

ADDERS' EGGS *and*
SPIDER'S WEBS

OR

HUMAN THEORIES
VS.
DIVINE REVELATION

BY

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Isaiah 59: 1-15

BEHOLD, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:

2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

3 For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness.

4 None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth; they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.

5 *They hatch adders' eggs and weave the spider's web:* he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper.

6 *Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works:* their works are works of iniquity, and the act of violence is in their hands.

7 Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths.

8 The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths; whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.

9 Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness.

10 We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes: we stumble at noon day as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men.

11 We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but there is none; for salvation, but it is far off from us.

12 For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them;

13 In transgressing and lying against the LORD, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood.

14 And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter.

15 Yea, truth faileth, and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment.

ADDERS' EGGS AND SPIDER'S WEBS

YOU who are familiar with your Bibles will recognize the foregoing solemn passage as one of the portions of the Old Testament Scripture from which the Apostle Paul quotes when arguing in his crushing indictment of the entire human family in Romans 3. Verses 15 to 17 of that chapter are taken from Isaiah 59, thus emphasizing for us a fact I wish to stress at this time: We have here the moral condition not only of Israel in the days of the evangelical prophet, but the condition of man generally at all times and in all places, and we may expect to see it accentuated as we draw near the close of the present dispensation of grace.

Our Lord has taught us that the corruption and violence of the days of Noah and the abomination and mocking of Sodom and Gomorrah will be reproduced in the very part of the world that has had the greatest privileges, immediately before the return of the Son of man. Well may we therefore give our serious attention to Isaiah's trenchant words.

SIN IS THE GREAT SEPARATOR

Sin is the great separator. "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God." This is

moral and spiritual death, and is the fearful condition of godless Christendom today. Men unblushingly deny the supernatural, because they have never known the power of God in their own lives. They have never yet been on praying ground, and so they declare that definite answers to prayer on the part of a personal God cannot possibly be. Millions of truly born-again men and women in all ages have given unimpeachable witness to the contrary, but all this mass of evidence is ruled out of court. The universe, we are told, is governed by unchangeable law, and law forbids any manifestation of a personal God. Yet prayer is in fullest accord with spiritual law, which the natural man cannot comprehend because he refuses to put himself into that attitude of mind in which he can detect the working of the Divine.

"Your sins have hid His face from you." Sin is the great nonconductor. Iniquity is an absolute insulation. It is impossible to connect with heaven while the hands are defiled with blood and the fingers with iniquity. The lying tongue cannot utter a prayer that God will hear, nor the unbelieving mind receive a message from the Throne of the universe, until, indeed, the summons to come to judgment shrivels up the last vestige of no-faith, and the affrighted sinner knows at last that it is a personal God with whom he has to do.

"Hands defiled with blood." Whose blood? First and most dreadful of all, the blood of the Son of God. The Christ-rejector is a deicide! He stands condemned as condoning the greatest crime of all the ages. He is morally allied with those who cried, "His blood be on us and on our children."

But, second, "the blood of the poor innocents" is charged against him who by word and example causes the soul-ruin of those who "follow their pernicious ways." Who can conceive the guilt of him who by a vicious life or by vicious teaching seduces youth into immorality of life, which is really death—for "she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth"—or into immorality of teaching, which is spiritual death, for it carries its own condemnation with it, because it is written that when Deity speaks "he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar, because he hath not believed in the witness that God hath borne concerning His Son."

It is useless to say, "I have prayed, but there was no answer from God; so I concluded that prayer is folly, and that a personal God who reveals Himself to His creatures is a myth." God has never promised to reveal Himself to unrepentant sinners. He has never promised to hear the prayer of the wilfully disobedient and gainsaying.

Sin separates. It separates in time; it will sepa-

rate in eternity. It is this that is the root of all the trouble and perplexity in which men find themselves today. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." While men trust in vanity and speak lies, while they conceive mischief and bring forth iniquity, they cannot, in the very nature of things understand the Holy God or form right conclusions as to His being or His demands.

MODERN UNBELIEF

And so they formulate systems of their own and propagate theories spun out of their own minds, inspired by the arch-apostate, the Devil. Most popular of all today is what is vaingloriously designated Modernism, Liberalism, or the New and Advanced Theology—terms which to many imply culture and sound judgment, and are used with the object of making the conjectures of their proponents acceptable and their wild guesses seem to the uninitiated "sane and safe."

But hear what the word of the living God says of every way that professes to bring man into tune with the Infinite that is not the way given us by Divine revelation: "They hatch adders' eggs, and weave the spider's web; he that eateth of their eggs dieth; and that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper. Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works."

There you have it—"adders' eggs and spider's webs"! It is God Himself who so designates the satanic perversions of His truth which natural, unregenerate men are ever ready to accept in place of His revealed word.

Some one has said, "Oh, the credulity of unbelief!" The unbeliever can believe anything, no matter how fantastic—even the crude conjectures of evolutionists—rather than the simple, reasonable statements of God's unalterable Word.

Adders' eggs! The poisonous product of the serpent, yet so like the harmless egg of the fowl that the ignorant and unwary are easily deceived, to their own destruction! The whole range of bloodless, Christless systems so eagerly taken up by unregenerate preachers, teachers, and peoples are but the spawn of that old serpent the Devil and Satan—a viper brood that will sting to death all who attempt to feed upon them.

Observe the symptoms of serpent-poisoning described in verses 8 to 11. The bitten devotee of false cults cannot keep a straight road, deliriously he walks in a crooked path. Unable to rightly understand the claims of justice and that righteousness which is according to God, he looks for light, but beholds darkness; for brightness, but beholds obscurity. Groping like the blind, bewildered as one with no eyes, he stumbles over the plainest truths of

Scripture and in the full noontide blaze of a Divine revelation tells you he is seeking for light, while refusing the testimony of God. Pretending to have something more suited to the modern mind than the word of God has declared, he seeks after justice, but there is none; and salvation, but it is far off.

Hear the ravings of one of these serpent-poisoned prophets of the new era: "Sin itself is a quest for God—a blundering quest, but a quest for all that. The man who got dead drunk last night did so because of the impulse within him to break through the barriers of his limitations, to express himself, and to realize the more abundant life. His self-indulgence just came to that; he wanted, if only for a brief hour, to live the larger life, to expand the soul, to enter untrodden regions, and gather to himself new experiences. That drunken debauch was a quest for life, a quest for God. Men in their sinful follies today and their blank atheism, and their foul blasphemies, their trampling upon things that are beautiful and good, are engaged in this dim, blundering quest for God, whom to know is life eternal. The *roué* you saw in Piccadilly last night, who went out to corrupt innocence and to wallow in filthiness of the flesh, was engaged in his blundering quest for God." *

* From R. J. Campbell's *New Theology*. In justice to him, I am glad to say he has since repudiated his insane ravings; but what of the thousands who have been inoculated by them?

Could anything show more unmistakably the trend of the new theology, with its utter rejection of the Bible doctrine as to sin and its punishment? What a crooked thing is this, and what crooked living must be the result of such insidious poison!

Satan works by imitation, and so we need not be surprised to see every truth of our holy religion misrepresented and the most orthodox terms used to cover the most heterodox conceptions. They are adders' eggs! Look out for the viper!

"THAT OLD SERPENT THE DEVIL"

From the beginning the old serpent has sought to inject into the mind of man doubts as to the reliability of a Divine revelation. The new theology is the old lie of Eden revamped. "Hath God said?" queried the subtle tempter; and when the virus of doubt had begun to numb the sensitiveness of the spirit of Eve he declared, "Ye shall not surely die. . . . ye shall be as God." † The first lie is his latest masterpiece. Union with God by natural creation is the essence of the cult we are considering. God and man are one, therefore no need of a vicarious atonement for sin! This is the form the primeval lie has now taken. Atonement is only the realization of your at-one-ment with the Divine. So hisses the serpent most subtly. But what saith the Scriptures? "Your iniquities have separated be-

† It is Elohim—the Triune God.

tween you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you." What is needed? A propitiation for sin, and He who died for our sins and rose again for our justification is Himself "the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). This is the gospel of God. And mark, this propitiation was made by blood, even the precious blood of Christ.

Beware of all bloodless gospels. They are but adders' eggs and spider's webs.

WHY THE LIMITED WAS WRECKED

Some years ago a fearful railroad wreck took dreadful toll of life and limb in an Eastern state. A train, loaded with young people returning from school, was stalled on a suburban track because of what is known as a "hot-box." The limited was soon due, but a flagman was sent back to warn the engineer in order to avert a rear-end collision. Thinking all was well, the crowd laughed and chatted while the train-hands worked on in fancied security. Suddenly the whistle of the limited was heard and on came the heavy train and crashed into the local, with horrible effect.

The engineer of the limited saved his own life

by jumping, and some days afterwards was hailed into court to account for his part in the calamity. And now a curious discrepancy in testimony occurred. He was asked, "Did you not see the flagman warning you to stop?"

He replied, "I saw him, but he waved a yellow flag, and I took it for granted all was well, and so went on, though slowing down."

The flagman was called. "What flag did you wave?"

"A red flag, but he went by me like a shot."

"Are you sure it was red?"

"Absolutely."

Both insisted on the correctness of their testimony, and it was demonstrated that neither was color-blind. Finally the man was asked to produce the flag itself as evidence. After some delay he was able to do so, and then the mystery was explained. *It had been red*, but it had been exposed to the weather so long that all the red was bleached out, and it was but *a dirty yellow!*

Oh, the lives eternally wrecked by the yellow gospels of the day—the bloodless theories of unregenerate men that send their hearers to their doom instead of stopping them on their downward road!

No wonder the faithful apostle cries, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other

gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." And lest any should think he spoke in haste, not weighing his words, he adds, "As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:8, 9). To trifle with souls is an awful sin.

"They weave the spider's web." Consider the spider's web. And first, what is this gossamer-like creation that looks so harmless and seems so fragile and is often so beautiful, like the finest of lace and most cunningly wrought? It is the product of a poisonous insect you say. Yes, but just what is it after all? It is simply *foam*. It is a frothy exudation from a tiny gland in the abdomen of the spider, and is produced at will by the little creature for one purpose, and that is to entrap the unwary.

MAN'S THEORIES ARE LIKE SPIDER'S WEBS

Have you not often exclaimed with wonder, "How can so small an insect produce so large a web!" And as you ponder some of the products of the Satan-inspired men (and women, too) of these and past days you may well cry out in amazement, "How did so small a mind spin so wonderful a theory!" Ah, they are just like spiders. They spin the web out of themselves and they, too, have but one object, to ensnare unwary souls.

Scripture asks, "What, came the word of God out from you, or came it unto you only?" It never came out of man's mind. It is a revelation from heaven. Human theories are spun out of the human mind as spider's webs are spun out of the insect's body. And upon these foam-like systems people who will not believe God dare to rest their eternal destiny. I do not mean that all the proponents of false systems are deliberately dishonest. There are deceivers and deceived, but the systems themselves are satanic in origin and have for their object the ruin of those who trust them.

And how aptly are they designed for this purpose. Satan has his appeals to the desire for ease, for physical health, for a respectable religion that will not interfere with the inclinations of the natural heart, for a religion endorsed by "all scholars" that will appeal to those who would pass for the cultured class and whose sensibilities are so refined they are shocked by plain words about the vileness of sin and its just desert; itching ears are tickled with sentimental rhapsodies about brotherhood and universal love; hell is never mentioned, or if the word is used, it is only that the fact may be explained away. The virile doctrine of redemption by the precious blood of Christ is side-stepped, and preachers prate of salvation by character instead. And all the while the souls of men and women are

being enmeshed in these spiders' webs of satanic devising, and thus lured on to perdition.

"The devil plays with loaded dice," someone has said. The figure is different but the thought is the same. His aim is ever to hide the truth by a systematizing of error, for he himself is an apostate, "he abode not in the truth"; he is a liar, and "when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own."

He deceives the worldling with pleasure and folly. He deceives the religious man with a false gospel. "We are not ignorant of his devices." We who are saved were once under his power, and deceived like others.

"Life passing aimlessly,
 Seeking for joys,
 Building bright hopes upon
 Frail, earthly toys;
 Satan gilt time for us
 As it slipped by,
 Little we thought of God
Then, you and I.
 Pleasure, an opiate,
 Making us deem
 Hell but an idle threat,
 Heaven a dream.
 Caught in this world-web,
 Like any fly,
 Satan had hold of us
Then, you and I."

What mercy to be saved from it all! Is it any wonder we are in earnest now trying to tear off the mask and expose the sham that nearly ruined our own souls?

We who stand for the true faith are sometimes called uncharitable because we can not condone these perversions of the Gospel. But we love the men who are ensnared though we hate the systems they proclaim, for we know their terrible danger, the baneful effects of false gospels upon those who "turn away from the truth and are turned unto fables." It is because "the end thereof are the ways of death" that we warn of the ways that seem right unto a man, when uninstructed by the word of God.

Justin Martyr wrote long ago, "Many spirits are abroad in the world, and the credentials they display are splendid gifts of mind, learning, and of talent. Christian, look carefully. Ask for the *print of the nails.*" Ah, that is the test! What place has the Crucified in your thoughts?

"What think ye of Christ? is the question
 To try both your state and your scheme;
 You cannot be right in the rest,
 Unless you think rightly of Him."

There are perhaps four main systems of thought belonging to the spider-web philosophy, for theology it is not.

THE THEISTIC EVOLUTION WEB

Perhaps the most popular one today is that which so many Christless professors of pseudo-science are proclaiming under the high sounding title of Theistic evolution. Man, according to them, is but the product of evolutionary forces which were all latent in the primeval cell created by God eons ago and left to evolve at its leisure, according to unalterable law. Up from star dust to universes, and from protoplasm to the superman the world has come, with many aberrations, but withal a continued progress, in spite of lapses and missing links without number. Who can doubt that the eternities will complete the process until all men have attained the full stature of Sons of God? According to this, Jesus Christ was the result of evolution, and the promise of what all men shall yet be. Fall there has been none. "Every fall," says one, "is a fall upward." Sin is but ignorance. It is given to man to develop through experience, and his iniquities, as we have seen, are but a quest after the divine!

How attractive a spider's web is this, but how flimsy is such a system! Verily, "their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works."

The entire system is unsupported by a single proof. Its progenitor, Darwinism, with its theory of natural selection, is today utterly discredited,

though thirty or forty years ago it was hailed as the explanation of the riddle of the universe. Unquestionably a few more decades and Theistic evolution will be as dead as the former view.

Men talk of the controversy between science and religion. Do they mean that science and the Scriptures disagree? Then so much the worse for science!

But hear me: There never has been and there is not now the slightest conflict between ascertained science and the Bible rightly understood. How could there be? God is the creator and upholder of the Universe, and "God spake all these words."

Conflict there has been and is today between the truth of science and unscriptural religious theories.

Conflict there has been and is today between the truth of the Bible and fantastic scientific hypotheses.

But conflict between the truth scientific and the truth Biblical there never has been, is not now, and we dare to say, never will be.

It would be well, therefore, if scientists would become familiar with the Bible before denouncing it, and it would be well if Bible believers would learn to distinguish between mere unproven hypotheses put forth in the name of science and incontrovertible facts orderly arranged. And we may rest assured science will never invalidate the testimony of Genesis on creation or of the Gospels on redemption,

for they are given by inspiration of the Spirit of Him who is both Creator and Redeemer. They who reject His witness are easily deceived.

THE "BACK TO CHRIST" WEB

But for those who are not so credulous the arch-spider has another system. Men are admittedly sinners, fallen and come short of the glory of God. What they need is a great exemplar and the energy to follow Him, in order to retrieve themselves. "Back to Christ!" is the cry. Heed His instructions, follow His steps, imitate His holy and unselfish life, and all will be well!

But Christ does not save by precept. He is not presented as an example to the unregenerate. He saves by His death. The bread of God is He who came down from heaven to give His life for the world. That means to die, and to die vicariously. Hence we must eat His flesh and drink His blood or we have no life in us. Until we have life we cannot walk as He walked. A new birth is imperative. Without it we cannot enter that kingdom which is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Holding the sacramental cup in His hand, Jesus says in tones of tenderest love, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is shed for you for the remission of sins."

Any system that ignores this basic truth of atonement by blood—life given up that sinners may be saved—is but a spider's web. Of old God declared, "The life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls." Note this well, "I have given it to *you*." And so we read of "the flock of God purchased with His own blood." In giving the blood of Christ God gave what was His own for our redemption. What must be the doom of those who lightly pass it by, or scornfully reject it and blasphemously sneer at what they call a "religion of the shambles"? "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Heb. 10:28, 29.) Dr. Chafer has well said, "Many there are who profess to accept the teacher that taught them, but reject the Saviour that bought them."

"Without shedding of blood is no remission." Blood shed is life given up. No mere man "can by any means redeem his brother or give to God a ransom for him." Nor is it possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should put away sin.

"Not all the blood of beasts
 On Jewish altars slain
 Could give the guilty conscience peace,
 Or wash away the stain.
 But Christ the heavenly Lamb
 Takes all our guilt away,
 A sacrifice of nobler name,
 And richer blood than they."

To go back to Christ indeed will lead us back to His cross, where "the Son of man *must* be lifted up that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Back to Christ will lead us to the wilderness where He proclaims, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and *drink His blood*, ye have no life in you."

Back to Christ will lead us to His feet who declares, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to *give His life* a ransom for many."

It is vain to prate of following Jesus while ignoring His unmistakable teaching regarding His great redemption.

THE SEDUCTIVE WEB OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

But a third web is stretched out and most cunningly devised for those who escape the former two. All the spiders are not masculine. It remained for an old lady spider to spin one of the flimsiest and

yet, for myriads, one of the most attractively seductive webs of all. Its great central lie is the denial of sin. It is a religion of negations. It declares matter is non-existent, therefore sin, sickness, pain and death are all delusions, simply errors of mortal mind. As sin does not exist, an atonement for sin is an absurdity, and so we are blasphemously told that "the blood of Jesus was no more able to cleanse from sin when it was shed on the accursed tree than when it was flowing in His veins." Christ's death was but a seeming death; His resurrection but an illusion. He Himself was not the way to God, but simply the way-shower, and the only salvation there is for anyone is that of demonstrating the principles of Eddyism! Alas, for those who become enmeshed in this fearful web of chicanery, absurdity, and blasphemy, only to find themselves at last dying a real death, weighted down by real sins, sinking into a real hell! I know many go into this entangling web lured on by the hope of obtaining physical health. Seeking to demonstrate the lie "there is no sickness," they hope to be cured of fancied ills! Others find in it a ready refuge from the accusations of a troubled conscience. For if there is no sin why be troubled about what has no existence?

But to both these classes the Bible shows a more excellent way. The conscience purged by the blood

of Christ enters into peace with God. Not by denying sin, but by confessing it, is this peace obtained. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). Here is the royal road to rest of mind and conscience in regard to sin. And as to bodily ailments, what could be better than these gracious words: "Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God that passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6, 7).

It is true, there is no positive promise here to grant every request as asked; but if God sees it would be better for us to give a different blessing, the subject soul will say with Paul, "Most gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." For God either removes the trouble or gives grace to endure. Good health is not always the greatest blessing one could have. But to be subject to the will of the Lord is always good, whatever the outward circumstances.

THE MILLENNIAL DAWN WEB

Another soul-entrapping web was spun some years ago by a venerable-looking old spider and by himself called "Millennial Dawn," and by others "Res-

titutionism." Scripture teaches "the restitution of all things, *spoken by the prophets.*" This false system promises a restitution of all things and all men, even though the Scriptures plainly declare that "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). Observe how this one passage cuts down to the roots the twin errors of Universalism and annihilation of the soul. You cannot logically couple the thought of abiding wrath—enduring anger—with unconsciousness after death or the annihilation of the wicked. And if there are those who *shall not see life*, then manifestly the doctrine that salvation is for all, whether they believe on the Son or not, is a delusion of the Devil. There is no hint in the Word of God of a second opportunity for salvation if men die in their sins. The whole trend of the Bible's teaching as to the last things is to the effect that it is a fatal thing to leave this world out of harmony with God. Jesus said, "Except ye believe that I am, ye shall die in your sins, and *whither I go ye cannot come.*" Of Judas He solemnly affirmed, "It were good for that man if he had never been born." There is no suggestion of another chance for salvation in either of these instances, nor in any other, if the Scriptures be accepted as given and not dexterously twisted and their plain meaning denied.

"Now is the accepted time; now is the day of

salvation." "It is appointed unto men *once* to die, and after this the judgment." Note well—not after this a larger hope, or a second probation—but judgment, irrevocable and eternal. This is the only world in which God is reconciling men to Himself. This is the only life in which sinners are offered a refuge from the wrath to come, and that refuge is Christ.

Other webs there are without number, but all alike substitute some human or satanic system for the Gospel of the grace of God. They delude with false hopes, for they make promises which they can never fulfill, and he who becomes entangled in them and is not delivered this side of the tomb will be forever in the darkness. Yet how many there are who take up with systems such as these, confidently hoping that God will be different than His word. At last they must learn that "He will not call back His words," when they stand naked in their sins before His judgment throne, for "their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works."

Vain is the hope of man to find salvation in anything apart from the atoning blood of the Christ of God.

THE FATE OF THE "HUMAN FLY"

Some years ago there came to Los Angeles, the great metropolis of Southern California, a so-called

"human fly." It was announced that on a given day he would climb up the face of one of the large department store buildings, and long before the appointed time thousands of eager spectators were gathered to see him perform the seemingly impossible feat.

But slowly and carefully he mounted aloft, now clinging to a window ledge, anon to a jutting brick, again to a cornice. Up and up he went, against apparently insurmountable difficulties. At last he was nearing the top. He was seen to feel to right and left and above his head for something firm enough to support his weight, to carry him further. And soon he seemed to spy what looked like a grey bit of stone or discolored brick protruding from the smooth wall. He reached for it, but it was just beyond him. He ventured all on a spring-like movement, grasped the protuberance and, before the horrified eyes of the spectators, fell to the ground and was broken to pieces. In his dead hand was found a spider's web! What he evidently mistook for solid stone or brick turned out to be nothing but dried froth!

Alas, how many are thinking to climb to heaven by effort of their own, only to find at last that they have ventured all on a spider's web, and so are lost forever.

Christ, and Christ alone, can save. His gospel

is unfailing and peace-giving. It is no adder's egg nor spider's web, but the "power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

Here you have the "garment of salvation," "the best robe," "the robe of righteousness," provided by God Himself through the death of His Son for all who own their guilt and trust His grace. "He gives the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

We have seen how futile are human efforts to fit the ungodly for the Divine Presence. Spiders' webs will not avail to cover the moral nakedness of Christ-rejecting sinners. "Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works." Whoever heard of a dress woven from the web of the spider?

THE SILKWORM IS DIFFERENT

But how different is the produce of another tiny creature, the silkworm! This marvelous little being spins a thread of such strength that it is readily woven into cloth of the utmost beauty and made up into garments of glory. But the silkworm must die that the floss may thus be utilized. Is it too much to say that here we have in nature more than a hint of Him who in the depth of His humiliation could exclaim, "I am a worm and no man," and who gave His life that we might be clothed in glory? No wonder that an erstwhile persecutor

declared, in view of this supreme atoning sacrifice, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world," and "yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but offal, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."

Why trifle with adders' eggs and spiders' webs when the Son of man has given His flesh to eat that we might have life eternal, and has provided for every believer in Him a perfect righteousness, a covering in which we may shine with ethereal brightness forever and ever?

AN ATHEIST'S CONFESSION

It is years since, as a young preacher, I made the acquaintance of and became deeply interested in a gentleman who had been almost all his days an atheist, spurning the revelation God has given in His word, and yet priding himself on a life of respectability. Awakened to see his folly by the marvelous transformation of a friend who had for many years fought a losing battle with the drink demon,

but who was made a new creature through faith in Christ, he began to question the soundness of his former views. His attention being directed to Isaiah's circumstantial prophecy of Christ, in chapter 53, he pondered with wonder the sublime description of the life, death, and resurrection of the Redeemer, written seven centuries before the advent of Jesus of Nazareth. As he read, his infidelity vanished, his unbelief melted away, and with tears streaming down his face he confessed his faith in the Saviour's love.

As nearly as I can recall it after the lapse of years, I give his testimony as he gave it a few nights later. He said, "I have been all my life an atheist. For me there was no God and no future life. I ridiculed religion as superstition and intellectual folly. By profession a civil engineer, graduated from Cambridge University, I was sent out to Palestine to survey the Jaffa-to-Jerusalem Railway. While in that strange land I visited many of the shrines and sacred places. Much that I saw increased my contempt for Christianity, but other things I found hard to get over. The very stones of Palestine seemed at times to cry: 'The Bible is true.' But the ridiculous credulity of the devotees of various churches who believed every tale that designing guides related only confirmed my atheistic notions.

"One day a party of us stood on the skull-shaped knoll outside Jerusalem which General Gordon considers the true Calvary. As I thought of the tragedy reputed to have been enacted there I cursed and swore, for I felt that it was there the Christian imposition possibly began. So blasphemous was my language my companions left me in fear that a bolt from the blue might strike me dead, and they be involved. I poured out the hatred of my soul against Jesus. But in the last few days and nights I have made a wonderful discovery. I now know that the One that I cursed on Calvary was there wounded for my transgressions and bruised for my iniquities; the chastisement of my peace was upon Him, and by His stripes I am healed."

Thus he had spurned the adder's eggs of atheism and cast aside the spider's webs of self-righteousness to learn that Jesus Christ was made unto him wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.