

ed to be its unjust injunctions. I did read the Bible, but it gave me more uneasiness than any thing else, although I was strictly moral in my conduct. I occasionally prayed in secret, and enjoyed some intervals of happiness; but could not bear the thought of praying in my own family. I was frequently importuned by professors to go to the altar to be prayed for, but my pride of heart would never let me do this. I thought God would give me religion without doing this, never taking into consideration the extreme unfitness of my heart to receive religion while harbouring thoughts so adverse to the requisitions for the Gospel of Christ. For "whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." I was "ashamed" to go to the altar, because it seemed to me so humiliating and simple. I believe thousands are thus ruined by this selfish pride. However, I was certain that neither happiness nor peace could be obtained from the various indulgences and pursuits of this transitory world, and that my only refuge was in Jesus. As he had given some of my neighbours great consolation of mind, according to their own account, (and if they had lied about it, I knew their countenances could not have been as cheerful as they were.) I resolved to throw away my own wisdom, and take advice. "He that is of God heareth God's word."

The camp meeting commencing on the 24th of June, being near Newark, in New Jersey, would afford me, I thought, a good opportunity to seek the truth of a matter which appeared to me so dark and mysterious. Here I thought I might employ my mind in the subject without interruption; determining not to acknowledge a conversion of heart, unless it were radical. On Wednesday, about one o'clock, I started for the meeting under somewhat oppressed feelings. When, however, I arrived on the ground, those internal torments of sin left me; and as I stood in the front of one of the tents in which they were singing and praying, my heart rose up in hostility to their devotions. It seemed to me both ridiculous and mean to be thus engaged in a matter which I thought was impossible to be understood. Being entreated by some of my friends (who knew my mind had been exercised) to go into the tent, and kneel down, and be prayed for, I at length complied, seeing that there were many respectable persons in the tent, whose capacities in every respect, I had reason to believe were superior to my own. After kneeling, I felt my heart more at war with the objects around me than ever. They told me to try to pray, but this seemed impossible. Though my reason was convinced, my feelings were averse to all the exercises of religion. So I remained that day. Returning home in the evening, I felt oppressed again. On the next morning before I arose, I partially resolved never to visit camp meetings again, or even to hear Methodist preaching. I thought they made too much ado about the salvation of souls! But scarcely had an hour elapsed before I repented of my rash resolu-

tion. I felt very much dissatisfied with every thing around me. Nothing pleased me. I went again that day to the camp. I kneeled to be prayed for at every opportunity. I at length stated to the people the situation of my heart; that it rebelled against all their proceedings; that I was reasonably convinced of the importance of religion, but knew not how to obtain it. This day left me as the former had done. The next morning being Friday, and the last day of the camp meeting, I thought I would spend one day more, and see whether God would do any thing for me. About the middle of the afternoon of that day I felt my burden partially removed. I had, after duly considering my lost and helpless condition as a sinner, endeavoured to look to Jesus for all my help, and with all my strength. I had retired into the woods to pray, but was afraid of being seen! Thoughts of suicide were presented to my mind, but I resisted them. I was, at this time, between darkness and light; not being able positively to affirm that a change had taken place in my heart, nor to deny that it was so. In this state of mind I sat down about the middle of the camp ground to meditate on my case. I thought I loved God. I thought I loved the brethren. But there were doubts in my mind. I felt that man could do nothing for me; I must look to God. I prayed to the almighty and all-merciful Being, in the loneliness of my thoughts, something after this manner: "Lord, thou knowest the situation of my mind, my natural incredulity, and my supreme desire to know thee aright. Lord, remove all doubts. I feel willing to give up all and follow thee; to be sacrificed if it should be thy will." In a moment of time I found myself rejoicing in the God of my salvation. "Old things were passed away, and all things had become new." The yellow radiance of the setting sun on the green foliage of the trees, produced in my soul paintings of beauty never before beheld. The glories of God shone all around me, and I arose, praising His name in every breath. The songs of Zion now broke upon my enraptured ear, and the spirit of their sweet melody rolled like streams through my new-born soul. I found myself in a new world of joy, into which I had emerged from the dark prison of sin, where no consoling voice was heard, where night perpetual reigned. I was "clothed, and in my right mind." The "new song" was in my mouth. The scales had fallen from my eyes, my tongue was loosed, and my ears unstopped. "The wilderness and the solitary place were made glad," and "the desert rejoiced and blossomed as the rose." "The glory of Lebanon was given to it;" and I shouted, "Glory to God" with a glad voice.

In the midst of this heavenly scene I thought how often I had called religion a delusion! I was determined not to be deceived, and I placed my hand on my heart to see whether its wild tumultuous throbbings had not caused unusual excitement. *But all was tranquil there.* I then tried the power of my memory it was the same as ever. My reasoning faculties; they were stronger than ever; and my perception was clearer. More convinced than ever, my soul gushed forth again in a flood of joy and thanksgiving to the

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