

GOD'S THOUGHTS

"I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end" (Jer. xxix. 11). God speaks here of His *thoughts*, not His *doings*. There is a distinction between the two, and it is very important that we should observe it. His thoughts and His doings cannot be at variance with each other. There can be no difference or contradictions in the Divine mind; "Hath He not said, and shall He not do it? Hath He spoken, and shall he not bring it to pass?" His way is perfect, yet is it often in the deep, and we cannot fathom his intentions; "Clouds and darkness are round about Him, and His footsteps are not known."

But how shall we know his "thoughts?" Clearly through the declarations of His Word. It is there that we must learn the Divine mind. And whether we turn to the Old Testament or the New, whether to direct statement or example of His dealings with His children, what thoughts of love and tenderness present themselves in Jehovah's heart! And I know nothing more important for Christians, under trials, than to separate between God's apparent *dealings* and His *thoughts*.

Poor tempted Christian is all dark and lowering? Not one star appearing—all dark and fearful? Does God seem to come against thee as an enemy, and not as a loving Father? Well, turn from his dealings to His *thoughts*. Joseph spake roughly to his brethren, but there was nothing but thoughts of peace and love working within him. Jacob, when looking at what God was bringing upon him, thought all was against him; but such were not the thoughts of Jehovah's heart. It may be, we cannot gather one atom of comfort from God's dealings with us. At such moments let us turn into His heart. Let us study His thoughts. Does He not say that, though mothers may and can forget their children, yet will he never forget? And if your thoughts of yourselves are such—of our baseness, and ingratitude and unworthiness—that we are almost driven to the conclusion that it must surely be impossible for a holy and just God to have mercy upon us, why this difficulty is met (and often a very dreadful one it is to poor tempted souls), by His assurance, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor my ways your ways, saith the Lord." And this is said in order to make it possible to believe what goes before, respecting His abundantly pardoning even the most wicked.

God's thoughts must, then, encourage prayer and quiet resting in Him. We can never pray, but we turn to the heart of the Omnipotent full of loving thoughts. And He who has raised our expectations regarding His full salvation, thinks and means nothing but to give us our expected end.

USES OF SNOW.

Many are the uses of snow, [some of them a necessity as arbitrary as flour for food—indeed, in many instances snow is the *alma mater*, almost the origin of food, as in the great Northern wheat regions of America and Europe. Over whole territories the white snow blanket protects and keeps warm through the long winters fields of wheat that, wanting such a shield, would perish at the cold, murderous hand of Arctic Jack. Far up above the clouds, along the Andean line, hundreds of towering peaks, clad everlastingly in winter costume, pour downstreams of snow water, that irrigate and fertilize slopes, plains, and valleys of the nether-world,