

Hints of the Beyond.

BY F. C. WRIGHT.

Mark 9: 2.

What a profound impression the tremendous scene of the transfiguration made upon the three favored disciples, upon whose dazed and wondering eyes it flashed. Two of them make subsequent and especial mention of it, John: "And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." Peter: "For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Using the majestic scene of the transfiguration as a most clear lens, I am sure we can descry through it hints of the beyond.

Let us carefully notice:

I. A hint of contrast.—Do you remember Raphael's picture of the transfiguration? He has told us of the scene in form and color, as the Scripture has in words. There on the top of the mount, there is the glory, the companionship of Moses and Elijah; the burning of the heavenly brightness; all the darkness which makes our earth sad and gloomy swept away. But down there at the foot of the mount is a scene piteous enough; mortal and impotent struggle with suffering. There a father has brought a son possessed by a demon. The boy every now and then is seized with convulsions. He lies there on the ground and wallows foaming. Is there no help for him? The father has brought him to the disciples. They have attempted a cure but the demon is too strong for them. The boy must go on tormented, falling now into the fire, now into the water. The father must go on helping the poor boy as best he can, but crushed under his child's suffering, himself impotent toward his cure. Do you not see the contrast? Above, the brightness; beneath, the gloom. Above, the joy; beneath, the sorrow. Above, the victory; beneath the defeat. Is there not here furnished a most precious hint of contrast?

Heaven is not below earth. In the glory in which Christ now dwells, suffering is not; disease is not; the sovereignty of evil is not; impotence toward the help of those we love the most is not; a burdened heart is not.

Heighten the contrast by some such blessed words as these from other Scriptures; "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes," and "there shall be no night there." All tears of any sort; of disappointed hopes, of unmet longings, of wearied hearts, of loneliness, of consciousness of failure. All nights of any sort; of temptation, of black doubt, of poverty, of helplessness to succor, of death. These are here, but they are not there. That glory streaming out of Christ there on the mountain, brightens and blesses Peter, and James, and John, and Moses, and Elijah. In that glory into which Christ has now arisen, and of which this upon the mountain was but a specimen, and ore-gleaming, in that glory where he now dwelleth, and to which he is bringing his redeemed, there are no shadows. Above pain into peace; above darkness into light; above defeat into victory. The glory on the summit, the sorrow and the struggle at the mountain's base. The difference between these is the difference between our earth and that heaven, into which our loved ones have gone.

II. A hint of continued and unsleeping consciousness beyond death.—What comes with the dissolution of the body? There shall be a resurrection of the body. "The time is coming when all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man." But do not think that there will ever be a resurrection of this exactly, fleshly organism. That can never be. This blood, these muscles, these bones, these shall never rise again. That cannot be. In the ceaseless commutations of nature, the particles that go to form these bodies must enter into other organisms. The flesh with which I am clothed today is not new matter. There is a constant yielding up of matter in one form that it may assume other forms. The mineral soil yields its force to the grass, the grass its life to the cattle, and they sacrifice theirs to man, and the man as to his body of the earth earthy, is not beyond the jurisdiction of the earthly law. That which was formed of dust returns to dust, and as dust is again laid hold of for other uses. The grass grows green above human graves. Yet there shall be a resurrection, for somewhere within this material organism sleeps the seed of the spiritual body. Out of the body of today shall somewhere spring the spiritual body of the future, exactly fitted for the uses of the soul in its highest sphere. "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." Then when the resurrection morn breaks shall be the consummation. But for all the time that may lie between this present and that future, during all this period between soul and body, what is the soul's state then? Must we look forward to a period of dreary sleep? When death strikes us, does it exhaust consciousness as well, until the resurrection morning breaks? Are all the properties of the thinking principle, remembrance, imagination, love, conscience volition, yielded at the beck of death into a desolate in-

activity and wane of being? Is the future state a huge dormitory of sleeping souls, awaiting the awakening of the resurrection? No! we cannot believe this to be the case when we gaze into the brightness of the transfiguration. Fifteen hundred years before, upon the top of Pisgah, Moses had died. Whether any change analogous to that of death had passed upon Elijah we cannot say, for he was caught heavenward in a chariot of flame. But we are distinctly told that Moses died and was buried. Yet now see, he comes with the freshness of eternal youth upon him to talk with Jesus upon the mount. He certainly is not slumbering. There is no look of a dreary unconsciousness about him. He is clothed with heaven's brightness. He is the same Moses who had died fifteen hundred years before. His personality is intact; his identity is preserved. We can learn no lesson of unconsciousness after death while we tarry here upon the mount. No, the soul is in all its parts and powers alive, alert, in the future state. Death which does dissolve the body cannot touch the soul. There is before the soul no horrible abyss of vacancy. Death cannot condemn the soul to slumber. Other Scriptures also are in complete harmony with the great doctrine of continued and unsleeping consciousness beyond death: And again notice:

III. A hint of recognition.—If what I have just stated regarding continued and unsleeping consciousness beyond death is true, then we can venture a step further and deal with recognition very well. But if any of my readers doubt what I have stated, then, of course, you take the other side and sing no better song than the following:

"Two little waxen hands, folded softly and silently;
Two little curtained eyes, looking out no more for me;
Two little snowy cheeks, dimpled, dimpled never more;
Two little trodden shoes that will never touch the floor;
Shoulder-ribbons softly twisted, garments folded clean and white,
These are left us, and these only, of the childish presence bright."

Does death rob us so wholly? Is that all that we may have left? Only the memories of the past? Only the flowers faded so quickly laid upon the coffin? Only the little shoes pressed into such dainty shapes? Only the playthings consecrated by that touch? Is the future altogether vacant? Are there no dear places of home sweet home beyond? Are the many mansions but one vast gathering-place, common alike to all, special to none? When the heavenly is put on, does all that is human drop away? Are the ties of family-head forever sundered when death cuts them? Does friend know no longer the face of friend? Yonder does the parent forget the child and the child the parent? Shall we know each other there?

From the testimony of the Word of God isn't memory one of the things which we carry into the other, or here-after life? Is not the continuity of life clearly set forth in the Scripture? In the story of the rich man and the beggar memory was still present with Dives suggesting to him that he had five brethren in this world. If we are to give an account to God, memory certainly must be present with us. Also in the narrative of the rich man and Lazarus recognition was clearly taught even as far as that between saved and lost, but not fellowship for a great gulf was fixed between them. Had we better carry the thought as far as this last sentence presents it? Let us now look briefly into the brightness of the Mount. See, there, Jesus, Moses, Elijah, they talk together, they are recognized by each other. There is surely recognition on the Mount. These saints had not known each other here on earth. Fifteen hundred years before Moses had died and was buried on the Mount. Elijah lived some six hundred years after Moses. Since then the transfiguration gives us a glimpse of the glorified life; as we look may we be filled with a heaven-born desire for a place in that company that have washed robes, made white through the blood of the Lamb. Heaven is a state, a place, yea home where the whole redeemed host shall at last be gathered. The bride is now making herself ready. What must it be to be there! Then we shall be like him. Enrapturing thought it is indeed to God's Israel. Let Jerusalem come into your minds.

Lastly, a brief, earnest word for some seeking soul: IV. A hint as to the way of entrance.—After the glory fades the disciples see "Jesus only." He is the one, true and only way of entrance. He that climbeth up some other way will fall to enter. Be earnest now, and come in by the door even if it is low, causing humility of heart. Oh that you may be truly and effectually drawn this day. For this we are praying. Brethren what other gospel have we got to preach than that of Jesus as the only way of entrance to the poor sinner? Do we wish to preach any other? It is the only ground of confidence which we have for ourselves, it is the only hope we have to set before others. Today I can personally read my title clear to mansions in the skies. Let me tell you how I can do it. It is not because I feel all that I wish to, nor because I am what I hope I yet shall be, but because I read in the Word this: "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." I am a sinner, even the devil cannot tell me that I am not. O precious Saviour then thou hast come to save such as I am. Then again I read, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." I know that I trust him and believe alone in Jesus. I wish to have Christ's name written on my heart, but if I want assurance I have to look at his heart until I can see my name

written there. Oh turn away your eyes from your sin and emptiness and look to his righteousness and fullness. There is life for a look at the Crucified One, there is life at this moment for thee, then look and live. Up, haste, Jesus calls, fly to the king of that far-away home of the soul and like the dying penitent seek an entrance into Paradise, yea, the Paradise of God. Do so, now, for Jesus' sake. Amen. Jamaica, Vt.

The Way of the Transgressor.

REV. A. T. KEMPTON.

This is one of the great truths that is so evident and yet apparently so hard to realize. But it is awfully true. Listen while I tell you how true it is. Listen to the life story of a young life and let him tell you himself how true it is to him now. Frank is one of the young men in the prison chapel on Sunday afternoons. He is and has been much interested in the services. One day I saw him break down and cry. I knew he had a sad story. He looked it. Among others that came into the office to talk with me at the cloie of the service was Frank. He said, "Chaplain I want to tell you the story of my life, I want your sympathy, I want a friend." Then followed the sad but true story of his life and its wanderings.

"When I was nine years old I was foolish, and would not go to school. So after some delay I was sent to the Truant School for two years. After "doing" my two years there, I came out, and wondered in my mind as to whether I had not better go to school and be like other boys. But the freedom was sweet and school wasn't. So in three months time I was sent back to the Truant school for two years more. By this time I was nearly fourteen years old. Then I was so big I was ashamed to go to school, and did not like it as well as I used to. So in a few months I got another sentence of two years. This was pretty hard I thought then. So after I had been there a few months I ran away, but was caught and sent back. I ran away again. I was sent back again. I ran away the third time and was determined they should not send me back this time. So I went to Penn. and worked with a kind old farmer on his farm. He was kind to me, and I found the Saviour while there, and was so happy for a few months. I enjoyed being a Christian. At his request I united with the Methodist church, and there spent the only real happy days of my life. I never expect to feel again as I did there. I would give anything or do anything in the world to be as happy again, even for only a few days, as I was at that time. When you say it is a lovely thing to be a Christian, Chaplain, I just say to myself, that is true, I know that is so. Oh, how I wish I could be what I was those few months. People don't think we young fellows that have done wrong ever can be just the same as other folks, but we can if we have the chance. I had no desire to go back to my old life of sin and wandering. I think, sir, I would have been there today instead of here if that kind old man had lived. He understood me and trusted me, and I had to get miles away from his home and his grave before I could be the same wild and reckless fellow I was before. In fact, I don't think I have ever been the same since that time, anyway. I don't enjoy sin like I did before. I am all the time longing for the good time and the clean life I was able to live by the grace of God down in Penn. After the old farmer died, I did not have a friend I wanted to stay with, so I started out again. I worked and stole my passage to San Francisco, on the night freight trains. I was so unhappy I did not know what to do. If you ever find anyone that thinks it is fun to serve Satan, will you please tell them for me it isn't. I shipped out of San Francisco on a whaler, bound for the Arctic Sea. That was an awful life for me. We were up there two years. It is hard being a sinner, and it is hard living with bad people. When I came from this trip I shipped again, and this time for New York, around Cape Horn. This was another hard experience. I tell you, sir, I have paid very dearly for all my wanderings. The reason I came to New York was, that I wanted to come home. I was sick of knocking around. I wanted to stay home. But my mother said I never could stay at home, the officers would still take me. I am not sure now which is the worse, being in prison or trying all the time to keep away from the officers. You may not think either is very pleasant, but now I prefer the prison. There are two things about it, anyway. You are not in constant fear of being caught, and you are not able to do anything very bad. So I left my old home in the middle of the night. It kind of takes the heart out of a young fellow, sir, not to be able to stay in his old home. It makes you feel awful mean, too, to have the family feel better when you are away than when you are home. So out I started for Canada. I got into one of the big rail-ways up there, and although the work was hard still it was the best I had had for some time. I had earned a good bit of money and then I wanted to come home again. I began to feel different. I was coming near to my twenty-first birthday, and I wanted to see if I could not begin and be a decent young man in my own home. I wish there were not so many temptations for young men with a little money in their pockets. It was near

Christmas help to make good time after it. So prison again and the good hard." I spend seven nine to the weeks alone for two years. Horn on a ter. To su hardship, to keep you not take through w a friend no help I a n be a Christ I came a text was t have seen grateful to s ys he k without fr There are he is to bl been stopp man who dle just as was there young ma the kind and some and wido ed by Ch these littl fold. Frank to compla ony on: e Lord Jesu those who tive at his every oth gressor is when w very eye Fitchbu

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