart of every child of God separately. Thus he founds a Salem in the hidden recesses of the soul, where God himself indwells, where his Divine life inspires us, and where it becomes the source of all our holier and higher emotions, sensations and impulses. And these two operate upon, and complement, one another. So that there is no fellowship with Christ apart from the Holy Ghost, and on the other hand there is no indwelling of the Holy Ghost save on the ground of our fellowship with God in Christ. Our nature in Christ dwelling in the heavens, and the Holy Ghost indwelling in our heart on earth. Thus God himself has laid the bridge of holy living, with one pier anchored in the heavens, and with the other resting in the center of our own human heart.

Even these two points of support, however, are in need of union. This they find in the communion of saints. Everyone knows for himself how his fellowship with God is strengthened when he is in touch with saints in the earth, and how on the other hand this fellowship suffers loss, when he has no other human contact than that of people of the world. The deep joy of the sacrament

of the Lord's supper springs from the focus of this fellowship. The holy supper bears witness to him of the glory of Christ, but only in the congregation, not without it. Hence no higher and holier institution could have been given to men, than when "in the night in which he was betrayed" Christ brake the bread and poured the wine, and called the Holy Supper into being. This is the centrum; here all lines become one, along which fellowship is established between the soul and God.

Nothing therefore is more heinous, than the sinful doing of those who by quarrelling and by passionate contention for the right of particular views cause this fellowship of God's saints to weaken and to grow faint. Our Savior gave us a new commandment, even that we love one another. This new love, which he commanded, is the tenderest love that is thinkable on earth, since it is in the flood-tide of this new love, that God will draw near unto us, and lift us up to himself. And what does he do, who, failing to understand this new love, abuses the church and this holy fellowship of love for the sake of propagating his own particular views, but break down Salem, destroy the tabernacle of the Lord, and as far as he is able obstruct fellowship with God?

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"THE NIGHT IS FAR SPENT."

After conversion we are in an intermediate state until death. The night is far spent, the day is at hand, but it is not yet noon. That only comes when the glory of Christ shall break in upon all spheres. Until that hour we are ever approach-