

THE SOWER.

AFTER the joys of earth,
After its songs of mirth,
After its hours of light,
After its dreams so bright,
What then ?

Only an empty name,
Only a weary frame,
Only a conscious smart,
Only an aching heart.

After this empty name,
After this weary frame,
After this conscious smart,
After this aching heart—
What then ?

Only a sad farewell
To a world loved too well,
Only a silent bed
With the forgotten dead.

After this sad farewell
To a world loved too well,
After this silent bed
With the forgotten dead—
What then ?

Oh ! then—the judgment throne !
Oh ! then—the last hope gone !
Then, all the woes that dwell
In an eternal HELL !

“I GO TO MEET GOD.”

A MAN guilty of many crimes, and hardened in iniquity had been arrested, tried and sentenced to death. Having learned that this wretched being had refused to listen to the exhortations of the many who had besought him to think of his soul, a servant of God, Mr. R——, requested permission from the authorities to pass the last night with him which he was to live, hoping to be an instrument in the hands of God to lead the condemned to Christ before he should be cut off from the earth.

The permission having been granted, Mr. R.—— was locked in the cell with him.

For several hours Mr. R.—— remained seated trying in vain to attract the attention of his companion, that he might enter into conversation with him. The prisoner, although he was evidently in a state of extreme agitation, retained a lowering and defiant reserve, walking up and down in his cell like a caged lion, rattling the chain which connected his hands and groaning loudly. Hour after hour he continued this without stopping, except to heave from time to time a deep sigh, seeming to wholly ignore the presence of another.

At length, Mr. R.—— fixing upon him a supplicating look, he suddenly stopped, shook his chain and fell heavily to the ground with fearful groans, which seemed to come from the depths of his being. Then raising himself and turning to Mr. R.——, he said,

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with a frightful accent, " Mr. R——, do not think I am afraid to die !"

" What !" said Mr. R——, " not afraid to die ! What mean then this agitation, these groans, and these looks of terror ?"

" No," replied the condemned man, " I am not afraid to die. I do not care for death more than that," said he, snapping his fingers. " But, Mr. R——, the fearful thought which torments me is, that to-morrow morning, at eight o'clock, I go TO MEET GOD ! TO MEET GOD !"

Eternity only can reveal what the result was of Mr. R——'s visit.

Dear reader, stop a moment, you have also to meet God ; yes, you must one day be face to face with Him. How shall you endure His looks, the brightness of those eyes, too pure to behold iniquity, and which will search you through and through ?

You may say, " But I am not at all like this criminal, I have never broken the laws of my country." Granted, but it is no question here of human laws, it is a question of holiness and the rights of God ; and as to this listen to the sentence : " There is no difference for all have sinned " ; and remember that a single sin makes a man a sinner, and brings him under the righteous judgment of God. You have not to compare yourself with this or that one ; the question is : " ARE YOU READY TO MEET GOD ?" if you were called, not at eight o'clock to-morrow, but now.

A LETTER

FROM AN AGED SERVANT OF THE LORD, NOW WITH HIM,
TO A YOUNG LADY IN FRANCE.

I understand that you feel you are farther from conversion than ever. I do not say that you are, but that this is your thought. I know, and you know, that you have a very restless spirit, which you have much difficulty in controlling. That is an evil ; an evil before God ; and an evil which will often make you unhappy, but you have already experienced the difficulty of resisting evil when it assails you. The irritation is within, in your nature, although the occasion may be outside of you—your will is unbroken, and you have plenty of it—you see I am not flattering you ; but our faults and our falls even, may be made a source of profit to us—we learn that we have no strength. I do not doubt you would like to be gentle (“ Let your gentleness be known to all men,” you remember the passage), but you do not succeed in being so. It is a humiliating proof that sin has deprived us of power as well as of righteousness—we may have the wish to do good, but we have not the power to do it. Sorrowful position ! and what is the consequence of it ? In place of making fruitless efforts when we have already proven that we are unable to overcome our evil nature, if we truly desire holiness and to be with God, we are forced to humble ourselves and confess that we can do nothing, and that we must submit to the grace which loved us when we were nothing but sinners.

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Do you believe the Lord could love you when you were wicked? If He could not, then would you never be loved by Him. What a consolation, when we are truly humbled on account of our faults and the wickedness of our hearts, to know that God loves us tenderly in spite of it all. That is grace, and it is that which makes us hate the evil, that which gives us by grace new strength against it. But it is necessary that we should realize that we are wicked, without strength, that all is grace, that we need this grace and that we are wholly cast upon God, who did not spare His Son for us when we were sinners.

Let me ask you again, do you believe that the good and tender Saviour could love you when you were a sinner? That is grace, that is the gospel; the law demands that we should as men be righteous and perfect, grace comes to us when we are not so, and when we are lost. Think of that, even for power, that the love of God is for those who need it, who have neither righteousness, nor power to acquire it. That is your case, you are already lost and far from God; you have no power in yourself to change your evil nature—you must look to Jesus who loves us, when we have nothing good in ourselves. Read the life of Jesus and see if it was anything but love, even for those who were unworthy and sinners.

It is of this that you should think, to know the love of God for you, such as you are. Go, then, to the gracious Saviour and do so. It may be you may not apparently find all at the moment just as you might wish, but the Lord gives us to know what we are.

He shows us that we have need of Him, and attracts us by His love until we comprehend that we are perfectly saved. Then, and not before, we find power against sin which is in us. Go to Him, you will find that He is love.

* * *

Oh, I pray you, as you will have to give an account at the last day, remember this ; that if you have not sided with Christ here He will not side with you there. If you will not accept the atonement He has made, what other provision can be made? There is a fearful looking for of judgment; an awful indignation for those that refuse to accept the one sacrifice for sin. Flee, I pray you from the wrath to come. Flee to the open arms of Jesus, to the open side of the Son of God. Find in His wounds your salvation. Seek Him who will cleanse from all iniquity, look to the loving Saviour for power that will enable you to live to His glory. May God, by His Spirit, lead you to the Lamb of God who will take away your sin. For His name's sake, Amen.

My chains are snapt,
 The bonds of sin are broken,
 And I am free.
 Oh! let the triumphs
 Of His grace be spoken,
 Who died for me.

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I PRAY the Lord that you may find mercy in the day of Christ, and I entreat you to consider the times in which we live, and that your soul is more worth to you than the whole world, and remember that judgment and eternity are before you.

Let me entreat you in Christ's name, and by the salvation of your soul, and by your compearance before the sin-revenging Judge of the world, to make your accounts ready. Read them ere you come to the waterside; for your afternoon will wear short, and your sun fall low and go down! and you know that this long time your Lord hath waited on you. Oh, how comfortable a thing it would be for you, when time shall be no more, and your soul shall depart out of the house of clay, to vast and endless eternity, to have your soul dressed up and prepared for the Bridegroom! No loss is comparable to the loss of the soul; there is no hope of regaining that loss. Oh, how joyful would I be to hear that you had left all vanities and made Christ your garland! Let your soul put away your old lovers, and let Christ have your whole love. May-flowers and morning vapor, and summer mist posteth not so fast away, as these worm-eaten pleasures which you follow. You build castles in the air, and night-dreams are the daily idols that you dote on, but salvation, salvation is the only thing necessary. Call home your thoughts to this work, and enquire for God's well-beloved. Seek the Son's inheritance and let Christ's truth be dear to you. O, betake you to Christ without delay.

GOOD NEWS.

“ **A**S cold water, to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country” (Pro. xxv. 25). And it has been the privilege of men from time to time to realize this and to thank God for it. It was at the burning but inconsumable bush that on one occasion Moses, while tending his flock, heard such tidings and they filled his heart with joy. “I am come down,” said the Lord of heaven and earth to him, “to deliver them (His people) out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey” (Ex. iii. 8). Such were the glad tidings of God delivered in person. Upwards of 1,500 years passed away, and again good news was sent to other shepherds as they watched their flocks by night, “And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring unto you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people (N.T.), for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” By “the people” is meant the Jews, for it was to them that the Christ or Messiah, was born (Isa. ix. 6), but no sooner was this blessed intelligence delivered than “suddenly (as if impatient of a moment’s delay) there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good pleasure in men” (N.T.).

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This goes far beyond the narrow limits of Judaism and enables us to understand that heaven and earth are called upon to see and rejoice in all the blessings enunciated by the host of heaven.

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!” (Isa. lii. 7). Twice we have now seen and heard a message of mercy from God to His people on earth—good news from a far country. The first time He spoke it was to deliver them from a cruel bondage, and for that end He said, “I have come down.” The second time He addressed them (and He had spoken to them many a time and oft between), was to tell them of the fulfilment of His promise in the birth of a Saviour whom He had sent to put away their sins. But at neither time does He say one word about requiring them to do anything in the way of aiding Him to perform the work He had voluntarily undertaken. He had come down to deliver His people out of Egypt and He did it alone and unaided. He had sent His well-loved Son as a Saviour to put away sin and He finished the work which the Father gave Him to do, saying, “It is finished,” when it was completed. But He asked no aid from anyone.

Now this will help us to understand what the good news of God is. It is not what man has to do for God. That is law. Man ought to love God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his strength, and with all his mind. But that, however right it be,

is not grace, it is not the gospel of God. What is that gospel? It is the thoughts of God towards man, that is to say, His thoughts in goodness; to which may be added the acts of God in virtue of these thoughts. In the old Testament we have one remarkable passage in the book of Jeremiah which furnishes an illustration on the point. "I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end" (Jer. xxix. 11). These are the kind of thoughts which have their natural and abiding dwelling-place in the heart of God. What an amazing difference there is between the thoughts of God and the thoughts of man. "Out of the heart (of man) proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts." (Matt. xv. 19). But the thoughts of God, as we have seen, are thoughts of peace and not of evil. Such are His thoughts toward man—peace, not war; good, not evil. And it could not be otherwise, for God is love. The good news is that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." God loved the world, a world of sinners, a world lying in the wicked one, a world in which no good could be found. Why did He love it? Because He is love. There in these few words we have the heart of God laid open to us, and make the discovery that His thoughts to usward are thoughts of goodness, for He is love. This is the good news of God. But what did this love lead Him to do? To give His only begotten Son to an ignominious death

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for sinners, that they might be redeemed. Here is some more good news of God. Anything else? That all believers in Him, the wide world over, no matter how great their sins may be, should not perish, but should have everlasting life. A third piece of good news of God.

YOU HAVE SINNED.

There is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.—Rom. iii. 23.

YET GOD LOVES YOU.

God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.—Rom. v. 8.

YOU MAY BE SAVED.

For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.—John iii. 17.

NOW.

Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.—2 Cor. vi. 2.

BELIEVE AND LIVE.

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.—John iii. 36.

NEGLECT AND YOU PERISH.

How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?—Heb. ii. 3.

BELIEF IN CHRIST.

TO believe in Christ is to believe that He died for sinners according to the scriptures. (1 Cor. xv. 1—4). But true faith in Christ is not satisfied with the mere general belief of this blessed truth. Taking the ground of a sinner, it says, "Yes, but Jesus died for me—He died for my sins, and through His death I am saved. He was delivered for my offences, and where are they? They are all put away. He was raised again for my justification. Hence, if He be a risen Christ, I am a justified sinner. The only proof, or evidence, that I have of pardon, justification, and peace in the presence of God, is a risen Christ." Faith's question is not, how, or what I feel, but is Christ risen? If He who died for my offences, be indeed risen from the dead, I am perfectly and for ever justified before God. (Rom. iv. 5). No sinner can have settled peace, save on the ground of the DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. He who is seated at God's right hand above the heavens, is the living, eternal witness of the believer's full and everlasting salvation.

There are many other passages that plainly teach the same blessed, soul-saving, peace-giving truth. Indeed, all scripture does. The Holy Spirit never suggests a doubt as to the believer's perfect security. Doubts and fears are the prolific offspring of the wicked insinuations of the beguiling serpent. Faith's

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stronghold is the word of God, in which it securely rests. But should the enemy seek to invade its peaceful repose, it can triumphantly reply, "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. v. 8). The love of God to me while in my sins, as manifested in the death and resurrection of Christ, satisfies my soul, and settles all for me a sinner. God says it—I believe it—who may question it? Listen to God only. Such is the character of true faith. It is most personal. At the same time, while maintaining its individual place and communion, it rejoices in the common joy of all believers, and glories in the words, "we" and "us."

To believe in Christ is to believe in the cleansing power of His blood, according to the testimony of scripture, and for my own need as a guilty sinner. Although this truth is implied in what has been said about His death for us, still, it gives great relief to the conscience to have the plain direct word of scripture on this special point. Such as, "The blood of Jesus Christ, His (God's) Son, cleanseth us from all sin." (I John i. 7). Faith takes its place amongst the "us," and knows for certain that all its sins are cleansed away. Hence the following strong language of unquestioning faith, "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." (Eph. i. 7). A personal application of the blood of Christ is peace to the conscience in the presence of God. Had the Israelite neglected to apply the blood of the lamb to

the lintel and doorposts of his own house in the land of Egypt, he would not have been safe. (Ex. xii.) It was not enough that he had a lamb, or that he had killed it, and had the blood in a basin. No; it had to be applied to his own individual door, or the destroying angel would have entered and killed the firstborn. The blood alone on the lintel and doorposts was the safeguard for all that were in the house. So is it now. There must be a personal application of the blood of Christ to our own need. The mere general belief that Christ loves sinners, that He died for them, and that His blood cleanseth from sin is not enough. There must be a definite, individual application of these blessed realities to our own souls. The language of faith is, "He loves me, He died for me, and His precious blood hath washed all my sins away." But though this is the language of simple faith, it is not, alas, the language of all who believe in Jesus. Many, of whose faith in Christ we can have no doubt, would be afraid to say so much. Through looking to themselves this fearfulness has great power over them, and keeps them from rejoicing in the Lord, and from enjoying His word. Faith never looks to self, but always to the Saviour.

To believe in Christ is to believe that He receives all that come to Him—and, further, true faith in Christ will say, "He has received me." Sometimes the young believer who is not well established in the truth will get into bondage on this point. He thinks that he sees and believes the truth about the love of Jesus to sinners, His dying for them, and the efficacy

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of His precious blood ; but he looks to himself and sees so many things that are contrary to Christ, and he begins to doubt if he has been or can be received. He will say plainly, " I doubt nothing you say about Christ, what I doubt is myself." This is a delusion. It is a snare of Satan. For how can you know by looking to yourself whether you can be received or not ? You must allow Christ to say whether He will receive you or not, and believe what He says without questioning. " Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out " (John vi. 37), are His words of gracious assurance to the coming one. The believing heart is satisfied with this assurance, and finds rest in Jesus. Now its every need is met. All fulness dwells in Jesus. He has received me and fitted me for His presence. Thus faith rejoices in Christ Himself, and in all His wondrous love, His complete salvation, and His coming glory.

In conclusion, allow me to ask, in plain terms, is my reader a believer in Christ Jesus ? Without faith in Christ there is no salvation. The soul that lives and dies in unbelief is lost for ever. Oh ! if thou art yet a stranger to Jesus, and living in unbelief, how awfully dangerous thy state is. Eternal danger is treading on thy heels. Another step and all may be over—and all may be lost for ever. Oh ! then, at once, as thou art, and without a moment's delay, flee to Jesus the Saviour of sinners. Believe in His love—His love for thee a sinner. Believe in His death—His death for thee a sinner. Trust in His precious blood to wash all thy sins away. Rest assured that

He is ready and waiting to receive thee. Oh! then, believe in Jesus—receive the truth into thy heart. Come to Himself. Trust in Him. Oh! with what joy and delight He welcomes home the poor lost sinner whom He loves—the one for whom He bled and died—the one whom He has besought many times by His gospel to return—the one whom the Father's hand of love has guided to His everlasting embrace, that He might “breathe on him,” quicken his dead soul, fill and overflow it with life and love divine. “Come unto me,” are His own words, “all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” And “whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ,” says Paul, “for it is the power of God unto salvation to EVERY ONE THAT BELIEVETH.” Matt. xi. 28; Rev. xxii. 17; Rom. i. 16.

LINES FOUND IN AN INFIDEL'S BIBLE.

The proudest heart that ever beat
 Has been subdued in me;
 The wildest will that rose to scorn Thy friends, to
 aid Thy foes,
 Is quelled, my God, by Thee:
 Thy will and not my will be done;
 I would be ever Thine;
 To sing Thy praise, incarnate Word, my Saviour,
 Christ, my God, my Lord,
 Thy cross shall be my sign.

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