

Where before you dashed onward as with a charmed life, treading the world and all its cares beneath your feet, you will find yourself pierced with many sorrows, bleeding with acute griefs, scratched, torn, lacerated with trials, losses, crosses and annoyances endless. If we continue in the love of Jesus, pleasing him in all things, jealously watching and carefully observing his will, our mind will be kept by the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, and our road to heaven will be a pleasant one: it may indeed be very rough in itself and in the judgment of others, but it will be so smoothed to us by the peace which reigns within that we shall glory in infirmity, exult in suffering, and triumph in distress, knowing that the Lord is with us, and no harm can come unto us. Thus you see that the peace which comes of justification, and the fuller peace which arises from enjoying the love of God, are a grand preparation for our life's journey, a shoe for the foot unrivalled in excellence.

It is also a grand sandal for a pilgrim's foot when the gospel of peace has fully conformed his mind to the Lord's will. Some children of God are not at peace with God because they do not fully acquiesce in the divine purposes; to them the pilgrim path must be a painful one, for nothing can please them, their mortified self will create swarms of vexations for them; but to hearts which have crucified self, and yielded all to the will of God, the most thorny paths are pleasant. He who can say concerning all things, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight," is shod for all ways and weathers, and may march on undismayed. Fully conformed to the divine will, saints are invulnerable and invincible, "none shall be weary nor stumble among them, neither shall the latchet of their shoes be broken."

"They bled by nothing here below,
Appoint their journey and they go;

Through joy or grief they march the same,
Triumphant still in Jesu's name."

Surely it is when the heart is completely with God that the true beauty of the Christian character is seen. Then is it that the heavenly Bridegroom cries out, "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter." Then, too, the church in her tribulation becomes bright and glorious like her Lord, of whom we read, "His feet are like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace." Shod with perfect delight in the will of the Lord, we are able to surmount all the difficulties and trials of the way, for it becomes sweet to suffer when we see that it is the will of God. Resignation is good, but perfect acquiescence is better, and happy, thrice happy is the man who feels it. No silver sandals were ever so precious, no buskins of golden mail adorned with precious stones were so glorious to look upon as a mind moulded to the divine will, perfectly in tune with the mind of the Lord most High.

The preparation of the gospel of peace, you thus see, is, in many aspects, the fittest help for our journey to the promised land, and he who has his feet shod with it need not fear the flinty ways, the craggy rocks, or the thorny defiles.

But the gospel of peace has another side to it, for it not only brings us peace with God, but it inspires us with *Peace towards ourselves*. Civil war is the worst of war, and for a man to be at discord with himself is the worst of strife; the worst peril of Christian pilgrimage is that which arises from the pilgrim's own self, and if he be ill at ease within himself, his course cannot be a happy one. The prayer of the evening hymn is very suggestive,

"That with the world, *myself*, and Thee,
I, e'er I sleep, at peace may be."

It is a most needful matter to have peace at home. It is a cruel case for a man when his own heart condemns