

Or again, behold him gazing in tears upon the doomed city of Jerusalem,—the representative of the unhappy land of his people—doomed for rejecting him as their Saviour, and pouring out from his sorrowful heart that sad and bitter wail:—“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.” Or again, Behold him bearing upon his bosom his young and beloved disciple John, and surrounded by all his other much loved followers at the last meal which he partook of with them before he suffered death. What undying love! what heartfelt sympathy! what cherished friend hip breathed in every word he spoke! How earnestly as their dying friend and master did he exhort them to keep his commandments that they might abide in his love, and to love one another even as he had loved them. And how great that love of his was towards them he was about to prove by laying down his life for their sakes.

Or once more, behold him when the lustre of his divine love shone forth most brilliantly of all; when as a man, he died for his friends; when as a faithful shepherd, he laid down his life for his sheep; when, with the life-blood streaming from his pierced side, and the paleness of death spreading o’er his cheek, he announced the completion of his glorious work of love, as with his last breath he exclaimed, “It is finished.”

Thus brightly were the love and friendship of Jesus Christ displayed on earth. And such a friend as he proved himself to be on earth, such a friend does he still continue to be in heaven. For,

“Though now ascended up on high,
He bends on earth a brother’s eye;
Partaker of the human name,
He knows the frailty of our frame.”

In every pang that rends the heart,
The man of sorrows had a part;
He sympathizes with our grief,
And to the sufferer sends relief.

Yes, he has been our ever-abiding friend and protector from our very earliest years. It was he who girded us about and guarded us in our infancy and childhood, and we knew it not. If we have been enabled to walk safely along the dangerous and slippery paths of youth, it is his watchful eye, and his protecting arm that have kept us from falling. When earthly helpers have failed us, he has been our helper. When earthly comforts have fled he has proved our comforter. When we have wickedly and ungratefully forgotten him and rebelled against him, as alas! we have oftentimes done, he has not deserted us as we have deserted him, but has gently lured us back to the fold, and saved us from the fatal paths of the destroyer. He has walked with us along our way through life, and guided us in the paths of divine truth. And having enjoyed his friendship and companionship thus far on our way through life, how could we suffer him to leave us now? Would not the world be indeed dark without him? Would not the way be both dreary and dangerous? For do we not require his constant presence to teach, and guide, and cheer us? Do we not need his grace and strength to shield us from the power of the enemy? And who but he could prove our stay and comfort in our time of need? Happy then, thrice happy are they who, like the two disciples at Emmaus, have walked with him by the way, and have so enjoyed and valued his friendship and company, that, dreading the very thought of his ever leaving them, they would constrain him still to abide with them. For he will continue to be their guide and companion to the end of their journey through life; and at its close he will go in to tarry with them in his