

"YOUR FATHERS, WHERE ARE  
THEY?"

THERE is something peculiarly affecting in this inquiry. It is eminently adapted to call forth all the tender feelings of our nature, and fill us with serious and holy thoughts. Early recollections crowd upon the mind when the names of our ancestors are mentioned, and imagination can paint them as they were in the days that are past, enjoying a plenitude of health, and mingling in the active scenes of life. Many are the years which have rolled by since we were playful children in our father's house. Many are the projects which then filled our youthful minds, and many are the tears which the overthrow of expectations and the blighting of fond hopes have caused in after life. Now all these considerations are intimately connected with this question. When asked where our fathers are, we cannot but call to mind where they once were; and it is with sad feelings, on the instability of human things, and the frailty of human pleasures, that we are forced to acknowledge they are not what they once were; their names are almost forgotten; others have filled their places, and the world knows them no more.

But there is something more in this question which not a little contributes to render it most serious and affecting. Though men have forgotten them—though the remembrance of them has banished from the face of the earth, we are bound to believe that they are still in existence; that the cold and putrid body which we committed to the dust was but the wreck of a fabric which had contained within it an immortal and immaterial spirit; and that though the dust has long since returned to its dust, the spirit hath ascended to Him who gave it. Where then are our fathers? True it is, no human reason can decide; and this very uncertainty it is which

tends to render us anxious for the time when all hidden things shall be made manifest.

But is there nothing said to us in this question? Does it address no word of admonition to the living? Assuredly it does? The language which it speaks is such as this, "Son of man! hast thou no respect for the future destiny? Dost thou imagine that thou art to continue here for ever? Will no end be put to the term of thy mortal existence? Consider for awhile. What does experience teach thee? Canst thou produce one man who has withstood the shock of ages, and laughed to scorn thy overwhelming current of time? Are the once famous ones of antiquity now moving on this earth? Nay, thou needest not refer to the ages of antiquity. Where are your own fathers? Have not they shared the common fate of all mankind? And do you then expect that you will be treated otherwise than they have been?"

These are awful considerations, and they speak a language which none can gainsay or deny. Oh, believe me, son of man, great though thy wealth may be, and mighty thy renown, the time must come when that same question shall be asked concerning you, which is now asked of those with whom you were most tenderly connected. Yet a little while, and the youngest of us will be in his grave. Who, then, will place any dependence on that which is so fickle? Who will forsake the strong holds of everlasting righteousness, for the bruised, the broken, the treacherous reeds of worldly pleasures? Seek rather an inheritance which is undefiled, and a glory which emanates from the Saviour of the world, and is therefore full of grace and truth.

B. Z.

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"It is appointed unto man once to die, and after death the judgment."