

times on the life of man. And He laboured and was heavy-laden in a special way in the great work of our redemption, and when He took our sins and infirmities upon His soul—"a weary man and full of woes." From what was outward and material in those burdens He never passed. He felt the pressure of injustice, the physical weariness, the heat, the burden, the pain, the shame, to the very end; but He felt them as one who had escaped from their power to hurt. Under all pressure and anguish of them, He was in possession of the rest which is a rest of the soul. What He invited those who listened to Him to do, He Himself had done. He had escaped from the burdens of earth, and entered into rest by entering into a knowledge of the Father. He placed Himself in the Father's hands in the joy of this knowledge; He virtually said, My Father's will shall be My yoke. And from that moment peace was present, flowing like a river in the soul, and making glad the city of God within. That was the rest He offered to those who heard Him in Judea. That is the rest He offers to all who hear the gospel still: "Assume the yoke which I assumed; learn of Me, and act as I have acted; be meek and lowly in heart before God, accepting all His rule in all things that touch your life; lay yourselves low at the feet of God; receive pain and sickness and, if need be, mockery and scourging and death, as coming from Him; and you shall find rest unto your souls."

Nothing order, in the essence of it, than this is the rest that remains for us in heaven. It is the resting of filial hearts on the heart of God; a sweeter, fuller resting, simply because there will there be a fuller vision of the character, a more uninterrupted experience of the love, of God. The deepest ache of the human spirit here arises from ignorance of the character of God; its deepest peace is in a true acquaintance with that character.

Heaven is, more than anything else, the full unveiling of the Father's love. To know that love here, to be assured that we are loved—unworthy though we be—with a love that will not change, and that He who loves us is our Father reconciled, who has forgiven all our sins—that is heaven begun. The rest that remaineth in heaven for the people of God is just a richer, deeper experience of that joy.

IX.

I should be doing injustice to our Lord's teaching it, after speaking of rest, I did not hasten to add that it is a life of service which His revelations concerning heaven open up to our view. It has been made a reproach by scoffers that we have brought ideals of heaven into our hymns which are only projections into the future of poor forms of congregational worship. But this is a reproach which discovers far more poverty of thought in those who indulge in it, than poverty of imagination in those who formed the ideal at which they mock. All worship is service, and the worship of a congregation of redeemed souls may turn out to be the most acceptable service which can be rendered to God. It is a remarkable fact that our Lord has set the loftiest ideal of heaven He has portrayed in the heart of an act of worship. It is in the Lord's prayer He opens the vision of a world in which God's will is done so as every worshipper of God would wish it done upon earth. And it is service which has a large element of worship in it which is disclosed in that word concerning Himself: "It is my meat and my drink to do the will of God." Service, obedience, bringing forth of fruit, the doing of the Father's will—is the law of all the varieties of life which pass before us in His portrayal of the kingdom. At the doorway of the new developments of that kingdom, He depicts groups of servants receiving additional talents for future service. Rulers who have been