

child, who was to be born. And when Elizabeth found that the Lord had dealt graciously with her, and was about to take away the reproach of barrenness, under which she had so long labored among men from some motive which has not been explained, she hid herself five months. Perhaps this retirement might arise from her anxiety to avoid any ceremonial defilement, aware as she was, that the promised child was to be a perpetual Nazarite from the womb; or it might be, "that she might not seem to be lifted up with the favour conferred upon her; or rather that she might have the more leisure for meditation, prayer and thanksgiving, on this extraordinary occasion."

The remarkable circumstances connected with the birth of the Baptist,—the pre-announcement of it, by an angel to his father, while he ministered in the temple; and the nine months dumbness, with which he was affected, both as a sign and a punishment for his unbelief,—such things were nothing more than might have been expected, in connection with the birth of that extraordinary character, who was to be the forerunner of the Messiah. The most glorious event was about to occur, that ever took place in the world's history, and it was to be expected that extraordinary circumstances would be connected with it.

It would seem that now all visible communication with the spiritual world have been suspended; we hear not now of angel's visits to the children of men. But happily this is not needed. We know that we enjoy their invisible protection, and assistance, sent forth as they are to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation; and this is quite as beneficial as their visible appearance could be, whilst there is not the excitement and alarm, which their visible presence could not fail to occasion. And then, possessed as we are of the complete revelation of God's will, contained in

the Bible, we need not the information which these angelic beings could communicate. We have it all, in a surer and more durable form, than angel's could present it in, by word of mouth. Who would care for a verbal message from a servant, when he has a letter from the hand of the Sovereign himself, announcing the same thing. O Brethren, let us value God's word as it deserves to be. It is possible that we might be imposed upon by wicked men, or evil spirits, assuming the appearance of angels of light; but by the word of God, we can never be deceived. It alone can make us wise unto salvation. When we read and meditate upon it, we are as it were, in the company of God, and receive the hallowing influence, which proceeds from such society. Let us value that word more, let us study it more profoundly, more frequently, more prayerfully, so shall we be better fitted for the society of angel's, when we shall be carried by them into Abraham's bosom.

DON'T FORGET TO PRAY.

A lady who had the charge of young persons not of kindred blood became on one occasion perplexed with regard to her duty. She retired to her own room to meditate; and being grieved in spirit, laid her head on a table and wept bitterly.—She scarcely perceived her little daughter seated quietly in the corner. Unable longer to bear the sight of her mother's distress, she stole softly to her side, and, taking her hand in both of her own, said, "Mamma, once you taught me a pretty hymn:

'If e'er you meet with trials
Or troubles on the way,
Then cast your care on Jesus,
And don't forget to pray.'"

The counsel of the little monitor was taken, and relief came. The mother was repaid for rightly training her child by having her become her own blest teacher. "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings God has ordained praise."