

purposes of God. Men did to Jesus only what God willed. Herod and Pilate united against Him and they accomplished—what? Only what God had determined before to be done. The Roman soldiers, when they nailed Him to the cross and raised Him up to the sneers and insults of the crowd, were carrying out the divine intention that He should be “lifted up” and so “draw all men unto Him.” (John 12:32.) It was God’s will that Jesus should rise again: and not the huge stone rolled to the door of the sepulchre, nor the authority of the Roman seal, nor the watchfulness of the guard could

prevent His rising.

It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary, the mother of James, v. 10. They failed in their errand. They found no use for the spices which they had brought, but their names have become immortal. The loving thought which brought them to the tomb, though it was prevented from taking the shape of outward deed, has shed its fragrance wherever the gospel has gone. Not even an unfulfilled thought of love will our gracious Master allow to pass unnoticed or unrewarded, so quick is He to see and so gracious and ample in recognizing.

POINTS AND PARAGRAPHS

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Love makes no needless delay. v. 1.

Difficulties disappear when we are in the path of duty. v. 2.

The Saviour who left His own grave empty will bring forth all believers from theirs. v. 3.

Earthly form and heavenly dress. How close akin are heaven and earth, the seen and the unseen. v. 4.

The angels declared the resurrection; they did not try to explain it. v. 6.

We lose a great deal by not remembering the words of Jesus. v. 6.

Sinful men are often used to carry out God’s purposes. v. 7.

The women undertook a humble task; they were rewarded by being trusted with a more honorable one. v. 9.

The mind that is unwilling to believe is hard to convince. v. 11.

Wonder is one thing, belief is another. v. 12.

Love never counts any trouble too great to take for the Master’s sake. The spirit that counts what is done for Jesus is not the spirit of love. There was only one calculator among the Apostles. He reckoned up the three hundred pence for which the ointment might have been sold which Mary poured on the head of the Saviour. He counted the thirty pieces of silver to be lost by faithfulness and gained by betrayal. That apostle was Judas. He counted because he did not love.

Love gives the cloak when only the coat is demanded. It goes two miles when it is required to go only one. (Matt. 5:40, 41.)

An old man said that the greater troubles of his life were those which had never happened. It often happens that the difficulties of which we are most afraid, we find rolled out of the way.

We are often perplexed about what ought to be a source of joy. These women were troubled when they missed the body of Jesus. They thought that some enemy had desecrated that sacred tomb and carried away the beloved form of the Master. Afterwards, when they understood that He had risen, their distress vanished. We are troubled because we do not understand. Some day God will explain the things that perplex us now and we shall see then that they were among our greatest blessings.

There is a picture called “The Angel of Consolation.” A woman sits on the low rocks looking out upon the sea. Desolation is all about her, not a flower, not a tree on the shore; only sand, rocks and breaking waves. Down into the waters her heart’s treasures have gone. Her face is stony in its despairing grief. Almost touching her shoulder, hovering over her bowed form, is an angel, white robed, softly striking the strings of a harp. Does the mourner know how near to her the angel is? No; she sits in dumb unconsciousness, sad and lonely, while

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