

THE SOWER.

THE MAN IN THE GLORY.

"*THE MAN CHRIST JESUS.*"—1 Tim. ii. 5.

I WAKE in the morning with thoughts of His
love—
Who is living for me in the glory above,
In glad hope expecting He'll call me away,
And that keeps me bright for the rest of the day;
But the moments speed forward, and on comes the noon,
Yet still I am singing, "He'll come very soon;"
And thus I am watching from morning to night,
And pluming my wings to be ready for flight.
There's a Man in the glory I know very well,
I have known Him for years, and His goodness can tell;
One day in His mercy He knocked at my door,
And, seeking admission, knocked many times o'er.
But when I went to Him, and stood face to face,
And listened awhile to His story of grace,
How He suffered for sinners and put away sin,
I heartily, thankfully welcomed Him in.
We have lived on together a number of years,
And that's why I neither have doubtings nor fears,
For my sins are all hid in the depths of the sea,
They were cast away there by the Man on the tree.
I am often surprised why the lip should be curled,
When I speak of my Lord to the man of the world,
And notice with sorrow his look of disdain,
When I tell him that Jesus is coming again,
He seems so content with his houses and gold,
While despising the ark, like the people of old,

And yet at His coming I'm sure he would flee,
 Like THE MAN IN THE GARDEN, who ate of the tree.
 I cannot but think it is foolish of souls,
 To put all their money in "bags that have holes,"
 To find, in the day that is coming apace,
 How lightly they valued the "riches of grace."
 As fond as I am of His work in the field,
 I would let go the plough I would lay down the
 shield,

The weapons of service I would put on the shelf,
 And the sword in its scabbard, to be with Himself.
 But I'll work on with pleasure, while keeping my eyes,
 On the end of the field, where standeth the prize,
 I would work for His glory, that when we shall meet,
 I may have a large sheaf to lay down at His feet ;
 That He, too, with pleasure, His fruit may review—
 IS THE MAN IN THE GLORY a stranger to you ?
 A stranger to Jesus ? what ! do you not know
 He is washing poor sinners much whiter than snow ?
 Have you lived in the land where the Bible's unknown
 That you don't know the Man who is now on the
 throne ?

Ah, did you but know of His beauty and power,
 You would not be a stranger another half hour.
 I have known Him so long that I'm able to say,
 The very worst sinner He'll not turn away.
 The question of sin I adoringly see,
 The MAN IN THE GLORY has settled for me !
 And as to my footsteps, whatever the scene,
 The MAN IN THE GLORY is keeping me clean ;
 And therefore I'm singing, from morning to night,
 The Man in the glory is all my delight.

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THAT WORD WAS "ETERNITY."

ABOUT twenty years ago I was a young boy in my father's house. I was very happy there, for my parents loved their children, and did all they could for their welfare and happiness. That number of years has passed since God spoke to me in the middle of the night, and I can never forget it.

I slept with my brother in the attic, and one dark night—whether asleep or awake I do not know—I saw a word written upon the wall at the foot of my bed; and that word was "*Eternity*." I remember well how I hid my head under the bed clothes, and tried to go to sleep again; but, although I closed my eyes, and tried to persuade myself that it was an illusion, I could not get rid of the solemn question which God Himself had presented to my soul, "Where will you spend eternity?"

It was that indeed that troubled me. I was wholly given up to the world. Young, and in good health; having agreeable companions, I found life very pleasant. However, a passage in the word of God came again and again to my mind, "But know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment" (Eccl. xi. 9). It was this "but" which filled me with anxiety. A dreadful abyss separated me from God.

How senseless people are! They run towards eternity with their eyes closed, blinded by the devil, who leads them at his will. Yes, those who vaunt

themselves of their liberty are but slaves of Satan. Such was my case; I was a fool, a slave of Satan, when this "but" awakened me from the sleep of death, and to my profound horror, I saw that every step brought me nearer to the moment when I would have to appear in the judgment.

Oh! what efforts I made to put this thought away from me. Night after night the word "*Eternity*" came before me. Day after day I closed my ears. At one time I tried to persuade myself that eternity would have an end; and when the devil had put this lie in my heart I felt that I could endure thousands of years of torment rather than the presence of God; the thought of whom was dreadful to me. But when I opened my Bible, the word of God was too much for me. I read: "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever;" and, "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire;" and again, "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever;" and elsewhere, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

The light seemed so bright that I could not bear it. "Oh! why was I born," I cried in the depth of my heart. But God, "who is rich in mercy," willed my salvation in spite of myself. He allowed me to follow my own way until I could go no farther; then my flesh and my heart failed, I cried out in an agony of my soul: "O God, be merciful to me a sinner!"

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It was in the same room where He had placed the word "eternity" before me, that God spoke to my troubled conscience and said to me by His word: "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth from all sin." What peace then overspread my soul. Peace with God! Peace by our Lord Jesus Christ. Note the words. It is not a peace to be made, it is a peace already made, "by the blood of the cross," by the precious blood of Christ. It was not a peace I had to make myself, but a peace made for me by Him who has taken my place under the just judgment of God; a peace with God, who is the Judge of all. I could now think without fear of the righteousness of God, for all His claims upon me as a sinner had been satisfied by Christ, my divine substitute.

Eternity is not a vain word, it is a reality. We live, and because we have life we belong to eternity. From our entrance into the world, we live for eternity. Solemn thought! Nothing can stop the course of its existence. After the short duration of terrestrial life, another mode of existence follows, but it is *you* it is *me*, it is everyone who will live again on the other side of the tomb. And what will it be for you, for me, this life beyond the earth? There are only two alternatives, happy or miserable. It will either be inexpressible happiness in the presence of God, or the gnawing of the never-dying worm in outer darkness, and inextinguishable fire, far from God. And it is in the short duration of our life here below that our eternal destiny is decided.

Does that not lay hold of you? Eternity! Eternity! As sinners, "The wrath of God abideth upon us," we deserve His righteous judgment, and if we leave this life under His wrath, under His righteous judgment, it is for ever; "The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever;" the lot of those who come under judgment is "the lake of fire and brimstone." But as we have heard, God is rich in mercy; He willeth not the death of the sinner, and in His great love He has given His only Son, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life. Life eternal instead of eternal condemnation, what grace!

Christ has given His life; Christ has come under the judgment of God against sin, in order that he who believes in Him may be justified from all sin. He has suffered for sin, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God, and to be without fear in His presence. The believer has peace with God, the word "eternity" does not alarm him, for he knows he shall pass it in the presence of God, where he shall drink of the river of the delight of His love.

Reader, what sentiment does the word "eternity" create in your soul? Is it joy or fear? Can you regard this inevitable future with a holy and peaceable assurance, or do you turn away your eyes as from a bright light which hurts them? The question, however, must be met, do not defer the moment of doing it:

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THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM.

IT is a city whose enduring joys have long been the end to which the look of faith has been directed; joys which have sustained the hope of the faithful who have suffered upon the earth; it will soon be the place of their eternal rest. Our father Abraham waited for it; the apostle Paul spoke of it; whilst it has been given to John, the beloved disciple of Jesus, to describe its glories for the encouragement of saints.

It differs from every other city we have ever heard of. Its name is indeed Jerusalem; leading to the thought of the city of David and Solomon; but the glory promised to their city, and which is the subject of so many prophecies for the future, gives but a faint idea of that wonderful city which God has prepared for His own.

The cities of this world are built by men, many of them bearing the name of the builder who founded them; but the one of which we speak has God for its architect and builder, and that is why it is called "the city of the living God" (Heb. xii, 22). Its wall is of jasper, and its foundations are ornamented with all manner of precious stones. As to its gates; instead of being of wood or iron; each is a single pearl. There are twelve; and twelve angels guard the entrances. The great cities of this world have fine streets, which are cleaned every day; but the streets of that city are never soiled; they are of "pure gold, as it were transparent glass." The sun lightens terrestrial cities by day, and artificial lights are prepared for the night. At times too they close

the gates ; but the heavenly city has no need of the sun nor the moon to lighten it, nor are there any lamps needed. "The gates of it shall not be shut at all by day," and "there shall be no night there." "For the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

However numerous the inhabitants of the greatest cities of this world may be ; however famous the wisdom of the citizens ; human governments, honorable as those may be who exercise them, cannot last, for all are subject to death. Furthermore, they speak different languages, and in many cases the inhabitants of one city cannot understand the speech of those of another. There are also those who are shut up in prisons on account of their misdeeds. But those who dwell in the city of God are innumerable, and all are saints. They are kings and priests. Their bodies are fashioned like the glorious body of the Lord Jesus (Phil. iii, 21). They have also white robes, and crowns of gold. They all speak the same heavenly language. The glory and honor of the nations are brought unto it ; "And there shall in no wise enter into it, anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie : but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

Rivers of water run through many of the cities of the earth ; and they are ornamented with beautiful avenues of trees ; which however do not bear fruit, and which for the most part, shed their leaves in the winter. But of the heavenly city, we read that there is "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

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In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month ; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." None of the cities of the earth can shelter from the effects of sin ; such as sickness, tears, suffering, death ; but no pain exists in the heavenly city. The apostle sees it coming down out of heaven from God prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Eternal life, joy, blessing, will be the happy part of all those who are found there ; all tears shall be wiped from their eyes, and God Himself will be with them, their God.

The treasures of the earth are not lasting. "The world passeth away and the lust thereof" and in fact will be burned up (II Peter, iii, 7) ; but the city we speak of is permanent ; and all who enter therein do the will of God ; they dwell there eternally (I. John, ii, 17).

How marvellous is the description of the heavenly city ! It has no doubt been given us to stimulate our hearts, to nourish them in hope ; and to remind us that it is time for us to awake out of sleep, "for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand" (Rom. xiii, 11-12). Faith is about to give place to sight ; and we shall soon be forever with the Lord. Let us then seek more the things which are above, that our hearts may not be seduced by the vain pleasures of the earth. The trials of the pilgrimage will soon be past.

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob confessed that they

were strangers and foreigners upon earth. They thus became the example, for character, of those who know God here below, and who prefer to suffer rather than to deny their faith. They thought of the city God has prepared for them ; for He is not ashamed of them, nor to be called their God. The scripture is verified as to them : " For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come " (Heb. xi, 16 ; xiii, 14). How often we forget these truths, but God is good to remind us of them, and to repeat them for us : " Arise ye, and depart ; for this is not your rest : because it is polluted " (Micah ii, 10).

Yes, soon we shall have reached this heavenly city where we shall no longer need the armour to stand against the wiles of the devil (Eph. vi, 11). Instead of combats and suffering, there will be eternal rest ; unspeakable joy.

The course will be ended ; old things will have passed away, all things will be new. We shall not be strangers in the house of our God, where our eternal dwelling will be. There will be no more death. Instead of heart-rending separations as these down here, we shall have perfect union ; complete accord ; the never ending presence of all in light. Praise will be the occupation of all hearts. Above all will be the inexpressible joy of being forever with the Lord in His Father's house, who is known now also as being our Father because of all that Jesus has suffered for us.

May we be kept in the energy of faith, waiting with patience what God has reserved for us.

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HELL.

I WAS having my hair cut recently, when I spoke to the operator about his soul.

"I suppose," said he, "you believe in hell."

I replied that I did.

"Well," said he, "I do not. I do not believe there is a place of eternal torment, where people are punished forever because they have not come up to a certain standard ; besides, the word hell in scripture always means the grave and nothing else."

"No," I said, "you are mistaken. It should in many places have been translated the grave, but certainly not always."

"Do you think," said he, "that if my child did a wrong act I could torment him for ever for it?" Then, stepping back a couple of paces and waving his shears in the air, he continued, in a loud and excited tone, "Do you think God could put one of His children into hell-fire for ever and ever?"

"No," I replied, "I am very sure He would not, and if you are one of His children you are perfectly safe from such a fate, but if you are not, you have no claim whatever upon Him, and if you go to meet Him as a child of the devil, you can expect no mercy and you will receive none."

This was a new thought for the barber, and he said no more. Possibly the Lord may use the word to arouse him from his false confidence, and to lead him to turn from his own thoughts and his own conclu-

sions to the revelation God has given us of His purposes and counsels.

Many speak learnedly of Sheol and Hades, and simple souls are confounded by words which they do not understand; but the former is the Hebrew, and the latter the Greek word which mean, generally, the unseen state or world, and this may mean only the grave, and it may mean much more, as, for instance in Luke xvi 23, we read, "And in Hades he lift up his eyes, being in torments." This was not the grave; nor was it a place of torment that was spoken of as to the blessed Lord, when it is said in the sixteenth Psalm, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol," as preachers have sometimes thought, and made sermons about.

But, that there is a place of future punishment, where the wicked will receive the due reward of their deeds; where the torment and agony are intense; for there is "weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth;" and where it is unending; scripture is definite and positive.

The word which more especially speaks of future punishment, is the Greek word Gehenna; originally, in the Hebrew, the name of a person who gave his name to a valley on the north side of Jerusalem where idolatrous rites were practiced, and in one part of which, was the image of Moloch, the god of the Ammonites, to whom children were offered in sacrifice by burning; but Josiah overthrew this idolatry, and defiled the valley by the bones of the idolatrous priests; thenceforth it was the place where refuse

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was cast from the city, and the combustible part burned; while carcasses of dead animals, being eaten of worms, were always to be found there, and thus it became a figure of hell as the place of unquenchable fire and undying worm, and so used by the Lord in Mark ix. 48. That part of the valley of the sons of Hinnom in which was the image of Moloch, was called Tophet; and Isaiah xxx. 33, refers to this, as the figure of a place of more direful judgment, specially prepared for "the king," and more particularly referred to in Rev. xix. 20, where the false prophet at last has royal power, subject, however, to the Emperor, who confers it upon him; and both these are cast alive into the lake of fire, burning with brimstone; and this Tophet; this place of awful judgment; is a part of Gehenna, and Gehenna is in Hades.

In II. Peter ii. 4, another word is used. God cast the angels that sinned down to Tartarus; clearly a place of judgment, and so understood by heathen writers, with whom the word originated; so that whatever word may be used, whether Gehenna, or Tophet, or Tartarus; or whether it be a statement of the pains and penalties endured there; there is no truth in the word of God more positively stated, than that a punishment after death awaits those who in this life have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

Awful as the judgment of God is upon the wicked; and dreadful as the place to which they are consigned; that judgment is interminable, and the place is their portion eternally. "The smoke of their torment

ascendeth up forever and ever;" and this is not a relative term; it is not merely during the continuance of earthly things; but is the expression used in Heb. i. 8, "Thy throne O God is for ever and ever."

There are those who deny that there is any future punishment; others who object to its continuance; and others again who maintain that the wicked dead cease to exist, body, soul and spirit, after death; but either of these views detract from the value of the atonement; indeed make the work of the cross unnecessary in a sense; for there is no future judgment to be preserved from.

Besides these, there are others who cast themselves, as they say, on the love and mercy of God—God is love; that is unquestionable; He has given His Son up to death for sinners, but He is also holy, and cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance or approbation. The one who sins, is a sinner; and the sin must be atoned for, either through the substitutionary work of another, or by the evil-doer meeting the judgment in person. God is merciful; even the sinner acknowledges that, and claims the benefit of it; but the throne of judgment, set up at last, is great; for its judgments are irrevocable; and it is white, for it is perfect righteousness. The day of mercy, as now known, will have passed away forever. Now if these things are true, and if the reader of these pages is on a downward course whose end is hell, reflect a moment; go no further: "Let no man deceive you."

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THE MASTER'S LETTER.

“JAMES, I wish you to come and see me this evening at six o'clock, when you have finished your work.”

Underneath this was his employer's signature.

At the hour indicated the young man came as directed. When he came into the office and had waited several minutes, his master raised his head from his work, and said :

“Do you wish to see me James?”

Somewhat surprised at this reception, James presented the note he had received.

“Ah! I see, you have got my letter—you thought I wanted you, and you came at once.”

“Surely sir, I could not do otherwise.”

“It is well James; you were right in coming. But wait, here is another letter for you. Will you also respond at once to this invitation?”

At the same time his master handed him a paper upon which he had written some lines. James took the paper and read :

“*Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*”

No sooner had the young man read the lines than his lips began to tremble, and his eyes to fill with tears. Drawing from his pocket his large red handkerchief, he covered his face with it, and held it there, not knowing what to do. At length he said, “Have I only to believe these words in the same way that I believe your letter?”

“Yes, just the same,” was the answer; and that evening James believed the Saviour’s gracious invitation; he came to Him and found rest and peace for his soul. He saw that he could trust the word of Him who said: “Whosoever cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.” If we believe what an honourable man, worthy of our confidence says; how much more reason have we for believing Him who is truth.

“If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; and this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son” (I. John v, 9-11.)

Dear reader, will you not like James, believe in the invitation of the Lord Jesus, which is to you also; and come to Him, receive the testimony of God, and enter into possession of life eternal.

GOD is love; and His love has reached even to this sin-ruined world. Though men despised and hated Him, He loved them. So in the fulness of time God sent His only begotten Son into the world; and it is a saying worthy of all acceptance, that HE CAME TO SAVE SINNERS; not to condemn but to save.

He took sin upon Himself, and bore the sentence of death pronounced against it. He was made a curse for us, to redeem us from the curse of the law.

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