

THE SOWER.

JESUS AT THE WELL OF SAMARIA.

JOHN, iv.

—
THERE were two worn and weary ones,
That met at Jacob's well ;
Both could of earth the emptiness
And toil and sorrow tell :
The one had sought in paths of sin
Her happiness to gain ;
And found, as all our hearts have found,
She sought it there in vain.

She comes alone, for good report
Her company would scorn ;
Weary, degraded, desolate,—
At mid-day, not at morn :
Scorched by the blazing sun above,
Her conscience scorched within,
Samaria's erring daughter proved
The bitterness of sin.

But He, who sat by Jacob's well,
Was weary-hearted too ;
This earth He found a wilderness,
In which no rest He knew :
He toiled, He daily spent His strength,
His loins were girded fast ;
There were but " twelve hours in the day :"
He'd labour to the last.

Hungry, and thirsty, weary too,
 He sits on Jacob's well ;
 But the strong thirstings of His love
 To rescue souls from hell,
 Make Him forget all but her need
 All but His Father's will :
 His meat, His drink, His one delight,
 His mission to fulfil.

It was a task that needed all
 His gracious skill, to win
 That hardened heart and darkened mind
 So long enslaved by sin :
 What wise and faithful tenderness
 In all his words we see !
 Each one of us, O Lord confess
 Thou did'st the same for me.

And still, O Lord, Thou art the same,
 Though seated on the throne,
 As when, on that eventful day,
 Thy grace to her was shown :
 Thyself, the precious gift of God,
 Givest those waters free ;
 And openest lips, like hers of old,
 To win fresh souls to Thee.

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A LITTLE GIRL'S TESTIMONY.

IT was lovely summer weather. I had been passing a few days at a friend's in the country, and now on a Monday morning my friend had come down to the train with me to see me away. There was no person in the car which I entered except an old woman. My friend bade me good-bye but he had no sooner left me, than a party of young people entered the car. They were out for pleasure and had no thought but amusement; the one thing important, the salvation of their souls, was apparently the farthest possible from their minds.

The train was at the point of starting when a young lady entered nearly out of breath as she had had to run to be in time. She had with her a pretty little girl, and they took the seat opposite me which was the only vacant seat in the car. The little one interested every one; she seemed perfectly at home, and at once proceeded to take off her hat, remarking:

"The elastic cuts me."

Her pretty face was encircled with brown curls, and animated by the brightest of eyes. Seeing me smiling, she said to me;

"I am going by the railroad Sir, to see my aunt Julia."

"Do you love your aunt Julia?" I asked.

"O! yes; she is so gentle."

"And how old are you?" I asked again.

"Four years," she replied. Thus we conversed together, and the passengers who were near were very much interested in her frank and childish talk.

Passing through a tunnel presently, she became silent and drew closely to her mother, for the noise made by the train, and the total darkness into which we entered, strangely impressed the child.

For a little, conversation ceased, but generally those who live far from God, and especially those who live in the pursuit of pleasure do not like silence, as it brings them face to face with God. We emerged from the darkness for a moment, and then approached another tunnel, when a young man, with a tired and jaded appearance, stood up and called out in a tone of mockery and derision :

"Ladies and gentlemen ; prepare yourselves ; we are about to descend into hell."

He said it, doubtless, because we were about to enter the second tunnel.

The little girl, greatly excited, cast herself upon her mother's knee, and encircled her with her arms, crying out : "No, no, mamma ; I will not go down into hell, I believe in the Lord Jesus."

Her mother, in a very distinct voice, replied. "No my child, those who believe in the Lord Jesus will never go into hell."

These words made a very powerful impression upon all those near, as the silence which followed proved.

For myself, I blessed God for having given this clear testimony to His Son, in such a place, and by the mouth of so young a child, and I recalled the words of our Lord Jesus "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise." (Matt. xxi, 16).

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I was to stop at the next station; and as the train drew up to the platform, I gave a farewell salutation to the lady and her little child, who were of those who would never descend into hell.

And you, my reader, are you of that company? Can you say in reality. "No, no, I shall not go down into hell, for I believe in the Lord Jesus."

THE precious blood of Christ must have been shed if but one soul were saved, but such is its value to God—such its efficacy that it is sufficient to save every one that has lived—is living—or ever will live. It was needful for one, it is sufficient for all.

Jesus said Himself, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again", for by His death, God's holiness has been maintained; His righteousness made good; His justice received full payment; His truth declared to be like Himself, unalterable; and His majesty exalted. Thus God is free to let His grace, and love, and mercy and compassion flow out unhindered to the vilest sinner, who trusts in the precious blood of Christ.

Dear reader do *you* know this God of love? Are *you* washed "whiter than snow" in the blood of Jesus Christ His Son?

HAVE YOU PEACE WITH GOD.

YOU will say dear reader, this is a bold and searching question. So it is. But the importance of the subject demands it; and it is time to speak plainly and faithfully, for many souls are being deceived on this momentous subject.

The Son of God when on earth was personal and pointed in His ministry. He went straight to the heart and conscience of His hearers; and none ever so understood the real value of souls, or the perfectness of God's love. To one He said: "*Ye* must be born again." To another, "If *thou* knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to *thee*, Give me to drink; *thou* wouldst have asked of Him, and He would have given *thee* living water." Again, we hear Him say, "Except *ye* repent, *ye* shall all likewise perish." And on another occasion, "Except *ye* eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, *ye* have no life in *you*." Thus we see the Lord's true faithfulness both on private and public occasions; and should not we, who profess to follow Him, be faithful.

In the present day the demand is urgent that our dealings with immortal souls should be close, earnest and affectionate. We are in danger of trafficking in mere doctrine, and of allowing its purity to be an excuse for coldness, deadness and formality. We are to present *God's love* to lost souls with the fervour and point that its eternal importance

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demands. We are to beware of lukewarmness, for Christ is rejected, and souls are perishing. It is high time to be aroused, for the coming of our Lord draweth nigh. Our opportunities of thus spreading the savour of His precious name will soon be over, and it is, alas! too evident that worldliness and indifference to the claims of Christ, are sapping the energies of the church of God; while Satan is artfully spreading his soul-deceiving nets.

The fact is, that multitudes are going quietly and respectably to hell, and it is to be feared that many of them think themselves very religious. Blinded by the traditions of their fathers, and diligent in the use of ordinances, they bolster up their false hopes by doing as they say, their duty, and thus enter the jaws of death in utter ignorance of the present reality of forgiveness of sins, and peace with God. Many too, having been systematically trained in the false idea that none can be sure of salvation till they die, have hazarded the settlement of the vital question till a dying hour, when, it may be, the pain and oppression of a mortal sickness will so overcome them, that they will be unable to fix the mind on anything.

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Again, there are not a few who endeavour to evade the personal bearing of the question, "Have you peace with God?" By such indefinite replies as, "It is to be hoped that we are all trusting in the Saviour," or "We must not judge," or "It is quite true there is no way of salvation but by Christ, of course we all know that," and such like; which show

that, whatever be their knowledge of the letter of scripture, they have never closed with the Son of God as their Saviour, or known the peace-speaking power of His precious blood.

Nor can we doubt that there are many true, anxious souls who are longing for "peace with God," and have it not, because they are looking for feelings or experience, or something else within, instead of simply and only to the already accomplished work of Jesus, and the infallible word of God.

We cannot then be too plain, or too personal and pointed, in dealing with souls in reference to this momentous and most blessed subject of *present peace with God*. Well might the dear Saviour of sinners, who fully knew the depths of the riches of divine mercy, and the eternal agonies of a lost soul, exclaim: "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

And now, dear reader, let me lovingly and earnestly bring before you again the searching, pointed question, "Have *you* peace with God!" You may, perhaps, reply, that you are as happy as most people, and as quiet in mind as your neighbors; but this does not answer the question, "Have *you* peace with God?" You may be ranked among the most useful and religious of your district; you may be most kind, amiable, and virtuous; you may be most regular and devout in outward religiousness, and still the momentous question be unanswered, "Have *you* peace with God?" Observe, my dear reader, that the

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question is not as to how you stand with your fellow-man, but with God. It is not about your quietness of mind, or peace of circumstances, but, "peace with God." Oh, beware of a false peace.

Scripture speaks of "peace with God," as a present blessing, known by those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a wondrous blessing now enjoyed, not by feeling, or doing, but by *believing*. "Being justified *by faith, we have peace with God*, through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. v. 1).

Here, God tells us that *we have*, not shall have when we come to die, but *we have peace with God*, and that, not through frames, feelings, experience, or doings, but, "Through our Lord Jesus Christ." How simple and how blessed this is, ! That happy frames and feelings *follow* this simple faith in God through Jesus His Son I know, and so will communion, service, and testimony, but they do not precede, but accompany, or follow this believing.

Those who have peace with God in the light and holiness of His presence, know that every question as to sin, death, hell and judgment, has been forever settled for them by Jesus. It is a peace which originated in the free mercy of God; is based upon divine righteousness in the judgment of sin on the cross of Christ, and is made sure by God raising Jesus our Lord from the dead. When clearly apprehended it cannot but give peace with God, because it is connected with an already-accomplished redemption by Christ, which has infinitely glorified God. This present peace, therefore, is not based upon what

we feel, or what we have been, or are, or may be, but entirely, "Through our Lord Jesus Christ." Through what God has done for us by the death and in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Peace with our holy God,
Peace from the fear of death
Peace through the Saviour's precious blood,
Sweet peace the fruit of faith."

Once more then, dear reader, let me enquire, "Have you peace with God?" Ponder it seriously, look straight to Jesus at God's right hand, who did by Himself, at Calvary purge our sins. Gaze upon that blessed one; a lamb as it had been slain; now in the midst of the throne; and see all your need as a poor guilty sinner, fully met by Him. Christ has made peace by the blood of His cross; and, as we have seen; peace with God is alone through Him. Thus coming to God through Christ, you will find perfect peace in His holy presence. You will see there is not a question that God Himself has not settled for you in Christ, and by His precious blood. Then you will be able to sing:—

"Christ died! then I am clean.
Not a cloud above, not a spot within."

Worship, service, and devotedness to Him who so loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, then happily follow.

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A SONG IN A HOSPITAL

A christian lady was visiting a military hospital at Cairo in Egypt. She saw among the wounded, a young man who belonged to a scotch highland regiment. A leg had been taken off by a cannon ball, and the surgeon had said that he could not live through the night. Consumed by a burning fever, he lay with his eyes closed. The visitor stopped by his bed to see if she could do anything for him. She heard the patient in his delirium, murmur: "Mother, mother!" Dipping a handkerchief in some iced water which she found near by, she bathed the forehead of the wounded man. He opened his eyes and said:

"How refreshing that is, how much good it does me!" And seizing the lady's hand he kissed it and said. "Thanks, thanks, dear madam. You remind me of my mother."

"Do you wish me to write to your mother?" She asked.

"No," he replied, "the doctor will do that for me, but would you not sing for me?"

The lady hesitated, seeing herself in so large a room and in the midst of so many sick ones; but through an open window, getting a glimpse of the Nile, over whose waters the setting sun was casting a purple hue, her thoughts went on involuntarily to that river which takes its rise in the city of golden streets, and gates of pearl; she began to sing in a low voice the well known song:—

Shall we gather at the river
 Where bright angels feet have trod,
 With its crystal tide forever
 Flowing from the throne of God?"

Every eye was at once turned to that side of the hospital ward, and heads were raised from their pillows to hear. When the lady had finished the first verse, numbers of the invalids joined their voices in the chorus. Some were bass, some tenor, some feeble and trembling, others strong; and they sang:

"Yes we'll gather at the river,
 The beautiful, the beautiful river—
 Gather with the saints at the river,
 That flows from the throne of God.

The lady continued:

"On the margin of the river,
 Washing up its silver spray,
 We will walk and worship ever
 All the happy golden day.

At the smiling of the river,
 Mirror of the Saviour's face,
 Saints whom death will never sever,
 Lift their songs of saving grace.

Soon we'll reach the silver river,
 Soon our pilgrimage will cease;
 Soon our happy hearts will quiver
 With the melody of peace."

And after each verse the voices full of emotion of the wounded soldiers, repeated:

"Yes we'll gather at the river,
 The beautiful, the beautiful river—
 Gather with the saints at the river,
 That flows from the throne of God."

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A profound feeling came over every heart. The lady with tears in her eyes, regarded the young Scotchman, so far away from his mother, now dying in an Egyptian hospital, and asked him ;

“ Shall you really be there, by that river of water of life, which flows from the throne of God ? ”

“ Yes,” he replied, “ *I shall be there, for I am resting upon the foundation of what the Lord suffered for me upon the cross.* ” And his great blue eyes, lighted up with an unnatural brilliancy, a face upon which the pallor of death was impressed ; a brilliancy which was not of this creation, but heavenly and eternal.

The lady took her leave of him, knowing that she would not again see him here below, but that she would meet him above by the river which flows from the throne of God.

And dear reader, shall you be there ?

THE saved are destined to spend an eternity with Jesus, the saints and the angels, in the peerless heights of everlasting glory ?

The unsaved are in the way to spend an eternity with the devil, the demons and all the damned, in the fathomless depths of the lake of fire, there to be everlasting food for the undying worm and inexhaustible fuel for the quenchless flames of that awful abode.

All the concerns of time are but as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor when compared with the interests of your soul, the realities of eternity.

Where will you spend eternity ?

HOW IS PEACE OBTAINED?

“**H**AVE you made your peace with God my good woman?” Said a kindly intentioned visitor to an old friend of ours. Now although our old friend was dying, yet she knew perfectly well what she was saying, when she replied: “No, that I have not Sir.” “Then see to it at once, and make your peace with God before you die, I entreat you,” replied the visitor, with solemn earnestness.

After a few moments silence, the aged believer fixed her eyes upon him, and said, slowly, “It was all done eighteen hundred years ago. He hath made peace through the blood of His cross.” It is a fearful thing to attempt to make our peace with God! A dreadful delusion for a dying hour. “We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. v. 1). The stone over which so many stumble is their feelings. But our experiences do not affect God’s fact. Whether the believer is in a peaceful state of soul, or harrassed and disturbed; the fact that peace is made, remains unchanged. The sun has risen, and though clouds blot out his beams from sight, and a chilly atmosphere takes the place of his genial glow, yet the fact that the sun shines, remains unchanged. What the believer has to do, is by faith, to forsake the valley of distrust over which the clouds hang, and to climb the mountains above the clouds.

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Some time ago a friend of ours was speaking to one who doubted the unchanging favour of God toward His people, and who has not the blessing of settled peace with God. "Is God not satisfied with what Jesus was, and is, for you?" He enquired. "Can He then hide His face from you? No; it is you, who, by looking within yourself, and pulling the blind down, shut Him out. You must keep the blind up. If the sun is pouring forth all its golden beauty, and you are keeping the blind up, it will shew forth all its power to you; but if you draw the blind down you hinder its rays from entering your room. And if you become occupied with self, and are taken up with your own feelings and thoughts, instead of with Christ, you are in darkness, for you thereby shut out the light of His presence." Our hearts are truly deceitful, and our thoughts and feelings often very evil, but God looks at us who believe, as not in the flesh but in Christ. It is this fact which gives our souls peace. This illustration of keeping the blind up, has helped many a poor doubter.

Let the truth of the perfect satisfaction which God has in Christ, and peace coming to us through Christ in glory, be the sunlight you would have pouring into your soul. "Keep the blind up," reader; look not within the dark chamber of your heart, but outside of yourself to Christ. Again, many doubts are bred in the bosom, because *there is not faith in a risen Saviour*. Too many linger over the cross as if Jesus were still there. As if He

were still a dying and not a living Redeemer. Upon the cross the work was done; by the blood there shed the peace was made; but a living Jesus, a risen Jesus, is the object of faith, and His words to you, as He shews you His hands and His side, are—"Be not faithless, but believing."

"I am ever looking to Jesus upon the cross," said one. Another gently replied, "He is not there." No, He is not upon the cross; He is upon the throne. He has made peace, and He is our peace. Reader do you believe on God who raised up Jesus from the dead? Then you are justified. And when did this justifying occur? Upon your believing! There and then God justified you. God did this; and what then shall you say? Oh! in the words of scripture, those great and sweet words—"Therefore," because God has justified me, I have "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

A mind of perfect peace with God,
O what a word is this,
A sinner reconciled through blood,
This, this indeed is peace.

Again;

Peace with our holy God,
Peace from the fear of death,
Peace through our Saviour's precious blood
Sweet peace, the fruit of faith.