



# 溪邊的樹

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## 永遠的十字架

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摘錄自十二藍

讀經：希伯來書九章十五至十七節。

這幾節聖經，說出了基督的十字架與舊約和新約的關係。我們要知道，在前約的時候，人犯了罪，如同現在的人一樣需要一位救主。人犯了罪，若沒有得著神的赦免，他就要擔當罪的刑罰。神不能只因憐憫而赦免人的罪，神不能陷祂自己於不義。所以，在神的救贖之法中，神就設立一個代替的方法。在舊約的時候，就用許多的犧牲來替人贖罪；人有了牲畜的代死，就能得著神公義的赦免。『贖罪』，在希伯來文的意思是『蓋過』。舊約裏所有的贖罪，不過是用牲畜的血將人的罪蓋過而已。聖經上明明說，『公牛和山羊的血，斷不能除罪。』（來十4。）所以，時期一滿，神就差遣祂自己的兒子降世，代替罪人死；因著祂一次獻上祂自己，就成了永遠贖罪的救恩。在舊約裏，公牛和山羊的血所不能除掉的罪，因著祂的死，就都除去了，因祂是『神的羔羊，除去世人罪孽的』（約一29。）因為神在許多牲畜的血中，遠見祂兒子的血和這血的效力，所以，主耶穌若不死，就不能結束前約罪的問題。祂死了，就除去了前約的罪，就結束了前約，而開始了新約。

『為此祂作了新約的中保。』祂作新約之中保，乃是根據於祂贖了前約之人的罪。本來人已經有永遠產業的應許，然而因為人的罪，人不能得著它。現在因著祂死了，罪已經贖了，蒙召的人就可以得著永遠的產業了。所以，主耶穌因著祂在十字架上的死作了中保，一方面結束舊約的罪，一方面開始新約的福。

希伯來九章十五節說到祂作中保，十六節說到祂作留遺命的。『遺命』在原文就是『約』。上文是說約的律法，凡犯法的應當死，所以基督受死為我們贖罪。現在是說到約的遺命。遺命的意思，就是留遺命的人定規他死後將他的產業一概歸與受遺命的人。所有今生、來世一切的福氣都是屬祂的。祂既願意擔當人在前約所犯的罪，祂也願意將這約（遺命）所應許的都賜給人。為了贖人的罪過，祂應當死；為了要人受遺命，祂也應當死。（因為人若活著，他所立的遺命就不生效力；必須等到他死了，遺命纔有效力。）在這裏我們看見，基督的死與舊約和新約有極深的關係。如果沒有祂的死，就沒有舊約，也沒有新約。沒有祂的死，舊約就不能完全，因為律法的要求沒有得著滿足。沒有祂的死，新約就不能發生，因為祂遺命的福氣不能賜給蒙召的人。祂死了，祂就結束了舊約，設立了新約。

因為公牛和山羊的血既不能除罪，那麼，舊約的人如何得救呢？藉著十字架。人犯罪，惟有人可以贖罪。牲畜雖然無辜，究竟不能為人贖罪。這樣，神為甚麼在利未記十七章應許以活物的血贖罪呢？在這裏的確有要緊的意思。律法的事，『原是後事的影兒；那形體卻是基督。』

(西二17。 )所以，舊約時代獻祭的犧牲，都是指著基督說的，神也把牠們的死都當作基督的死。在許多牲畜的血裏，祂看見了祂愛子的血；在許多的牛羊裏，祂看見了『神的羔羊』；在許多的犧牲裏，祂看見了基督的代死。當祂接受那些祭的時候，祂就算是接受了祂兒子死的功勞，所以人的罪能得著赦免。在舊約的時候，每次獻祭殺牲，都是說到將來神的兒子如何一次在各各他獻上贖罪祭，而成功了永遠的救贖。因為主是人，所以祂能替人贖罪；因為主是神，所以祂能替古今所有的人贖罪。

舊約時獻祭的人，在不知不覺中，都是相信一位將來釘死在十字架上的救主。他們所有一切的祭物，都是仰望一位將來的救主。雖然那時主耶穌還未降生，但是信心不是看那能看見的，乃是看那不能看見的。信心從遠處看見一位代死的救主，就倚靠祂。到了時候，神的兒子來了，替人死了，他們過去所相信的，現在變成事實了。

我們現在是處在新約的時候。新約的人如何得救呢？基督已經死了，救恩已經成就了，我們若肯相信主耶穌，意思就是用信心接受祂作救主，就得救了。有的人不明白，怎麼他還未出生時，基督就代替他死了呢？真的，這個如果用頭腦來想，是有許多的難處；但在信心，這是一個榮耀的真理。我們要知道，時間是不能束縛神的。從世人的眼光看來，幾十年真是不少。但是，神是永遠的神，從祂看來，數千年也不算多。時間雖然能限制我們，但不能限制神。所以，我們相信這一位已經替我們死的主，就得救了。

聖經說主耶穌只一次將自己獻上，就把贖罪的事成全了。(來七27。 )祂是神，所以祂能不受時間的限制。祂一次將這事成全了，就永遠成全了。現在罪人如果要得救，並非要祂再來替他受死，乃是接受祂那一次死的功效，就得著了救恩。並且我們的信心也是不受時間的限制，信心能引人進入永世的真實。舊約的人如何仰望一位將來的救主而得救，我們也是如何仰望一位已過的救主而得救。已過，並不是說這事已經過去了，乃是說這事已經成全了。舊約的人是向前看，我們現在是回頭看；舊約的人藉著信心能叫他們接受一位未來的救主，我們豈不也能藉著信心接受一位已過的救主麼？

我們讀希伯來九章，若將十二至十五節的三個『永遠』連在一起，是非常有意思的。主所要成就的是永遠的救贖，所以祂藉著永遠的靈將自己獻上給神，因此就叫我們得著永遠的產業。主耶穌所成就的是永遠的救贖，所以，無論何時，人若相信祂，都能得著這救贖。我們應當知道，十字架的價值不是隨著人的看法而定的，十字架的價值是神定的。神看十字架的救贖是永遠的。所以，我們這些不義的人，如果按著祂的話，相信祂兒子的十字架，就能得救。

這要說到我們所最注重的一點。希伯來十章十二節說，『基督獻了一次永遠的贖罪祭。』『一次』，意思就是主的贖罪祭是完全的，祂只用一次替人贖罪就彀了。同時，祂的贖罪祭也是永遠的。『永遠的贖罪祭』，這意思不只祂贖罪祭的效力是存到永遠，並且這祭也是永遠的。雖然基督已經復活了，直活到永永遠遠，然而，祂的十字架也是永遠的！雖然祂已經復活了，但是，祂的十字架還是繼續著！但願我們知道十字架是常新的，它不是一千九百多年前的一個已過事實，它在今日還是新的。

啓示錄十三章八節說，『自創世以來被殺的羔羊。』(另譯。)我們的主，自創世以來，直到今日，延至永遠，都是被殺的羔羊。在祂看來，十字架並不只是某年某月某日某時的一件事，乃是從創世以來，繼續延長的。當祂造人的時候，祂就豫先知道將來救贖的代價。在造人之

初，好像祂就被釘十字架。數千年來，祂忍受這長期十字架的苦難。各各他山上一次的受死，不過表明神在靈中已經如何為世人擔憂了。這是何等的奇妙！我們不曉得應當如何用話語來表明這深奧的意思。主耶穌在未離開天的榮耀之先，祂就知道十字架的苦難了。十字架從永世起就在神的心懷裏了。雖然祂只一次在末世顯現為我們擔罪，然而從創世以來，祂因著心愛世人的緣故，憂傷痛惜，不知已經嘗過多少的十字架的痛苦了！這是神的心！我們既然知道這個，豈不當因此而更愛神麼？所以，雖然照人的眼光看來，舊約的人是相信一個將來的十字架，新約的人是相信一個已過的十字架，其實十字架是不受時間的限制的；不只新約之人的十字架是現在的，並且舊約之人的十字架也是現在的。願主開我們的眼睛，叫我們看見十字架是不受時間的限制的。

許多人常將十字架推到一千九百多年前，以為它舊了、陳了、老了。雖然，在世界記事的歷史裏，基督的各各他已成陳跡，然而在信徒靈性的歷史裏，基督的十字架，還是新鮮的，不是陳舊的。

希伯來十章十九至二十節說，『弟兄們，我們既因耶穌的血，得以坦然進入至聖所，是藉著祂給我們開了一條又新又活的路從幔子經過，這幔子就是祂的身體。』舊約裏的帳幕分為兩層：頭一層叫作聖所，第二層叫作至聖所，兩層之間用幔子隔開；進入至聖所的人，必須經過這幔子。至聖所是神的榮耀顯現的地方，不是平常人所能進入的，只有大祭司一年一次帶著血，為自己和百姓的過錯，獨自進去獻上。現在我們因著主耶穌在十字架上所流的血，可以隨時進入至聖所。

進入至聖所必須經過幔子。幔子是指主耶穌的身體。當祂在十字架上釘死時，殿裏的幔子從上到下裂為兩半。幔子不裂開，人就不能從它經過。主耶穌如果不死，不捨去祂的身體，人就不能從祂經過進入至聖所。我們現在就是藉著主耶穌在十字架上的死，來到神面前。

這條通過幔子的路，是主耶穌替我們開的。這條路是『又新又活的』。『新』，在原文是『新獻的』，或『新作的』。這裏我們看見十字架的常新！大祭司不能倚靠舊年的祭品或犧牲；他應當有新的祭品、新的犧牲。藉著這些牲畜的血，他纔敢、也纔能進入至聖所。我們現在呢？我們藉著主的血，經過主的身體，就能來到神面前。每一次我們來到神的面前，我們不必重新去獻祭；我們的祭品是常新的！主耶穌的十字架，並不因年代久遠而陳舊。它在初釘時如何新鮮，在今日，在永世，也不改變。我們每次來到神的面前，都能看見主十字架的新鮮。當日大祭司若非有新獻祭的血，他必定死在神前，因為去年的犧牲不能贖他今年的罪過。如果神不是看主作犧牲贖罪是常新的，我們早已滅亡了。感謝主，十字架在神的面前是常新的，神看十字架好像是剛纔成全的事。

這路也是『活』的，或譯作『永活』的。這路是『新作』的路，又是『永活』的路。基督死了又復活，為我們成功救恩，引我們到神的面前。我們不但知道基督已經死了，祂的代死一直繼續到今天，我們也實在知道基督已經復活，祂的復活也是繼續到今天。祂的死和祂的復活，在今天還是新鮮的。我們既有這位新鮮的贖罪救主，我們就當接受祂、倚靠祂，來到神的面前，得著祂的赦免和祝福。

啓示錄五章六節記載約翰如何看見天上的主耶穌基督，他說，『我又看見寶座與四活物並長老之中，有羔羊站立，像是「纔」（原文）被殺過的。』約翰所看見的在天上的主，不知離各各

他已經多少年了，然而，主還是像纔被殺的。『纔』也可譯作『新鮮』。在天上快到永世的時候，主還是新鮮被殺的！哦，十字架是永遠新鮮的！十字架真是歷萬古而常新，將來天上榮耀顯現的時候，十字架的救贖還是新鮮的，那麼，我們今天豈可以它為陳舊的呢？

有一點是我們應該注意的，就是基督被稱為羔羊，在舊約裏有兩次，（賽五三7，耶十一19，）在新約裏，按照原文，福音書和使徒行傳裏有三次，（約一29，36，徒八32，）書信裏有一次，（彼前一19，而啓示錄裏竟有二十八次之多！神特別在這卷關乎永世的書裏，稱祂兒子為羔羊。而這羔羊是纔被殺的，可見傷痕還在！永遠的傷痕，就是保證永遠的得救。哦，被殺的羔羊，要成為我們永遠的記念。主耶穌十字架的榮耀是永不衰殘的。

神自己知道祂兒子十字架的永久價值，神也將祂兒子十字架的永遠常新表明出來。祂要蒙救贖的人知道這件事。知道十字架的常新，就是能力；知道十字架的常新，就有愛心；知道十字架的常新，就是得勝；知道十字架的常新，就有忍耐。我們若真知道十字架的新鮮，我們就要從十字架得著何種的啓示，何等的感動！如果十字架在我們的心目中不是陳舊的，我們對於我們的主，就必定有更親密的交通。

主就是要叫祂的十字架常新在我們的心靈和思念中。所以，聖經對我們說，『你們每逢喫這餅，喝這杯，是表明主的死，直等到祂來。』（林前十一26。）『每逢』，有『常』的意思。主設立晚餐的緣故，就是要祂所救贖的人常在祂的死裏記念祂。祂豫先看見，許多人要以祂的十字架為陳舊，所以祂就命令祂的門徒時常在晚餐裏記念祂的死。祂知道引誘要來，試探要來，我們要在不知不覺之中失去十字架在我們身上的新鮮，所以，祂命令我們時常舉行晚餐記念祂。當我們纔信主的時候，十字架在我們的身上是何等新鮮，可是過了一些時日，十字架好像變得很模糊了。當我們纔知道十字架得勝的時候，我們看十字架是何等新鮮；可是，因為我們聽慣了十字架的榮耀，它好像變得平常了。但是，主不願意我們失去十字架的新鮮，主要我們多多的記起十字架，所以祂要將祂的死常常擺在我們的面前。

我們切不可為主的十字架不過是歷史上的陳跡而已。無論何時，主耶穌基督釘十字架的事實總應當活畫在我們眼前。（加三1。）加拉太書是一封十字架的書信。當加拉太人有十字架活畫在他們眼前的時候，他們是何等自由；當他們要因行律法而受聖靈，要靠肉身而得成全的時候，他們就失去這十字架的新鮮。一個信徒的靈性如何，要看他對於十字架的看法如何。如果他看十字架是陳舊的，那就表明他已經失去他能力的根源了。

知道十字架的新鮮有甚麼益處呢？我們知道，新鮮的事往往易於動人；事過境遷，好像就沒有甚麼感人的能力。如果我們逐日有主耶穌基督釘十字架活畫在我們眼前，那我們要如何受它的感動呢！約瑟本來只敢在暗中作基督的門徒，尼哥底母本來只敢在夜裏來見主耶穌，後來他們兩個因為看見了主釘死在十字架上，受了很大的感動，所以敢不顧一切的出來要求領取主耶穌的身體，敢用細麻布加上香料裹主耶穌的身體。十字架能叫最膽怯的人變為最勇敢的人。他們眼見了十字架上的耶穌基督如何為人受苦，如何受人頂撞，十字架的愛心就啓示了他們，激勵了他們。所以，現在若常有基督的死擺在我們面前，那我們也要受感動像他們一樣，十字架也要成為我們的能力。

『我們可以仍在罪中，叫恩典顯多麼？』（羅六1。）我們應當回答這個問題。如果我們真是時常看見主的十字架，看見祂頭上的荆冕，看見祂手足的傷痕，看見祂的慈愛和血同流，看見

祂的苦痛難過，那我們豈不深受感動，我們豈能忍心再行祂所不喜悅的事，使祂的憂傷加深呢！許多人就是因為沒有十字架常新的異象擺在他們面前，所以他們對主的愛就那麼漠然無動於衷。

如果主耶穌替我們受死的十字架是常新的，那麼我們與祂同釘十字架也就是歷久不舊的。我們逐日對於十字架都有新鮮的異象，我們也就要加增許多與主同死的新經歷。就是因為我們看不見一個天天的十字架，所以我們纔有許多在罪上復活的經歷。如果我們真的看見十字架的常新，時時刻刻都無改變，那我們自己對罪的死，也必是經久不變的。許多神的兒女們，就是因為不知道十字架的死是時時刻刻的，所以就失敗了。

我們知道，在許多的時候，我們還是在不知不覺中跌倒。神所以不因此而棄絕我們，乃是因『祂兒子耶穌的血也洗淨我們一切的罪』。（約壹一7。）祂兒子的血不只一次洗淨我們，並且繼續不斷的洗淨我們。如果我們不幸跌倒，我們到祂面前一認罪，祂就赦免我們，祂兒子的血就洗淨我們的罪。這是十字架永久的工作。神為我們豫備了這樣的救恩，是何等美好呢！

我們知道了永遠得救這一個事實，就要大發讚美父神的聲音。可惜有許多人還不知道他是永遠得救的。我們不得救則已，一得救就是得救到永遠。我們一次真接受主耶穌的贖罪祭，我們一次倚靠祂十字架的功勞，祂的十字架就永遠為我們說話。『燔祭要放在壇的柴上，從晚上到天亮，壇上的火，要常常燒著。』（利六9。）燔祭豫表基督，祭壇豫表十字架。燔祭是從晚上燒到天亮，這就是說，主耶穌救贖的功勞，在這世代中，是繼續不斷為我們請求！以色列人在帳幕裏，或者還會發怨言，但是，祭壇上的燔祭還是不止息的為他們獻上。我們應當知道，寶血是時常為我們說話的。我們一次接受十字架，十字架就永遠是我們的拯救。這是永遠的得救。

十字架在天上，是不因時日而變為陳舊的，所以，我們所得著的救恩，也必不因時日而成為陳跡。永世並非一種單調乏味的生活。永世雖長，並不能使十字架的榮光減色。在永遠裏，我們要看見神一一為我們顯出十字架的榮耀。主阿！願你使我們認識你十字架永久的新鮮！

天使是因著甚麼而讚美主呢？『曾被殺的羔羊，是配得權柄、豐富、智慧、能力、尊貴、榮耀、頌讚的。』（啟五12。）天使是讚美曾被殺的羔羊。到那日，我們在天上，也要因著主的十字架而永遠讚美主。十字架是今日救贖的中心，十字架是榮耀裏讚美的原因。

弟兄姊妹阿，十字架是何等新鮮！但願我們不間斷的受它的感動，但願我們一生溶化在十字架裏，但願十字架沒有一天在我們身上失去能力，但願十字架天天在我們裏面作更深的工作。求神開啓我們的眼睛，叫我們看見祂在祂兒子的十字架裏所蘊藏的奧妙。但願我們也說，『我斷不以別的誇口，只誇我們主耶穌基督的十字架。』（加六14。）

## **THE ETERNAL CROSS**

Watchman Nee

Excerpted from Twelve Baskets

Scripture Reading:

Hebrews 7:27; 9:11-17; 10:12, 19-22;

Revelation 5:6, 12; 13:8; 1 Corinthians 11:26; Galatians 3:1-3.

The first few verses we have read show the relation between the Cross of Christ and the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament days sinners needed a Savior just as they do today. Unless they received pardon for their sins they had to suffer the penalty attaching to sin. God could not be unrighteous and offer forgiveness on the bare ground of mercy; but because He yearned to extend mercy to all, He devised a way whereby He could be just and at the same time the Justifier of sinners: He provided a Substitute in the Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom.3:26). This way of substitution He set forth in the Old Testament dispensation by many sacrifices, and every sinner who brought the appointed sacrifices received remission of sins. Nevertheless, the Word of God declares: "it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins" (Hebrews 10:4); so in the fullness of time God sent His Son into the world to accomplish an eternal redemption, for it is only "the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). God having Himself provided a Lamb, and "a death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant" (Hebrews 9:15), that covenant was wound up and the way opened for "a better covenant." It was in view of the one sacrifice of the Lamb of God's own providing that He could accept the many sacrifices which in themselves could never take away sins; and Christ, by the offering up of Himself having met all the righteous demands of the earlier covenant, brought it to a final conclusion and became "the mediator of a new covenant" (9:15).

Note the sure basis of Christ's mediatorial work -- "For this cause He is the mediator of a new covenant." Without violating His righteousness He mediates the values of the New Covenant because He has made atonement for those who, under the Old Covenant, had by their transgressions forfeited all right to inherit the promises of God. By virtue of His death they now have a clear title to the eternal inheritance.

Hebrews 9:15 speaks of Christ as Mediator while the following verse refers to Him as Testator. As Testator, Christ bequeaths the inheritance to His heirs. By His death He not only bore the penalty of every breach of the former covenant, but also made it possible for the heirs to inherit all the wealth He had bequeathed to them. His death was necessary in order to make atonement for all transgressions under the Old Covenant; it was equally necessary in order to make way for the heirs to enter into the values of the New, "for where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of him that made it. For a testament is of force where there hath been death: for doth it ever avail where he that made it lives?" Do you see how intimately Christ's death is related both to the Old Testament and the New?

Since "it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins", how could people living under the Old Testament dispensation be saved? Only through the Cross of Christ. Their many sacrifices all pointed to the one sacrifice and in view of that one sacrifice they found acceptance with God. However limited the offerer's comprehension of his typical sacrifice might be, God accepted it by virtue of the sacrifice of the Antitype. Each believing soul that approached God in His appointed way

was virtually putting his faith in the One Whom God would send in the fullness of time, for true faith lifts the believer beyond the realm of things seen and temporal to the unseen and eternal.

And how can people living today in the New Testament dispensation be saved? How can a death that took place nearly two thousand years ago be efficacious at this date? How can Christ's death be accepted by God to atone for our sins seeing we were not born till long after His death and had done neither good nor evil when He was crucified? We are saved by faith just as they were saved who lived and died before Christ came to earth – by dependence on the Lamb of God who settled the sin question "once for all when He offered up himself" (Hebrews 7:27).

Note the three occurrences of "eternal" in Hebrews 9:12-15. An "eternal redemption" has been accomplished by the offering of Christ through the "eternal Spirit", whereby we receive the "eternal inheritance". It has not been left to men to assess the value of the Cross; God has assessed it; and such is His assessment of the sacrifice of His Son that all sinners of all times and all places find acceptance with Him on the ground of Christ's offering of Himself once for all.

However, the point we wish to emphasize is the eternal nature of the Cross. This is again expressed in Hebrews 10:12: "He, when he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God." Not only is the efficacy of Christ's sacrifice eternal; the sacrifice itself is eternal. It is a fact that Christ is arisen and is alive for evermore; but His Cross is not merely an accomplished fact, it is an eternal fact. Yes, we can point to a date in history when He was crucified on a hill called Calvary; but His death is not merely a historical event that took place long ago; for He is "the Lamb (Revelation 13:8). When He created man the cost of redemption was already known to Him; more than that, in spirit He know the sorrow of it. The suffering He endured on the earth at a certain point in time was a manifestation of the pain He has suffered through the ages on man's account. What words can express this sacred mystery? The Cross was in His heart from eternity. He loves man with an everlasting love and through the ages has suffered indescribable sorrow because His love is an eternal love. Oh, that we might worthily requite such love!

From the human viewpoint, Old Testament believers looked forward to the Cross while New Testament believers look backward; but in actual fact, because the Cross is eternal it is always a present reality and can never be limited by time. Secular history represents it as being very old; but sacred history shows it to be unaging, and from generation to generation its newness is preserved in the spirits of the saints as well as in the sacred scriptures. The writer to the Hebrews encourages his readers in these words: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which he dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh ... let us draw near" (10:19-22). When the Lord Jesus expired on the Cross the veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom, indicating that the way into the Holy of Holies is now open to all who come to God by Him; and this way, opened by the rending of His flesh, is both "new" and "living". In the original the word "new" bears the thought of being "newly made". There is no mark of age upon it for it is a newly made way; and there is no touch of death upon it for it is a "living way".

In olden times the high priest could only enter the Holiest of All once a year, and only with the blood of the sacrifice that was newly slain. You and I have constant access to God on the ground of the shed blood of the Lamb because that sacrifice is "new and living" in His sight. He sees in it no taint of staleness and no tinge of death. Christ truly died; but while it is true that He burst the bands of death and is alive for evermore, yet His death is a fact as fresh today as it was centuries ago. John, who was witness of His death on earth, describes a vision of the risen Christ in heaven: "I saw in the midst of the

throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain" (Revelation 5:6). The Greek has been rendered "a Lamb standing as though it had been newly slain". In the fullness of His resurrection life His death is as fresh as it was that day when He expired on Calvary. Oh, the Cross is an eternal reality! It is remarkable that the title "Lamb of God" occurs more often in the one book of Revelation than in all the other books of the Bible combined; and Revelation is the book that unveils the coming eternity. The eternal freshness of the wounds of God's Lamb is our guarantee of an eternal salvation.

God alone has fully comprehended the nature of the Cross. We are so slow to comprehend and so swift to forget, that provision has been made for us to see and perceive what is far beyond our unaided comprehension. The Breaking of Bread has been instituted to demonstrate the eternal newness of the slaying of the Lamb, and we are invited to avail ourselves of this means of grace. Note the reason given: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come" (1 Corinthians 11:26). Our Lord's object in instituting the Supper was to encourage all His redeemed ones to remember His death continually. He knew the snares and the temptations that would beset our path; and He knows how readily the Cross would lose its freshness in our lives, so He made this special provision to bring it freshly to our memories. When first we came to the Lord and the reality of His death broke upon us, how fresh it was! But we gradually became careless in our Christian life and consequently the vision dimmed; and we grew accustomed to hearing about the Cross, so that sheer familiarity caused it to lose its impact on our hearts and minds. The realization of its eternal newness will bring a new incentive into our lives that will turn defeat into triumph. Yes, and what revelation it will bring, and what inspiration, and what intimacy of fellowship with the Lord!

Paul, writing to the Galatians, takes them to task because they have lost sight of the Cross. "O foolish Galatians," he says, "who did bewitch you, and before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified ... Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now perfected in the flesh?" (3:1-3). When the vision of the Cross first broke upon the Galatians, what liberty they knew! And what bondage they fell into when they lost the vision! Unless we know the eternal freshness of the Cross we are bound to lose out spiritually. It is an obvious fact that as soon as anything becomes stale it ceases to make an impact upon us, and unless the freshness of Christ's death is preserved in our hearts and minds, its mighty efficacy will be lost to us.

"Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" How can we if we are freshly beholding the face that was marred for us, and the body that still bears the wound-prints in hands and feet and side? Provided we never lose sight of Christ's sufferings for us, we shall not lack the incentive to bear the Cross, and we shall know in no mere objective way what it means to be crucified with Him. Defeat will give place to victory when we cease to regard His Cross as a by-gone event in world history and accept it as an eternal fact; then it will become a present and powerful reality every day in our personal history.

In vision John saw the heavenly hosts surrounding the Lamb on the Throne, and he heard them singing a new song. His ears caught these words: "Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honor, and glory, and blessing" (Revelation 5:12). When we join those hosts we too shall sing the new song extolling the slain Lamb; but let us prove its eternal freshness during our span of time on the earth by submitting afresh every day to its impact. May God open our eyes to discern the mystery of the Cross so that here and now we may be able to say with the Apostle: "Far be it from me to glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Galatians 6:14).