

The Hem of His Garment

Scripture Lesson: - Matthew 9: 18-26.

Text: - Matthew 9: 20. "And touched the hem of his garment."

Introduction: - The one point the evangelists make in this miracle, is not the power of Christ, the grace of Jesus, nor the fact that he was touched by a woman and healed of her disease, but that she touched but the hem of his garment. She came somewhat afraid, reached forth a trembling hand and touched the hem of his garment and was made whole.

Now what is the hem of Christ's garment? Where is the hem of Christ's garment now? The hem this woman touched was one of the four tassels of blue which hung from his coat. That garment woven by his mother's fingers has long since mouldered into dust. Never again can one slip us behind him and touch the tassel of blue. But is there no hem for us to touch? Are we poorer because Christ has gone to the Father? No, the hem of his garment can still be touched. For what is this hem but the which virtue passed out of him. Only through the visible can men touch the invisible. How then can you and I touch the hem of his garment?

Think of the Hem of His Garment in Nature. Nature is the visible garment of God, wrought by God's fingers in Time's roaring loom. This world of rising and setting suns, of silent stars and breathing winds, of sea and shore, of moor and mountain and meadow and wood, is the garment of the living God. The Hebrew poets declared the light to be God's robe, and the winds his whisper, and the thunder to be God's voice. Even the dullest and most thoughtless have at times been conscious that the divine personality of love and healing was enshrined within this world of life and order and beauty.

Davis tells us in the thirty-sixth Psalm, that when he was sick at heart with men's pride and deceit and ungodliness, he went out to the world of the open heavens and the everlasting hills and the song of relief came to his lips. "Thy mercy O Lord, is in the heavens, and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Thy righteousness is

like the great mountains; thy judgements are a great deep". The poet Wordsworth often wandered lonely on mountain-side, that he might walk with God in His temple. Samuel Cox says that as he worked with the dock laborers he kept a flower upon his desk that he might be chastened and purified by coming in touch with God. Really, there have been times when you have felt your strength gone, your nerves unstrung, your brain throbbing with exhaustion, that you wandered in the woods, or down by the waters edge, and found that the virtue of the Lord of life passed into you.

The Hem of His Garment is the Word.

This is the tassell of blue which most of us have touched. The Word of God is the closest garment of his thought. Christ himself is called the Word. The Bible is something more than a book. A personality dwells within its pages. The roughest spirit will not lightly abuse a single page of it. A modern writer tells of a man purposing a crime in which he will glut the revenge of his embittered spirit. As he sits in his room his eyes fall upon the Bible. It seems a living thing. He shrinks back from it. But as his hand reached for it and he begins to read from it, his spirit is cleansed. What had happened? He had brushed against the hem of his garment.

Scene in a cemetery.

of immortal life
When we have lost hope and heart, when our hopes grow dim, the breath of God's spirit as we hear the words, "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee", or "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him", or "If ye then, being evil, etc.

When we hear these words, we feel that we have found what we needed. We have touched the hem of his garment.

Then think of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Nothing else brings us so near to Christ. In this ordinance, so universal whenever Christian men are met, with its pure white cloth, and bread and wine, which all men feel to be, "the sight of a sweeping garment, vast and white, with a hem that I would recognize". This is the hem that all men recognize