

THE SOWER.

SIN, LOVE, FAITH.

WHAT IS SIN? 'Tis the bold defiance
Of the God who gave us breath ;
Daring heart and hand alliance
With His foe in deeds of death ;
'Tis the heart in alienation,
With its streams of hate and gall ;
BUT REJECTING GOD'S SALVATION
IS THE CROWNING SIN OF ALL.

(1 John iii. 8. John xv. 22-24.)

WHAT IS LOVE? See love's expression
In the Son, the sent of God,—
For our guilt and deep transgression
Shedding His atoning blood,
To redeem from condemnation
Those whose lot was death and hell,
And to GIVE, with full salvation,
ENDLESS LIFE WITH HIM TO DWELL.

(1 John iv. 10.)

WHAT'S BELIEVING ? 'Tis submission
To the God of love and grace ;
'Tis to own our true condition,
And TO TAKE THE SINNER'S PLACE ;
'Tis to bow the soul before Him,
And to LOOK TO CHRIST, His Son ;
'Tis to worship and adore Him,
OWNING THUS WHAT GRACE HATH DONE.

(Rom. x. 8-17.)

LIGHT AND LOVE.

ISAIAH VI.

THE throne was "high and lifted up." The train of Him who sat upon it, "filled the temple." The seraphim stood above it. Each had "six wings." "With twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly." The holiness and the glory of Him who sat upon the throne, occupied these seraphim. "One cried to another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke." Solemn and impressive scene for human eyes to behold, yet the eyes of the prophet saw this scene of holy and glorious majesty, and his ears heard that solemn cry of the seraphim. Solemn, too, was the effect in the conscience of that man of God. Prophet as he was, his conscience was searched through and through, and he was made to feel his own vileness, and the vileness of a sinful nation with which he was identified, in the light of that glorious presence.

"WOE IS ME! FOR I AM UNDONE."

was the cry of his poor distressed soul as he stood manifested in the presence of infinite holiness. "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." His own state, and that of the people, were laid bare in the light—a state utterly hopeless, as far as human resources were concerned.

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And what was it that made him realize this hopeless condition? His condition was not really different from what it was before. He had been a God fearing man, and had prophesied against the wickedness of the people, as the previous chapters show, and yet no such words as these had passed his lips before. His cry now is, "Woe is me!" Why had he never uttered such a cry of distress? His own mouth furnishes the answer in these words, "FOR MINE EYES HAVE SEEN THE KING, THE LORD OF HOSTS." Here, then, is the secret. The light was let in on his state. He was in the very presence of Jehovah, and manifested in the light of His presence. He could say, what he never could have said before, "Mine eyes have seen the King;" and the effect was to make him feel his utter unfitness for that holy presence.

So, too, had it been with another of more ancient day--one of whom the Lord said, "There is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil." This remarkable man, when fully tested, cursed the day in which he was born, and in justifying himself condemned God, yet when brought into God's presence, he had to say, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (Job. i. 8; xlii. 5, 6).

Solemn indeed, it is, when God thus takes us in hand, in order to show us what we are in His presence. "God is light," and the light searches us.

It is light which admits of no admixture of evil—the absolute purity of His holy nature, which necessarily judges evil. Hence the solemnity of being searched in the presence of His holiness.

But if we are thus searched it is for blessing, and blessing such as one who knows not God has no conception of. No sooner had the prophet uttered his cry of “Woe is me,” than one of the seraphim who had just proclaimed the holiness of Him who sat on the throne, flew to him with a live coal from the altar, with which he touched his mouth, saying, “LO, THIS HATH TOUCHED THY LIPS, AND THINE INIQUITY IS TAKEN AWAY, AND THY SIN PURGED.”

What had the prophet now to fear? He was in the same presence still, and in the same light, but he was consciously cleansed; his sin was gone. The glory of that light was no less bright; but it now discovered no sin, for sin had been removed according to the requirement of infinite holiness. The altar had furnished the remedy that was needed to set his conscience at rest and peace in the presence of God. That altar speaks to us of Christ and His infinitely precious sacrifice for sin on the cross. “God is light,” and in His presence the sinner is searched. But, “God is love” too, and in His love, He has furnished a remedy for the need He makes manifest. Light reveals the need; love provides for it. The stroke which revealed God’s awful hatred of sin, when His holy One was smitten on the cross, put sin away. The living coal from the altar was the witness of what the judgment of God had

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done as to sin, and so, when we are now brought into His presence, it is to find that, vile as we are, we are in the presence of One who has already judged our sin, and put it away in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, His Son. Oh! what peace fills the soul of one who, in that presence, knows his own vileness, yet knows while there, that all his sin has been put away, and that the infinitely holy One, in whose presence he is, has put it away according to His own requirement. Christ has suffered for our sins, the Just for the unjust, and is now risen and on the throne. Can the brightness of light, never seen by mortal eye, discover any sin in Christ? Impossible. Nor can sin be imputed to those who are *in* Him. "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more," is the word of Him who has undertaken the settlement of the whole question, in His own way, and for His own glory.

So completely was the prophet's fear taken away, that, when he "heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" he immediately answered,

"HERE AM I; SEND ME."

He had learned to know the Lord as One whose holiness is inflexible, and who must judge sin; but who judges it to put it away, in order that He may bless His people according to righteousness and holiness. The prophet was sent forth with a message of judgment, but it was judgment to be followed by blessing in sovereign grace and mercy. The fifty-third chapter gives us the ground of this

blessing, namely, the bruising of the Messiah, on whom were laid the iniquities of His people. And this is the only ground of eternal blessing for man. But it is divinely sufficient, free to all, and available by faith.

And now, dear reader, may we ask, are you on that ground? or are you indifferent and careless, proposing to pursue your own way of sin and folly, and to brave the day when you must render an account to that "holy, holy, holy" One? Stop, and think for a moment. If the seraphim, those pure and holy beings, whose only desire is the will and glory of their Creator, veil their faces, and cover their feet in the presence of His glory, how will you be able to stand in that holy presence, in all your guilt and sins,—sins, many of which you would shrink to have disclosed, even in the presence of your sinful fellow-mortals? And if that prophet of God cried out "Woe is me," at the voice of the seraphim, and the sight of the King in His glorious holiness, how do you think it will fare with you, if you despise the mercy that flows through the sacrifice which infinite love has made? Those who accept the proffered mercy, in this day of grace, obtain mercy and forgiveness; but what of those who despise the offer! There is a day coming, solemn, and awful, and terrible, beyond the power of words to describe, when vast multitudes of such as now despise the glad tidings of God, in all their sins and shame, unsheltered and without hope of mercy, will stand before that throne of unsullied light, when heaven

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and earth will flee away, and be dissolved, and melt in the fire of God's judgment—guilty rebels, held there by omnipotent power, and forced to give an account of the deeds done in the body. (2 Pet. iii. 10, 12; Rev. xx. 11-15.) Oh! unsaved soul would you escape that day of awful retribution? Let the light, then, search you now, and in the presence of God, own yourself a lost and helpless sinner, and you will receive the pardon and cleansing He is so ready to bestow. He who is to sit upon that "great white throne" has said: "He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, *and shall not come into judgment*, but is passed from death unto life. (John v. 24.)

THE BLOOD, THE MERITORIOUS GROUND OF OUR JUSTIFICATION. "But God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now *justified by His blood*, we shall be saved from wrath through him." (Romans v. 8, 9.)

THROUGH IT WE HAVE REDEMPTION. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved. In whom *we have redemption through His blood*, the forgiveness of sins; according to the riches of His grace." (Ephesians i. 5-7; Colossians i. 14.)

NOT YET.

“HE *has'nt* tum yet.”

The words came from a little fair haired lassie of six years of age. It was an eager little face, with the blue eyes surrounded by golden curls—and the eyes looked very bright just then, for the voice had something of doubt in it, as the words were uttered. Bright little soul! always singing, although the tiny limbs were paralyzed for life, and, she could only walk a few steps—and those with difficulty—holding on to some strong hand. About a week before, she had heard for the first time of the Lord's coming.

So new, so beautiful, so strange, it seemed to her, that often during the day she would stop in some play, or meal, to ask “Tould He tum *now*?” But this evening evidently doubts had entered into the ardent little spirit.

“No, He has not come yet,” was the answer, “but He will come. He does not tell us *when* He is coming, He only tells us to watch for Him, because He may come at any time.”

“Seems He's telling me to watch *all the time*,” returned the little one earnestly.

“Not come yet,” and the child was disappointed—“Not come yet,” and she had watched for Him for a whole week—“Not come yet,” and she must soon go back to her London home and its dark surroundings, although she was full of joy at the prospect of telling Willie, her only brother, that He was coming—“Not come yet,” dear reader, and it is more than

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eighteen hundred years since the promise was given—but “He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.” He will not tarry for the unbelief of the world, or the sleeping hearts of His own, or the power of Satan spread abroad—“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye we shall be changed.” “We,” those who know Him and love Him—those born of the Holy Spirit, redeemed by His blood, made members of His body, and united to Him in the glory. That “same Jesus” who went up in the clouds in the act of blessing His disciples after eating with them in His resurrection body, shall so come in like manner.” They did not doubt the angel’s word, so returned to Jerusalem with great joy, worshiping and praising. The little one could not understand the resurrection. How was she, crippled and unable to walk, to have a glorious body like His own? “Will he tut my legs off?” she asked

Many of us cannot understand the resurrection, but we can *believe it*. We cannot understand how the seedling becomes the flower, or the acorn the tree, but we see it, and *know* the transformation is actual. It is far more wonderful, that “in the twinkling of an eye,” this body shall be changed into one like unto His own, without passing through decay and death. But Christ is the first fruits of the resurrection, and He tarried forty days to make their hearts sure, before He ascended. As surely as He is risen so surely will you and I rise again, but alas! if you are not His, your resurrection body will only be

given you to endure the eternal misery which Satan must endure, and which he, in hatred, lures you to suffer with him.

“He has not come yet,” and the day of grace is still yours; the call of love still resounding, “Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out—” but if He came to-day, or comes to-morrow, and you have not hidden yourself under the shelter of His precious blood, you will be left in the world when the holy Spirit will no more restrain Satan and his tools; no more plead with sinners; no more enable hearts to “see Jesus.” And if you die unsaved, you will not rise to meet Him in the air, and so be “forever with the Lord.” Your body will lie untouched until the resurrection of the unsaved, and then only rise to receive judgment. “Depart from me I never knew you,” and so enter the place prepared for the devil and his angels. “Seems He’s telling me to watch all the time,” said the child. The wondrous glad hope of the Christian’s heart; the ray of gold that gilds every cloud of sorrow, and separation, and death. Only, “until He come,” do we part from our dear ones, who pass over unto the other side, and that, “Until” may be “To-day,” “To-morrow.” “Those that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.” Only, “until He come,” we suffer, serve, and strive—but at any moment we may see His glorious face, and hear His voice and so be with Him *for ever*. But for those that know Him not, it means the door shut upon everlasting happiness; the Saviour changed into a judge; the mercy into wrath; the glory of Heaven lost *for ever*. Oh! dear

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reader, *if* you know Him, He is telling you "to watch all the time," making it the radiant hope to brighten your heart, and strengthen your footsteps. If you do *not*, He is calling while your eye is on this page, longing to gather you before the storm breaks. Not yet for you the blackness, and the cry of "Lost, lost." Not yet the face of Christ turned from you—will you not accept Him and His finished work *now*, and rejoice in the hope of the glory which shall be revealed.

There is a door that stands ajar,
 And through its portals gleaming,
 A radiance from the cross afar
 The Saviour's love revealing—
 Oh! depth of mercy can it be
 That gate is left ajar for me,
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THE BLOOD MAKES ATONEMENT FOR THE SOUL.
 "For the life of the flesh is in the blood:
 and *I have given it to you* upon the altar,
 to make an atonement for your souls: for it is *the blood*
 that maketh *an atonement* for the soul."
 (Leviticus xvii. 11.)

Let us specially note that God, blessed be His holy name, has graciously *given* us the blood of His own beloved Son to make an atonement for our guilty souls, so that, instead of our sins being before Him, He has that precious blood which has put them all away for ever. "Hallelujah!"

"A SOLEMN WARNING."

SOME time ago in a small town in western Ontario, where I was holding gospel meetings, a young man became very much concerned about his soul. While staying at his house one night, I was endeavoring to impress upon him his great need of a Saviour, and of the importance of believing on Him at once, showing him from the "word of God" that the present moment was all he could call his own. I referred him to such scriptures as these, "Behold NOW is the accepted time, behold NOW is the day of salvation," 2 Cor. vi. 2.; and, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth," Prov. xxvii. 1. Assuring him too that in a "little while" Christ would come and take His people away, and then the door of mercy would be closed, and the last opportunity of being saved gone for all who would not believe. I sought to impress upon him as I would upon you, dear reader, the tremendous risk he was running, in neglecting the salvation of God so freely offered. He was one like many others who had lived in sin, and in the vain hope of finding in this christless scene something that would satisfy the cravings of the soul. He found, as Solomon tells us, after he had put the world to a most thorough test, that "all is vanity and vexation of spirit." Everything here had now lost its charm for him. The saloon, the ball, the theatre, had no longer any attraction for him. He longed for pleasures that would endure. He set to work to

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improve himself, to make himself more fit to come to God, as, alas, many thousands are doing to-day.

No effort of your own, dear reader, will meet your case as a helpless sinner before God. All you do as an unconverted person is done with a selfish motive and not for the glory of Christ. In the salvation of sinners God will have His Son glorified, so the work must be all his own from first to last. How do you expect God to approve of anything you do, or of anything you bring, when self in some shape or form is at the bottom of it all? If this is what you are doing, my dear friend, let me beg of you to take heed in time, for this is one of Satan's most successful ways of deceiving people. Under the cloak of religious works thousands are being hurried into hopeless ruin. All this, and more, I endeavored to impress upon my friend until the clock reached the midnight hour, and then bade him good-night, saying, "You have no time to lose Robert, Christ Jesus may come to-night, and if He finds you still unprepared, you will be forever beyond the reach of mercy." "NOW is the accepted time, NOW is the day of salvation." Just then a knock at the door was heard, and I went down and opened it, and a man said, "Will you give a child of God a night's lodging?" He was assured of a welcome, and we were soon in conversation about the coming of Christ for His people. Robert slept in the next room, and as the partition between us was not plastered, he could hear every word we said. At last everything was

quiet and the thought came to Robert's mind with great force, "The Lord has come, and I am left." He arose, and sat upon his bed, and wept. In great distress of mind he started down stairs to see if father and mother were gone, but when he reached the first step he could go no farther, but sat down in despair saying, "There is no hope for me now, I am lost and lost forever. O! God is it possible there is no mercy left for me." Who can describe his feelings as he sat upon that stairway long past the midnight hour. It makes one think of the awful awakening it will be for this poor world, when Christ comes and quietly takes away His people, and closes the door of mercy against every rejector, and every neglecter, of His "great salvation." Then their earnest pleading will be, "Lord, Lord, open to us;" only to be met with that soul-agonizing response; "I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded: But ye have set at nought all my council, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh: Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me." Prov. i. 24-28. Dear reader, let me out of love, put the following question and ask you to answer it in the presence of God. "If Jesus Christ were to come to-day and raise the dead saints, and change the living saints, and in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, have them with Himself, would you be taken or left?

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Just then Robert heard a sound in our room that told him we were still there, so that he knew that the day of grace was not yet ended, nor the door of mercy closed. But sad to say this warning, solemn as it was, seemed to leave no lasting impression. Friend, you have had many warnings. Have you heeded them? You may think it strange that Robert paid no heed to such a voice from God. But what about yourself. Have you taken to heart the many warnings He has sent you. Are you prepared to meet Christ if He were to come to-day? "Behold NOW is the accepted time, behold NOW is the day of salvation."

THE BLOOD FORMS THE BASIS OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD TO THE WORLD, AND OF ITS APPLICATION TO THE BELIEVER "Being justified *freely* by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth *a propitiation* through faith in *His blood*, to declare *His righteousness* for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. To declare at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Romans iii. 24-26.)

How precious is this for the poor guilty sin-burdened soul! God can righteously forgive us all our sins, and count us perfectly righteous, if we simply believe in Jesus. Such is the efficacy of the blood of Christ! Such the virtue of His peerless name! May we not again exclaim, "Hallelujah!"

THEREFORE THEY SAY UNTO GOD, DEPART FROM US; FOR WE DESIRE NOT THE KNOWLEDGE OF THY WAYS."

Job. xxi. 14.

I MUST have to do with God. And here is the solemnity of it. If I do not meet God now about the Saviour, I shall have to meet Him about my sins, and if I despise meeting the Saviour about my sins, meet God I must in my sins—to be lost for ever. You put a sort of honor upon an enemy by paying attention to him; but you cannot more deeply insult a friend than by paying no heed nor notice. So it is as to indifference to Christ. Perhaps we try to settle accounts with God once or twice a day—what a wrong to God, and a wrong to my soul!

If I have sins upon me,—and in that condition we all are, and have been, naturally—what is to be done? It is easy to say what we have been doing—walking “according to the course of this world.” This is not merely gross things. Supposing that people were all as courteous and kind as possible—that there was no such things as jails, and judges, nor convicts punished; supposing that men could be reasoned out of their wickedness; what would still be the condition of men? “That which is born of the flesh is flesh.” Man, as such, never can see the kingdom of God.
