

THE SOWER.

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"SEEKING THE LOST."
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"For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke xix. 10.)

SWEETER, O Lord, than rest to Thee,
While seated by the well,
Was the blest work that led Thee there,
Of grace and peace to tell.
One thoughtless heart that never knew
The pulse of life before,
There learned to love, was taught to sigh
For earthly joys no more.
Friend of the lost, O Lord, in Thee
Samaria's daughter there
Found One whom love had drawn to earth
Her weight of guilt to bear.
Fair witness of thy saving grace
In her O Lord, we see;
The wandering soul by love subdued,
The sinner drawn to Thee.
Through all that sweet and blessed scene,
Dear Saviour, by the well,
More than enough the trembler finds,
Her guilty fears to quell.
There, in the blest repose of faith,
The soul delights to see
Not only One who fully loves,
But *love itself* in Thee.

Not One alone who feels for all,
 But knows the wondrous art
 Of meeting all the sympathies
 Of every aching heart.

I WAS finishing some work on Saturday night when a man came in, he was the husband of a woman whose mother was a fortune teller. The poor old woman was dying, she had laid about a week apparently unconscious and they thought she could neither see nor hear. They came for me, and after looking to the Lord to guide I and a brother went; we knelt by her side, and I repeated that beautiful hymn, "There is a fountain filled with blood
 Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
 And sinners plunged beneath that flood, lose all their guilty stains.
 The dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day."

I stopped for a moment, and she spoke, to the surprise of all, repeating the last two lines. "And there may I though vile as he, wash all my sins away."

She said no more, but the agony and terror were gone; a settled peace had taken possession of her heart; she lay three days perfectly at rest, and then fell asleep, cannot we say in Jesus?

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FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

THE MESSAGE TO THE GENTILES.

READER, are you a Gentile? Do you belong to one of the nations outside of Israel, God's ancient people? Then let me beg you to read the tenth chapter of Acts, and there see how God has visited the Gentiles. A particular case is given, but, we might say, a *pattern* case. It was Cornelius, an officer in the Roman army, and his house, but not confined to him and them, for the door was open to all.

Cornelius was already a God-fearing man, and gave evidence of this in his life, but as yet he knew nothing of salvation as an accomplished fact, or of forgiveness of sins, absolute and eternal. He had already been turned to the living and true God, but knew not what was in His heart for a poor sinner. And now God visited him, and, Oh! so graciously. Cornelius was praying in his house at the ninth hour, having been fasting before, and as he prayed an angel of God stood before him, a heavenly messenger (Acts x. 3-30). But angels are not themselves preachers of the glad tidings. This is reserved for sinners saved by grace, whose hearts are aglow with the love of Christ who has saved them from judgment, and wrath, and hell, to give them a place of eternal glory and blessedness with Himself on high. So the

most that this angel could do was to let Cornelius know that God had thought of him, and tell him where to go to hear good news from God. He must send for Peter who would tell him words whereby he and all his house should be saved (Acts xi. 14). Surely this was something worth while. To be saved with all his house was no small matter. What could be of greater importance to a man who knew he must have to do with the living God? Do you, reader, know of anything more important? And will you, if you have not already, give the matter the same consideration as did Cornelius? At once he despatched messengers to Peter, who was to bring to him the wonderful words.

While these messengers were on the way, the Lord was also preparing Peter for this new and important work. Jewish prejudice against the Gentiles had to be overcome in Peter as well as others, and so the Lord spoke to Peter in a vision, while he was in a trance. Through this vision Peter learned that God is no respecter of persons; but in every station "he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him" (Acts x. 10-16, 34, 35). This made no difference between a Jew and a Gentile. The *fear of God* as a moral basis in the soul, resulting in *working righteousness*, was just as acceptable to God in a Gentile as in a Jew, for indeed this was God's own work in the soul; and as the cross had laid

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the ground in divine righteousness for the salvation of many, Christ having given Himself a ransom for all, the door was now open to all. But this was what Cornelius had not yet learned, and Peter declares it to him, and then goes on and tells him of Jesus sent to Israel to bless them, but, rejected and slain by the Jews in the very capital of the nation, and now raised up of God from the dead, and appointed "Judge of living and dead." Solemn truth! The rejected and slain One alive again, and appointed Judge! And He *will* judge by and by. But judgment is not come yet, and in the meantime a door of mercy is opened to all, and all who enter by faith may be assured of pardon that will exempt from judgment in that great day. "To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." These were the words that were to give knowledge of salvation to Cornelius and his house. These were the words that Cornelius was waiting to hear—words from God coming through the mouth of Peter. God's angel had told him Peter should tell him words whereby he should be saved. Now he has heard the words, and he believes them as God's words; words on which he can rely. "WHOSOEVER!" That is a wide door. "*Whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.*" That lets in the Gentile who "believes." Cornelius believed (for they were *God's* words), and forgive-

Ghost." But Peter understood it, and said, "can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" How could those of the circumcision object to their reception when they had the proof before them that *God* had received? So Peter commanded that they should be baptized in the name of the Lord. And thus they were formally received into the company of believers.

Reader, the same door stands open still. It is still the day of grace; and the blessing is just as free to you as it was to Cornelius and his company who had listened to Peter. The same words that brought salvation to that company are here in this paper for you, and if you receive them as God's words to you, as they are to all who will believe, they will bring salvation to you.

HOW anxious men are to insure their lives, to provide for their families, and yet they make no provision for eternity! Oh! how is it that people are so foolish? They will do anything rather than get the question of their eternal salvation settled.

Reader, do you know that were you to die this night, your soul would either go to be with Christ forever, or into eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels, there to endure God's righteous wrath for ever and ever!

THE MAN WHO LIKED HISTORY.

HISTORY was the only subject that interested Mr. B——. Books which treated on this, were his only reading. Kings, and their mighty deeds; parliaments and their debates; nations and their revolutions; wars and rumours of wars, took complete possession of his mind. In fact the past had for him more interest than the present, and as to the future * * * well, he was “no prophet.”

One day a christian friend succeeded in persuading this amateur historian to read a portion of an ancient writing which he knew nothing of, or at least, had taken no account of. Much persuasion and perseverance were required before he would take the book which contained the history heretofore neglected by him. At length however he said:

“I will read it to please you, and I will do it at once.”

The part of the book which he had been asked to read was a letter addressed, “To all that be in Rome,” but as he read the letter, Mr. B—— observed that it concerned everyone; indeed this is what it said: “*There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are ALL gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one.*”

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He could not deceive himself as to the meaning of the words. All the history that he had read did not touch him personally except, it may be, very remotely; but in the pages of this brief writing he saw what was manifestly the portrait of every one, for there were also these words, that, "all the world may become guilty before God."

The details of this portrait impressed him deeply. They were:

The eyes: "There is no fear of God before their eyes.

The mouth: "Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness."

The lips: "The poison of asps is under their lips.

The tongue: "With their tongues they have used deceit."

The throat: "Their throat is an open sepulchre."

The feet: "Their feet are swift to shed blood."

It was evident that no exception could be made to the number whom this portrait represented, for it said: "*All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.*" He had never seen a universal history of the human race expressed in so few words. The brief epitome of all that he had read, was; "sin, sin, and yet sin." And to it all, was added the solemn declaration: "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight."

His conscience was deeply stirred by what he read.

When his friend came back to see him he asked him what he thought of the book.

"What a dreadful picture," said Mr. B——.

"It has haunted me like a night-mare."

"Will you read another portion of the book?"

"Yes, if you will promise me that it will be more cheerful."

"Certainly: you have read the third chapter of Romans, read now the third chapter of John's gospel."

As soon as he was alone, Mr. B—— took the bible and opened to the chapter indicated.

"Another bit of history," was his thought as he read the first lines; but the third verse arrested him: "*Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*"

"It is evident," he said to himself "that Nicodemus did not understand these words."

Our friend was glad that Nicodemus asked an explanation for he also wished it.

The fourteenth and fifteenth verses seemed a little clearer to him: "*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.*"

Then he recalled to mind the ancient history that he had heard in his childhood; the history of the disobedience of Israel, and how, on account

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of this sin all who were bitten by the fiery serpent were in danger of death, but also how all those who looked to the serpent of brass, raised up by the command of God, did not die, but were healed. This verse in John's gospel presented a similar circumstance but infinitely grander.

Jesus was lifted up! * * Where? he asked himself; upon the cross, in order that if I, bitten by sin and dying, look to Him I may be saved and not perish."

Then he read the sixteenth verse: "*For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*" And the Holy Spirit showed him how "*all the world,*" declared "*guilty before God,*" was in spite of all, the object of the love of God who gave, not indeed a serpent of brass, but His only and well-beloved Son. And the proof of this love is, that He died in the place of those who were guilty and condemned in order that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life!

"Ah! how beautiful this sixteenth verse is!" he said to his friend, when he came again to visit him.

"If I could only believe that it is for me."

"You believe that the passage which you have read in Romans is true, do you not?"

"Yes," replied Mr. B—— "and it is that which has made me so unhappy."

“Well, the second passage comes to you clothed with the same authority as the first; if you believe it you will be happy; the same divine voice which proclaims this proclaims also the other.”

Mr. B—— believed in the love of God manifested towards a guilty world, He laid hold of, and appropriated it to Himself. He believed that Jesus died for sinners, died for him; he understood that, consequently, he would never perish but had now eternal life. After that, he became a man of a single book, and that book the bible. The word of God was his constant study.

Some months passed, when he became ill, and from this illness he never recovered. One of his friends who knew how passionately fond he was of books of history, brought him some. Taking his bible from under his pillow, he said: “This is now my only reading.”

The word of God had been the means of saving his soul; he could not help but love it; he was born again, born of the Spirit, and had eternal life.

And you reader, have you seen yourself in the picture traced in the third chapter of Romans? Have you believed the declaration of the love of God? Do you love the book which has revealed it to you?

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THE ATONEMENT.

WHEN a soul is convinced of sin, and practically under the law (that is, the requirements of God's righteousness on living man), the judgment of God is feared, the terrors of the Almighty can drink up the spirit. God thus teaches a man what he is, what he is worth in this solemn question between Satan and God—the power of evil and of good. See the case of Job. God sustains man in grace and the sense of integrity, so that he clings to dependence on God, come what will; yet judgment is feared, God's holiness and righteousness pressed on the spirit weighed down with the sense of sin, the power of death as ending nature's hope and leading to judgment is there, and Satan uses it to drive to despair, to destroy faith, and break the spirit of man away from depending on God and believing in His love.

Without the atonement, there could be no answer in grace to this state, because we have deserved condemnation; and if new life be there which clings to God, yet this very life gives the sense of God's holiness, which brings judgment on the soul conscious of sin. When the full work of grace in redemption is learnt, the soul obtains a peace only the more solid, and indeed only thereby really solid, that it has passed through these exercises by which sin is known, by which God's judgment of it is before the soul

by His own convincing work, and Satan's effort spent, and resulting only in bringing us to the answer which atonement gives, and thus his power over us destroyed and gone for ever.

But though the answer to, and deliverance from, this state is the full and perfect redemption wrought by Christ, by which we are wholly taken out of the state in which we stood accused and liable to judgment, and transferred into the position of the last Adam before God, of Him who is now gone to His Father and our Father, His God and our God, there is positive and direct grace in the exercise itself.

Now, before obtaining the peace acquired by the knowledge of redemption, Christ sustains, encourages, relieves by times, the soul in this state, but not so as to hinder its learning this deep and solemn lesson which has its fruit in eternity; nor so as to prevent its finding its only resource in the redemption He has accomplished.

ARE any of my readers halting between two opinions, not yet decided between Christ and the world? Oh, I beseech you halt no longer. Decide at once, and decide for Christ. Life or death, depends on the decision. The time is short. Life so uncertain. Death busy everywhere. Satan is seeking careless, thoughtless souls to drag them into perdition. Eternity is very near. The Saviour, the loving Saviour is calling you to Himself. He waits to be gracious.

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THE VALUE OF A NAME.

“YOU may make what use you like of my name,” is often said by those of rank and influence; and many are thankful to avail themselves of such kindness. I remember being told of a lady who wished to place her daughter in a certain establishment, and called one day to make enquiries. The interview was unfavorable; besides other objections, there was not a vacancy. As the lady was leaving she said, “—— told me to apply to you.” She was asked at once to resume her seat, and in a little while satisfactory arrangements were made for her daughter to enter the establishment. What a change was brought about by just mentioning a certain name! Does my reader know the value of the name of Jesus? How all prevailing and efficacious it is with God? Go to God in your own name, and it will be without success. Go to God in the name of Jesus, and He will save you and bless you. “Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins” (Matt. 1, 21). “Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is *none other name* under heaven given among men whereby we can be saved” (Acts iv. 12).

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds

In God the Father's ear;

When sinners at His throne are found,

Pleading that name so dear.

“God hath given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow” (Phil. ii, 9, 10). Bow to the name of Jesus now, in the day of God’s grace, or you must bow to it in the day of God’s judgment. God has declared that *every* knee shall bow to the name of Jesus, and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. And if the poor, lost, guilty sinner, coming to God in the name of Jesus, obtains salvation, forgiveness of sins, and peace with God, what may not the children of God expect who ask all in this precious name. Jesus says Himself, “Verily, verily I say unto you, *whatsoever* ye shall ask the Father *in my name* He will give it you. Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name, ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.”

Is not this saying, as it were, you may make what use you like of my name? Do we thankfully avail ourselves of this so great a privilege?

To God, the name of Jesus is precious beyond compare.

To the believer it is also precious. “Unto you which believe He is precious.”

Dear reader, is the name of Jesus precious to you? He waits to save *you*. Oh yield to His love. Turn to Him *now* in all your sins, and He will save you. “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool.” (Isa. 1-18).