SERMON BY THE REV. A. J. GORDON, D. D. 
PREACHED IN CLARENDON-STREET CHURCH, BOSTON, MAY 7TH. 

SUBJECT: MEMORY AND HOPE.

"This do ye as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."—1 Cor. 11: 26.

It has been truly said that three things are necessary to constitute a happy life—something to love, something to remember, and something to hope for. And this saying is only a translation of that word of Scripture, "And now abideth faith, hope, charity; these three, but the greatest of these is charity." Faith takes us back to the cross, and kindles holy remembrance of the death of Christ, love takes us up to the throne, and awakens blessed communion with the living Christ, and hope takes us forward to the advent, and begets holy anticipations of the coming of the King in his glory. Jesus Christ in his death, and exaltation and second coming, is the something to remember, and something to love, and something to hope for, which can make a happy life. And it is very necessary that all these grace be in active exercise, in order that the Christian life may be well balanced. There are those who live altogether in memory and not at all in hope. They are anchored to the past. Their heaven is behind them, and not before them: life has receded upon itself and become a something which was, rather than a something evermore about to be. The pendulum of the mind has swung back and been fastened there, so that the clock work has stopped. A soul which lives entirely in memory, becomes dead to the future; a soul which lives entirely in hope, becomes dead to the present. The pendulum must swing between the two, between the past and the future, between memory and hope, if the hands are to move steadily on and mount higher and higher each day. I explained to you last Sabbath the significance of baptism. I wish to explain the significance of the Lord's Supper to you in just the direction which I have indicated.

1. The Lord's Supper as a memorial ordinance. "This do in remembrance of me."—It is the glory of Christ's atoning death, that it is something worthy to be remembered forever. Even the greatest human events become dissolved, in the perpetual flow of the stream of time, and are rather held in solution in history, than standing out from history conspicuous and isolated. Strictly speaking we can only remember a thing which we have seen and experienced. If I were to ask you if you remembered the landing of the Pilgrims, sus Christ the Son of God to the grade of other good men, and why should we keep up a memorial feast for him any more than for a hundred others who have lived and died in the world? It is because I know that Jesus Christ was so good that he could face the world with the challenge, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" and so great that he has been exalted to sit down with God in his throne he is worthy to be remembered through all time in a memorial ordinance. Then besides all this we are to remember that a great and holy memory has a most powerful influence on present life and conduct. Hope draws us; memory impels us. If unbelief blots out our faith in the future, it cannot destroy the past. That is fact and reality and history, and hence it often has a most resists impelling power.

A Scotch mother was many years ago attempting to make her way over a Highland pass with her babe in her arms. Overtaken by a blinding storm and chilled by the cold and bewildered by the darkness, she found herself sinking. She determined to shelter her child in the cleft of a rock and then push on for help, and return. She hid him in the rude refuge, and staggered on a few steps only to sink exhausted in the snow. The villagers found her body in the morning, and also the babe, whose cry they heard. The boy grew to be a man and a soldier. In the Crimean war he lost a limb. While in the hospital, the story of his early infancy came to memory. As he reflected on the romantic circumstances, a nurse beside him happened to sing "Rock of Ages." He wept as he thought of his sinful life, but on his recovery he returned again to his evil ways. Years afterwards he went to his native village. All were strangers to him. Sunday morning he walked out to the quiet churchyard and knelt by his mother's grave. The turf was green and sprinkled with daisies, for she was loved by the people who loved to beautify her grave. He then went into the old church, and there they sang again the hymn.—

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee."

Memories of the past came like a flood over his soul. He wept and prayed, and there sought the Saviour. He lived but a little while, and then went to his rest in the same village churchyard, and his spirit went to join the blessed company of the redeemed. You see what one holy memory did for this young man. And it is not a solitary instance.

A hundred years ago there was a young man engaged in the slave trade on the coast of Africa, and steeped in all the degrading vices which such a business engenders. He tells us how as lost, heart-sick and disgusted he sank down under his burden when a strange and overpowering great hope of the church, in which other hopes centre and culminate.

Notice now what the Scriptures teach concerning the influence of this hope. First as to its purifying power. "We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." If a Christian lives under the power of this glorious hope, he will just as certainly be purified by it as the linen is whitened out under the rays of the sun. You may say that it is too distant and mysterious an idea to effect us very strongly. But it is what we contemplate that influences us most powerfully, not what we see and handle merely. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." The iron becomes magnetized by the magnet against which it grinds. And the soul becomes assimilated to that on which it thinks. Christians are described in Scripture by this distinctive title—"those that love his appearing." We become like that which we love. If the object of our affection be a sordid one, it will give a sordid and selfish tinge to all our thoughts and desires; if it be an elevated one it will just as certainly exalt and sublimate our affections. Michael Angelo, by perpetual looking up to the marvellous frescos on which he wrought in the church domes, acquired a fixed upward gaze which he never outgrew, so that as he passed along the street he seemed all the while to be contemplating something in the sky. And Christ left this great hope to his church in order that it might give a steady, moral uplift to the life—that so the disciple might have his face turned heavenward and not earthward. Mourner, do not look towards the grave and allow your life to reflect its shadows; but look toward the sky and catch the light of the coming resurrection morn! Christian, do not look towards the earth or let your countenance be tinged with the reflection of the yellow gold, but look toward the throne and let your face reflect the light of the knowledge of the glory of God from the face of Jesus Christ. May God help you to be like men who wait for their Lord when he shall return from heaven. "For every one that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure."

And besides this purifying influence is the mighty uplifting power of this blessed hope. "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil," whither Christ the forerunner has for us entered.

When the high priest entered within the vail of the Holiest every eye in the Jewish Congregation was directed towards him, watching for him to return. They heard the sound of the silver bells which he wore upon
or the annunciation of the Holy Virgin, you would think it an absurd question, since these events happened long before you were born. Yet we speak of remembering the death of Christ, which took place eighteen hundred years ago. But don’t you realize that Christ is so different from every other being, that his whole life and work are in a kind of perpetual present tense? We speak about coming to Christ, and accepting Christ, and walking with Christ, and being crucified with Christ, just as if he were here to-day. But the great always seem near. Mt Washington when ten miles away, seems so near that you would think you could walk to it in half an hour. The splendid rainbow in the clouds used to look to me as if I could clasp it in my hands by just running over the brow of a little hill, near my country home. So it is that great things seem near. They are near. They take us up in themselves and so identify us with them, that we cannot, think of ourselves as separated from them either in time or space. Did you know John Brown? "I was crucified with him," he answers. I never saw him in the body, but so great and exalted was the death which he died on the cross, that he seemed to think of it as something within his own experience. He remembered it. He was there when it occurred. He was crucified with his Lord.

You see then what memory does for us. It closes up the gaps of time. It makes us neighbors to those who lived ages ago, and brings us into immediate and intimate communion with them. I recall a very aged man whom I knew as a boy. I have heard him break out in a very excited manner to describe his battles with wild beasts, describing most graphically just how he was attacked and how he conquered. "When was it?" I would ask. "Why, it was only yesterday," he would answer. "Haven’t you heard about it?" As a matter of fact he was telling of what had happened sixty or seventy years ago in the early settlement of the town. Memory had broken down all the bridges of time and space. It had turned life back upon itself. It had made a half century ago to become as yesterday. This is exactly the philosophy of Communion. "This do in remembrance of me." Let eighteen centuries drop out of sight. Let the two ends of the Dispensation be folded together like a scroll. Let the table be spread in the upper chamber of Jerusalem. Let Christ our Master break the bread and distribute the cup for us. We are guests of Jesus of Nazareth to-day. And because Christ is so great and his

of a vision on earth. It was simply a holy memory from the past. This young man was John Newton, and he described his vision in a hymn he wrote:

"I saw one hanging on a tree,
In agony and blood,
Who fixed his languid eyes on me,
As near his cross I stood.

Save never till my latest breath
Can I forget that look;
It seemed to charge me with his death,
Though not a word he spoke."

And the history of the Church is full of just such stories as these. Let who will say the present, the present is the present which can alone powerfully influence. That holy memory of Calvary it is that is changing the face of the world; taming men from savages into saints; razing churches above the ashes of the funeral pyre and the blood of the cannibals’ slaughter house. It is true

"We live in deeds, not years,
In thoughts, not figures on a dial;"

but most of all we live in memory and in hope.

2. The Lord’s Supper as a propitiatory ordinance: "Ye do show the Lord’s death until he come.

I have said that we need two motives, memory and hope, to keep the soul in equilibrium. Memory must constantly draw us back to the cross, and hope must constantly attract us forward to the crown, if our hearts are to be kept in even and balanced communion with God. As the waters of the sea are held between two mighty gravitations, the moon now drawing those waters towards itself, and the earth now drawing them back again, thus giving us the ebbing and flowing tide by which our earth is kept clean and healthful, so must the tides of the soul’s affection move perpetually between the cross of Christ and the coming of Christ, influenced now by the power of memory and now by the power of hope. So it is that the Lord’s Supper gives us these key-words, "In remembrance" and "Till he come."

It is very strange, that to many it should sound almost fanatical to talk about the second advent of Christ. As a matter of fact it is the most prominent theme in the New Testament. An actual count shows that there are more verses upon this than upon any single doctrine relating to Christ. Run through your Bibles and see how constantly this subject is held up. It is the key-note of every exhortation, the crown of every promise, and the culmination of every hope. Does the Scripture exhort us to patience? It says, "Be ye therefore patient, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord." Does it seek to bring us consolation in our sorrows? It says, "The Lord himself;

His blessed promises sound out to us from glory like bells with solemn, sweet vibrations. I am he that liveth and was dead and am alive for evermore." These words tell us that he is still there at the Father’s right hand, though we see him not. And our attitude should be that of perpetual watching for his return, with eager longing and with upturned vision until the day dawns.

Meanwhile he is our anchor cast within the vault to hold and steady us in our Christian life. The idea of the anchor within the vault seems to be this: A ship is coming into port, and owing to sand-bars and shallow water it cannot get into the harbor, so the anchor is taken in a boat and brought in and secured to the dock till the tide shall rise. The vessel cannot get in yet, but it can be secured from being driven out to sea. We cannot get into heaven as yet; the tide of resurrection power that is to lift us in has not yet risen; but our anchor is there fastening us securely, fixing us immovably. In the mighty drift of unbelief we are held fast; the receding tides of apostasy cannot bear us away from God; the adverse winds of false doctrine cannot break our heavy mooring that we should drift out to sea. Anchor=arios was the name which in ancient time was given to the anchor bearer. Christ is our Anchorage who has taken our great hope and fixed it for us within the holiest. What power shall drag it thence? Who shall separate us from this steadfast anchorage?

A minister walking one day came upon a lad flying a kite. The long string ran far up into the clouds, but the pastor looked in vain to see the end of it. "Can you see your kite?" he asked of the boy. "No sir, but I know it is there for I can feel it pull." The Lord Jesus Christ, our Hope, has ascended into heaven far above all principalities, and powers, and every name that is named. Can you see him? No, but I can feel him drawing me. When I fall into sin, I feel him drawing me out in gentleness and contrition to himself; when I fall into darkness, I feel him drawing me out into his light; when I fall into sorrow, I feel him drawing me up into his peace. "Whom having not seen I love, and in whom, though now I see him not, I rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." And I shall feel the drawing of this invisible Redeemer till he comes, then I shall be drawn up to him and abide with him forever. And all this is told again and again
comfort one another with these words." Does it seek to
incite us to watchfulness? Its word is: "Watch, there-
fore, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.
Does it seek to commend the church for its faith-
fulness? This is its word: "Ye turned from idols to
serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son
from heaven." Does it wish to present us an exalted
to purity and consecration? Its words are: "De-
ning ungodliness and worldly lust, that we should live
soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present world,
looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing
of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." And so with
scores of texts if I had time to enumerate them. This
word in the formula of the Lord's Supper, "till he
come" is the key-word of Scripture. It gives us the

HOW TO READ.

Only by varied reading, can we combine in our own
taste any very wide range of excellences. We must
achieve our object as a bee gathers honey. Apalists
tell us that no two honeycombs have precisely the same