

## WEIGHTS AND WINGS.

Every blessing of God is capable of profitable use or harmful abuse. Each may be turned to the sad account of sinking us into deeper guilt and condemnation, or of raising us to higher knowledge and enjoyment of God. It may be a weight to send us down, or a wing to bear us up.

The latter is the true mission of every blessing. Each, as it comes from God, points to him as the bestower, gives a delightful and alluring view of his character, and would draw us nearer to him in the exercise of gratitude and love. And it is a delightful view which we may take of every blessing—that it comes to prepare the way for others, comes to give us fitness, being improved, for the reception of still greater blessings. Each is a link in a chain which God is willing to make interminable, if we will not break it by our perversity.

Blessings are wings. They are given that by them we may soar upward toward God.—They make us see and feel the infinite goodness and loveliness of the character of God. They make us see the shame and wrong of disobeying him. They show us how much he loves us, and compel us to see and feel the obligation of loving him. Hence all the mercies of God have a natural tendency to break up the sinful indifference of our hearts to God, and to soften them into the most fervent love. All the Christian graces are quickened into life, and augmented in power, by a just sense of the goodness of God.—Goodness leadeth to repentance, strengthens aith, gives a livelier fervour to love, gives a joyful stimulus to hope, and causes one to run with more alacrity and zeal in the path of obedience. All God's blessings are voices calling us into a higher and sweeter intimacy with himself. They would bear us as on eagles' wings to a higher conformity to his will, and a more perfect reflection of his image.

Happy are they—and many there are who enjoy it—who are making this very use of the blessings they receive. Each swells the capital on which they trade, and enables them to accumulate still more of those spiritual treasures which moth and rust can never corrupt.

But what numbers make these blessings *weights* instead of *wings*! They are sunk by them, and not raised. They are borne down by them, and not up. The things given are loved more than the Giver. Enjoyment is in them; and not by them, in him. They absorb the attention they came to direct to him. The bearer of a message from the Great King is more honoured than the King himself.

The divine blessings come to furnish them as with the pinions of a dove, that they might soar upward towards the Infinite Giver of all good. But they are so abused that their grand design is defeated. Selfishly grasped, and inordinately loved, and diverting the affections from God, they sink the soul like lead, into the mighty waters. They carry it down into a deeper worldliness. They are perversely used in opposition to the very end for which they were sent, separating the soul from God, instead of bringing it nearer to him.

Let it not be forgotten, that one reason that God so often takes away the good things he had given his people, is their propensity to make weights instead of wings of them.—They love, enjoy, and get themselves so absorbed in them, that they cannot fly upward, and soar away towards God and the glorious things of eternity. The sand-bags of the balloon must be cast overboard, so that it may rise. These too much loved blessings must be cut loose. They weigh down the soul.—But being cut loose, we have seen the soul grovelling and earthly no longer. Weights being exchanged for wings, we have seen the freed spirit soar upward. The loss was gain.

Happy he whose blessings are used as wings to bear him up, and not to burden him. Such blessings are doubly blest—precious in themselves, and precious in the use made of them.—*Puritan Recorder*.

The seeds of repentance are sown in youth by pleasure, but the harvest is reaped in age by pain.—*Colton's Laconisms*.