

THE RESCUE OF THE CHILD-SOUL

By Rev. J. W. Ras

"A simple child
That lightly draws its breath
And feels its life in every limb
What should it know of death?"

In the morning of life, when every cloud is tinted and every prospect is pleasant, there is but little that suggests the heavy burdens that sin has placed on the shoulders of toiling humanity. These burdens, though seen, are not experienced, and the heaviest of them appear to be light. With the passing of youth, however, the stern problems of life claim attention, and even the *stripling is made aware of the unseen bands that bind every son of Adam, and cripple every effort for better things.*

The chains that bind humanity have been welded at unseen forges and the Samson-like strength of young manhood, while it may snap visible withs, and even unhinge gates of iron and proudly carry them off, is absolutely powerless to break the bands of sin.

Worldly wisdom lifts up her voice in the streets and presents her wares before him. She points out three beautiful paths, each of which, she declares, leads to castles of delight. The first is garnished with precious stones. Here the treasures of earth are seen. Mine, and field, and forest bring their gifts and cast them at his feet. The second leads to the castles of knowledge. The road is not a royal one, but the fruit of the trees of wisdom beside the way is sweet to his taste, and he feels strong, for "knowledge is power." The third is flower-strewn. Sweet voices sing their songs of love. Youth and beauty beckon him forward.

He soon discovers that deliverance is found in none of these paths. Riches, if he gain them, but increase his cares. Knowledge, whilst it gives him keener vision, and reveals new worlds, does not destroy the old. It still remains with its cares and sorrows, and his wearied brain the keener feels its bondage. Pleasures satiate; they never satisfy. There are ways that seem good unto man, but the end thereof is death. He is still bound.

Is there no deliverance? Must the stricken deer die of his wounds? Is the slave enchained forever? Have these unseen bands never been

broken? In his anguish he cries, "Is there no power that can free?" Another, once in bondage but now enjoying the liberty that belongs to the people of God, shouts triumphantly in his ear, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

Stand in imagination beside the great dynamos at Niagara which convert the wasted energy of the all but omnipotent flood into a living, pulsing power, harnessed for man's use, which, in the daydream of many, is yet to illumine all the great cities on this northern continent, and supply electrical energy enough to turn all its wheels of manufacture. Oh what power is here!

"The tread of armies thickening as they come,
The boom of cannon and the beat of drum—
The brow of beauty and the form of grace—
The passion and the prowess of our race—"

are all, to fancy's sense, visible at Niagara; but the greatest vision man has seen in the mighty cataract is that of power. Yet this power, at best, is limited to a continent of earth, and cannot touch the spiritual universe, or lighten in the least degree the burdens that rest on a sin-sick soul.

The faithful teacher carries in his hand the Word of God, the Gospel of Christ, of which he should never be ashamed, for it is the *dynamo** of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. It is not limited to a continent but is efficacious to every one that believeth. The dynamo has no power in itself. It can but transmit what is given to it. The Bible is but a book and if used as a fetish is powerless. When employed in like fashion the Ark of God was taken. But if the wire of faith in Jesus Christ link us to it, it instantly becomes the power of God unto salvation. The power that energizes is the power of God transmitted to us through the dynamo of His Word. Untold thousands searching the Scriptures, through faith in Jesus Christ, have been made wise unto salvation.

Christianity consists not in formulas, or even in deeds, however worthy. It is a living thing. It is life touching life. To stand beside this dynamo of God is not sufficient. To even study its construction and know its component parts, will not set free a *sin-burdened soul* or quicken a *dead spirit*. The scholar must come into contact with the Saviour through the Word.

* *Δύναμις*