

# THE HOME MISSION JOURNAL

VOLUME VI, No. 1

ST. JOHN, N. B., JANUARY 14, 1904.

WHOLE No. 129

## Between Death and the Resurrection.

By Rev. Wm Hurlin.

There are Christians who tell us that our bodies and spirits are so essentially connected that both die together, and that therefore there is no conscious existence of the spirit between death and the resurrection. The object of this paper is to present a few of the many passages of the Scriptures which show that these persons are mistaken.

From Matthew 22:23, and the parallel passages we learn that the Sadducees said "that there is no resurrection," and that they came to Jesus with the statement of a case which they claimed proved the truth of their opinions. But Jesus not only showed that the case they presented was not a relevant one with reference to the resurrection; but from the statement made by God to Moses, Exodus 3:6, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," he proved the separate conscious existence of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob by the statement, "God is not the God of the dead; but of the living." He thus asserted that although the bodies of these patriarchs had been in their graves a long time, yet when God spoke to Moses, their spirits were consciously alive. And according to Luke 20:38, He asserted that this was a general principle by adding, "For all live unto Him."

In Luke 23:42, it is recorded that one of the thieves who were crucified said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom," thus asking for a favor to be bestowed at some future time. But Jesus promised him more than he asked, by replying, "Verily, I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in Paradise." He thus asserted that after they had both died the spirit of the thief would be with Him in Paradise in a state of conscious existence.

Philippians 1:23, 24. Paul wrote, "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better. Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." From this it is evident that Paul believed that when he died his spirit would not only continue to live in a state of conscious existence, but that he would be with Christ. He loved and served Christ on earth, and had fellowship with Him; but he believed that after he died he would be brought into a closer relationship to Him, which he said "is far better." Had he supposed that his spirit would remain unconscious until Jesus Christ came to raise the dead, there could have been no strait in his mind; but knowing that his continuance on earth was desirable for the Philippians, he would have prayed that his life on earth might continue as long as God saw fit to continue it. In II. Corinthians, 5:8, Paul also expressed his conviction that when the time came for him to die his spirit would continue consciously existent, for he wrote: "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."

As the revelation which God has given to man is progressive in its character, we do not expect to find in the Old Testament such clear and definite statements on this subject as we have in the New Testament. Yet even there in the early history of the world, we find that the separate and conscious existence of the spirit of man is distinctly taught. In Genesis 35:29, we read: "Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years, and was gathered unto his people. And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him." Genesis 35:29, "And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days, and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him." Genesis 49:23, "And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people." Genesis 50:13, "His sons carried him (Jacob) into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah."

I know that it may be said that the expression

"gathered unto his people," is only another mode of describing death. But this cannot be here, for in each case the fact of dying is stated separately and in distinction from being "gathered unto his people." It may also be said that it means burial. But again I reply that this cannot be so, for in each case the burial is spoken of as an after matter. And if this were not so, Abraham was not buried with his people, for his ancestors and his brother Haran were buried in "Ur of the Chaldees," and his father Terah was buried in Haran in Padan-Aram, and only Sarah had been buried in the cave of Machpelah before Abraham was buried there. In the case of Jacob we are told that he "was gathered to his people," and that it was seventy days after this that Joseph asked permission of Pharaoh to carry the body of Jacob into the land of Canaan that it might be buried there. It may be further said that it was only a current opinion of the people of that age. But I submit that it is not given as a current opinion; but Moses, writing, as I believe, under divine inspiration, states distinctly that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were each "gathered unto his people," and thus declares the continuous existence of the spirit distinct from the body.

The above are only a few of the many passages in the Scriptures which teach that the spirit of man can and does exist separate from the body. We know very little of the state of existence between death and the resurrection and probably it is a matter which in our present condition it is impossible for us to understand. But I think we have in the Bible abundant proof that the spirits of those who "die in the Lord" do not sleep in the grave with their bodies, but that they have a conscious and a happy existence "with the Lord."

Autrim, N. H.

## Little Kindnesses.

You gave on the way a pleasant smile,  
And thought no more about it;  
It cheered a life that was sad the while,  
That might have been wrecked without it;  
And so for the smile and its fruitage fair  
You'll reap a crown some time—somewhere.

You spoke one day a cheering word,  
And passed to other duties;  
It warmed a heart, new promise stirred,  
And painted a life with beauties.  
And so for the word and its silent prayer  
You'll reap a palm some time—somewhere.

You lent a hand to a fallen one,  
A lift in kindness given;  
It saved a soul when help was none,  
And won a heart for heaven;  
And so for the help you proffered there  
You'll reap a joy sometime—somewhere.

## Be Cheerful!

By enduring a hardship cheerfully, or by accepting discomfort without a murmur, we may be of more real service to our fellows than by performing acts of ministry while we appear to begrudge the required effort, or while we ourselves are in an unloving mood. The way in which we do our most generous deeds is sometimes of as much importance as the deeds themselves. Many a child or a man has been made more glad by the pleasant looks and words of one who had to refuse a requested favor, than by the reception of a desired favor from one who gave it with a sneer or a frown. The importance of the right way of doing good, in the line of giving or of withholding, should not be forgotten or undervalued. Charles Buxton says, in this line, "You have not fulfilled every duty unless you have fulfilled the duty of being pleasant." How does that apply to our service of to day?

## The New Year.

The new year has come to us with a cold breath, and rough voice. But cold and rough beginnings often close with genial and serene endings. May it be so with the present year. However, it has brought with it responsibilities, opportunities and possibilities which we all should face with earnestness, courage and diligence, depending on divine aid for success. "knowing that our labor is not in vain in the Lord." The Master gives "to every one his work," and says "occupy until I come." And later on he says, "be faithful until death, and I will give thee the crown of life." That crown is well worth striving for against the powers of darkness. The vain world, the sinful flesh, and a vile devil. May the dear Lord grant us grace sufficient to bring us off more than conquerors through the struggle. We take this opportunity to thank our dear friends who have in a tangible way remembered us at this season of the year. These tokens of kindness are enjoyed with much gratitude to our Heavenly Father, and the brethren and sisters who made the donations. We also wish to express our gratitude to those friends of our little paper, who have put funds in our hands to enable us to give the paper gratis to a number of families who do not feel able to pay for it themselves, as well as to some of their own friends that they wanted to have the reading of it. We are sending the HOME MISSION JOURNAL to over fifty families gratis for this year, and hope that some of them at least will so enjoy the reading of it as to order it for themselves next year. We are sending it to some who used to take it, but had given it up; they will take it as no offence that we now send it to them free for this year. We will be pleased to hear from all of those sometime before the year closes whether they continue the paper or not. We will not be able to call on any of our friends in the country this winter. We are much pleased to find a goodly number of renewals coming in with payments, and yet there is room. We hope that those in arrears will soon remit us. Look at the date on your paper, or if in a single wrapper, on the outside of it, and you will see to what time it is paid to. We have sent addressed envelopes to most all of those in arrears. If any mistakes are made please let us know. We hope that some of those who are getting the paper free will try and get a subscriber for us. About all the manager of the paper will be able to do this winter is to see that it is printed and mailed to subscribers.

## Acknowledgments.

Would you kindly permit me to acknowledge the kindness of the church and friends at Cookville and Harper's Brook, who on the 9th ult, came to our house bringing precious gifts to the amount of \$31. The people are very thoughtful and kind to their pastor at all times, which makes it a pleasure to labor among them. Although a small church they are a people of great hearts and good wills. May the Lord abundantly bless them.

Midgic Station, N. B. C. S. STEARNS.

A very pleasant surprise awaited us at Albert on Thursday evening, Dec. 24th. The people had gathered for Conference meeting. A suspicious looking bundle was noticed in the front pew of the church. Just before the opening of the service Conductor Downing of the S. & H. Railway stepped forward and with a few friendly words presented us with a very nice sleigh robe. It was a complete surprise, an expressed genuine good will. The Lord bless these kind people. At the Cape a kind friend remembered us on Xmas, in such a way as to win the hearty thanks of the whole family. J. W. BROWN.

Dec. 28.

Cultivate a spirit of gratitude for daily mercies. Realize that worrying is an enemy which destroys your happiness.