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not knowing whither he went. But before his course was closed, he found that all his steps had been ordered—that all his way was of the Lord. So with Joseph; and to this he refers when he seeks to comfort his conscience-smitten brothers, at the time of their father's death. They were afraid that now that he was gone, Joseph would visit them with due retribution for all their cruelty. But what did he say! *"Fear not; for I will nourish you and your little ones, for it was not you that sent me hither, but God, that I might preserve much people alive."* So with St. Paul; and he felt that he was immortal till his work was done. It was the consideration that his times were in God's hands—that the work which he was doing was the work of God—that cheered him in all his perils on land and sea; that made him happy in the Mamertine prison in Rome, and the happiest man in that little water-logged craft, buffeted by the wintry winds upon the Adriatic, which was to be wrecked upon the shore of Malta; the happiest man among all the two hundred and seventy-six soldiers and sailors that walked the deck: for his was a faith which grew brighter amid the wane of years and the gathering storms of persecution, and led him to say in view of the martyr death that was before him: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand."

All this is very plain from the teaching of the Word; but it is no less plain from the teaching of Providence. How true is it that God is in history! We can see this both in the history of nations and individuals. Think of the life of Joseph—of David or Daniel! You can see the hand of God in the dreams of Joseph,—in the sleepless night of Ahasuerus,—in the shipwreck of the Apostle,—in the early life of Martin Luther. But consider your own life: how you have been led; what influences have been brought to bear on you; how your life has been shaped and your character moulded into its present fashion! Oh, how truly we are the clay and He the potter! Look back upon the past years through which you have so silently and thoughtlessly glided, and see what God hath wrought! Your birth—marriage—present employment—your state in life—your opinions; religious experience—your friendships, preferences and prejudices—losses and gains—joys and sorrows—successes and reverses: these were not loose contingencies for which no provision was made, and which no foresight could anticipate, but the wise appointment of Him who doeth His will among the armies of heaven and the inhabitants of earth. These, for the most part, were not of your own seeking, but of God's ordaining. It was the reading of a certain book, or the hearing of a certain preacher, that made such a deep and abiding impression upon your mind. It was an accidental meeting, one night, that led you to be this man's wife, or that wife's husband. Like two rivers that rise far apart on the hills, sometimes diverging and sometimes converging, but which ultimately meet at a given point, and flow on in one united stream—like these you met at a given point, and thus linked together in feeling and in destiny, you move on together, acting and reacting upon each other, in the most important interests of your being, till you reach that blessed state where they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God!

God is in history; and God is in biography. He has been in your life. Its pattern, so to speak, is in the loom, and the shuttle is flying: now casting a dark, and now a golden thread; and thus the work goes on from day to day, amid crosses and losses, and joys and sorrows, till the pattern is completed—till the work is done. So with life, in all its details,—its sorrows and joys; dark days and bright days. And just as every thread is necessary, whether white or black, to the weaver, in order to