

THE BELIEVER'S SECURITY.

Psalm 91:1.

There is a strong probability that this Psalm was written by Moses. Although its authorship cannot possibly be traced, yet the sentiment expressed with the imagery employed might have been derived from the circumstances of the wilderness wandering. Surely no nation was ever more directly "under the shadow of the Almighty." There was that pillar of cloud by day; were they not under that shadow, and was not that shadow the symbol of the divine presence? Or what had they to fear when a thousand fell at their side and ten thousand at their right hand? When the mighty forces of Moab and Ammon disappeared before them like chaff on the summer threshing floor they could well sing: "Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked." Or might not the great lawgiver himself, as he trod those awful heights of Horeb, or when for those forty days he "dwelt in the secret place of the Most High," have felt those wonderful emotions which gave birth the first verse of this Psalm: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." What wonderful security was there, alone on those sapphire heights with God! "I will say of Jehovah, He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I will trust." Surely if ever man could say: "He will cover thee with his plunions, and under his wings shalt thou take refuge," it was he, as the cloud came down on the mountain and the Almighty hid him away from the presence of his fellows. Well might he exclaim, with the everlasting hills about him, and the very presence of the great Jehovah overshadowing him: "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror at night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day, nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday."

But whoever penned the Psalm, and whatever were the conditions under which it was written, no words have ever voiced more emphatically the assurance of the security of the believer. From beginning to end it is one prolonged note of confidence in God, no matter what befalls.

Oh, there are so many "secret places of the Most High!" So many places where we can abide under the shadow of the Almighty. We do not need to climb to the mountain's top like Moses; or lie down amid the green pastures or still waters, like David; or go into banishment on some lonely isle, like John, in order to be assured of the truth of the Psalmist's words: "He will give his angels charge over thee, to keep the in all thy ways." The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his salvation. No matter where they are the eyes that never slumber nor sleep are keeping guard. "Who is he that will harm you if ye be followers of that which is good?" "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Wherever we lie down at night, God is there. Wherever we journey he is there. In the sick chamber, and in the silent pew on the Lord's day; in the open field where daily duty calls, as well as at the secret altar where we make supplication before him. Anywhere, everywhere, he who will may seek the covert of his plunions and under his wings take refuge. The Lord is with his people, and it is theirs to abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

But this security can only come to those who seek it. "All these passages in the Old Testament," says Maclaren, about "trusting in God" run on all fours with "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." But security means a flying to God for refuge and throwing ourselves into his arms. "A man out on the plain, with the avenger of blood, hot-breathed and bloody-minded, behind him might believe, as much as he liked, that there would be safety for him within the walls of the City of Refuge, but unless he took to his heels without loss of time, the spear would be in his back before he knew where he was." It is not the knowledge that there is a city

of refuge that gives security, but the getting safely inside the walls.—United Presbyterian.

THE JOY OF THE CROSS.

It is a serious misfortune that the Christian teacher is inclined to dwell rather upon the cost of self-denial than its rewards. It is the province of religion to convert the wilderness into a fruitful field and to make the desert blossom as the rose.

It is quite true that religion requires one to "take up the cross;" but it is none the less true that the cross is a source of joy such as the world can give or take from one. And the first element in this joy is freedom from the sting of sin. The well man passing through a hospital where the suffering lie, says to himself, "What a blessed thing is health." "To feel one's life in every limb" is a joy. And to get out from under the burden of sin he bore was to Bunyan's Pilgrim a joy as heavenly as to view from Beulah's heights the celestial city.

It is a joy of religion to be conscious of strength. Underneath all the passion for athletics is the joy which a strong man knows who strips to run a race. What a joy the soul knows when it has learned to sing, "O my soul, thou has trodden down strength." The joy of conscious power, the joy of victorious strength, is a part of the joy of life to which Jesus calls us, although the way to it lies by the cross.

And then to crown all is the joy of hope. Always "more to follow." Always happier fields and larger delights await us. Put these things before the young Christian and not simply the demand for self-denial. Self-denial is the strait gate, but paradise lies behind the gate.—Selected.

THE SIN OF POSTPONED.

Deferred duties usually mean neglected duties. In this field, accumulation is the enemy of accomplishment. Accumulated dividends may be a very good thing, but they are never earned by allowing unfinished tasks to pile up on us. When we have to admit that there are a score of duties that have been awaiting our attention for days or weeks, or months, and that ought to have had our attention long ago, we may at the same time safely admit that something is wrong with our plan of life. The whole trouble probably lies in our not doing to-day what we ought to do to-day; and that results from two sins; misusing some of our time, and wasting some of our time. The right selection of our tasks, and then intense concentration on our tasks, will put a stop to the fatal accumulation. No one has any right to stagger along under the burden of unfinished tasks that ought long ago to have been put out of the way.

FIDELITY.

To engage in the performance of home duties faultlessly, without petulance, without haste, without fretting—to repress the sarcastic and unkind word, be calm in the hot moment of anger, to do without weariness, and to suffer without murmuring, to be charitable in judgment and trample out of the heart the Pharisee spirit, deeming life at once too short and too costly for quarrels and for pride; to maintain a chivalrous honor in all business relations; to the holdback from the temptations of doubting or hasty gain; to wear "the white flower," not "of a blameless life" only, but of a life cleansed from its earthliness and made pure by the Holy Spirit; to walk about the world and before men with a calm heart filled with love; to shed abroad the "sweet savor of Christ," and allure men to the heaven to which they know you to be travelling—these are but many-sided exhibitions of the one holy character, many facets of the one jewel of fidelity by which you are to be "approved" of your Father which is in heaven.—Punison.

GOD KNOWS.*

By Robert E. Spear.

God knows. That is both consolation and anguish. He knows all that might excuse our faults which the world does not know. But he also knows that our faults are inexcusable. But his knowledge does not breed contempt and scorn of us. It is full of tenderest pity and love. It is a father's knowledge. Like as a father pitieth his children, so does the Lord pity. He knows, and his knowledge is full of gentleness, of understanding, of solicitude. This is the reason we think of his complete knowledge of us with such calmness and peace.

He knows our qualities of serviceableness and strength, and will make the best use of us. Therefore, we are never to be put out or disconcerted when we seem not to be recognized as we think we deserve. He will not let us be wasted, and if he uses others rather than us, it is clear that they are more worth using and we ought only to rejoice that we were not allowed to push in to undertake what we could not do as well.

He knows our limits of strain, that is, how much we can stand without breaking, and he will not place on us more than we can bear. That is the satisfaction of our conflict with temptation. If we keep in the way of his appointing, we know that we shall meet in it no temptation which we cannot conquer.

He knows all the lines of life with which ours are to be crossed and interwoven. The network is inextricably confused to human eyes. That is why it is such supreme folly for any man to think that he can plot the lines with success. We do best to leave it to God. He knows.

He knows all the untold success. This sweetens the loneliness of life. He knows our longing to hear again the little voice and to see the little face, loved long since and lost a while. He knows that we are thinking of the music that was here and is elsewhere, and the hands that were our comforters once and are busy in the Master's service to-day. As the work of the world rolls on and we do our part in it, but with hearts that are far away, he knows, and the sharing of the secret with him is rest.

The ease and confidence of prayer are in the fact that we can always begin and end "Lord God, Thou knowest." We do not need to impart a complete body of information or to make an argument. We need only to open our hearts and say, "Lord God, Thou knowest."

How good it is that God does not tell all that he knows! It is hard for us to learn this lesson. A quaint verse embodies it:

"Two ears and but a single tongue,
By Nature's laws to man belong,
The lesson she would teach is clear—
Repeat but half of what you hear."

God does not need to hear, for he knows all. And in his love he is silent about us. Our follies and shames he does not betray.

The wonder is that God knows and still cares. He would not if he were not God.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.

- Mon.—God knows our life (Rev. 3:1-6).
- Tues.—God knows our need (Matt. 6: 25-34).
- Wed.—God knows our sorrows (Exod. 3:7; 2 Cor. 1: 3-4).
- Thur.—God cares (1 Pet. 5:5-7,10).
- Fri.—God carries our burdens (Isa. 46: 3, 4).
- Sat.—God crowns us (Psa. 5: 11, 12).

The call to religion is not to be better than your fellows, but to be better than yourself.—Beecher.

Our deeds still travel with us from afar,
And what we have been makes us what we are.

The method of prevention is a great deal cheaper than reformation, and it is also more Christian.

Y. P. Topic—Sunday, June 12, 1910.—God knows, (Psa. 103: 1-4; Matt. 6: 7,8).