

GLORIOUS PROMISES.

BLISS IN DYING.—"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."—Rev. xiv. 13.—My soul! is this blessedness thine in prospect? Art thou really, if called this night to lie down on thy death-pillow, sweetly to fall asleep in Jesus? What is the sting of death? It is sin. Is death, then, to thee, robbed of its sting, by having listened to the gracious accents of pardoning love, "Be of good cheer, thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee"? If thou hast made up thy peace with God, resting on the work and atoning blood of His dear Son, then is the Last Enemy divested of all his terror, and thou canst say, in sweet composure, of thy dying couch and dying hour,—"I will both lay me down in peace and sleep, because Thou, Lord, makest me to dwell in safety." Reader! ponder that solemn question, "Am I ready to die? Am I living as I should wish I had done when that last hour arrives?" And when shall it arrive? To-morrow is not thine. "Verily, there may be but a step between thee and death." Oh! solve the question speedily,—"risk no doubts and no p.r. adventure. Every day is proclaiming anew the lesson, "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong." Seek to live, so that that hour cannot come upon thee too soon, or too unexpectedly. Live a dying life! How blessed to live,—how blessed to die, when the consciousness that there may be but a step between thee and glory!

A DUE REAPING.—"In due season ye shall reap, if ye faint not."—Gal. vi. 9.—Believer! all the glory of thy salvation belongs to Jesus,—none to thyself; every jewel in thine eternal crown is His,—purchased by His blood, and polished by His Spirit. The confes-sion of time will be the ascription of all eternity,—*"By the grace of God I am what I am!"* But though "All be of grace," thy God calls thee to personal strenuousness in the work of the high calling;—to "labour," to "fight," to "wrestle," to "agonise"; and the heavenly reaping will be in proportion to the earthly sowing. "He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully!" What an incentive to holy living and increased spiritual attainments! My soul! wouldst thou be a star shining high and bright in the firmament of glory?—wouldst thou receive the ten-talent recompense? Then, be not weary. Gird on thine armour for fresh conquests. Be gaining daily some new victory over sin. Deny thyself. Be a willing cross-bearer for thy Lord's sake. Do good to all men as thou hast opportunity; be patient under provocation, "slow to wrath," resigned in trial. Let the world take knowledge of thee that thou art wearing Christ's livery, and bearing Christ's Spirit, and sharing Christ's cross. And when the reaping time comes, He who has promised that the cup of cold water cannot go unrecompensed, will not suffer thee to lose thy reward!

AN END OF WEeping.—"The days of thy mourning shall be ended."—Isaiah lx. 20.—Christ's people are a weeping band, though there be much in this lovely world to make them joyous and happy. Yet when they think of sin—their own sin, and the unblushing sins of a world in which their God is dishonoured, need we wonder at their tears?—that they should be called "Mourners," and their pilgrimage-home a "Valley of tears"? Bereavement, and sickness, and poverty, and death, following the track of sin, add to their mourning experience; and with many of God's best beloved, one tear is scarce dried, when another is ready to flow! Mourners, rejoice! When reaping time comes, the weeping time ends! When the white robe and the golden harp are bestowed, every remnant of the sackcloth attire is removed. The moment the pilgrim whose forehead is here furrowed with woe bathes it in the crystal river of life—that moment the pangs of a lifetime of sorrow are eternally forgotten! Reader! if thou art one of these careworn ones, the days of thy mourning are numbered! A few more throbbings of this aching heart, and then the angel who proclaims "time," shall proclaim also sorrow, and sighing, and mourning, to be "no longer!" Seek now to mourn thy sins more than thy sorrows; reserve thy bitterest tears for forgetfulness of thy dear Lord. The saddest and sorrest of all bereavements is when the sins which have separated thee from Him evoke the anguish-cry, "Where is my God?"

A SPEEDY COMING.—"Behold, I come quickly."—Rev. iii. 11. "Even so! come, Lord Jesus!" "Why tarry the wheels of thy chariot?" 6,000 years this world has rolled on, getting hoary with age, and wrinkled with sins and sorrows. A waiting Church sees the long-drawn shadows of twilight announcing, "The Lord is at hand." Prepare, my soul, to meet Him. Oh! happy days, when thine adorable Redeemer, so long dishonoured and despised, shall be publicly enthroned, in presence of an assembled universe, crowned Lord of all, glorified in His saints, satisfied in the fruits of His soul's travail, destroying His enemies with the brightness of His coming,—the lightning glance of His wrath,—causing the hearts of His exulting people to "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Prepare, my soul, to meet Him! Let it be a joyous thought to thee—thy "blessed hope," the meeting of thine Elder Brother. Stand oftentimes on the watch-tower to catch the first streak of that coming brightness,—the first murmur of those chariot wheels. The world is now in preparation! It is rocking on its worn-out axle. There are voices on every side proclaiming, "He cometh! He cometh! to judge the earth." Reader! art thou among the number of those who "love His appearing"? Remember the attitude of His expectant saints. "Blessed are those servants whom their Lord, when He cometh, will find watching!"

A CROWN OF LIFE.—"When the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."—1 Peter v. 4.—What! is the reward to be "raised from the dunghill, set among princes, and made to inherit a throne of glory"? Is dust and ashes, a puny rebel, a guilty traitor, to be pitied, pardoned, loved, exalted from the depths of despair, raised to the height of heaven—gifted with kingly honour—royally fed—royally clothed—royally attended—and, at last, royally crowned? O my soul, look forward with joyous emotion to that day of wonders, when He whose head shall be crowned with many crowns, shall be the dispenser of royal diadems to His people; and when they shall begin the joyful ascription of all eternity, "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings, . . . to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen!" Wilt thou be among the number? Shall the princes and monarchs of the earth wade through seas of blood for a corruptible crown; and wilt thou permit thyself to lose the incorruptible, or barter it for some perishable nothings of earth! Oh, that thou wouldst awake to thy high destiny, and live up to thy transcendent privileges as the citizen of a kingly commonwealth, a member of the blood-royal of heaven! What wouldst thou not sacrifice, what effort wouldst thou grudge, if thou wert included at last in the gracious benediction, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!"

THE VISION AND FRUIT OF GOD.—"God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."—Rev. xxi. 3, 4. Glorious consummation! All the other glories of heaven are but emanations from this glory that excelleth. Here is the focus and centre to which every ray of light converges. God is "all in all." Heaven without God! It would send a thrill of dismay through the burning ranks of angels and archangels; it would dim every eye, and hush every harp, and change the whitest robe into sackcloth. And shall I then, indeed, "see God"? What! shall I gaze on these inscrutable glories, and live? Yes, God himself shall be with them, and be their God; they shall see His face! And not only the vision, but the fruition. Oh, how does sin in my holiest moments damp the enjoyment of Him! It is the "pure in heart" alone who can "see," far more, who can enjoy "God." Even if He did reveal Himself now, these eyes could never endure His intolerable brightness. But then, with a heart purified from corruption, a world where the taint of sin and the power of temptation never enters; the soul again a bright mirror, reflecting the lost image of the Godhead—all the affections of their original high destiny—the love of God the motive principle, the ruling passion—the glory of God the undivided object and aim—the will no opposing or antagonist bias. Man will, for the first time, know all the blessedness of his chief end—"to glorify God, and to enjoy Him for ever!"