

THE HOME MISSION JOURNAL

VOLUME III, No. 15

ST. JOHN, N. B., AUGUST 13, 1901.

WHOLE No. 65

Our God is a Rewarder.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

AMONG all the names and attributes of our Heavenly Father, that is a very endearing one that is contained in that glorious epic of faith, the eleventh chapter of the "Hebrews." We there read that God is the "rewarder of them that diligently seek him." That precious promise is linked with every earnest prayer and every act of obedience. God rewards labor. Does not every farmer act in faith when he drives his plough in springtime, and drops his grain into the mellowed ground! Every minister prepares his gospel message—every Sunday school teacher conducts the Bible lesson, and every godly parent tills the soil of the child's docile heart, in the simple faith that God rewards good sowing with harvests.

God rewards obedience. He enjoins upon every sinner repentance and the forsaking of his sins, and the acceptance of Jesus Christ as his atoning Saviour. Every sinner that breaks off from his sins, and lays hold of Jesus Christ, does it on the assurance that our truth-keeping God will reward obedience. "By faith Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, prepared an ark to the saving of his house." An unbelieving generation hooted, no doubt, at the "fanatic" who was wasting his time and money on that unwieldy vessel. But every blow of Noah's hammer was an audible evidence of the patriarch's faith in the Lord as a rewarder of obedience.

God rewards believing prayer for right things, when it is offered in a submissive spirit. "Ask and ye shall receive; seek and ye shall find." Humble, childlike faith creates a condition of things in which it is wise and right for God to grant what might otherwise be denied. We grasp the blessed truth that he hears prayer and gives the best answer to prayer in his own time and way; upon these two facts we plant our knees when we bow down before him. Oh, the long, long trials to which we are often subjected, while our loving Father is testing our faith, and giving it more vigor and volume! We are often kept at arm's length—like that pleading Syro-Phoenician mother—in order to test our faith; the victory comes when the Master says "be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

Godly wives are often left to press their earnest petitions through months and years before the answer comes in the work of the converting Spirit. There was an excellent woman in my congregation who was for a long time anxious for the conversion of her husband. She endeavored to make her own Christian life very attractive to him—a very important point, too often neglected. On a certain Sabbath she shut herself up and spent much of the day in beseeching prayers that God would touch her husband's heart. She said nothing to her husband; but took the case straight up to the throne of grace. The next day, when she opened her Bible to conduct family worship, according to her custom, he came and took the book out of her hands and said, "Wife, it is about time I did this," and he read the chapter himself. Before the week was over he was praying himself, and at the next communion he united with our church!

Verily, God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. That praying Hannah who said, "The grief of my heart is that of all children not one loves Jesus," was not satisfied that it should be so. She continued her fervent supplications until five of them were converted during a revival. They all united in a day of fasting and prayer for the sixth daughter, and she was soon rejoicing in Christ. The victory that overcame in that case was a faith that would not be denied.

Sometimes the prayers of the parents are answered long after the lips that breathed them

are mounded into dust. When a certain Captain K—sailed on his last sea voyage he left a prayer for his little boy written out and deposited in an oaken chest. After his death at sea, his widow locked up the chest, and when she was on her dying bed she gave the key to their son. He grew up a licentious and dissolute man. When he reached middle life he determined to open that chest, out of mere curiosity. He found in it a paper, on the outside of which written, "the power of M—K—for his wife and child." He read the prayer, put it back into the chest, but could not lock it out of his troubled heart. It burned there like a live coal. He became so distressed that the woman whom he was living with as his mistress thought he was becoming deranged. He broke down in penitence, cried to God for mercy, and making the woman his legal wife, began a new life of prayer and obedience to God's commandments. And so God proved to be the rewarder of a faith that had been hidden away in a secret place a half a century before! I have no doubt that among the blessed surprises in eternity will be the triumphs of many a believer's trusting prayers.

My friend, if you are not a Christian, I entreat you to put the divine promise to the test. Jesus Christ's invitation to you is "follow me!" He calls on you to forsake your darling sins and offers you pardon. He calls you to self-denial, and offers you peace of conscience. He calls you to His service, and offers you solid joys than this world can give or take away. He calls you to a clean, pure, useful life, and offers you grace sufficient for it. He calls you to follow Him through sunshine or storm, up hills of difficulty and through some sharp temptations—to follow Him implicitly, gladly and heartily to the last hour of earth, and then in heaven you will acknowledge that the "God of all Grace" is the eternal rewarder of all who obey Him.

The Immortality of the Soul.

BY R. J. FOOOTH.

MAN'S future existence is not so much an assertion in the Old Testament as it is an assumption. It seems to be regarded by all the writers as an assumed fact—a great truth not needing to be proved. Enoch was not, for God took him, did not extinguish his life, did not put him out of being, but took him—carried him away to some other place. It logically follows that he still existed. Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, were all gathered to their fathers,—gathered, not annihilated, not extinguished, but gathered as a husbandman gathers shocks of ripened corn, taken to their fathers who had gone before them, an innumerable host who existed somewhere. What other conception can we have than the transfer of life to other life, the living brought into the company of others who are living, life to life?

David and Solomon slept with their fathers; sleep is not extinction. It is a term used by the Old Testament writers, and more particularly by our Lord, to give a milder thought to death, to lead the mind away from the idea of extinction of being.

Whatever notion we may have of the witch of Endor scene, it is based upon the common belief of Old Testament writers, of the continued life of the dead in the other world. This was the universal belief of God's people from the earliest period. We think this cannot be well doubted; we cannot read the Old Testament writers with any other view. And this harmonizes with the universal desire of the human soul, and it cannot be that God, who surely planted this desire in the soul, would blast this great hope by sending man out at last into the blackness of an eternal night. No, we stand with old Job:

"For I know that my Redeemer liveth;"

"And after I shall awake, though this body be destroyed, yet out of my flesh shall I see God." (marginal rendering), "Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and no another."—*Trenton, N. J.*

Suggestive.

ALL the best things in the world are scattered with a lavish hand and we do not know how rich we are until we sit down to reckon up our treasures. The love of parents, the affection of brothers and sisters, the help of teachers, the sympathy of friends, the companionship of books, the gift of children, the joys of home as given to all sorts and conditions of men. If those you love and who love you have been spared to you another year, there ought to be a thanksgiving season in your home. What is any failure in business, or calamity in fortune, or disappointment in ambition, or weariness in labor, or infirmity in health, compared with the loss of a husband or wife or child? Into many a home death has come and glory has vanished from the earth. But even in these homes there is reason for thanksgiving, and the sorrow should not be that of those who sorrow without hope. The promise of the life eternal is ours, and ours the expectation of a glad reunion.—*Charles E. Jefferson, D. D.*

In a recent article on preaching Zion's Herald says,—Dr. Maclaren, of Manchester, Eng., considered by many good judges to be the great representative preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ, is reported to have said at a recent Methodist parliament held in this city, that he deplored the lack of the old urgency for men to come to Christ. Instead, he now heard essays, reviews of the last novel and such-like, but he missed the earnest preaching of Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Has not the great preacher in these few words pointed out the general lack in the modern pulpit? So we think. Doctor Maclaren's preaching, which best illustrates what he means, is exegetical—a critical and thorough unfolding of the Word, carrying the "Thus saith the Lord," with tremendous force and solemnunction to his hearers. When we are able to restore this message to the pulpit, we shall no longer be troubled with the question of how to reach and move the people."

Dr. Cuyler entered his seventy-sixth year on the 10th inst. That he is still vigorous, that his mind is strong and clear, and that his heart beats with deep concern for Zion and the welfare of men his writings show. He is enjoyed by more people, probably, than any other contributor to the religious press. There is no more stimulating and helpful writer than he has been for many years. His friends and admirers are a great host, and they all hope he may be spared yet a number of years to speak and write in the name of the Lord, for all his writings are like lucious ripe fruit.

Sunday funerals frequently make inconvenience and difficulty for pastors. The Yarmouth pastors have resolved to use every effort to discourage Sunday funerals, and they urge their people to avoid having them except in cases of extreme necessity. And when such funerals are necessary, they ask the people to consult their pastors before fixing the hour, so that there will be as little interference as possible with the regular services of the day. Everywhere pastors would do well to have an understanding about this, and the people, on having the matter explained to them, would probably co-operate with them.

God hath yoked to guilt
Her pale tormentor—misery—*Bryant.*