

# God's Plan of Salvation in Elizabeth Gaskell's "Hand and Heart"

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## 1. Introduction

This study examines how Elizabeth Gaskell's Christianity is depicted in her short story "Hand and Heart" (1849). Its purport is to point out that God's Plan of Salvation, one of the principal Christian doctrines, is used as a backbone of this text for moral education.

The didacticism in this story has already been discussed by previous critics. For instance, it is "a work of an improving nature, an attempt to recommend charity and patience by enrolling invention in the service of morality" (J. G. Sharps 83; emphasis added). "'Hand and Heart' is in the 'Libbie Marsh' tradition. . . . the same benevolent philosophy of life is the keynote in each tale" (J. G. Sharps 84; emphasis added). "Gaskell's earlier efforts were basically Sunday-school stories, with a clear moral" (Angus Easson 201; emphasis added). "Two stories for Travers Madge's *Sunday School Penny Magazine*—'Hand and Heart' (1849) and 'Bessy's Troubles at Home' (1852)—are neat exemplifications of Christian heroism in humble life" (Easson 204; emphasis added). Its "theology and comfort" is "of the simplest," and the "modern interest lying in details of life and feeling rather than the assurance of God as loving refuge" (Easson 201; emphasis added). "The nature of publication for which these two texts ["Hand and Heart" and "Bessy's Troubles at Home"] were intended can easily account for their very didactic tone" (Benjamin Toussaint-Thiriet 79; emphasis added). "Hand and Heart" is "a moral tale of an orphaned child's good influence on his uncle's chaotic household" (Jenny Uglow 234; emphasis added), and "a moralizing children's story about an unbelievably virtuous boy who manages to convert all around him to Christian values" (Shirley Foster 32; emphasis added). The didactic nature of this story is confessed even by the author herself: it is one of the stories which "are all moral & sensible" (Chapple & Pollard, Letters 365).<sup>1</sup>

Although arguing the didactic aspects of this text as the above critics do—"The tone of the story, in keeping with its purpose, is heavily didactic" (66; emphasis added); it "prominently" displays "didactic motives" (428; emphasis added)—, Marie Bacigalupo is unique

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1 There have been a few critics who attempted to read the tale from different perspectives. For instance, Julia McCord Chavez includes it among one of "Gaskell's sentimental stories" (61, 76). Mariko Tahira finds in the story Gaskell's emphasis on "a high value of 'home' which protects from various difficulties and predicaments" (141; Harumi James 121).

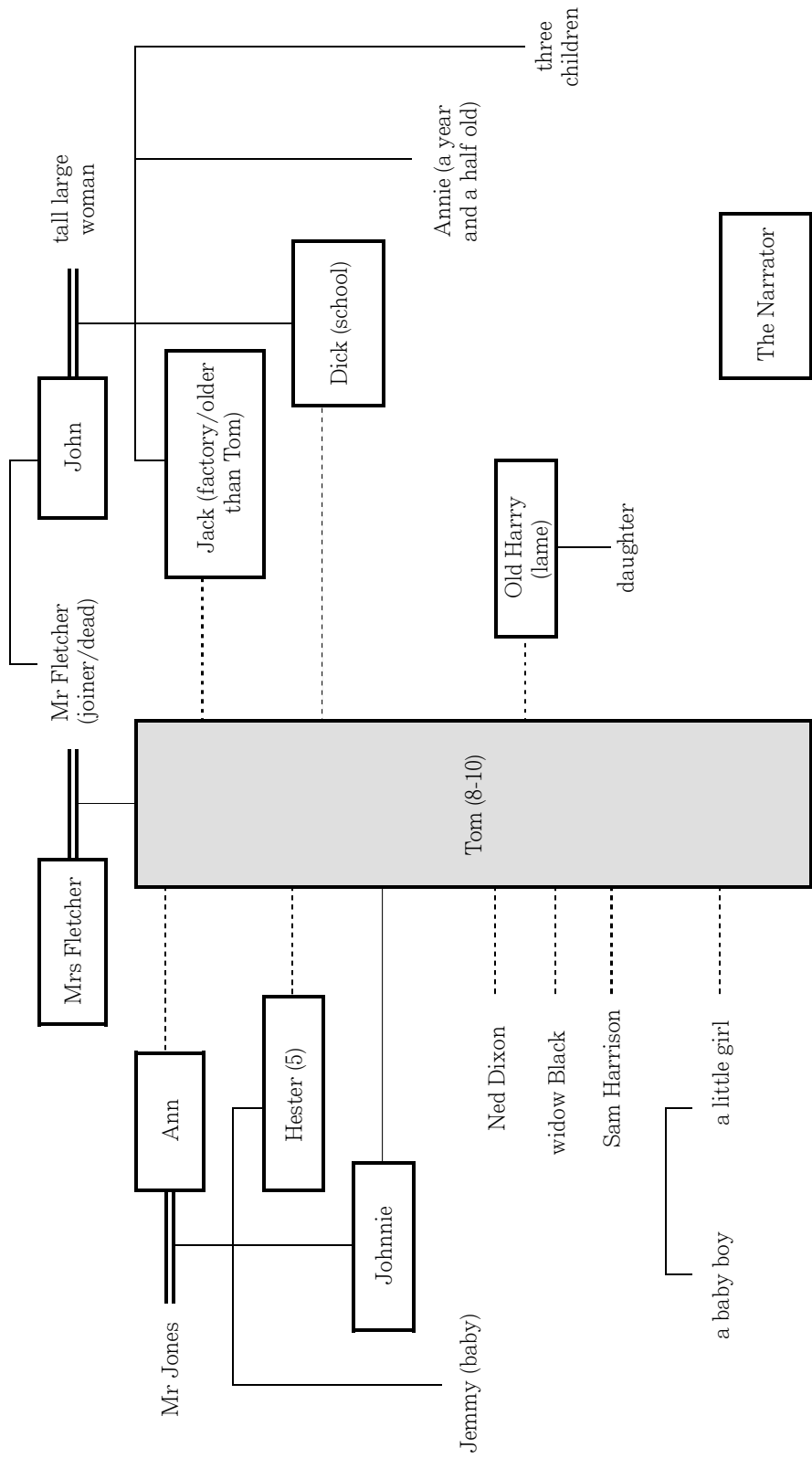
in acknowledging a positive meaning concerning its didacticism by viewing it from a historical perspective, i.e. in “the moralizing tradition” (173, 182):

Mrs. Gaskell’s earliest contributions fall squarely into the tradition of the moral tale. Sententious and didactic, they read like Sunday-school sermons as, indeed, they were sometimes intended. As Webb informs us, it was the explicit desire of George III that every child in Great Britain be able to read the Bible [R. K. Webb 31]. Accordingly, in the nineteenth century dutiful Englishmen, motivated by religious as well as patriotic impulses, founded a whole range of Sunday schools to teach reading to the working classes. Well meaning Victorians were aided in these attempts to educate the working classes by the new, cheap periodical press; and their efforts to provide cheap and edifying material for the new class of readers resulted in the proliferation of moral and religious tracts cast into narrative form. (64; emphasis added)

Bacigalupo insists that one “must acknowledge that such works as ‘Hand and Heart’ and ‘Bessy’s Troubles at Home’ have greater historical value than intrinsic literary merit” (68).

As shown in the above brief survey of the previous studies of “Hand and Heart,” no substantial analysis has yet been attempted on this text from a Christian perspective, in spite of critics’ repeated references to the significance of its religious theme. This study, therefore, shall focus on its religious elements through the following procedures. This introductory Section 1 clarifies the aim of this study and reviews some previous studies of our target story. The next Section 2 explains the three main concepts of God’s Plan of Salvation, i.e. (a) innate goodness of spirit, (b) Christ as the model of a virtuous human being, and (c) hope for the next world. Then, the text shall be analysed from the viewpoint of how each of the three concepts is incorporated into the plot, in Sections 3, 4, and 5 respectively. Our argument shall be concluded in Section 6.

Main Characters in "Hand and Heart"



## 2. God's Plan of Salvation

God's Plan of Salvation is one of the principal Christian doctrines concerning the belief in eternal life. We human beings who had lived with God as His spirit children in the premortal world (Acts 17:29; Rom. 8:16) were born into earth, receiving physical bodies, and only through this step can our souls have experiences to grow up in preparation for meeting God again; death which separates spirits from bodies is a step for the eternal journey that includes resurrection when spirits will reunite with bodies (1 Cor. 15:13-14, 54; John 5:28-29, 14:19); we can return to our Heavenly Father only through Jesus Christ His son, whom He sent for us to overcome sin and death (John 3:16; Acts 4:10-12). This doctrine is shared by most Christians irrespective of their denomination.<sup>2</sup> That the mysterious doctrine is acknowledged even among Unitarians can be understood from a Unitarian minister's defence against their "absurdity in rejecting the incomprehensible," in which the minister stresses that they "exhibit the necessity of admitting the incomprehensible" (*Unitarianism Defended*: "General Preface" v-vii).

Beyond a few distinctive nuances among Christian denominations, we can see some common features in the Plan of Salvation, which run as follows:

(a) The innate goodness of the spirit—when the plan was announced in the premortal world, our spirits "shouted for joy" (Job 38:7), supported Jesus Christ when the war broke in heaven between Him and Satan whose cause is the latter's rebellion against God (Rev. 12:7; Isa. 14:13-14), and, after the latter and his followers were cast out from God's presence (Rev. 12:9; Isa.

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2 Quoted below are several summaries of the doctrine. (a) "Salvation is the free gift of eternal life that is made possible only through Jesus Christ" ("God's Plan of Salvation," *KJBB*). (b) "This passage [1 John 5:11-12] tells us that God has given us eternal life and this life is in His Son, Jesus Christ. In other words, the way to possess eternal life is to possess God's Son" ("God's Plan of Salvation," *Bible.org*). (c) "The plan of salvation is right in the Bible. God gives us His clear plan for being 'born again'" ("Plan of Salvation," *All About God*). (d) "God has an incredible goal in mind for the humans He made in His own image. . . . Throughout the Bible God shows that He has a plan for us—a plan that includes every human being who has ever lived, each in his or her own turn" (Doug Johnson, "Plan of Salvation"). (e) "God's simple plan of salvation is: You are a sinner. Therefore, unless you believe on Jesus Who died in your place, you will spend eternity in Hell. If you believe on Him as your crucified, buried, and risen Savior, you receive forgiveness for all of your sins and His gift of eternal salvation by faith" ("God's Simple Plan of Salvation," *Lifegate*). (f) "The bottom line is this: we need saving and we can't save ourselves. Good works can't possibly make up for the damage that sin has done to our relationship with God. Only He can save us. Salvation is a gift from God, poured out freely from His grace. It is available to everyone who accepts Jesus as their Lord and Savior. The Bible tells us that there is only one way to Heaven. Jesus said, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me' (John 14:6). We must have a relationship with Christ" ("God's Plan of Salvation," *Methodist Church*). (g) "One therefore needs to understand how the liturgy is the fulfilment of God's plan of salvation, and this requires knowledge of the Old Testament and its law, which Christ came not to abolish but to fulfil. . . . Before creation, the life of the Trinity was already a community of persons, but because of the overflowing of love from God who 'does whatever he pleases' (Psalm 115:3), he chose to create the world and all that inhabits it" (McNamara 35); a Catholic view of the doctrine is illustrated in the chart "Plan of Salvation: Timeline of the History of the World" (McNamara 38-39). (h) "Our hope and happiness lie in knowing who we are, where we came from, and where we can go. We are eternal beings, spirit children of an eternal God. Our lives can be compared to a three-act play: premortal life (before we came to earth), mortal life (our time here on earth), and postmortal life (where we go after we die). God has had a plan for our lives since the beginning of the first act—a plan that, if followed, provides comfort and guidance now, as well as salvation and eternal happiness in our postmortal life" ("Our Eternal Life," *LDS*).

14.12; Luke 10.18), were permitted to come to the earth to receive physical bodies (Num. 16.22, 27.16). Our spirits were God's children who chose good there (Hos. 1.10; Acts 17.29; Eph. 1.4), and therefore live here as human beings. This is why we have the innate faculty to know right from wrong, and why our spirits have innate goodness (Rev. 12.17), or conscience. We often commit sins simply because we are not strong enough to resist the temptations of jealous Satan and his followers (Matt. 26.41; Mark 14.38; 1 Pet. 5.8; Jas. 1.13-14; 1 Thess. 3.5; 2 Cor. 2.11).

(b) Christ is the model of a virtuous human being, or our moral standard. Apostle Paul recommends us to follow Christ's example of humbleness:

*Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (Phil. 2.3-8)*

A general understanding of Christ's roles as the Saviour includes that, by atoning for our sins, He took upon Himself the punishments required by the law of justice and is able to offer the mercy and forgiveness we need to become clean, and that these blessings of the Atonement are available to us only on the condition that we repent (Acts 3.19; *D&C&CH* 37). Even Unitarians who deny "the divinity of Christ" (Mark Knight and Emma Mason 11) respect Him as "the representative of Deity, or as the model of humanity" (James Martineau, "Lecture V" 4), that shows us "the spirit of that Being who spreads round us in Infinitude, and leads us through Eternity" (Martineau, "Lecture V" 5); they consider that they should have "the personal holiness and love, the Christlike spirit and the Christlike life" (John Hamilton Thom, "Lecture I" 25). Regarding Christ's role, Apostle Paul testifies that "being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5.9).

(c) The third essential element in God's Plan of Salvation is the hope for the next world, or eternal life. Apostle Paul testifies its existence by writing "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Tit. 1.2). Its existence is believed by Unitarians, Gaskell's denomination, as well—"our eternal life commences and our earthly is but the first state, the infancy of that awful and endless existence. . . . The faculties that make our life here must be those which shall make that which is to come" (Henry Giles, "Lecture XII" 19); Martineau observes that from Christ's "words of eternal life . . . all ages learn divinest wisdom" (*Endeavours* 35).

The following argument is intended to demonstrate that these three features are scattered over "Hand and Heart" as if used as the backbone of its storyline.

### 3. Innate Goodness of the Spirit

This section examines the passages expressing “the innate goodness of spirits” which appear in the story.

(a) The first example is the following remark by Mrs Fletcher, the protagonist Tom’s mother: “[M]ere money can do little to cheer a sore heart. It is kindness only that can do this. Now we have all of us kindness in our power. The little child of two years old, who can only just totter about, can show kindness.”<sup>3</sup> This is not only a succinct summary of the moral teaching of this short story, but also an indirect reference to her belief in God’s Plan of Salvation, because her assertion “we have all of us kindness in our power” is closely linked to one of its key concepts that the spirits who were allowed to come to the earth are all good (Eph. 1.3-4). (b) The second example of the inborn goodness of the spirit is found in Ann Jones, Tom’s neighbour, who, soothed by his kind help, opens “her heart a little to him” (104). The goodness of her spirit, which has disappeared temporarily owing to her irritation, returns to her, thanks to the boy’s kindness.

The following eight instances are concerning the goodness of the spirit of John, Tom’s uncle. (c) Although looking “rough,” Mrs Fletcher’s brother-in-law is actually kind enough to promise to do “all he could to make her feel easy in her last moments, and . . . all she required” (108). (d) Even in the brief record of his hesitation to articulate his words to the dying sister-in-law is implied the goodness of his soul which is concealed in his kind consideration for her: “‘I’ll take him [Tom] back with me after’—the funeral, he was going to say, but he stopped. She smiled gently, fully understanding his meaning” (108). (e) Looking at Tom’s alacrity in making tea, his uncle is the only person in the disorderly household that acknowledges his goodness: “Thou’re a rare lad, Tom” (110). (f) John is sensitive enough to notice the sad tears in Tom’s eyes, and by inviting him to have a glass at his public house, shows his compassion (110). (g) In response to his wife’s merciless words to Tom—“He’s thy flesh and blood, not mine” (110)—, John admonishes her, “he’s an orphan, poor chap. An orphan is kin to every one” (110), only to demonstrate the goodness of his spirit. (h) At his dinner table, John feels “hot and shy” about saying a grace, but, “thinking it was right to say it, he put away his shyness, and very quietly, but very solemnly said the old accustomed sentence of thanksgiving” (113). (i) One year after accepting Tom in his house, John, who has been affected by his nephew’s goodness, comes to refrain from taking “refuge in a publichouse” (114). (j) Similarly, John begins to miss “the accustomed grace” and “to say it himself” when his ill nephew is absent at meal time, and to ask his children “the blessing on the meal” (114).

Tom’s aunt-in-law, although being “sharp and hasty and cross” (111), is also a child of God. The inborn goodness of her spirit is depicted in the ensuing six instances. (k) Reprimanded for her unkind words toward her nephew-in-law by her husband, she “was softened directly,

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3 “Hand and Heart” 102-03. Page references hereafter in the text.

for she had much kindness in her" (110). The innate goodness of her spirit is spotlighted in the narratorial remark which comes immediately after this scene—"her husband's words had smitten her heart, and she was sorry for the ungracious reception she had given Tom at first" (110). (l) Feeling grateful to Tom for his silence about her "very sharp blows," his aunt-in-law begins to be sorry for having "struck him so hard" (112). (m) Feeling grateful to Tom for nursing Annie, "a little girl of about a year and a half old" (113), his aunt-in-law comes to speak kindly to him: "She'll tire you, Tom . . . you'd better let me put her down in the cot"; "Thank you, Tom. I've got my work done rarely with you for a nurse. Now take a run in the yard, and play yourself a bit" (113). Her change of mind is stressed twice by the narrator: "his aunt was learning to like him," and "His aunt was learning something, and Tom was teaching" (113). (n) At a dinner time, his aunt-in-law "in her new-born liking for him" helps Tom "early to what she thought he would like" (113). This is another piece of evidence that she is a child of God. (o) During one year since Tom joined his uncle's household, she has "learned to speak less crossly" to her nephew-in-law who is "always gentle" even after her scoldings. "By-and-by," the narrator continues, "her ways to all became less hasty and passionate, for she grew ashamed of speaking to any one in an angry way before Tom" (114). The inborn goodness of her soul is implied especially in her growing "ashamed of" her impatient self. (p) It is indicated furthermore in her kindness to ask Tom about his mother (114). At first she does so simply because she "thought he would like it," but later because she becomes humble enough to learn "many things which she would have been too proud to learn from an older person" (114).

Dick, Tom's cousin, is also described as having the spirit of goodness. (q) At first, he shows no sympathy to his orphan cousin, saying he shall not sleep on bed, but "lie on the floor" (110). Soon after knowing him sobbing in thought of his dead mother, however, Dick feels sorry for Tom's loss and utters kind words: "There's room at my back if you'll creep in" (111). (r) When he finds his cousin break a bedroom window carelessly, Dick is "half sorry for Tom" (112). (s) When he sees his cousin begin to cry in fear of his mother's outrage, Dick becomes "more and more sorry for" him (112).

The goodness of the spirit of Jack, Dick's elder brother, is hinted at in (t) his acknowledgement of Tom's virtues—"his cousins [Jack and Dick] were beginning to respect him" (113); "Even Jack has been heard to acknowledge that Tom has 'pluck' in him; and as 'pluck' in Jack's mind is a short way of summing up all the virtues, he has lately become very fond of his cousin" (115).

This concept—only good spirits who had accepted Christ's teachings were allowed to come to this world—is also expressed in the two narratorial summaries. (u) First, in the narrator's sympathetic comment on the thoughtlessness of Uncle John's family which is inserted after their dinner scene, what is intimated is that their disorder is caused simply by their carelessness, not by their "wise and holy" spirits which are fundamentally good: "They were not an illdisposed set of people, but wanted thoughtfulness in their everyday life; that sort of thoughtfulness which gives order to a home, and makes a wise and holy spirit of love

the groundwork of order” (114). (v) Second, the concept appears in the closing and concluding paragraph of the story: Tom “was loving and good; and on those two qualities, which any of us may have if we try, the blessing of God lies in rich abundance” (115). The two qualities of “loving God and neighbours” (Mark. 12.30-31) and “being good always” (Deut. 6.24) are the qualities which “any of us” is provided with as inborn gifts from God and therefore can have if we try. This is another piece of evidence that God’s Plan of Salvation is Gaskell’s backbone idea for this story.

#### 4. Christ as the Moral Standard

The moral standard for all characters in “Hand and Heart” is Jesus Christ’s teachings, which are principally represented by Mrs Fletcher and her son Tom. This section focuses on their role as Christian messengers.

A survey of the frequency of characters’ appearance which has been conducted by a simple word count by using the concordance software AntConc indicates that the author’s central concern lies in Tom and his mother (See Fig. 1),<sup>4</sup> both of whom are given the attributes of Jesus Christ. The author’s meaning in conveying Christ’s integrity to the reader is presumably reflected in this result of a simple investigation into a structural device.

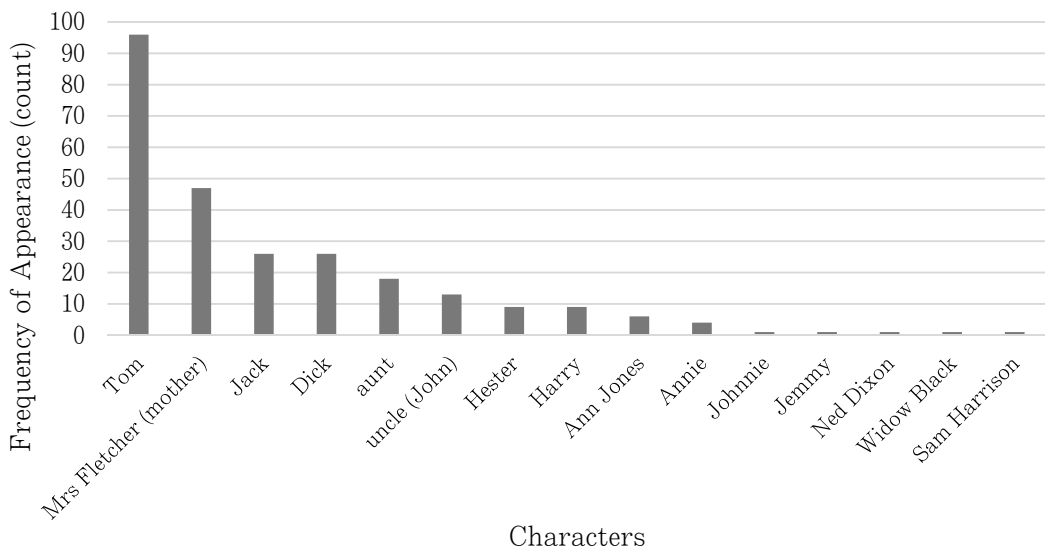


Fig. 1. Main Characters’ Frequency of Appearance in “Hand and Heart”

##### 4.1. Mrs Fletcher’s Christian Integrity

First, let us examine Christian ethics expressed in Mrs Fletcher’s advice for Tom.

(a) She warns him that “mere money can do little to cheer a sore heart,” adding that “It is

<sup>4</sup> Out of 47 examples of the reference to “Mrs Fletcher,” 45 are “mother.”



kindness only that can do this" (102-03). Explaining "we may be considering money too much as the only thing required if we want to do a kindness" (102), she concludes her talk by suggesting to her son that he should imitate the faith of Apostle Paul, who helps a lame man "rise up and walk": "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee" (Acts 3.6)(103). Her talk above, whose gist is to encourage doing good without using money, or with using hands and heart, is associated not merely with Apostle Paul's testimony but also with Christ's advice to lay up "treasures in heaven," for "where you treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6.20-21).

(b) Although Mrs Fletcher's caution above is most important in terms of the plot development as it is closely linked to the theme of this short story—help could be given with no expenditure of money—, she refers to a further instruction of Christian morality in her talk to Tom to the effect that whether earning or saving money becomes "holy" or not depends upon our purpose as well as its consistency with our duties (102). Even if the purpose for using money is good, such as for "those who are poorer than" she is (102), she becomes wrong if she sacrifices her maternal duties for money earning. This advice is the same as Apostle Paul's reminder of God's commandment concerning women's duties: aged women "may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, [*t*]o be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (Tit. 2.4-5).

(c) Mrs Fletcher also makes the following remark in the dialogue between mother and son, expressing her compassion for the poor as well as her regret about people's harsh treatment of the beggar:

"I should think very poorly of that beggar, who liked sixpence given with a curse (as I have sometimes heard it), better than the kind and gentle words some people use in refusing to give. The curse sinks deep into the heart; or if it does not, it is a proof that the poor creature has been made hard before by harsh treatment." (102)

Here, the mother suggests her son treat the poor with a truly kind heart rather than with superficial gentleness. Her implication conjures up an inseparable association with Christ's parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10.25-37). In her utterance, "the curse sinks deep into the heart," is hidden Apostle Paul's emphasis on the careful choice of words: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers" (Eph. 4.29).

(d) At school time, Mrs Fletcher wishes Tom "to come in decently and in order, with quiet decorum, and thoughtfulness as to what he was going to do" (105). Decency, order, decorum, and thoughtfulness are the Christian standards for good action as indicated in Apostle Paul's directions "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14.40), and in an Old Testament prophet's "A good man . . . will guide his affairs with discretion" (Ps. 112.5).

(e) Mrs Fletcher's wisdom for overcoming difficulties is hinted at in the following narratorial insertion: "however much she might regret a thing, she was too faithful to repine"

(106). This comment is added in the situation where she meets a difficulty in satisfying Tom's desire for her to go out with him because she has her shop to mind. Even if her circumstance becomes regrettable, Mrs Fletcher's faith in God is sturdy enough for how to make no complaints about it. This positive view of her life comes from her trust in the good intention of Heavenly Father, who "will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10.13).

(f) Mrs Fletcher's advice to Tom, who is in deep childlike reveries, "Go into the fields for a walk" to fetch her "wild flowers," results in restoring "his usually even, happy temper" (106). This invitation to outdoor walking, getting rid of selfish engagement with inward daydreams, reminds us of the Scriptural recommendation to take invigorating action rather than unhealthy meditation—"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3.18); "Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works" (Jas. 2.18).

(g) Listening to Tom's counting his good deeds, Mrs Fletcher turns over "the pages of the New Testament which lay by her" (108), and puts her finger under the passage of Christ's suggestion of doing good in secret: "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth" (Matt 6.3).

(h) Mrs Fletcher's strong faith is stressed when her irrecoverable illness compels her to leave her boy on earth. The narrator remarks, "God strengthened her, and sent his peace into her soul, and before her death she was content to leave her precious child in his hands, who is a Father to the fatherless [Ps. 68.5], and defendeth the cause of the widow [Deut.10.18; Isa. 1.23]" (108). Both references to the Old Testament imply God's mercy for fatherless children, as well as widows.

(i) The narratorial depiction of Mrs Fletcher's death—"thankful for the joys she had had, and thankful for the sorrows which had taught her meekness, thankful for life, and thankful for death, she died" (108)—is one of the typical instances expressing her staunch faith in God and is also the projection of His Plan of Salvation within the text. She is thankful not merely for her earthly life but also for her afterlife.

#### **4.2. Tom Fletcher's Christian Integrity**

Next, Christian ethics in Tom's action and utterance shall be examined.

(a) Tom is described as a kind and tender boy. He asks Anne Jones, his neighbour, to let him take care of her mischievous children, because he dreads "the cruel sound of another slap" (104). Tom is "very fond of babies, and could not bear to hear them cry" (105). His tenderheartedness betokens one of the typical Christian attributes: "the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy" (Jas. 5.11).

(b) A clue to Tom's selflessness and discretion is given in the scene where he decides to help Mrs Jones rather than "to play with and amuse little Hester" because "it was true enough

that giving Mrs. Jones the clothes' pegs as she wanted them would help her as much; and perhaps keep her from being so cross with her children" (104). Tom's action accords with the Old Testament prophets' recommendation of discretion, such as "The discretion of a man deferreth his anger" (Prov. 19.11), "A good man . . . will guide his affairs with discretion" (Ps. 112.5), and "When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee" (Prov. 2.10-11).

(c) Tom's humbleness in his belief in God is expressed especially in his prayer scenes. The following citation describing his bedtime prayer on the first night of his moving to uncle John's house indicates not only his humble obedience to his dead mother's teachings but also his earnest faith in God:

Tom tried to speak to God as his mother had taught him, out of the fulness of his little heart, which was heavy enough that night. He tried to think how she would have wished him to speak and to do, and when he felt puzzled with the remembrance of the scene of disorder and anger which he had seen, he earnestly prayed God would make and keep clear his path before him. (110)

Humbleness is the quality of God's children: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering" (Col. 3.12).

(d) Tom is depicted as an honest boy as well. In spite of Dick's advice to concoct a story about the broken window to avoid his mother's anger, Tom determines to tell his aunt the truth honestly, fearing God's anger more than hers: "I shan't have to dare God's anger. Mother taught me to fear that; she said I need never be really afraid of aught else" (112). His honesty in fear of God's anger is a reflection of his commitment to the Scriptural teachings—"Lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they that deal truly are his delight" (Prov. 12. 22); "By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life" (Prov. 22.4); "And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men" (Acts 24.16).

(e) Before meeting his aunt-in-law to make an honest confession about his breaking a window pane, Tom prays to God for "help and strength" (112). This humbleness is again a manifestation of his Christian piety, as it is the same as the humbleness manifested by an Old Testament prophet: "Give ear, O Lord, unto my prayer; and attend to the voice of my supplications. In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt answer me" (Ps. 85.6-7).

(f) Tom's Christlike fortitude is depicted most clearly in the behaviours he shows after being struck by his aunt-in-law:

But what struck the boys more even than his being 'hard' in bearing such blows, was his quietness afterwards. He did not grumble loudly, as Jack would have done, nor did he turn sullen, as was Dick's custom; but the minute afterwards he was ready to run an errand for his aunt; nor did he make any mention of the hard blows, when his uncle came in to breakfast, as his aunt had rather expected he would. (112)

Tom's action is an embodiment of Christ's teachings of fortitude: "Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven" (Luke 6.37), and also Paul's advice on generosity: "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. . . . Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12.19-21).

(g) Knowing his position as their dependant, Tom hesitates to ask his uncle and aunt if he can "go to school again" (113), which shows his humble politeness, one of the Christian virtues — "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time" (1 Pet. 5.6; See also Matt. 23.12, and Jas. 4.10), and "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: . . . ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel" (Phil. 1.27).

(h) The narrator draws the reader's attention to Tom's selflessness by contrasting it with Jack and Dick's selfishness. The former is pleased to look after Annie while his aunt is busy working,<sup>5</sup> but the latter are always "ready enough to see after their own pleasures" (113). The narratorial summary of the contrast — "Whenever . . . every one is selfish . . . there are no feelings of gratitude; the gracefulness of 'thanks' is never called for" (113)<sup>6</sup> — is in association with Apostle Paul's recommendation of selfless mind: "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Phil. 2.3-4).

(i) At the dinner table, Tom refrains from starting to eat until his uncle says a grace, because he had been taught by her mother "to say a simple 'grace' with her before they began their dinner" (113). A short prayer of thanks to God said before meals is an imitation of Christ's prayer before the Last Supper (Mar. 14.23), and a reflection of Paul's suggestion of gratitude to all things — "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5.20); "Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thess. 5.17-18).

The narrator's concluding remark on the change of Uncle John's family elucidates that it is these Christian virtues of Tom's — especially patience, gentleness, fortitude, and forbearance — that bring good influences to his uncle's family:

He was useful to his aunt, and patiently bore her hasty ways, until for very shame she left off being hasty with one who was always so meek and mild. His uncle . . . really respected him for the very qualities which are most truly 'manly;' for the courage with which he dared to do what was right, and the quiet firmness with which he bore

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5 The innocence of Annie, a-year-and-a-half old cousin of Tom, helps him retrieve the loving heart which he almost lost only the night before: "he began to know the happy feeling of loving somebody again" (113). This small incident has a link to the biblical reference to children's innocence as a key to salvation (Matt. 18.2-3; Luke 18.16-17).

6 Felicia Bonaparte views that the moral of the tale is given in this narratorial remark (141).

many kinds of pain. . . . and long before Jack could be brought to acknowledge it, Dick maintained that 'Tom had a great deal of pluck in him, though it was not of Jack's kind.' (114)

## 5. Hope for the Next World

The third evidence of the prevalence of the Christian doctrine "God's Plan of Salvation" in the plot is the narratorial reference to the next world. Its examples are found in the faith of Old Harry, in Mrs Fletcher's death, and in the narrator's conclusive remark of the story.

(a) Harry, a lame old neighbour of the Fletchers, is introduced as a pious Christian—his Bible is "old," "worn with much reading," but "treated with careful reverence" (107). He accepts the decline of his health as it is, considering it is "the Lord's will" (107). To note is his reference to his life on earth as the reflection of the teachings of the Bible, which is narrated in the following citation depicting the scene of Tom's reading the Scriptures to the old man:

The Bible served as a textbook to their conversation; for in a long life old Harry had seen and heard so much, which he had connected with events, or promises, or precepts contained in the Scriptures, that it was quite curious to find how everything was brought in and dovetailed, as an illustration of what they were reading. (107)

Everything which the old man experienced in his mortal life is an illustration of events, promises, or precepts depicted in the Scriptures. This acknowledgement is an indication not merely of Harry's staunch belief in the truth of the Bible, but also of his manifestation of the Christian belief that our life is led by Heavenly Father, or, progresses according to His Plan of Salvation, as implied in the biblical verse: "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Prov. 3.6).

(b) As elucidated in Section 4.1 (i) above, Mrs Fletcher passes away, feeling "thankful for life, and thankful for death" (108). She is grateful even for death, presumably because she believes in the next world, which is full of hope, for instance, for her resurrection—"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead" (1 Cor. 15.19-21).

(c) Hope for the next world is expressed more directly in the following narratorial remark on the future of Tom and his new family: "I think we may hope that he, and the household among whom he is adopted, will go 'from strength to strength'" (115). The Bible verse quoted here refers to a promise that everyone in Zion who goes "from strength to strength . . . appeareth before God" (Ps. 84.7).

## 6. Conclusion

The objective of this paper has been to reveal evidence concerning the dissemination of the Christian doctrine "God's Plan of Salvation" in the plot chiefly through the qualitative

analysis of the key characters. A literature review was conducted in the introductory Section 1 to stress the uniqueness of my interpretation in comparison with previous criticism. In Section 2, a general idea of “God’s Plan of Salvation” was elucidated to bring to light its three essential features—(a) the innate goodness of the spirit, (b) Christ as our moral standard, and (c) the hope for the next world, or eternal life. Section 3 examined the intrinsic goodness of the spirit, centring on Tom and his uncle’s family, and on their character development. Section 4 focused on the two central characters—Mrs Fletcher and her son Tom—to show their role as Christ’s messengers. In Section 5, Old Harry’s view of life, Mrs Fletcher’s gratitude for death, and the narrator’s reference to a Bible verse were considered as the examples of the hope for the next world.

Before closing my argument, I would like to consider the meaning of the title “Hand and Heart.” J. G. Sharps observes that its meaning is suggested by Mrs Fletcher’s warnings to her son Tom (83): Do good in secret by the loving heart. Quoting the biblical phrase “Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth” (Matt. 6.3), the mother explains its import to her child: “I don’t want us to talk about it, as if you had been doing more than just what you ought” (108), i.e. “Do good in secret.” The meaning of the Christ’s phrase is clarified by Christ himself in the verse subsequent to the above: “That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly” (Matt. 6.4). Furthermore, in the explanation Mrs Fletcher makes immediately after the above citation, the true meaning of her teaching is presented to Tom: “how far more may be done by the loving heart than by mere moneygiving” (108), i.e. “Heart could do more good deeds than money.” Accordingly, Sharps’ interpretation seems to presuppose that “hand” denotes “action,” as in “a helping hand” (103), while “heart” signifies a mental attitude towards neighbours, such as “love and kindness.”

“Hand and Heart” probably means “worship (or, action) and will.” The OED’s definition of the set phrase “(with) heart and hand” explains “as regards both will and execution; readily, willingly, wholeheartedly; (in later use also sometimes) strenuously, vigorously” (“heart,” def. P2.f; emphasis added). That is, “heart” symbolizes “will,” while “hand” “execution.”

The phrase is also used by James Martineau (1805-1900), a “Unitarian minister at Liverpool” (*Letters* 997), in his collection of sermons *Endeavours after the Christian Life* in the sense of “worship (or, action) and will” : “there, is the glad consent between hand and heart, the concord between our worship and our will” (301; emphasis added). Indeed, it is used as the title of a piece of his sermons (Martineau, *Endeavours* 199-210; See also Michael Wheeler 27 and Ralph Waller 502). The phrase appears two more times in his book, both in the same sense—“there is undoubtedly an increasing body of persons in this country, who . . . are ready to join hand and heart in order to give free scope to the essential truths and influences of our religion” (Martineau, “Preface to Second Series” viiiix; emphasis added), and “Devotion is holy regulation, guiding hand and heart; a surrender of selfwill, —that main source of uncertainty and caprice, —and a loving subordination to the only rule that cannot change” (431; emphasis added). Since

James is a brother of her friend Harriet Martineau (1802-76), writer (*Letters* 997), it is highly probable that Gaskell hit upon the title of her short story, taking a hint from his sermons.

In our reading of the text, consequently, the meaning of its title is "worship and will," which implies to help others "with action based on the faith in God and with resolution." Because of its strong didactic tone, little attention has been paid to this short story; Bacigalupo even mentions that it finds "least favor among modern readers" (428). Our Christian reading of the text, however, brings to light its close association with the fundamental Christian doctrine "God's Plan of Salvation."

Considering the repeated insertions of Tom's kind deeds—(a) giving Ann Jones the clothes' pegs (104), (b) keeping the little ones safe out of mischief till Mrs Jones finishes her work (104), (c) carrying "the heavy basket of potatoes for the little girl" on his way to school (105), (d) taking the wild flowers to lame Harry (107), (e) reading the Bible for the old neighbour (107), (f) bringing water, blowing the fire, boiling the water, and making the tea for his aunt-in-law, tired as he is after having a "six-mile walk" (108) to his uncle's house (109-10), (g) trying to open a bedroom window to take in fresh air at uncle John's house (111), and (h) saying thanksgiving, following his uncle's grace, at his dinner table, which makes "all the family . . . the happier for having listened reverently (if with some surprise) to" it (114)—, some readers may think Tom is too idealized to be convincing. Notwithstanding, we must not avoid the narrator's reference to the boy's weakness: "And yet Tom was no powerful person; he was not clever; he was very friendless at first" (115). Acknowledging this authorial device, Tracey Marie Nectoux reminds us that he is "not naturally gifted," and "must be patiently led by mother" (62). Bacigalupo, looking at the protagonist's idealized characterization from a historical perspective of didacticism, expresses a sympathetic view of the author's reiteration of his goodness: "once we understand not only the audience and purpose of the narrative, but also the tradition from which it derives, we can better accept the perfection of Tom who, at the age of nine, leads his uncle's family along the path of righteousness" (66).

The prevalence of the story's preaching tone is so conspicuous that the detection of the authorial meaning may hardly seem difficult. The theme is condensed into what Mrs Fletcher calls "the truth" of her words: "how far more may be done by the loving heart than by mere moneygiving; and every one may have the loving heart" (108). The narrator herself inserts an answer to this question in the closing paragraph of her tale: "Now do you not see how much happier this family are from the one circumstance of a little child's coming among them? Could money have made onetenth part of this real and increasing happiness? I think you will all say no" (115). Her answer is the suggestion of helping others with "hand and heart," or "action based on worship, and willpower," in accordance with the Christian spirit of "love and goodness" (115). The second clause in Mrs Fletcher's truth cited above—"every one may have the loving heart"—is worthy of attention, as it is an allusion to the Christian belief that we were spirit children of God in the premortal world.

Because it was published in Travers Madge's *Sunday School Penny Magazine*, whose key object was edification of children and poor people (Letters 686; Easson 15; Sharps 83; Shattock xxiv, 99), "Hand and Heart" has often been interpreted as the work of moralization or didacticism. The uniqueness of my interpretation of this tale, if any, would be to have analysed the cause of such readings in arguing that the narrator's references to God's Plan of Salvation are scattered throughout, and that this Christian belief is thus the backbone of the story.

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## エリザベス・ギヤスケル「手と心」を「救いの計画」で読み解く

大野 龍浩

本稿は、Elizabeth Gaskell (1810-65) の初期短編 “Hand and Heart” (1849) において、キリスト教の最も根本的な教えである “God’s Plan of Salvation” (前世、現世、来世を通して人類を幸福に導くための神の救いの計画) が、その創作の基盤をなしていることを、テキストの綿密な読み込みによって、指摘するものである。

第1項は本稿の目的を述べ、この短編に関する先行研究を紹介する。第2項は「神の救いの計画」にある3要素「靈魂の善性」「道德規準としてのキリスト」、そして「来世へ希望／いのちの永遠性」について説明する。第3項、第4項、第5項は、それぞれの要素がいかに関登場人物の言動に顕現しているかを例証する。第3項では、主人公 Tom の模範によって伯父の家族が変わっていくのは、それぞれの靈魂がそれを解する善性を備えているからであると指摘する。第4項では、二人の主要人物 Mrs Fletcher とその息子 Tom の高潔さは、キリストの教えを道德規準にしていることによると論じる。第5項は、隣人 Old Harry や Mrs Fletcher の言葉のなかに、来世の存在を信じている証拠を拾う。第6項は、上の議論を総括したあと、表題「手と心」について、作品内の言説や当時のユニテリアン派の論客 Henry Martineau による言及を吟味することによって、「行動と信仰」を意味すると推察する。

子供向けの啓蒙雑誌 *Sunday School Penny Magazine* に掲載された経緯から、道德主義や教訓主義を標榜する短編と目されてきたこの作品について、その要因は、テキストがキリスト教の根本教義である「救いの計画」の基本要素を作中に散りばめ、作品の屋台骨にしているゆえであると結論づける。