

PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS.

"The righteous shall hold on his way; and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger." These words were the utterance of Job. This Old Testament worthy, away back in the dim past, believed in the "Perseverance of the Saints." It is, noteworthy that the utterance was made in his saddest hours. The same unshaken faith appeared a little after in the words: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." He exemplified in fiery trial, and distinguished heroism, the precious doctrine. All that Satan could do failed to move him. Family, property, health, all that he held dear, were taken away, yet he rejoiced in God. Like Job, we are comforted by the thought that the righteous shall hold on his way. Like David, we hope in God, whom we "shall yet praise for the help of His countenance." And like Paul, we are sure that nothing shall "separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

The Perseverance of the Saints is unsurpassed among the comforting truths of our religion. It is this: Those who truly receive Christ by faith and are regenerated by the Holy Ghost, will be saved. They will not so backslide as to be finally lost.

The gospel rings this doctrine clear in the words to the Philippian jailer: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." And the words from the lips of the Saviour: "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." The promise in the covenant to faith is the gift of everlasting life. The only condition required for the giving of salvation is faith. The salvation is perfect, for it is "everlasting life." It is not said to the jailer: "Believe on Christ," and if you succeed in living a consistent life, you shall be saved. But it is said, "Believe," and you shall certainly be saved.

Faith cannot expect less than a completed salvation. The reason is it rests in perfect certainty upon God's promise and on His unchangeableness. "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever."

We call this doctrine the perseverance of the saints, but we might equally well call it "the perseverance of the Lord." For it is grounded in the faithfulness of the Lord. In Him is the hope that anchors us within the veil. When more conscious of weakness, and face to face with liability to sin, we turn to the reassuring words: "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. Neither shall any pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand." In the darkening hours that come we find sweet comfort, too, in the prayer of our Saviour: "Sanctify them through thy truth." And also in the hope-inspiring words: "Wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God through Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."—Presbyterian Standard.

Zaccheus acted like a man who has counted the cost and made his mind up. None of your superficial emotional, excitable people was he. Are you, too, hungry for Jesus? Is it Jesus you want? Then he is very near you. He is nearer than the seat upon which you sit. He is nearer than the friend beside you; nearer than the book you hold in your hand; nearer than the handkerchief with which you dry your tears away. Jesus, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, is very near you. May the Holy Spirit take away the bondage, the blindness, the scales from your eyes and let you see him now.—Gipsy Smith.

"THIS YEAR ALSO."

The words of Jesus startle us. There is no limit to the love of God, but there is a limit to His patience and grace. He revealed his love for the world in such a manner that the whole universe of holy ones bow and adore, for he gave his Son with the offer of eternal life to whoever would believe. We accustom ourselves to think of this, and go on in our course of neglect and sin. But Jesus tells that there is a limit beyond which his Spirit does not strive with men. He does all that is possible for us. He seeks not only our admission to heaven with himself, but a present life of faith and Christian living. He plants the fig and carefully cultivates it. He watches its growth and waits until ample time has been given for it to bear the fruit he seeks. And still he waits, and comes with earnest desire, the desire of a hungry soul, for the proper fruits of his care and culture, but is disappointed. It is vain to do more; "cut it down."

Still further grace is given but the fact of a limit remains. He yields to the entreaty for a limited time. "This year also." After that the patience of God ceases. He who died for us that he might live in us declares the limit: "This year also, if after that it does not bear fruit cut it down."

Is that year coming to a close? Has God's grace been without avail? After all the appeals of love, all the stirrings of conscience, all the prayers, is your life without fruit to God in love and righteousness? Are you at the beginning or near the close of the year of God's patience? There is a limit: there is a final "Cut it down." Oh, save yourself from the terrible blow of that axe, by a life of faith and service.—United Presbyterian.

TINY TOKENS.

The memory of a kindly word,
For long gone by;
The fragrance of a fading flower,
Sent lovingly;
The gleaming of a sudden smile,
Or sudden tear;
The warmer pressure of the hand,
The word of cheer,
The hush that means, "I cannot speak,
But I have heard!"
The note that bears a verse
From God's own word;
Such tiny things we hardly count
As ministry,
The givers deeming they have shown
Scant sympathy.
But when the heart is overwrought,
Oh, who can tell
The power of such tiny things
To make it well!

—Selected.

DECLINING TO REMEMBER.

Memory is given to us for purposes of help and encouragement only. When we allow our memories to discourage us, we are sinning against God and our fellow men. It is as wrong to brood over memories of our mistakes and failures as it would be to drink typhoid fever germs with deliberate intention. We can learn from the memory of our failures, how to guard against repeating those failures; but that is the only right we have to such memories. Much of our past we have no business to remember at all; and God will help us to blot it out if we confidently ask his aid in this. "The man who cannot forget the past is no good for the future."

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.

MON.—My confessional (Psa. 61).
TUES.—My shepherd (Psa. 23).
WED.—My war-song (Psa. 68: 1-6).
THURS.—My King (Psa. 2).
FRI.—My Saviour (Psa. 22: 1-11).
SAT.—My Home (Psa. 90: 1-12).

LIFE LESSONS FROM THE PSALMS.*

By Robert E. Speers.

It was after reading this forty-sixth Psalm that Demetrius, Grand Prince of Russia in the 14th century, plunged into the fight with the Mongol invaders and utterly defeated them at Koulikoff.

Luther's use of the Psalm, says Prothro, "exemplifies his magnificent courage, and suggests the source from which it sprang. There were moments when even he felt something akin to despair, and he asked with the Psalmist, 'Why art thou cast down, O my soul?' In such hours he would say to Melancthon, 'Come, Philip, let us sing the 46th Psalm,' and the two friends sang it in Luther's version. 'Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott.' The version is characteristic of the man. It was his heartiness, his sincere piety, his joyful confidence, his simplicity and strength, his impetuosity and ruggedness."

It was a favorite Psalm of Cromwell's. In 1656 he says to Parliament: "If you set your hearts to it (to make God's will done on earth, and first of all in England) then you will sing Luther's Psalm (46). That is a rare psalm for a Christian and if he set his heart open, and can approve it to God, we shall hear him say, 'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.' If Pope and Spaniard, and devil and all, set themselves against us—yet in the name of the Lord we should destroy them! 'The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.'"

This was the Psalm which upbore the English soldiers in Jellalabad when Dr. Brydon came in, the last survivor of the British Cabul force in 1841, and following on his heels the storm burst upon the garrison. "They knew that, insufficiently provided with ammunition, and scantily supplied with food, fighting behind crumbling walls whose circuit was too vast to be properly manned, they would have to hold their own for weeks against a host excited by previous victory. Such a position might well solemnize the feelings of the most careless. On the next Sunday the whole garrison assembled for Divine service in one of the squares of the Bal Hisar. There was no chaplain, but the Church Service was read to the officers and men by a gray-haired captain, of slight, well-knit figure, whose clear, strong voice made every word audible. Instead of the Psalms appointed for the day, he chose the forty-sixth Psalm, 'God is our hope and strength,' etc., which, as he said, 'Luther was wont to use in seasons of peculiar difficulty and depression.' The words, well suited to the desperate circumstances of the garrison, expressed their determination to defend the battlements to the last extremity. They expressed, also, the sublime dependence upon God which was the strength of Henry Havelock, who officiated as chaplain. He was then an unknown man, though he had served with distinction in Burma, in Afghanistan, Gwalior, and the Sutlej. Fifteen years later, when he died at Alumbagh, after the relief of Lucknow, his name was a household word. His death was worthy of his life. 'I have for forty years,' he said, 'so ruled my life, that, when death came, I might face it without fear.'"

From this Psalm John Wesley took his last words: "The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge." Throughout the last night he was heard attempting to repeat the words. They are good words both to live and to die by.

Y. P. Topic, Sunday, March 7, 1909.
Life lessons for Me from the Psalms.
(Psa. 46: 1-11. Consecration Meeting).