

text: "This day is salvation come to this house."

Zaccheus had mounted the sycamore tree out of mere inquisitiveness. He wanted to see how this stranger looked—the color of his eyes, the length of his hair, the contour of his features, the height of his stature. "Come down," said Christ.

And so, many people, on this day, get up into the tree of curiosity or speculation to see Christ. They ask a thousand queer questions about His divinity, about God's sovereignty, and the eternal decrees. They speculate, and criticize, and hang on to the outside limb of a great sycamore. But they must come down from that if they want to be saved. We cannot be saved as philosophers, but as little children. You cannot go to heaven by way of Athens, but by way of Bethlehem. What matters it who are elected to be saved, when we know that unless we believe and repent, we shall all be damned. Why be perplexed about the way sin came into the world, when the great question is, how shall we get sin driven out of our hearts? How many spend their time in criticism and religious speculation! They take the Rose of Sharon, or the Lily of the Valley, pull out the anther, scatter the corolla, and say, "Is that the beautiful flower of religion that you are talking about?" No flower is beautiful after you have torn it all to pieces. The path to heaven is so plain that a fool need not make any mistake about it; and yet men stop and cavil. Suppose that, going toward the Pacific slope, I had resolved that I would not stop until I had killed all the grizzly bears and the panthers on either side of the way. I would never have got to the Pacific coast. When I went out to hunt the grizzly bear, the grizzly bear would have come out to hunt me. Here is a plain road to heaven. Men say they will not take a step on it until they can make game of all the theories that bark and growl at them from the thickets. They forget the fact that as they go out to hunt the theory, the theory comes out to hunt them; and so they perish. We must receive the kingdom of heaven in simplicity. William Pennington was one of the wisest men of America; a Governor of his own State, and afterwards a Speaker of the House of Representatives. Yet when God called him to be a Christian, he went in and sat down among some children who were applying for Church membership, and said to his pastor, "Talk to me just as you do to these children, for I know nothing about it." There is no need of bothering ourselves about mysteries when there are so many things that are plain.

**Death a Lifting Up**

I love to think that what seems to be the mystery of the silence of death, which envelops so many that we loved on earth, is not really a mystery. Our friends are separated from us because they are lifted higher than our faculties can go. Our child dies. It is the last that we see of him here. He is lifted so far above us that we cannot follow him. He was our child; he was cradled in our arms; he glambred upon our knees. But instantly, in the twinkling of an eye, God took him, and lifted him up into His own sphere. And we see him not. But it is because we are not yet developed enough. We cannot see things spiritual with carnal eyes. But they who have walked with us here, who have gone beyond us, and whom we cannot see, are still ours. They are more ours than they ever were before. We cannot commune with them as we once could, because they are infinitely lifted above these conditions in which we are able to commune. We remain here, and are subject to the laws of this realm. They have gone where they speak a higher language and live in a higher sphere. But this silence is not the silence of vacuity, and this mystery is not the mystery of darkness and death. There is the glory; ours is the waiting for it. There is the realization; ours is the hoping for it. There is the perfection; ours is the immatur-

ity striving to be ripe. And when the day comes that we shall disappear from these earthly scenes, we shall be joined to them again; not as we were—for we shall not then be as we were—but as they are with God. We shall be like them and Him.—Beecher.

**Life's Harmony**

I stood within the great cathedral door,  
And heard a voice  
That rose in song, but ceased almost  
before  
One could rejoice  
I listened; Ah! the many singers caught  
The melody,  
And the grand anthem, as by angels  
taught,  
Swelled full and free.  
And so I thought of sweet lives that  
but lent  
Their youth to earth,—  
Their life-work all in summer days was  
spent,  
And all life's worth.  
'Twas only that short strain we needed  
here,  
While up above  
The seraph song is ever since more clear  
And rich in love.  
One Master guides the harmony of life  
In earth and heaven;  
No pause unneeded falls, no note too  
brief  
Is ever given.  
Here, but the snatches of the glorious  
song  
Our ear can trace;  
There, the full chorus, pure, and deep,  
and strong,  
In endless praise.

**Toward Evening**

By Nancy Byrd Turner

Sing a song of childhood days, the rain  
upon the roof:  
Ancient-sweet monotony where the  
eaves are deep;  
Burden of the melody now near and  
now aloof,  
Lost and caught and lost again on  
the brink of sleep.  
Rain upon the sloping roof, and fire  
ebbing, dim,  
In a little pulse of flame beating very  
low,  
Like a faint accompaniment to a tender  
hymn—  
Music of the long and long ago.  
Sing a song of childhood days, the wind  
upon the corn:  
Half a breath and half a sigh making  
wistful round;  
Whispering, whispering, each to each,  
aged folk outworn  
Of the old-gold tents of rest on the  
camping ground.  
Wind among the withered corn, and a  
bob-white in the brush  
Calling thrice and silver clear so his  
mate may know—  
She a bit of listening brown by an  
autumn bush—  
Music of the long and long ago.  
Sing a song of childhood days, a  
spring's first whippoorwill;  
One gray shadow on the world, one  
pale star alight;  
Strange, a disembodied cry from the  
lone-tree hill,  
Making sudden plaintive speech to  
an April night.  
Whippoorwill across the dusk, and cow-  
bells up the lane,  
Through the gate a truant file, muffle-  
footed, slow;  
Tired bell by tired bell tinkling home  
again—  
Music of the long and long ago.  
Sing the songs of childhood days, croon  
them every one;  
Keep no chord or cadence back, spare  
no broken bar;  
Youth may hold my hand again before  
the singing's done,  
Though the years are many and the  
distance stretches far;  
Peace may touch my brow again and  
hush the chant of strife—  
Fretful notes all meaningless, words  
that weary so—  
Ah, throw the old stops open wide and  
loose upon my life  
Music of the long and long ago!



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