

God. Manufacturers have learned to make many useful articles out of materials once thrown away as useless waste. So, however our lives may have been broken and spoiled by sin, God can take them and make them instruments in helping our fellow men and building up His kingdom.

After vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver, v. 21. There are many things in themselves desirable, such as pleasure, honors, companionships, wealth, which in the time of trial, sorrow, danger or death will be found to be vain things which cannot profit nor deliver. We all need keener vision, a awakened and sharpened spiritual insight, that we may not mistake the glitter for the

gold, the chaff for the wheat, the vain appearances for the eternal realities.

Pray for you, v. 23. Every other means of doing good is limited. This has no limit. Our friends may be separated from us by distance, or so situated, that we cannot help them by our strength or wealth, but we can always pray for them. Our enemies may be unwilling to listen to our offers of reconciliation, but they cannot prevent us from praying that God will give to them a better mind. Those whose salvation we desire may refuse to hear our invitations and warnings, but we can at least pray, that the Lord will turn their hearts to Himself. Great is the power of intercession.

POINTS AND PARAGRAPHS

Every gift of God brings its own responsibilities. v. 13.

Noble men are the material of a great nation. v. 14.

We should avoid the rocks on which others have made shipwrecks. v. 15.

Sin is seen most clearly in the presence of God. v. 17.

The world fears no one more than him who has power with God. v. 18.

Not only our sin, but our sins should be confessed. v. 19.

The majesty of God is not greater than His mercy. v. 20.

Our choice lies between the service of God and the service of the world. v. 21.

The divine promises are as unchanging as the divine character. v. 22.

The bell of threatening is needed to rouse from the sleep of indifference. v. 25.

There were they, a great army, with sword and spear, young, strong, and valiant, yet they could not arrest in its fall one drop of rain, nor alter the course of one puff of wind, nor extinguish the blaze of one tongue of fire. "Oh, what folly it was to offer an affront to the great God, who had such complete control over 'fire and hail, snow and vapors, stormy winds fulfilling His word!' What blindness to think they could in any respect be better off with another king.—Blaikie.

With all our knowledge of natural science, it is still true that God is behind the forces of nature, controlling and guiding them. But, if we were more enlightened, we should recognize the great truth, that God is even more fully revealed in the still small voice, than in thunder and lightning, 1 Kgs. 19: 12.—Professor W. G. Jordan, D.D.

Ambrose, a bishop of Milan in the fourth century, says that a Christian wife was on a journey with her heathen husband, when a terrific thunder-storm arose, which overwhelmed the man with terror. His wife asked the cause. He replied, "Are you not afraid?" She answered, "No, not at all; for I know that it is the voice of my heavenly Father, and shall a child be afraid of a father's voice? The husband saw that his wife had what he had not; and this led him to embrace Christianity.

"Now that they have begun to fear, Samuel can say to the people, 'Fear not.' Now that they have shown themselves alive to the evils of God's displeasure, they are assured that there is a clear way of escape from the evils.... If God be terrible as an enemy, He is glorious as a friend. No doubt you offered a slight to him when you sought another king. But it is just a proof of His wonderful goodness that, though you have done this, He does not cast you off. He will be as near to you as ever He was if you are only faithful to Him."