

Then follows *God's promise*. Abner says: 'The Lord hath spoken, By the hand of David I will save my people from the hand of *all* their enemies.' He appeals to God's promise: as David had conquered the Philistines, the nearest enemy in time past, so he alone could conquer those farther off. He should save Israel from the hand of *all* their enemies. Beautiful type of the promise by which the soul is now invited to trust Jesus for the victory over every enemy, and a life of undisturbed fellowship. 'The Lord hath spoken,—this is our only hope. On that word rests the sure expectation (Luke i. 70-75): 'As He spake, That we should be saved from the hand of all that hate us, to perform the oath which He swore, that He would grant unto us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, should serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life.' David reigning over every corner of the land, and leading a united and obedient people on from victory to victory; this is the promise of what Jesus can do for us, as soon as in faith in God's promise all is surrendered to Him, and the whole life given up to be kept abiding in Him.

'Ye sought for David in times past to be king over you,' spake Abner, and added, 'Then do it now.' *Do it now* is the message that this story brings to each one of us who longs to give Jesus unreserved supremacy. Whatever the present moment be, however unprepared the message finds thee, however sad the divided and hopeless state of the life may be, still I come and urge Christ's claim to an immediate surrender—this very moment. I know well that it will take time for the blessed Lord to assert His power, and order all within thee according to His will—to conquer the enemies and train all thy powers for service. This is not the work of a moment. But there are things which are the work of a moment—of this moment. The one is—thy surrender of all to Jesus; thy surrender of thyself entirely to live only in Him. As time goes on, and exercise has made faith stronger and brighter, that surrender may become clearer and more intelligent. But for this no one may wait. The only way ever to attain to it is to begin at once. *Do it now*. Surrender thyself this very moment to abide wholly, only, always in Jesus. It is the work of a moment. And just so, Christ's renewed acceptance of thee is the work of a moment. Be assured that He has thee and holds thee as His own, and that each new 'Jesus, I do abide in Thee,' meets with an immediate and most hearty response from the Unseen One. No act of faith can be in vain. He does indeed anew take hold on us and draw us close to Himself. Therefore, as often as the message comes, or the thought of it comes, Jesus says, Abide in me: do it at once. Each moment there is the whisper, *Do it now*.

Let any Christian begin, then, and he will speedily experience how the blessing of the present moment is passed on to the next. It is the unchanging Jesus to whom he links himself: it is the power of a Divine life, in its unbroken continuity, that takes possession of him. The *do it now* of the present moment—a little thing though it seems—is nothing less than the beginning of the ever-present now, which is the mystery and the glory of Eternity. Therefore, Christian, abide in Christ: *do it now*.

#### ABIDING STRENGTH AND GLADNESS.

BY RICHARD S. STORRS, D.D.

"Strength and gladness are in his place."—1 Cron. 16: 27.

We sometimes hear a strain of music which seems to be carefully, artificially elaborated, in which, with all its richness, we do not feel the expression of spontaneous liberty, or recognize the spring of a great motive. In poetry, too, we may detect, amid all its ornamentation, a

lack of this vivid, vital power of an inward impulse. On the other hand, we sometimes meet with a vigor in speech and in song both vital and immediate, which reveals a feeling the most strenuous, spontaneous, and abiding. We find it in the passage from which we have taken the text: a song that breaks from a full heart, leaping with lyric motion in the loftiest and most unartificial freedom of style: "Sing unto the Lord all the earth! show forth from day to day his salvation. Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations. For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised. Glory and honour are in his presence; strength and gladness are in his place."

A song like this throws light on the whole Hebrew economy of precept and worship. By some it has been regarded as an austere, repellent system, severe in temper, and shadowed by an ever-watchful and recompensing God, guarded by a law vast and terrific in its sanctions; a burdensome bondage, in which the swing of perfect liberty was unknown. But Hebrew worship was largely festal. Praise was prominent. In this it surpassed all other religions before or since the time of David. The Psalms, it is true, breathe a penitential spirit and voice the feelings of a contrite heart, but, pre-eminently, they are jubilant and grateful in their temper. Their inspiring joy shoots up from a vigorous root. That joy had its throne in the temple and in the sanctuary; in the rude, humble tent where rested the sacred ark as well as in the palace of the king. In the midst of powerful and envious empires the national unity of God's people preserved them—a unity inspired alone by their strong, radical, religious life. Nothing else would have enabled them to withstand the adverse circumstances of their condition.

Now, we all need enthusiasm and vigor in our work. It is, however, a rare thing to find these as an abiding, continuous experience. Youth, of course, has freshness and freedom. Its ardent hopefulness colors everything, just as we and when, looking at distant objects through a lens not perfectly achromatic, we see them fringed with prismatic tints—a rainbow brilliancy which does not belong to the objects themselves. There are objects in life that lose their illusive and enchanting brightness when viewed in the sober inspection of maturer age.

Health, too, has its influence in imparting enthusiasm. On a bright and bracing day we walk the street with resounding foot. The sunlit skies and the crisp air help to quicken and enliven our spirits. Contact with a friend we love warms our soul with new emotion, and pours the elixir of life into languid veins. A great thought, or the perusal of a delightful book, may stir our intellect to fresh activity. A new key to the mystery of life is given us by momentary contact with an illuminated mind.

But society is complex. Cares are multiplied and minute in this our hurrying and exacting life. By no voluntary act of ours can we maintain this tension, any more than we can stretch a wire a hundred yards without a sag. With added years and with narrowing friendships we see less of pleasure ahead to anticipate. We come to feel the need of something to alleviate the weariness of life. Just here is seen a reason for the universal impulse to seek for artificial stimulus. It is not a love for the drug or dram itself, so much as a craving for something to lighten the load that presses on the spirit—a burden which is most sensibly felt as society grows more and more artificial. It is in just such communities that suicide is most common.

Can we as Christian disciples find in our religion that ennobling and enlivening element which was found in the Hebrew? If not, ours is narrower and more limited than the Hebrew. Yes, we do find strength and gladness here.

We do find, not a transient glow, an occasional enthusiasm, but an abiding joy, as we come under the power of the religion of Christ. Do you ask how this is to be maintained?

1. We find it in the entire relief from solicitude as to the future, which the grace of God imparts. If we do not accept that grace, the weight of that great eternity at hand must rest on us with even more of burdening power than on the heathen. Their conception of this solemn and august truth was not as vivid as ours is. It did not bring so urgent a pressure as it does to us, before whose eyes Christ has unfolded the awe-inspiring panorama of the future. He offers an absolute assurance of heart as to the good we are to gain and the loss we are to avoid. We may say, with all the emphasis of Paul, "I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him until that day." The willingness of Christ to be our care-taker is proved by every word and act of his life. He made a final expression of that readiness in hanging on the cross. Nor is his ability less distinctly declared. He is both willing and able. He is one with God. In his custody we are secure. The witness of the Spirit in the heart, the progress of Christ's kingdom in the world, and the exhibitions of heroic fortitude in the history of the Church, all confirm our confidence. "He is able to keep that which I have committed unto him." With the gleam of a Roman sword flashing over his heart, Paul could utter this sublime ejaculation of faith; and we, too, can utter the same. In Christ we are safe. God's punitive vengeance would strike him, if that were possible, before it would reach us. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" When there is eliminated from the view of the future all fear and doubt, the soul gains a mighty and an abiding impulse. We are not holding to the world with one hand and clutching the Cross with the other, dividing the spirit by its antithetic relations; but, wholly and heartily united to Christ, we enjoy the deepest and sweetest exhilaration of soul possible; a gladness that ever breaks forth in song. It has been seen in the illustrious examples of missionary heroism and in the triumphs of martyrdom. It has been caught up and echoed through the ages. It will finally mingle with the celestial song!

2. We realize this abiding strength and gladness as we remember that we are working out God's will concerning us in all that is done or borne by us. As he watched over Christ in the flesh, so God's favor watches over us. No craft of traitor and no rage of demon can touch us. What we do or endure for him is as truly worship as is the song of seraphim above. The two mites, which were the widow's living, became a parable and pattern of charity. Paul toiling with his hands, a tent-maker, is honoring God as truly as when on Mars Hill he addresses philosopher or senator. This thought lifts the soul with joyous power, dignifies and enriches life. Nothing is below God's notice and regard. Love is more than genius; love gives to work the beauty of praise. Every act, however trivial—eating, drinking, walking, or talking—every bargain made, every letter written, every errand done or directed, may be thus exalted with the added lustre which love imparts. All life thus becomes a song, each day a stanza, each year a canto, rounding, finally, in the ethic completeness of heaven.

3. We are educated by what we do. There is a reflex in loving toil. The thought of developed character and of virtues daily nourished within us is calculated to give abiding joyousness and strength to life. Pain brings patience. Peril teaches courage. We learn not by reading so much as doing; not by hearing, but by attempting and enduring. We dig for roots, and fine gold. We fish for oysters, and find pearls. Our richest revenue, our most inestim-

able reward, i—a moral adv—the intellectu—celestial elem—sitions; a di—strength and—patience and—us.

4. Lastly, I—A light supern—as the swing o—the waves till—along the win—apprehension—things workin—within us. I—darken; stren—tent of our so—contents, with—hind the curta

Brethren, w—liever's privile—ing, instead of—go with weigh—bleak and bari—ter have this—freshness and—this *shekinah* o—show to men c—they have not—ledge of the tr—have Christ in—an enthusiasm—of youth, or th—tion of geni—Christ has bro—Not as the wo—sensing this, '—fluence over n—This abiding r—Its fruits, see—and link earth—bright and v—chanic skill, c—Wealth is po—marble or free—his being. A—and diamonds—within, be onl—all nobleness—can renovate—the elements—ness. Having—he will compl—the palace wh—Let us, then—

"Trust—Trust—Plant

#### British

MEETING IN MISSIONS.—A n—sions was held a—J. McCormick n—more especially—trict, Roundston—to note how wo—had been blesse—the sole instrum—basis, and to ma—of a religious ch—of Parliament"—the Bible was m—widely proclaim—the troubles the—Bible was a seal—to become acqu—ing of their pri—which the speak—their supervision—of the Church of