

Pastor and People.

COURAGE.

If the day's brief pain and passing care
Have seemed too much and too hard to bear;
If under its trivial press and smart
Thou hast failed in temper and lost in heart,
If the undiscouraged, journeying sun,
As it sinks to its rest with its travail done,
Leaves thee all spent with trouble and sorrow—
How shalt thou face the harder to-morrow?

If the things familiar daunt thee so,
How shalt thou deal with an unknown woe?
If conquered by every passing dole,
How build the sinews of thy soul?
To stand and shiver on the brink
Of each recurrent task, and shrink,
Will never harden thee to abide
The waves of the turbulent Jordan tide.

Never a river but brims and fills
By the aid of numberless slender rills;
Never a strength but has grown and fed
With the force of a weakness conquered,
Never a day but is ruled and shaped
By the power of a yesterday escaped,
And never a human soul that grew
By a single resolve to its stature true.

Winter makes ready for the spring
By months of struggle and suffering,
And the victory won from the mortal strife
Strengthens the fibre and pulse of life.
How if the earth in its chill despair,
Felt that the fight was too hard to bear?
Where were the bloom and the vintage then?
Where were the harvest for hungering men?

So, if the now seems cruel and hard,
Endure it with thoughts of the afterward;
And be sure that each task that is clearly set
Is to brace thee for other tasks harder yet.
Train the stout muscles of thy will
In the daily grapple with daily ill,
Till, strong to wrestle and firm to abide,
Thou shalt smile at the turbulent Jordan tide.

—Susan Coolidge.

JOB THE PATRIARCH, OR LESSONS FOR OUR TIMES.

BY GEORGE W. ARMSTRONG, LONDON.

THE POTENCY OF HOLINESS. — Another trait in the character of Job which is worthy of emulation and imitation is: The spotlessness of his life, and his constant dread of offending God by committing any sin.

In reading the record of Job's life how forcefully this is presented to us. I many times think if there is one man above another who possessed that, which, as Christians, we all say we are aiming at, viz, *entire sanctification*, that man was Job.

The testimony God bears to him more than once, is that. He was a man perfect and upright and one that feared God and eschewed evil. But let us examine more minutely how deeply he dreaded sin because it was hateful to himself and displeasing to God. In the 5th verse of the first chapter we read: "When the days of the feasting of his children were gone about, Job sent and sanctified them; and rose early in the morning and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all, for Job said, it may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually."

Thus we see that sin was not only repulsive to him in himself, but that he dreaded its existence in others; and his fear of offending God was so great that he did not even wait to assure himself that his sons had actually sinned, but knowing how prone the human heart is to think evil of God, and how easy it was to fall from strict integrity when engaged in feasting—pleasures which equally promoted physical and mental excitement—"It may be," said he, "It may be that my sons have sinned," and so on the strength of a simple probability he sought to appease God's displeasure.

What a finely constituted and highly sensitive spiritual nature Job must have possessed. He was not only the greatest man in all the east in a temporal sense, but also when viewed from a moral and spiritual standpoint. "There was none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man." He was a giant in moral stature, and what wonder that God should with such full confidence hand such a man over to the tender mercies of Satan. God knew how strong was Job's faith and love, and how deeply these principles were engrafted in his being.

Virtue is more potent than vice; holiness

and purity than sin, and a regenerate man with the seeds of sin removed from out of his heart is far superior to a fallen angel, even though that fallen one be "The Prince of Darkness." We meet with people who say they have been subjected to severe trials and temptations from Satan, when, if they would only own the truth, Satan has had nothing what to do with their trials at all. Supposing God had placed us in a similar position to the one in which He allowed Job to be placed, I fear the strongest would have succumbed to Satan's superior strength. If God permitted Satan to tempt some of us, I fear we should not be able to stand against his devices a single hour. It is an easy matter when a man does wrong to lay the blame on Satan. Satan certainly is bad, but not so black as some would represent him. He gets credit for a great deal of which he is not guilty. We are taught from our Saviour: "For from within, out of the heart of man proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceits, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these things come from within and defile the man."

If men only sinned when Satan tempted them, sin would be of comparatively rare occurrence. For a moment let us reflect upon the reasonableness of this assertion. The Lord said unto Satan, "Whence comest thou?" Then Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it." This, we think, implies the limitability of the individuality of Satan, or that he can only be in one and the same place at one and the same time! Consequently if he were personally to subject each individual Christian to temptation he would have to speed on lightning wings, he would have more to do than he could conveniently attend to. No! Satan knows how deeply rooted sin is in our nature, and so does not give himself much concern about us; he knows it is as much as many of us can do to keep in subjection our own stubborn and rebellious hearts, and therefore he leaves us pretty much to ourselves while he directs his efforts against such as our Saviour, Peter, Paul, Luther and Job; these he knows to be men who may be said to have self, by aid of the divine power, under control, and thus he considers them worthy of his attacks, for he well knows that if they fell, they could not fall alone, for just as they exerted an influence over others for good, so, if he succeeded in accomplishing their overthrow, many might be the reward of his toil.

CALMNESS AMIDST CALAMITY. — The study of the life of Job suggests that the good man is protected on every side, and so long as he keeps within the hedge which God throws around him he is safe. Satan may try to break through the hedge, but it will be in vain: God's protection is proof against Satan's darts. If thoughts of God fill the heart the Christian has little to fear from assaults from without. Our Rock of defence is impregnable and foes without will prove impotent to harm. What we have most to fear are "foes within," and if we yield to evil inclinations and desires, which, as our Saviour says, "are from within, out of the heart," then we weaken our defence, or break through the hedge for ourselves and make way for Satan to enter. The heart we know may be affected by outward influences, but it is the heart that impels the hand. The heart conceives the evil thought, the lips only fossilize it into words.

We are very prone to attribute effects to wrong causes. If a Christian does an unchristian act he generally blames Satan or some other external cause, whereas, if he would only honestly trace the wrong to its right source, in nine cases out of ten he would find that neither Satan nor any other external influence had had anything to do in the matter, but that the real cause from whence such wrong originated was his own heart.

The life of Job further teaches how little in point of fact Satan actually knows about the state of human hearts.

How greatly he erred in his estimate of Job. His idea was Job served God from selfish motives, because God had blessed him with temporal good. "Doth Job fear God for nought?" was his enquiry, but too

impatient to wait a reply he gave his own answer, "Put forth thine hand now and touch all that he hath he will curse thee to thy face." That was Satan's idea, but how superficial it proved. He had wrongly calculated his man. How chagrined Satan must have felt when God having placed Job and all he possessed into his power, and after he had done his worst and stripped Job of all he had as well as of all his domestic comforts and happiness, to hear the good old patriarch exclaim, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." There's something truly majestic in such moral heroism. Job's life had been too much devoted to blessing and praising to turn to cursing now.

Though Satan had wrongly estimated his man, God had not. Satan could not read Job's heart, but God could. What a blessing is this to some of us weak ones. If Satan only knew how weak some of us are it might lead him to trouble us somewhat, but when hearts are placed in God's keeping He keeps them in safe shelter. "He keepeth them in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on him." And if we are ever exposed to Satan's or any other outward temptation, it must be by our own doing or by God's permission; and of this we may rest fully satisfied that it will never be the latter until God shall have satisfied Himself that our faith is strong enough to resist.

"Satan trembles when he sees,
The weakest saint upon his knees."

And though he may desire to have us that he may sift us as wheat, if the Satanic sifting process be too severe, let us remember Christ has said under such circumstances, "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." With Christ's help what need we fear? We can resist the devil and he will flee from us, or we can by faith and prayer rid ourselves of his presence; but from the presence of Christ we can never flee. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." So that wherever we may be, His help can be obtained; and if we, like Job, are "perfect and upright," then nothing can harm us. In our past considerations we find words of warning and words of encouragement, words of warning because of Satan's vigilance, words of encouragement because of God's protection.

We may be surrounded by strong moral influences or forces which are antagonistic to spiritual growth, but let us ever remember it is "not that which goeth into the man, but that which cometh out that defileth him." If we fall we are the authors of our own destruction, for if we cling by simple faith to the promises of God and get them deeply rooted into our natures as the sole foundation upon which our loftiest aspirations are based, then the winds of adversity, the waves of sorrow, and the temptations of Satan will beat against us in vain, and we, like Job, shall stand firm on the rock of God's everlasting love.

(Concluded.)

TWO GREAT QUESTIONS.

Dr. William King, in his "Anecdotes of His Own Time," tells us that he was one of a party dining with the Duke of Ormond when Sir William Wyndham, in the course of a conversation regarding short prayers, said the shortest prayer he had ever heard of was that of a common soldier just before the Battle of Blenheim: "O God, if there be a God; save my soul, if I have a soul." The telling of this anecdote was followed by a general laugh round the dinner table. There is something ludicrous in the story, it must be admitted; but there is also in it something very deeply pathetic. The heart of the poor soldier, on the perilous edge of battle, like that of the devotee who erected the altar. Paul beheld at Athens, was seeking after the UNKNOWN GOD, if haply he might feel after Him and find Him. There is an inner voice in man that whispers to him of God. That voice may long be hushed in silence; or when it speaks we may refuse to listen; but the moment comes when the truth it utters fills the spirit with awe, perhaps with fear and bewilderment, perhaps also with hope. Often does the soul appear to seek after Him in vain. "Behold, I go forward, but He is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive Him; on the left hand where He doth work,

but I cannot behold Him; He hideth Himself on the right hand that I cannot see Him." Yet He is "not far from every one of us; for in Him we live, and move, and have our being." The soul of man carries in itself some likeness to God, and tends in its deepest instinct towards God as its true happiness and home. With this is conjoined an instinct of immortality, some assurance, however dim, that there awaits us a life beyond the tomb. But till we comprehend the revelation made in Christ we remain without any true knowledge of God or sure hope of a life to come. "No man hath seen God at any time," not only by the bodily eye, which cannot behold what is spirit, but by the eye of reason, which is baffled by the mystery of the Divine Being. But "the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." God can only be understood in Christ, according to His word "he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." God in His eternal power and Godhead may be learned from His creation, but God in His infinite holiness and mercy is taught us only in Jesus. There do we see the glory of the double revelation that "God is Light" and that "God is Love." And this revelation carries with it the assurance of life eternal, for Christ has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel. Christ is risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of those that slept. He has gone to prepare a place for us, that where He is there we may be also. To the believer death has become the gate of life. The Dark Valley is only the place of passage to the Paradise of God. The Christian does not speak with doubt and hesitation either of the God whom he addresses or of the soul for which he prays. His language is, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." "Thou wilt show me the path of life, in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."—*The Presbyterian.*

THE PRICE OF A SOUL.

"I recollect how Mr. Rowland Hill once held an auction over Lady Anne Erskine, who drove up in her carriage to the edge of the crowd, while Mr. Hill was preaching. He said: 'Ah! I see Lady Anne Erskine.' A careless, thoughtless woman she was then, and he said: 'There is a contention about who shall have her. The world wants to have her. What wilt thou give for her, O world! I will give her fame, and name, and pleasure. And sin wants to have her. What wilt thou give for her, O sin? A few paltry, transient joys. And Satan wants to have her. What wilt thou give for her, Satan? And the price was very low. At last Christ comes along, and He said: I give myself for her. I give my life for her, my blood for her.' And turning to her ladyship, Mr. Hill said: 'You shall have her, my Lord Christ, if she does not object. My Lady, which shall it be?' he said, and she bowed her head, and said that she accepted Christ's offer, and would be sold to Him, and be His forever."—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

We don't know why it should be that church attendance, and prayer meetings, and Sunday School teaching and missionary societies and social temperance work and personal care for the needy—why all this should be so largely remanded to the Christian women. We feel like exclaiming with the Prophet, "The fathers, where are they?" And is it an indication that the religion of the home also, as well as of the church—the family altar, thoughtfulness of vows taken at the baptism of children, the Christian instruction and nurture of those children, and indeed nearly all that pertains to parental responsibility in the things of God—are we to understand that in these respects, too, all the joint duties of the "united head," as we sometimes hear parents termed, are to be borne by the devoted mother alone? It is refreshing to read of the man, the father of a family, who during a revival service, rose and said: "I have heard a good many tell in these services about the prayers of their mothers being answered; but no one has said anything about praying fathers. It is a good thing that there have been so many praying mothers, but I am determined, by the help of God, to live so that my boys shall say they had a praying father."—*Mid-Continent.*