

## Leaning Upon the Beloved.

BY GEORGE MULLER.

"Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?"—  
SONG OF SOLOMON VIII. 5.

The one here spoken of is evidently the Bride of the Lamb, the Church of Christ. She is described as "coming up from the wilderness."

This, then, is the proper description of ourselves as believers. And what abundant cause for thankfulness there is in this one fact, that we are in the wilderness! For if it were not so, we should still belong to this present world, which is under condemnation. If we were not in the wilderness, we should know nothing of redemption—of the forgiveness of our sins; we should not be united to Christ—we should have no hope of redemption—of the forgiveness of sins; we should have no hope of seeing Him and being like Him and with Him for ever.

It is, then, matter of exceeding thankfulness, and on it our hearts should continually dwell—that by God's grace we are brought into the wilderness—that we are no longer "dead in trespasses and sin," no longer of the world, but that we have been forgotten, and are united to the living Lord Jesus, the Head of the new creation!

But this wilderness position, while it brings with it such exceeding great blessings and privileges, has also its difficulties and trials in connection with this life. The fact of Israel being brought into the wilderness marked them as those who had before them the hope of the land. They had been delivered from Egypt, and were looking forward to Canaan, which God had given them for a possession; but they were not yet in the land. They were still in the wilderness and had to experience its difficulties and trials. So with us. Because we are in the wilderness, we have before us the bright,

blessed, and glorious prospect of a Father's house, the full enjoyment of all those blessings which are promised to his children, the certainty of being confirmed to the likeness of God's dear Son—of seeing Jesus and being like Him. And, after all, this is the chief blessedness—not that we shall wear a crown, and reign with Jesus, blessed as that will be; but, above all blessings, this is the greatest, that we shall be perfectly free from sin, absolutely and perfectly conformed to the image of Jesus in purity and holiness.

But this blessedness we have not in actual possession; by faith it is ours, and we have now, by faith, to live upon it; but the time is coming when all these things will be actually enjoyed by the very weakest, and feeblest, and least instructed of the children of God! It is certain. No power of darkness will be able finally to hinder this. As surely as we put our trust in the Lord Jesus for the forgiveness of our sins, so assuredly all these blessings will be ours!

It is further said, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness?" Now, here is progress. The Church is not represented as remaining in the wilderness, but as "coming up from it." This implies that, as the days and months pass on, we do not remain stationary. The appearance, outwardly, indeed may be, that we are, on May 14, 1871, just where we were on May 7, 1871—or even just where we were on May 14, 1870; but it is not really so. No; we are a week or a year, as the case may be, nearer the end of the wilderness. How exceedingly precious it is to think, as the sun once more sets, or as the clock strikes one more hour, "Now I am a day, an hour, nearer my heavenly home!"

These are indeed simple truths, but it is the seeking to enter into these as realities that brings blessing to the soul. "Verily I am not remaining in the wilderness," our souls shall say, "but I am now again one week nearer the Father's house!" Thus we should seek