

THE DEVOTIONAL WORKS OF DAVID HARSHA

MONERGISM BOOKS



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Immanuel's Land

PREFACE

The design of this essay is to afford a glimpse of Immanuel's land; to exhibit some of the powerful attractions of that world of glory. To those who are asking the way to Zion, with their faces toward there, the author knows that his present theme will be at all times refreshing. Future felicity in Heaven is the most cheering subject that can be presented for the contemplation of the Christian in this valley of tears. What can be more delightful than for the weary pilgrim who is fast hastening to mansions in the skies, to meditate on the glories of his future home?

There is much in this subject to animate us in the thorny pathway to immortality. It affords hope in life's darkest hour; it points with its glorious light to the realms of bliss, where no tear is ever shed and where no sorrow ever enters. There is much in Immanuel's land to engage our hearts in holy meditation while we sojourn as strangers and pilgrims here. The bright mansions of our Father's house- the many crowns of glory laid up for us there- the joyous rest that remains for our weary souls- the sweet employment of the redeemed in glory- the endeared society in the heavenly home; all are presented to attract us to heaven- to induce us to set our affections on things above.

Then, let us fix our hearts more steadfastly upon heavenly joys- upon the glories of Immanuel's land. In handling this delightful subject, the Word of God has been our guide. To this blessed volume we are indebted for all the revelations that have been made of the glory of the celestial world. In the Bible we obtain a glimpse of the glorious land. May He whose infinite love fitted up those bright abodes of bliss, bless our present effort to the souls of men, in leading them to lay up their treasures in Heaven, and to choose that better part which shall never be taken away from them.

Heavenly meditation is a delightful work, in which our souls should be

daily engaged, until we enter the portals of glory, and begin our unending song in the paradise of God. O! may that sweet hour soon come.

"O! soon may Heaven uncloseto me!
O! may I soon that glory see!
And my faint, weary spirit, stand
Within that happy, happy land!"

1. THE PLACE

"I go to prepare a **place** for you." John 14:2

There is a world of rich delight,
Where warm affections glow;
Where reigns the everlasting light,
Where crystal waters flow.
There happy saints securely dwell
From Satan's deadly power;
Their bliss no mortal tongue can tell,
Unfolding every hour.
They dwell with Jesus, and behold
The beauties of his face;
Secure in the celestial fold,
And crowned by sovereign grace.
From earth and all its empty joys,
Blest Jesus, set me free;
How vain the worldling's gilded toys,
Compared with heaven and thee!
You are my hope, my way, my bliss,
My glory, and my crown;
Descend O blessed Prince of Peace,
And make my heart your throne."

How full of consolation are the Holy Scriptures! They animate the

Christian in his pilgrimage on earth; they point out the way of salvation through a crucified Jesus; they lead the ransomed sinner to the gates of the celestial city, and seat him amid the untold and inconceivable glories of Paradise! The Scriptures urge us to set our affections on the glories of the Christian's eternal home. To those in whose hearts Christ is formed the hope of glory, how beautiful, how tender, how soul-reviving is the language of inspiration! It is written, "If you then are risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."

In compliance with the sacred command we shall endeavor, through divine assistance, to raise our thoughts to those scenes of bliss which the redeemed perpetually enjoy before the throne of God and the Lamb. We shall contemplate the place itself, where all the precious flock of Christ are to dwell through an endless day. In connection with this we shall notice a few of the powerful attractions of that blessed abode.

Heaven is a place as well as a state. Among the last words of our Redeemer before He left this valley of tears, we find this cheering declaration and promise, "I go to prepare a **place** for you. And if I go and prepare a **place** for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there you may be also." Precious words from a loving Friend! But follow Him to the land of promise. Christ has now gone to prepare that place for us! O what a place will Jesus prepare for his dear children! What a place will infinite love make! How attractive will it be! Well may we confess our utter inability to portray the regions of glory, and exclaim with an enraptured Apostle, "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him."

Language fails to describe the beauties of Immanuel's land, and the human mind to conceive its blessedness. "All the glories of kingdoms, all the beauties of gardens, all the splendor of palaces, yes all the riches of creation, form but a faint sketch of the sublime original." We cannot know what heaven really is until we enter into 'the holy place' and sit down under the shadow of the tree of life in the midst of the Paradise of God. Then shall we see in the light of glory that it is a happy region; a

happy home indeed.

Heaven is a holy place where the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, unveils His glorious perfections in full effulgence. In that blessed place, the Lamb of God, the Savior of sinners, dwells in His glorified humanity. There triumphant saints are gathered home to Christ. There they are made pillars in the temple of God and go out no more. There the host of heaven dwell in the blissful presence of the King of glory.

This blessed place should attract us. We should look beyond this present fleeting world. We should endeavor to raise our eyes to Canaan's happy shores, and obtain a glimpse of those everlasting hills from where our help comes from. Let the Christian ascend the mount of meditation, and by the help of God's Word, survey those fair regions which lie beyond the Jordan of death.

"My, soul, on Pisgah's mount ascend,
where Moses once admiring stood.
There view the promised land extend
beyond the swelling Jordan's flood.
By faith survey the landscape o'er,
Where living waters gently flow;
'Till earth usurp your love no more,
'Till all you're your kindling passions glow."

What glorious prospects are presented to the Christian pilgrim when he, by faith, gazes on the heights of Mount Zion above! There stands the New Jerusalem, the city of our God, in dazzling glory. Through its golden streets the river of life rolls its bright waters; and on the banks of that crystal stream, grows luxuriantly the tree of life, loaded with the richest fruits. To those fountains of immortality the Lamb conducts His white robed followers, and in tasting of joys the purest and noblest, in feasting on the banquet of redeeming love, the saints spend the ages of glory.

On those 'walls of jasper' and 'streets of gold' the sunbeams are always shining; but no earthly sun illuminates the celestial city. The glory of God

enlightens it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. Our Heavenly Father is there, and His glory is manifested there. Jesus our elder Brother is there and He is the center of heavenly attraction; of heavenly glory.

Heaven is a chosen spot; selected by Christ; prepared from the foundation of the world for the eternal abode of the righteous. To the heirs of immortality, Christ will at last pronounce this joyful invitation, "Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Thus a place is already prepared for the redeemed; a place rendered infinitely attractive by a display of divine power, wisdom, goodness, and love. The beauty of heaven should attract us. It is a place of perpetual loveliness; a kingdom of unfading glory. The earthly Canaan had many attractions, but what was that to the heavenly? It is the Canaan above that is so glorious! It is that 'pleasant land and goodly heritage' which stretches beyond the swellings of Jordan, that is so attractive to the Christian. Every child of God longs to reach those bright shores of a purer climate, where everlasting glory bursts upon the weary pilgrim!

Respecting the earthly Canaan, Moses' prayer was, 'I beg you, let me go over and see that good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon.' How much more should every Christian earnestly strive and pray that 'an entrance may be administered unto him abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.'

The earthly Paradise was a charming spot, where grew every tree that was pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden; and there issued a crystal stream to water the lovely region, and to fertilize a blooming world. How delightful to have dwelt in such a home as this. But Immanuel's land, the everlasting home of God's children, shines far more glorious than ever shone the earthly Paradise.

How consoling to think that every child of God shall finally be brought to that celestial world, to gaze with wondering eyes on its untold glories! What gratitude do we owe to God for providing such an inheritance for us! To Him we should continually raise our hearts in grateful songs of praise. We should call upon our souls and all that is within us to bless His

holy name. We should exclaim with the Apostle, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fades not away; reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

Under many pleasing views, heaven is attractively set forth by the sacred writers. To accommodate their descriptions to our capacities they adopt various emblems, drawn from sublunary scenes. These figurative expressions but faintly exhibit the glory of the land of immortality. But they will suffice us for the present. Indeed, in our present state of existence, we could not possibly bear the full effulgence of that glory, which will burst upon the ransomed soul when mortality is swallowed up in life.

1. Heaven is represented as A COUNTRY, "a better country." Of the Patriarchs it is said that they 'sought a country,' that they 'desired a better country, that is, a heavenly one; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared for them a city.' Heaven is that 'pleasant land' to which all Christian pilgrims are traveling. We are now in a wilderness world, where the winds of adversity blow upon us, and the tempests of sorrow sweep along our pathway. But this present world is not our home. Our march is heavenward; to the glorious land. Guided by the Captain of our salvation, we are coming up from the wilderness, and our feet shall soon stand on the glorious mount of God. Our conversation is in heaven, our future inheritance lies there, and we are looking on it as our eternal home. No wonder then that it should appear so attractive in our eyes. No wonder that we should long to behold the good land which is afar off.

All true believers desire that 'better country.' They feel that they are strangers and pilgrims here. They look beyond this present world to those regions of perpetual delight where they expect to spend countless ages. The hope of salvation animates them in every earthly trial, and the promises of God's Word elevate their view above this crumbling world.

Their hearts overflow with joy unspeakable, and full of glory, when they are assured of the blessed truth that their eyes see the King of heaven in His beauty, and the celestial Canaan in its glory!

Heaven is a promised land. We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, 'I will give you.' God's Word is true. Every saint that has lived on earth shall be brought to this heavenly world, where Jesus reigns in all His glory. Cheer up then, you drooping saints! View that happy world where your Savior reigns, and where you are shortly to reign with Him!

2. Heaven is described as A GLORIOUS CITY, a city that has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. But who can perfectly paint the splendor of that city, whose light is the glory of God? 'Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion.' Where will you begin to enumerate the attractions of that celestial city, the abode of the redeemed? Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God. We can gain but a glimpse of its glories now, in the light of God's Word, but they will be seen and told through all eternity. With the eye of faith let us now view the city of our God, the New Jerusalem, set on Zion's holy hill.

How dazzling does it appear. Its walls of jasper, its gates of pearls, its streets of gold, the city itself 'of pure gold like unto clear glass.' When the splendor of 'that great city, the holy Jerusalem,' was manifested to the beloved John, rapt in heavenly vision on the isle of Patmos, he describes it as 'having the glory of God, and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every gate was of one pearl. The street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.' How brightly shines the heavenly Jerusalem, irradiated by the glory of God! No city on earth ever shone like this!

Nineveh and Babylon, 'the glory of kingdoms,' were once splendid cities; but that City of Light, whose foundations were laid before earth rose from chaos; whose builder and maker is God Himself, far outshines them all in unutterable splendor. Yes, and when all earthly cities shall have been buried in everlasting ruin, when this terrestrial globe shall have passed

away in one awful conflagration, the celestial city of Zion shall shine in eternal glory, while ransomed sinners walk in golden streets!

Let the Christian pilgrim who has set out from the city of Destruction to the city of Immanuel, often contemplate his glorious home. Attracted by its glory, let him look into it, and long to be among its shining inhabitants, who sound on golden harps the praises of redeeming love. Standing at the gates of the celestial city, let him gaze, with John Bunyan, on its splendor, as those pearly gates are opened wide to admit the transfigured pilgrims. "Now just as the gates were opened to let in the men, I looked in after them, and behold the city shone like the sun; the streets, also, were paved with gold, and in them walked many men with crowns on their heads, palms in their hands, and golden harps to sing praises with. There were of those who had wings; and they answered one another without intermission, saying, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord.' And after that, they shut up the gates; which when I had seen, I wished myself among them."

Of that city of glory, John declares, "I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." There was a temple in the earthly Jerusalem, but there is none in the heavenly. Nor is any required there. Sweet, intimate communion with God and the Lamb will be enjoyed there without a medium. The glorious manifestation of the divine presence will forever dispense with the use of all means of communication between God and His people. Here we worship Him in earthly temples, by the means which He has appointed; but there we shall dwell in His immediate presence, and drink at the Fountain of Life!

The celestial city is so gloriously illuminated by the effulgence of God that it has no need of a natural luminary to shine in it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. The divine presence sheds such a radiance there that it lights up all heaven in everlasting glory. Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, shines there; and in His light we shall see light. Truly light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun. But no light is so sweet as this, and no sun so pleasant to behold as the Sun of Righteousness shining in His meridian splendor!

In that celestial city, there shall be no night. Eternal day beams with unclouded splendor in the city of Immanuel. No natural or moral darkness shall ever overspread the landscape of glory. "Your sun shall no more go down, neither shall your moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be your everlasting light, and the days of your mourning shall be ended."

But look again at that celestial city. Emanating from God's eternal throne, the river of life flows through its midst. "And he showed me a pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb." The heavenly Jerusalem is enriched with 'the river of God, which is full of water.' This is the stream that makes Immanuel's land to bloom with immortal joys. This is the river of pleasure; the river whose streams shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the most High. There, the inhabitants of Zion may bathe in the pure fountains of immortality, 'close by the throne of God,' and drink freely of those swelling streams of purest joy which flow through the realms of glory.

In the city of our God is the tree of life, of whose delicious fruit the saints eat, and under whose ambrosial bowers, they dwell in eternal repose, and celestial bliss. "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bore twelve kinds of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

There is much in the heavenly Jerusalem to attract you; many crowns of glory; many mansions of bliss; many songs of praise; much that the eye has never seen, the ear never heard, nor the human mind never conceived. Strive then to obtain an interest in Jesus, that you may 'have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.' How cheering is the promise of the Savior, "To him that overcomes will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God!" Then fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, and you will come off more than a conqueror through Him that loved you and gave Himself for you.

3. Heaven is represented as A GLORIOUS BUILDING, the building of

God, the future happy home of the Christian. "For we know, "says the Apostle, "that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Confident of reaching this blessed home, the believer is enabled to exclaim with the Psalmist, "Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Heaven is the eternal Father's house, in which are many mansions; the home of the redeemed, where congregated nations sing the song of Moses and the Lamb.

When Christ would comfort His sorrowful disciples He sets forth heaven under the endearing emblem of a home; a Father's house, adorned with many spacious mansions. "In my Father's house, says the Savior, are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you." There is something peculiarly attractive in this description of heaven. How sweet is even an earthly home; but how endeared will be that home above, where we shall meet with our Heavenly Father, with our elder Brother, with our dear Christian friends, who went to glory before us; with the whole household of faith! In that house not made with hands, there are 'many mansions' for our enjoyment. There is ample room and provision for all God's children in the upper sanctuary, everything to render them happy, unspeakably happy through all eternity!

May the reader so live in the faith of the gospel, that when his clay tabernacle is ready to crumble into dust, his immortal spirit, guided by the angels of God, may take its joyful flight to the mansions of glory, and dwell forever in those realms of bliss, where beauty smiles eternally, and pleasure never dies!

2. THE BLESSEDNESS

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Matthew 5:8.

"At your right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Psalm 16:11.

"In those blest regions of delight,
Where Jesus is unveiled to sight,
No mortal tongue can e'er express
The ransomed sinner's blessedness."

The blessedness of heaven is a powerful attraction to draw souls to it. And it is presented in all its charms in the world of God- presented to you- to me. Then let us seek it. If we are true believers in Jesus, we soon enjoy all that unspeakable blessedness which the Bible now presents to the Christian's view. The blessedness of the redeemed in glory will consist in the exemption from all evil, and in the enjoyment of all good. There will be nothing to hurt or destroy, in all God's holy mountain.

All will be blessed there in the possession of the greatest good. Every enjoyment in heaven will conspire to increase and perpetuate the blessedness of the saints in light. Those happy souls whose robes have been washed white in the blood of Immanuel, and who are presented faultless before the throne of God, "shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

The redeemed in glory shall be placed far above the reach of a sinful world, and shall dwell securely in heavenly bliss. There, they shall flourish in our God's holy place. There, they shall be crowned with blessedness, and glory and immortality. How attractive does the blessedness of heaven appear, as presented in the Holy Scriptures! No heart can conceive it- no tongue can express it. It is a boundless ocean of eternal delights! Here on earth, the Christian tastes but drops from the ocean above; but soon he shall stand on the "crystal sea of glass" before the throne, and drink endless pleasures in.

Blessed Jesus! Prepare us all for serving you in mansions above- for participating in those joys which are in your presence- in those pleasures which are at your right hand forever. "In your presence is fullness of joy;

at your right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

In attempting to speak of the blessedness of heaven, we may, in the first place, conceive of it NEGATIVELY. "Not only what is in heaven should attract us to it, but what is not there." (Nevins) And do you ask what is not there- We answer, there is no sin- no sorrow- no tears- no pain- no disease- no death, in heaven.

1. No SIN there. Sin reigns in this world; but in heaven its very existence will be eradicated. There the children of God shall never complain of a body of sin and death. Those immortal forms that surround the throne of God are all sinless beings. Sin will never shed its baneful influence in the Paradise above. Satan can find no admittance there. None of his fiery darts will be cast in glory.

2. No SORROW there. In heaven there will be no more "sorrow." It is here in this present world, within us, all around us. Who has not felt the withering touch of sorrow- This is a world of sorrow. Here, one wave of trouble after another sweeps over us until we close our eyes in death. "In the world," says the Savior, "you shall have tribulation." It is expressly declared, that "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." How often have we tasted this bitter fruit of sin! How often have our hopes been blasted; our expectations disappointed! How often have we been called to mourn the loss of near and dear relatives! Here our hearts are almost constantly filled with some kind of sorrow.

But, dear fellow-pilgrim, cheer up! There lies a bright prospect before us. Has not your eye caught a glimpse of yonder golden plains beyond the grave, where no sorrow ever comes, and where you hope to dwell with Jesus, in endless glory! Then go on your way rejoicing in tribulation. Heaven will make amends for all your momentary sorrow here. You will soon forget all sublunary grief in that land of blessedness, where sorrow is no more.

3. No TEARS there. "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." No expression of grief is there- no "crying"; no mourning. There, "sorrow and mourning shall flee away." Happy world, where all the redeemed are,

with cheerful countenances, rejoicing in God their Savior! There no tears bedew the cheek. What a striking contrast is there between heaven and earth in this respect. This world, with all its fancied happiness, is nothing in reality but a valley of tears; and you have not to live many years before you experience the sad truth of this.

Here sin has entered, and sorrow has entered, and tears flow; but in the celestial Jerusalem "the voice of weeping shall be no more heard, neither the voice of crying." There, dear Christian, "you shall weep no more; the days of your mourning shall be ended." Here on earth, the people of God are called to shed many tears. "You feed them with the bread of tears, and give them tears to drink in great measure." How consoling, in such a valley of tears as this, to think of heaven! How attractive does that joyful land appear to the mourning Christian! He knows that God will there gently wipe away all his tears. The tears of the righteous will soon cease to flow. In a little while "the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces." O, what a happy thought, to think that it is God himself who will wipe away every tear of sorrow in glory! Surely the Christian ought to rejoice now.

4. In heaven there will be no PAIN nor DISEASE. "Neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." Of that celestial world, "the inhabitants shall never say, I am sick." Pain and disease ravage this fallen world. "The whole creation groans and travails in pain together." Here even the righteous "is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain;" but there God will remove from him all pain and sickness forever. Here the children of God are often laid on beds of affliction, and "wearisome nights are appointed unto them;" there blooming health shall cheer their souls, and they shall experience pain and disease no more. What a great blessing to be eternally free from all pain and sickness! To the sons and daughters of affliction how attractive should that world appear, where a kind Heavenly Physician not only wipes away every tear, but heals all diseases and frees from all pain! "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits: who forgives all your iniquities; who heals all your diseases!"

5. Heaven is A LAND OF IMMORTALITY. Jesus Christ has abolished

death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. In those happy regions beyond Jordan's stream, there is no death. "And there shall be no more death." Immortal life will be enjoyed by all the blessed inhabitants of Immanuel's land. How animating in a dying world like this, to think of a glorious immortality! How unlike this land of death, is heaven! There all is blooming immortality.

Here, in the midst of life we are in death; we are surrounded with the dying and the dead; thousands fall within our view. The young, the beautiful and the vigorous, are not exempted from the painful stroke of the 'king of terrors'. There, death it self is swallowed up in victory.

Here on earth, the dearest ties that bind us to earth are cut asunder. Death does not even spare our nearest and dearest relatives. His icy hand is often stretched over the face of a beloved wife- an affectionate husband- a smiling babe- a tender son or daughter- a loving sister or brother- a dear parent. But in heaven, death shall strike its darts no more. How reviving to the Christian who is mourning the loss of pious relatives, to think that in those joyful regions of bliss, he shall meet his dear departed friends who now sleep in Jesus. Then shall we ever be with the Lord in his temple of glory, where parting is no more, and where there is no more painful separation of kindred souls in death.

Let the mourning Christian take comfort from this blessed hope. The 'last enemy' (death) will soon be destroyed. God is just ready to say of his people, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death;" and of death, "O death, I will be your plague! O grave, I will be your destruction!" "This corruptible must" soon "put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory." As we enter the portals of glory and place our feet on the blessed shores of immortality, we may triumphantly exclaim, "O death, where is your sting! O grave, where is your victory!" "And there shall be no more death."

We come now to notice the POSITIVE BLESSEDNESS of heaven. And what is there that is so attractive? In heaven, there is not only the absence

of all evil, but the actual enjoyment of the highest good- of unspeakable blessedness! There is the tree of life, in the midst of the Paradise- the hidden manna- fullness of joy- rivers of pleasures- crowns of glory that fade not away- eternal life- society the most pure; perfect and lovely- sweet communion with God- the glorious presence of the blessed Savior. And this is enough- enough to satisfy the most capacious desire.

What heart can conceive, or what tongue can describe, the blessedness contained in this single verse of Scripture: "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sits on the throne shall dwell among them." This blessedness awaits all the children of God. Happy thought! In heaven the saints will be perfectly blessed, in the full enjoyment of God through all eternity! The eternal God will be the inexhaustible source of all their blessedness. From the fountain of Infinite Love they will derive the purest bliss. In the ocean of divine blessedness and glory, they shall bathe forever and ever.

The blessedness of the saints will be derived directly from God, the fountain of all goodness. He will supply the needs of all his people. He will crown their heads with immortal bliss. What blessedness must fill the ransomed soul when it is brought to dwell in the presence of Him, "who alone has immortality, dwelling in that light which no man can approach unto; whom no man has seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen."

O, to bask in the full beams of His light, whose glory kindles up the realms above in inconceivable splendor! What must those blessings be which a God of love will confer upon his blood-bought flock! How innumerable, how invaluable, how soul-ravishing will they be! In heaven, the blessedness of the saints will flow in an eternal stream from God, their Savior. There, every soul will be filled with all the fullness of God. O, what rivers of blessedness will flow from the Eternal Fountain!

The redeemed will enjoy all that unspeakable blessedness, arising from a display of the divine glory- from sweet, unrestrained communion with God- from the manifestation of a Savior's love- from the enjoyment of that love through eternity. What more does an immortal soul desire?

What more can it enjoy?

This single attraction, the enjoyment of God in Christ through a blessed eternity, should draw every soul to glory. Such a blessedness, eternity alone can unfold. This blessing will enrich your soul to all eternity.

If you have found the "pearl of great price," all the bliss of heaven will be yours! the pleasures at God's right hand! fullness of joy in his presence! a right to the tree of life! In a word, the inheritance of all things! "He that overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

Blessed with the presence of Christ, the saints shall enjoy that GLORIOUS REST which remains for them. Wearing the crowns of glory which a Savior's love placed upon their brow, they shall participate in the ecstatic joys of heaven. They shall eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God. Yes,
"The tree of life shall bless their sight,
With golden fruit their taste delight
Beneath its green and spreading boughs,
The harp shall lull them to repose;
And in seraphic pleasures deep,
Their powerful senses ever steep."

They shall eat of the hidden manna, and receive a white stone; and on the stone a new name written, which no man knows, except him who receives it. They shall be clothed with white clothing, and their names shall not be blotted out of the book of life. They will encompass the throne of God with everlasting songs of praise; they shall even sit with Christ on his throne. "To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and have sat down with my Father on his throne."

The Lamb in the midst of the throne, is the immediate source of heaven's blessedness! Christ will ever remain the glorious Head of his living

members- his mystical body, the church. He will supply their every need. He will provide for them rich blessings- the blessings of eternal salvation. "They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. They shall not hunger or thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them; for he that has mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them."

The Lamb not only feeds them with heaven's richest fruits, but also guides them to fountains of bliss- springs of living water. "The Lamb who is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters." Blessed lot of the righteous! Happy is that people, that is in such a case; yes, happy is that people whose God is the Lord! In contemplating such blessedness, well may we exclaim with the inspired Penman, "Happy are you, O Israel: who is like unto you, O people, saved by the Lord."

Heaven is a place of ETERNAL BLESSEDNESS. No change from happiness to misery is experienced there. None of the vicissitudes of earth shall be there. One perpetual scene of bliss crowns all. One wide, unbounded field of expanding blessedness spreads away, far away before every soul clad in glory.

In heaven, there will be AN ETERNAL PROGRESSION IN KNOWLEDGE AND HAPPINESS. Every new discovery of the ways and works of the Almighty, will roll new tides of glory and blessedness around the ransomed soul. O, what powerful attractions are these! Should they not draw you to glory? What are all the pleasures of a dying world compared with one hour's enjoyment of heavenly blessedness? How worthless! May you possess more permanent joys than those of earth. May it be your happiness to reign with Christ forever and ever. May God grant that every reader of this little volume may be brought to enjoy that blessedness which is reserved for the righteous, in another and a better world; and to his glorious name be everlasting praise! Amen.

3. THE JOY

"In your presence is **fullness of joy.**" Psalm 16:11

"There, in your blissful presence, reigns
Immortal joy serene;
No wintry storms are heard to roar,
Nor desolation seen.

"Around you flow unmixed delights,
The rivers deep and wide;
While from the ocean of your love,
Proceeds an endless tide.

"You of all joy the center are;
Oh! never from my soul depart;
Blest Jesus! let your saving love,
Like dew, drop gently from above."

When the Christian has passed the valley of life, and is done with mortal care and grief, the Savior will welcome him home to glory with this joyful invitation, "Enter into the joy of your Lord." Then begins the heavenly joy of the believer. He rests with Jesus and enters into the joy of his Lord. And what is this joy? What is there about it that is so attractive? It is a joy unspeakable and full of glory. The pen cannot describe it, nor the tongue declare it. It is the joy of being with Christ- the joy of possessing the heavenly inheritance- a fullness of joy. The joy of heaven is full, satisfying, and eternal. It is ecstatic joy. It transports the ransomed soul with ineffable delights!

This joy is to be found in the blissful presence of Christ. Blessed Jesus! You are the source and center of heavenly joy. Enable me to fix my heart upon you. Bestow upon me, your unworthy servant, the joys of your salvation. Let me not wander one moment from the path of life. Guide me safely through the wilderness, over Jordan, until, landed on Canaan's happy shores, I see you face to face, and in your presence, taste, through eternal ages, the joys of a redeemed soul.

"In your presence," cries the Psalmist, "is fullness of joy." There is an

abundance to lift every soul. There will be no lack of joy in heaven. The saints will always "be joyful in glory."

How ravishing will be the joys of the redeemed in the mansions of glory! What ineffable joy will fill the soul of the believer, when he sits down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of God- when he reigns with Immanuel on his throne- when he views all heaven's bliss as his! Amid such joys as these, surely his enraptured soul must be lost in wonder, love, and praise. But the joy of the glorified saint in the presence of Christ is beyond human comprehension or knowledge.

"His joys are all alike unknown,
As, seated on Immanuel's throne,
He drinks the living streams of bliss
And views all heaven's joys as his."

Let us contemplate the joy of the saint who is presented faultless before the presence of God. There is a glorious day approaching, when "the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." Then shall ransomed sinners begin their songs of joyfulness in the celestial Zion. Then shall all their tears be wiped away, and eternal joy and gladness fill their happy souls.

There are three sources from which joy will be brought to the saint in his glorified and exalted state; a contemplation of the past, the present, and the future.

1. CONTEMPLATION OF THE PAST. When he arrives at the realms of glory and looks back upon his past sufferings, how will joy arise in his heart! With pleasure will he contemplate the way through which the Lord has led him. Now he sees that all his earthly trials, and afflictions, and sorrows, and tears have come to an end. He has gotten safely over the tempestuous ocean of life and reached the blessed haven of Immanuel's land. This reflection will afford him unspeakable joy. He views with a joyful heart all the former dealings of God with his soul. Though, during

his pilgrimage on earth, he was often ready to exclaim with the afflicted Patriarch when contemplating the providences of God with regard to himself, "All these things are against me!" Yet now he sees that "all things" have worked together for his good.

In heaven, Christ will make everything plain to the believer. "You don't understand now what I am doing," says the Savior, "but you shall know hereafter." The blessed "hereafter" has come when the Christian will know why so many calamities befell him on earth; why so many afflictions were sent upon him, why so many sorrows were strewed around his pathway to immortal bliss. All was fitting him for glory. Every trial, every affliction was lifting him higher towards heaven. Now that he has reached the blessed shores of glory, he will joyfully exclaim, in the view of the past, "O, Lord, you have led me forth by the right way!"

2. Look again at the joy of the saint with Christ as he **VIEWS HIS PRESENT GLORIOUS STATE**. How will his heart overflow with seraphic joy and love, when he sees his Redeemer, who is to him the most attractive of all objects, and the blessed source of his joys! If "you love him even though you have never seen him. Though you do not see him, you trust him; and even now you are happy with a glorious, inexpressible joy," what will be the joy when he shall see him as he is, face to face, in the heavenly kingdom, in all his matchless beauty!

Of this joy we can know but little. It passes human thought. All the preciousness and loveliness of the Savior will then appear to view. This will fill the soul with unutterable joy. The enraptured saint will be enabled to exclaim without fear or hesitation, "My Beloved is mine and I am His; He is the chief among ten thousand and altogether lovely!"

The presence of the Savior will be a source of unspeakable joy to the Christian. Nothing will cause the heart to rejoice more than this blissful sight of a glorified Redeemer. Christ cheered his sorrowful disciples with this blessed hope. "I will see you again," he says, "and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man takes from you." From the blessed Jesus will emanate swelling streams of joy to refresh and invigorate the people of God. How sweet is this thought!

Has heavenly joy any attractions for my readers? Is not this single consideration the joy arising from a sight of Christ and his glory, sufficient to lead them to inquire the way to Zion? What more powerful attraction could present itself to allure sinners to glory?

But there are innumerable 'rivulets of joy' that issue from this fountain. The presence and society of the glorious Savior is a boundless ocean of joy; while the enjoyment of heavenly bliss, the communion with saints and angels, are the streams of pleasure that are lost in this fathomless abyss! As the saint views his present condition, he sees that it is one of perfect blessedness. What emotions of joy must thrill through his soul when he sees himself encircled with divine glory, when he views all the present bliss of heaven as his, when he is made a partaker of all the soul-ravishing enjoyments and delights of paradise!

3. But this is not all. As he VIEWS THE FUTURE, one perpetual scene of blessedness lies before him! Ages of glory in endless succession, in which he is to possess fullness of joy in the presence of God, roll away before his blissful imagination. What ineffable joy must spring up in his heart as he contemplates eternal bliss! He sees before him an ocean of glory without a shore, and without a storm. An eternity of glory must surely fill his soul with inexpressible joy! With the greatest delight will he meditate on eternity. This is the crowning glory of the whole. The anticipation of the future will afford the saint present felicity; and as he sails over the boundless ocean he will rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory!

Concerning his people, a God of infinite love has said, "Everlasting joy shall be unto them." The joys of the redeemed in glory have no end. Those happy souls before the throne of God fear no termination to their heavenly felicity. Well may the poet exclaim:

"Could you, so rich in rapture, fear an end;
That ghastly thought would drink up all your joy,
And quite unparadise the realms of light."

Thus we have briefly noticed heavenly joy, but the half is not told! O, that every reader may be attracted by those unspeakable joys which are in the

presence of God. Let him contemplate these joys, let him anticipate them, and he will look beyond the fleeting delights of an evil world, to those pleasures which are at God's right hand forever. Earth will then lose its attractions, and heaven be ever in his eye.

Let the Christian take courage in his pilgrimage- let the joy of the Lord be his strength. Let him remember, that though this world is a 'night of weeping', yet there is a bright morning coming- a morning of everlasting joy. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning." Let the weeping Christian remember that he will soon reap in joy- that he shall rejoice in God, his unfailing portion through a glorious eternity. "Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goes forth and weeps, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

May a bleeding Savior be your all and in all; and when his glory shall be revealed, may you, among countless millions, be one who shall be glad also with exceeding joy. Rest in Jesus, and in a little while all will be well.

"And now, all glory to God, who is able to keep you from stumbling, and who will bring you into his glorious presence innocent of sin and with great joy. All glory to him, who alone is God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Yes, glory, majesty, power, and authority belong to him, in the beginning, now, and forevermore. Amen." Jude 1:24-25

"Joy is a fruit that will not grow
In nature's barren soil;
All we boast till Christ we know,
Is vanity and toil.
"But where the Lord has planted grace,
And made his glories known;
There fruits of heavenly joy and peace
Are found, and there alone.
"A bleeding Savior seen by faith,
A sense of pard'ning love;
A hope that triumphs over death,
Give joys like those above.

"To take a glimpse within the veil,
To know that God is mine;
Are springs of joy that never fail,
Unspeakable! Divine!
"These are the joys which satisfy,
And sanctify the mind;
Which make the spirit mount on high,
And leave the world behind.
"No more, believers, mourn your lot,
But if you are the Lord's;
Resign to those who know him not.
Such joys as earth affords."

THE GLORY

"I have given them **the glory** that you gave me." John 17:22

"The ransomed soul, in glory clad,
Shines brighter than meridian sun
The weary pilgrim, now so sad,
There finds his toilsome journey done.
Cheer up, O saint, oppressed with grief,
With joy expand your drooping wing;
Jesus affords the kind relief;
Jesus extracts the envenomed sting.
Soon you will reach the blest abode,
Where happy pilgrims ever reign;
Soon shall you see the face of God,
And all the bliss of heaven obtain."

Heaven is a glorious place. Its glory should attract us. How delightful to think of heavenly glory ! How it raises the soul above earth! Let us soar on high and view the glory of the New Jerusalem, and of the saints in light. We have seen that the glory of God and the Lamb irradiates the

celestial world. There, the Sun of Righteousness always shines, and his beams gladden the hearts of a ransomed host. There God smiles, and the nations of the saved walk in the light of his countenance. There is one perpetual noontide of glory in the mansions above. There is glory- "an exceeding and eternal weight"- reserved in heaven for those who love God.

When the whole assembly of the redeemed shall stand on Mount Zion, they will shine as the sun in eternal glory. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Then "those who are wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and those who turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever." Glory shines in Immanuel's land. The city, the mansions, the inhabitants, are all glorious. Every believer in Jesus will be crowned with everlasting glory. Though we could not bear the effulgence of heaven's glory, should it now beam upon us, yet we know that when we awake to immortality, that glory shall be revealed in us. We know that when Christ, our glorious Head, shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

O to be like the blessed Jesus! What heart can desire more? If we are His people we shall soon be like him. Our bodies shall shine like his— like that wondrous Personage whose original glory once beamed on Mount Tabor, when his face shone as the sun, and when this clothing was white as the light. In heaven, the wonders of Mount Tabor will ever be exhibited; and there the pure radiance of the Savior's glory will always beam upon redeemed millions!

Who can conceive this blessedness? How desirable, how attractive does it appear to an immortal mind! From those heights of bliss, every soul will be ready to exclaim with Peter, "Lord, it is good for us to be here." But more than that. The saints will be made partakers of the Redeemer's glory." "I have given them the glory that you gave me" "The Lord will give glory." Amazing love! that Christ should exalt his followers to such bliss, and crown them with such glory!

But who can describe the glory of the saints with Christ, contrasted with which, the splendor of this world is darkness itself! On what John saw in

the revelation of the heavenly world, and of the redeemed in glory, ,in eloquent living writer (Stephen Tyng) has the following beautiful and glowing expressions: "The glory of the meridian sun- the intense brightness of the furnace- the pure radiance of the light- the transparent beauty of the rainbow- an ocean of gold, translucent as the crystal-precious stones, of every hue, and of the richest forms- fountains, ever sparkling with living water- streams, with an unceasing flow of perfect purity- trees of unchanging verdure, clothed with endless varieties of beautiful fruit- living beings, of the noblest and most exalted aspect, clad in garments which earthly art in vain would imitate- music, of the tenderest influence and of the most overwhelming power; sometimes the single melody of a heavenly harp and voice, and again flowing forth in a volume of harmony, like approaching thunders, or the majestic waterfall, or the mysterious rolling of the sea- a state of being, in its aspect of loveliness, feebly illustrated by the most perfect bridal beauty and purity of earth. All these, and many like them, are efforts to express to man the things which he saw and heard. But they are all in vain. One sentence of his own conclusion sums up his acknowledged inability to describe the glory of the saints with Christ- Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it cloth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."

To see Christ as he is- to behold his glory- to be made a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed- this is heaven; this is the glory of the saints. It is to this glory that God is "bringing many sons." It is to "eternal glory" that we are called. God is leading his people to his temple of glory- to that city where there is no night, and where they need no candle, neither the light of the sun; for the Lord God gives them light, And they shall reign forever and ever! There, a gracious God will bestow upon us the "riches of his glory," and we shall shine to all eternity, in the garments of glory and of beauty. We shall inherit a glorious kingdom, and wear a glorious crown. Our bodies shall be fashioned like unto Christ's "glorious body;" and we shall obtain an exceeding and eternal weight of glory in the smile and presence of God.

In view of our future glory, how insignificant do these present afflictions appear? "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing

with the glory that will be revealed in us." Let the afflicted Christian remember, that his momentary trials and sufferings here, are preparing for him a weighty crown of glory hereafter. "For our present troubles are quite small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us an immeasurably great glory that will last forever!" How animating is this hope of a glorious immortality! O joyful hope! It cheers us amid the surrounding gloom of life; it illuminates our pathway to the tomb; it sheds its radiance beyond the grave; it enables the believer to exclaim, when he is just finishing his earthly course, and about to embark upon the boundless ocean of eternity, "And now the prize awaits me—the crown of righteousness that the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that great day of his return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to his glorious return."

Then, let us run with patience, the race that is set before us, and soon we shall reach the goal of immortal blessedness; then shall the glory of heaven gladden our blissful sight, and the streams of Paradise refresh our weary souls. Let every reader be attracted by the glory of heaven. Let him look to a bleeding Savior for salvation, and press onward with eagerness to receive the crown of glory that fades not away!

THE REST

"There remains therefore a **rest** to the people of God." Hebrews 4:9

"We seek a rest beyond the skies,
In everlasting day;
Through floods and flames the passage lies,
But Jesus guards the way.
The swelling flood and raging flame,
Hear and obey his word;
Then let us triumph in his name,
Our Savior is the Lord."

There is something peculiarly attractive in the description of heaven as a place of rest. Here is something that tends powerfully to lead the soul upwards. This fleeting scene of trouble is overlooked when the land of rest is in view.

Heaven is a state of rest- rest reserved for the righteous. How cheering is the blessed truth, "There remains therefore a rest to the people of God." How desirable, how delightful is rest to the weary traveler; to those who are almost overwhelmed with the cares and anxieties and afflictions, incident to human life! How refreshing to the sons and daughters of affliction- to those whose bodies are "chastened with pain"- is the enjoyment of rest. But what is the rest of earth to that of heaven? O, how delightful will it be for the Christian, after the storms of life to enter the desired haven of eternal rest!

"They were glad when it grew calm, and he guided them to their desired haven." Every believer will be enabled to shout, as he steps on the shores of glory, "This is my rest forever! here will I dwell, for I have desired it." What a rest is here presented to our view, to animate us in our lonely pilgrimage! A rest from sin and suffering from toil and pain; but not from praise. A rest in the arms of Infinite Love; a rest in Abraham's bosom, with Jesus, the sinner's friend. A rest perfect, complete, and eternal. This is the saint's rest. O blessed rest! where all are resting in eternal love- blooming in eternal joy. Let this attract you. "There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest."

You can find no rest in this world. To the Christian, life is a continual battle-field; without are fightings, within are fears. "For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against the evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against those mighty powers of darkness who rule this world, and against wicked spirits in the heavenly realms." We are commanded to "put on the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil;" and exhorted to fight the good fight of faith. There is no rest for the Christian here; it is above- in our Father's house- in the mansions of glory.

How animating to think that our rest is near at hand- that our warfare

will soon be over- that our pilgrimage will soon be ended! Every day is bringing us nearer our blessed home. That joyful morning will soon dawn, when the soldiers of the cross shall honorably lay aside their weapons, and, with the garlands of victory on their brow, enter triumphantly upon that rest which remains for the people of God.

How long and loud will be those songs of victory that shall ring from rank to rank, through that mighty host, who have been more than conquerors through the blood of the Lamb, and who are now brought to enjoy sweet, eternal rest in the bosom of God! How sweet will heaven be to the weary Christian pilgrim when he finds his toilsome journey ended; when from the heights of glory he looks back on a world of sorrow through which he has passed! To the afflicted saint, that "rest" will become sweeter when he reflects on his past sufferings. There, he finds that all his tears are wiped away, and not one joy is lacking in the presence of his Savior, and in the smile of his God.

Heaven is now presented to us weary pilgrims with this powerful attraction- Rest. Would you enjoy it? Does your heart aspire after heaven's blessed rest? Then believe in Jesus; rest in him now, and you will soon rest with him in the Paradise of God. Remember that this present world is not your rest. "For this world is not our home; we are looking forward to our city in heaven, which is yet to come." We are strangers and pilgrims on the earth. This is not our home. We are coming up from the wilderness with our faces Zionward; we are traveling to the celestial city. Our path is rough; but the Savior sustains us. Our pilgrimage lies through a wilderness, but faith cheers us with a view of the glorious rest of the redeemed in our Father's house- in mansions of blessedness.

And how reviving to think that faith shall soon be turned into sight! Let this consideration animate us amid the conflicts of life. In a little while we shall obtain a joyous entrance upon the rest above. The storms of life's ocean will soon carry us into the haven of peace, where there is no trouble. We shall soon rest with Christ. Then our pilgrimage will have ended, and our eternal rest have begun. From the temple of God there shall be no more going out. There, the saints shall enjoy the everlasting

rest- the Sabbath of eternity. Let us be admonished to seek the saint's rest now. The language of inspiration is, "Get up, go away! For this is not your resting place, because it is defiled, it is ruined, beyond all remedy."

Your Savior, pilgrim Christian, has prepared for you a nobler rest than this polluted world. In his Father's house are many spacious mansions, where your happy spirit, after tasting the bitter cup of life's sorrow, shall rest in eternal blessedness. No restlessness will be experienced in the realms of glory. Nor sorrow, nor trouble of any kind will be there. There, the redeemed rest from their labors and cares, and doubts and fears, and spiritual conflicts. For them there is an eternal calm- a rest of perfect satisfaction in the enjoyment of God their Savior. O, what a world is that, where not a wave of trouble shall roll over the soul, where all are resting in the enjoyment of Him, who is "a shelter from the wind and a refuge from the storm, like streams of water in the desert, and the shadow of a great rock in a hot and weary land."

Heavenly rest should attract us. "Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience." "Return unto your rest, O my soul: for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you." In view of such a glorious rest beyond the grave, well may we exclaim, "Blessed are those who die in the Lord from now on. Yes, says the Spirit, they are blessed indeed, for they will rest from all their toils and trials; for their good deeds follow them!" "For all who enter into God's rest will find rest from their labors, just as God rested after creating the world."

Blessed Jesus! enable me to rely, with cheerful hope, on your dying love, until I reach the blissful mansions, and enter upon my joyful rest.

"Then shall I bathe my weary soul,
In seas of heavenly rest;
And not a wave of trouble roll
Across my peaceful breast."

THE EMPLOYMENT

"They are before the throne of God and **serve him** day and night in his temple." Rev. 7:15

"And they **sang** a new song." Rev. 5:9

There is much in the employment of heaven to engage our hearts and warm our affections. Heavenly employment is the most delightful work in which the soul ever engaged. The redeemed will be filled with ecstasy while engaged in celestial work. The 'rest' of heaven which we have been describing, is not a state of inactivity. O, blessed rest, where "they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."

The mansions of glory will be filled with the sweetest melody. The employment in which the redeemed in glory are engaged, is one that should attract every sinner. It is one of everlasting praise and adoration. How delightful to spend eternity in praising God- in contemplating his wonderful works- in admiring his redeeming love! When all the redeemed are brought home to glory, they shall serve God day and night in his temple. They shall sing the song of Moses and the Lamb through a glorious eternity!

In heaven the saints will be meditating on the wonders of creation, providence, and redemption. There the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, as manifested in the works of a vast universe, will be brought to full view. In contemplating Jehovah's mighty empire, all those radiant inhabitants of heaven's mansions shall cast their crowns before the throne of God, and cry, "You are worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honor and power. For you created everything, and it is for your pleasure that they exist and were created."

Even while on earth, what pleasures are to be derived from the contemplation of nature. With what delight have the minds of Bacon and Boyle, of Newton and Herschel, surveyed the magnificence of creation's

works. But in heaven, the Christian, with a knowledge infinitely surpassing that possessed by any of these eminent characters, shall range with exquisite pleasure amid the beauties of Paradise. He shall spend eternal ages in contemplating those wonderful works which an omnipotent arm has scattered in endless variety and beauty around him, and which declare the glory of God, and exhibit his power, wisdom, goodness, and love.

The beauty of the celestial universe, the charms of science, and the pleasures of religion, will forever attract the redeemed in glory. To those who have a proper estimate of the value and importance of natural and divine knowledge, how attractive does that world appear where all are engaged in contemplating the most delightful subjects that can be presented to an immortal mind! In heaven, knowledge will have arrived at perfection. Here on earth, we see through a glass darkly; there, face to face. Here, we know but in part; there, we will know even as we are known.

In heaven, the providence of God over his church and people, and every particular saint, will be beautifully exhibited, causing each heart to exclaim, "You have done all things well." But above all, redemption will be the chief theme of the redeemed before the throne. That glorious work, executed on Calvary by the Son of God, will employ the souls of ransomed saints in holy meditation through the blessed Sabbath of eternity!

With what wonder shall that happy multitude look into this mystery of love to fallen man— the redemption of the soul! With what astonishment will they gaze upon a crucified Savior, bearing the print of the nails and of the spear on his glorious form. How will seraphic love and gratitude rise in the bosoms of those who have been washed in the blood of Jesus, when they behold Him in the midst of the throne as the Lamb who was slain for them! A crucified Jesus will be eternally admired as the Lamb slain for the redemption of sinners. He will receive the homage and praise of all the redeemed through eternity. Eternity itself will be too short in which to speak his praise; or tell his preciousness, or proclaim the vastness of his dying love on Calvary!

This everlasting song in which all voices shall unite in melodious strains, will be sung in the realms of glory: "Worthy! Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing! Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him who sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever!" In the contemplation of redemption, the souls of the redeemed will be lost in wonder, love, and praise. How overpowering will be the display of divine love that shall then shine in the glorious plan of salvation! The eternal love of the Father, in giving his Son, his only-begotten Son, to die for sinners! The amazing love of the Son, in exchanging the throne of glory for the cross of Calvary! The wonderful love of the Holy Spirit, in applying redemption to the soul, will then appear in full resplendency!

How brightly will that love which was once manifested on Calvary shine in the habitation of the redeemed, while glorified saints are employing their noble powers in its sublime contemplation! Redemption will furnish eternal employment for the Christian in that brighter world- his happy home. Eternal ages of glory can never unravel the mystery of redeeming love! Redemption is a theme on which the soul may unceasingly dwell with rapturous delight, and discover brighter and brighter displays of divine love and glory to all eternity! How sweet will be the study of redemption in heaven! "Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care." That glorious salvation which, "is all so wonderful that even the angels are eagerly watching these things happen," will ever be the delightful and soul-ravishing theme of the redeemed in glory, while eternal ages roll away!

The employment of heaven will include in it UNENDING PRAISE. Eternal songs will resound through the mansions of glory. The saints will be employed in praising God- in admiring the beauty and glory of Him who died on Calvary for their redemption. One theme, one song will employ every soul in glory. It is the wondrous theme- the new song of redemption, that will draw from their lips the loudest notes of praise. "And they sang a new song with these words: 'You are worthy to take the scroll and break its seals and open it. For you were killed, and your blood has ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people

and nation." "And they were shouting with a mighty shout, 'Salvation comes from our God on the throne and from the Lamb!'" "And they were singing the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb."

Such is the delightful employment of the heavenly world. Should not this blessed work attract you? Do you not long to join with the redeemed above in those celestial songs of praise to him who died for man? O, then, be entreated to choose a loving Savior now; and the happy hour will soon arrive when you shall raise your joyful voice in glory, and unite with the ransomed of the Lord in that sweet song which has no dying cadence, and with which the arches of heaven shall entirely resound- "All praise to him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by shedding his blood for us. He has made us his kingdom and his priests who serve before God his Father. Give to him everlasting glory! He rules forever and ever! Amen!"

"Oh, holy, holy, holy Lord!
Whom angel hosts adore;
When shall I join in raptured strains?
The bright celestial choir?
In pity view a sinful worm,
A prisoner here below;
A pilgrim journeying through the land,
Of darkness, sin, and woe.
Ten thousand voices round your throne,
Unite in hymns divine;
'Salvation to the Lamb!' they cry,
As high in bliss they shine.
Fain would I now begin the song,
To you my God and Friend;
Then mingle with the choirs above,
In praise which never shall end!"

THE SOCIETY

"You have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to thousands of **angels** in joyful assembly. You have come to the assembly of **God's firstborn children**, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to **God himself**, who is the judge of all people. And you have come to the spirits of the redeemed in heaven who have now been made perfect. You have come to Jesus, the one who mediates the new covenant between God and people, and to the sprinkled blood, which graciously forgives instead of crying out for vengeance as the blood of Abel did." Hebrews 12:22-24

The society of Immanuel's land forms a principal part of celestial happiness. Were a saint to be excluded from the society of the upper sanctuary, he could not be happy though surrounded by all the glories of the heavenly Jerusalem. Heaven is a state of sweet, uninterrupted communion. There the redeemed will meet in blissful harmony, no more to separate. There, they shall meet with the people of God who have lived in every age of the world; there they shall converse with those bright angelic beings that never sinned; and there they shall have the blissful society and glorious presence of Him whom their souls love above every sublunary object- they shall be forever with the Lord.

The contemplation of heavenly society should lead every reader to seek the happy shores of that world where all the inhabitants are united in one sweet bond of affection and love. We shall briefly notice the PURE AND PERFECT SOCIETY THAT THE REDEEMED ARE TO ENJOY THROUGH COUNTLESS AGES, in Immanuel's land.

1. In heaven, the saints shall have the society of their REDEEMED BRETHREN of every age and nation. There, we shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of Immanuel. We shall meet with the excellent of the earth. We shall be associated with Patriarchs and Prophets- with Apostles and Martyrs- with all the lovers of the Savior. And what a blessed society will this be, where every heart is full of love and every tongue flowing with praise!

Can a doubt be entertained that the saints will know one another in glory? Surely not. If the disciples knew Moses and Elijah standing on

Mount Tabor, may we not expect to know them too, when standing on the Mount of God? Paul tells the Thessalonians that they are his hope, and joy, and crown of rejoicing at the coming of the Lord; and when he would comfort those who were mourning the loss of pious friends, he sets before them the blessed hope of meeting them on that great and joyous morning when the dead in Christ shall burst the fetters of the grave and arise to immortality.

Nothing will be lacking to perfect the happiness of the redeemed in glory. We may then anticipate the most delightful associations- the most intimate acquaintances. O how delightful will it be to converse with Moses and Elijah, with David and Isaiah, with Paul and the twelve Apostles of the Lamb; to hear from their own lips the tale of their wonderful history! How joyful will such society be! When we land on the shores of glory we shall enjoy the society of all those faithful ambassadors of the cross of Jesus, who proclaimed salvation to a dying world. There we shall be associated with such men as Luther, Calvin, Baxter, Flavel, Owen, Watts, Doddridge, Edwards, Payson, Chalmers and McCheyne; men who were so strongly attached to the cause of Christ, and so entirely devoted to his service. All the ransomed of the Lord shall dwell together in one happy home!

In the word of God heaven is represented as a social state: "After this I saw a great multitude, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white and held palm branches in their hands." We shall have the most endeared society in the world of glory. We shall meet again, on the peaceful shore, those dear friends with whom we took sweet council together, and went to the house of God in company, until death parted us. How joyful will that meeting be, when we shall mingle again with our Christian relatives in the Celestial Sanctuary! "All who are victorious will become pillars in the Temple of my God, and they will never have to leave it. And I will write my God's name on them, and they will be citizens in the city of my God—the new Jerusalem that comes down from heaven from my God. And they will have my new name inscribed upon them."

In Immanuel's land, there is no more parting, and there the word "Farewell" never breaks the heart. What a consolation does this blessed truth administer to the bereaved Christian! Perhaps the eyes of such are now resting on these lines; if so, we say to you, dear reader- "And now, brothers and sisters, I want you to know what will happen to the Christians who have died so you will not be full of sorrow like people who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus comes, God will bring back with Jesus all the Christians who have died." Be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises; and very soon you will reach the peaceful shores of glory, and meet your godly relatives in blissful harmony and adoring praise. "Therefore comfort one another with these words."

2. In the celestial world, the saints shall have the society of holy angels- AN INNUMERABLE COMPANY OF ANGELS. Those ministering spirits who watched over our footsteps on earth, will be our companions in glory. With them we shall unite in the contemplation of redemption, and join in the praises of Immanuel, singing in a mighty chorus: "The Lamb is worthy—the Lamb who was killed. He is worthy to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing."

"And then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea. They also sang: 'Blessing and honor and glory and power belong to the one sitting on the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever.'"

3. But the crowning bliss of heaven is THE ENJOYMENT OF GOD-Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In those bright realms, we shall enjoy the society of our Heavenly FATHER; we shall see his face. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." "And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads." This blissful sight and enjoyment of God is the perfection of happiness- all that the soul desires. No heart can conceive how sweet that communion between a holy God and redeemed saints will be in the mansions of bliss. There, God will be near his people in a peculiar manner, to bless them with his glorious presence- to comfort them with the full assurance of his love, and the eternal smiles of his

countenance. "I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, 'Look, the home of God is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will remove all of their sorrows, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. For the old world and its evils are gone forever.'"

Standing before his throne, and seeing his face in righteousness, we shall behold the glorious manifestation of his grace and love beaming upon us to all eternity! When we enter the portals of glory, we shall see the King of Zion in his beauty, and be perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of his endearing society through heaven's eternal day.

"There shall I see your smiling face,
And never, never sin,
There, from the rivers of your grace,
Drink, endless pleasures in."

4. The saints shall have the society of CHRIST IN GLORY. This is the principal attraction of the heavenly world. In those blessed regions, dwells the glorious Savior with his people. "He who sits on the throne will live among them and shelter them." Oh! to dwell in the presence of him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood! What heart can conceive the unutterable joy! The presence of Jesus makes the heaven of the believer. It is the heartfelt desire of every renewed soul to be with Christ- to enjoy his society. The saints never feel themselves happy until they are with Him, who is, in their estimate, the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely.

The presence of Jesus is the very center of heavenly bliss! It is the felicity- the glory of the saints above. In the presence of our Immanuel there is fullness of joy, and pleasures for evermore. When the Christian meditates on the glories of the Savior- when he considers that this adorable Savior died for him- when he reflects that he is soon to dwell with Him in the courts of Paradise, no wonder that he should soar on the wings of faith, beyond the visions of a mortal scene, and exclaim with the Psalmist, "Whom have I in heaven but you? I desire you more than anything on

earth. My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak, but God remains the strength of my heart; he is mine forever!"

The sweet thought of the society of Jesus in glory made Paul long to be dissolved, that he might be with his Savior. "For to me, living is for Christ, and dying is even better. Yet if I live, that means fruitful service for Christ. I really don't know which is better. I'm torn between two desires: Sometimes I want to live, and sometimes I long to go and be with Christ. That would be far better for me."

The blessed hope of entering into the immediate presence of a loving Savior, made the martyrs pass through flames to the portals of bliss; and it will make every one who knows and is fully assured that his Redeemer lives, meet death with a smile. When the Christian knows that to die is only to depart and be with Christ, no wonder that he should exclaim with his departing breath, in transports of joy, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"

The redeemed will ever enjoy the glorious presence and blissful society of the Lord Jesus, in mansions of endless felicity. "So shall we ever be with the Lord." "Where I am," says Christ, "there shall also my servant be." And again, "Father, I want these whom you've given me to be with me, so they can see my glory. You gave me the glory because you loved me even before the world began!" This is heaven, the glorious habitation of the redeemed.

To enjoy sweet communion with a glorified Savior, is to be in a state of perfect happiness. This unspeakable blessedness awaits all the friends of Jesus in a world of glory. O happy thought! When the bright morning of the resurrection shall dawn upon our enraptured souls, we shall behold, with our bodily eyes, that Savior who once left the realms of bliss and poured out his precious blood on Calvary for our redemption! How lovely and attractive will he then appear as our Redeemer! How will his glory shine in the celestial sanctuary! And how will our souls burn with seraphic love, and rise in adoration and praise when we shall behold him as he is, on his heavenly throne, radiant in glory; when we shall see his hands and feet, and side and head, which were once wounded for our

transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; when we shall forever bask in the light of his life-giving countenance, and taste through eternity the sweetness of his immortal love! What fountains of joy and rivers of pleasure will emanate from his blissful presence to exhilarate our happy spirits while eternal ages roll on!

Dear believer, in a little while your eyes shall behold the King in his beauty, and the glorious land that is afar off.

"Hail, sovereign love that first began,
The scheme to rescue fallen man;
Hail matchless free eternal grace,
That gave my soul a hiding place.
Against the God who rules the sky,
I fought with hand uplifted high,
Despised the mention of His grace,
Too proud to seek a hiding place.
Enwrapped in thick Egyptian night,
And fond of darkness more than light,
Madly I ran the sinful race,
Secure without a hiding place.
But thus the eternal counsel ran,
'Almighty Love, arrest that man!'
I felt the arrows of distress,
And found I had no hiding place.
Indignant justice stood in view,
To Sinai's fiery mount I flew,
But Justice cried with frowning face,
'This mountain is no hiding place!'
Ere long a heavenly voice I heard,
And Mercy's angel form appeared.
Who led me on with gentle pace,
To Jesus Christ, my hiding place.
On Him Almighty vengeance fell,
That must have sunk a world to hell;
He bore it for a chosen race,
And thus became their hiding place.

Should storms of sevenfold vengeance roll,
And shake this earth from pole to pole;
No flaming bolt could daunt my face,
For Jesus is my hiding place.
A few more rolling suns at most,
Shall land me safe on heaven's coast.
There I shall sing the song of grace,
To Jesus Christ, my hiding place!
A few more rolling suns, at most,
Will land you on fair Canaan's coast.
Then you shall sing the song of grace,
And see your Savior face to face."

THE PERPETUITY OF BLISS

"And they shall reign **forever and ever.**" Rev. 22:5.

"O blest scenes of permanent delight!
Full, above measure! lasting, beyond bound!
A perpetuity of bliss, is bliss."

The glory of Immanuel's land will shine with increasing splendor through eternity! The bliss of heaven is eternal. This stamps an infinite value on all celestial enjoyments. How noble are those pleasures which are to endure forever! Such are the pleasures which are at God's hand. They never fade. Forever is attached to every enjoyment in Immanuel's land. Eternity is the measure of the saint's bliss. "And they shall reign forever and ever."

That happy land which we have been describing in this little volume is an eternal world. It is an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fades not away. How different from this earthly abode are those bright mansions in our Father's kingdom! How fleeting are the pleasures of time. This world itself, with all its grandeur, is passing away. Mutability,

and decay and dissolution are indelibly written on all beneath the skies. Every object around us feels the withering touch of time, and fades beneath its corroding energy. The proudest monuments of antiquity have crumbled into dust, and the most powerful nations and cities of other days have been swept from the face of the earth, and over them oblivion hangs its dismal mantle.

But eternity is inscribed on the gates of Paradise; and an eternal weight of glory crowns all the inhabitants of Immanuel's land. There they will ever dwell in an eternity of bliss! O what ineffable delight must spring up in the souls of the redeemed in glory, when they contemplate eternity! How sweet will that solemn word be to those happy spirits before the throne! As they look forward into the boundless ocean, they see- they fear no end to their bliss. While ages of glory roll on, their happiness will be unbounded, and eternal. When millions of ages shall have run their expansive rounds, the inhabitants of Immanuel's land will still be young in immortality, and before them will still roll an eternity of glory.

The mansions of our Father's house are eternal. The blessedness- the joy- the glory- the rest- the employment- the society, of Immanuel's land are also as lasting as eternity itself. Let that solemn word eternity, impress upon your mind the importance of salvation. If you are saved, it is with an everlasting salvation; if you are lost, you are lost forever! Said a dear dying saint to the writer, as she gave her parting look, "Think often of Eternity; that short word, Eternity! Oh! what does it not comprehend?"

We would also entreat you with the utmost compassion for your immortal soul, to "think often of Eternity." Eternity is yours; you are an heir of immortality. You must soon enjoy a perpetuity of bliss or of woe. O be entreated to forsake the world and cleave closely to Jesus! Live to Him who loved you with an everlasting love, and when death shall terminate your earthly course, the portals of heaven will open for your reception, and eternity, with all its untold glories will burst upon your ransomed spirit, and you shall be ever with the Lord!

HEAVENLY MEDITATION

"There is a place of sacred rest,
Far, far beyond the skies.
Where beauty smiles eternally,
And pleasure never dies.

O, my soul, rise on the wings of meditation, and survey the glories of Immanuel's land! Look beyond the dim visions of mortality- beyond the swellings of Jordan- beyond the gloomy grave, and behold, with the eye of faith, those delectable mountains where the city of our God shines in more than earthly splendor; and where millions of happy saints are to reign in glory, while infinite ages roll away. This is our happy dwelling place- our Father's house. How brightly those celestial mansions shine, irradiated by the glory of Immanuel! No cloud rests on these peaceful dwellings. There all is light and joy. Our Heavenly Father is there; and in his gracious smile there is joy unspeakable and full of glory. There we shall rest in Abraham's bosom. There vine shall dwell with that Friend who "loves at all times;"- there the Savior will be in our midst, to refresh our souls with the glorious manifestations of his eternal love. He will appear in perfect beauty from Zion's holy hill. There Sharon's lovely rose will bloom in everlasting day.

"Oh! blessed Spirit, to my heart
This dear celestial flower impart;
With joy I'll prize the Savior here,
Then go to heaven and view him there."

In glory, Christ shall appear in all the loveliness of his person and character. The presence of Him who loved us, and gave himself for us, will make a sweet, glorious heaven indeed. Clad in the spotless robes of redeeming righteousness, we shall follow the Lamb to living fountains of waters- to perennial streams of pleasures- to boundless oceans of joys; and in the enjoyment of the Savior's presence we shall be perfectly happy. Within us, all will be peace; around us, all will be glorious. Immanuel's land is a place of unfading beauty! Eternal spring blooms in the realms of

endless day.

"How unlike this state below!
There the flowers unwithering grow,
There no chilling blasts annoy,
All is love, and bloom, and joy."

How sweet for the weary Christian pilgrim, while passing through this wilderness scene, to think of that blessed abode! Dear follower of Jesus, meditate much on heaven- your happy home. Think of the rapturous delight you must experience in the courts of Paradise, while vast eternity glides along! O, what ecstatic joy must reign in the ransomed family of the Lord when they are admitted to see the King in his beauty; when they come to dwell forever in the Paradise of God! With joy anticipate that glorious hour, when your happy spirit, freed from its clay tabernacle, shall take its flight to those pure regions of bliss, where it shall receive a crown of glory that fades not away.

"Oh, glorious hour, it comes with speed!
When we, from sin and darkness freed,
Shall see the God who died for man,
And praise him more than angels can."

Live with heaven always in view. Endeavor to obtain a glimpse of the happy land, and in a little while you will have reached the blissful coast. You will soon enjoy the refreshing breezes of the saint's rest. One step more and you will have gained the happy shores of Immanuel's land, where you shall tread with your Redeemer the ceaseless round of eternity! In view of such blessedness, who would not exclaim in joyful tones, "Come, Lord Jesus! Come quickly!" O, that the happy hour was come when we shall rest with Jesus in the Paradise of God!

In the blessed hope of a glorious immortality, let us look beyond this dying world, and gaze on the glories of our heavenly home, until hope is turned into fruition, and faith into vision. Let us long for the sight of that blissful city- that happy home in which we are to spend a glorious eternity.

"And now I entrust you to God and the word of his grace—his message that is able to build you up and give you an inheritance with all those he has set apart for himself." Hoping to meet you on the shores of Immanuel's land, where the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall feed us, and lead us unto living fountains of waters; where God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes; and where we shall sing the song of redeeming love through countless ages of glory. I would, until then, leave you in the tender and compassionate arms of Jesus, the Friend of Sinners.

"Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
Would God I were with thee!
Oh that my sorrows had an end,
Your joys that I might see!
Your walls are made of precious stone,
Your bulwarks, diamond square
Your gates are made of Orient pearl;
O God, that I were there!
O happy harbor of God's saints!
O sweet and pleasant soil!
In you no sorrows can be found,
No grief, no care, no toil.
No dimming cloud o'ershadows you;
No gloom nor darksome night,
But every soul shines as the sun,
For God himself gives light.
Lord, in my forehead plant your name
And take me hence away,
That I may dwell with you in bliss,
And sing your praise for aye!
Jerusalem! my happy home.
O how I long for thee,
Then shall my labors have an end,
When once your joys I see."

Addendum. This much loved poem was extracted from the letters of Samuel Rutherford (a puritan pastor in Anwoth, Scotland in the 1600's).

IMMANUEL'S LAND

The sands of time are sinking,
The dawn of Heaven breaks,
The summer morn I've sighed for,
The fair sweet morn awakes:
Dark, dark has been the midnight,
But dayspring is at hand,
And glory-glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

Oh! well it is for ever,
Oh! well for evermore,
My nest hung in no forest
Of all this death-doomed shore:
Yes, let the vain world vanish,
As from the ship the strand,
And glory-glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

There the Red Rose of Sharon
Unfolds its heartsome bloom,
And fills the air of Heaven
With ravishing perfume.
Oh! to behold it blossom,
While by its fragrance fanned
Where glory-glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

The King there in His beauty,
Without a veil, is seen,
It were a well-spent journey,
Though seven deaths lay between.
The Lamb, with His fair army,

Does on Mount Zion stand,
And glory-glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

Oh! Christ He is the Fountain,
The deep sweet well of love!
The streams on earth I've tasted,
More deep I'll drink above:
There, to an ocean fullness,
His mercy does expand,
And glory-glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

Even Anwoth was not heaven;
Even preaching was not Christ;
And in my sea-beat prison
My Lord and I held tryst:
And aye my murkiest storm-cloud
Was by a rainbow spanned
Caught from the glory dwelling
In Immanuel's land.

But that He built a heaven
Of His surpassing love,
A little New Jerusalem,
Like to the one above,-
"Lord, take me o'er the water,"
Had been my loud demand,
"Take me to love's own country,
Unto Immanuel's land."

But flowers need night's cool darkness
The moonlight and the dew;
So Christ, from one who loved it,
His shining oft withdrew;
And then for cause of absence,
My troubled soul I scanned-

But glory, shadeless, shineth
In Immanuel's land.

The little birds of Anwoth
I used to count them blest,
Now, beside happier altars
I go to build my nest:
O'er these there broods no silence,
No graves around them stand,
For glory, deathless, dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

Fair Anwoth by the Solway,
To me thou sill art dear!
E'en from the verge of Heaven
I drop for thee a tear.
Oh! if one soul from Anwoth
Meet me at God's right hand,
My Heaven will be two Heavens,
In Immanuel's land.

I've wrestled on toward Heaven,
'Gainst storm, and wind, and tide,
Now, like a weary traveler,
That leaneth on his guide,
Amid the shades of evening,
While sinks life's ling'ring sand,
I hail the glory dawning
From Immanuel's land.

Deep water crossed life's pathway,
The hedge of thorns was sharp;
Now these lie all behind me,
Oh! for a well-tuned harp!
Oh! to join Hallelujah
with yon triumphant band,
Who sing, where glory dwelleth,

In Immanuel's land.

With mercy and with judgment
My web of time He wove,
And aye the dews of sorrow
Were lustered with His love.
I'll bless the hand that guided,
I'll bless the heart that planned,
When throned where glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

Soon shall the cup of glory
Wash down earth's bitterest woes,
Soon shall the desert-briar
Break into Eden's rose.
The curse shall change to blessing,
The name on earth that's banned,
Be graven on the white stone
In Immanuel's land.

Oh! I am my Beloved's,
And my Beloved is mine!
He brings a poor vile sinner
Into His "House of wine."
I stand upon His merit,
I know no other stand,
Not e'en where glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

I shall sleep sound in Jesus
Filled with His likeness rise,
To live and to adore Him,
To see Him with these eyes
'Tween me and resurrection
But Paradise does stand;
Then, then for glory dwelling
In Immanuel's land!

The Bride eyes not her garment
But her dear Bridegroom's face;
I will not gaze at glory,
But on my King of Grace,
Not at the crown He giveth,
But on His pierced hand:
The Lamb is all the glory
Of Immanuel's land.

I have borne scorn and hatred,
I have borne wrong and shame,
Earth's proud ones have reproached me,
For Christ's thrice blessed name,
Where God is seal set fairest
They've stamped their foulest brand;
But judgment shines like noonday
In Immanuel's land.

They've summoned me before them,
But there I may not come,
My Lord says, "Come up hither,"
My Lord says, "Welcome Home!"
My kingly King, at His white throne,
My presence does command,
Where glory-glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

Wanderings of a Pilgrim

This World a Wilderness, and the Christian a Pilgrim

PREFACE

The design of this essay is to contemplate the Christian's journey through the wilderness of this world to a better land, even the Heavenly Canaan— to point out, briefly, the way by which the Captain of our Salvation leads his followers to glory. It has been the grand object of the author to make the reader feel that he is a stranger and a pilgrim on earth— to make him realize the solemn truth, that a man's life is vanity; that his days are as a shadow which passes away; that mutability and dissolution are the characteristics of all sublunary objects; that, "All, on earth, is shadow; all beyond is substance."

When we look at the brevity and vanity of human life, we may well exclaim, in the beautiful and touching reflection of Edmund Burke, "What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue!" And in the similar impressive language of Patrick Henry, "I am but a poor worm of the dust, as fleeting and unsubstantial as the shadow of the cloud that flies over the fields, and is remembered no more!" Or we may rather open the pages of Holy Writ, and say, with the wisest of men, "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity;" and with other inspired penmen, "As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field so he flourishes; for the wind passes over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more." "For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away."

Amid the excitement and bustle of a busy world, it is to be feared that the Christian too often forgets his true character as a

pilgrim, journeying to mansions of glory in the skies. Too apt is he to place his affections upon those terrestrial objects by which he is surrounded in his pilgrimage. How often is this the case with the young Christian, over whom the world, with its delusive pleasures, exercises such a fascinating power. The author would earnestly and affectionately entreat the young reader to pause with this solemn reflection, 'I am but a traveler here.' Remember that you are passing rapidly through a scene of shadows and death to a state of eternal realities. O, then, we beseech you to live, as God's dear children, above the world, with your eye directed to that blessed home in your Heavenly Father's House, where the wicked shall cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest.

Should the few plain words here written be the means of inducing any to pass the time of their sojourning here in the fear of God- of persuading them to live and walk by faith in Christ- to rely, entirely, on his atoning blood for salvation- the author will desire no other reward than the happiness of knowing that he has been an humble instrument in the hand of God, for doing good.

This essay is now cast, as a mite into the treasury of Biblical literature, and commended to the blessing of Heaven. May it cheer the Christian pilgrim as he journeys through this world of sin and sorrow, and lead him to strive more earnestly for the glory, honor, and immortality of heaven- to cleave more closely to Jesus, and to labor more zealously in his cause, so that, when he comes to pass the valley of life he may enter the abodes of immortal glory, and receive the Savior's plaudit and welcome, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!" "Then the King will say to those on the right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'" Matthew 25:34

This World a Wilderness, and the Christian a Pilgrim

For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding. 1 Chron. 29:15

We are here for only a moment, visitors and strangers in the land as our ancestors were before us. Our days on earth are like a shadow, gone so soon without a trace. 1 Chron. 29:15

We are aliens and strangers in your sight, as were all our forefathers. Our days on earth are like a shadow, without hope. 1 Chron. 29:15

Beyond this darksome valley of tears and death there lies a bright and joyous region of immortality, where weary pilgrims meet to stray no more. In that happy land their wanderings will have forever terminated, and they shall sit down in everlasting repose under the delightful shadow of the Tree of Life, in the midst of the paradise of God, and enjoy, through the blissful ages of glory, the presence and smiles of that Friend and Savior who, in the tenderest love for them, once poured out his own most precious blood on Calvary, that he might present them, faultless, before the throne of Heaven!

O how transcendently glorious must be the future eternal home of the Christian pilgrim! On those golden plains beyond the river of death, rays of divine glory are beaming in full effulgence. There, the Sun of Righteousness is shining in all his meridian splendor, making eternity one constant noontide of untold and indescribable glory and blessedness— a day without clouds. There, our Immanuel shall be as the "light of the morning when the sun rises, even a morning without clouds."

Eternal day will dawn without a cloud. No gloom or darkness will ever overspread those blissful realms beyond the shores of time. The celestial world will always be irradiated by the glory of God and the Lamb, and the redeemed shall forever bask in the gladsome sunshine of Infinite Love. In that bright home of pilgrims, the Savior will conduct his ransomed ones to living fountains of waters— streams of immortal joys, and God shall wipe away all tears. In the presence of Jesus there is fullness of joy; at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore. Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has the human heart ever conceived those things which God has prepared for those who love him.

An exceeding and eternal weight of glory will crown every pilgrim who has found the happy shores of Immanuel's Land. In the Palace of the King of kings, all will be perfectly blessed, and from that "building of God, that house not made with hands," there shall be no more going out; but we shall forever be with the Lord, beholding his glory and enjoying the soul-ravishing manifestations of his endearing love. O, happy abode of Zion's pilgrims! O, sweet and pleasant world, where the balmy zephyrs of Heaven refresh the weary soul; where there flows not a tear; where there enters not a pain; where death itself shall be swallowed up in victory! This is the heritage of those who fear the Lord.

But before our feet stand on the blissful shores of the heavenly Canaan, we have to pass through a WILDERNESS scene. This world is that wilderness, where Zion's pilgrims wander until they are taken home to glory. It is a thorny pathway that leads to the realms of eternal day; but, by the grace of God, the Christian is enabled to hold on the good way with joy, until he passes through the wilderness and over Jordan, more than a conqueror through Jesus, and takes up his seraphic song of triumph amid the undying splendors of immortality.

In this little volume it is our design, as has been stated. to contemplate the Christian in his pilgrimage to the promised

land- the happy home of all the true followers of Jesus. In this chapter there are two prominent ideas which recur in our mind, and which deserve our serious consideration.

First, This world is a wilderness.

Second, The Christian is a pilgrim here.

I. THIS WORLD IS A WILDERNESS

To every child of God this world, with all its conceived pleasures, is nothing but a wilderness— far from his Father's House; far from that goodly land which he so ardently longs to see and to possess. This is the view which every saint takes of earth; and it is a just one. What the wilderness was to the children of Israel in their journey to the promised land, this decaying scene is to the believer in his progress heavenward. It is not his rest; it is not his home. On the contrary, it is a wilderness world of trouble, from which he is coming up out of, and traveling to the mansions above. The dark, rugged pathway lies through imminent dangers and difficulties, which sometimes rise like mountains before the Christian pilgrim, and threaten to retard his march to the land of immortality.

But it is a blessed consolation to know that Jesus guards the way to Mount Zion; that he will allow no evil to befall us; that even here, in this valley of tears, all things shall work together for our good. The sorrows and bereavements of life render this earth a trying wilderness world to the child of God. Here, the winds of adversity and floods of sorrow sweep along our path, making us long to reach the blissful hill Of Zion, where "no chilling blasts annoy," where all is blooming with immortal love and peace. Here on earth, we are almost constantly distressed with difficulties, cares, pains, and griefs, which render this a weary land— "a land of deserts and of pits, a land of drought, and of the shadow of death."

It is SIN that makes this world a wilderness to the saint. On account of the sin in his heart, he often faints, and is ready to die; he feels that this is indeed a valley of weeping, and longs to

arrive at the borders of the wilderness, that he may cross into Canaan. Besides all this, he has to encounter, in his journey, violent opposition from an ungodly, persecuting world. This makes him cry out, with the Psalmist, "How I suffer among these scoundrels of Meshech! It pains me to live with these people from Kedar! I am tired of living here among people who hate peace." In the world, there are fightings without, and fears within. How unlike this dark abode of sin and misery are those radiant mansions far beyond the starry sky! There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest.

2. THE CHRISTIAN IS A PILGRIM HERE

He has only a temporary residence in this valley of tears; his abiding home is in that world "where momentary ages are no more." Now he is on his journey to those tearless, blissful regions where he is to spend the ceaseless, revolving ages of eternity. When the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they had no permanent residence, but were continually roving about from place to place; journeying to that goodly land which flowed with milk and honey, and which was then the glory of all lands; "For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land of flowing streams and pools of water, with springs that gush forth in the valleys and hills. It is a land of wheat and barley, of grapevines, fig trees, pomegranates, olives, and honey. It is a land where food is plentiful and nothing is lacking."

So the believer is a pilgrim on earth, with no continuing city, nor certain place of abode, traveling through a dreary wilderness to that city which shines in the highest noon of glory; to that land of blessedness and immortality, where perennial streams of bliss issue from the eternal Fountain of Life to refresh the weary soul, and where we may freely eat of the fruit of the Tree of Life, in the midst of the paradise of God. How impressive is the language of

Moses to Hobab, in the wilderness: "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you." The hosts of Israel, instead of making their abode in the waste howling wilderness, were marching forward to obtain possession of that land which the Lord "swore unto their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give unto them and to their seed after them."

Like those ancient pilgrims, we have a promised land in view, and onward is our motto. Instead of seeking our home and our happiness in a perishing world, we are pressing on to that glorious kingdom which Jesus, in his boundless love, has gone to prepare for our reception, and which he has promised to bestow on all those who love him; for he says: "I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." And again; "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." So the Christian pilgrim, animated by such precious promises, has good hope, through grace, of gaining the happy shores of Canaan; of possessing the heavenly inheritance— of making his eternal abode in the courts of Paradise; and of sitting down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, at the banquet of redeeming love, in the kingdom of God.

With such glorious prospects in view, no wonder that he should look upon earth as a barren, homeless world; that he should feel like a stranger and sojourner in it. No wonder that he should speed his earthly flight to reach the blissful skies. We are entreated by a compassionate Savior to seek the better country. In the wilderness, the divine injunction to the children of Israel was to march forward to the land of promise land. The Lord said to Moses, "Now that you have brought these people out of Egypt, lead them to the land I solemnly promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I told them long ago that I would give this land to their descendants."

The same solemn command, reminding us of our short

pilgrimage on earth, is sounding in our ears. It is the entreating voice of the Savior, calling upon us to forsake this present evil world, and seek our portion in the fair realms of eternal day. It is a voice of compassion and love that says to us, "Arise, and depart; for this present world is not your rest. Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness." The Christian pilgrim obeys the divine injunction; sets forward on his journey; leaves the world, looks beyond this dying scene, gazes on the celestial Canaan, until its glories beam upon his soul, until he breathes the pure atmosphere of the upper world, until his ear hears the glorious melody of heaven and his eye catches a glimpse of the king in his beauty, and of the land that is afar off.

O says the weary pilgrim, as onward he journeys with his eye directed towards the heavenly Canaan. In yonder glorious world is my rest and abiding home. Yes—
"There is my house and portion fair;
My treasure and my heart are there,
And my abiding home;
For me my elder brethren stay,
And angels beckon me away,
And Jesus bids me come!"

The Christian confesses that he is a pilgrim here. All the children of Zion- all who have ever traveled to the Canaan on high, have acknowledged that they were strangers and pilgrims in this wilderness world. Of those ancient worthies who died in faith- in the bright hope of a blessed immortality beyond the darksome grave, and who are held up in the precious volume of inspiration, for our imitation in the Christian life- it is said, they "confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." To this land of shadows and of death, their views were not confined. No. They looked higher than earth. "They were looking for a better place, a heavenly homeland. That is why God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a heavenly city for them." Of Abraham, it is said, "And even when he reached the land God promised him, he lived there by faith—for

he was like a foreigner, living in a tent. And so did Isaac and Jacob, to whom God gave the same promise. Abraham did this because he was confidently looking forward to a city with eternal foundations, a city designed and built by God."

The earthly Canaan was but a type of the heavenly; and therefore the patriarchs, overlooking the passing scenes of a sublunary world, elevated their views to the true land of promise beyond the skies. In contemplating his present state, each child of God is ready to exclaim with the Psalmist, when addressing his Heavenly Father in earnest prayer, "Hear my prayer, O Lord! Listen to my cries for help! Don't ignore my tears. For I am a stranger with you—a traveler passing through, as my ancestors were before me." His feelings with regard to earthly objects are beautifully expressed in the glowing language of the Christian poet—

"Nothing on earth I call my own;
A stranger to the world, unknown,
I all their goods despise
I trample on their whole delight,
And seek a city out of sight,
A city in the skies!
Not a foot of land do I possess;
No cottage in this wilderness:
A poor, wayfaring man;
I lodge awhile in tents below,
Or gladly wander to and fro,
Till I my Canaan gain!"

Thus the Christian pursues his journey and pitches his tent nearer and nearer Canaan, until he reaches the banks of Jordan, where some appointed herald of glory is ready to conduct his happy spirit to the bosom of Abraham- to the mansions of rest- to the paradise of God.

The believer's life is a PROGRESSIVE one. All the true followers

of Jesus are daily advancing in their journey towards the realms of peace. They go on, from strength to strength, through this wilderness scene, until every one of them appears before God in the celestial Zion. Their earnest and continued endeavors are to get nearer Heaven, to become ripe for glory; hence, forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those which are before, they press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. They are not satisfied with their present life in the wilderness. It has but little attractions for them. They are not conformed to the world. They do not think of making their abode in this valley of weeping; but onward they travel towards the land of Canaan- that pleasant region which lies beyond the Jordan of death. Their course is upward.

"All Christians," says the pious McCheyne, "are coming up out of the wilderness. Sabbath days are like milestones- marking our way. Every real Christian is making progress. If the sheep are on the shoulder of the shepherd, they are always getting nearer the fold. With some, the shepherd takes long steps. Dear friends, you should be advancing, getting higher, nearer to Canaan, riper for glory. In the south of Russia, the country is of vast plains, rising by steppes. Dear friends, you should get on to a higher place, up another step every Sabbath day. In traveling, you never think of making a house in the wilderness. So, dear friends, do not take up your rest here; we are journeying. Let all your endeavors be to get on in your journey."

We would earnestly invite you, gentle reader, to accompany us in our pilgrimage to the heavenly country. We would beseech you, with the utmost compassion for your immortal soul, to forsake the path of death, and follow the way of life- the way to undying glory and felicity. In a word, we would most affectionately say to you as Moses did to Hobab, "We are on our way to the Promised Land. Come with us and we will treat you well, for the Lord has given wonderful promises to Israel!"
Numbers 10:29

Commencement of the Christian's Journey- Difficulties in the Way

"...where they strengthened the believers. They encouraged them to continue in the faith, reminding them that they must enter into the Kingdom of God through many tribulations." Acts 14:22

"Let us adore the grace that seeks
To draw our hearts above!
Attend, 'tis God the Savior speaks,
And every word is love."

No man begins the journey to the heavenly home, until by the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit, his soul is attracted to Christ, the Living Way, the Truth, and the Life. At that happy hour when the heart is opened, and the understanding enlightened to discern spiritual things, the Savior's love is the first to beam in mild, sweet, constraining influence upon the soul of the renewed man. He wonders that he was not able before to discern the beauty, the excellence and glory of Immanuel. Now, Jesus appears to him as the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. Now, he is ready to exclaim, "My beloved is mine, and I his. Whom have I in heaven but you? There is none upon earth that I desire besides you."

Thus enlightened by divine grace, the pilgrim turns from the City of Destruction to the Heavenly Mansions. He leaves the crowded road which leads to eternal darkness and woe, and enters on the narrow pathway that conducts the weary traveler to realms of light and bliss. The star of Bethlehem is his guide; the promises of God's word, his rod and staff; and heaven, his everlasting, happy home. His views are now elevated above the decaying objects around him. His affections are placed upon

things above. He contemplates with rapturous delight the bleeding glories of Immanuel, and the shining abode of Zion's pilgrims in the celestial kingdom. He is risen with Jesus.

He has become a spiritually minded man. He lives and walks by faith in the Son of God. Though in the world, he is no longer of it; but belongs to the kingdom of Jesus Christ. As an heir of glory, as a traveler to the skies, as an expectant of eternal bliss, he looks above and beyond the troublesome scenes of a fleeting pilgrimage. He enjoys the charming and sublime prospect beyond the precincts of time! He beholds in that brighter world, an ocean of glory, without a shore, and without a storm! As the Christian pursues his journey, with his eye fixed on the solemn realities of eternity, earth and sublunary grandeur appear to him as transitory as the morning cloud and early morning dew, compared with those immeasurable ages of bliss, which roll before his transported vision.

A traveler on his journey, loves to cherish the endearing thoughts of home and domestic happiness. Nothing is so dear to him in all his wanderings as the fireside of his fathers— the land of his birth. In like manner, he who has been constrained, by the Savior's love, to begin the blessed journey from the wilderness of this world to the heavenly Canaan, will delight to meditate on the riches and glory of his Father's house, in the pure, unclouded realms of eternal day. The Jerusalem above will be dearer to him than any earthly object. His language will be: "If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its skill upon the harp. May my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth if I fail to remember you, if I don't make Jerusalem my highest joy." In every stage of his pilgrimage, the Christian loves to think of that better land, his true, abiding home, where he shall sing triumphant songs of praise to his Redeemer, and his God.

We have thus hinted at the pleasing view which opens to him from whose eyes the scales of unbelief have fallen— who is enabled to look at eternal things in the light of God's word; and

who has set out upon the Christian's journey, to the celestial city. We shall now notice a few of the difficulties which lie in the way to glory; for no sooner does the pilgrim enter on the path of the just, than he meets with obstacles. We mention three sources from which the Christian may expect to meet with great opposition in fighting the good fight of faith.

1. THE WORLD

The world with its sinful pleasures and enjoyments is calculated to captivate the affections, enchain the heart, and impede the pilgrim's progress to the heavenly rest. A thousand fascinating charms are thrown around his pathway through this bewildering world. In city and in country; on land and on sea- everywhere, the soldier of the cross is surrounded by spiritual dangers and difficulties.

"Yet, the clear path to your abode,
Lies through this horrid land;
Lord, we would trace the dangerous road,
And run at your command."

Love of the world is one great means of retarding our journey to the skies. O, how many have turned aside from following the blessed Jesus by placing all their affections upon this present, fleeting scene, which in a very few years at most, will profit them nothing! "Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world."

See to it, Christian, that you do not love the world. By faith in the cross of Christ, and the bleeding glories of Calvary; this world with all its riches and honors will become a dim and dying object in your view.

"Then, pilgrim, let your joys and fears
On time no longer lean;
But henceforth all your hopes and fears
From earth's affections wean."

Obey the warning voice of mercy if you would reach the blissful shore: "Stop loving this evil world and all that it offers you, for when you love the world, you show that you do not have the love of the Father in you." Notwithstanding the Christian's endeavors to live above the world, and near to God, how often is he compelled to cry out with the Psalmist: "My soul cleaves unto the dust: quicken me according to your word."

"From earth, and all its empty joys,
Blest Jesus, set Me free;
How vain the worldling's gilded toys,
Compared with heaven and thee!
You are my hope, my way, my bliss;
My glory, and my crown;
Descend, O blessed Prince of Peace,
And make my heart your throne."

We must expect to meet with OPPOSITION FROM AN UNBELIEVING WORLD. Those who have their part and portion here do not love those who have chosen a better inheritance above. The world hates a true follower of the Lamb! Jesus was himself the object of their hatred. No wonder then that his followers should meet with the same reception from unbelievers. The Savior says to his disciples: "If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you." It has been truly said that if we are faithful, we must indeed expect reproach; if we boldly confess Christ before men, and steadily maintain that marked distinction which forms the line of separation between the church and the world, we must submit to have our names cast out as evil.

2. THE DEVIL

The Christian pilgrim will meet with opposition from Satan. "For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against the evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against those mighty powers of darkness who rule this world, and against wicked spirits in the heavenly realms." The inspired

writers give us directions how we are to meet and vanquish this arch enemy of souls. "Be careful! Watch out for attacks from the Devil, your great enemy. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for some victim to devour. Take a firm stand against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that Christians all over the world are going through the same kind of suffering you are." "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you". "A final word: Be strong with the Lord's mighty power. Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies and tricks of the Devil. Use every piece of God's armor to resist the enemy in the time of evil, so that after the battle you will still be standing firm. Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray at all times and on every occasion in the power of the Holy Spirit. " Let us follow this advice, and we shall win a glorious victory, and receive an immortal crown. The God of peace shall bruise Satan under our feet shortly.

In the arms of Jesus we shall be safe, eternally safe from the attacks of our subtle adversary. Satan will never be able to pluck a single believing soul from the hands of an Almighty Savior! Animated by such a consideration, let us press forward in our pilgrimage, armed with the panoply of Heaven; and in a little while the Satanic conflict will be over; then we shall take up sweet, unending songs of triumph in that happy place, where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest.

3. THE FLESH

Another enemy, with which the Christian will have to contend until this mortal life shall have put on immortality, is the flesh. As the believer is never perfectly sanctified in this life, the remains of corruption in his heart must be a source of continual annoyance to him in coming up from the wilderness to the land of perfection and bliss. Here, the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. The Canaanites are still in the land; and the soldier of the cross must be always on his guard, lest they surprise and overcome him.

"The remainders of corruption require continual watchfulness and caution, lest they increase and regain their former possession of the heart. Sin still dwelling in the believer, causes that warfare, which must never cease until this body is laid in the grave, never more to harm the disembodied spirit, encircled with heavenly glory." How often has the remaining depravity of the human heart made the good man weep and bend, as under an unendurable load, and long to be freed from the bitter thralldom of sinful flesh! This made Paul cry out in the bitterness of his soul, "Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin?" But almost with the same breath he exclaims, as he sees the Great Deliverer, "Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord."

Here, then, is our strength and deliverance. Jesus is the salvation of Israel. In Him we shall obtain complete dominion over the corruptions of our nature. How reanimating to hear that sweet promise whispered in our ears, while we are still in an enemy's land," My gracious favor is all you need. My power works best in your weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may work through me."

Then, if we would overcome all the difficulties which lie in our pathway to immortal bliss- if we would reach the happy shores of Immanuel's Land- let us follow the advice of the Apostle. "The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature."

What a glorious reward is held forth to him who is true to the cause of Christ throughout his pilgrimage on earth! "Remain

faithful even when facing death, and I will give you the crown of life." O what unutterable bliss awaits the faithful follower of Jesus in that eternal, glorious world toward which they are daily advancing!

And how much is there in the Holy Scriptures to animate us in struggling amid the sorrows and conflicts of the Christian course! They tell us that all the riches and glories of the heavenly Canaan are to be enjoyed through the ceaseless ages of eternity, by those who have overcome by the blood of the Lamb. The cheering language of the Savior is— "To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God." "He who overcomes will not be hurt at all by the second death." "To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it." "He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels." "Him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on him my new name." "To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne." "He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son."

"Oft as I look upon the road
That leads to yonder blest abode,
I feel distressed and fearful;
So many foes the passage throng,
I am so weak and they so strong,
How can my soul be cheerful?
But when I think of him whose power,
Can save me in a trying hour,
And place on Him reliance,

My soul is then ashamed of fear;
And though ten thousand foes appear,
I'll bid them all defiance.
The dangerous road I then pursue,
And keep the glorious prize in view,
With joyful hope elated;
Strong in the Lord, in Him alone,
Where he conducts, I follow on,
With ardor unabated.
O Lord, each day renew my strength,
And let me see your face at length,
With all your people yonder;
With them in heaven your love declare,
And sing your praise forever there,
With gratitude and wonder."

Encouragements- Provision by the Way

"These are the ones who will dwell on high. The rocks of the mountains will be their fortress of safety. Food will be supplied to them, and they will have water in abundance." Isaiah 33:16

"I thirst! O God, great Source of Love!
Infinite Life streams from above,
O give one drop and let me live!
The barren world has nothing to give:
No solace have its streams for me:
I thirst alone for heaven and thee."

When the Israelites were marching through the burning wilderness of Arabia to the promised land, God nourished them with bread from heaven, and with water from a smitten rock. Then he opened the doors of heaven, and rained down manna upon them to eat, and gave them of the bread of heaven. Men

ate angels' food! He sent them food to the full. He opened the rock in the wilderness, and gave them drink as out of the great depths. He brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers.

The same is true, in a spiritual sense, of Zion's pilgrims, who are journeying through this barren wilderness world to the happy Canaan above. They are encircled in the same Everlasting Arms. Their needs are supplied by the same Almighty Hand. They eat of the hidden manna, and drink of the water of life. How beautifully is this comparison illustrated by the Christian poet!

"When Israel by divine command
The pathless desert trod,
They found, though 'twas a barren land,
A sure resource in God.
A cloudy pillar marked their road,
And screened them from the heat;
From the hard rocks the water flowed,
And manna was their meat."
Like them we have a rest in view,
Secure from adverse powers:
Like them we pass a desert, too;
But Israel's God is ours.
Yes, in this barren wilderness,
He is to us the same,
By his appointed means of grace,
As once he was to them."

A gracious God, in the infinitude of his love, has provided ample provision for the refreshment and support of weary pilgrims in passing through this dark valley to the joyous realms of everlasting light. Here, he has instituted the precious ordinances of divine grace and salvation for our joy and happiness until we come to worship Him in His temple above. As our kind Heavenly Father, he has given us the bread of life. Jesus Christ is the true bread from heaven, with which the souls of believers are nourished in their lonely pilgrimage. Says the Savior, "I am

the bread of life. No one who comes to me will ever be hungry again. Those who believe in me will never thirst." "Yes, I am the bread of life! Your ancestors ate manna in the wilderness, but they all died. However, the bread from heaven gives eternal life to everyone who eats it. I am the living bread that came down out of heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live forever; this bread is my flesh, offered so the world may live."

The Israelites, in their wanderings in the wilderness, were fed with manna; but we, in our journey to a better land, partake of the fullness of Jesus, whose flesh is food indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed. Here, in this wilderness,
"Jesus, the bread of life, is given
To be our daily food
We drink a wondrous stream from heaven,
'Tis water, wine, and blood.
Lord, 'tis enough, I ask no more,
These blessings are divine;
I envy not the worldling's store,
If Christ and heaven are mine."

Here, we drink of the living waters of salvation- those streams of immortal joys, which issue from the pierced side of a blessed Redeemer, for the refreshment of thirsty pilgrims, wandering through the deserts of life. The perennial fountain of that river, whose streams make glad the city of our God, is to be found in a suffering Savior; and at this precious Fountain we may quench our thirst forever. "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." Here is the well of endless life.

O thirsty soul, come to a bleeding Savior, and drink, and live forever! You are earnestly invited to come to the Fountain of Life. These living waters are freely offered to all. This is the language of redeeming love, "Is anyone thirsty? Come and drink

—even if you have no money! Come, take your choice of wine or milk—it's all free! Why spend your money on food that does not give you strength? Why pay for food that does you no good? Listen, and I will tell you where to get food that is good for the soul!" "To all who are thirsty I will give the springs of the water of life without charge!" "The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come.' Let each one who hears them say, 'Come.' Let the thirsty ones come—anyone who wants to. Let them come and drink the water of life without charge."

When the children of Israel left the land of Egypt, the Lord guided them through the pathless desert by a pillar of cloud and fire until they were brought to the borders of Canaan. Thus the great Leader of his spiritual Israel has kindled a light in this dark and dreary land to guide his chosen people to that glorious realm on high, where it is said, "The Lord shall be unto you an everlasting light, and your God your glory."

The blessed WORD OF GOD affords the Christian traveler light, comfort, joy, and provision by the way. Says the Psalmist: "Your word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. This is my comfort in my affliction; for your word has quickened me. Your statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage. Your testimonies have I taken as a heritage forever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart. How sweet are your words unto my taste yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth." In the Bible there is everything provided for the needy traveler to Zion. "It embodies all," says an eloquent living divine (Waterbury), "that a Christian in this pilgrimage can need. It is his only chart through this tempestuous life. In trouble, it is his consolation; in prosperity, his monitor; in difficulty, his guide. Amid the darkness of death, and while descending into the shadowy valley, it is the day-star that illuminates his path, makes his dying eye bright with hope, and cheers his soul with the prospect of immortal glory."

Ample provision is set before the pilgrim of Zion in a PREACHED GOSPEL. Here it is that his soul is refreshed with

the richest streams of divine grace. Here, he draws living water out of the wells of salvation with joy. No wonder, then, that the child of God loves, above all other places in this world, the habitation of God's house. No wonder that his language is, "My heart is breaking as I remember how it used to be: I walked among the crowds of worshipers, leading a great procession to the house of God, singing for joy and giving thanks—it was the sound of a great celebration!" "How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord Almighty. I long, yes, I faint with longing to enter the courts of the Lord. With my whole being, body and soul, I will shout joyfully to the living God."

But the most abundant provision is procured for needy pilgrims in THE LORD'S SUPPER. This is a most precious, a most soul-ravishing ordinance of grace. Surely, if there is a time when the Christian is permitted to lie down in green pastures, by the still waters, in this bleak and barren world, it is during communion seasons, when he draws around that holy table, and meditates on the wonders of Calvary. Then it is that his weary soul is refreshed with the abundance of God's grace, and with the goodness of his house. Then it is that he reposes with the greatest delight under the shadow of Jesus, who protects all his people from the burning wrath of an offended God. "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste."

If there is a moment this side of heaven, when the Christian traveler seems to breathe a purer atmosphere than that of earth, it is when seated at the table of the Lord, he takes into his hands the emblems of Immanuel's broken body and shed blood, and, with the eye of faith turned towards Calvary, views that immaculate Savior nailed to the accursed tree, bleeding from every pore— in his unparalleled love, dying for rebel man, and by his vicarious death opening the way to God and to glory.

When the believing communicant appropriates Christ and his righteousness as freely offered in this ordinance, he feels as if his

happy spirit were fanned by the breezes of paradise. It is this appropriating act- this feasting on Christ crucified that refreshes the weary pilgrim infinitely more than all the enjoyments of a dying world. This rich provision satisfies the soul as with marrow and fatness. It fills it with joy, unutterable, indescribable and full of glory. Our poor pen cannot describe the joy and peace which a famishing soul experiences when it eats of the hidden manna, and drinks of the living water. It is impossible to tell how soul-reviving it is, thus to receive a crucified Savior as ours; to have his goodness imparted to our souls.

"How sweet the sacred joy that dwells
In souls renewed by power divine;
Where Jesus all his goodness tells:
Oh! may this joy be ever mine."

Come, then, weary pilgrim, and repose in these green pastures, and bathe in the still waters. You will then be invigorated for treading the pathway through the shadows of earth to that bright, happy region where you shall forever eat of the fruit of the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God; and where you shall drink of that perennial fountain which issues from the throne of the Eternal.

How happy is the condition of Zion's pilgrim even in this land of sorrow! Their needs are all supplied out of Jesus, in whom it has pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell. Their provisions are prepared by the God of all grace; and they are sufficient. "They will be my sheep, grazing in green pastures and on hills that were previously bare, and their pastures shall be in all high places." "They will be my sheep, grazing in green pastures and on hills that were previously bare. They will neither hunger nor thirst. The searing sun and scorching desert winds will not reach them anymore. For the Lord in his mercy will lead them beside cool waters. And I will make my mountains into level paths for them. The highways will be raised above the

valleys. See, my people will return from far away, from lands to the north and west, and from as far south as Egypt. Sing for joy, O heavens! Rejoice, O earth! Burst into song, O mountains! For the Lord has comforted his people and will have compassion on them in their sorrow."

Go then, Christian traveler, on your way to the peaceful shore of glory, singing, with a cheerful heart, the pilgrim's song of Psalm 23—

The Lord is my shepherd;
I have everything I need.
He lets me rest in green meadows;
he leads me beside peaceful streams.
He renews my strength.
He guides me along right paths,
bringing honor to his name.
Even when I walk
through the dark valley of death,
I will not be afraid,
for you are close beside me.
Your rod and your staff
protect and comfort me.
You prepare a feast for me
in the presence of my enemies.
You welcome me as a guest,
anointing my head with oil.
My cup overflows with blessings.
Surely your goodness and unfailing love
will pursue me all the days of my life,
and I will live in the house of the Lord forever.

THE CHRISTIAN PILGRIM IN THE VALLEY OF BACA

"Who passing through **the valley of Baca** make it a well; the rain also fills the pools." Psalm 84:6

"When they walk through **the Valley of Weeping**, it will become a place of refreshing springs, where pools of blessing collect after the rains!" Psalm 84:6

"God, in Israel sows the seed
Of affliction, pain, and toil;
These spring up and choke the weeds
Which would else o'erspread the soil.
Trials make the promise sweet,
Trials give new life to prayer;
Trials bring me to his feet,
Lay me low, and keep me there."

Our pilgrimage to the Heavenly Canaan lies through a valley of weeping. This earth is a valley of tears: and it is a path which all of Zion's pilgrims must tread until they come to that place where the voice of weeping shall no more be heard. "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." Of God's own chosen people, it is said, "You have fed us with sorrow, and made us drink tears by the bucketful." The followers of Jesus must not, therefore, expect try find a smooth road to glory. "You have tested us, O God; you have purified us like silver melted in a crucible. You sent troops to ride across our broken bodies. We went through fire and flood. But you brought us to a place of great abundance."

"Our path is strewed with piercing thorns;
Each step is gained by arduous fight,
Yet wait, till hope's bright morning dawns,
Till darkness changes into light."

Some of the trials which render this world a valley of tears, and which the Christian pilgrim is called to suffer, are, bodily sickness, mental anguish, adversity, and bereavement. Who has

not experienced some of these afflictions? Our limits will permit us to notice only the last mentioned- that of BEREAVEMENT. And whose cheeks have not been moistened by the tears shed for the loss of some dear companion? Who has not, in this land of death, been called to take the last look of some loved associate in his toilsome pilgrimage? To see, perhaps, his dearest friends lowered in the cold, dark grave? O how trying to flesh and blood, is bereavement!

"This is the bitterest of all earthly sorrows. It is the sharpest arrow in the quiver of God. To love tenderly and deeply, and then to have to meet together for the last time on earth; to bid farewell for time; to have all remembrances of home and kindred broken up- this is the reality of sorrow. To look upon that face that shall smile on us no more; to close those eyes that shall see us no more; to kiss those lips that shall speak to us no more; to stand by the cold side of father, mother, brother, sister, friend, yet hear no sound and receive no greeting; to carry to the tomb the beloved of our hearts, and then to return to a desolate home with a blank in one region of our souls which shall never again be filled until Jesus comes with all his saints- this is the bitterness of grief; this is the wormwood and the gall."

This is what the saints of God, as well as the men of the world, are daily called to endure; and this is what renders earth such a valley of tears.

But we would also notice the DESIGN which God has in afflicting the righteous. It is to prepare them for that better land, where there is fullness of joy. It is to draw their affections from earth to heaven- from the wilderness to Canaan. It is to make us mindful of our inheritance above- to make us feel that we are strangers and pilgrims on the earth- to make us cleave to Jesus by faith- to make us meditate on the wonders of his redeeming love- to qualify us for a participation of the joys of the redeemed before the Throne. Our light, momentary affliction works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

"Affliction," says one, "not only profits us much just now, but it will serve us much in eternity. Then we shall discover how much we owe it. All that it is doing for us, we know not now, but we shall know hereafter. It is preparing for us a 'more abundant entrance,' a weightier crown, a whiter robe, a sweeter rest, a home made doubly precious by a long exile and many sufferings here below."

"I wonder," says that godly man of other days, Samuel Rutherford, "I wonder many times that ever a child of God should have a sad heart, considering what the Lord is preparing for them." Says one, "When we shall come home, and enter into the possession of our brother's fair kingdom, and when our heads shall feel the weight of the eternal crown of glory, and when we shall look back to pain and sufferings, then shall we see life and sorrow, to be less than one step or stride from a prison to a glory, and that our little inch of temporal-suffering is not worthy of our first night's welcome home to heaven. However matters go, the worst shall be a tired traveler, and a joyful and sweet welcome home."

But amid all our affliction here we are not without strong consolation. The most precious promises are extended to the mourning pilgrims of Zion. There is One who speaks to them in the tenderest love and compassion. "Sing for joy, O heavens! Rejoice, O earth! Burst into song, O mountains! For the Lord has comforted his people and will have compassion on them in their sorrow." "I, even I, am the one who comforts you" There is an eye that watches over suffering pilgrims. There is a hand that smoothes the rugged passage to the realms of day. There is a Friend in Heaven, who feels for his sorrowful disciples in this valley of tears. Jesus is that Friend who sticks closer than a brother; and his encouraging language to his afflicted followers is, "Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions." "He that goes forth and weeps, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless

come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with Him"

"Beloved, it is well. It is good to be afflicted. Our days of suffering here we call days of darkness; hereafter they will seem our brightest and fairest. In eternity we shall praise Jehovah, most of all for our sorrows and tears. So blessed shall they then seem to us, that we shall wonder how we could ever have wept and sighed." (Horatius Bonar)

There is a joyful 'harvest-home' for weeping pilgrims in New Jerusalem. In that happy home, no tears shall ever flow, through the glorious ages of vast eternity.

"There purity with love appears,
And bliss without alloy;
There those who oft had sown in tears
Shall reap again in joy."

Of those who are marching through this valley of tears to Immanuel's land, our gracious Heavenly Father has said: "They will come home and sing songs of joy on the heights of Jerusalem. They will be radiant because of the many gifts the Lord has given them—the good crops of wheat, wine, and oil, and the healthy flocks and herds. Their life will be like a watered garden, and all their sorrows will be gone." Then shall every tear be wiped away from the faces of all the redeemed before the throne of God.

A consideration of THE BREVITY OF THEIR EARTHLY TRIALS ought to afford relief to weary pilgrims who are looking to Jesus for eternal life. They will not be long in the valley of Baca. They will soon have reached the heights of Mount Zion. Our light affliction is but for a moment. "His anger lasts for a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime! Weeping may go on all night, but joy comes with the morning." How pleasing is the thought that our redemption is every moment drawing nearer. We may well lift up our heads with joy, for the coming of the Lord draws near.

Our journey to the skies is but a short one. We are rapidly advancing to the tearless region. "Every hour that strikes- every morning that dawns, and every evening that darkens around us, brings us nearer to the end of our pilgrimage." A few more tears of sorrow; a few more days of darkness, and nights of weeping, and we shall forever be with the Lord in that better country, where we shall find fullness of joy in the presence of Him who has loved us with an everlasting love- who has washed us from our sins in his own most precious blood, and who will wipe away all tears from our eyes. Then the Lord will be our everlasting light, and the days of our mourning be ended. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

THE CHRISTIAN ON PISGAH'S MOUNT

"Your eyes will see the king in his beauty and view a land that stretches afar." Isaiah 33:17

"Your eyes will see the king in all his splendor, and you will see a land that stretches into the distance." Isaiah 33:17

"I was a groveling creature once,
And basely cleaved to earth;
I lacked the spirit to renounce
The clod that gave me birth.
But God has breathed upon this worm,
And sent me from above,
Wings such as clothe an angel's form;
The wings of joy and love.
With these to Pisgah's top I fly,
And there delighted stand;
To view beneath a shining sky,

The spacious promised land"

Before the children of Israel gained possession of the land of Canaan, they were refreshed with a taste of its delicious fruits. In like manner, the Christian, before he reaches the better country, has many sweet foretastes of celestial joys in the valley of weeping. There are times when he seems to live above the world, and to have nothing but the glories of heaven in his eye. At such delightful seasons, he can adopt the soul-stirring language of Payson: "The celestial city is fully in my view. Its glories beam upon me, its breezes fan me, its odors are wafted to me, its sounds strike upon my ears, and its spirit is breathed into my heart."

The views of the pilgrim, when by faith he surveys the better land, are similar to those of the Christian when showed the Delectable Mountains. How beautifully and strikingly is this described lay the immortal Bunyan: "Then I saw in my dream, that on the morrow he got up to go forward, but they desired him to stay until the next day also; and then, said they, we will, if the day be clear, show you the Delectable Mountains; which, they said, would yet farther and to his comfort, because they were nearer the desired haven than the place where at present he was; so he consented and staid. When the morning came, they took him to the top of the house, and bid him look south. So he did, and behold, at a great distance, he saw a most pleasant mountainous country, beautified with woods, vineyards, fruits of all sorts, flowers also, with springs and fountains, very delectable to behold. Then he asked the name of the country. They said it was Immanuel's land; and it is as common, said they, as this hill is, to and for all the pilgrims. And when you come there, from thence you may see to the gate of the celestial city, as the shepherds that live there will make appear."

We would notice, in a word or two, HOW and WHERE the Christian obtains the most glorious views of that Promised Land which lies beyond the Jordan of death.

1. As Moses obtained a view of the earthly Canaan from the top of Pisgah, so we yet a glimpse of heavenly glory FROM THE MOUNT OF MEDITATION— our spiritual Pisgah. "By meditation," says a pious old divine, "I can converse with God— solace myself in the bosom of my Beloved— bathe myself in rivers of pleasures— tread the paths of my rest— and view the mansions of my eternity. What do you gain, then, O my soul, in this valley of tears? Go up upon the mount, and view the Land of Promise! What can you look for in this wilderness of trouble? Up upon the wing, and take your flight to Heaven— let your thoughts be where your happiness is, and let the heart be where your thoughts are. Though your habitation may be on earth, yet your conversation shall be in Heaven."

2. It is while waiting upon God IN THE COURTS OF HIS HOUSE— while seated at the table of the Lord, that the Christian pilgrim sometimes obtains the brightest views of heaven. It is in the earthly temple of the Lord that we oftentimes obtain a glimpse of the heavenly mansion. Here it is, that a sweet promise has been repeatedly verified to the children of God: "Your eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off." O how delightful is it thus to glance from earth to Heaven— from a dying world to one of immortal bloom— from the turbulent scene of our toil and suffering; to the peaceful mansions of our rest and felicity!

There is nothing that transports the soul of a weary pilgrim like a faith's view of his eternal rest beyond the swelling floods of Jordan.

"How rich the prospect glows
Beyond this vale of tears;
Where crystal water flows,
And verdure crowns the year."

Come then, fellow pilgrim, and survey your everlasting happy home. Ascend the Mount of Pisgah, and behold the glorious land

before you. View the Celestial City, with its twelve gates of pearls, and its streets of gold, enlightened by the glory of God and the Lamb. See the river of pleasure, with its crystal streams, flowing from the Eternal Throne; and the Tree of Life, with its twelve kinds of fruits, standing in the midst of the Paradise. Behold the countless throng of the redeemed before the throne. Hear their sweet, melodious strains, which shall forever gladden the realms above: "All praise to him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by shedding his blood for us. He has made us his kingdom and his priests who serve before God his Father. Give to him everlasting glory! He rules forever and ever! Amen!" "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

"There shall the ransomed throng
A Savior's love record;
And shout, in everlasting song,
Salvation to the Lord!"

Above all, contemplate your blessed Redeemer, seated on his great white throne, encircled with heavenly glory. Look at the King in his beauty! It is the sight of a glorified Savior that will make the heaven of the believer. Endeavor now, by the eye of faith, to behold the Lord Jesus in all his matchless beauty and excellence. Contemplate his glorious character; his infinite mercy; his unparalleled condescension, and his boundless love. There is enough in Jesus to employ the soul in rapturous meditation through a vast eternity— his excellence, his goodness, and his love can never be fathomed. O, then, keep your eye fixed on this adorable Savior, while you sojourn in this valley of tears; and in a little while you shall see him as he is— face to face, and ascribe to him unceasing praise.

How reviving to the weary Christian traveler, from the top of Pisgah, is a view of his distant, happy home in the Heavenly Canaan! His feelings on this delightful spot are well expressed in the following beautiful lines—

"As when the weary traveler gains,
The height of some o'er-looking hill,
His heart revives, if across the plains
He eyes his home, through distant still.
While he surveys the much loved spot,
He slights the space that lies between;
His past fatigues are now forgot,
Because his journey's end is seen.
Thus when the Christian pilgrim views
By faith, his mansion in the skies,
The sight his fainting strength renews,
And wings his speed to reach the prize.
The thought of home, his spirit cheers,
No more he grieves for troubles past;
Nor any future trial fears,
So he may safe arrive at last.
'Tis there, he says, I am to dwell
With Jesus, in the realms of day;
Then I shall bid my cares farewell,
And he will wipe my tears away."

THE POSTURE OF THE CHRISTIAN PILGRIM IN COMING UP FROM THE WILDERNESS OF THIS WORLD

"Who is this that comes up from the wilderness, **leaning upon her beloved?**" Song of Solomon 8:5

"But, firm as on a rock,
The saint on Christ relies;
He smiles in death's dissolving shock,
And mounts into the skies!"

The Jewish church came up from the wilderness, leaning on the

Eternal God for her support. He was the Guide, the Rock, the Salvation of his chosen Israel. "He found them in a desert land, in an empty, howling wasteland. He surrounded them and watched over them; he guarded them as his most precious possession. Like an eagle that rouses her chicks and hovers over her young, so he spread his wings to take them in and carried them aloft on his pinions. The Lord alone guided them; they lived without any foreign gods."

In like manner, the Christian church is passing through the deserts of life, has Israel's God for its Leader. The same gracious eye that watched over the wandering tribes of Israel in their long journey through the Arabian wilderness, is now watching with the tenderest care and love over that chosen band, who have forsaken all for Christ, and who are marching through a changing, terrestrial scene to a higher, brighter, nobler world on high. "But the Lord watches over those who fear him, those who rely on his unfailing love." "He that touches you, touches the apple of his eye." (Anyone who harms you harms my most precious possession.) The same kind hand that led Israel of old to the promised land, guides the humble followers of Jesus to mansions of glory in the skies. "The Lord of hosts is with us." "The eternal God is our refuge; and underneath and around us are the Everlasting Arms."

In the 8th chapter of the Song of Solomon we have the posture of the pilgrim, advancing to the celestial city, beautifully presented to us "Who is this that comes up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" Here we see the blessed object on which the Christian reposes, while passing through this scene of fluctuating and perishing mortality. He relies entirely upon Jesus Christ, the Beloved of his soul. He look to no other source for protection and support. He hopes in no other refuge. His language is, "Lord, to whom would we go? You alone have the words that give eternal life."

We would advert to a few ways in which a believing soul, in

coming up from the wilderness, rests on Jesus, the sinner's Friend.

1. He rests on him for STRENGTH. The poor pilgrim has no might in himself; but relying on Christ, he can say with holy Paul, "When I am weak, then I am strong." What a happy thing it is to feel our own weakness and nothingness in the sight of Heaven; and then to cast ourselves into the strong arms of Jesus— those arms of infinite love, which encircle and sustain all the righteous. "The name of the Lord is a strong fortress; the godly run to him and are safe." It is by leaning upon the Beloved of our souls that we are made strong.

Helpless pilgrim, would you obtain strength for gaining the joyful heights of Zion? Then look to Jesus. Rest in him now; and in a little while, when you cross into Canaan, you will rest with him in that happy land, where weariness and sorrow are unknown. Do not trust to your own strength; but lean upon the Lord, and you will be upheld with divine grace and power. Then you will be enabled to press onward with the greatest speed and alacrity to the heavenly mansions. "The Lord's voice will roar from Zion and thunder from Jerusalem, and the earth and heavens will begin to shake. But to his people, the Lord will be a welcoming refuge and a strong fortress."

"Have you never heard or understood? Don't you know that the Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of all the earth? He never grows faint or weary. No one can measure the depths of his understanding. He gives power to those who are tired and worn out; he offers strength to the weak. Even youths will become exhausted, and young men will give up. But those who wait on the Lord will find new strength. They will fly high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint."

"Blest Jesus, to my soul
Your grace and strength impart;

Till, clothed in perfect righteousness,
I see you as you art.
As I wander through the desert,
Be my constant help and stay
Shine upon my path, and lead me
To the realms of endless day."

Happy is he who in the morning of life casts all his care upon Jesus; who takes the Savior as his all and in all— as the strength of his heart and his portion forever. He may sweetly sing as he is tossed upon the surging billows of life's ocean, "Praise the Lord! He was angry with me, but now he comforts me. See, God has come to save me. I will trust in him and not be afraid. The Lord God is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation."

"But Jesus is my living way,
My only trust, my hope, my stay;
From him, I all my strength receive,
And daily on his fullness live."

2. The Christian CLEAVES TO JESUS BY FAITH. He knows that his Redeemer lives, and he rests his whole weight upon him. He lives upon an unseen Savior. Our life in the wilderness is a life of faith. Here, we live by faith and walk by faith. This will be the manner of our life until we come to behold our Redeemer face to face in the Heavenly Jerusalem, and enjoy all the blessedness of that better country above. But such a life is one of comfort and joy to the Christian pilgrim in this wilderness land. "O! the blessedness and joy of faith! How does it bring near, and realize a view of Christ in glory! Do we indeed see Christ by the eye of faith? Is he the one chief object of our souls? Is he precious to us? Verily, then, we shall count our days on earth toilsome ones, and long for the full fruition of him in glory. It will be our great joy to see him, whose blessed head was crowned with thorns, and whose lovely face was spit upon, for us! Until then, let us live by faith in him, constantly crying, "Come, Lord, Jesus, come quickly."

Though the believer may be walking to darkness, yet he must still, by faith, lean upon the Beloved of his soul. "Who among you fears the Lord and obeys his servant? If you are walking in darkness, without a ray of light, trust in the Lord and rely on your God." The pathway to the celestial mansions is often obscured by darkness. Here, at best, we see but through a glass, darkly. "We are but as wayfaring men, wandering in the lonely night, who see dimly upon the distant mountain-peak the reflection of a sun that never rises here, but which shall never set in the 'new heavens' hereafter." (Bonar)

"Darkness overspreads us here,
But the night wears fast away
Jacob's star will soon appear,
Leading on eternal day!"

The commission of sin is the great cause of the Christian being often left to wander in darkness. "Your iniquities," says the prophet, "have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you, that he will not hear." How sad is such a condition! When, for a season, the light of God's countenance is withdrawn from the believer, he is led to cry with pious Job, "I long for the years gone by when God took care of me, when he lighted the way before me and I walked safely through the darkness. In my early years, the friendship of God was felt in my home. The Almighty was still with me..." "I go east, but he is not there. I go west, but I cannot find him. I do not see him in the north, for he is hidden. I turn to the south, but I cannot find him."

At times he cries with the Psalmist, "I thirst for God, the living God. When can I come and stand before him?" And he can also say with the pious Cowper, who trod a gloomy path to the realms of day,
"O for a closer walk with God!"

A calm and heavenly frame!
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb!"

The duty of the Christian, walking in darkness to trust in the name of the Lord, and lean upon his God. Let him always be found leaning on his Beloved; and, though his days on earth may be darksome, yet at the "evening time" of his pilgrimage, "it shall be light." How sweet will be the light of Heaven to such a soul!

"We journey through a vale of tears;
But often from on high;
The glorious bow of God appears,
And lights up all our sky.
Then through the breaking clouds of heaven,
Far distant visions come;
And sweetest words of grace are given,
To cheer the pilgrim home."

In order to obtain the greatest light and comfort now, let the follower of the Lamb be found diligently improving the means of grace and salvation, which God has afforded him. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." How often has a beam from Heaven darted upon the pilgrim while engaged in the sweet employment of praising God!

"Sometimes a light surprises
The Christian while he sings;
It is the Lord who rises
With healing in his wings!
When comforts are declining,
He grants the soul again
A season of clear shining,
To cheer it after rain."

3. The believer RESTS ON JESUS FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PARDON. The language of a renewed soul is, "In the Lord I have righteousness and strength." "But in the Lord all the descendants of Israel will be found righteous and will exult." Man had no righteousness of his own to justify him in sight of Heaven. Not a single soul could have gained the celestial Paradise if the Son of God had not assumed humanity, and by a life of obedience and suffering, fulfilled the violated law, and brought in an everlasting righteousness. Blessed be God! the Son of Righteousness has arisen upon our benighted world; and Zion's pilgrims walk in his light.

"Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one who believes." In the 23d chapter of Jeremiah he is called, "The Lord Our Righteousness." Every believer in Christ is arrayed in that linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of saints. His robes are washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. How happy is the condition of the saint! His sins are all cancelled by the atoning righteousness of our Lord and Savior, whose language is, "I, even I, am he that blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember your sins."

As the Christian pilgrim journeys towards the realms of peace, leaning upon Jesus for righteousness and pardon, he can raise his voice in triumphant songs of praise to his Redeemer. This is one of his sweetest songs in the house of his pilgrimage: "I am overwhelmed with joy in the Lord my God! For he has dressed me with the clothing of salvation and draped me in a robe of righteousness. I am like a bridegroom in his wedding suit or a bride with her jewels."

He can also look forward to the dark waters of Jordan, and say, with the poet,
"When death shall loose the silver cord,
Obedient to your mandate, Lord,
My soul shall joy and peace possess,

If Jesus be my righteousness."

4. The Christian pilgrim relies on Jesus FOR GUIDANCE THROUGH THIS VALLEY OF TEARS to the peaceful shore of a blessed eternity. "You shall guide me with your counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."

"Jesus, on you our hope depends,
To lead us on to your abode:
Assured our home will make amends
For all our toil while on the road."

Amid all the vicissitudes of a sublunary scene- in prosperity and adversity, in health and sickness, in life and death, the weary pilgrim reclines on the Almighty arm of Jesus, and all is well. He knows that what the Savior has promised, he will perform; and he reads, with unspeakable delight, these precious promises: "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you." "The Lord will guide you continually, watering your life when you are dry and keeping you healthy, too. You will be like a well-watered garden, like an ever-flowing spring."

5. The believer trusts in Christ FOR ETERNAL LIFE. Of that little flock who have chosen the better land for their inheritance, Jesus says, "I will give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand;" and again: "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die." This is the most precious promised blessing of the covenant of grace. No created mind can comprehend the full import of these words- Eternal Life! They include in them the highest bliss of Heaven. Such a life will the Savior eventually bestow upon those who now repose in him.

There is a blissful hour fast approaching, when the weather-beaten pilgrim shall be raised above the storms of life by the Savior's hand. Beyond the swellings of the Jordan of death there

is a peaceful shore, a happy, land, where the pilgrims of Zion shall be invested with the robes of immortality, and rein with Christ forever and ever. Fellow pilgrim, we would earnestly invite you to come and put your trust in him who will sustain you amid the heart-rending trials of this valley of tears, and who will bring you to a better land- who will bestow upon you immortal existence, an unfading crown of glory in that world beyond the stars.

In all your wanderings through this world, cleave closely to Jesus. Live for Him who died for you. O, may the redeeming love of the blessed Savior constrain you to be wholly his. Live with an eye fixed upon his cross. Turn to that sacred mount and behold a Savior expiring for your salvation; hear him exclaiming, "It is finished."

O the sweet wonders of that cross,
Where Christ, my Savior, loved and died;
Her noblest life my spirit draws
From his dear wounds and bleeding side."

Go, then, and live upon Christ. Live in the daily contemplation of his glorious atonement, and in the sincere belief of his all-sufficiency to save your soul. May your language ever be that of an enraptured Apostle: "As for me, God forbid that I should boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of that cross, my interest in this world died long ago, and the world's interest in me is also long dead."

If you thus live by faith in Christ, and in the blessed hope of a glorious immortality, you need not fear, at the close of life, to tread along death's dark valley to cross Jordan's swelling stream; for in that solemn hour, Jesus will sustain and comfort you by his presence; and God will redeem your soul from the power of the grave; for he shall receive you.

"O, could I find, from day to day,

A nearness to my God,
Then would my hours glide sweet away,
While leaning on his word. "
Lord, I desire with you to live
Anew from day to day,
In joys the world can never give,
Nor ever take away.
Blest Jesus, come, and rule my heart,
And make me wholly thine,
That I may never more depart,
Nor grieve your love divine.
Thus, till my last, expiring breath,
Your goodness I'll adore
And when my frame dissolves in death,
My soul shall love you more."

Passage over the Jordan of Death

"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you: and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you." Isaiah 43:2

"How sweet the hour of closing day,
When all is peaceful and serene,
And when the sun, with cloudless ray,
Sheds mellow luster o'er the scene!
Such is the Christian's parting hour,
So peacefully he sinks to rest;
When faith, endowed from Heaven with power
Sustains and cheers his languid breast."

As the Christian pilgrim is about to leave the wilderness of this world forever, he has to cross a dark stream. The Jordan of death rolls between this world and the Celestial Canaan. Before they obtained full possession of the promised land, the Israelites

lead to pass over Jordan; so every traveler to the Canaan above must cross over the river of death, before he is admitted into the courts of paradise, and obtains possession of the heavenly inheritance. In the third chapter of Joshua we have an interesting account of the Israelites' passage over Jordan. We there read as follows: "When the people set out to cross the Jordan, the priests who were carrying the Ark of the Covenant went ahead of them. Now it was the harvest season, and the Jordan was overflowing its banks. But as soon as the feet of the priests who were carrying the Ark touched the water at the river's edge, the water began piling up at a town upstream called Adam, which is near Zarethan. And the water below that point flowed on to the Dead Sea until the riverbed was dry. Then all the people crossed over near the city of Jericho. Meanwhile, the priests who were carrying the Ark of the Lord's covenant stood on dry ground in the middle of the riverbed as the people passed by them. They waited there until everyone had crossed the Jordan on dry ground." Joshua 3:14-17

Now, all this is typical of the believer's triumphant passage over the Jordan of death. When the fainting Christian pilgrim comes to the brink of this last swelling stream, over which all must pass, Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, who bears the everlasting covenant on his shoulders, goes before and rolls back the surging waves, that the ransomed soul may pass safely over into glory. In the prospect of dissolution, the saint may say, with a Christian poet—

"A swelling Jordan rolls between,
A timid pilgrim I;
But grace shall order all the scene,
And Christ himself be nigh.
He shall roll back the foaming wave,
Command the channel dry;
No sting has death, no victory grave,
With Jesus in my eye."

What we design in the few following pages, is, to comfort the timid Christian in the prospect of death; to show that Jesus is with believers in the dark valley; to cite some of the last words of eminent saints, who, sustained and cheered by the Savior, have passed over Jordan with songs of triumph; and to contemplate the happy termination of the Christian pilgrim's journey, and his joyful entrance upon the rest above.

1. THE PRECIOUS RELIGION OF JESUS AFFORDS THE STRONGEST CONSOLATION TO THE CHRISTIAN PILGRIM IN THE VIEW OF DEATH. There is no reason why he should dread its approach. Its terrors are subdued; its sting is extracted; it is a disarmed enemy. Death cannot harm the child of God; but for him to die is gain. To such it is the beginning of everlasting, celestial joys- the daybreak of a glorious eternity. It is only a peaceful slumber in Jesus- an entering into the joy of the Lord. It is but to depart from a land of sorrow and bereavement, and be with Christ, in those happy regions where God shall wipe away all tears from the eye. To the Christian, "death has changed its nature and its name. Call it no more death; it is the sweet sleep of the body, deposited in its earthy bed, under the eye of the Redeemer, until the morning of the resurrection."

Many pious Christians are held in bondage by the fear of crossing the river of death. Their feelings with regard to this subject are not what they should be. They ought to rise above the fear of dissolution; for Christ has delivered us from this bondage. He has achieved this victory by the assumption of humanity- by destroying the works of the devil, and by passing through the swelling Jordan in our nature. "Because God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—Jesus also became flesh and blood by being born in human form. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the Devil, who had the power of death. Only in this way could he deliver those who have lived all their lives as slaves to the fear of dying."

The Savior has warmed the cold grave for his disciples. He has made an easy way through the swellings of Jordan for the faithful followers. Why, then, fellow pilgrim, are you afraid to cross this stream when the channel is dry? when you see the footprints of your Redeemer in the bottom? when death is but a sure step into glory? Surely there is no ground for dismay to the believer in that solemn hour which terminates his earthly pilgrimage; but every reason for joyfulness. "For we know that when this earthly tent we live in is taken down—when we die and leave these bodies—we will have a home in heaven, an eternal body made for us by God himself and not by human hands."

There is no condemnation to the believer; for, being justified by faith, he has peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. He has peace during his pilgrimage; he has peace in the hour of death. In Christ, he obtains a complete victory over death and the gloomy grave. Washed in the atoning blood of the Savior, and clad in the snowy robe of his righteousness, he can shout forth joyfully, upon a dying bed, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? For sin is the sting that results in death, and the law gives sin its power. How we thank God, who gives us victory over sin and death through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

It is Jesus, the sinner's Friend, who disarms death of its terrors—who makes a dying bed so easy to the believer. Hence many a once timid pilgrim has been able to say in his last moments, "Is this dying? Is this the enemy that dismayed me so long, now, now appearing so harmless, and even pleasant?" O, how reviving that,

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,
While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

2. CHRIST IS WITH HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE IN THE MIDST OF

JORDAN. His precious promise is "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you." In their passage through death, the Lord upholds and cheers the souls of his ransomed ones by the endearing manifestations of his gracious presence and wonderful love.

"How happy is the dying saint,
Whose sins are all forgiven;
With joy he passes Jordan's flood,
Upheld by hopes of heaven.
The Savior, whom he truly loved,
Now cheers him by his grace;
A glory gilds his dying bed,
And beams upon his face."

Hence, thousands of God's children have been enabled to exclaim, while descending into the shadowy valley, "Even when I walk through the dark valley of death, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me."

It was the soul-ravishing manifestation of the Savior's presence and love that made the martyrs so joyful at the stake; and it is this that has made many a departing saint burst forth with rapturous joy in such language as this: "O! why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariot? Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly!" O what amazing mercy does Jesus often bestow upon his faithful follower in the darksome valley, and in the deep Jordan, when the cold hand of death is upon him!

"Jesus, the vision of your face
Has overpowering charms;
Scarce shall I feel death's cold embrace,
If Christ be in my arms."

3. We now proceed to cite the DYING SAYINGS of a few

eminent, pious Christians, who have been wonderfully sustained by divine grace during their passage over the Jordan of death. We mention the following glorious examples—

Donald Cargill: "This is the most joyful day that ever I saw in my pilgrimage on earth. My joy is now begun, which I see shall never be interrupted."

Luther: "Into your hands I commit my spirit; God of truth, you have redeemed me."

Thomas Holland: "Come, O come, Lord you bright Morning Star! Come, Lord! I desire to be dissolved and to be with Jesus, Jesus, you."

John Flavel: "I know that it will be well with me."

Alexander Henderson: "I am near the end of my race, hastening home, and there was never a school boy more desirous to have the play, than I am to have leave of this world."

Thomas Cartwright : "I have found unutterable comfort and happiness, and God has given me a glimpse of heaven."

John Locke: "O the depth of the riches of the goodness and knowledge of God."

James Evans: "In Jesus I stand."

Augustus Toplady: "I believe God never gave such manifestations of his love to any creature, and allowed him to live."

John Tennent: "Welcome God and Father! Welcome sweet Lord Jesus! Welcome death! Welcome eternity. Amen. Lord Jesus, come, Lord Jesus."

Samuel Finley: "I see the eternal love and goodness of God. I see the love of Jesus. Oh, to be dissolved, and to be with him! I long to be clothed with the complete righteousness of Christ."

Dr. Waddell: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

Ralph Erskine: "Victory, victory, victory."

John Wesley: "The best of all is, God in with us."

Felix Neff: "Adieu, adieu. I am departing to our Father in perfect peace. Victory, victory, victory! by Jesus Christ."

Dr. Bogue: "I am looking to that compassionate Savior, whose blood cleanses from all sin."

Dr. Nevins: "Death! Death! Now come, Lord Jesus- Dear

Savior."

To Dr. Waugh one said, "You are now in the deep Jordan; have you any doubt that Christ will be with you?" He replied, "Certainly not! Who else? Who else?"

D. H. Gillette: "O that I had strength to shout! I feel so happy. O, the precious Savior; what is the world to me? All its vanity? Give me Jesus. Do not weep for me, I am going home."

Alexander Proudfit: "When will this lingering conflict end? Oh, for a speedy and easy transition! Oh for deliverance from this corruptible body- this body of sin and death! Come, blessed Jesus, dear Savior, come! come! I long to depart."

J. H. Rice: "Mercy is triumphant!"

Dr. Nettleton: "It is fit to trust in the Lord."

Robert Anderson: "Peace! peace! How gracious God is in so making it all peace!"

Elisha Macurdy: "The Savior is all my comfort."

Thomas Cranfield: "A few more sighs, and then- " Wilberforce Richmond: "The rest which Christ gives is sweet."

Mrs. Hannah More: "Jesus is all in all. God of grace, God of light, God of love: whom have I in heaven but you? It is a glorious thing to die." Her last word was, "Joy."

Mrs. Isabella Graham: "I have no more doubt of going to my Savior, than if I were already in his arms."

Thus, we have presented a few dying sayings of several pious Christians who passed the river of death upheld by divine grace. Innumerable other similar cases might be cited; but these are sufficient to show with what great mercy and loving kindness the Lord generally deals with his people in the hour and article of death. Although many of God's children have not enjoyed such bright, sensible manifestations of his gracious presence in their dying moments- although they may have gone to heaven under a cloud, yet their passage over the Jordan of death was as safe as that of the most joyful believer.

In the matchless dream of Bunyan, we have an admirable description of the triumphant passage of the pilgrims over

Jordan. There we find that the most timid got over as safely as the most fearless. The last words of Ready-to-halt were, "Welcome, life." The last words of Feeble-mind were, "Hold out, faith and patience." The last words of Despondency were, "Farewell, night! welcome, day!" Even his daughter, Much-afraid, "went through the river singing; but no one could understand what she said." But how transporting were the last words of Mr. Standfast! "This river," said he, "has been a terror to many; yes, the thoughts of it also have often frightened me; but now methinks I stand easy, my foot is firmed upon that on which the feet of the priests that bare the ark of the covenant stood while Israel went over Jordan. (Joshua 3:17) The waters indeed are to the palate bitter, and to the stomach cold; yet the thoughts of what I am going to, and of the convoy that waits for me on the other side, are as a glowing coal at my heart. I see myself now at the end of my journey; my toilsome days are ended. I am going to see that head which was crowned with thorns, and that face which was spit upon for me. I have formerly lived by hearsay and faith; but now I go where I shall live by sight, and shall be, with him in whose company I delight myself. I have loved to hear my Lord spoken of; and wherever I have seen the print of his shoe in the earth, there I have coveted to set my foot too. His name has been to me sweeter than all perfumes. His voice to me has been most sweet, and his countenance I have more desired than those who have most desired the light of the sun. His words I used to gather for my food, and for antidotes against my faintings. He has held me, and has kept me from my iniquities; yes, my steps has he strengthened in his way."

4. Here we see THE HAPPY TERMINATION OF THE CHRISTIAN'S PILGRIMAGE ON EARTH. His sorrowful days are ended. He has fought the good fight; he has finished his course; he has kept the faith; he has obtained the victory; he has crossed the swellings of Jordan, and gone to receive an immortal crown. But who can describe the glories which encircle the saint, safely landed on the happy shores of Immanuel's land?

"In vain my fancy strives to paint
The moment after death;
The glories that surround the saints,
When yielding up their breath.
One gentle sigh their fetters breaks;
We scarce can say, They're gone,
Before the willing spirit takes
Her mansion near the throne."

Now the Christian traveler has reached his everlasting home—that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Now the trying scenes of earth are passed, and the wanderer, raised above the storms of life, steps upon another shore; he enters a land, blooming with immortality, and illuminated by the effulgent beams of the Sun of Righteousness. Now he is ever with the Lord. Now he is seated with Immanuel on his heavenly throne. Now he is arrayed in the shining robes of glory, and drinks of the rivers of pleasures at God's right hand.

When we contemplate the past suffering condition, and the present felicitous state of such a one, we may truly say— "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb and made them white. That is why they are standing in front of the throne of God, serving him day and night in his Temple. And he who sits on the throne will live among them and shelter them. They will never again be hungry or thirsty, and they will be fully protected from the scorching noontime heat. For the Lamb who stands in front of the throne will be their Shepherd. He will lead them to the springs of life-giving water. And God will wipe away all their tears."

O happy termination of the pilgrim's journey on earth! O blessed beginning of his felicity in heaven!

'Tis past- the voyage of life is o'er,

The wanderer hails another clime;
On perils borne to yonder shore,
He views afar the waves of time.
The storm that muttered o'er his head,
The flame that quivered round his path,
Are sweetly hushed; the cloud has fled,
And gone the angry lightning's scath.
'Tis past; and grief is changed to songs
That angel-cordons love to hear;
The harp that to delight belongs,
In softest murmur soothes his ear.
For secret sighs that rent his breast
There's peace to seraphs only known-
The tear that told the heart, oppressed,
Is gemmed upon the eternal throne.
Blessed voyager! how happy thou,
Safe moored within the port of peace;
Once heir of death— immortal now,
Of pain— your toils forever cease.
O, may I, too, thus sweetly rise,
Thus tread yon bright empyrean free,
With joy regain those native skies,
Secure at last in love like thee."

Thoughts on the Love of Christ

Preface and Introductory Essay

This work is not designed as a systematic treatise, but as a humble essay on the great, the inexhaustible subject of the love of Christ, as manifested to a lost world. It was composed during a long period of recovery from a chronic disease, which brought the author to the gates of death, and well near terminated his life. In the present essay the author has endeavored to notice a few ways in which Christ has manifested his great love to sinners. His object in writing this work is to do good; and should this volume be the means of leading any sinner to the blessed Jesus, or of kindling a single spark of divine love in his bosom, or even of refreshing the soul of any saint- of animating him on his way to glory- he will feel amply rewarded for the toil of writing it, when in a state of much physical inability; and most gratefully would he ascribe all the praise and glory to God. He can bless the feeblest instrument; and, without his blessing, all our labors for good must be futile. While the author would endeavor to lead others to the Lamb of God, to the bleeding Savior, most humbly would he himself glory in the cross of Christ. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world;" and ever does he hope to proclaim the love and set forth the praise of that blessed Redeemer, who left the regions of glory to live and die for sinners.

"Jesus I my Shepherd, Husband, friend;
My Prophet, Priest, and King;
My Lord, my life, my way, my end,
Accept the praise I bring.
Weak is the effort of my heart,
And cold my warmest thought;

But when I see you as you art,
I'll praise you as I ought.
Till then I would your love proclaim,
With every fleeting breath;
And may the music of your name
Refresh my soul in death."

God designed from eternity to create this world, and people it with intelligent beings. This design was put into execution in the beginning of time. "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." He spoke, and this earth, with all its multifarious occupants, sprung into being. It required nothing but his almighty fiat to usher a world and its inhabitants into existence. Man was created in the image of God: hence he was a holy and a happy being.

Uncontaminated by moral pollution, his soul was one of purity, holiness and happiness. He was lord of this lower creation, enjoying the smiles of his beneficent Creator, and the delight of the terrestrial paradise. Primeval beauty mantled all sublunary objects. Paradise bloomed with its richest productions; and all was peace and harmony between man and his Creator. At length man disobeyed the divine command; sinned against God, and fell from his original blessedness, by eating the forbidden fruit. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned."

When we contrast man's present deplorable condition, with his pristine state of innocence, we may well exclaim with the Prophet, "How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed!" "The crown is fallen from our head: woe unto us that we have sinned." By his fall, man lost all communion with God, and became exposed to the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the wrath of God through eternity. From this sinful and lost condition he could not extricate himself, he could not redeem himself, nor pay unto God a sufficient ransom for his manifold transgressions. A broken law was to be fulfilled, the

justice of God to be satisfied, and a complete atonement to be made for the sins of men, or else God and the sinner could never be reconciled.

Punishment, everlasting punishment and destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, awaited all mankind in the world of just retribution. All was forlorn; all was hopeless, forever hopeless with regard to man's redemption, had not God interposed on our behalf; to give unto us an expected end. It was the grand design of God, from all eternity, to exhibit a magnificent plan of salvation to a lost world. And everlasting praise and thanksgiving be unto his most blessed name, that the glad tidings of this unspeakably precious salvation have reached our ears.

When there was no eye to pity sinners, nor arm to save them, God's eye pitied and his arm alone brought salvation to them. In infinite love to lost and perishing sinners, he said, "Deliver them from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom." To every redeemed sinner, God says, "But I came by and saw you there, helplessly kicking about in your own blood. As you lay there, I said, 'Live!' And I helped you to thrive like a plant in the field. You grew up and became a beautiful jewel. Your breasts became full, and your hair grew, though you were still naked. And when I passed by and saw you again, you were old enough to be married. So I wrapped my cloak around you to cover your nakedness and declared my marriage vows. I made a covenant with you, says the Sovereign Lord, and you became mine."

God did not leave all mankind to perish in their fallen, miserable and polluted condition. No! his love saved them; his wisdom devised a way by which we, polluted sinners, might be raised from the horrible pit into which our iniquities had consigned us.

"When in our blood we lay,
He would not let us die;
Because his love had fixed a day,

To bring salvation nigh."

The glorious plan of man's salvation originated in the infinite love of God the Father; and in this divine plan of redemption, the most marvelous exhibition of the love of God to hell-deserving sinners is clearly seen. Here is love, the love of God: such love its could never have been conceived of, had it not been so amply revealed and manifested in the gift of his only begotten Son. "For God so loved the world (even a world of lost sinners) that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "God is love," and our salvation is from the God of love, and is a salvation planned and executed in deep unfathomable love. "God showed how much he loved us by sending his only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love. It is not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins."

When we contemplate the greatness of God's love to sinners, we are compelled to pause, and exclaim with the admiring apostle, "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

Oh! the riches of divine grace! Oh! the depths of divine love. How vast, how glorious, and how adequate to the needs of perishing sinners, is the plan of mercy- of love- of salvation, which God has devised to save a lost world! It manifests the wisdom, the justice, the power, but, above all, the love of God.

"Salvation! what a glorious plan;
How suited to our need!
The grace that raises fallen man
Is wonderful indeed!
'Twas wisdom formed the vast design,
To ransom us when lost;
And love's unfathomable mine
Provided all the cost.

Truth, Wisdom, Justice, Power and Love,
In all their glory shone,
When Jesus left the courts above,
And died to save his own."

God has chosen a portion of the human family to be the monuments of his free grace- trophies of his redeeming love; and for them he has sent his own Son to suffer and die. In the profound depths of infinite love, the mercy of God to a lost world had its expression. Unsolicited and undeserved, it was nevertheless extended to lost sinners: sinners, guilty and polluted, are the objects upon which the mercy and love of God are profusely bestowed. Love is God's darling attribute, which he delights to manifest most illustriously; for God is love. And he has most singularly displayed all his love to sinful man, in the contrivance of his salvation.

Oh! how immeasurably great was that love which saved a world from ruin, and raised millions of Adam's sons and daughters from eternal death and woe, to everlasting life and felicity! Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

The promise of a Great Deliverer, who should emancipate captivated man from the thralldom of sin and death, and accomplish his salvation, was early conveyed to our first parents. Before their expulsion from Paradise, when all seemed lost, a gleam of hope shone around them. It was promised that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent; that the works of the devil should be destroyed. For this purpose, the Son of God was to be manifested in the flesh.

To the patriarchs the same promise was more amply conveyed. Abraham got a glimpse of the day of Christ, and was glad. Dying Jacob spoke of the coming of a Savior. "The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from his descendants, until the coming of the one to whom it belongs, the one whom all nations will obey." Moses said to the children of Israel, "The

Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your fellow Israelites, and you must listen to that prophet."

Isaiah, wrapped in prophetic vision, eloquently describes the advent and characteristics of the promised Messiah. "For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. And the government will rest on his shoulders. These will be his royal titles: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel." All the prophets spoke of Him who was to come into the world to accomplish our salvation; "for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." As the time approached, the promises of a divine Savior were multiplied. "But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children."

Love was the grand principle which prompted the blessed God to give his Son to die for sinners; and love was the impelling motive that brought Emmanuel from his throne, to this fallen world, in order to save the lost. How great, how sublime was that scheme of his to save a perishing world! how vast was that love which enabled him to execute this plan!

The Love of Christ in Coming into the World to Save Sinners

"This is a true saying, and everyone should believe it: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—and I was the worst of them all." 1 Tim. 1:15

The gospel, as the name signifies, denotes glad tidings. This

blessed gospel is sent to us: to you, reader, are these glad tidings conveyed. "That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," is the best news that ever fell on the ears of a dying world. Life and immortality are brought to light through this gospel of the grace of God. Let us now contemplate the glorious character of our blessed Redeemer, and the love which he has manifested in coming into the world to save sinners.

1. In the person of Christ, the human and divine natures are united. His DIVINITY is clearly asserted in the Scriptures. The Redeemer of lost sinners is the eternal Son of God -equal with the Father, the Creator of the universe, the upholder of all things. Endued with supreme power, he reigns universal Lord. All power is given to him, in heaven and earth. All worlds are his. All kingdoms are his domain. He made all things. At his command, worlds sprung into being. By his power all created matter is upheld in existence. He has caused the sun to shine with undiminished splendor on our globe for nearly six thousand years. "Without warning, he moves the mountains, overturning them in his anger. He shakes the earth from its place, and its foundations tremble. If he commands it, the sun won't rise and the stars won't shine. He alone has spread out the heavens and marches on the waves of the sea. He made all the stars—the Bear, Orion, the Pleiades, and the constellations of the southern sky. His great works are too marvelous to understand. He performs miracles without number."

Open the blessed volume, and read the fundamental doctrine of Christianity, that Christ, the redeemer of sinners, is God. "In the beginning the Word already existed. He was with God, and he was God. He was in the beginning with God. He created everything there is. Nothing exists that he didn't make." It is a matter of great consolation for the believer who has entrusted his immortal concerns in the hands of his blessed Redeemer, to know that he is God over all, blessed forever. Let him ever bear in mind that the Savior, who loves him is the only begotten Son of God, and bears his very image. He is the brightness of his

Father's glory, and the express image of his person. He is clothed with divine majesty, and possesses all divine perfections, and infinite excellences. He is equal with God in all his glorious perfections.

He is called "the Lord of Glory," the "King of glory," "the mighty God," "Jehovah;" and in the Revelation he is described as having on his vesture, and on his thigh a name written, "King of kings, and Lord of lords." Again, it is said of him that "Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before God made anything at all and is supreme over all creation. Christ is the one through whom God created everything in heaven and earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see—kings, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities. Everything has been created through him and for him. He existed before everything else began, and he holds all creation together. Christ is the head of the church, which is his body. He is the first of all who will rise from the dead, so he is first in everything. For God in all his fullness was pleased to live in Christ."

There is a transcendent loveliness in the person of Christ. He is "fairer than the children of men:" "the chief among ten thousand; yes, he is altogether lovely." What glorious and lovely attractions center in Emmanuel! Such is the character of Him who came into our sin-polluted world, to shed on Calvary his precious blood for the redemption of his people.

2. Christ came into the world by being manifested in the flesh, yet he lost nothing of his essential glory and dominion. He was as truly "the brightness of his Father's glory," and the owner of the universe, when in the manger, and on the cross, as he is now at the right hand of God: "Even the son of man who is in heaven." Yet out of love to sinners, he chose to suffer that glory to be veiled in humanity, and himself to be made under the law to redeem his people. What amazing love is seen here. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." "God was manifest in the flesh." Christ Jesus was in the form of God, and thought it

not robbery to be equal with God; but "He made himself nothing; he took the humble position of a slave and appeared in human form. "

The coming of Christ was the signal of peace on earth. His incarnation was an event of great joy to the world. To the shepherds of Bethlehem, the glad tidings of his birth were conveyed by an angel of the Lord. To them he proclaimed: "Don't be afraid! I bring you good news of great joy for everyone! The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born tonight in Bethlehem, the city of David!" A new light then burst upon the world. The glorious Sun of Righteousness, emitting his resplendent rays upon kingdoms and nations involved in moral darkness, arose to enlighten, to gladden, and to bless our benighted planet. The prince of peace made his appearance. The messenger of reconciliation came, to reconcile alienated man to the friendship of his offended Creator, and fit him for the mansions of glory.

When such a momentous event had occurred, when the eternal Son of God had invested himself with humanity, and became bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh; well might the song of the heavenly host resound among the hills of Judea, proclaiming, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to all whom God favors." For unto us a Savior was born. And never was human nature so highly honored and exalted as when Christ assumed it. What blessings are bestowed upon fallen man, through the incarnation of the Son of God! Eternity alone can unfold them.

Christ came most willingly into the world to do the will of his heavenly Father. His words were "Look, I have come. And this has been written about me in your scroll: I take joy in doing your will, my God, for your law is written on my heart." Christ offered himself a willing victim upon the altar of divine wrath. He came into the world. But Oh! wonderful condescension and boundless love, that Christ should come into this sinful world. On the

matchless condescension and kindness of Christ, as manifested by his incarnation, a pious writer has the following beautiful remarks: "Earthly princes are only feeble worms; their loftiest elevation is a molehill, and their brightest splendor a vain show. Yet how rarely do they descend from their thrones, to visit and relieve those who languish in the abodes of poverty and wretchedness! In our low and lost estate Jesus Christ not only saw and pitied us, but also hastened on the wings of love to bring salvation. He was eternally rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich."

He was clothed with light, and surrounded with hosts of happy, adoring spirits; yet he submitted to put on our nature, and sojourn among guilty, worthless mortals. Herein is love! love without a parallel, love that exceeds description, and passes knowledge!

The incarnation of the only begotten Son of God is a mystery of wisdom and love, in which all our thoughts ought to be absorbed, and all our hearts with it should be enraptured. The wonders of the vast universe, could they be collected and presented to us in one view, would lose all their attraction and dwindle into insignificance, were we steadfastly to contemplate the marvelous condescension of the Redeemer, manifested in the humiliation to which he submitted on our account.

When he exchanged his throne for the manger of Bethlehem, the shining host of heaven burst into that sublime song, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to all whom God favors." Here is condescension which we could not have believed possible, had it not been so clearly and amply revealed. The kindness and love of God our Savior towards man, appeared with pre-eminent luster in the whole of that great work which he undertook to perform for their salvation. How ardent was that love which brought the ever blessed Son of God from heaven to earth, that he might save sinners. What but infinite love could have induced him to come into the world- to be made sin for us-

to bear our sins in his own body, that we might be reconciled to God, and be brought at last into the everlasting mansions of glory; to be ever with the Lord.

Jesus Christ is love itself embodied in a human form: that form once appeared on our earth, and trod the thorny pathway from the manger to the cross, till it was seen to bleed, and groan, and die, on Calvary, for sinners as vile as we are! Reader! have you a saving interest in that great work which Christ, by coming into the world, has finished? Are you deeply interested in his atonement, and righteousness? Is his love shed abroad in your heart? Is he unspeakably precious to you? For, says the Apostle, "unto you therefore who believe, he is precious." Can you adopt the language of the poet, and sweetly sing,

"Sweeter sounds than music knows,
Charm me in Emmanuel's name
All her hopes my spirit owes
To his birth, and cross, and shame.
When he came, the angels sung
'Glory be to God on high!'
Lord, unloose my stammering tongue;
Who shall louder sing than I!" -Newton

By his coming into the world and accomplishing our salvation, Christ has opened the gates of the celestial city, through which redeemed sinners may now pass into mansions of eternal bliss. O sinner, the gates of Paradise are now wide open for your reception; enter in and be saved. The arms of Christ are now stretched from heaven for your relief. Look up, then, with confidence to your loving Savior. He now calls upon you from his eternal throne, "For there is no other God but me—a just God and a Savior—no, not one! Let all the world look to me for salvation! For I am God; there is no other."

Sinner, have you looked to Christ for salvation? In him you will find an everlasting salvation. Everlasting salvation! precious words! It is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. In the

incarnation of the Son of God, we behold immeasurably great love manifested to sinners. With love unparalleled, he descends to this sinful world, and lives and dies for the redemption of his people. Love led him to forsake the regions of glory, for this dark abode of sin and suffering.

"Nothing brought him from above,
Nothing but redeeming love."

O, what love is here manifested to a guilty, rebellious world! "You know how full of love and kindness our Lord Jesus Christ was. Though he was very rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty he could make you rich."

But why did he thus veil his glory in humanity, and come into this world? It was to save sinners. "This is a true saying, and everyone should believe it: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—and I was the worst of them all."

3. To save sinners was the very object for which Messiah left his throne; for which the Son of God became incarnate. "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." "The Son of man has come to seek and to save those who are lost." When Christ veiled his glory, and left the regions of bliss, it was to save sinners. When he assumed mortal flesh, and became a suffering man, it was to save sinners. When he bled and died on the cross, it was to save sinners. When he burst the fetters of death, and in a glorified form ascended to heaven, it was to save sinners; and now that he is sat down at the right hand of the throne of God, he is still carrying on his blessed work of saving sinners.

It was infinite love that brought Christ into the world to save sinners. What amazing love is here displayed! In man's redemption the love of Christ shines with pre-eminent luster! In his love Christ came to save sinners, and most willingly does he receive even the vilest sinner that comes to him for salvation.

Have you yet fled for refuge to the world's Redeemer? There is

but one refuge provided for a lost world— Christ is that refuge. He shelters all that come to him. In him is eternal safety. Happy are they, whose hopes are fixed on him— they are safe. Though all around them are changes and fluctuations, yet their rest is pitched aloft, far above this sphere of changing and perishing mortality. Onward and heavenward will be their course, and glorious will be their destiny! When Christ shall appear, they shall appear with him in glory!

Animated by the hope of immortality, look with holy contempt upon the world and all its delusive pleasures. Let a joyful eternity be ever in your view. Choose Christ as your Savior and portion, and heaven will be your home. You will quickly glide over the tempestuous sea of life, and land on "the peaceful shore of blest eternity." Come, O sinner! come and entrust your salvation to the blessed Jesus, who came to save sinners. He will not cast you out. "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away." He has a willing ear to hear your cry; a willing heart to receive you; willing arms to embrace you; almighty power to save you.

O do not refuse the Lord of glory! Do not contemn the gospel message of love. Behold your loving Savior! See what an interest he has taken in your eternal welfare. See him laying aside the robes of his glory for you. See him, though high, becoming low; though rich, becoming poor for you! and see him coming into this world to save you. Attend to his gracious calls. Seek him instantly. May the sweet influences of Christ's redeeming love constrain you to come and partake of the joys of salvation. Salvation by Christ! Blessed gospel; well may you be styled glad tidings of great joy!

In a word, I beseech you, dear reader, as you value the happiness of your immortal soul and the bliss of eternity, to make sure of your salvation. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." Tomorrow may be too late. Tomorrow's sun may set upon your grave. Now "Seek the Lord while you can

find him. Call on him now while he is near. Let the people turn from their wicked deeds. Let them banish from their minds the very thought of doing wrong! Let them turn to the Lord that he may have mercy on them. Yes, turn to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

"Come, lepers, seize the present hour,
The Savior's grace to prove
He can relieve, for he has power;
He will, for he is love." -Newton

The Love of Christ, as Manifested in His Sufferings and Death

"Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13

"Religion! you are the soul of happiness;
And groaning Calvary, of you! There shine
The noblest truths; there strongest motives sting;
There sacred violence assaults the soul;
There nothing but compulsion is forborne.
You my all!
My theme! my inspiration, and my crown!
My strength in age! my rise in low estate!
My soul's ambition, pleasure, wealth; my world
My light in darkness, and my life in death!
My boast through time! bliss through eternity!
Eternity is too short to speak your praise,
Or fathom your profound of love to man!
To man of men the lowest, even to me!
My sacrifice! my God! What things are these!
They talk of morals! O bleeding Love!
You maker of new morals to mankind!

The grand morality is love to You!"

In the death of Christ, we behold the most astonishing exhibition of divine love that has ever been manifested to a lost world. Such love as is here displayed without a precedent; without a parallel in the annals of time or in the records of eternity. To behold the Son of God, the Maker of worlds, bowing his head on the cross, and yielding up his immaculate soul amid the agonies of death, is the most wonderful, the most affecting, the most melting sight that mortals ever witnessed! Around the Cross of Christ there shine the most resplendent rays of divine love that ever beamed from the Sun of Righteousness- that ever emanated from the Deity!

Here then is the brightest display of love, that Christ has manifested to a world of perishing sinners. "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." But, oh! amazing love! that Christ breathed out his precious life, poured out his holy soul unto death, for his enemies, for the ungodly, for sinners. "You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Christ died to save sinners! without his death, their salvation could not have been accomplished. Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission; and without the shedding of Christ's precious blood, not a single sinner could have been saved. The salvation of countless millions was suspended on the death of Christ; but, in love, he died to save them!

Here we may behold a little of the vastness of that love which cannot be measured, and which cannot be told. The Savior's love met death itself to the face, and triumphed over the grave. O, my soul, look and wonder! Behold your Savior bleeding on the cross; bleeding from every pore, that your sins might be washed away in the flowing stream! See him pouring out his soul unto

death, for your salvation; and ask, Is not this a manifestation of unparalleled love to you?

O, blessed Jesus! we come far short of comprehending the greatness of your dying love. It is a great deep. It is a fathomless ocean. May we contemplate more and more this mystery of divine love!

Christ's suffering and dying for us is a great mystery, a mystery of unfathomable love. How vehement was the love of Christ, that led him to endure death in its most terrible form, even the death of the cross! "Love is strong as death; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which has a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love; neither can the floods drown it." Such is the love of Christ. All the waters of affliction and suffering; all the billows of divine wrath that rolled over our blessed Redeemer, were not sufficient to quench the ardency of that love which he felt for a dying world of sinners. It will endure through time. It will shine with undiminished splendor, and glow brighter and brighter through eternity.

Oh! the infinite love of the Son of God, to shed his precious blood for sinners. The love of Christ, in dying for sinners, passes all knowledge. It is immeasurable. It is as incomprehensible as the duration of eternity. It is as illimitable as boundless space. "Such knowledge is higher than the heavens—but who are you? It is deeper than the underworld—what can you know in comparison to him? It is broader than the earth and wider than the sea." O love divine! where are your limits? Great God! beyond the sight of mortals, and of angels? The stupendous sun, the brilliant moon, the blazing stars, the extended earth— these have their bounds, but his love has none!

Lift up your eyes, and behold this vast world, the product of his power! See its continents, and its oceans extending for thousands of miles: these continents may be measured; but not his love; who, though God, became man, to die for man. Sooner

would those unfathomable oceans be fathomed, than the depths of his compassion!

Lift up your eyes to the heavens! Survey the countless glories of the starry firmament; all its fixed or moving worlds of light! Let your thoughts rove from star to star. How great is he who formed them all! How glorious he who bids them shine with undiminished splendor through six thousand years, and to whom they are inconsequential as a speck of flying dust! Yet he who hung out those brilliant fires stooped from his amazing height of bliss and majesty, to assume mortal flesh, and appear a feeble infant and a suffering man. Far sooner could you measure their immeasurable distances, and count their countless numbers, than tell all the vastness of his love, and the blessings it bestows. The sun is darkness compared with his superior glory who hung it in the heavens! And yet he humbled himself to the dark abodes of misery and death for guilty man.

O! when you gaze upon the blue expanse, or when the solemn stillness of night banishes from your mind the thoughts of a vain, departing world; when you behold the midnight sky and mark the thousands of its glowing fires; then think that he who fixed them there once hung on Calvary for you, that you might shine a star, a sun, in heaven, when all those stars shall shine no more. Think that he was once humbled and dishonored, stained with blood, and blue with blows, that you might have a treasure greater than a thousand united worlds, and infinitely more lasting than the countless lights which illuminate the skies. Amazing love!

Here we must pause, and wonder, and praise, and adore; and in the midst of our adoration, exclaim, Lord! what is man, that you are mindful of him; and the son of man, that you should thus visit him? O blessed Jesus! you visited us in love- in great mercy. You bled your life's blood, that we might be washed from our sins in that blood of infinite virtue. You died, that we might live. You wore a crown of thorns, that we might wear a crown of

glory, and shine as stars in heaven forever.

Oh! to know more and more about the dying love of the Lord Jesus! The heart of Jesus is nothing but a heart of love: love to sinners, even the chief. It has been well remarked by Maclaurin, that "were all the love of all the men that ever were or shall be on the earth, and all the love of all the angels in heaven, united in one heart, it would be a cold heart compared to that which was pierced with the soldier's spear." Oh, loving, bleeding Lamb of God! come, wash us in that blood which flowed from your wounded heart, from your pierced side; which streamed from Calvary, a fountain of overflowing, inexhaustible depths of redeeming blood! "On that day a fountain will be opened for the dynasty of David and for the people of Jerusalem, a fountain to cleanse them from all their sins and defilement." Blessed be God! that fountain has been opened these eighteen hundred years, and is as inexhaustible as ever.

Ho! every one that thirsts, come to the waters; and he that has no money, come, buy and eat; yes, come, buy wine and milk—without money and without price." What stupendous love has Christ here manifested, in washing away the sins of a lost multitude in his own most precious blood. Well may redeemed sinners shout in songs of praise to their adorable Redeemer, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; unto him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing!"

Oh! the infinite efficacy of the blood of Christ to cleanse from all sin— "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin." Through the blood of Christ, pardon and peace flow to guilty sinners. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." "Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures." "Through this

man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." "He made peace through the blood of his cross." Precious blood that redeems us from eternal misery, and brings us to God! "But now you belong to Christ Jesus. Though you once were far away from God, now you have been brought near to him because of the blood of Christ."

Oh! costly price of man's redemption- the precious blood of Christ. "For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And the ransom he paid was not mere gold or silver. He paid for you with the precious lifeblood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God." O, my soul! look with astonishment at the price paid for your redemption- the infinitely precious blood of Christ!

Dear reader, look and live! Look at the blessed Jesus, bleeding and dying on the cross for your sins. "And as Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the wilderness, so I, the Son of Man, must be lifted up on a pole, so that everyone who believes in me will have eternal life."

"Upon the cross I see him bleed,
And by the sight from guilt am freed:
This sight destroys the life of sin,
And quickens heavenly life within."

A bleeding Savior, seen by faith, is the sight that gives peace to the guilty, heavy-laden soul. It is the blood of Christ sprinkled upon the conscience, that makes peace between God and the sinner.

But what intense sufferings our divine Redeemer endured, when he "bore our sins in his own body;" when he was made to be sin for us; when he suffered, the just for the unjust. As our substitute, he endured the wrath of God, and suffered for our sins. It was infinite love that led the blessed Son of God to endure all these sufferings, and, at last to submit to the painful death of the cross.

How brightly did that love shine in the last hours of his life, when he was about to bleed on Calvary! What but infinite love led him to the garden of Gethsemane, to endure that bitter agony; when he said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death," and where "his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground!"

What but infinite love led him to the judgment hall, there to be derided, condemned to death, and crowned with thorns; where "his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men!" What but infinite love brought him to Calvary's mount, there to hang a suffering, bleeding victim on the cross, for our sins!

There is nothing that slows the love of Christ like Calvary. It is there that all the rays of divine love are blended together. In that dark hour in which our Savior hung on the cross, he showed to the world that his love was stronger than death: there he exhibited more human love; he manifested the infinite love of God. Amid all his sufferings, divine love shone with the greatest luster. Who can tell what love Christ felt for a lost world when he suffered on the cross? Then he was about to accomplish our salvation; and his love became stronger and stronger. Though he grappled with the powers of darkness, yet his arm brought salvation. He endured the hidings of his Father's countenance, until he was led to exclaim, in the bitterness of his soul, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

But he made an end of sin, and brought in an everlasting righteousness; and amid the last struggles of his holy soul, there fell from his lips in dying accents, these most blessed words- the most joyful ever conveyed to a sinner's ear, "It is finished!" Yes, your salvation, sinner, is accomplished by this wondrous death by that divine personage who endured it.

O, look at this exhibition of love! Was there ever such love

manifested to a lost world, as is here displayed before your eyes? Reader, contemplate Christ crucified. How intently was the mind of the great apostle fixed on this prolific theme! His language to the Corinthians is, "I determined not to know anything among you, except Jesus Christ and him crucified." You also may look towards Calvary, and with the same apostle, exclaim, "God forbid that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Blessed Jesus! we cannot comprehend the vastness of your dying love!

"The propitiatory death of Christ," says Thornton, "viewed by faith, fills and absorbs the mind, touches and melts the heart, raises and refines the affections, and completely transforms the whole character." "This is real love. It is not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins." "For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again."

Is it surprising, then, that Christ should be precious to believers? Can we see his matchless condescension, in stooping from a throne of glory, to a cross of suffering and shame; can we understand the great end of his amazing humiliation and vicarious death; can we feel the sprinkling of his peace-speaking blood upon the conscience, and not love, adore, and magnify him? "O you cold-hearted, frozen formalists! on such a theme it is impious to be calm. Passion is reason, transport is temperance, here."

What can elevate and rejoice the soul, if it remains unaffected with the highest manifestations of eternal love? In the death of Christ, the power, wisdom, justice, and mercy of God, shine forth in full unclouded splendor. What language can, with due force, express the tender and lively emotions which spring up in

the Christian's breast as he silently muses on the delightful subject of redeeming love?

O God! what is man, that you are mindful of him? You did not even spare your own Son, but freely delivered him up for us all. Who am I, that such a price should be paid for my ransom? It was not with silver and gold, and corruptible things, that my soul was redeemed, but by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. Why, blessed and adorable Savior, did you look in compassion on me, a worthless worm, a vile apostate, a hell deserving rebel? O how is my soul lost in admiration and delight, when I contemplate this mystery! May your love ever glow in my heart, and your praise on my tongue! May I wholly live to you, who has died for me.

"Oh, wondrous love! to bleed and die
To bear the cross and shame;
That guilty sinners, such as I,
Might plead your gracious name."

The death of Christ delivers us from condemnation. When a sinner, by faith, obtains a sight of the crucified One, he boldly exclaims in the face of all his enemies, "Who then will condemn us? Will Christ Jesus? No, for he is the one who died for us and was raised to life for us and is sitting at the place of highest honor next to God, pleading for us." By his death he has satisfied divine justice, and reconciled us to God; and "there is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus." "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ;" and being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." O, to have an interest in that atonement which Christ made for our sins! "By whom we have now received the atonement."

Reader, I would not lead you to Sinai, but to Calvary- to the Savior's bleeding side. I would point you to the cross of Christ;

to him, who, in his great love, once suffered, and bled, and died for sinners. I would direct you to the bleeding Lamb of God, "who takes away the sin of the world." May you behold him with the eye of faith; even Him who so loved you, that he laid down his own life for you. Then shall the peace of God, which passes all understanding, fill your heart. Then shall heavenly joys possess your renewed spirit; and one unbroken strain of praise shall, through time and eternity, arise from your purified, exalted, and enraptured soul, to Him who loved you, and washed you from your sins in his own blood. Look at Jesus now. Have faith in his atoning blood. Endeavor to obtain a glimpse of the bleeding Savior.

"A bleeding Savior, seen by faith,
A sense of pardoning love;
A hope that triumphs over death,
Give joys like those above,
To take a glimpse within the veil;
To know that God is mine;
Are springs of joy that never fail,
Unspeakable! divine!"

The sufferings and death of the Son of God afford the most illustrious exhibition of divine love that has ever been displayed on this terrestrial globe. Here is exhibited love, such as never before shone on earth; love, surpassing human thought and comprehension. Truly, here the love of Christ passes knowledge! What wonderful love and condescension are here manifested! Christ dying for sinners! The Son of God nailed to the cross for sinners! The blood of Emmanuel flowing from Calvary for sinners! Our blessed Savior, "Though he was God, he did not demand and cling to his rights as God. He made himself nothing; he took the humble position of a slave and appeared in human form. And in human form he obediently humbled himself even further by dying a criminal's death on a cross." O, wonderful love that made the only begotten Son of God lay down his life for sinners!

"That such a person as Christ," says Vincent, "so excellent, so innocent; should undergo death, and such a death as that of the cross, so disgraceful, so painful; that he should submit to such ignominy, and endure such agony, such tearing of his flesh, such pressure in his spirit, with such submission and patience, for strangers and enemies! Here was love, stronger than death. Oh! the sleight, oh! the depth of this love! There are such dimensions in this love of Christ, as the longest line of our most extended thoughts and imaginations can never be able to reach and measure."

What amazing love did Christ manifest, when he, who was the brightness of his Father's glory, exchanged that crown of glory which he wore in heaven, for a crown of thorns on earth, and bled, and died on the cross for guilty man! Sinner, "Behold the Lamb of God!" Contemplate your divine Redeemer, who has shed his precious blood to save your soul from eternal misery. In love he died to save you. O, then, contemplate this loving Savior in his sufferings and death!

"Think how on the cross he hung,
Pierced with a thousand wounds!
Hark, from each, as with a tongue,
The voice of pardon sounds!
See, from all his bursting veins,
Blood of wondrous virtue flow!
Shed to wash away your stains,
And ransom you from woe."

Sinner, flee to Christ. He will receive you joyfully, and save you with an everlasting salvation. He will rejoice over you with great joy. He is a loving Savior, and he loves to save sinners. "He was willing to die a shameful death on the cross because of the joy he knew would be his afterward (the joy of saving sinners). Now he is seated in the place of highest honor beside God's throne in heaven." "Therefore he is able, once and forever, to save

everyone who comes to God through him. He lives forever to plead with God on their behalf."

Come, now, and put your trust in this Savior. Leave with him your immortal concerns. Entrust fearlessly your whole salvation to him. Do not think that he will reject you, if you attempt to cast your sin-burdened soul into his compassionate arms. His atonement is all-sufficient. He saves to the very uttermost. Despair not— only come and commit your soul to Christ, and salvation is yours.

There is an infinite efficacy in the precious blood of Christ, to cleanse you from all sin. Blessed be God! that blood which washes away the deepest stains, has been shed; and that atonement which expiates the greatest guilt, has been made. God now says to us, in language the most strong and encouraging, "I have swept away your sins like the morning mists. I have scattered your offenses like the clouds. Oh, return to me, for I have redeemed you."

In the contemplation of our salvation, well may we exclaim with the prophet, "Sing, O heavens, for the Lord has done this wondrous thing. Shout, O earth! Break forth into song, O mountains and forests and every tree! For the Lord has redeemed Jacob and is glorified in Israel."

Blessed Jesus! It is from your death that we derive eternal life and blessedness. How should our hearts glow with love to you, and sound with the high praises of our God! "I am overwhelmed with joy in the Lord my God! For he has dressed me with the clothing of salvation and draped me in a robe of righteousness. I am like a bridegroom in his wedding suit or a bride with her jewels."

Reader, are you deeply interested in the atonement and righteousness of Christ? Then go forward in your pilgrimage journey with joy; leaning upon Jesus, the beloved of your soul.

"Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ, who loved you and gave himself as a sacrifice to take away your sins. And God was pleased, because that sacrifice was like sweet perfume to him." "...Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless."

With their robes washed white in the blood of the Emmanuel, invested with his spotless, perfect righteousness, the saints shall at last be presented before God, a faultless church; and the redeeming love of Christ constituting their unending theme, shall engage their enlarged and exalted faculties, and employ their ransomed souls in holy meditations through the everlasting sabbath of eternity.

Sinner, resort immediately to the fountain of the Redeemer's blood, while it is yet open. Come, without delay: "Wash, and be clean." "The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." Let each one who hears them say, "Come." Let the thirsty ones come—anyone who wants to. Let them come and drink the water of life without charge." If you thus come to the fountain of living water, you will be able to adopt the language of Cowper, and say—

There is a fountain filled with blood drawn from Emmanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains.
Lose all their guilty stains, lose all their guilty stains;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day;
And there have I, though vile as he, washed all my sins away.
Washed all my sins away, washed all my sins away;
And there have I, though vile as he, washed all my sins away.

Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood shall never lose its power
Till all the ransomed church of God be saved, to sin no more.
Be saved, to sin no more, be saved, to sin no more;
Till all the ransomed church of God be saved, to sin no more.

E'er since, by faith, I saw the stream Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme, and shall be till I die.
And shall be till I die, and shall be till I die;
Redeeming love has been my theme, and shall be till I die.

Then in a nobler, sweeter song, I'll sing Thy power to save,
When this poor lisping, stammering tongue lies silent in the
grave.
Lies silent in the grave, lies silent in the grave;
When this poor lisping, stammering tongue lies silent in the
grave.

Lord, I believe Thou hast prepared, unworthy though I be,
For me a blood bought free reward, a golden harp for me!
'Tis strung and tuned for endless years, and formed by power
divine,
To sound in God the Father's ears no other name but Thine.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST CONTEMPLATED

"And to know the love of Christ." Eph. 3:19

On no other subject did the mind of the apostle Paul dwell with
so much delight, as on that of the redeeming love of Christ. This
was his favorite theme. It was his ardent desire to exhibit to a

lost world, the grace of the Lord Jesus, which had been so abundantly manifested to himself, once a great sinner. It was the love of Christ that sustained him amid all his trials, and distresses, and persecutions, and enabled him to finish a glorious career. Neither the threats of the Jews, nor the terror of the Romans, could separate him from the love of Christ, or in the least abate his zeal for spreading the news of salvation, and the wonders of redeeming love through a lost world.

Writing to the Romans, he boldly exclaims, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: 'For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.' No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The same apostle, writing to the Ephesians, desires and prays that Christ may dwell in their hearts by faith, that they being rooted and grounded in love, "may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge."

Let us contemplate the love of Christ in all its extent, and in all its vastness. When did it commence? In the past eternity. The love of Christ to his people extends from eternity. Though it was manifested in time, yet it existed from eternity. "Then I was by him as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men." Christ says to each of his chosen ones, "I have loved you with an everlasting love therefore, with loving kindness have I drawn you."

Oh! wonderful thought, everlasting love! Who can comprehend the import of these words— everlasting love? Christ loves us, and his love is everlasting. Yes, dear believer, Christ loved you before the world was created; before you had an existence. From all eternity he thought upon your lost condition by nature; and oh! how willingly, how gladly, he left the throne of glory to bring salvation to you. His love never had a beginning. "This river of love began to flow before the world was; from everlasting, from the beginning, before ever the earth was. Christ's love to us is as old as the Father's love to the Son. This river of light began to stream from Jesus towards us, before the beams poured from the sun; before the rivers flowed to the ocean; before angel loved angel, or man loved man: before creatures were, Christ loved us. This is a great mystery; who can fathom it? This love passes knowledge." (McCheyne)

The love of Christ will reach into eternity; will extend throughout its immeasurable ages it has no end. This is the sweet declaration of Christ, with regard to his love, that "For the mountains may depart and the hills disappear, but even then I will remain loyal to you. My covenant of blessing will never be broken," says the Lord, who has mercy on you."

O, to be among that happy number, who will enjoy in heaven the eternal favor of Christ's love, which will make eternity itself one joyous unclouded day of everlasting light and immortal felicity! Blessed Jesus! Give us a saving interest in your unchanging loving-kindness, which is better than life. O, let one ray of your most wonderful love light on our benighted hearts: soften them by the manifestation of your grace.

Of the vastness of the love of Christ, we can form no adequate conceptions; much less can we, by any power of the understanding, comprehend it. To use the emphatic language of Rutherford, "it is as if a child could take the globe of earth and sea in his two short arms." The love of Christ is like a great ocean, whose depths are unfathomable. There is a height in this

love, to which no human intelligence can soar; a depth which no created mind can penetrate. In viewing the love of Christ, there lies a wide unbounded prospect before us. The mental vision wanders at liberty over this illimitable range. The love of Christ is circumscribed by no limits; it is bounded by no horizon: it is one vast expanse in which the soul may lose itself in wonder, delight, and admiration.

The pious McCheyne, whom we have already quoted, has the following beautiful remarks on the love of Christ— "Paul says: 'The love of Christ passes knowledge.' It is like the blue sky into which you may see clearly, but the real vastness of which you cannot measure. It is like the deep, deep sea, into whose bosom you can look a little way, but its depths are unfathomable. It has a breadth without a bound, length without top, and depth without bottom. If holy Paul said this, who was so deeply taught in divine things; who had been in the third heaven, and seen the glorified face of Jesus; how much more may we, poor and weak believers, look into that love, and say, It passes knowledge!"

If we cannot comprehend the love of Christ; if we cannot fathom it, let us contemplate and admire it. It was the love of Christ that led him to assume human nature, in order that he might suffer and die, and thus atone for the sins of his people. It was this love that induced him to leave the bosom of his Father, and the adoration of the angelic host, and to sojourn among guilty, worthless mortals.

It was love that led him to exchange the throne of glory for the manger of Bethlehem and the cross of Calvary. It was love that made his whole life, from the manger to the cross, one of grief and sorrow. Love made him "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."

Well might the blessed Jesus have exclaimed, "Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, with which the Lord has afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger." It was love that

made him suffer and die for sinners. Yes, love led him to the gloomy garden of Gethsemane; love drew him to the judgment hall; love nailed him to the cross; and love enabled him to exclaim with his expiring breath, "It is finished."

"Greater love has no man than this." The love of Christ is wonderful love: it is surpassing, boundless love. Look at that amazing love which Christ has manifested to sinners; and may you be able to comprehend with all saints what is its breadth, and length, and depth, and height! When you intently contemplate that redeeming love which brought Christ from his throne, to live and suffer, and die for sinners, does not your breast heave with emotions of gratitude? Does not your soul rise in adoration, and is it not lost in wonder, love, and praise?

Have you a heart so cold as not to be warmed by such unbounded love; a heart so hard as not to be softened by such grace as is here set before the eyes of a wondering world?

No feeble mortal can express the vastness of the love of Christ to sinners! It is a mystery which eternity itself will never fully unravel. "God only, knows the love of God." We know that it is great love, and that it is manifested to sinners, but it is love too boundless for the most capacious mind to grasp. None can comprehend its vastness: none can measure its immensity; language fails to describe it; human thought cannot fathom it; time cannot disclose its depths; and vast eternity itself will roll away in its continual and delightful contemplation. How transcendent is the love of Christ! It passes knowledge.

O my soul, are you not lost in wonder and admiration when you contemplate this divine love— the love of Jesus? And love so amazing, love so boundless as the love of Christ should call forth our loftiest strains of praise, and exercise our highest powers of mind in devout contemplations. It should be the constant theme of our meditation here, until we come to possess its full and eternal enjoyment in that world where all is love. And if we

possess the love of Christ on earth, it will cheer our hearts, brighten our prospects, alleviate our sorrows, mitigate our afflictions, and emit a ray of hope that will enable us to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, even in this valley of tears.

To be the object of Christ's love is desirable, and it is a blessed attainment to know that you enjoy it; to say with Paul, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." There is nothing so much calculated to drive from sin, or excite to good works, as a ray of the love of Christ darting into the sinner's heart! This will more effectually melt it, than all tide terrors of the law, or the thunders of Sinai.

The love of Christ fills the soul with immortal joys. There is nothing so reviving to the believer, as the sweet thought of Christ's love to him. There is no subject stored with such an exuberance of divine consolation, and heavenly joy, as that of redeeming love— the love of the Son of God to a lost world. Every other subject loses its luster when contrasted with this sublime, soul-reviving theme; and nothing tends so effectually to expand, elevate, and purify the soul, as that faith "which works by love."

And what do we not owe to the love of Christ? All the comforts and happiness of life, and all the joys of a blissful eternity flow from this love. You should meditate much upon the love of Christ; and may that love ever glow within you, and be like a perpetual fire burning upon the altar of your heart.

"The love of Christ is a subject too lofty for a seraph's harp. The soul, renewed by the spirit, is often incapable of expressing the sublime feelings which pass through the mind, when thinking on this glorious subject. The love of Christ conveys a joy to the believer's heart, which is unspeakable and full of glory. The tongue cannot express the delight of heart which arises from the

manifestation of this love. The joy of harvest, the joy of the bridegroom on his wedding day; the joy of victory, and taking great spoils from the enemy; the joy of a poor man in finding great treasures; all these are not worthy to be compared with the joy and exultation of the believer's heart, on the manifestation of this love to his soul." (Vincent)

What does the blessed Jesus deserve for such unbounded love to sinners? All our hearts should be devoted to his service, and all our affections should be placed upon him. We should love him, because he first loved us. "Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy."

O to be made like the adorable Redeemer, and to praise him throughout the countless age's of eternity, for the wonders of his redeeming love! May this be the desire of every reader; and may each be enabled to exclaim with the Psalmist, "Whom have I in heaven but you? There is none upon earth that I desire besides you!"

"One there is, above all others,
Well deserves the name of Friend
His is love beyond a brother's;
Costly, free, and knows no end.
They who once his kindness prove,
Find it everlasting love.
Which of all our friends to save us,
Could or would have shed their blood!
But our Jesus died to save us
Reconciled, in him to God;
This was boundless love indeed
Jesus is a friend in need."

THE LOVE OF CHRIST IN THE

BESTOWMENT OF GRACE, IN THE GIFT OF HIS WORD, AND IN THE INSTITUTION OF DIVINE ORDINANCES.

"He gives us **grace** and glory." Psalm 84:11

"I have given them your **word**." John 17:14

"He is the one who gave these **gifts** to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers."
Ephes. 4:11

"He gives us grace and glory." But will he give grace to sinners? Yes, to great sinners. Paul was the chief of sinners, and yet to him was the grace of the Lord Jesus manifested. He asserts, concerning himself, that "The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant, with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."

Oh! what surpassing, boundless love, has Christ manifested to sinners! And on millions of Adam's lost and guilty race, who were once as vile as sin could make them, has he in his great love bestowed his boundless grace. It is his love that makes sinners saints, and distinguishes them from the rest of mankind; and every sinner that will enter heaven's gates, must first feel the constraining influence of this love. How sweet are the words, "By grace (without merit) you are saved!" Here is an overflowing fountain of divine consolation for guilty sinners. What wonderful love is here manifested to us! "But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so very much, that even while we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's special favor that you have been saved!) For he raised us from the dead along with Christ, and we are seated with him in the heavenly realms—all because we are one with Christ Jesus. And so God can always point to us

as examples of the incredible wealth of his favor and kindness toward us, as shown in all he has done for us through Christ Jesus."

"Most amazingly rich mercy! most astonishingly great love! When dead in sins, blinded by pride to our wretchedness, and full of enmity against God and goodness, even then he loved us with great love, and of rich mercy quickened us. O look at, live and feed upon this rich mercy and great love. Oh! to grace what mighty debtors." (Mason)

This grace is greatly celebrated by prophets, and apostles, and saints. Paul cries, "By the grace of God, I am what I am." The Psalmist exclaims, "How excellent is your loving kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of your wings." A good man says, "Nothing but free grace makes any difference between me and the vilest of sinners." One says, "I know no sweeter way to heaven, than through free grace and hard trials together; and where grace is, hard trials are seldom lacking." Another says, "Two things I chiefly know: one is, that I am a great sinner; the other is, that Jesus Christ is a great Savior. O the riches of divine grace!"

When Christ shall bring forth the headstone of his living, glorious temple, all the redeemed shall shout "Grace, grace, unto it." Grace is glory begun, glory is grace perfected. Grace is the first degree of glory. The Lord will give grace, and glory also. O what precious words! Who can weigh their import?

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

Tw'as grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear

The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,
His Word my hope secures;
He will my Shield and Portion be,
As long as life endures.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the veil,
A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine;
But God, Who called me here below,
Shall be forever mine.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we've first begun. -Newton

As soon as sinners are brought into a state of grace, they have need of continual spiritual instruction; and such instruction, Christ in his love has provided them. He has given them his word. He has favored them with the means of grace, and with the institution of divine ordinances. In the gift of his word, Christ has manifested great love to his people. While journeying through this bleak, arid, wilderness world, to mansions of glory, he refreshes their souls with the bread of life, and with the living waters of salvation. The word of God, and the ordinances of his grace, afford them abundant provisions by the way.

What transcendent love has the blessed Jesus manifested in giving us this unspeakably precious treasure, the holy Scriptures, in which are contained such inexhaustible stores of rich grace. The whole Bible is an epistle of love, unspeakable love, to perishing sinners. It unfolds the way of salvation; it proclaims a risen, glorified Savior; it points to the Lamb of God; it is full of Christ, full of immortal love; it leads the sinner to glory. O then, may this precious treasure, this precious volume be yours, be mine, to guide us through this dark, bewildering scene of sin and sorrow, to a brighter world above. "Your word," says the psalmist, "is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

How highly has the word of God been prized by every Christian pilgrim, by every traveler to Zion— it was David's comfort in his affliction; it was his song in the house of his pilgrimage. "This is my comfort in my affliction, for your word has quickened me." "Your statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage." How precious was the holy law of God, to this eminent saint, Israel's sacred bard! Hear him exclaim, "O, how I love your law! it is my meditation all the day." "Your testimonies have I taken as a heritage forever, for they are the rejoicing of my heart." "Therefore I love your commandments above gold; yes, above fine gold." "How sweet are your words unto my taste! yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth." "Consider how I love your precepts." "My soul has kept your testimonies, and I love them exceedingly."

Reader, may you also love the word of God, and may it ever be your greatest delight to read its sacred pages. You cannot prize this blessed book sufficiently. Blessed Jesus, what do we not owe you for the gift of this precious volume!

"Let everlasting thanks be thine,
For such a bright display,
As makes a world of darkness shine

With beams of heavenly day.
My soul rejoices to pursue
The steps of him I love;
Till glory breaks upon my view,
In brighter worlds above." -Cowper

In his love, Christ "has given unto us exceeding great and precious promises." May you ever contemplate these "precious promises;" and may your prayer be, "Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law." If you are a believer, you will love and value the word of God; you will meditate much on it. It is true of a righteous man, that "his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law does he meditate day and night."

On a dying bed, you will not regret having spent too much time in the study of the Scriptures, but you may lament that you had not devoted more of your time to the diligent perusal of the divine pages. When Salmasius, one of the most consummate scholars of his age, came to die, he exclaimed, "O! I have lost a world of time! Time, the most precious thing in the world! whereof had I but one year more, I would spend it in reading David's Psalms and Paul's Epistles." The immortal John Locke, when asked which was the surest way for a young man to attain a knowledge of the Christian religion, replied, "Let him study the Holy Scriptures, especially the New Testament; therein are contained the words of eternal life; it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter."

It is from the Bible that we obtain that knowledge, which will guide us to the abodes of immortality which will lead us to the glory and honor that will endure when sun and stars have lost their light. Then study, the word of God. "It embodies all," says Waterbury, "that a Christian in this pilgrimage can need— it is his only chart through this tempestuous life; in trouble, it is his consolation; in prosperity, his monitor; in difficulty, his guide; amid the darkness of death, and while descending into the

shadowy valley, it is the day-star that illuminates his path, makes his dying eye bright with hope, and cheers his soul with the prospect of immortal glory."

Always remember the divine admonition of our blessed Savior, "You search the scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." And "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." Let the language of your heart ever be—

"May this blest volume ever lie
Close to my heart, and near my eye;
Till life's last hour my soul engage,
And be my chosen heritage."

In the institution of the ordinances of grace, Christ has manifested the tenderest love and concern for the spiritual welfare of his people while in this world. In his love, "He is the one who gave these gifts to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ, until we come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature and full grown in the Lord, measuring up to the full stature of Christ."

A preached Gospel is the gift of Christ- a gift of love to a lost world. The Redeemer's last command, was, "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." This blessed gospel, Christ in his love has sent to us. The lines are fallen unto us in pleasant places; yes, we leave a goodly heritage.

Blessed be God! that the glad tidings of life and salvation, through a crucified Redeemer, have reached our ears. O, happy they, whose lot is cast within the joyful sound of the glorious gospel! "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of your countenance." "Blessed are those who dwell your house; they will be still praising you."

What a blessed privilege is it, that we enjoy, of entering into the house of God, with voices of joy and praise! Let us prize this privilege, and let us love to dwell in the house of God.

How ardently did David love the sanctuary of God! "Lord, I have loved the habitation of your house, and the place where your honor dwells." "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." To David, no spot on earth was so dear as Zion's holy hill; no service so sweet as that of divine worship. How highly should you, who live amid the meridian splendor of Christianity, prize the means of grace which you enjoy! With the Psalmist may you extol him from the heart, "How amiable are your tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! a day in your courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

In the institution of the sacramental supper, Christ has afforded a grand exhibition of love. In his love, yes in his dying love, he instituted it. The Lord's Supper is the sweetest of all ordinances; it is, emphatically, a feast of love. The very banner that Christ unfurls over the head of every believing communicant, is love; love written in such legible characters that he who runs may read. "He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." With what joy does the redeemed sinner approach this sacred table, that he may commemorate the dying love of his blessed Savior. His language is, "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste."

This ordinance, exhibiting as it does a crucified Savior, vividly displays the vastness of redeeming love and the riches of divine grace. A loving Savior has spread this table for us, and he cries, "Eat, O friends; drink, yes, drink abundantly, O beloved." What blessings are here provided for dying sinners? the bread of life, the waters of salvation, remission of sins; yes, an abundant pardon, peace with God, a fitness for heaven!

Come and show your love to Christ, at this feast of love; remember, and obey his dying injunction, "This do in remembrance of me." Can you lay any claim to the name of a Christian, while you live in the utter neglect of this duty? Surely not. The love of Christ should constrain you to observe it. Surely it becomes a ransomed captive, a captive bought at such an inestimable price, to testify his obligations to his loving Redeemer! "Come, for all things are now ready." Come to the Lord's table, and behold the most amazing love manifested to you, the infinite love of the dying Son of God!

O Blessed Jesus! may it be our delight, on earth to confess and own you as our divine Redeemer before men, and to commemorate your dying love in this sweet ordinance. Refreshed by that spiritual provision, which you have laid up for us in the gospel of your grace, may we press onward in our pilgrimage journey heavenward; and at last realize the joys of a blessed home in the world of glory!

Dear believer, we shall soon exchange the table below for the table above. Jesus our divine Redeemer, himself shall be at the head of that table, and shall feed us, and lead us to living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes. Until then, let us endeavor to be profited by all those means of grace, with which Christ in his love has favored us. "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen."

THE LOVE OF CHRIST IN AFFLICTIONS

"But evil does not spring from the soil, and trouble does not sprout from the earth. People are born for trouble as predictably

as sparks fly upward from a fire." Job 5:6-7

"For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes those he accepts as his children." Hebrews 12:6

Affliction comes upon all. None are exempt from the sufferings incident to our fallen nature. The young, the old, the rich and the poor, alike feel the withering touch of affliction and of sorrow. Disease invades the strongest constitution, and affliction prostrates the mightiest energy. Often those in the prime and vigor of life are laid down on the bed of sickness, and made to feel that they are dying creatures. How true it is, that "How frail is humanity! How short is life, and how full of trouble!"

The children of God are not exempted from the afflictions of this life; but it is their blessed consolation to know that they have a Friend to sympathize with them in all their sorrows and sufferings, while in this mortal state. Yes, Jesus is that friend, who watches over their sick beds, and consoles their desponding spirits amid the frailty of sinking nature. Oh! how often does the blessed Jesus wonderfully manifest his love to his afflicted ones! How often does he whisper words of peace and love and consolation in their ears! How often, in the manifestation of his love, do their souls overflow with joy, even when their bodies are racked with severe pain!

Christ will always make that promise good, "As your days, so shall your strength be;" and amid all our trials and afflictions here, we may rely with unshaken confidence on the promises of our loving Redeemer, who will not forsake us in the hour of extremity. Then he will manifest his love to us, and display the riches of his grace. In all our trials, his promise runs thus: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

All the afflictions of the children of God are designed for their

good. They come from a kind heavenly Father, from a God of love; and one of their designs is the purification and sanctification of believers. "I will turn my hand upon you, and purely purge away your dross, and take away all your tin." "By this, therefore, shall all the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit— to take away his sin." "In this way, they will be refined and cleansed and made pure until the time of the end, for the appointed time is still to come." "Many will be purified, cleansed, and refined by these trials."

Afflictions make us fit for glory: they enable us to obtain a correct view of the vanity of terrestrial happiness; they tend, through grace, to fix our souls on Him, in whom alone we can find true happiness and immortal joys. Happy sickness, that leads the soul to Jesus, the only source of blessedness! Afflictions, then, promote our spiritual welfare, and are ordered for our good. It is expressly declared, "that all things work together for good, to those who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose;" and afflictions are among the "all things" that are beneficial to the present and eternal welfare and happiness of God's children.

Afflicted believer, Christ says to you, "You don't understand now why I am doing it; someday you will." You will soon know the merciful design, which Christ had in afflicting you. In the light of eternity, you will look back and say that he has brought you by a way that is right.

In their afflictions here, Christ manifests most tender love to believers: he renews their fainting souls, by the manifestation of his love and the revelation of his grace; he strengthens them inwardly. "In the day when I cried, you answered me, and strengthened me with strength in my soul." It was the manifestation of the love and grace of the Lord Jesus, that supported the Apostle Paul amid all his afflictions. "That is why we never give up. Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are being renewed every day. For our present troubles are quite

small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us an immeasurably great glory that will last forever! So we don't look at the troubles we can see right now; rather, we look forward to what we have not yet seen. For the troubles we see will soon be over, but the joys to come will last forever."

How greatly will our light afflictions and trials here, add to the weight of that crown of glory, which we shall wear hereafter! How will they sweeten that eternal rest which remains for the people of God, our happy home in heaven!

Were the sun of prosperity always to shine upon us, we would soon forget our Father's house, our heritage above. Christ sends us afflictions to tell us that this is not our rest, that our blessed home is far above this scene of perishing mortality. Here, we must be fitted for glory; and Christ says to his followers, "In the world you shall have tribulation." It is through much tribulation that we must enter into the kingdom of God. Of that happy throng who stand around the throne of the Eternal, it is said, "these are they who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

The way to Mount Zion lies through the valley of Baca. The road to glory is a rough one. Believers may exclaim with the Psalmist, "You have tested us, O God; you have purified us like silver melted in a crucible. You captured us in your net and laid the burden of slavery on our backs. You sent troops to ride across our broken bodies. We went through fire and flood. But you brought us to a place of great abundance." But when we come to that abundant place, even to the heavenly Canaan, we will find that it will make amends for all our momentary afflictions on earth— that one hour with Christ in glory, will make us forget a lifetime of suffering.

"Though rough and thorny be the road,
It leads you home, apace, to God

Then count your present trials small,
For heaven will make amends for all."

Even now, when we are traveling through this valley of tears to mansions of glory, we have our comforts and enjoyments. The love of Christ sweetens every affliction; turns the darkest night of adversity into the light of day, and the saddest night of weeping into the morning of joy. Come afflictions, come trials, come whatever may, we are assured that all things shall work together for our good.

Reader, are you afflicted? Is it sanctified to you? If so, look upon it as an evidence of Christ's love. Let it ever be remembered, that "For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes those he accepts as his children." And again, "For the Lord corrects those he loves, just as a father corrects a child in whom he delights." The Lord afflicts his people, because he loves them. "As many as I love," says Christ, "I rebuke and chasten." He does it "for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness." And though now, "No chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto those who are exercised thereby."

Afflictions are often sent to arrest the wanderer in his course, and to bring him back to God. Many a child of God can say with David, who had often been tried and made to pass through the furnace of affliction, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray; but now have I kept your word. It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn your statutes. I know, O Lord, that your judgments are right, and that you in faithfulness have afflicted me."

Afflictions are also designed for the conversion of sinners. Thousands have been chosen in the furnace of affliction. Oh! how many saints of God, in every age, can witness to the truth of these words: "Behold, I have refined you, but not with silver; I

lave chosen you in the furnace of affliction." How many careless sinners, under the softening touch of affliction, have been brought to Jesus, and have found peace in his atoning blood! How many, without the saving knowledge of Christ, have been cast on beds of sickness, and there made, for the first time, to feel that Jesus is precious! Then they enjoyed his love, received his grace, and knew by experience that the Lord is gracious. Then affliction became light, Christ precious, and heaven sweet. The manifestation of a Savior's love dispelled every gloom, and heavenly light irradiated their souls. In affliction, Christ manifests the tenderest love to his people, and then it is that they get a glimpse of his matchless perfections. He is always near them, and "in all their affliction he is afflicted, and the angel of his presence saves them."

How happy are they to whom the love of Christ is manifested in affliction; in whose hearts the love of God is shed abroad; and who are filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory! Such are enabled to say, with an experienced apostle, "We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they are good for us—they help us learn to endure. And endurance develops strength of character in us, and character strengthens our confident expectation of salvation. And this expectation will not disappoint us. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love."

A young lady who had lain on a bed of sickness for many months, once declared to the writer, that she would rather suffer affliction with the people of God, than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Whence arose this resignation to the will of God, amid extreme sufferings? From the manifestation of Christ's love; from that love being shed abroad in her heart.

"How often does Christ manifest his dearest love to his suffering ones," said an eminent saint of other days (Hannah Housman), during her sickness. "Blessed be God for all his mercies, and for

this comfort in my affliction. O, how many mercies I have! I lack for nothing. Hitherto I can say, the Lord is gracious. He has been very merciful to me, in sustaining me under all my trials. The Lord brings affliction, but it is not because he delights to afflict his children; it is at all times for our profit. I can say it has been good for me to be afflicted; it has enabled me to discern things, which, when I was in health, I could not perceive. It has made me know more of the vanity and emptiness of this world, and all its delusive pleasures- for at best they are but vanity."

Said an amiable and devoted young minister (Thomas Taylor) in his last sickness, "I do not consider my circumstances melancholy or painful. I am very mercifully dealt with. My passage to the tomb is easy. I have comparatively little suffering, and I enjoy that peace of God which passes all understanding. I can truly say, that goodness and mercy have followed me all my days, including these suffering days: and looking upwards to that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, I can also add, I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." Thus afflictions work for our good, and qualify us for the joys and bliss of heaven.

And now, afflicted reader, remember the divine exhortation, "My child, don't ignore it when the Lord disciplines you, and don't be discouraged when he corrects you. For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes those he accepts as his children." "But consider the joy of those corrected by God! Do not despise the chastening of the Almighty when you sin. For though he wounds, he also bandages. He strikes, but his hands also heal." "As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Whoever heard of a child who was never disciplined? If God doesn't discipline you as he does all of his children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really his children after all." Dear believer, the time is short. Your afflictions are nearly over.

"A few more trials; a few more tears; a few more days of

darkness, and we shall be forever with the Lord. In this tabernacle we groan, being burdened: All dark things shall yet be cleared up; all sufferings healed; all blanks supplied; and we shall find fullness of joy (not one drop lacking) in the smile and presence of our God. It is one of the laws of Christ's kingdom—'we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.' We must not reckon upon a smooth road to glory, but it will be a short one." (McCheyne)

"Be still, my soul, and know the Lord;
In meek submission wait his will,
His presence can true peace afford,
His power can shield from every ill.
Your path is strewn with piercing thorns;
Each step is gained by arduous fight,
Yet wait, till hope's bright morning dawns,
Till darkness changes into light.
Soon shall the painful conflict cease;
Soon shall the raging storm be o'er;
Soon shall you reach the realms of peace,
Where suffering shall be known no more.
There shall your joy forever flow
In one unbroken stream of bliss;
There shall you God the Savior know,
And feel him yours as you are his."

Cleave closely to Jesus; you shall soon see him as he is; then your afflictions, and trials, and days of mourning will have ended; you shall reign with Jesus, and be like him. "And I am sure that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on that day when Christ Jesus comes back again."

Sanctified afflictions are fitting you for heaven. " Happy are those whom you discipline, Lord, and those whom you teach from your law. You give them relief from troubled times until a pit is dug for the wicked."

Choose Christ now, and you may rest assured that goodness and mercy shall follow you through life, and glory and immortality crown you at death. You will enjoy the love of Christ in health, and in sickness, and when you come to feel your last pain, and draw your last breath, you will shout forth, "O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory? Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

THE LOVE OF CHRIST, AS MANIFESTED TO HIS PEOPLE IN THE HOUR OF DEATH

"Even when I walk through the dark valley of death, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me." Psalm 23:4

"And when the closing scenes prevail,
When wealth, state, pleasure, all shall fail;
All that a foolish world admires,
Or passion craves or pride inspires;
At that important hour of need,
Jesus shall prove a friend indeed.
His hand shall smooth your dying bed,
His arm sustain your drooping head;
And when the painful struggle's o'er,
And that vain thing, the world, no more
He'll bear his humble friend away,
To rapture and eternal day."

It is a solemn truth that you and I must die. Death will soon overtake us. Before the termination of the present year; yes, before the sun shall have again passed the horizon, the hand that now writes these lines, and the eye that now reads them,

may both have felt the chill of death.

Oh, what is human life? A vapor; a dream; a tale that is soon told; a feeble spark of vitality, emitting its light for a moment, and then forever extinguished! "How frail is humanity! How short is life, and how full of trouble! Like a flower, we blossom for a moment and then wither. Like the shadow of a passing cloud, we quickly disappear." "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle flying back and forth. They end without hope. O God, remember that my life is but a breath."

Our continuance on earth is but for a short moment. "Our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding." "As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourishes; for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more." "For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away." How short, how uncertain is life; but how certain is death!

How true it is that God will bring us to death, and to "the house appointed for all living." "It is appointed unto men once to die." Millions have fallen before the irresistible stroke of death. All mankind are dying creatures, and are pressing onward to the grave.

Reflect upon the past history of mankind. "Generation after generation," says a beautiful writer, "have passed away. Time was, when they were alive upon the earth, and active amid its busy scenes. They had their joys and their sorrows. They flitted across life's busy stage, and disappeared forever behind the curtain of mortality. They have gone. The winds of centuries have swept over their graves."

As it was with them, so it will soon be with us. Look at the future. It is computed that eight hundred million people constitute the population of our globe: these, in less than a

century, will all be lodged in the grave. The grave receives alike as its victims the inmate of the cottage, and him who sits on his throne and sways the scepter of nations. The paths of glory and honor lead but to the grave. Here come the nobles with their titles, kings with their crowns, and scholars with their volumes. Here is the home of the mighty hero, who once with his steel-clad millions thundered over the field of battle, and with an arm of power shook the foundations of kingdoms.

"How populous, how capacious is the grave!
This is creation's melancholy vault."

O look at the brevity and vanity of human life, and learn a solemn lesson. Though you have soared in fame, or have accumulated wealth in abundance; though you glory in human power, and, like Alexander, could ride triumphantly over the ruins of desolated nations, yet the time will soon have arrived when the feeble tenement of clay shall moulder, leaving its only epitaph upon the crumbling marble; when it may be pronounced, over your mortal remains—

"How loved, how valued once, avails you not;
To whom related, or by whom begot:
A heap of dust alone remains of thee;
'Tis all you are, and all the great shall be."

But death does not annihilate our existence. We are immortal beings. Human life is but a prelude to an immortal state of being. As we close our eyes on the visionary scenes of time, we open them amid the solemn realities of eternity; we enter upon that life which will never end. To die, then, is but to live.

Oh! how important it is that we should become interested in the atonement of Christ; that we may find redemption in his blood, and forgiveness of sins, that we may be in peace. All must tread the dark valley alone. All must cross the Jordan of death. But the humble follower of Christ is, through grace, enabled to exclaim, as he approaches the dreadful precipice that hides the view of

mortality: "Even when I walk through the dark valley of death, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me."

Christ's presence is with believers in the hour of death; he cheers their departing spirits. They have fled for refuge to him, and he sustains them in their trying hour. Then he is a friend indeed; a friend that sticks closer than a brother. This love is manifested to them; it enables them to shout forth triumphantly, in the face of the last enemy, "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? For sin is the sting that results in death, and the law gives sin its power. How we thank God, who gives us victory over sin and death through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

It is to the believer in Jesus, and to him alone, that death comes disarmed of his terrors; being only a faithful messenger to convey him to his dear Lord and Savior: so that in the prospect of dissolution, he can express a desire with Paul, "To depart and be with Christ, which is far better." He knows that Christ is his loving friend, that he is watching over his dying bed, ready to receive his departing spirit, and he can confidently say with Stephen, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." And with David, "Into your hand I commit my spirit; you have redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." "I will behold your face in righteousness. I will be satisfied, when I awake, with your likeness." And with Simeon, "Lord, now let your servant depart in peace according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation."

Such is the peaceful end of the Christian's mortal career. He dies in peace. He passes the swellings of Jordan, cheered by the Savior's presence, and animated by the manifestation of his love. It is in the trying hour of death, when flesh and heart fail, that the love of Christ is amazingly manifested to believers.

It is when the 'swellings of Jordan' come almost over the poor believer's soul; when he is ready to sink beneath the boisterous waves, that Christ reveals to him his wonderful love, which fills

his heart with joy; which enables him to shout forth joyfully upon his bed, and be more than a conqueror through Him that loved us. "Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds." "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." And at that solemn period, when the last sands of life are running out, when life's last hour is closing, he visits them individually, and unfolds the riches of his grace, and the wonders of his love. He whispers in their ears his gracious promises. "Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine. When you go through deep waters and great trouble, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown! When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you. For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior."

And they find him faithful to his promises; yes, when they tread the verge of Jordan, they find him like the high priest of old, who bore the ark of the covenant, standing in the midst of the waters, that they may safely pass through its proud waves to the heavenly Canaan, that glorious land of promise- the happy home of the believers, the heaven of eternal rest. "They were glad when it grew calm, and he guided them to their desired haven." Jesus Christ, our blessed high priest, himself has passed through the Jordan of death. He has dipped his feet into this stream. He has rolled back its swelling waves. He has made a safe and easy passage for all his followers.

Christian, why then are you afraid to die, to plunge into this stream, when you see the very footprints of your Savior in the bottom? "Who is he that condemns? It is Christ who died." His eyes have been closed in death. O, believer! Christ has been laid in the cold and silent grave before you. He has felt the chill of death. But he has removed its sting. Through death, he has destroyed him that had the power of it. Fear not, death is a vanquished foe. Christ says concerning his people, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave. I will redeem there

from death O death! I will be your plague; O grave! I will be your destruction."

Christian, death cannot hurt you. It is but a sure step into glory! Are you in bondage through the fear of death? Christ has delivered you from this bondage. "Because God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—Jesus also became flesh and blood by being born in human form. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the Devil, who had the power of death. Only in this way could he deliver those who have lived all their lives as slaves to the fear of dying."

Thus, the children of God are safely conducted through death to mansions of glory, and awake amid the splendors of an immortal day. How happy they, who, when walking through the valley of the shadow of death, find that Jesus is their friend and companion!

"How glorious he! how happy they,
In such a glorious friend!
Whose love secures them all the way,
And crowns them at the end."

Thus, while the believer is standing on the verge of the grave, and looking back on his past life, his past conflicts, his earthly pilgrimage, he can exclaim in the language of the Apostle Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith;" and as he looks forward into a vast eternity, and sees the rich rewards that are shortly to be his, the kingdom that he is going to possess, the crown of glory that is soon to be placed upon his brow, he triumphantly adds, "And now the prize awaits me—the crown of righteousness that the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that great day of his return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to his glorious return." At last, he hears that happy approbation, and joyful invitation, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord."

The solemn scene closes. The dark valley is passed. Jordan is crossed. No more struggles. No more pain. No more tears of sorrow, and affliction. No more death. "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces." The believer is "absent from the body, and present with the Lord." In the Savior's perfect love, he rests, and finds his eternity of joy. In his dying moments he could say, "God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave; for he shall receive me." "For this God is our God, forever and ever; he will be our guide, even unto death." And he has experienced a happy realization of these promises. That Savior who loved him in life, also manifests his love to him in the hour of death. His love is abiding, it is not subject to mutation; it knows no change. "Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them unto the end."

As the believer's mortal career is about to terminate, the Savior stands by him, and encircles him with the arms of his love. He sheds abroad his love in the believer's heart. He sustains him amid the agonies of dissolving nature. He strengthens him by his grace. The dying Christian cries, "My flesh and my heart fail; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." "That is why we never give up. Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are being renewed every day. For our present troubles are quite small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us an immeasurably great glory that will last forever! So we don't look at the troubles we can see right now; rather, we look forward to what we have not yet seen. For the troubles we see will soon be over, but the joys to come will last forever."

Thus he finishes his earthly course with joy. His end is peace. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace." With him all is calm, and peaceful. The heavens are serene. The thunders of the law are hushed. Calvary is in his view. Around him all is sprinkled with atoning blood. No wonder, then, that he should die in peace; for, "being

justified by faith," he has "peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." He has obtained the victory over death, the last enemy. Hence, many a dying Christian has been able to say, with Goodwin, "Is this dying? Is this the enemy that dismayed me so long, now so harmless, and even pleasant?"

Not so with the end of the wicked. To him, death is terrible; the grave, gloomy; and eternity, dark. "The wicked are crushed by their sins, but the godly have a refuge when they die."

The death-bed of the Christian is a glorious, happy place— "The chamber where the good man meets his fate, Is privileged beyond the common walk of virtuous life, Quite on the verge of heaven."

THE LOVE OF CHRIST IN THE HOUR OF DEATH (continued); THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES

"Seeing we also are compassed about with **so great a cloud of witnesses.**" Hebrews 12:1

A great many delightful records of the death bed scenes of martyrs, ministers of Jesus Christ, and private Christians, who have enjoyed the presence of Christ in a dying hour, who have felt his love manifested to them, and have received his consolations, might be adduced to corroborate the assertions we have already made, and to confirm the truth, that Christ does thus manifest his love to dying believers. We shall introduce the following.

1. Lambert, a martyr under Henry VIII, while he was cruelly mangled by the soldiers' halberds, and consuming in a slow fire,

raised his burning hands amid the flames, and, with a distinct voice, exclaimed, "None but Christ; none but Christ!"

2. Lawrence Saunders, suffered martyrdom under the "bloody Queen Mary." He kissed the stake at which he was bound, and cried aloud, "Welcome the cross of Christ! Welcome the cross of Christ! Welcome life everlasting!"

3. John Knox, the Scottish Reformer's dying words, were, "Come, Lord Jesus, sweet Jesus! into your hands I commend my spirit." Again he said, "I have tasted of the heavenly joys where presently I shall be! Now, for the last time I commit soul, body, and spirit into his hands." Uttering a deep sigh, he said, "Now it is come!" His attendant desired him to give his friends a sign that he died in peace. On this he waved his hand, and uttering two deep sighs, he fell asleep in Jesus.

4. John Welsh, the son-in-law of John Knox, was one of the most eminent ministers that the Church of Scotland ever produced. He died in great joy. On his death-bed, he seemed to feel himself on the very threshold of glory: he was filled and overpowered with the sensible manifestations of God's love and glory. His last words were uttered in an ecstasy of joy: "It is enough, O Lord, it is now enough! hold your hand; your servant is a clay vessel, and can hold no more!"

5. Samuel Rutherford, professor of divinity in the University of St. Andrew's, was one of the most resplendent lights that ever rose in Scotland He died a triumphant death. His last moments, he was favored with a most wonderful manifestation of Christ's love. He felt that Christ was with him, and that he manifested his grace to him; and he was, through that manifested love and grace, enabled to exclaim with his dying breath, "There is none like Christ. I feel, I feel, I believe, I joy, I rejoice, I feed on manna! My eyes shall see my Redeemer, and I shall be ever with him! And what would you more want? I have been a sinful man; but I stand at the best pass that over a man did. Christ is mine,

and I am his! Glory, glory, to my Creator and Redeemer forever! Glory shines in Emmanuel's land! O for arms to embrace him! O for a well-tuned harp." He continued exulting in God his Savior to the last, as one in full vision of joy and glory. At length he entered into the joy of his Lord.

"In vain my fancy strives to paint
The moment after death;
The glories that surround the saints,
When yielding up their breath.
One gentle sigh their fetters breaks;
We scarce can say 'they're gone,'
Before the willing spirit takes
Her mansion near the throne."

6. James Durham, on his dying bed, was at first in much darkness of his mind. He said to a friend, "For all that I have preached and written, there is but one scripture that I can think of, or dare to lay hold of. Tell me, brother, if I may dare lay the weight of my salvation on it: "Whoever comes unto me, I will in nowise cast out!" "That you may depend on," said the minister in reply," though you had a thousand salvations at hazard!" Having remained some time in silence, he at length came joyfully from beneath the dark cloud, and cried, in a rapture of joy, "Is not the Lord good? Is he not infinitely good? See how he smiles! I do say it, and I do proclaim it!"

7. The noble Marquis of Argyle, on the morning of his execution, while settling his worldly business, was so overpowered by the manifestation of divine love and goodness, that he broke out in a holy rapture, and said, "I thought to leave concealed the Lord's goodness; but it will not do. I am now ordering my affairs; and God is sealing my charter to my heavenly inheritance, and is just now saying to me, Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you!"

8. James Guthrie, a godly minister, the companion of the noble

Argyle, exclaimed, when on the scaffold, "Jesus is my light and life, My righteousness my strength and salvation and all my desire! Him, O Him do I commend with all my soul unto you. Bless Him, O my soul, now and forever! Now, O Lord, let your servant depart in peace; for my eyes have seen your salvation."

9. The pious Hervey closed his life in peace. His last words were: "How thankful am I for death! It is the passage to the Lord and Giver of eternal life. O welcome, welcome death! You may well be reckoned among the treasures of a Christian— to live is Christ; to die, is gain! Lord, now let your servant depart in peace; for my eyes have seen your salvation!" Then he fell asleep in Jesus. Oh, what a happy death; to die unto the Lord- to sleep in Jesus!

10. William Romaine was an eminent preacher of the gospel of Jesus, and died a joyful death. He had the love of Christ in his heart; and He was very precious to him in the hour of death. "I have," said he, "the peace of God in my conscience, and the love of God in my heart. Jesus is more precious than rubies; and all that can be desired on earth, is not to be compared to Him." Being near his dissolution, he cried out, "Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty! Glory be to you on High, for such peace on earth, and goodwill to men." One time he said, "I have much of the presence of Jesus with me."

11. Doddridge, an eminent servant of Christ, said, on his death-bed, "I am full of confidence: there is a hope set before me; I have fled; I still fly for refuge to that hope. In him I trust. In him I have strong consolation, and shall assuredly be accepted in the beloved of my soul."

12. The immortal Baxter closed his course full of joy and peace. To some ministers around him, he said, "I have peace, I have peace!" "You are now drawing near your long- desired home," said one. "I believe I believe," was the reply. When the question was put to him, "How are you?" he promptly answered, "Almost

well!" To a friend who entered the chamber, he said, "I thank you, I thank you for coming." Then fixing his eye on him, he added, "The Lord teach you how to die!" These were his last words.

13. John Janeway, a young minister of England, died one of the most triumphant Christian deaths on record. Not a word dropped from his lips, which did not breathe of Christ and heaven. His Savior was with him in the hark valley; the arms of Christ supported him; the love and smiles of Christ cheered his departing soul, and made death itself sweet to him. He broke out in such words as these: "O, he is come! he is come! O, how glorious is the blessed Jesus! How shall I speak the thousandth part of his praises! O for words to set out a little of that excellency; but it is inexpressible! O, my friends, come look upon a dying man, and wonder! I myself cannot but wonder! Was there ever greater kindness? Were there ever such manifestations of rich grace? O, why me, Lord; why me? If this be dying, dying is sweet! Let no Christian be afraid of dying. O, death is sweet to me! This bed is soft! Christ's arms, his smiles, his visits; surely they would turn hell into heaven! What are all human pleasures compared to one glimpse of his glory, which shines so strongly on My soul? I shall soon be in eternity! I shall soon see Christ himself, who died for me, who loved me, and washed me in his blood! I shall soon mingle in the hallelujahs of glory! I think I hear the melody of heaven, and by faith I see the angels waiting to carry me to the bosom of Jesus, and I shall be forever with the Lord! And who can choose but rejoice in all this?"

Often he would say, "O, that I could but let you know what I now feel! O, that I could express the thousandth part of that sweetness that I now find in Christ! You would all then think it well worth while to make it your business to be religious. O, my dear friends, we little think what Christ is worth upon a death bed! I would not for a world, no, for millions of worlds, be now without Christ and pardon." To those around him, he said, "O

that glory, the unspeakable glory that I behold. My heart is full! my heart is full! Christ smiles, and I cannot but smile. The arms of my blessed Savior are open to embrace me; the angels stand ready to carry my soul into his bosom. O, did you but see what I see, you would all cry out with me, 'How long, dear Lord? Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!' O, why are his chariot wheels so long in coming? I so long to be with Christ, that I would be contented to be cut in pieces, and to be put to the most exquisite torments, so that I might but die and be with Christ! O, how sweet is Jesus! 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!' Death, do your worst. Death has lost its terribleness. Death! it is nothing to me! Death is nothing (through grace) to me. I can as easily die, as shut my eyes, or turn my head and sleep. I long to be with Christ: I long to die."

To his Christian friends who came to see him, he said, "O help me to praise God, I have nothing else to do, from this time to eternity, but to praise; and love God! O, praise, praise, praise, that infinite boundless love that has to a wonder, looked upon my soul, and done more for me than for thousands of his children! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! Help me, help me, O my friends, to praise and admire him that has done such astonishing wonders for my soul— he has pardoned all my sins; he has filled me with his goodness; he has given me grace and glory, and no good thing has he withheld from me."

On another occasion, he uttered such words as these, "Admire God forever and ever, O you redeemed ones! O, those joys, the taste of which I have! The everlasting joys which are at his right hand forever more! Eternity, eternity itself is too short to praise God in. O bless the Lord with me! Come, let us shout for joy, and boast in the God of our salvation. O, help me to praise the Lord, for his mercy endures forever." Again he said, "I shall presently behold Christ himself who died for me, and loved me, and washed me in his own blood. I shall, before a few hours are over, be in eternity, singing the song of Moses, and the song of the

Lamb. I shall presently stand upon Mount Zion, with all innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect, and Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant. I shall hear the voice of many people, and be one among them, who shall say, hallelujah, salvation, glory, honor and power, unto the Lord our God! And yet a little while, and I shall sing unto the Lamb a song of praise, saying, Worthy are you to receive praise, who was slain, and has redeemed us to God by your blood, out of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation, and have made us unto our God, kings and priests, and we shall reign with you forever and ever."

A few hours before his death, he said, "And now, dear Lord, my work is done. I have finished my course, I have fought the good fight; and henceforth there remains for me a crown of righteousness. Now come, dear Lord Jesus, come quickly." At length his course was completed, and this lovely servant of the Lord fell asleep in Jesus.

14. The great Thomas Halyburton, one of the most learned divines of Scotland, and professor of divinity in the University St. Andrew's, breathed out his soul to God in a triumphant death. The following were his last words: "I dare look death in the face, in its most ghastly shape, and hope soon to have the victory over it. Glory, glory to him! O, what a God do I see! I have never seen anything like it. The beginning and the end of religion are wonderfully sweet! I long for his salvation: I bless his name, I have found him! I am taken up in blessing him; I am dying rejoicing in the Lord! O, I could not have believed that I should bear, and bear cheerfully, as I have done, this rod which has lain long on me. This is a miracle! Pain without pain! You see a man dying; a monument of the glorious power of astonishing grace!"

Some time after, he said, "When I shall be so weak as no longer to be able to speak, I will, if I can, give you a sign of triumph when I am near to glory." He did so: for when one said, "I hope

you are encouraging yourself in the Lord," being now unable to speak, he lifted up his hands and clapped them, and in a few moments expired.

15. Augustus Toplady closed a long and eminently holy life, by a very triumphant death. He said, "O how this soul of mine longs to be gone: like an imprisoned bird, it longs to take its flight. O, that I had the wings of a dove, I would flee away to the realms of bliss, and be at rest forever! I long to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord." At another time he said, "O what a day of sunshine has this been to me! I have no words to express it; it is unutterable! O, my friend, how good our God is! Almost without interruption his presence has been with me." Being near his end, he said, "O what delights! Who can fathom the joys of the third heavens!" And just before he expired, he said, "The sky is clear; there is no cloud; come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"

16. Thomas Scott, the commentator, died a happy, triumphant death. The love of Christ filled his soul; and his dying bed may be said to have been sublimely Christian! Among the last words he uttered were these, "Lord support me! Lord Jesus receive my spirit! Christ is my all! He is my only hope! O to realize the fullness of joy! O, to be done with temptation! This is heaven begun! I am done with darkness forever! Satan is vanquished! Nothing remains but salvation with eternal glory, eternal glory!"

17. Dr. Condict, President of Queen's (now Rutgers') College, New Jersey, was known to be much afraid of death, but he died triumphantly. Raising himself from his pillow, he stretched out his quivering hands, and exclaimed, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me." Then he added, "Let us pray;" and having uttered a brief and solemn prayer, he gently leaned back on his pillow, and closing his eyes with his own hands, soon fell asleep in Jesus.

18. Dr. Dwight, President of Yale College, closed his useful life by a peaceful and happy death. He requested his brother to read to him the 17th chapter of John. While listening to the latter verses of that chapter, he exclaimed, "O, what triumphant truths!" Some one recited to him a part of the 23rd Psalm, and asked "Can you now say, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me?" He replied, "I hope so." He died in peace, cheered by his Savior's presence and love.

19. Dr. Edward Payson was an eminent Christian, and a devoted minister of the Lord. He died a most triumphant death. When about to finish his course, he thus commenced a letter- "Dear sister, were I to adopt the figurative language of Bunyan, I might date this letter from the land of Beulah, of which I have been for some weeks a happy inhabitant. The celestial city is fully in my view; its glories beam upon me; its breezes fan me; its odors are wafted to me; its sounds strike upon my ears; and its spirit is breathed into my heart. Nothing separates me from it but the river of death, which now appears but as an insignificant brook that may be crossed at a single step, whenever God shall give permission. The Sun of righteousness has been gradually drawing nearer and nearer, appearing larger and brighter as he approached; and now fills the whole hemisphere, pouring forth a flood of glory, in which I seem to float like an insect in the beams of the sun, exulting, yet almost trembling, while I gaze on this excessive brightness, and wondering with unutterable wonder why God should condescend thus to shine upon a sinful worm. A single heart, and a single tongue, seem altogether inadequate to my desires; I want a whole heart for every separate emotion, and a whole tongue to express that emotion."

Among the last words of this excellent and pious divine, are the following: "A young man, when about to leave the world, exclaimed, "The battle's fought, the battle's fought; but the victory is lost forever!" But I can say, "The battle's fought, the battle's fought, and the victory is won! The victory is won

forever! I am going to bathe in an ocean of purity, and benevolence, and happiness, to all eternity!"

Again— "Hitherto I have viewed God as a fixed star; bright indeed, but often intercepted by clouds. But now he is coming nearer and nearer; and he spreads into a sight so vast, and so glorious, that the sight is too dazzling for flesh and blood to sustain!"

On one occasion, when laboring under vary acute pains, he exclaimed, "These are God's arrows; but they are sharpened with love." Once he exclaimed, "Victory, victory! Peace, peace!" The last words he was heard to whisper, were these: "Faith and patience, hold out!" Thus died Dr. Payson; and he has left a glorious testimony to the truth of the religion of Jesus.

20. Harlan Page was an eminent Christian, and used great personal efforts for the souls of individuals; and in his death, Christ was with him. "A death-bed," said he, "is a precious place, when we have the presence of Christ— then to wake to a glorious immortality." Again, "I feel as if I had got half way home. I cannot bear to stop. It would be a pity to have the flesh return on these limbs again." Again he said, "I commit myself to you, Jesus, Savior of sinners. O the infinite love of Christ! I may stop my mouth, and lie in the dust." He appeared to feel that he had obtained a new view of the love of Christ; therefore he said, "It seems as if I never knew before what it was to love him. O, who can help loving such a blessed Savior!"

Again he repeated these words: "O when shall I go home? How long must I be burdened with this body! The Lord knows how much suffering I need, to prepare me for his kingdom." A little before his death, he exclaimed, "Home! home!" and prayed: "O for a free and full discharge! Lord Jesus, come quickly! Why wait your chariot wheels so long? I dedicate myself to you. O may I have the victory. O come quickly! Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"

21. David Brainerd died a happy death. With perfect composure of mind, this eminent servant of God saw the approaches of dissolution. To him, death was not an enemy, but a friend— it was the long expected messenger, sent to convey him home to his heavenly Father's house. He would exclaim, "Oh! why is the chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariot? Come, Lord Jesus; come, quickly!" In this happy frame of mind, he expired.

22. Risdon Darracott, an eminent servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, said on his death-bed, "I am going to that Jesus whom I love, and whom I have so often preached. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly! Why are your chariot wheels so long a coming?" The night before, he died, he said, "O what a good God have I in Christ Jesus! I would praise him, but my lips cannot. Eternity will be too short to speak his praises." He related his experience of the goodness of God to him during his sickness, and said, "If I had a thousand lives to live, I would live them all for Christ! I have cast anchor on him, and rely on his blood, and am going to venture my all upon him. There is nothing on earth I desire! Here I m waiting! What a mercy to be in Jesus!" He then threw abroad his arms, and exclaimed, "He is coming! he is coming! But surely this can't be death! O how astonishingly is the Lord softening my passage! Surely God is too good to such a worm! O speed your chariot wheels! Why are they so long in coming? I long to be gone." At length he fell asleep in Jesus, whom he so much loved, and who manifested such tender love to him in the hour of death.

23. Mrs. Catharine Brettergh, a singular Christian of Lancashire, England, was blessed to die a comfortable and joyful death. The following were some of her last words: "O the joys that I feel in my soul! O my sweet Savior, shall I be one with you, as you are one with the Father? O wonderful is your love me, who am but dust! To make such a one as I a partaker of your glory! O that my tongue and heart were able to sound forth your praises as I

ought!"

24. The amiable and pious Hannah Housman, when on her death-bed, often said, with smiles in her face, and transports of joy: "Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly! Why tarry the wheels of your chariot? O, blessed convoy! come and fetch my soul, to dwell with God, and Christ, and perfect spirits, forever and ever! When I join that blessed society above, my pleasures will never end. O, the glory, the glory that shall be set on the head of faith and love!"

25. Jeremiah Evarts, so well known by every friend of missionaries, died a triumphant death. Feeling the love of Christ in his last moments, he broke out into rapturous expressions: "Praise him, praise him, praise him in a way which you know not of." Some one said to him, "You will soon see Jesus as he is, and know how to praise him." He replied, "O wonderful, wonderful, wonderful glory! I will praise him! I will praise him! Wonderful glory! Jesus reigns!"

20. Richard Cecil often exclaimed on his death-bed, with the martyr Lambert, "None but Christ; none but Christ!" As he drew nearer and nearer to death Jesus Christ was his only topic, and a short time before he died, he requested one of his family to write down for him in a book the following sentence: "'None but Christ, none but Christ,' said Lambert, dying at the stake; the same, in dying circumstances, with his whole heart, says Richard Cecil."

27. John Rees, of London, uttered the following words on his death-bed: "Christ in his person, Christ in the love of his heart, and Christ in the power of his arm, is the rock on which I rest; and now, (reclining his head on the pillow,) "Death, strike!"

28. Mrs. Hannah Woodd, repeated the following words, when near her dissolution: "Oh! I am very happy! I am going to my mansion in the skies. Thank God, I have a hope built on the

Rock of ages. I am dying, but I am going to glory. I shall see Him as he is. I shall be forever near him, and behold his face. Blessed be God! Blessed be God!"

29. Mrs. Atthans, an excellent Christian lady, left this testimony to the cause of Christianity: "I bless God, I have not one fear concerning dying. That Almighty Lord, who has so wonderfully preserved me to the present moment, will not forsake me in my last extremity. No! when flesh and heart fail, he will be the strength of my heart, and my portion forever."

30. We shall close our records of triumphant deaths, with an account of the last hours of a remarkably pious young lady, who lately went to glory; and whose death-bed scene, it was the privilege of the author to witness.

He had often read accounts of the triumphant deaths of believers, but never before had he seen such an illustrious exhibition of divine grace, and love, manifested to a saint, in the hour of death. Not until then, did he feel that there was such power in the religion of Jesus, to sustain, and to cheer in the hour of dissolution. This young lady had been confined to a bed of severe suffering for one year. At last her soul was ripened for glory. The time came that she must die and her death-bed was a scene of triumph. Christ was very precious to her; and his love was wonderfully manifested to her soul. She often exclaimed, "My beloved is mine, and I am his."

The following are among her last words. To her distant brother she thus dictated a letter. "Dear brother, I know not whether I shall meet you again on earth; but I hope to meet you in heaven, where we shall be forever singing the praises of God; where the Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, shall feed us, and lead us unto living fountains of waters, and where God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes." To her father, who said to her, "I fear I must lose you;" she replied, "Your loss will be my gain! I have a building from God, a house, not made with hands, eternal

in the heavens." And again when he said, "I think you will fall asleep in Jesus;" she responded, "It will be a happy change."

As her friends were standing around her dying bed, she said to a brother, "Have you any words to say?" He immediately repeated Psalm 23:4 "Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff they comfort me." These words were very reviving to her. She seemed to feel that Christ was with her in that trying moment, that his love was shed abroad in her heart; for, turning herself, she exclaimed in a transport of joy, "Oh! I would not give up Christ for all the world!"

"Whom have I in the heavens high,
But you, O Lord, alone?
And in the earth whom I desire,
Beside you there is none."

"I hope that I shall meet you all in heaven, where we shall be forever with the Lord." She wished that Christ might be praised; and that he might be magnified by her dying breath. To her brother she said, "I hope you may live with Christ, and praise him throughout the endless ages of eternity."

She was asked by one, if, during her sickness she had not often experienced something like heaven upon earth. She replied that she had. Her earthly course being nearly finished, she opened her eyes, which were soon to be closed in death, and in the language of strong, unshaken faith, exclaimed with Job, "But as for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, and that he will stand upon the earth at last. And after my body has decayed, yet in my body I will see God! I will see him for myself. Yes, I will see him with my own eyes. I am overwhelmed at the thought!" Once she broke out into a rapture and exclaimed, "O, to be ever with the Lord, what a happy change!"

A little while before her death, one said to her, "It is a happy

thing when the believer can say when about to leave the world, I have finished the work which you gave me to do." She said yes; and added, (though with great difficulty, her breath being almost gone), "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course. I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but also unto all those who love his appearing." Her faith remained firm unto the end, and her hope and confidence unshaken to the last. Her sky was clear and serene, her mind calm and composed, and thus she fell asleep in Jesus, and entered into the joy of her Lord.

As the writer gazed upon the solemn scene before him, he could not but feel the force of Revelation 14:3, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." A few days before this young lady died, she requested the following verses to be read at her funeral. They are too beautiful, and impressive to be omitted here.

To my young companions—

"My youthful mates, both small and great,
Stand here, and you shall see,
An awful sight, which is a type
Of what you soon will be!

I used to appear once fresh and fair
Among the youthful crowd;
But now behold me dead and cold,
Wrapped in a sable shroud!

My cheeks once red, like roses spread,
My sparkling eyes so gay;
But now you see how 'tis with me,
A lifeless lump of clay!

When you are dressed in all your best,
In 'fashion' so complete,
You soon must be as you see me,
Wrapped in a shrouding sheet!

Ah, youth beware, and do prepare
To meet the monster, death!
For he may come when you are young,
And steal away your breath!

When you unto your frolics go,
Remember what I say;
In a short time, though in your prime,
You may be called away!

Now I am gone, I can't return;
No more of me you'll see;
But it is true that all of you,
Must shortly follow me!

When you unto my grave do go,
That gloomy place to see,
I say to you who stand and view,
Prepare to follow me!"

And now, reader, can you not say, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" How important is it then that you should now choose Christ in order that you may enjoy his love and presence, not only through life, but also in the hour of death! If you belong to Christ, you will find him, in the last hour of life, a friend that sticks closer than a brother. What an awful thing it is to die without salvation by Christ, without a saving interest in him; and yet millions live without God, and without hope in the world; and millions more die in the same awful condition, and plunge into a dark and miserable eternity. O, be admonished to choose Christ in time, and he will be yours in death, and in eternity.

How unspeakably blessed it is to enjoy the love and smiles of Christ in a dying hour! Then what can the world do for you? The tears of your friends, and the exertions of your physicians, will then be unavailing. It is Christ alone that can make a dying-bed easy and comfortable. His love and presence will sustain you, and his almighty arms support you.

"Though unseen by human eye,
The Redeemer's hand is nigh,
He has poured salvation's light,
Far within the vale of night;
There will God my steps control,
There his presence bless my soul.
Lord whatever my sorrows be,
Teach me to look up to thee."

"He who is thus with you," says an excellent writer, "will afford all needful comfort and support in the trying hour. He will open at that time treasures of grace and strength, to which you had been previously a stranger. The Redeemer himself is present, not only to guide his saints, but to infuse that comfort and vigor which will abundantly compensate for the sinkings of expiring nature. Who but those who have entered heaven, can tell what unearthly joys are granted the saint in a dying hour? Often, there is reason to believe, they transcend everything possessed in the present life. There may be visions of glory realized by the spirit, which are second only to those of heaven. The dying experience of many saints has been of the most delightful kind. Whether such hopes and joys as were afforded to Janeway and others, will be vouchsafed to you, you know not; nor is it necessary you should know. Whatever is necessary for you in a dying hour, Christ will bestow. He says, "My grace is sufficient for you." Remember, that he has said, "Don't be afraid! I am the First and the Last. I am the living one who died. Look, I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave."

When we contemplate those, whose deaths we have recorded in this volume, we may justly say, "These all died in faith." Let us also be "followers of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises." "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily hinders our progress. And let us run with endurance the race that God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from start to finish." If you belong to Christ, he will love you in life, in death, and in that happy home, which his love has prepared for you.

In conclusion, Christian reader, you will soon exchange the abodes of mortality for the regions of bliss. Then look beyond the grave. Do not confine your thoughts to this earthly gloomy place. Contemplate the sublime raptures of your future existence beyond the precincts of time. Christ shall one day break the slumbers of the grave, and you will arise to immortality.

The love of Christ does not stop at death. It extends beyond this solemn period. It will accompany you into the heavenly world; your everlasting happy home— and you will soon arrive there. From the valley of the shadow of death you shall ascend to the summit of Zion. You shall "come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to thousands of angels in joyful assembly. You have come to the assembly of God's firstborn children, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God himself, who is the judge of all people. And you have come to the spirits of the redeemed in heaven who have now been made perfect. You have come to Jesus, the one who mediates the new covenant between God and people, and to the sprinkled blood, which graciously forgives instead of crying out for vengeance as the blood of Abel did."

For the darkness of mortality, you shall obtain the bright glories of heaven. "Your eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off." You will possess the

promised land, the heavenly Canaan. Then shall the days of your mourning be ended. Raised in the likeness of your blessed Redeemer, you shall, finally, be presented faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy! Entering the fair mansions of glory, you shall reign with your glorified Redeemer, forever and ever! O! happy outcome to the Christian's short pilgrimage on earth!

With such cheering prospects to be realized, can you not also say, in the prospect of death, with many dying saints, "I have a desire to depart, and to be with Christ. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"

In the following chapters we shall contemplate that happy home which Christ, in his great love for a lost world, has now gone to prepare for his children. "For we know that when this earthly tent we live in is taken down—when we die and leave these bodies—we will have a home in heaven, an eternal body made for us by God himself and not by human hands. We grow weary in our present bodies, and we long for the day when we will put on our heavenly bodies like new clothing."

"How happy is the dying saint,
Whose sins are all forgiven;
With joy he passes Jordan's flood,
Upheld by hopes of heaven.
The Savior, whom he truly loved,
Now cheers him by his grace;
A glory gilds his dying bed,
And beams upon his face.
Ecstatic joy and heavenly bliss
Swell his enraptured heart;
He views the promised land of rest,
And pants for his depart.
Terror and dread are both unknown;
Sweet peace and hope appear,
To guide the blessed traveler home,

And all his footsteps cheer.
Angels of light attendant wait
His spirit to convey
Beyond this drear abode of night
To realms of endless day.
Oh! may I live the life of faith,
Abound in holy love,
Till death shall bear my joyful soul
To Zion's courts above."

THE HAPPY HOME IN VIEW

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." John 14:2

"There are many rooms in my Father's home, and I am going to prepare a place for you. If this were not so, I would tell you plainly." John 14:2

"As when the weary traveler gains
The height of some o'er-looking hill,
His heart revives, if cross the plains
He eyes his home, though distant still.
While he surveys the much loved spot,
He slights the space that lies between;
His past fatigues are now forgot,
Because his journey's end is seen.
Thus when the Christian pilgrim views
By faith, his mansion in the skies,
The sight his fainting strength renews,
And wings his speed to reach the prize.
The thought of home his spirit cheers,
No more he grieves for troubles past;
Nor any future trial fears,

So he may safe arrive at last.
'Tis there he says I am to dwell
With Jesus, in the realms of day;
Then I shall bid my cares farewell,
And he will wipe my tears away.
Jesus, on you our hope depends,
To lead us on to your abode;
Assured our home will make amends
For all our toil while on the road." John Newton

Christ has not only manifested his love to a lost world in his incarnation, sufferings, and death, but also in going to prepare a place, a happy home, for those whose salvation he has accomplished. Said the blessed Redeemer, to his sorrowful disciples, when he was about to leave the world, "I go to prepare a place for you."

Christ has manifested most amazing love to believers, in preparing for their eternal abode, mansions of glory, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Heaven is a prepared place for believers; prepared by Christ in his infinite love. The love of Christ will make heaven a glorious, happy abode indeed. Oh! what a happy home will heaven be. There all the redeemed shall finally assemble, to spend one eternal day in the glorious presence of Emmanuel. Who can fully describe the joys of the Christian's happy home? Feeble mortals could not comprehend the description if it should be given.

What human mind can conceive of the unspeakable blessedness which awaits the child of God in that upper and better world, his happy home! Dear believer, to know what heaven really is, you must put off mortality. "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him."

Is not your happy home always in view? Do you not long for the

approach of that joyful day, which will introduce you into the mansions of glory, and bring you to your endless, happy home? How short is the space that lies between you and glory! The time, how short! Already is the night far spent. The day is at hand; that blessed day which will bring each weary Christian traveler home, and seat him in his Father's house; that house not made with hands, in which there are many mansions.

The map of heaven is laid wide open for your inspection. Often obtain a glimpse of the happy land. Be always looking heavenward and homeward. Let heaven be always in your eye, and the earth under your feet, and in a little while God shall wipe away all tears; you will reach your journey's end; then faith shall be turned into vision; hope, into fruition; and you will be fully satisfied with the goodness of God's house.

As you now survey the glories of your happy home, does not your heart exult at the prospect? And is not the thought of HOME at all times refreshing? What name is more endearing than home, sweet home; around which so many hallowed associations cluster? Christian, heaven is your only true home. Here on earth, you have no continuing city nor place of abode. The divine command is, "Arise, and depart; for this is not your rest." "There remains therefore a rest for the people of God." God has provided a better home for you, than this polluted world. O, remember that you are a stranger and pilgrim on earth. Let your course be onward in the Christian's journey. Quicken your pace on the road to glory. Your happy home will not be always in view; it will soon be in possession!

Reader, are you pressing upward to the Christian's happy home? Is heaven the home which you expect to reach? Do you long to arrive at those everlasting mansions in the sky? Then let the hope of eternal glory elevate your affections above all sublunary objects. "Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits at God's right hand in the place of honor and power. Let heaven fill your

thoughts. Do not think only about things down here on earth. For you died when Christ died, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. And when Christ, who is your real life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory."

The ultimate object of Christ's mediatorial work is to bring sinners to glory- to God's house- to the happy home; there they are to live; there to reign forever; there to be ever with the Lord. God will bring all his dear children home to glory. Then he will receive them, and be a father unto them, and they will be his sons and daughters. They will be forever with their kind heavenly Father- with their blessed elder Brother- with prophets and apostles- with saints and angels- with one another. What a happy meeting! What blessed society will the saints enjoy! Then they will have gained the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. They will receive those crowns of glory which fade not away. They shall be kings and priests unto God. They shall serve him day and night in his temple above. Blest abode! Delightful employment! that of praising God! Happy they who are to spend eternity in such a home; contrasted with the glories of which, this earth is darkness itself!

Christian, soon shall the interposing veil of mortality be drawn aside, and you will behold the glories of that land which no mortal pen can now describe. But is heaven soon to be your happy home? Are you there to reign with Jesus, in the realms of everlasting day? there to behold the uncreated glory of Emmanuel? Then how trifling should the transient concerns of earth appear to you! You should smile at "the frowns of time". The angry tempest will soon be over. The swelling waves of life's ocean will soon rise no more. You will soon have reached the desired haven of eternal rest, the blessed shores of immortality, the happy home; and that home will more than compensate for all the toil of the way.

"Soon will you reach the blest abode.
Where happy pilgrims ever reign;

Soon shall you see the face of God,
And all the bliss of heaven obtain."

Live with your happy home always in view. Let the glories of a coming eternity revive your drooping spirits, amid life's trials and life's conflicts. The road to glory is but a short one. A moment of that intervenes, and then eternal ages commence to roll away. After this present brief moment has passed, you will enter upon a state of endless felicity. Arrived at your happy home, you will take up an everlasting song of praise; you will celebrate the victories of redeeming love, through one unending day.

You have overcome, through the blood of the Lamb. You have been more than a conqueror, through him who loved you. And now you shall stand a monument of God's love, and mercy, and grace; you shall be made a pillar in his glorious temple above, where there shall be no more going out. You shall live with Christ, and praise him throughout the endless ages of eternity. You shall behold Emmanuel in his unveiled glory. You shall praise him for that unbounded love, which has obtained for you immortal bliss.

O, Christian! the love of Christ has procured that unfailing wreath of glory, which will one day be entwined around your brow; that radiant diadem which you will forever wear. The love of Christ has prepared a happy home for your reception, when this sublunary scene shall have vanished from your mortal vision. All the happiness you enjoy in time; all the glory that will crown you through eternity, flow from the love of Christ. Make him your boast in time, your all in all; and may he be formed in you, the hope of glory.

Happy are they who have fled for refuge to the world's Redeemer. He will carry them to glory! Reader, may this precious Savior be yours; in life, in death, and in eternity. Conducted by the Captain of your salvation, you will also reach

the Christian's happy home, and realize the joys of a blessed immortality.

What glorious prospects are presented to the eye of faith, the spiritual vision of the Christian! He views the never-ending glories of the heavenly kingdom; and in that view he loses the sight of terrestrial grandeur. He quickly glides over the narrow stream of time; until he finds himself sailing on the vast unbounded ocean of eternity, an eternity of blessedness. He lifts his eyes to the hills, from where comes his help; those everlasting hills which tower aloft, beyond the swellings of Jordan; beyond the valley of the shadow or death. He expects soon to reach the heights of Zion. "They will continue to grow stronger, and each of them will appear before God in Zion."

In the mean time, O my soul, meditate upon the glories of your happy home. What must be the feelings of the Christian, when he views all heaven as his own; when he can claim all the delights of the celestial paradise as his, and looks upon the world to come as his eternal happy home!

Come, Christian, survey the happy land, your everlasting home. Life is fast hastening away. The oscillating tides of time are bearing you onward and homeward. Every wave of life's tempestuous ocean is only wafting you to the happy shores of a blessed eternity. Then look beyond this poor dying world! Look at that eternal home which Christ has prepared for you! View the celestial city, irradiated by the glory of God and the Lamb! See the pearly gates, the golden streets, the shining inhabitants of the New Jerusalem! The uncreated glory of God will enlighten that city of everlasting habitation, which the love of Christ has prepared. What a blessed habitation has Christ prepared for believers! What a glorious inheritance has he promised them! Come, my soul, and survey it.

"My soul, on Pisgah's mount ascend,
Where Moses once admiring stood;

There view the promised land extend
Beyond the swelling Jordan's flood.
By faith survey the landscape o'er
Where living waters gently flow;
Till earth usurp your love no more;
Till all your kindling passions glow.
In that blessed region of delight,
The saints no sin nor sorrow feel,
Eternal day excludes the night,
And all possess the spirit's seal.
The ransomed soul in glory clad,
Shines brighter than meridian sun;
The weary pilgrim, now so sad,
There finds his toilsome journey done."

O my soul, rise and soar aloft to the heavenly Canaan! Mount up as upon eagles' wings, and behold the king in his beauty, and the land that is afar off. Leave the world to those who seek their pleasures and happiness in its perishing enjoyments, and set your affections on things above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God. How the world recedes from your view, as you obtain a glimpse of the heavenly land! The short lived pleasures of earth, and the transient show of sublunary magnificence, no longer fascinate the mind, as it gains a Pisgah view of the Christian's endless happy home, the glories of which baffle all description!

The love of Christ is most illustriously manifested to believers, in his going to prepare such a home for them. O matchless love! that Jesus has not only died for sinners, but has gone to prepare mansions above, where they shall reign with him in eternal glory! Hasten on, O joyful day, when the redeemed of the Lord shall come to Zion with songs; when ransomed sinners shall commence to celebrate the wonders of redeeming love in mansions of glory!

Look forward, Christian reader, to the consummation of your

bliss. With joy, anticipate the glories of the resurrection morning; a morning that will dawn upon the glorified saint, without a single cloud to darken his beatific vision, or obscure the glorious rays of the Sun of righteousness, that shall arise with healing in his beams, and forever gladden the hearts of millions of happy saints! What a happy day will that be, when all the children of God shall reach their everlasting home; those mansions in the skies, where all are perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God through eternity!

Dear believer, in humble confidence in God, wait with patience until the coming of the Lord Jesus; until you are brought into the full possession of the heavenly inheritance. "All honor to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for it is by his boundless mercy that God has given us the privilege of being born again. Now we live with a wonderful expectation because Jesus Christ rose again from the dead. For God has reserved a priceless inheritance for his children. It is kept in heaven for you, pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay. And God, in his mighty power, will protect you until you receive this salvation, because you are trusting him. It will be revealed on the last day for all to see."

Blessed Jesus! keep me by your almighty power through faith unto salvation. Spiritualize my affections—elevate my views to the world of glory. Wean my heart from the fleeting enjoyments of this mortal life, this perishing earth. Satisfy me with your goodness and mercy; visit me with your salvation, and at last bring me home to yourself in glory.

"Then let my soul forever raise
The incense of adoring praise;
And join the heavenly choirs above,
In sweetest songs of grateful love."

Reader! look beyond this sublunary scene of changing mortality.
"All, all on earth is shadow; all beyond is substance. How solid

all, where change shall be no more!"

Soar aloft on the wings of faith, and roam in imagination through the myriads of ages that lie beyond the precincts of time; and in those regions of immortality prepared for the just, may you realize the joys of endless life, of an immortal existence, and of an inheritance before which the splendor of a thousand worlds fades; which will endure when this earth and all her terrestrial glory shall have passed away, and when the sun shall have cast his last rays, and the stars have set in endless night!

"Life's theater as yet is shut; and death,
Strong death alone, can heave the massy bar,
This gross impediment of clay remove.
And spring to life, The life of gods;
oh transport! and of man."

"And now, all glory to God, who is able to keep you from stumbling, and who will bring you into his glorious presence innocent of sin and with great joy. All glory to him, who alone is God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Yes, glory, majesty, power, and authority belong to him, in the beginning, now, and forevermore. Amen." Jude 1:24-25

THE HAPPY HOME CONTEMPLATED— BEING WITH CHRIST IN GLORY

"Father, I will that they also whom you have given me, be with me where I am." John 17:24

"So shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thes. 4:17

"In those blest regions of delight,
Where Jesus is unveiled to sight,

No mortal tongue can e'er express
The ransomed sinner's blessedness.

What mortal pen can describe the glowing beauties of Emmanuel's land! What mortal tongue can express the blessedness of the saints, when gazing upon the heaven-bright glories of Emmanuel's form, and dwelling forever in his glorious presence, under the resplendent beams of the Sun of righteousness! This is what the eye has not seen; what the ear has not heard; what the heart of man has never conceived. But yet this blessedness awaits all the saints, and will abide with them through the incessant flow of eternity's immeasurable ages. O, happy thought!

Dear Christian reader, Christ has, in his infinite love, now gone to prepare a place, an endless happy home for you; but he will come again, and receive you to himself. He will not always leave you in this valley of tears. No— when this short life is ended, you will "depart and be with Christ;" you will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Christ will bring you to his Father's house, where his glorious presence is enjoyed without a medium. He will welcome you to the mansions of glory, to the kingdom of heaven. "Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." "Don't be troubled. You trust God, now trust in me. There are many rooms in my Father's home, and I am going to prepare a place for you. If this were not so, I would tell you plainly. When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am."

Thus spoke our Savior before he left this world- before he ascended to heaven from Mount Olivet. But there is a day coming, when that same Savior shall break through the clouds of heaven; "when he comes to receive glory and praise from his holy people. And you will be among those praising him on that day, for you believed what we testified about him."

Job obtained a glimpse of this day. He starts forward on the wings of faith, and beholds through the lapse of many ages the divine form of his Redeemer. He sees him with his very eyes. "But as for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, and that he will stand upon the earth at last. And after my body has decayed, yet in my body I will see God! I will see him for myself. Yes, I will see him with my own eyes. I am overwhelmed at the thought!"

Christ shall come again, to gather his children home, to that place which he has prepared for them. Then shall the word of command, issued from his blessed lips, go forth: "Gather my saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. "For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the call of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, all the Christians who have died will rise from their graves. Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and remain with him forever. So comfort and encourage each other with these words." Then shall we be ever in his presence, where there is fullness and pleasure forever.

It is Christ's presence that will make the very heaven of happiness, the very center of felicity. It is being with Christ that will constitute the purest, brightest, noblest heaven. What would heaven be to the saints, did they not enjoy the presence of Christ? It would be no heaven to them, though they were surrounded with the glories of the New Jerusalem. O Blessed Jesus! may we be going up through this wilderness world, leaning upon you; walking by faith; loving and serving you; and may we finally be brought to behold your glorious face in the realms of light, in the paradise above, and be ever with you.

"What is the world, but grief and care!
What heaven, if you are absent there!
Your glorious face illumines the sky,
And sheds ecstatic joys on high."

It is in the presence of Christ, that we will participate in those pleasures which are at God's right hand. "In your presence is fullness of joy: at your right hand, there are pleasures for evermore." Oh! to be ever with the Lord! What human mind can comprehend the blessedness of such a state? Christ knows this blessedness; and how fervently he prays, "Father, I want these whom you've given me to be with me, so they can see my glory. You gave me the glory because you loved me even before the world began!" This prayer will be answered. We shall soon be with Christ. We shall soon behold his glory. Then shall we see Him as he is; even Him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; who died on Calvary for us; whose blessed hands, and side, and feet were pierced for us; and whose precious blood flowed so freely to wash away our sins— to Him be glory forever!

Oh! blessed sight. Then shall we gaze forever upon the uncreated glory of Emmanuel, shining forth in full unclouded splendor. Then shall we behold the glory of that blessed Redeemer, who left the regions of bliss, to assume mortal flesh and die for us. Then shall we see with our very eyes, him who was crucified for us on Calvary; but, oh! we shall see Him shining with inconceivable glory.

The glory of Christ will attract the eyes of all the redeemed, and he will be forever "admired in all those who believe." "The Word was made flesh" and the glory of God shall shine through that flesh, making that blessed body more glorious than a thousand suns!

The saints shall dwell forever in the presence of Emmanuel. Thrice happy they, who are to spend eternity in beholding his radiant glory, and in encompassing his throne with everlasting songs of salvation! Then shall it be proclaimed through the heavenly mansions, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people; and

God himself shall be with them, and be their God."

In heaven, the saints will enjoy the society of the Lord himself; which is the perfection of happiness. Says Christ, "Where I am, there shall also my servant be." O! to be ever near Him; to see Him as he is; to be like him; to behold his glory; to have that glory revealed in us; to praise Him eternally in the mansions above! What a happy home will this be! "Yes, dear friends, we are already God's children, and we can't even imagine what we will be like when Christ returns. But we do know that when he comes we will be like him, for we will see him as he really is."

Oh, to be like the blessed Jesus; to see him in glory! What heart would desire more? Then shall we commence to tread with our elder Brother, and adorable Redeemer, the ceaseless circuit of eternity. Then shall the wonders of his love be incessantly unfolded before us- causing new songs of praise to ascend from our enraptured souls, to him who sits upon the throne. Who can express the delights the saints must feel, when they look into the face of Christ, and there read his tender love to them!

But oh, how completely engulfed in the abyss of infinite love, and lost in wonder and praise, must our souls be, when we gaze upon the scars which mark the hands and feet and side of our blessed Savior, and there read the immensity of that love which made him die for us! "And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain." In those blessed regions, where He is unveiled to the sight of mortals, Jesus will gladden our hearts with perpetual joy, and love us with an everlasting love.

It is the privilege of believers to be with Christ; to spend eternity in his presence; to gaze forever upon the Sun of Righteousness, shining in his meridian splendor. That sun will never set in the "new heavens." His beams will always irradiate the city of our God, our happy dwelling place.

Christ's presence will make "our Father's house" a glorious home, a happy abode, a blessed habitation. Where he is, there will heaven be. His glorious presence will illuminate the abode of the blessed, the realms of everlasting day. And, believer when you come to dwell in those blissful mansions, his presence, his companionship, his love, and his celestial voice will cause your enraptured soul to rejoice; and eternity will be spent in being with him, and in beholding his glory.

"Oh! to hear that voice speak ineffable peace and consolation to your soul; to see Him as he is, whose glory infinitely surpasses all objects of nature and of art; to see those dear hands, and feet, and head, whose wounds in suffering for you will be more brilliant and beautiful in your eye than the topaz of Ethiopia: yes, to have his glory revealed in you; to be perfectly like him, and to reign with him: what a heaven will this be! Then your unbounded desires, which the whole creation could not limit, shall be satisfied with the full fruition of immortal love. You shall be refreshed with the emanations of uncreated life and joy, and shall drink at the fountain-head of pleasure. You shall mingle with society the most pure, perfect and lovely, whose glory is only surpassed by that of Him who sits upon the throne. You shall dwell with kindred spirits, in everlasting harmony. Your employment shall combine all the excellencies of ease, delight, and perpetuity. You will have nothing to do but to worship and serve God, and shall have ability to worship and serve him forever."

What a happy home will heaven be, where we shall be ever with the Lord! How happy will the saints be, when they come to dwell in that heavenly home— in that glorious palace, where "He that sits on the throne shall dwell among them;" where "the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Of that celestial city, in which the saints are to make their eternal home, it is said, "the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads."

The saints, in heaven, shall see Christ with their bodily eyes. We shall see Him, who loved us, and gave himself for us. "Now we see things imperfectly as in a poor mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God knows me now." Yes, we shall behold His glorious face, and be fully satisfied with his immortal love.

We hope shortly to exchange the trials and afflictions of this valley of tears- this suffering, dying world, for the glories of eternity; and be forever with the Lord. Then will we be done with transitory life, with grief and care. Then will we drink of affliction's bitter cup no more, and death itself will have lost its power over us. Then shall we be lodged in the regions of immortality, and be forever with the Lord.

And when ten thousand times ten thousand years have rolled away; when ages countless as the stars which deck the midnight sky have run their extensive round, it may be said that we are, as it were, just beginning to be forever with the Lord; that we are just beginning to behold his glory, and to look into that wonderful counsel of love, that glorious plan of salvation, which will be our theme of meditation, of wonder, and of praise through the ceaseless ages of eternity. Then shall we know the joy of being with Christ. Then, there shall be no more separation between Christ and his people- they shall then be brought near him, and abide with him forever.

"O glorious hour! O blest abode!
I shall be near and like my God!
And flesh and sin no more control
The sacred pleasure of the soul."

It will be Christ's amazing love that will then fill our hearts with joy unspeakable and full of glory. It will be the brighter manifestation of that love which will cause our souls to overflow with ecstatic joy, as we dwell in the presence of Emmanuel, and surround his throne, and behold his glory. Then shall we be better "able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge." Then shall we "be filled with all the fullness of God." Oh! the infinite love of Christ, that he should bring sinners to glory, to dwell in his presence, to spend eternity with him! "So shall we ever be with the Lord."

"By faith I see the hour at hand,
When in his presence I shall stand
Then will it be my endless bliss,
To see him where and as he is." John Newton

THE HAPPY HOME CONTEMPLATED— THE BLESSEDNESS OF THE SAINTS

"In your presence is fullness of joy; at your right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Psalm 16:11

Come, O my soul, retire from the noise, bustle, and tumult of a vain world, and contemplate your happy home in the heavens! Look beyond this present fleeting scene of existence, and view your future, eternal resting place; and may the bright glories of heaven, elevate your views and raise your affections above the transitory pleasures of this decaying scene.

Under the pleasing emblem of a happy home, heaven is most beautifully set forth. Christ calls it his Father's house. "In my Father's house are many mansions." If we are the children of

God, we may also call it our Father's house, our happy home; and each believer may say with the Psalmist, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

Heaven is also described as a glorious city. In his sublime vision of the heavenly world, John thus speaks: "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband;" "Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." The streets of this city are of gold; and the gates of pearl. "And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass." And John adds, "I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple of it."

In this celestial city which is thus beautified by the creative power of God, and enlightened with his glory, the saints are to spend the ceaseless ages of a glorious and happy eternity. This is that city which prophets and apostles and saints of every age, have desired, and longed for; that city which Abraham, when "he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country," looked for. "For he looked for a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

Heaven is that better country which all the saints of old, who confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth, desired and sought to obtain. "But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one; therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he has prepared for them a city." To this heavenly home, God will bring all his children, and Jesus will there dwell among them, forever and ever.

When all the saints shall be brought home to be forever with the Lord, they will be perfectly blessed. They will enjoy the assurance of Christ's love, and the eternal smiles of his countenance! What heart can conceive the unutterable bliss of the Redeemed, when brought into the glorious palace of the

great King, where there is fullness of joy, and pleasures for evermore. They will be far from a world of grief, and sin. They will be beyond the reach of suffering. No gloom or sorrow shall ever becloud their bright spirits in the presence of Christ. They shall be forever happy with him. Reaching the happy shores of Emmanuel's land, they shall dwell with God. They shall see him. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

Their souls shall be filled with unutterable bliss, amid the splendors of beatific vision, and the sublime raptures of celestial joys. The ineffable glories of the Deity, shall then beam forth upon the redeemed. And, "then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father." To the love of Christ the saints will owe all their blessedness in this blessed world. Let us contemplate this blessedness.

In the word of God we see it described. In the 7th chapter of Revelation there is contained a glimpse of heaven- of the redeemed in glory. There we find that when all the redeemed shall be brought home to glory, they will form a mighty host. "After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white and held palm branches in their hands. And they were shouting with a mighty shout, "Salvation comes from our God on the throne and from the Lamb!" Millions of Adam's sons and daughters shall be brought to glory, through the merits of Emmanuel. There we find where this mighty multitude came from. To the questions, "Who are these who are clothed in white? Where do they come from?" it is answered, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb and made them white. That is why they are standing in front of the throne of God, serving him day and night in his Temple. And he who sits on the throne will live among them and shelter them."

The saints have traveled a rough road to glory, and have come

out of great tribulation. Many of them have gone through the fires of persecution, and their souls have ascended to glory amid the flames of martyrdom. Many of that blessed number who now stand before God, "were stoned, were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword," were once "destitute, afflicted, tormented;" but they have come out of all their tribulations, and are now happy before the throne of God.

The saints have all washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. They are invested with the snowy, spotless robe of the Redeemer's righteousness. "This," says Hamilton, "is the only garb which a child of Adam can wear before the throne of God. And though the apparel of some may be more curiously wrought and exquisitely embroidered than that of others, though the hand of the beautifying Spirit may have made it 'raiment of needle-work'— the hue and luster of each is the same. Every spirit in glory wears the vesture radiant with redeeming righteousness— the snowy robe which speaks of the fountain opened, and which will commemorate through eternity, the blood of the Lamb."

The employment of the saints in heaven is also described in this glorious vision. They serve God. "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple." "They cry with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God which sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." "And his servants shall serve him." What a contrast is there between the service of God on earth, and in heaven! Here, all our divine services are imperfectly performed; there, all is perfection itself. Here, when the spirit is often willing, the flesh is weak, and soon wearied, even in the sweetest seasons of devotion and heavenly meditation. There "

Each of these living beings had six wings, and their wings were covered with eyes, inside and out. Day after day and night after night they keep on saying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty—the one who always was, who is, and who is still to come." And again, "You are worthy, O Lord our God, to receive

glory and honor and power. For you created everything, and it is for your pleasure that they exist and were created."

The employment of redeemed saints will be that of everlasting praise and adoration. They will praise and admire the Savior, for his unbounded love and goodness to them. They will contemplate that glorious salvation, of which "the prophets have inquired and searched diligently," and which "the angels desire to look into." Redemption and salvation by Christ will constitute their unending theme; in the contemplation of which, their souls shall be lost in wonder, love and praise. A crucified Savior will be the wonder of heaven, and will employ ransomed souls in holy meditations through an inconceivable eternity.

"Christ crucified, "says an excellent old divine, "is the library which triumphant souls will be studying in to all eternity. Eternity itself will be too short, in which to unfold the wonders of redeeming love, or to speak the praises of that blessed Redeemer who was crucified on Calvary for a sinful world. With increasing wonder and admiration shall that ransomed host, who stand upon Mount Zion, eternally search into the wonders of Christ's redeeming love as manifested to them. And all the redeemed will cast their crowns before the throne in token of their own unworthiness, shall unite in one long, loud, adoring anthem of praise; in one grand, everlasting chorus: 'Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!' Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever."

They sing unceasing praises to him who loved them, and washed them from their sins in his own blood. "All praise to him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by shedding his blood for us. He has made us his kingdom and his priests who serve before God his Father. Give to him everlasting glory! He rules forever and ever! Amen!" "And they were singing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb: "Great and

marvelous are your actions, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations. Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous deeds have been revealed."

Such is the employment of heaven; and its blessed inhabitants shall have power and ability to worship and serve God without weariness, forever!

The saints shall be perfectly happy in the presence of Christ. Free from all sorrow, they shall possess immortal joys in the presence of Him who sits on the throne. They shall not know what sorrow is any more. All tears shall be wiped away; for "He who sits on the throne will live among them and shelter them. They will never again be hungry or thirsty, and they will be fully protected from the scorching noontime heat. For the Lamb who stands in front of the throne will be their Shepherd. He will lead them to the springs of life-giving water. And God will wipe away all their tears."

Here on earth, the saints weep, and wail, and experience the distressing calamities and sorrows of mortal life. They feel the mutations of this ever varying scene. They are often in the depths of adversity and distress. They also experience changes in the spiritual life. Today they may be on Pisgah, with heaven in their view, rejoicing; tomorrow, in the valley of Baca, weeping. Today, the sunshine of Christianity may illumine their path; tomorrow they may wander about, enveloped in spiritual darkness. Here, the dearest ties are cut asunder, and the tenderest cords broken; which causes the heart to overflow with sorrow. Our friends die, and tears trickle down our checks; and perhaps we ourselves go down with sorrow to the grave. "You have fed them with the bread of tears; you have made them drink tears by the bowlful." Thus the saints keenly feel the sorrows of this mortal state; but in heaven, "Look, the home of God is now among his people! He will live with them, and they

will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will remove all of their sorrows, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. For the old world and its evils are gone forever."

In heaven, the saints shall obtain everlasting joy. "Everlasting joy shall be unto them." "Those who have been ransomed by the Lord will return to Jerusalem, singing songs of everlasting joy. Sorrow and mourning will disappear, and they will be overcome with joy and gladness." "Those who plant in tears will harvest with shouts of joy. They weep as they go to plant their seed, but they sing as they return with the harvest." And then "the days of your mourning shall be ended."

Our joy in heaven will be full, satisfying, and eternal. The redeemed shall be free from all the suffering, pains, and diseases that afflict humanity, and render this mortal life one continual scene of distress. In that happy world, "The people will no longer say, "We are sick and helpless," for the Lord will forgive their sins.

Immortal health and vigor bloom in heaven. Sin, the cause of sickness, and pain and sorrow, shall be excluded from that blessed world. There, no tears bedew the cheek, no sorrows rend the heart, no pain is felt, no dissolution is feared; for death itself is swallowed up in victory. "And there shall be no more death."

This present cosmos is nothing but a dying world. Here, death strikes its dart, and cuts down our dearest friends. Perhaps he who now reads these lines may have stood over the dying bed of a dear relative or friend, and, with bitter sorrow, taken the last farewell, and witnessed the death struggles of him or her whom he loved.

Death annually sweeps off a multitude of the human race. The sun now shines upon the graves of thousands, who, but a year ago, bloomed with health and vigor. Where are they now? Gone!

Now they are numbered among the dead. Now, clad with all the habiliments of the grave, they are cold and lifeless in death's narrow house- in the grave's dismal mansion.

In heaven there shall be no more death, nor painful separation of kindred souls. Eternal life shall be enjoyed by the blessed inhabitants of the New Jerusalem. The last enemy shall have been destroyed. Then will God say, concerning his redeemed ones, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. Where, O death, are your plagues? Where, O grave, is your destruction?" Then, "our perishable earthly bodies must be transformed into heavenly bodies that will never die. When this happens—when our perishable earthly bodies have been transformed into heavenly bodies that will never die—then at last the Scriptures will come true: "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" In those celestial mansions, all the immortal sons of God shall meet in blissful harmony and adoring praise, to be forever with the Lord.

The saints shall enjoy eternal rest in heaven. "There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest." They shall be perfectly holy and happy; and shall eternally bask in the sunshine of God's immediate presence, and drink of those perennial streams that issue from the fountain of life. The Lamb shall feed them, and lead them to living fountains of waters.

"The Godhead is a boundless sea, on which the thin island of creation floats; and though the region be ever so dry and arid— a burning Baca; and though the object be ever so bleak and bald— a grim Horeb, a flinty rock; it needs only the touch of the prophet's rod, and forthwith a fountain springs as exhaustless as that divine perfection from where it flows. In that better country the Horeb never staunches, and the Baca never dries: the fountains play perpetually, and the waters ever live; and the Lamb is familiar with them all. To the woody brink of one he leads his white-robed followers; and in its fringing glories and

profound populous, they read the riches of creative power and skill. To the melodious verge of another he conducts them and in the fountain of light which gushes high, and flings its rainbows wide; in the balm scattered by its wafted dews, and the song with which the branches wave, they hear it endlessly repeated, 'God is love.' And to another still he guides them; and simple as the margin looks, and limpid as the waters are, it dilates and deepens as they gaze; deepens, until it mocks the longest line; widens, until Gabriel's eye can see no shore; and in its fathomless abyss, and ever-expanding bounds, they recognize the divine unsearchableness. In Paradise, every fountain lives, and each fountain is a lesson full of God." (Hamilton)

The saints shall spend an everlasting day of light and blessedness in Emmanuel's land— "and there shall be no night there." Eternal day smiles in those blessed regions. "Your sun shall no more go down, neither shall your moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be your everlasting light, and the days of your mourning shall be ended."

In that bright world which the saints are going to possess, all will be irradiated by the glory of God and of the Lamb. The glorious Sun of righteousness will illuminate the heavenly world, the celestial city. "No longer will you need the sun or moon to give you light, for the Lord your God will be your everlasting light, and he will be your glory." "And the city has no need of sun or moon, for the glory of God illuminates the city, and the Lamb is its light. The nations of the earth will walk in its light, and the rulers of the world will come and bring their glory to it. Its gates never close at the end of day because there is no night."

The saints "shall inherit all things," and "reign with Christ forever and ever." Such is the blessedness of the saints; and to crown all their heavenly bliss, it will be ETERNAL. Heaven is a state of never-ending bliss. Eternity stamps an infinite value on celestial happiness.

"O you blest scenes of permanent delight!

Full, above measure! lasting, beyond bound!
A perpetuity of bliss, is bliss."

With regard to eternity, what a striking contrast there is between earthly and heavenly joys! How transient are all sublunary pleasures? "Passing away," is indelibly stamped upon all that is terrestrial. "The world passes away, and the lust thereof." Youth and beauty, health and strength, riches and honor are passing away. Incessant changes characterize this globe, and all its inhabitants; but no such changes are known in heaven.

"Lord, I long to be at home,
Where these changes never come!
Where the saints no winter fear,
Where 'tis spring throughout the year;
How unlike this state below!
There the flowers unwithering grow,
There no chilling blasts annoy,
All is love, and bloom, and joy."

The joys of the Christian's happy home never end. The pleasures which are at God's right hand endure forever. "Oh yes! those sweet words forever, shall be attached to everything in glory. You shall eat of the tree of life; drink of the water of life; wear the crown of life; you shall be made a pillar in the temple of God, and there shall be no more going out." But oh! what is the forever of heaven; who can describe it? Who can comprehend vast eternity, the measure of the saint's bliss?

"Were the house you inhabit, "says Pike, "to be filled with the most fine sand, and then emptied so slowly that but the smallest grain should be taken out once in ten thousand years, how many millions of ages should pass away before the last grain were removed! Yet, compared with eternity, these countless years would be like the twinkling of an eye. Were the mighty seas which dash their waves upon so many shores, to be suddenly changed into one mass of ink, and then to be employed in

numbering down figures, and the last figure to signify a million of years, what countless ages would be numbered down before the seas were emptied! Yet he who wrote the last figure might say, 'These ages are not eternity; they are nothingness itself, compared with eternity; less than one drop compared to all the sea; less than one moment compared to all these infinite years; they are like a tale that is told; or a sigh that is forgotten.'

Were this vast universe one mass of sand, and were the most high God, by his infinite power, to create as many worlds as there might be grains of sand; and were he then to commission a ministering angel to destroy them all, by removing grain after grain; yet so slowly that he should remove but one grain in a million years; what millions, and millions, and millions of years, beyond all thought and conception, would pass away before one world were thus destroyed! And O, what before all these numbers were! What in eternity would be here! An eternity! no, not a moment, compared with it. Sand after sand would be removed, though, at so infinitely slow a rate; world after world would be destroyed; and the angel would finish his task, but not finish eternity! Eternity would be eternity still! One grain of sand would bear some proportion to these numberless worlds; one moment would bear some proportion to these countless millions of ages; but all these would bear none to eternity; when they were passed, it would still be 'beginning— rather beginning to begin.' Such is the forever of heaven!

Eternity! who can grasp the immense idea which this short word conveys? When millions and millions of ages shall have passed away, the blessed inhabitants of Emmanuel's land will be young in immortality, and there will still be stretched before them all "evermore," in which they will enjoy perfect blessedness at God's right hand. Oh! what a blessed, happy home is heaven.

"And what a home for us to return to and abide in forever! A home prepared before the foundation of the world. A home in the many mansions; a home in the innermost circle of creation,

nearest the throne and heart of God; a home whose peace shall never be broken by the sound of war or tempest, whose brightness shall never be overcast by the remotest shadow of a cloud. How solacing to the weary spirit, to think of a resting-place so near, and that resting-place our Father's house, where we shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; where the sun shall not light on us, nor any heat; where the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed us, and lead us to living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes." (Bonar) O! how near is our happy home— it is just within sight. How near, how very near is eternity— it is even at the door!

Christian reader, you shall soon, very soon, reach your happy home. Already your earthly course may be nearly terminated. One step more, and you will have gained the happy shores of Emmanuel's land. Having crossed the tempestuous ocean of life, you will enjoy the refreshing breezes of heaven, and the calm repose of the saint's everlasting home. Your redemption is drawing near. "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand." A few more suns will rise and set, and then the unsetting sun shall rise in the "new heavens." A few more days, and then will dawn the eternal day. A few more fleeting years will pass swiftly by, and then the everlasting cycles of eternity will roll on. You will soon exchange a cross of suffering on earth, for a crown of glory in heaven, immortal, incorruptible, and that fades not away.

You will soon join with the whole family of God, in the contemplation of Christ's redeeming love. One theme— that of redemption, shall then employ every soul, and every tongue shall be tuned to the praises of Emmanuel. With your redeemed companions in glory, you will soon unite in that sweet song, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own (yes, his own most precious) blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

The time is short. "The Lord is at hand." "Surely I come quickly.
Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus."

CHRIST, AND HIM CRUCIFIED

PREFACE

In presenting these pages to the Christian public, the object of the author is simply to exhibit Christ and Him crucified as the only hope of a lost world. In this essay we have endeavored to speak of the Excellency of the subject- of the Person of Christ- of the Glory of Christ- of Christ Crucified- of Redemption by Christ- of the New Song in Glory- of the Sum and Substance of the Gospel- of the only Hope of the Sinner- and of the Cross of Christ. This volume is now commended to the blessing of God. May He grant that, through these page, some despairing soul may be led to hope in Christ and Him crucified. May sinners be attracted by the glory of the cross of Jesus; may saints he built up in their "most holy faith;" and to the Eternal Father, Son, and Spirit, a triune God, be all the praise.

And now, dear reader, in the language of William Mason, "I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, wishing you sweet comfort in perusing these meditations. If our Lord gives you as much in reading as I have found in writing them, you will have great reason for love and praise. Accept them, as the labor of one who is no prophet, neither a prophet's son, but who would glory in being a saved sinner, by the cross of Jesus;" and whose delight it ever is to dwell on the blessed theme of redeeming love.

"Blest Savior, with delight I dwell
On themes no mortal tongue can tell;
The glory of your cross exceeds
All human and angelic deeds."

Blessed Jesus! Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation

of my heart, be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my Strength,
and my Redeemer. Amen.

"Though billows of sorrow should roll,
And surround me on every side;
Yet you can the tempest control,
My Savior, my Refuge, and Guide.
Your smile makes the soul to expand,
And graces celestial to grow;
With rapture I gaze on the land
Where pleasures incessantly flow.
'Tis there my dear Savior resides,
In fullness of glory and grace;
And there the pure river that glides
Through regions of joy and of peace.
The life-yielding tree there shall spread
Its branches luxuriantly round;
The saints robed in white shall be fed,
With fruits from Immanuel's ground.
How deep is the mystery of grace!
The theme of bright seraphs above;
To see the sweet beams of his face,
To dwell in the essence of love!
My Father! your nature is love;
In Jesus your image I view!
Oh may I behold him above,
And praise him eternally too.
May this my delight ever be,
On earth his rich grace to record;
And when from these temples set free
With joy ascend up to the Lord."

THE EXCELLENCY OF THE SUBJECT

"Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the

priceless gain of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I may have Christ." Philip. 3:8

In the physical, intellectual and moral world there are to be found many important and interesting subjects. The whole circle of science embraces many topics of absorbing interest to the man of genius. Human learning exalts man to that grand elevation of intellectual greatness, from which he views nature in all her magnificence, revels amid her beauties, and roams, in imagination, from star to star, from sun to sun, where the Deity reigns in all the grandeur of his attributes. No wonder, then, that human learning should be so highly prized, and so assiduously sought after by rational beings. But there is a subject of infinitely greater importance than all science or human knowledge; a subject which above all others may be denominated sublimely great and interesting; and which, to the thirsty soul of a penitent sinner, is most refreshing and exhilarating. That theme is Christ and him crucified.

All the holy angels that surround the throne of God, with all the redeemed in glory, look upon this subject with unbounded delight and increasing admiration, but can never fully comprehend its sublimity and moral grandeur. It is the unending theme of heaven, the joy of saints, the astonishment of angels. It is a subject too lofty for human skill; angelic intellect can never comprehend it. We cannot adequately declare its vastness, much less comprehend its fullness. It is inexhaustible in its nature. The highest intelligences that move amid the glories of Paradise cannot fathom its profundity. The mighty oceans that divide continents, and dash their waves on numberless shores, may be exhausted. Not so the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. The countless luminaries that decorate the nocturnal sky, and light up the canopy of heaven, may be extinguished in eternal darkness, but this glorious theme shall shine forever in the perfection of beauty.

When the last lines of earth's history shall have been written, yes, when this terrestrial globe itself shall have been wrapped in the flames of the judgment day, and all the redeemed brought home to glory, Christ and him crucified will form the all-absorbing subject that shall engage the capacious and exalted minds of heaven's blissful inhabitants, in holy meditation and rapturous delight, through a blessed and glorious eternity.

Then, believer, if you are to spend eternity thus, should you not employ the short space of time which intervenes between you and the realms of glory, in the contemplation of this wonder of wonders, this mystery of godliness— a crucified Savior? May God in his infinite mercy grant that you may be led to form the resolution of the great Apostle, who, when writing to the Corinthians, declares, "I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified."

"Christ crucified" said Stillingfleet, "is the library in which triumphant souls will be studying in, to all eternity. Other knowledge makes men's minds giddy and haughty; this settles and composes them. Other knowledge is apt to swell men into high conceits and proud opinions of themselves; this brings them to the truest view of themselves and thereby to humility and sobriety. Other knowledge leaves men's hearts as it found them; this alters them, and makes them better. So transcendent an excellency is there in the knowledge of Christ crucified above the most sublime speculations in the world."

Should you not then spend much of your time in meditating on this glorious theme? Where in the whole world can you find a subject so excellent, so consoling, so animating as this? O, then, study Christ and him crucified. Be diligent and ardent in the pursuit of this knowledge, for it alone can guide the Christian to immortal bliss!

A knowledge of Christ and him crucified, is indispensable to salvation. "I am the way," says Christ, "and the truth, and the

life: no man comes unto the Father, but by me." "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." By that great atonement which he made on Calvary, our blessed Savior has abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light. The radiancy which the knowledge of a crucified Savior emits light amid the darkness of mortality, dispels the gloom that overspreads the mind, and dissipates the darkness that hovers around the pathway to immortality.

This knowledge makes the Christian's eye bright with hope, and animates him on his way to the mansions of glory. It tears asunder the veil that hides the unseen world from mortal view, and holds up to the Christian's enraptured gaze, the untold glories of heaven. It points directly to the only sacrifice for sin, Jesus Christ, the bleeding Lamb of God. It leads you to Calvary, where, amid the affecting and overpowering scenes exhibited, it opens to your astonished view the portals of heaven, and pours in a flood of light and glory that dazzles the eye of the Christian, sheds effulgence around the throne of God, and beams with unclouded splendor through eternity itself.

The saving knowledge of Christ and him crucified, leads the sinner to glory and happiness at God's right hand. It will crown him with unutterable bliss. It will prepare him for the enjoyment of heaven; for the reception of that unfading wreath of glory which shall be entwined around the brow of the faithful; for that glittering diadem which shall be placed upon his head; and for those robes of salvation with which he shall be eternally arrayed before the throne of God.

How important then is this knowledge which leads to such blessed results, to such unspeakable glory! O that each of us may become experimentally acquainted with Christ and him crucified. Permit me to urge this momentous subject upon your serious consideration. You should give it a thorough investigation. Your immortal destiny is embraced within its extensive scope. To neglect it, will be at the peril of your eternal

happiness. O then, we beseech you with the utmost compassion for your immortal soul, to attend to this glorious message, the proclamation of a crucified Savior, and eternal life through him.

This great and all-important theme, the glory of which no mortal tongue can express, is more intimately connected with your present and future welfare than all other subjects within the range of human acquisition. We would not, in this little volume, display before you the airy speculations of philosophy or the various charms of human science; but we would, with ardent language, hold up to your view, Christ and him crucified, as your only hope; as the only hope of a lost world.

Here, sinner, is your hiding-place. Under the shadow of Him who once groaned and bled on Calvary, you can find eternal repose. "And a man shall be a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of waters in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Jesus Christ is here set forth in all the richness of his grace. He is here offered, freely offered to dying sinners. Embrace him as your only Savior; while passing through this weary land— through this wilderness world, lean on Him, who will guide you safely to glory. In Him, you will experience that joy which the world cannot impart, and that peace of God, which passes all understanding.

By that blessed side which was once pierced with the soldier's spear, you will enjoy the favors and smiles of a reconciled God. From those deep wounds that were inflicted on the Savior's immortal form, fountains of joy, as inexhaustible as the ocean of divine perfection itself, will flow in the richest streams of grace, to refresh, invigorate and animate your soul. O! there is something about Calvary so mysterious in its nature; so glorious in its results. Time can never disclose, nor vast eternity unravel those things connected with that affecting scene, displayed when the Son of God bowed his head and exclaimed "It is finished."

This subject embraces this mystery, and consequently will be the

theme of the redeemed to all eternity. It comprehends the glorious plan of redemption and all the wonders of Christ's redeeming love. It does not lead the sinner to Sinai, and there leave him amid the dreadful thunder and lightning and flame and smoke. No, it gently draws him to Calvary, that life-giving mount, where the unbounded love of God for sinners once glowed in the bosom of his Son, with more than human splendor; where it beamed forth in all the effulgence of the divinity, when the holy Jesus hung a suffering, bleeding, victim on the ignominious cross. How glorious is such a subject! It is full of Christ and salvation through him. It vividly displays the matchless mercy, and boundless love of God to a lost world.

"Oh! how matchless is this mercy!
How unbounded is this love!
'Tis our joy on earth to feel it;
'Tis the theme of saints above."

Let the knowledge of Christ and him crucified dwell in you richly. Endeavor to know more and more about the person of your glorious Redeemer; about that wonderful death which he accomplished at Jerusalem, and that all-sufficient atonement which he effected on Calvary. Christ and him crucified is the sweetest, noblest theme on which a soul ever dwelt. Holy angels on their lofty thrones in glory, desire to stoop from the heights of celestial bliss, and look into this wonderful abyss of love and mercy to fallen man— the gift of a Savior— a glorious salvation. Well may we, who are the objects of such unprecedented love, raise our grateful hearts to the God of heaven, and shout forth in language like this— Glory to God in the highest for such peace and good-will toward men.

Christian, may Christ and him crucified ever be your delightful theme on earth, until mortality is swallowed up in life, until you are admitted into the glorious presence of Immanuel, and see him face to face, and begin your unceasing song, unto him that loved you and washed you from your sins in his own blood. Can

you not now say with the Apostle, "Yes doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency or the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." O that every reader could join with us in the following beautiful, glowing lines of the poet,

"You are my all!
My theme! my inspiration! and my crown!
My soul's ambition, pleasure, wealth; my world.
My light in darkness! and my life in death!
My boast through time! bliss through eternity!
Eternity is too short to speak your praise,
Or fathom your profound love to man!
To man of man the lowest, even to me,
My sacrifice; my God!" (Young)

THE PERSON OF CHRIST

"You are fairer than the children of men." Psalm 45: 2

"My meditation of him shall be sweet." Psalm 104: 34

Before we dwell on the melting story of Calvary, or exhibit to you a crucified Savior, or afford a display of his glorious atonement, let us advert to the divine person and character of our Immanuel. Let us admire his glorious perfections. A saving knowledge of Christ will constitute the foundation of our immortal joys; will lead us to eternal life, and the highest state of felicity in heaven above. "And this is life; eternal, that they might know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."

O, that we might obtain a glimpse of the matchless person of Christ! O, that we might behold "the King, in his beauty." Surely then would our sight and eyes be turned away from viewing

vanity. If there is an object in the universe that should attract our attention, excite our admiration, warm our affections, and demand our love; surely it is the glorious Savior, the blessed Son of God, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. Christ is the most glorious being in the universe of God. Blessed Jesus! reveal yourself unto us in all your transcendent loveliness, in all your surpassing beauty.

"You are fairer than the children of men;" "the chief among ten thousand;" "yes, you are altogether lovely;" "you are the blooming rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys." Manifest yourself unto us as you do not unto the world. Gladden our guilty souls with the beams of your mercy and grace. Unfurl the banner of your wondrous love over us; encircle us in the arms of your compassion, and lift upon us the light of your gracious countenance.

We can know but little, comparatively, of the excellence and glory of Christ's person, until we see him on his heavenly throne, in all his unveiled glory. Then shall we see him as he is, face to face, and forever behold his matchless beauty. What a glorious sight will that be, to see the Redeemer shining in the perfection of beauty. What a blessed privilege, to dwell forever in the presence of the great King, to surround the radiant throne of heaven, and amid the splendors of the celestial Paradise, to sound through endless ages the notes of seraphic praise, to him that redeemed us from eternal misery with his own most precious blood!

Gentle reader, seek Christ now; believe on him; view him with the eye of faith, as your only Lord and Savior, and in a little while faith shall be turned into sight, into heavenly vision, and you will enjoy the presence and society of your beloved Redeemer throughout a glorious eternity. Remember, young reader, that Christ has said "those that seek me early shall find me." May the Lord in his mercy grant that you and I may find Him of whom Moses and the prophets wrote— Jesus, the Son of

God. This will prove our everlasting comfort. Through time and through eternity, Christ will be our unchanging friend.

To the believer, Christ is all in all. Amid all the vacillating scenes and heart-rending sorrows of mortality, he is ever with him, manifesting his grace and sustaining him in every trial; and in the last hour of mortal existence, when the believer is standing on the verge of the grave, Christ is by him, cheering his departing soul with the hope of eternal glory", and guiding him safely through the swellings of Jordan to the promised land, the everlasting happy home of God's children. In the hour of death, the believer is enabled to exclaim, "Oh! I would not give up Christ for all the world. Whom have I in heaven but you? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides you."

Now, is Christ precious to you? Do you desire to know more and more about him? Is he formed in you, the hope of glory? If so, we trust you will follow us with a joyful heart in our presentation of his character and excellence as they are vividly portrayed in the Holy Scriptures. That blessed Redeemer who once hung as a bleeding victim on Calvary; who endured the death of the cross there, is the eternal Son of God, equal with the Father in power and glory, possessing all the attributes of Deity.

The Scriptures plainly assert that Christ is God, the Creator of the universe. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." Christ bears the very image of the everlasting Father. Yes, the eternal Son of God, our blessed Savior, is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven."

Again, it is declared that "Christ is the visible image of the

invisible God. He existed before God made anything at all and is supreme over all creation. Christ is the one through whom God created everything in heaven and earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see—kings, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities. Everything has been created through him and for him. He existed before everything else began, and he holds all creation together. Christ is the head of the church, which is his body. He is the first of all who will rise from the dead, so he is first in everything. For God in all his fullness was pleased to live in Christ."

What a fullness of grace and glory dwells in the blessed Jesus! And what divine power has he displayed in the works of creation! By his word, were all things made. He spoke and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. He only gave the command, and this world, with all its inhabitants, sprung into being. Such is his illimitable power, that he has created and sustained for ages, millions of fixed and moving worlds of light and glory. With unerring precision, he guides the planets in their revolutions, and directs the comets in their flaming march. With an arm of omnipotence, he has bespangled the midnight sky with its glowing luminaries; and that same mysterious personage who endured the ignominious death of Calvary, has created this beautiful, green earth on which we tread; formed the moon in her silvery brightness, and kindled up the sun in all his glory. "By the word of the Lord, were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." He has "measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with a span, and determined the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance."

Christ is the second person in the glorious Trinity, and is of equal power with God the Father, and God the Spirit. Yes he "thought it not robbery to be equal with God," and as the Creator of the universe, he reigns, the omnipotent Lord of heaven and earth. All power is entrusted to him, and all worlds are the

offspring of his almighty fiat, the product of his creative skill. This is the same blessed Savior who bled and died on earth. "He alone has spread out the heavens and marches on the waves of the sea. He made all the stars—the Bear, Orion, the Pleiades, and the constellations of the southern sky. His great works are too marvelous to understand. He performs miracles without number."

Christian, go out and gaze upon the clear, blue sky, when the solemn stillness of night pervades a slumbering world; survey the countless glories of the starry firmament; view the numberless suns that shine above you; think of the innumerable planets that revolve around these suns; contemplate the mighty systems of worlds that move in celestial harmony and majesty through boundless space. Your Savior made them all.

Then think of his power, wisdom, and goodness as manifested in all his works. Think of his original glory and blessedness; but above all, think of his amazing condescension and infinite love for you. He who hung out these brilliant orbs, once stooped from his celestial throne of glory to assume human nature, and bleed and die for you! yes, to die the death of the cross! "He made himself nothing; he took the humble position of a slave and appeared in human form. And in human form he obediently humbled himself even further by dying a criminal's death on a cross." Wonderful condescension. Amazing love! Was there ever love like this, that led Christ to Calvary, there to lay down his precious life for sinners! No! the annals of time do not furnish a parallel; neither is it to be found in the records of eternity!

Christ, the only begotten Son of God, lay in the bosom of the Father from all eternity; possessing untold glory with him. But out of infinite compassion and boundless love for his children, his redeemed, he consented, for a time, to veil that glory in humanity, and bleed upon the accursed tree. He became partaker of flesh and blood. "Because God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—Jesus also became flesh and

blood by being born in human form. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the Devil, who had the power of death."

He gave his blessed body to be broken, and his precious blood to be shed for sinners. For you, dear believer, did the Lord of glory suffer. That he might redeem you from the curse of a broken law, and thus rescue you from eternal misery in the regions of darkness and despair, he assumed your nature. "We all know that Jesus came to help the descendants of Abraham, not to help the angels. Therefore, it was necessary for Jesus to be in every respect like us, his brothers and sisters, so that he could be our merciful and faithful High Priest before God. He then could offer a sacrifice that would take away the sins of the people."

In Christ, the divine and human natures are admirably united in one glorious person. He is truly God and truly man. He is our Creator, our Preserver, our bountiful Benefactor; and yet he is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. He is our near kinsman; our elder brother; our gracious friend, who loves at all times; our glorious Redeemer.

In our nature, Christ suffered and died for us; in our nature he rose triumphant from the grave; and he now wears it before the throne of God. O how highly has Christ exalted human nature! He has elevated it to the right hand of God, to the greatest honors and the brightest state of felicity in the heaven of heavens. In glory, the redeemed shall be made like Christ; their bodies shall shine like his glorious body. Says an Apostle, "we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." At his glorious appearing on the resurrection morning, Christ shall call forth our sleeping dust. "He will take these weak mortal bodies of ours and change them into glorious bodies like his own, using the same mighty power that he will use to conquer everything, everywhere."

Then shall we be with him, and be entirely like him to all

eternity. Then shall we see him face to face in his heavenly kingdom, yes, we shall look into the very face of the blessed Jesus, and behold in that countenance the expressions of tenderest love for us, his redeemed. Then shall we see what a lovely Savior we have! And through eternal ages we shall be contemplating the glorious person of our Redeemer. Then shall we discern those excellencies in the person of Christ, which are now obscured by the veil of mortality. "Now we see things imperfectly as in a poor mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God knows me now."

Precious Savior! Your name is as ointment poured forth. You are all our salvation and desire. We love you, because you have first loved us. Whom have we in heaven but you, and there is none upon earth that we desire besides you. You are our way to the Father, the way in which the redeemed journey through a wilderness world to the heavenly Canaan. You are the blessed day-star which illuminates our path through a bewildering world, and guides it safely over life's tempestuous ocean into the harbor of eternal glory. Blessed Redeemer, may I love and prize you more and more on earth, until, prepared for those happy mansions above, I bid adieu to this sinful, sorrowful world, enter into the joy of my Lord, and raise a never-ending song of praise in glory to you my Almighty Savior.

"Almighty Jesus, make me thine;
Oh! wash me in your blood divine,
Preserve my soul from every sin,
And reign the sovereign Lord within.
Oh! for a heart of faith and love,
To taste the Savior's richest grace,
To emulate the choirs above,
Who ever see his blissful face.
Blest spirit! beautify my soul
With humble joy and holy fear;

Your power can make the wounded whole,
And bring each gospel blessing near.
Descend and dwell within my heart;
The Savior's image let us bear;
Then bid me hence with joy depart,
And angels' bliss forever share."

What a precious Savior we have to choose as ours. One who is so amiable and excellent in his person. One who is infinitely able to save us. One who delights in our salvation; and rejoices over us to do us good. Concerning his people, Christ says, "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, promising not to stop doing good for them. I will put a desire in their hearts to worship me, and they will never leave me. I will rejoice in doing good to them and will faithfully and wholeheartedly replant them in this land."

What mercies flow from the Savior of sinners! When we look at what our Redeemer has accomplished for us, well may we, with wonder and astonishment, exclaim, "Oh how great is your goodness, which you have laid up for those who fear you; which you have wrought for those who trust in you; before the sons of men." How deeply impressed with the divine goodness was the prophet, when, borne along and overwhelmed with the sublimity of his rapturous theme, he breaks forth into this lofty song: "Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout aloud, O Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! For the Lord your God has arrived to live among you. He is a mighty savior. He will rejoice over you with great gladness. With his love, he will calm all your fears. He will exult over you by singing a happy song."

There is none like Christ. He spoke as never man spoke. When he sojourned in this valley of tears, he went about doing good; words of compassion flowed from his gracious lips; he comforted the afflicted, healed the diseased, and raised the dead. At his omnipotent voice, "the eyes of the blind were

opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; the lame man leaped as a deer, and the tongue of the mute sung."

How compassionate was the blessed Jesus, to the sons and daughters of affliction, to the perishing multitudes around him, when he trod this earth, clothed with the garb of humanity. And now that he is in heaven, invested with all his original glory, he has the same eye of pity, and the same heart of love for dying sinners on earth. Though he reigns in glory, yet he now says, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at my word."

One compassionate look from Christ, which draws out the soul in love after him, and kindles up the affections in holy desires after sweet communion with him, is worth more than all the treasures of the world. A saving interest in the glorious Redeemer, will put us into the possession and enjoyment of those "unsearchable riches" which will endure when this bewildering world, with all its fascinations, with all its grandeur, shall have passed away.

Does your heart pant after these durable riches? Then look up to Christ, admire him! contemplate his adorable, mysterious person. Open the blessed volume of inspiration and read his glorious character. "Search the scriptures," says the Savior, "for in them you think you have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." Trace him in his wonderful transition from heaven to earth. He veils his glory in humanity. He assumes human nature, and becomes an infant of days, a man of sorrow through life; a bleeding victim on Calvary. For you, sinner, he yields to the stroke of death; and is laid in a tomb. But see him bursting the fetters of the grave, and ascending to glory! There follow him. On the wings of faith soar to the heavenly Canaan! Your Divine Redeemer is there, radiant in glory. Before him, all the redeemed bow in token of humble adoration and praise. While they gaze upon his wondrous bright form, one song, "worthy is the Lamb that was slain, "employs them all. In

heaven, all are admiring and praising the "Lamb that stands on Mount Zion."

There, every redeemed sinner desires to know more and more about the adorable Savior. O believer, the more you study Christ the more will you admire and praise him. Wonderful in his nature, glorious in his person, and dear in those relations in which he stands to you, he demands your whole heart, your affections, all your grateful thoughts. While you walk by faith through a wilderness world, you should constantly keep Christ in your view- in your thoughts- in your mind; until in the full blaze of heaven's glory, you behold him, in the midst of the celestial throne, as "a Lamb that had been slain," and eternally admire his matchless person, and his boundless grace.

O blessed Jesus! may the desire of our soul now be to your name, and to the remembrance of you. May we remember you upon beds, and meditate on you in the night-watches. And through all our earthly pilgrimage may we ever think of you, and of your great goodness.

Christian, let your love for an unseen Savior increase more and more. "You love him even though you have never seen him. Though you do not see him, you trust him; and even now you are happy with a glorious, inexpressible joy." "Unto you therefore who believe, he is precious." In the mean time, may your eye- that eye of faith which views the eternal world, and those glorious "things which are not seen," ever be directed to the bleeding Lamb of God, who takes away your sins; who takes away the sin of the world! Be always longing and "look forward to that wonderful event when the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be revealed. He gave his life to free us from every kind of sin, to cleanse us, and to make us his very own people, totally committed to doing what is right."

How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!

It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms the troubled breast;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary, rest.

Dear Name, the Rock on which I build,
My Shield and Hiding Place,
My never failing treasury, filled
With boundless stores of grace!

By You my prayers acceptance gain,
Although with sin defiled;
Satan accuses me in vain,
And I am owned a child.

Jesus! my Shepherd, Husband, Friend,
O Prophet, Priest and King,
My Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,
Accept the praise I bring.

Weak is the effort of my heart,
And cold my warmest thought;
But when I see You as You art,
I'll praise You as I ought.

Till then I would Your love proclaim
With every fleeting breath,
And may the music of Your Name
Refresh my soul in death! (John Newton)

THE GLORY OF CHRIST

"Father, I want these whom you've given me to be with me, so they can see my glory. You gave me the glory because you loved me even before the world began!" John 17:24

In order that we may see the personal excellency of God's beloved Son, let us contemplate his glory. That amazing humiliation and painful death to which Christ submitted, for sinners, will appear still more astonishing, when we reflect upon that majesty and glory with which he was invested before time began to flow. In Christ, we behold uncreated glory. No created glory was ever like his. Christ's glory shone from all eternity. Before the sun beamed in the heavens, or the moon walked in silvery brightness; before the stars glittered in the deep blue sky, or the earth sprang into existence; Christ, the blessed Son of God, lay in the bosom of the everlasting Father, enjoying equal glory with him.

The glorious Redeemer of a lost world was set up from everlasting. Hear his own declaration, "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was," and surely the glory of the eternal Son must be as old as himself. Yes, Christ has always been, and will ever continue to be "the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person." When he left the bosom of his Father, and the regions of bliss, and visited this fallen world with the message of redeeming love, he only veiled his glory in humanity. He lost nothing of his original glory by his assumption of human nature. He was as truly "the brightness of his Father's glory" when he lay in the manger at Bethlehem, when he had not where to lay his head on earth, or when hung a dying victim on Calvary's cross, as he was before the Incarnation, or as he now is, in his glorified state at the right hand of God.

Though his glory was veiled in a human form, when he tabernacled in the flesh, now and then a beam of that glory darted through his human nature, proclaiming to all around that he was divine. The disciples beheld the glory of their Redeemer.

Says the beloved John, "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."

Says another faithful follower of the Lord, and an eye-witness of his majesty, "And he received honor and glory from God the Father when God's glorious, majestic voice called down from heaven, 'This is my beloved Son; I am fully pleased with him.' We ourselves heard the voice when we were there with him on the holy mountain." On mount Tabor, Peter, James and John got a glimpse of the Savior's glory, which made them feel as if heaven had come down upon earth. There Christ's glory beamed forth in heavenly splendor, "when his face shone as the Sun, and his clothing was white as the light." There Moses and Elijah also appeared in glory, and spoke of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.

What a glorious, sacred spot! How nearly allied to heaven! What is all the splendor of the universe, contrasted with the resplendent scene of Tabor! How gloomy! Contrasted with that dazzling, overpowering brightness which there emanated from the blessed Jesus, the sun is darkness itself. Never had there been such a vivid manifestation of the glory of Christ on earth, as was then displayed to astonished disciples. Well might Peter exclaim, "Lord, this is wonderful! If you want me to, I'll make three shrines, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." Delightful abode! To dwell with Jesus! to be overshadowed with his glory!

"If heaven be thus glorious, Lord,
Why must I keep from thence?
What folly is it that makes me loth
To die, and go from hence?"

Hasten on, O joyful day, when I shall be admitted into the palace of the great King, when I shall see him in his beauty, in his glory; when I shall be made "a pillar in the temple of God, and go no

more out;" when I shall dwell with Christ, yes, with that glorious Savior, whose blessed side was once pierced for me. Happy, unspeakably happy, will those be whom Christ will bring to behold his glory! Their bliss no mortal tongue can express. They will reign with Jesus, and behold his glory forever and ever. "To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne."

It is the will of Christ, that all his people be with him, that they may behold his glory. Mark that beautiful prayer of his, in the 17th chapter of John: "Father, I want these whom you've given me to be with me, so they can see my glory. You gave me the glory because you loved me even before the world began!"

For what is it that Christ prays so fervently here? It is, that those given him by his Father, may not only be with him, but that they may also behold his glory. That prayer has not ascended to heaven in vain. It has been heard on high. In heaven, all the redeemed around the throne of God, are now beholding the glory of Christ. All the spirits of just men made perfect, are admiring his beauty. This prayer will be fully answered, when Christ shall bring forth the head-stone of his living, glorious temple with shoutings; when he shall exclaim, "Behold I and the children which God has given me." When every member of his precious flock shall be gathered home to himself; when even the feeblest lamb shall be housed from the storm. Then shall we all be with Christ; then shall we behold his glory; not veiled as it was in his humiliation, blazing forth in full, unclouded splendor.

The glory of Christ will make eternity itself one bright, unsullied day of bliss. This will be manifested to the redeemed; they will spend the revolving ages of a blissful sterility in beholding it. It will irradiate the mansions of bliss; it will adorn with immortal splendor and beauty every inhabitant of those mansions. It will decorate with blooming youth countless millions. It will light up a bright and glorious abode for the redeemed. It will constitute

the purest, noblest, brightest heaven. What is heaven but being with Christ, and beholding his glory? This is heaven! This is blessedness! This is the bliss of saints! O blessed privilege, to be with Christ, to behold his glory.

And all believers shall soon be forever with him. What a happy state to be ever with the Lord, beholding his glory! This made Paul long to depart, that he might be with Christ. "I'm torn between two desires: Sometimes I want to live, and sometimes I long to go and be with Christ. That would be far better for me" Immediately after death, the soul of the believer is with Christ, beholding his glory, "absent from the body, and present with the Lord."

How many have longed for a sight of this glory of Christ. How often has it cheered the heart of the dying Christian, and filled his soul with the hope of a glorious immortality. A few hours before the great Dr. Owen breathed his last, friend informed him that he had just been putting his work. "On the glory of Christ", to the press, to whom the Dr. responded, "I am glad to hear that that performance is put to press;" then lifting up his hands, and raising his eyes as in a rapture, he exclaimed, "But O brother, the long looked for day is come at last, in which I shall see that glory in another manner than I have ever done yet, or was capable of doing in this world."

A great part of heaven's happiness, will consist in beholding the glory of Christ; yes, the glory of Christ will fill heaven with unutterable bliss. O blessed Jesus, show us your glory; may it illuminate our pathway through a world of darkness; may it guide us to you, the uncreated source of life, light and glory. With you is the fountain of life; in your light shall we see light. Wean our affections from a world that is so soon to be wrapped in flames. Elevate our views above the transient scenes of earth, its fading, deceitful joys, to the permanent and enrapturing bliss of heaven. May we be going up through this wilderness world leaning on you, our Beloved. While on earth may we live to your

glory; and when done with mortal life, when the messenger of death is sent to convey our immortal spirits home, may we be safely conducted through death's dark valley and Jordan's swelling stream, to the heights of Zion, the city of the great King, the heavenly Jerusalem, the celestial Canaan, where you, blessed Savior, reign in everlasting glory.

"Oh! that I felt my soul upborne
On pure devotion's wings,
Far above earth's deceitful joys
And sublunary things.
Where you, blessed Savior, sit enthroned
In everlasting light;
The glory of the angelic host,
The source of their delight.
There in your blissful presence reigns
Immortal joy serene;
No wintry storms are heard to roar,
Nor desolation seen.
Around you flow unmixed delights,
Like rivers deep and wide;
While from the ocean of your love,
Proceeds an endless tide.
Can such a sinful creature, Lord,
Partake his wondrous grace,
To dwell with you in heavenly bliss,
And view your glorious face?
Ah! then, let sin and earth usurp
My wayward heart no more;
Oh, be through life, my all in all,
My soul's unbounded store."

Have you obtained a glimpse of the glory of the Sufferer of Calvary? Is Christ glorious in your view, or does he appear "as a root out of a dry ground, having no form, nor loveliness, no beauty that you should desire him?" Is he, in your estimation, "the chief among ten thousand" all lovely, all glorious; or do you

"lightly esteem the rock of your salvation?" Have you seen Christ, in all his glory, not with the bodily eye, but with that of faith, which scans the heavens and views the Savior there, as yours? Or have you no faith in God's dear Son? Are you still rejecting the free offer of a crucified Savior; still counting his precious blood an unholy thing?

These are solemn questions which you are now called upon to answer. If you have never viewed Christ as your glorious Savior, look to him now as such. Let faith spread her wings towards him. Believe on his glorious name. "But the way of getting right with God through faith says, 'You don't need to go to heaven' (to find Christ and bring him down to help you). Salvation that comes from trusting Christ—which is the message we preach—is already within easy reach. In fact, the Scriptures say, "The message is close at hand; it is on your lips and in your heart."

To see Christ in the glory of his person, in the fullness of his grace and as our only Savior, is the sight that affords perfect peace— that peace of God which passes all understanding. This blessed sight fills the soul with joy unspeakable and full of glory; elevates the sinner's view above sublunary objects, to those blissful mansions in the skies, and cheers the believing soul, when standing on the threshold of eternity, with the hope of a glorious immortality. When we obtain a faith's view of Christ and his glory, how despicable do the unhallowed joys and pleasures of a dying world appear? Even now one beam of the Savior's glory shining into our hearts, or the light of his countenance lifted upon us, will afford us more joy than all the glittering wealth of the world. Hear an eminent saint of olden times exclaim, "You have put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased."

You who have embraced the glorious Savior will soon be made a partaker of his glory. "The glory which you gave me," says Christ, "I have given them." O wonderful! wonderful! not only to behold that glory, but to receive it ourselves! "The Lord will give

glory." What shall we render to him for all his gifts? "Bless the Lord O my soul; and all that is within me! O, bless his holy name." Every step you take on earth will be a step heavenward. Constantly beholding the glory of Christ in the mirror of the word and ordinances, you will become more and more transformed into his likeness. "And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit." In the face of Christ, we behold the glory of God, the brightness of the divinity, shining forth in uncreated, overpowering luster. The holy Spirit illuminates our hearts, and enables us to discern this effulgence of, divine glory. "God, who first commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

Christ is crowned with all the radiance of the Deity. "In him dwells all the fullness of the godhead bodily." "In him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." "The word was made flesh," and the glory of God shall shine through that flesh through all eternity, and make that blessed form far more glorious than the midday sun. How glorious and exalted is Christ! Encircled with inconceivable glory and seated on the throne of heaven, he sways with uncontrollable power, the scepter of the universe. There is a glory in the person of Christ that makes him unspeakably precious to believers. There is a glory in his perfections. There is a glory in his works. "All your works shall praise you, O Lord; and your saints shall bless you."

Yes, Christ is not only glorious in his person, but also in his works. In the works of creation he is encircled with divine glory. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows his handy work;" and in that greater work- the redemption of a lost world- he is crowned with incomprehensible glory, and exalted to the right hand of God. "What we do see is Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, and now is crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death for us."

Dear believer, this glorious Savior is yours. For you he died; for you he lives; for you he reigns the Lord of glory. With the church you may exclaim, "This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem" "how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty!"

How attractive, how desirable, how lovely, how glorious will Christ appear in heaven! How will his glory shine there! When we awake amid the splendors of immortality, the first object that will excite our admiration will be that glorious Redeemer, who loved us, and gave himself for us; whose dying groans were once uttered on Calvary; whose bleeding heart there showed the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of redeeming love! Then shall we see with our very eyes, Him who was, for us, taken, and by wicked hands crucified and slain! But, oh! we shall see him shining in effulgent glory!

The glory of the Man of Calvary will attract the eyes of all the redeemed above, and he will be forever "admired in all those who believe." The perpetual presence of Christ and the continued manifestation of his glory will always make heaven one noontide of light and blessedness. He will be continually before us, and his glory will be constantly beaming upon us; and our sight will be so illuminated that we can steadily behold that glory. Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face.

Now, we could not possibly bear the full effulgence of that glory. It struck Paul to the earth with blindness when Jesus appeared to him, and when he saw "a light from heaven brighter than the sun shine down on me." And on the manifestation of a glorified Savior, John falls to the earth as dead. But in heaven we shall gaze with intense delight upon the glorious sun of righteousness, shining in his meridian splendor. Blessed be God! That sun once rose on our benighted world! That promise has been fulfilled, "Upon you that fear my name, shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings."

That "true light, which enlightens every man that comes into the world" pointing us to heaven, the region of eternal glory, once shone on earth. That light will eternally shine in the upper world in the celestial mansions. There Christ will always manifest himself to his people, in all his glory. There they will not have to cry with Moses, "I beseech you, show me your glory." All shall see it. Every saint there shall be gazing forever upon the uncreated glory of Immanuel. O blessed sight! Lord, prepare each of us for beholding this glory. Unite our hearts to you, by faith. May we be growing in grace and in the knowledge, of you—our Lord and Savior. Oh, Almighty Savior, preserve us from the snares and temptations of a world lying in wickedness, and finally present us faultless before the presence of your glory with exceeding joy.

In his sublime vision of the glory of Christ, Isaiah speaks thus, "In the year King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord. He was sitting on a lofty throne, and the train of his robe filled the Temple. Hovering around him were mighty seraphim, each with six wings. With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with the remaining two they flew. In a great chorus they sang, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty! The whole earth is filled with his glory!' The glorious singing shook the Temple to its foundations, and the entire sanctuary was filled with smoke."

That this was the glory of Christ, which Isaiah saw, John, in the 12th chapter of his gospel, asserts, "These things said Isaiah, when he saw his glory, and spoke of him." On the lonely isle of Patmos, the beloved disciple had a glorious revelation of the Son of God. Heaven opened and poured forth its glories upon him. He was fanned with its breezes. He stood bewildered and amazed amid its grand pageantry. But one form more glorious than all other objects, filled him with profound awe and consternation. It was the Lord Jesus. His countenance shone like the sun in his midday splendor. Glory beamed from every part of that blessed form, diffusing a flood of light on all around,

and blazing far, far away into eternity. It was the dazzling form of the Lamb of God, in more than earthly transfiguration that appeared to the bewildered disciple. The description which he furnishes of this glorified personage is this, "When I turned to see who was speaking to me, I saw seven gold lampstands. And standing in the middle of the lampstands was the Son of Man. He was wearing a long robe with a gold sash across his chest. His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow. And his eyes were bright like flames of fire. His feet were as bright as bronze refined in a furnace, and his voice thundered like mighty ocean waves. He held seven stars in his right hand, and a sharp two-edged sword came from his mouth. And his face was as bright as the sun in all its brilliance. When I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead."

This is Jesus of Nazareth, the same Jesus on whose bosom the beloved disciple had so often leaned. How glorious does he appear now! So glorious, that John falls at his feet as dead. This is the same Jesus whom the dying Stephen saw standing on the right hand of God. When his cruel persecutors were about to imbrue their hands in the blood of this holy servant of God, he being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.

This, Christian, is the same Jesus whose glory you shall behold in heaven; whom you will love and praise and adore with unceasing delight and seraphic vigor, through eternity's rolling ages. Love and admire him now. Cleave closely to him, and you will soon see his glory. You will soon be with Christ! O happy thought!

Soon, very soon, shall the visions of earth vanish, and the darkness of mortality disappear before the rising glories of Immanuel's kingdom. The time is short; the period is just at hand, when we shall, with transporting joy, behold the dawning of that day which will never end, and the rising of that sun which

will never set. Then "Your eyes shall see the King in his beauty! they shall behold the land that is very far off." Raised in glory, and caught up from the flames of a burning, crumbling world, to meet the Lord in the air, "when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all those who believe; we shall, with him, soar to a brighter world above— Our everlasting happy home, where no sin ever defiles, where no tears ever flow, and where no death is ever feared.

Entering into the golden city and its many mansions, we shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; with Moses and Elijah; with prophets and apostles, in the kingdom of God. Standing, not on Mount Tabor below, but on Mount Zion above; not with Moses and Elijah, alone, but with "the general assembly and church of the firstborn, who are written in heaven;" we shall ever behold, contemplate and admire the glory of him who is the light of heaven, and the brightness of God's glory. How gloriously will that celestial city, the home of the redeemed, be illuminated with the presence of Immanuel!

There, no natural light is required. "And the city has no need of sun or moon, for the glory of God illuminates the city, and the Lamb is its light." There, all will be irradiated by the glory of God and the Lamb. "No longer will you need the sun or moon to give you light, for the Lord your God will be your everlasting light, and he will be your glory." There, from a reflection of that glory, the righteous themselves shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Eternal glory beams in Immanuel's land. Everlasting light emanates from His blessed face. "The sun will never set; the moon will not go down. For the Lord will be your everlasting light. Your days of mourning will come to an end." "And there will be no night there—no need for lamps or sun—for the Lord God will shine on them. And they will reign forever and ever."

To this blessedness, to this glory, to this honor, to this immortality, "the Spirit and the bride say, "Come." Let each one

who hears them say, "Come." Let the thirsty ones come—anyone who wants to. Let them come and drink the water of life without charge." O, my friends! be wise in time; choose a glorious Christ now, and you shall shine as the stars forever and ever!

Now, "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only does wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name forever; let the whole earth be filled with his glory! Amen and amen.

"He who on earth as man was known,
And bore our sins and pains.
Now, seated on the eternal throne,
The God of glory reigns.
His hands the wheels of nature guide
With an unerring skill;
And countless worlds extended wide,
Obey his sovereign will.
While harps unnumbered sound his praise,
In yonder world above;
His saints on earth admire his ways,
And glory in his love.
His righteousness to faith revealed,
Wrought out for guilty worms;
Affords a hiding place and shield,
From enemies and storms.
This land, through which his pilgrims go,
Is desolate and dry;
But streams of grace from him overflow
Their thirst to satisfy.
When troubles, like a burning sun,
Beat heavy on their head,
To this almighty Rock they run,
And find a pleasing shade.
How glorious he! how happy they
In such a glorious Friend!
Whose love secures them all the way,
And crowns them at the end."

CHRIST CRUCIFIED

"For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified." 1 Cor. 2:2

"But we preach Christ crucified." 1 Cor. 1:23

"When on the cross my Lord I see,
Bleeding to death for wretched me,
Satan and sin no more can move,
For I am all transformed to love.
"His thorns and nails pierce through my heart,
In every groan I bear a part;
I view his wounds with streaming eyes,
But see! he bows his head and dies!
"Come, sinners, view the Lamb of God,
Wounded and dead, and bathed in blood.
Behold his side, and venture near,
The well of endless life is here.
"Here I forget my cares and pains;
I drink, yet still my thirst remains;
Only the fountain head above,
Can satisfy the thirst of love.
"Oh, that I thus could always feel!
Lord, more and more your love reveal;
Then my glad tongue shall loud proclaim,
The grace and glory of your name
"Your name dispels my guilt and fear,
Revives my heart, and charms my ear
Affords a balm for every wound,
And Satan trembles at the sound."

The death of Christ was the most affecting and solemn scene ever presented to the view of men or angels. What a sight! to see

Christ on the cross bleeding for sinners! How astonishing! to see the King of glory, whom all the angels of heaven worship and adore, bow his head in death! Earth never before witnessed such a sight! Heaven never before looked upon such a scene. O my soul, draw near and contemplate it. Look towards Calvary with the cross erected in your view, and behold the Son of God nailed to the accursed tree, his blessed hands, and side and feet pierced, his blood streaming from every pore, until pallid death sits upon his heavenly brow, and he cries, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit."

This is the scene, the solemn scene, upon which we are about to dwell. We have been contemplating the glory of Christ; we come now to notice his wonderful death. We have seen him arrayed in the robes of eternal glory; now we see him laying aside these bright robes, humbling himself and becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Amazing condescension! that the glorious Son of God should forsake the realms of everlasting day, leave the throne of glory, and take up his abode in this dark region of sin and suffering! Boundless love! that He should expire on the cross for a guilty world!

"Oh! love without compare,
Oh! love beyond degree;
That he, whom cherubim adore,
Should bleed and die for me!"

Christ became man that he might die for man, that his precious blood might flow for the redemption of a lost world. The land of Judea was the birthplace of the Savior of the world. It was office the glory of all lands. Jerusalem was its renowned metropolis. Here, God was manifested in the flesh. Here, the Son of God walked with man, clad as a man, in the gab of humanity. How near was heaven to earth when Jesus dwelt among men, promulgating the blessed gospel of the grace of God to a sinful dying world! What joyful tidings were conveyed to the shepherds of Bethlehem, when "the angel reassured them. 'Don't

be afraid! I bring you good news of great joy for everyone! The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born tonight in Bethlehem, the city of David!" Well might the bright host of heaven burst into that sublime birth-song of Immanuel! "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward man."

Christ came to reconcile a rebel earth to the offended majesty of heaven; to suffer, the just for the unjust; to give his life a ransom for many; to die on Calvary. And when that eventful hour, fixed upon in the counsels of eternity, in which the Son of God should pour out his soul unto death, had arrived, how impressive, how solemn was the scene that transpired on Calvary's sacred mount! How great were the sufferings of God's beloved Son! How painful the death he endured! A series of unparalleled sufferings which he bore in his own person, immediately preceded the crucifixion of our Savior. In the garden of Gethsemane, in the judgment-hall on the way to Calvary, and after his arrival there, his sufferings were intensely severe. We design to notice these.

The whole life of Christ was a life of sorrow and suffering. He was always "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." From the manger to the cross he trod a thorny pathway. For you, sinner, he lived a suffering life, and for you he died a painful death. Should not the love, the dying love of Christ, constrain you to love him who first loved you, and gave himself for you, yes, his own glorious self. Surely it should. Surely your whole heart should be a flame of burning love to your adorable Savior, "Whom having not seen, you love."

Christ stood in the room and stead of dying sinners. He was our representative, and as such he endured the penalty of a broken law. He bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows. All our iniquities were laid on him. No wonder then, that his holy soul was almost overwhelmed when all the waves and billows of divine wrath were about to gather and break over his devoted

head! No wonder that he should cry, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." What intense sufferings the blessed Jesus endured, when he was about to make his soul an offering for sin! when he bore our sins in his own body on the tree!

Contemplate the scenes and circumstances of the Savior's suffering and death. Call up in your mind those memorable names consecrated by the passion and death of Christ—Jerusalem—Gethsemane—Calvary. The remembrance of JERUSALEM awakens some of the most thrilling associations that ever clustered around the memory. Here, some of the most momentous events in the annals of time, or in the records of eternity transpired. Here, was displayed the most amazing and glorious scene that was ever exhibited on this terrestrial globe. Here, on Mount Calvary, the Son of God, the Creator of the Universe, once hung in agonies and death; and here, he accomplished that wonderful, that great and sublime scheme of man's redemption, which is the wonder of angels, which will form the delightful theme of the redeemed in glory, through the countless ages of eternity.

What a sacred spot for meditation!

But turn to GETHSEMANE. This is a name deeply engraved on the heart of every Christian. Here Christ suffered as never a man suffered; suffered for you, sinners. Here, he endured that bitter agony for you, when; "his sweat was as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground."

Now let us view that mysterious Mount, just outside the gates of Jerusalem, on which the Man of sorrows died. CALVARY! At the mention of that name, earth thrills with new emotions of joy, and heaven bursts into long, loud anthems of praise. Intense glory beams from the summit of Calvary; but its moral heights no mortal eye can view; its top is lost in the glorious atmosphere of the upper world. In heaven, Calvary will awaken many a glorious association, when we there look back and contemplate

the wondrous scene it commemorates. There it will live forever in the remembrance of all the redeemed, and be the eternal source of their highest bliss!

When Christ had spent more than thirty years on earth, the hour- the eventful hour of his departure at length arrived, and with his sufferings full in view, he hastens to Jerusalem to offer himself a sacrifice for our sins. How he longs to reach his ignominious cross- to be baptized with his own blood- to accomplish our salvation on Calvary! Blessed be God for such a Savior, whose delights were always with the sons of men! The following beautiful lines on "The Redeemer hastening to suffer," are from the pen of Cowper-

The Savior, what a noble flame
Was kindled in his breast,
When hastening to Jerusalem
He marched before the rest.
Good-will to men and zeal for God
His every thought engross;
He longs to be baptized with blood,
He pants to reach the cross!
With all his sufferings full in view,
And woes to us unknown,
Forth to the task his spirit flew;
'Twas love that urged him on.
Lord, we return you what we can:
Our hearts shall sound abroad
Salvation to the dying Man,
And to the rising God!
And while your bleeding glories here
Engage our wondering eyes,
We learn our lighter cross to bear,
And hasten to the skies."

Arrived at Jerusalem, for the last time, the Savior eats the Passover with his disciples, and institutes the sacramental

supper in that last gloomy night which preceded his painful death. In his dying love he instituted that ordinance which will, through all time commemorate his sufferings and death. "As they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread and asked God's blessing on it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, 'Take it and eat it, for this is my body.' And he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them and said, 'Each of you drink from it, for this is my blood, which seals the covenant between God and his people. It is poured out to forgive the sins of many.'" Who would not obey the injunction, the dying injunction, of the Friend of sinners, "This do in remembrance of me?" Come and manifest your love to the Lord Jesus, at his own table; come, for all things are now ready. "Eat, O friends; drink, yes, drink abundantly, O beloved."

What tender love did the blessed Jesus manifest to his sorrowful disciples, when he was about to leave them, and bleed and die on Calvary! "Don't be troubled. You trust God, now trust in me. There are many rooms in my Father's home, and I am going to prepare a place for you. If this were not so, I would tell you plainly. When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am." Consoling words! What animating prospects are here presented to the humble followers of Christ! Our Father's house, the many mansions of glory, our being with Christ, where he is, our future felicity in heaven, are here, all held up for our encouragement, while in a suffering world.

How solacing, how joyful to the weary Christian, struggling amid the storms and afflictions of life, to find a Happy resting place in our Father's house, in Immanuel's land! "All honor to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for it is by his boundless mercy that God has given us the privilege of being born again. Now we live with a wonderful expectation because Jesus Christ rose again from the dead. For God has reserved a priceless inheritance for his children. It is kept in heaven for you, pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay. And God,

in his mighty power, will protect you until you receive this salvation, because you are trusting him. It will be revealed on the last day for all to see."

How brightly did the dying love of Jesus shine in that "upper room" at Jerusalem! "Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them unto the end." Brighter and brighter will that redeeming love of his eternally shine in the upper room of glory. There all Christ's dear children shall sit down at the banquet of love spread there, from which they shall rise no more; but where they shall forever "eat of that hidden manna," and drink of that living "water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb;" where they will forever enjoy the presence and smiles of a gracious Redeemer. Having uttered that beautiful prayer, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son, that your Son also may glorify you," the Savior calls upon his faithful band, "Arise, let us go." "After saying these things, Jesus crossed the Kedron Valley with his disciples and entered a grove of olive trees."

The sun had passed the western horizon, and the mantle of darkness was spread over a slumbering world, when that mournful group crossed the Kedron, and entered the garden of Gethsemane. There Jesus had often resorted with his disciples. The spot was well known to them all. But never before had the Savior come here with a heart so full of sorrow. Listen to his mournful cry, "My soul," said he, "is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death: tarry here, and watch with me."

Your sins, reader, bore him down. The sins of a lost world overwhelmed him, and he "fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will." If that bitter cup had passed the Savior's lips, where would you, where would I have been this day? Without a Savior, without a heaven, passing our weary days in darkness and despair. Impenetrable gloom would have beclouded our bright immortal hopes. But thanks be unto

God for his unspeakable gift, for the gift of Jesus; for his precious life, for his precious death, which brings salvation to a lost world! The sufferings of our Savior in the garden of Gethsemane, were all endured for us, guilty sinners. O what piercing agony is that which rends his heart, and forces "great drops of blood" down those pale cheeks moistening the green earth! "And being in an agony, he prayed most earnestly; and his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground."

After rising from the earth he had moistened with his blood, Christ is apprehended and betrayed into the hands of sinners. The sword of divine justice is now fairly unsheathed. God the Father is now commissioning the sword of his justice to awake against his own dear Son, who is now delivered for our offences. "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, says the Lord of hosts: smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn my hand upon the little ones."

The innocent sufferer of Gethsemane, who is none other than the Creator of worlds, and the Author of our being, is hurried away to the judgment hall of an earthly court, there to be derided and condemned to death by sinful mortals. There the blessed Redeemer gave "his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them who plucked off the hair." There he "hid not his face from shame and spitting." There the glorious Son of God "was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities," wounded and bruised until his heavenly "visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men."

What condescension and love are here displayed! Wonder O heavens! Be astonished O earth! Behold that bleeding victim, wearing a thorny crown, see his life's blood streaming from every lacerated vein, and read in that bleeding heart the vastness of redeeming love! He who now wears that crown of thorns for sinners once wore a crown of glory at God's right hand. What

manner of love was that which led Christ to make such an exchange as this— a crown of glory for a crown of thorns! It was the love, the infinite love he ever bore to dying sinners. Nothing brought him from his throne of glory to his cross of suffering, but eternal, redeeming love. Look at the bleeding Jesus again and again until your hearts overflow with love to him.

Pilate said to the Jews, "Behold the man!" We would say to you in the language of a greater and better than Pilate, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" Behold him as your Savior, bleeding for your sins. Behold him until the eye of faith brightens, and you exclaim with Thomas, "My Lord (yes, my bleeding Lord) and my God." In that judgment hall the Lord of glory is condemned to death. There "he was oppressed and treated harshly, yet he never said a word. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter. And as a sheep is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth."

But let us follow Him to the CROSS. That last dreadful night of the Son of God had passed. Morning had broken as clear and beautiful as ever. The sun had risen in his strength, and his glorious midday beams were now gladdening the oriental landscape; all nature was smiling around, when Christ, bearing his cross, thronged by an immense crowd of bitter enemies and wondering spectators, is led away to be crucified. Leaving the gates of the crowded city, that entourage is seen ascending the slope of Mount Calvary. What views, what scenes are now presented to the astonished gaze. There stands Jerusalem in all its glory; Mount Zion with its countless edifices, palaces, and towers of strength; Mount Moriah with its magnificent temple, whose glorious form dazzles the eye of the beholder as the sunbeams fall upon it; and a little before you, arises a mysterious Mount, on whose summit the cross of Christ is to be erected.

But there was a far more interesting and glorious sight than was ever before exhibited on earth, passing before you. All heaven

was gazing with profound interest upon it. There was the Son of God, the glorious Redeemer of a lost world, going to ransom his people with his own blood— to pay the last farthing that God's holy law demanded— to make an end of sin— to bring in an everlasting righteousness— to vanquish Satan and all his legions— to triumph over death itself, and the gloomy grave. There was the Captain of our salvation going to open the portals of heaven and lead millions of Adam's sons to glory. There was One whose arm had made the heaven of heavens going to be nailed to a cross! "Carrying the cross by himself, Jesus went to the place called Skull Hill (in Hebrew, Golgotha). There they crucified him. There were two others crucified with him, one on either side, with Jesus between them."

What a scene is now transpiring on Calvary! Thousands are gazing on the Son of God weltering in his own blood. Well might angels leave their thrones to look upon such a scene. Well might mortals be amazed at such love as shines around that cross, and dazzled with that glory which beams from Calvary. The holy, the innocent Jesus is nailed to the cross for sinners! But as his murderers are, with heavy blows, driving the nails into his blessed hands and feet, those pale, quivering lips mutter strange words, which partake more of the language of a God than a man; which breathe nothing but pardoning love. It is the dying prayer of Jesus for his murderers, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

Blessed Jesus! you are compassion itself. O speak these words to every reader. Say to him, to her, "Son, daughter, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven." "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do!" That prayer was soon answered. Many who had shouted, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him," were soon afterwards crying, "Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?" They were indeed forgiven and accepted by him whom they had crucified.

Almighty Savior! your power is the same now; break each heart

of stone. Your grace is the same now; pour it forth on guilty sinners. Then will they look to you whom they have pierced, and mourn!

"Father, forgive, (the Savior said,)
They know not what they do;
His heart was moved, when thus he prayed
For me, my friends, and you.
He saw that, as the Jews abused
And crucified his flesh;
So he, by us, would be refused,
And crucified afresh.
Through love of sin, we long were prone
To act as Satan bid;
But now with grief and shame we own,
We knew not what we did.
We knew not the desert of sin,
Nor whom we thus defied;
Nor where our guilty souls had been,
If Jesus had not died?
We knew not what a law we broke,
How holy, just and pure!
Nor what a God we dared provoke,
But thought ourselves secure.
But Jesus all our guilt foresaw,
And shed his Precious blood
To satisfy the holy law,
And make our peace with God.
My sin, dear Savior, made you bleed,
Yet you did pray for me!
I knew not what I did, indeed,
When ignorant of thee."

For three long hours did the Savior hang, bleeding on the cross, enduring indescribable agonies. Oh, was there ever sorrow like that which our dying Savior felt! Well might the suffering Jesus exclaim, "Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my

sorrow, which is done unto me, which the Lord has afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger." One wave after another broke over the Savior's soul, until the last, the heaviest of all, came rolling on to overwhelm him. His Father— his own Father, had deserted him; and from that bloody cross arose a most piercing cry, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Amid this dreadful suffering, nature seems to sympathize with her bleeding Author. She gives a groan that makes the earth tremble, and turns the heavens into blackness. How awful the period! Darkness covers the land; the sun is darkened; the earth quakes; the rocks are torn; the veil of the temple is torn in two; the graves are opened, and sleeping saints arise. "At noon, darkness fell across the whole land until three o'clock. At that moment the curtain in the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, rocks split apart, and tombs opened. The bodies of many godly men and women who had died were raised from the dead after Jesus' resurrection. They left the cemetery, went into the holy city of Jerusalem, and appeared to many people." Well may the sun turn black in the heavens; well may the earth quake, and the rocks break, when that divine Personage is in the arms of death; and well may a heathen centurion exclaim at such a sight, "Truly, this was the Son of God."

Amid this awful convulsion of nature, are heard the dying words of the Man of Calvary. In tremulous tones they fall on the ears of the amazed spectators; but the human ear was never before greeted with such joyful sounds- with such glorious tidings. That bleeding Sufferer never bowed his head in death, until he had conquered every foe and exclaimed with his departing breath, in the language of triumph, "It is finished."

"Jesus knew that everything was now finished, and to fulfill the Scriptures he said, 'I am thirsty.' A jar of sour wine was sitting there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put it on a hyssop branch, and held it up to his lips. When Jesus had tasted it, he said, 'It is

finished!' Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit." "It is finished!" At the mention of these words the universe thrills with joy. Glad tidings! let them ring from pole to pole— let them be loudly proclaimed from every pulpit— published from every press; let every Christian blaze them abroad; let every missionary fly with them to heathen lands; let all the ends of the earth hear the joyful sound, "It is finished!"

When Christ died, the redemption of a lost world was finished. The gates of the new Jerusalem above were then opened to admit the redeemed sinner. Heaven was then at peace with earth. God could then look in compassion and love on a rebel world. He could then encircle in his gracious arms the vilest of Adam's apostate race.

When Christ had commended his spirit into the hands of his Father, the solemn scene of Calvary soon closed. The astonished multitude began to leave the sacred spot, and march towards a noisy city. "And when the crowd that came to see the crucifixion saw all that had happened, they went home in deep sorrow." But reader, follow not a thoughtless world. Stay on Calvary! There view the bleeding glories of Immanuel. There taste the sweetness of redeeming love. There contemplate a glorious, finished salvation. O my soul, look to that precious bleeding Savior; trust him for his grace; praise him for his love, and adore him for that grand atonement which he made on Calvary!

"Let me dwell on Golgotha,
Weep and love my life away:
While I see him on the tree
Weep, and bleed, and die for me!
That dear blood for sinners spilt,
Shows my sin in all its guilt;
Ah, my soul, he bore the load,
You have slain the Lamb of God.
Hark! his dying word, 'Forgive
Father, let the sinner live;

Sinner, wipe the tears away,
I your ransom freely pay.'
While I hear this grace revealed,
And obtain a pardon sealed;
All my soft affections move,
Wakened by the force of love.
Farewell, world, your gold is dross,
Now I see the bleeding cross;
Jesus died to set me free
From the law, and sin and thee!
He has dearly bought my soul,
Lord, accept and claim the whole!
To your will I all resign,
Now, no more my own, but thine."

CHRIST CRUCIFIED (continued)

"Before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth crucified." Gal. 3:1

"Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us."- 1 Cor. 5:7

Reader, before your eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth crucified. You have followed him to Gethsemane; from Gethsemane to the judgment hall; from the judgment hall to Calvary. You have seen him extended on the cross, bathed in blood. You have heard his dying groans, and seen him bow his head and expire. Before your intellectual vision Calvary's mournful scene has been arrayed.

Now let us inquire into the CAUSE of the sufferings and death of Christ. Why does the Lord of life and glory suffer? Why does he endure that piercing agony and that bloody sweat in gloomy Gethsemane? Why is he condemned to the death of Calvary?

Look at the crucified Jesus. Why does he hang on that bloody cross? Why are those blessed hands and feet nailed to the accursed tree? Why is that dear side pierced with the soldier's spear? Why does the immaculate Lamb of God thus bleed?

Ah! believing sinner, it is for you! For you, Christ endured that indescribable agony in Gethsemane, and those excruciating pains on Calvary. For you, the blood trickles down those pale cheeks, and streams from that pierced side. For you, the Son of God endures the hidings of his Father's face, until he is led to exclaim in the bitterness of his soul, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" For you, his last breath is drawn, and his last cry uttered, "It is finished." O could you but see with faith's vision, what Christ has done for you, surely your whole heart would burn with love to such a Savior, who, to ransom your precious soul from eternal woe, shed his own blood!

That precious blood was not shed in vain; it was poured out to cleanse you from the guilt of sin. It streamed down that cross to wash away the moral stains of a polluted world. Not all the blood that flowed from the Jewish altars could do this. But that vicarious sacrifice offered on Calvary, expiates the greatest guilt. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin. The meritorious obedience, sufferings, and death of the incarnate Son of God, afford an ample satisfaction for sin. God's holy, but violated law requires nothing more.

Now, there is nothing to condemn believers in Christ. "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." In the 8th chapter of Romans- a chapter that ought to be written in golden letters- the Apostle boldly exclaims, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God who justifies? Who is he that condemns? It is Christ who died." This is the only plea that a guilty sinner can make before a just God. "It is Christ who died." Precious truth!

Blessed Jesus! it is from your death that we derive our life, our immortal life. It is from your bleeding side that we drink of the living waters of life, that we draw our purest joys and our highest felicities. We thank you, Almighty Savior, for your precious death, which confers such unspeakable blessings on sinners. Christ died that we might live. He died for us. The deace which he accomplished at Jerusalem was for our sins, "Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures." "He was manifested to take away our sins." "Who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes you were healed." "Christ also has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God."

Sin, then, was the procuring cause of the sufferings and death of God's dear Son. Ah! sinner, you have slain the innocent Lamb of God. You have caused those wounds on Immanuel's glorious person. Your sins pierced him to the very heart. Will you not then look on Him whom you have pierced, and mourn? O look and live, for in that look there is life. Look to Him who is lifted up on the cross for you. Have you looked to Christ for salvation? Looking to Christ is nothing more than believing on his glorious name. Have you faith in Him, in his atoning blood? Saving faith in a crucified Christ is all that is required to fit the vilest sinner for glory. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved."

We entreat you again to look to a dying Savior. Let your eyes turn to that bloody tree, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations; for the healing of your soul. Listen to the Savior's own gracious call. Hark! from the top of Calvary, I hear the blessed invitation fall from the lips of the dying Man, "Look unto me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth." From heaven's high throne I hear it still proclaimed by the glorious Redeemer, "Look unto me and be saved." It is the voice of Immanuel calling sinners home to glory. It is the voice of God speaking in the tenderest accents of redeeming love.

"The God who once to Israel spoke
From Sinai's top, in fire and smoke,
In gentler strains of gospel grace,
Invites us now to seek his face.
He wears no terrors on his brow,
He speaks in love, from Zion, now,
It is the voice of Jesus' blood,
Calling poor wanderers home to God.
The holy Moses quaked and feared
When Sinai's thundering law he heard;
But reigning grace, with accent mild,
Speaks to the sinner as a child.
Hark! how from Calvary it sounds;
From the Redeemer's bleeding wounds;
Pardon and grace I freely give,
Poor sinner, look to me and live.
What other arguments can move
The heart that slights a Savior's love!
Yet till Almighty power constrain,
This matchless love is preached in vain.
O Savior, let the power be felt,
And cause each stony heart to melt!
Deeply impress upon our youth,
The light and force of gospel truth."

When Christ was crucified the veil of the temple was torn in two, thus showing that the way into the holiest of all- even into heaven, was now opened by the blood that flowed from Immanuel's veins. No more sacrifices were required. The great Antitype- the bleeding Lamb of God had been offered. Sinner, heaven is now opened to receive you. Vile as you are, you will be accepted if you only look to a crucified Jesus- if you only trust in him for your whole salvation. O will you not embrace that Savior, who will lead you to glory? Are not the joys of a blissful eternity worth striving for? Then "Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you

do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

Seek an interest in Christ now. Then all the glories of heaven will be yours. If a crucified Christ is yours, blessings innumerable will flow around your path to immortality, and through the merits of Immanuel you will at length gain the happy shores of that blessed world, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. Glorious rest! Who would not strive to obtain it? Christ endured the painful death of the cross to purchase this rest for his people. Christ died, a sacrifice for their sins, thus paving the way for their eternal salvation. He died, a sacrifice for the sins of a lost world. "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." He was crucified for a "multitude which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues."

Sinner, repair to the foot of the cross, and roll your burden of guilt on its bleeding victim— the Lord Jesus. There your burden will become light; and there is room for you also to stand and receive the balm which drops from the top of that bloody tree for the healing of a diseased world. Though you may be the chief of sinners, yet you are invited to come to that cross. He who once, in his infinite love for you, bled on it, himself calls you. "Come unto me," says the Savior, in language as compassionate as ever flowed from human lips. "Come unto me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Go, heavy-laden sinners, and find rest in Christ. Enter into rest now by believing in him. Remember that your iniquities were laid on the head of a bleeding Savior. "The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all." "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was laid upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." His death is our life; his dear wounds and bleeding side, our soundness and health. Now God

is pacified, and the sinner saved by the death of Jesus.

To those who are looking to a crucified Redeemer, and relying entirely on the merits of his blood for life and salvation, the sweet language of a reconciled God now is, "Comfort, comfort my people," says your God. "Speak tenderly to Jerusalem. Tell her that her sad days are gone and that her sins are pardoned. Yes, the Lord has punished her in full for all her sins." 'Christ's dying for us is as much in God's account as if we had twice over borne the eternal agonies of hell.' (McCheyne)

Blessed consolation! This is the language of our gracious Heavenly Father, and oh! how reviving is it to the poor penitent sinner, who is often oppressed with a sense of guilt and borne down with the apprehension of impending wrath. He is now enabled to shout with the adoring prophet in that sweet song, "Praise the Lord! He was angry with me, but now he comforts me. See, God has come to save me. I will trust in him and not be afraid. The Lord God is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation. With joy you will drink deeply from the fountain of salvation!"

You may well trust a crucified Redeemer with your soul and its immortal concerns, for he has, by his obedience and death, effected a complete salvation for you. He breathed out his precious life for you; but he rose again for your justification. He "was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification." "I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice; and there will be one flock with one shepherd. The Father loves me because I lay down my life that I may have it back again. No one can take my life from me. I lay down my life voluntarily. For I have the right to lay it down when I want to and also the power to take it again. For my Father has given me this command."

Christ was indeed laid in the cold and silent tomb; but God did

not allow his Holy One to see corruption. The sepulcher could not hold him. He triumphed over the grave. He burst the fetters of death, and in a glorious form, ascended to heaven. There he ever lives to intercede for sinners; there he stands with open arms to receive the vilest of the vile. "Therefore he is able, once and forever, to save everyone who comes to God through him. He lives forever to plead with God on their behalf."

Christ is not only able, but willing to save sinners; yes, he rejoices in their salvation. He delights to pluck them as brands from the burning- to make them monuments of his victorious grace- trophies of his redeeming love- pillars in his glorious temple above, where they shall sing the song of redemption through all eternity. "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." "For the joy that was set before him (the joy of saving sinners,) endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." A crucified Redeemer is still carrying on his blessed work of saving sinners. His salvation is to the uttermost; none need despair.

Come to Christ, and salvation is yours. Before closing this chapter, we would just glance at the amazing love exhibited in the death of Christ. Would you see the highest manifestation of eternal love? Then contemplate Christ crucified. Here is the grand exhibition of infinite love. In the crucifixion of the glorious Redeemer, the brightest love that ever shone on earth is displayed. What boundless love is seen here! The infinite love of Christ, shining in all its glory! What but infinite love brought him from the height of bliss, to the depths of sufferings, from the throne of heaven to the cross of Calvary! What but infinite love made him a suffering man, and a dying Savior! What but infinite love made him hasten to Jerusalem, to suffer for sinners! What but infinite love led him to Gethsemane, to endure those agonies for sinners, where his blessed form was covered with bloody sweat! What but infinite love nailed him to the cross, there to bleed and die for sinners!

"Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." But oh! the greatest wonder in the universe is, that "while we were yet SINNERS, Christ died for us!" Think of this, wonder at it, be amazed at it! Christ, the glorious Son of God, dying for you a vile sinner, a rebel worm! O admire that love which pitied you in your lost condition, visited your world, and raised you from the depths of sin and suffering, to become an heir of eternal life, and of eternal glory! "When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. Now, no one is likely to die for a good person, though someone might be willing to die for a person who is especially good. But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God's judgment. For since we were restored to friendship with God by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be delivered from eternal punishment by his life."

How vast is this love! The all surpassing love of a dying Savior! your breadths and lengths have never been compassed by a human thought; your depths never fathomed by a created intelligence; your heights never scanned by a seraph's gaze! Dear believer, may you, the object of divine love, be strengthened with might by the spirit of God in the inner man, "And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love really is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is so great you will never fully understand it."

Stupendous love! A length which reaches from everlasting to everlasting; a breadth that encompasses every intelligence and every interest; a depth which reaches the lowest state of human degradation and misery; and a height that throws floods of glory on the throne and crown of Jehovah!

What a theme! the dying love of the crucified Son of God! Well

may angels desire to dwell on this mystery! Well may saints be enraptured with this profound subject! What heart is so obdurate as not to be melted by its touching exhibition, or so benighted as not to be dazzled by its glory! How wonderful! That he who kindled up the stars of heaven, should take upon him our nature, and die in our room and stead! Amazing love! This is the wonder of wonders, the unsearchable riches of Christ!

"Not to be thought of, but with tides of joy;
Not to be mentioned, but with shouts of praise."

Truly, the love of Christ passes knowledge. Those, and those alone, who have stood by the cross and viewed Immanuel in agonies and death, bleeding and dying for their sins; and have felt that healing balm applied to their diseased souls; have seen all their sins washed away with the blood of God, their ransom paid, and their pardon sealed, will realize the following very appropriate and beautiful lines—

"In evil long I took delight,
Unawed by shame or fear,
Till a new object struck my sight,
And stopped my wild career.
I saw One hanging on a tree,
In agony and blood,
Who fixed His languid eyes on me,
As near His cross I stood.
Surely, never to my latest breath,
Can I forget that look;
It seemed to charge me with His death,
Though not a word He spoke.
My conscience felt and owned the guilt,
And plunged me in despair,
I saw my sins His blood had spilt,
And helped to nail Him there.
Alas! I knew not what I did,
But now my tears are vain;

Where shall my trembling soul be hid
For I the Lord have slain.
A second look He gave, which said,
'I freely all forgive;
This blood is for your ransom paid;
I die that you may live.'
Thus, while His death my sin displays
In all its blackest hue,
Such is the mystery of grace,
It seals my pardon too!
With pleasing grief and mournful joy,
My spirit now is filled;
That I should such a life destroy,
Yet live by him I killed." (John Newton)

REDEMPTION BY CHRIST

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Eph. 1:7

"Redemption! what a glorious plan;
How suited to our need!
The grace that raises fallen man,
'Tis wonderful indeed!
Twas Wisdom formed the vast design,
To ransom us when lost;
And love's unfathomable mine,
Provided all the cost.
Strict Justice, with approving look,
The holy covenant sealed;
And Truth and Power undertook
The whole should be fulfilled.
Truth, Wisdom, Justice, Power and Love,
In all their glory shone;

When Jesus left the courts above,
And died to save his own."

In the works of creation, the power, wisdom and goodness of God are admirably displayed; but in the far greater and more glorious work of human redemption, his love shines in full resplendency. How glorious was the design of God to redeem a lost world! How magnificent the plan of eternal redemption! This redemption originated in the infinite love of God the Father. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Jesus Christ is the gift of the Father— a precious gift, indeed, to a lost world. He is given to redeem his people; given that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

Jesus Christ is therefore called the unspeakable gift of God. "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." In the counsels of eternity, Christ was chosen to be the Redeemer of his people. God gave him as a free gift to the Church. A greater gift he could not bestow upon lost sinners. Had the Almighty given us ten thousand worlds to possess, they would have been as nothing in comparison with Jesus Christ, his unspeakable gift. Oh! how good our God is. How great is his power, wisdom and goodness, as manifested in the creation of the universe; but oh! how astonishing is his love, as exhibited in the redemption of a captivated world— in sending his only begotten Son to die for sinners!

"Oh, everlasting lover
Of our unworthy race!
Your gracious eye surveyed us
Ere stars were seen above;
In wisdom you have made us,
And died for us in love."

The gift of a Savior, and redemption through his blood, afford

the grandest view of the eternal love of God. Around this sacred theme, beam glorious rays of divine love. "God is love;" and redemption is but the effect of that love, in which the Deity is enshrined. Love enters into the very essence of the Divinity; and we see that it has blazed forth from the eternal throne, and shone on our benighted world. Yes, the glorious light has shone from heaven. It shines all around us. God loves this world. Blessed truth!

Every page of divine revelation gleams with his love. Redemption is full of it. Here contemplate it— "God showed how much he loved us by sending his only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love. It is not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins." Jesus Christ willingly undertook our redemption. He cheerfully offered himself to bear our sins, to bleed on the altar of divine wrath, to redeem us from eternal misery. O blessed Savior! your love never had a beginning; it is like yourself, eternal. Love always glowed in your blessed bosom for a sinful world. All the glories of Paradise could not keep you from leaving your throne to ransom a guilty race. When there were no merciful arms to embrace us; no joyful heaven to welcome us; yes, when we were lost sinners, you, blessed Jesus, pitied us, and hastened on the wings of your love to redeem us, to bring us to glory, to seat us around your throne, in the celestial palace. How wonderful is your love, O Friend of Sinners!

When that momentous question was asked by the Almighty in the counsels of eternity, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Our blessed Savior came forward and said, "Here am I; send me." Christ was delighted with the glorious work of redeeming a lost world. When the morning stars sang together, and all the immortal sons of God shouted for joy over a rising world, the Savior rejoiced over its redemption. Then his "delights were with the sons of men."

Redemption was his chosen work, and in its execution he took the greatest delight. Ages rolled away, and earth groaned beneath the burden of its sin; idolatry and superstition reigned in triumph over the vast empires; moral darkness, obscuring the light of eternal day, enshrouded the human race, until the star of Bethlehem pointed to the infant Jesus as the glorious Redeemer of his people! A new light then burst from heaven upon them. Christ, "the bright and morning star," that issues in the light of a blissful eternity, appeared in a human form, and trod the valley of humanity. He willingly, yes, joyfully, left his throne of glory to bring redemption to us. His language was, "Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do your will, O my God; yes, your law is within my heart."

Our lost, pitiful condition called for a Redeemer. When Christ came to redeem us, we were on the verge of everlasting destruction. Man, created in the image of his Maker, was once holy and happy. But sin soon entered our fair world, and spread ruin and devastation all around. Pain was felt; disease and suffering endured, and death embraced in his dismal arms, a fallen world. Sin brought death, and all our misery, into this world. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

How deplorable was the condition of the human race! An awful eternity of suffering opened to their view. Then God in infinite love said, "Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom for him." "I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him." Jesus Christ was set apart for the great work of redemption; and at the appointed time, God sent him to redeem us from the curse of a broken law, and to guide us safely through the mazes of a bewildering scene, to the Paradise above. "But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children."

To redeem lost sinners was the very object for which the Son of God was sent into the world; for which he was made of a woman; for which he was made under the law. O matchless grace! O sovereign love! that God send his Son, his only Son, to save sinners! Here we behold a way of access opened to perishing sinners through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Blessed Lord! may the knowledge of this unspeakably precious redemption through a crucified Redeemer fill my soul with gratitude and praise. "My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord; and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever."

Let us see HOW the redemption of sinners was effected. We find that an immense sum was paid for their ransom; that it required the blood of God to redeem a world of perishing sinners. "The Church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood." It is expressly declared that "without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins." The blood of the Deity must flow or else a world be irrecoverably lost. But the Son of God assumed human nature, and freely poured out his blood for our redemption. Oh! the boundless love of Christ, that he should shed his precious blood for sinners. Oh! the infinite efficacy of that blood to cleanse from all sin. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleansed us from all sin."

We see then that our redemption is by price. "For God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body." What a price was paid for our redemption! The precious blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God! "For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And the ransom he paid was not mere gold or silver. He paid for you with the precious lifeblood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God." Costly price of man's redemption; the infinitely precious blood of Christ! O my soul, look with wonder and amazement at your ransom the precious life and the precious blood of Jesus, "He gave his life to free us from every kind of sin, to cleanse us, and to make us his very own people, totally committed to doing what is right." "The Son of Man

came, to give his life a ransom for many."

It is a blessed consolation for the sinner to know that he has redemption through the blood of Christ- that he has access to a holy God through a crucified Jesus. How sweet are those words, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." The blood of Christ is the fountain-head of all felicity. It is the blessed source from where emanates the living water of life; from where flow pardon and peace to a guilty world. It is that "river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God."

Thirsty soul, come and quench your thirst at the fountain of life. Dear believer, come and draw water with joy out of the wells of salvation. Long before a bleeding Savior hung on the cross, it was prophesied, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." The fountain has been opened. The rock has been smitten. Christ's side has been pierced! The sacred streams have gushed from the cross- have flowed around Calvary.

When our Savior instituted the sacramental supper he said, "for this is my blood, which seals the covenant between God and his people. It is poured out to forgive the sins of many." This, this is the fountain of joy- the well of endless life. Here, sinners may drink and never thirst again. And all are invited to come to the waters. The gospel invitation extends to all classes of mankind without exception; to the vile as well as to the good; to the poor as well as to the rich; to the young as well as to the old. The blessed call stands emblazoned on the pages of inspiration. With the authority of the majesty of heaven, I repeat it to a thirsting and famishing world, "Is anyone thirsty? Come and drink-even if you have no money! Come, take your choice of wine or milk-it's all free! Why spend your money on food that does not give you strength? Why pay for food that does you no good? Listen, and I will tell you where to get food that is good for the soul!

Come to me with your ears wide open. Listen, for the life of your soul is at stake. I am ready to make an everlasting covenant with you. I will give you all the mercies and unfailing love that I promised to David." "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Blessed be God for that "whosoever." None are forbidden to taste "the water of life." The vilest sinner may come to the "waters" and drink, and live forever. None are excluded from the way of salvation through the atoning blood of the Lamb of God. What encouragement is there for all to come to the bleeding side of Immanuel, there to receive the pardon of sin, obtain eternal life, and imbibe immortal joys!

Here is redemption offered to you. Will you receive it? Here is the bread and water of life. Will you eat that which is good and let your soul delight itself in fatness? Will you drink from the fountain of immortality? "But those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them at the last day." "All who eat my flesh and drink my blood remain in me, and I in them. I live by the power of the living Father who sent me; in the same way, those who partake of me will live because of me. I am the true bread from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live forever and not die as your ancestors did, even though they ate the manna."

Oh! who would not come and he made a partaker of such inestimable blessings as cluster around the cross of a loving Redeemer. Here is all that a dying sinner requires or his redemption. Here is all that a feeble saint needs for his comfort and support during his pilgrimage through a bleak and barren world which is far from his home. What joys are to be found in redemption by Christ! They are unspeakable and full of glory. They flow down the narrow stream of time and expand into the boundless ocean of eternity!

Redemption by Christ affords sweet peace to the soul. The blood

of Jesus poured out from the cross makes peace between God and the sinner. "Having made peace through the blood of his cross." It brings us near to God. "But now you belong to Christ Jesus. Though you once were far away from God, now you have been brought near to him because of the blood of Christ." Precious blood, that brings us so near our heavenly Father! "You have come to Jesus, the one who mediates the new covenant between God and people, and to the sprinkled blood, which graciously forgives instead of crying out for vengeance as the blood of Abel did." This is the blood of "Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant."

This blood satisfies offended justice, redeems the sinner and prepares him for glory. The blood of Jesus atones for all sin. There is redemption for all sinners, then, if they will but apply to the atoning blood of Jesus for cleansing. There is justification to acquit all; there is righteousness to clothe all. "The people will declare, 'The Lord is the source of all my righteousness and strength.' In the Lord all the generations of Israel will be justified, and in him they will boast." The sinner rejoices to find in the Lord Jesus, complete redemption. "Being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."

"Blessed Savior, speak a word,
Bid all my sorrows cease;
Oh, be my great atoning Lord,
My Righteousness and Peace.
Oh, let your precious blood divine,
Wash all my sins away,
Then shall my soul resplendent shine,
Through heaven's eternal day."

How merciful is our God! How free is his grace! How plentiful is that redemption which is in Christ Jesus! "Let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption." "Yet now God in his gracious kindness declares us not guilty. He has done this through Christ Jesus, who has freed

us by taking away our sins. For God sent Jesus to take the punishment for our sins and to satisfy God's anger against us. We are made right with God when we believe that Jesus shed his blood, sacrificing his life for us. God was being entirely fair and just when he did not punish those who sinned in former times. And he is entirely fair and just in this present time when he declares sinners to be right in his sight because they believe in Jesus."

O sinner, come and taste the joys of redemption. Exercise a lively faith in the atoning blood of the Son of God. We would lead you to the bleeding sacrifice; we would point you to the cross of Christ as your only redemption. We would tell you in the tenderest language that there is redemption for you. Christ is made unto us "redemption." Cleaving to him you shall be redeemed from all evil and sin, and finally admitted into the Paradise of God. Our blessed Savior has obtained eternal redemption for us, and he will soon lead us to glory.

This is the grand object of Christ's sufferings and death, or in other words, of his redemption— to bring "many sons unto glory." Redemption by Christ, then, is an eternal deliverance from sin and sufferings, and the permanent enjoyment of the highest bliss in heaven. All the happiness of the redeemed in glory results from redemption by Christ. All the future felicity of the whole household of faith, through eternity, will flow from that redemption completed on Calvary. "He provided redemption for his people; he ordained his covenant forever— holy and awesome is his name."

By shedding his own blood, the Redeemer has purchased everlasting salvation for his people. "So Christ has now become the High Priest over all the good things that have come. He has entered that great, perfect sanctuary in heaven, not made by human hands and not part of this created world. Once for all time he took blood into that Most Holy Place, but not the blood of goats and calves. He took his own blood, and with it he

secured our salvation forever." Here we may see the eternal, matchless love of Christ, in shedding his precious blood for our redemption. Love was the impelling motive that led him to undertake our redemption; and love enabled him to exclaim, "It is finished." Love made him offer himself a sacrifice for our sins. "Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God."

Christ calls the church, "his beloved." "Oh, how delightful you are, my beloved; how pleasant for utter delight!" He loved the church so ardently as to redeem it with his own blood. "Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless."

Christ's love to the church is eternal. "I have loved you, my people, with an everlasting love. With unfailing love I have drawn you to myself." And again, "Since you were precious in my sight you have been honorable, and I have loved you." Paul thus celebrates the redeeming love of Christ to his church, "You know how full of love and kindness our Lord Jesus Christ was. Though he was very rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty he could make you rich."

THE NEW SONG IN GLORY

"And they sang a **new song**." Revelation 5:9

The redeeming love of Christ will be celebrated through eternity. In heaven, redemption by Christ will be the grand theme, the sweet song of the family of God. It is that "New Song" which all the redeemed sing in glory. It will have no dying cadence through the revolving ages of a blessed eternity. It will be always new; yes, when ages countless as the drops of the ocean shall have rolled away, the song of redemption will be as new to the

redeemed as when the celestial mansions first echoed with its pealing strains.

In the house of his pilgrimage, redemption was the believer's song, and in that house, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, it will be his sweet song through countless ages. O blessed thought! Who will not now commence the 'new song' of redemption! Will you not chant songs to him who died to ransom you from eternal woe? The songs of the grateful followers of the Lamb never end. The saints will find eternal employment in praising Christ for that precious redemption he has effected by his death. The notes of praise to a crucified Redeemer sound through the narrow limits of time and the rolling ages of eternity.

In heaven, Christ will be eternally admired as the Lamb that was slain for the redemption of sinners. There he stands in the "midst of the throne" as the Lamb of God that was once wounded, and bruised, and slain. "And I beheld," says John, "and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as if it had been slain." Every eye shall see him there. Every tongue shall praise him there. All the redeemed shall shout, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain!" This will be the theme of the New Song." This will sound the loudest through heaven— "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain." "There will be much in Jesus to admire when we shall see him as he is. But that which will draw out the loudest notes of the new song, will be the sight of the prints of the nails, and of the wound in his side." (McCheyne)

There will be none brought to heaven but those who will sing eternal praises to the Lamb for the wonders of redemption. There will be no mute tongue in glory. All voices and all hearts shall unite in singing the New Song. When the portals of heaven were opened to the beloved John, and the glory of the New Jerusalem came beaming through those pearly gates, he heard the music of Zion; and what was it but the New Song of

redemption? "And they sang a new song with these words: You are worthy to take the scroll and break its seals and open it. For you were killed, and your blood has ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. And you have caused them to become God's kingdom and his priests. And they will reign on the earth."

We find that a mighty multitude will be congregated in glory to sing the song of redemption; some from "every kindred, and tongue, and people." "After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white and held palm branches in their hands. And they were shouting with a mighty shout, 'Salvation comes from our God on the throne and from the Lamb!'"

What a glorious company will that be who shall eternally stand on the celestial Mount Zion! How sweet will be their song! How rapturous their delight! How ecstatic their joy! But reader, pause, and ask, "Am I to mingle among that blessed host who never cease to praise God and the Lamb? Is the new song of redemption to be my sweet song above?"

Live for eternity- live for Christ now, and you will soon join all the redeemed family of God, in songs that will never end. With your robes washed white in the blood of the Lamb, you shall be presented faultless before the throne of God, to praise him who loved you and washed you from your sins in his own blood. Then you will see your glorious Redeemer, who will always be to you the center of heavenly attraction. How will your grateful heart burn with seraphic love to him whose blood brought you such heavenly bliss, and whose merits crowned you with such inconceivable glory! Your hearts will overflow with more joy than language can express. You will then, in the light of heaven, see that redemption by Christ is a precious work- that rich, inestimable blessings flow from the atoning blood.

Be sure not to trample that blood underfoot now. You will never be crowned with glory without your robes are washed white in the blood of the Lamb. You must have a saving interest in the death of Christ, before you can learn that "new song," which, none but the redeemed sing. "This great choir sang a wonderful new song in front of the throne of God and before the four living beings and the twenty-four elders. And no one could learn this song except those 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. "And they sang the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb."

On the sublime vision of heavenly worship as given to John when banished to the lonely Patmos, a writer whom we admire (Headley) has the following lofty expressions: "The singers were those hundred and forty-four thousand, and they sung a new song, and as they struck their harps, together thus they sung: 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.' And with one voice the innumerable host chanted the heavenly doxology, 'Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sits on the throne, and to the Lamb forever; and back returned the long 'Amen.' Again and again was it taken up and echoed from rank to rank along that celestial mountain, until it came rolling back with all the strength of archangel voices full on the throne of God. The theme, the song was new- it was the song of Redemption. David stood there sweeping a harp far more melodious and tuneful than the one he swept with such a master-hand on earth. Elijah poured his soul of fire into it. Isaiah gave it a loftier echo. The martyrs, those witnesses for the truth who had passed through the flames to their reward, furnished new accessions to its strength; for all the ransomed of the Lord were there. Aaron went up there from the top of Mount Horeb, and Moses from Pisgah. Elijah's chariot of fire never stopped until its burning wheels rested on that heavenly mount, and there Christ ascended from the hill of Olives. Thus the redeemed have flocked one after another to the Mount of God, and there they shall continue together until the glorious

assembly stands complete, and God is all and in all."

How will the arches of heaven resound with that "new song" when all the redeemed are gathered home by the blood of Christ!

"And what in yonder realms above,
Is ransomed man ordained to be?
With honor, holiness and love,
No seraph more adorned than he!
Nearest the throne, and first in song,
Man shall his hallelujahs raise;
While wondering angels round him throng,
And swell the chorus of his praise."

How many redeemed sinners are now before the throne, singing everlasting songs to Him who died for them on Calvary! The redeemed are fast flocking to their everlasting home in glory. "Those who have been ransomed by the Lord will return to Jerusalem, singing songs of everlasting joy. Sorrow and mourning will disappear, and they will be overcome with joy and gladness." Prophets and apostles and martyrs, the great and good of every age and nation, are already in Zion above, and redemption is their song! Those immortal divines, Baxter, Bunyan, Flavel, Owen, Henry, Doddridge, Watts, Edwards, Payson, Martyn, Chalmers, the lovely McCheyne, and the venerable Alexander; have ascended to swell the throne, in singing "Worthy is the Lamb!"

This song breathes on every lip in glory, and bursts from every heart there. One song employs all the tongues of the redeemed in the mansions of bliss.

"Ten thousand, thousand are their tongues,
But all their songs are one."

Dear follower of the Lamb, we shall all shortly join with the family of God in this "new song," in mansions of Glory. Then, lift up your head with joy; "for your redemption draws near." The

hour of glory will soon be at hand.
"Oh, glorious hour, it comes with speed!
When we, from sin and darkness freed,
Shall see the God who died for man,
And praise him more than angels can."

Life is fast hastening away. Time is swiftly flying. Eternity is at the door. You are just on the threshold of glory— just within sight of Paradise. The gates of the celestial city are about to open for your reception, and your Savior is ready to pronounce that blessed invitation, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord." "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.'"

Does not a sight of all this glory make you long to obtain it? Then press onward; press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. One step more, and glory will beam upon your eye, and the joys of heaven captivate your heart, and the music of Paradise charm your ear! The hour will soon come when the shining mansions shall receive you, when an exceeding and eternal weight of glory shall crown you; when you shall begin that "new song" which you learned on earth; when redemption by Christ shall be your unending theme.

Oh! this is heaven, where all rest in the bosom of God; where all behold the Redeemer's face; where all are singing that wondrous "new song" which fills heaven with joy, and eternity with undying melody, as it ascends in pealing notes from the mansions of glory, "All praise to him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by shedding his blood for us. He has made us his kingdom and his priests who serve before God his Father. Give to him everlasting glory! He rules forever and ever! Amen!"

You will soon begin your everlasting song in the upper sanctuary. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power,

and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. Blessing, and honor and glory, and power, be unto him that sits upon the throne and unto the Lamb forever and ever."

"Oh, holy, holy Lord!
Whom angel hosts adore;
When shall I join in raptured strains,
The bright celestial choir?
In pity view a sinful worm,
A prisoner here below;
A pilgrim journeying through the land
Of darkness, sin and woe.
Ten thousand voices round your throne
Unite in hymns divine;
'Salvation to the Lamb!' they cry,
As high in bliss they shine.
Fain would I now begin the song,
To you my God and friend;
Then mingle with the choirs above,
In praise which ne'er shall end."

CHRIST, AND HIM CRUCIFIED, THE SUM AND SUBSTANCE OF THE GOSPEL

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum"
Hebrews 8:1

The gospel is glad tidings of great joy to a lost world. It brings immortality within the reach of dying sinners. It opens untold glories to them. It brings life and immortality to light. Dispelling the moral darkness of a fallen world, it points to an eternal day of light and glory. Delivering from eternal misery the condemned sinner, it reveals to him the way of salvation; leads

him in the path of righteousness; and finally brings him to the enjoyment of endless felicity in the heavenly world. Blessed gospel! Well may you be styled "good tidings of great joy."

What blessings flow in the gospel channel to exhilarate a thirsty world! It is the gospel that makes the wilderness and the solitary place to be glad, and the desert to rejoice, and blossom as the rose; that makes the parched ground to become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water. "Even the wilderness will rejoice in those days. The desert will blossom with flowers. Yes, there will be an abundance of flowers and singing and joy! The deserts will become as green as the mountains of Lebanon, as lovely as Mount Carmel's pastures and the plain of Sharon. There the Lord will display his glory, the splendor of our God."

How refreshing to the weary child of God, to be down in green pastures; to be led beside the still waters of gospel grace! How cheering to say, in a world of sin and sorrow and disappointment, with the sweet Psalmist, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Who can describe the blessedness and the glory, that are contained in this single verse! Who can enumerate the blessings that flow from the gospel of God! In this blessed gospel, "mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." The blood of Jesus, through the gospel, proclaims peace on earth and glory in heaven- such peace as passes all understanding, and such glory as the human heart has never conceived.

We now turn to notice the SOURCE from where all gospel blessings flow. It is in Christ and him crucified that they originate. This is the blessed origin of all goodness; the inexhaustible fountain of love to guilty, rebellious man. In the gospel, a bleeding Savior is held up in a banner so conspicuous as to attract the attention, and excite the admiration of all anxious inquirers after salvation. They look to him and are relieved of the burden of sin and guilt. His grace is so free, and

his love so un bounded, that all may look and be saved. And all that look to Jesus and renounce their own righteousness shall be saved. A bleeding Jesus is the sum of Christianity, and the only hope of a lost world. In him all fullness dwells, around him all blessings flow, from him all glories emanate.

"Dear Jesus, fill my soul
With holiness and peace;
Arise with healing in your wings,
Oh, Sun of Righteousness.
May all beneath the sky
Usurp my heart no more;
Oh, be my first, my chief delight,
My soul's unbounded store.
In you all treasures lie,
From you all blessings flow;
You are the bliss of saints above,
The joy of saints below.
Oh, come, and make me yours,
A sinner saved by grace;
Then shall I sing with loudest strains,
In heaven, your dwelling-place.
When standing round the throne,
Amid the ransomed throng,
Your praise shall be my sweet employ,
While love inspires my song. "

Christ, and him crucified, is the sum and substance of the gospel. What is the gospel but a glorious revelation of Christ crucified, a gracious plan of salvation through the merits of Immanuel's blood! It is only through a crucified Redeemer that we can be admitted into heaven. Our salvation is intimately connected with him. Take away Christ, and you bury our immortal hopes in the dust; you demolish the glorious superstructure of gospel truth. If there had been no Savior proclaimed, there would have been no salvation for perishing men- no gospel of the grace of God.

But Christ is revealed in the gospel as the great object of our faith. There he stands as the great center of all holy attractions—as the sum of all our happiness. In the gospel revelation, Christ is all. The Bible is full of him. From Genesis to Revelation, he is set forth in all the loveliness of his character, and in all the richness of his grace to dying men. Enraptured prophets dwell on him, inspired poets sing of him, and ardent, zealous apostles blaze his name abroad.

The grand design of a divine revelation is to exhibit Christ and him crucified as the only hope of a lost world. Christ is the glory of the Scriptures, as the sun is the glory of the sky. "To take Christ from the Bible," says a writer of other days, "would be like blotting the sun from the firmament." It will avail nothing whatever discoveries we make, if we find not, to our present and eternal welfare, him of whom Moses and the prophets wrote. The key of knowledge will be of little use, unless it opens to us the unsearchable riches of Christ. "These things are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God; and that believing, you might have life through his name." The sum and substance of all evangelical preaching is, Christ and him crucified.

"We preach Christ crucified," says one of the greatest ministers of Jesus Christ. Christ crucified was the substance of Paul's preaching. With ardent, burning eloquence he dwelt on this glorious theme. This was the brand topic of all his writing and preaching. He set nothing else before the people but Christ crucified. He desired to know nothing more, for he knew that nothing more was essential to salvation than the saving knowledge of Christ, and him crucified. He caught this glorious truth, and published it to a dying world. He summoned all his energies to understand this deep mystery. This was his study—"For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified."

Christ and him crucified, is the very life of the gospel. Here all the lines of evangelical truth meet in one central point. Blessed be God, for a crucified Savior! O my soul, put your trust in him. Study Christ, and him crucified. He is the life of the soul; the salvation of the sinner. Search the Scriptures; for they testify of him; yes, "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Prophets speak of him as the bleeding sacrifice for sin. The Old Testament points to him as the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. The New Testament is replete with the history of the crucified Savior.

"Of gospel history, what is the sum? Christ crucified! What do the four evangelists relate? They all, for substance, tell the same story; and that story is rightly termed the gospel. It is the history of the cross. In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word is established. God has graciously given us four, all inspired by his Holy Spirit, to relate the birth, the life, the labors, the preaching, the miracles, the sufferings, and the death of Jesus. They tell us what he said; what he did; and what he endured from the powers, from the hands of men, and from the sword of justice. They inform us how he was at last, condemned, and nailed to the tree, for the testimony which he bore to the truth, that he was the only begotten Son of God, and that the same divine honors were due to him as to the Father."

What a long series of prophecies was accomplished in Christ, and him crucified! The Spirit of God in all the prophets, testified "beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." Christ is the sum of prophecy. To the two disciples going to Emmaus, he explained the prophecies relating to himself. "Then Jesus said to them, 'You are such foolish people! You find it so hard to believe all that the prophets wrote in the Scriptures. Wasn't it clearly predicted by the prophets that the Messiah would have to suffer all these things before entering his time of glory?' Then Jesus quoted passages from the writings of Moses and all the prophets, explaining what all the Scriptures said about himself." And again, "When I was with you before, I told

you that everything written about me by Moses and the prophets and in the Psalms must all come true." Then he opened their minds to understand these many Scriptures. And he said, "Yes, it was written long ago that the Messiah must suffer and die and rise again from the dead on the third day."

The life, the sufferings, and the death of Messiah were all foretold in glowing language, by the prophets of God. Moses wrote of him. Job knew that his Redeemer lived. Abraham got a glimpse of Christ's day, and it gladdened his heart. Jacob spoke of the coming of Shiloh, the Prince of Peace. Isaiah, transported into future times, cries: "For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. And the government will rest on his shoulders. These will be his royal titles: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His ever expanding, peaceful government will never end. He will rule forever with fairness and justice from the throne of his ancestor David." Micah foretells the place of his birth, "But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, are only a small village in Judah. Yet a ruler of Israel will come from you, one whose origins are from everlasting."

To Daniel the time was revealed, when Messiah should be cut off, to finish transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy. The Psalmist foretold the sufferings and death of Jesus on the cross as if he had actually witnessed them. The 53d chapter of Isaiah, and the 22nd Psalm are full of Christ and him crucified. Thus, all the prophets highly extol him, who is the great and glorious Deliverer of lost man. Christ and him crucified is the sum of all these good things that God promised to his ancient people; the substance of all those types, and shadows, and emblems, which prefigured good things to come.

The whole ceremonial law was a shadow of good things to come; but "the substance is about Christ." The paschal lamb bled on Jewish altars, as the emblem of a bleeding Savior. Hence Christ

is styled, "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." "The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." His precious blood is represented to be like that of "a lamb without blemish and without spot." All the Jewish sacrifices, rites and ceremonies were full of Christ crucified. They pointed to this one great sacrifice for sin. They referred directly to him, whose death as truly an atoning sacrifice.

"The death of atonement, then, which the Son of God died for our reconciliation, was that to which all sacrifices, from the earliest times, had respect, as their great termination, and without which they would have been destitute of reason as they were, in their very nature, of all actual value in the very sight of heaven. If holy men of old made an acceptable use of them, in drawing near to God, it was only by looking through them to this all-perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice which they prefigured. This great sacrifice, accordingly, being offered up in due time; all that were before it were completely done away; and all that ancient sort of worship went forever out of use"

Christ crucified is now proclaimed in the everlasting gospel as the substance of all our holy religion. Whoever has faith in him, has true religion in his soul. Whoever believes on a crucified Christ, shall be admitted into the Paradise of God, to eat of the fruits of "the tree of life," and to drink of the crystal streams of living water, which flow from the throne of the Deity. O then, give your heart to Jesus, and he will fit you for glory.

Of the ordinances of divine grace, what is the sum? Christ crucified. Their grand design is to set Him forth as an offering of atonement, through faith in his blood. Of the sacramental supper, what is the substance? Christ crucified. This sweet ordinance is full of Christ and his whole glorious work for the salvation of sinners. In the broken bread and poured out wine, we see nothing but the crucifixion of the blessed Son of God. Here, he is presented to us as the glorious Savior dying for sinners. Here, we get a glimpse of his matchless perfections- of

his transcendent glory. Here, all his sufferings rise up to our view- the sufferings of his holy soul- the agonies of his cruel death. Here is nothing but Christ and him crucified. How the love and grace of the Lord Jesus kindle into a glorious blaze, in this ordinance.

Would you see a lively exhibition of a crucified Savior? Then go to the Lord's table; sit down there and meditate on his death, his dying love, his glorious atonement; so will you grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen.

How highly should we esteem our divine Savior. With what entire confidence should we rely on him for salvation! Blessed Jesus! You are the source of all happiness- the spring of all joy. You are all in all to your people. O satisfy me with your goodness, that I also may rejoice in your precious salvation. "Remember me, O Lord, with the favor that you bear unto your people; visit me with your salvation." Refresh my soul, blessed Lord, with the manifestation of your grace, and prepare me for beholding your glory in heaven- for enjoying endless pleasures at your right hand.

May we all be daily feeding by faith, on Christ and him crucified, while we sojourn as strangers and pilgrims here, until we "enter in through the gates into the city," sit down beneath the shadow of the tree of life, feed upon the hidden manna, and drink of the "pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, that proceed out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."

In a little while we shall see our Redeemer's face, and his name shall be upon our foreheads. We shall soon see a crucified Christ- the print of the nails, and of the wound in his side. How lovely and attractive will Christ appear in glory, as our crucified Savior! When we look on his dear wounds and bleeding side, our souls will be lost in wonder, love, and praise. Then we shall be filled with his goodness, and taste through eternal ages the

sweetness of redeeming love. Amen. Even so come Lord Jesus.
Come quickly!

CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED, THE ONLY HOPE OF THE SINNER

"The Lord Jesus Christ, who is our hope." 1Timothy 1:1

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is
Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 3:11

"O Thou dear, anointed Jesus,
All my hopes are fixed on thee;
In your tender, sweet compassion,
Cast a smile of love on me.
Come in all your full salvation,
Deign within my heart to dwell;
Then, with all your ransomed people,
Of unbounded love I'll tell.
Fill my soul with heavenly graces,
Gently falling from above;
Meekness, patience, pure affection.
Sweet humility and love.

Come, oh blest anointed Savior,
To your earthly temple come;
Till the hour of death remove me
To my everlasting home."

Christ and him crucified, is the only hope of the sinner. Here is
the only substantial, permanent foundation of all our hopes.
"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is
Jesus Christ." A crucified Christ is the only hope of the world. In
vain do we hope for salvation from any other source. "Truly in

vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains: truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel."

The Lord alone is the salvation and strength of his people. The Christian boldly exclaims, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" There is but one refuge provided for a lost world. That refuge is Christ crucified. It is a "strong refuge." "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous run into it and are safe."

None are safe outside of Christ. He is the only refuge from the storms of divine wrath that will one day sweep away the ungodly world. "But to the poor, O Lord, you are a refuge from the storm. To the needy in distress, you are a shelter from the rain and the heat. For the oppressive acts of ruthless people are like a storm beating against a wall." Christ will shield all who come to him. No sinner ever perished that "fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."

In the arms of Christ, we are safe for time- and safe for eternity. An almighty Savior has said concerning his chosen flock, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." What a blessed ark of safety for perishing sinners! Christ and him crucified! Happy they who are enclosed in this new testament ark! They will survive every storm, and amid the wreck of a crumbling world, ride safely and triumphantly into the harbor of immortal glory! Happy they whose lives are hidden with Christ in God; when Christ who is their life shall appear, they shall appear with him in glory. "Yes, happy are those who have it like this! Happy indeed are those whose God is the Lord."

"Sinners, see the ark prepared!
Haste to enter while there's room;
Though the Lord his arm has bared,

Mercy still retards your doom.
Seek him while there yet is hope,
Ere the day of grace be lost,
Lest in wrath he give you up,
And this call shall prove your last."

Flee to the ark of safety; hide in Christ. Listen to the gracious calls of your only Savior. Hear him cry, "Hide yourselves for a little while, until his wrath has passed by." Come without delay. Your Savior will not reject you. He will receive you into his arms, adopt you into his family, and make you an heir of God, and a joint-heir with him in glory. O, blessed privilege, to reign with Christ in glory! Accept, then, of a crucified Savior, and heaven will be your everlasting home. You will soon land on the peaceful shores of Immanuel's land; soon be admitted into the presence of Christ, to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb.

If Christ is your only hope here, he will be your everlasting portion hereafter. If you glorify him on earth, you shall enjoy him in heaven. If you follow the Lamb now, he will lead you unto living fountains of waters, in that "land of pure delight, where saints immortal reign." You will be happy in his service through time, and blissful in his presence through eternity. If your only hope is the Lord Jesus, he, as the captain of your salvation, will lead you into the promised land. O be sure to enlist in the cause of your crucified Redeemer. Choose him as your only leader. Stand beneath the glorious banner of his love. Follow him on to victory. "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life," and you will come off at last more than conqueror through the blood of the Lamb.

Go forward, then, in the strength of your Redeemer. Say with the Psalmist, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God; I will make mention of your righteousness, even of yours only." View the glorious prize offered to believers in Jesus! An unfading wreath of glory! A royal diadem of beauty! A kingdom that will never end. The inheritance of all things! "He that overcomes

shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." "All who are victorious will become pillars in the Temple of my God, and they will never have to leave it. And I will write my God's name on them, and they will be citizens in the city of my God—the new Jerusalem that comes down from heaven from my God. And they will have my new name inscribed upon them." Here is all the happiness of heaven summed up in a few words. But who can declare their import? Who can express the blessedness of being in Christ; of resting our hopes on him?

Eye has not seen it, nor has the ear heard it; neither has it entered into the heart of man. All this glory is obtained by believing on a crucified Jesus. Is Christ formed in you, "the hope of glory." There is but one road to heaven; that way is through Christ and him crucified. All the redeemed in glory have traveled this road. All who will ever yet enter in through the gates, into the new Jerusalem, will be admitted only through the merits of a crucified Savior. They must depend on him. There is no other foundation on which to rest. Christ is the way—the only way to the Father, and to a glorious immortality. "I am the way," says Christ, "and the truth, and the life; no man comes unto the Father, but by me." "Yes, I am the gate. Those who come in through me will be saved. Wherever they go, they will find green pastures."

There is no salvation without Christ. There is no other name but his that can save from eternal woe. "There is salvation in no one else! There is no other name in all of heaven for people to call on to save them." In the gospel fabric, Christ is the chief cornerstone. In him is fulfilled, "I am placing a stone in Jerusalem, a chosen cornerstone, and anyone who believes in him will never be disappointed." Jesus Christ is that precious corner-stone on which the Church is built. "The stone rejected by the builders has now become the cornerstone."

Fix your hopes on Christ and him crucified. Commit your immortal concerns into the hands of a bleeding Savior, and

heaven is yours. Come, and entrust your whole salvation to Him, who is the only hope set before you in the glorious gospel. Fly for refuge to Him. Christ will receive you joyfully. Hear his own gracious language. "All that the Father gives to me, shall come to me; and him that comes to me I will never cast out." Blessed words! What can be more encouraging.

Despairing sinner, here is hope for you. A crucified Savior is lifted up on the pole of the everlasting gospel, that you may view him and live. Are you drawn to him yet? The dying Savior cries, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself." Jesus Christ is elevated on the cross that a diseased dying world may get a glimpse of him and live. He is the world's Redeemer. He is the sinner's friend- his last and only hope. Reject not this only refuge. Here is hope for the vilest of sinners. Christ came to save such. "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." "Oh, had I ten thousand souls, I would, at this moment, cast them all into his hands, with the utmost confidence." (Simpson)

"Tell me," says an eloquent living writer (Gardiner Spring), "where the vilest sinner is to be found that dwells on God's footstool; conduct me to his abode of wickedness and gloom; and if it be anywhere this side the grave, I would assure him in God's name, that he who was lifted up from the earth came to save just such sinners as he. Whoever believes on a crucified Redeemer shall be saved. This is the cheering language of inspiration. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life." Then let all look to the cross of Christ. Let all contemplate the Son of God bleeding for their sins. Let all look to Jesus, and live.

"As the serpent raised by Moses
Healed the burning serpent's bite,
Jesus thus himself discloses,
To the wounded sinner's sight;

Hear his gracious invitation,
I have life and peace to give,
I have wrought out full salvation,
Sinner, look to me and live.
Pore upon your sins no longer,
Well I know their mighty guilt;
But my love than death is stronger
I my blood have freely spilt;
Though your heart has long been hardened,
Look on me- it soft shall grow;
Past transgressions shall be pardoned,
And I'll wash you white as snow.
I have seen what you were doing
Though you little thought of me;
You were madly bent on ruin,
But I said, it shall not be;
You had been forever wretched,
Had I not espoused your part;
Now behold my arms outstretched,
To receive you to my heart.
Well may shame, and joy and wonder,
All your inward passions move;
I could crush you with my thunder
But I speak to you in love!
See! your sins are all forgiven,
I have paid the countless sum!
Now my death has opened heaven,
Thither you shall shortly come.
Dearest Savior, we adore thee,
For your precious life and death
Melt each stubborn heart before thee,
Give us all the eye of faith;
From the law's condemning sentence,
To your mercy we appeal.
You alone can give repentance,
You alone our souls can heal."

"And now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in you." "The Lord is my portion, says my soul; therefore will I hope in him." Is this the language of your soul? Do you hope in Jesus? Is he your unfailing portion? Then rejoice in the Lord. Make his glorious name known to a dying world. "In that wonderful day you will sing: "Thank the Lord! Praise his name! Tell the world what he has done. Oh, how mighty he is! Sing to the Lord, for he has done wonderful things. Make known his praise around the world. Let all the people of Jerusalem shout his praise with joy! For great is the Holy One of Israel who lives among you."

Blessed Jesus! enable us to rely on you as our only hope. Open our eyes that we may discern your beauty and excellence. Be our hiding place to which we may resort for safety. May sinners flee to you before the storm arises to overwhelm a guilty world.

"Lord, open sinner's eyes,
Their awful state to see,
And make them, ere the storm arise,
To you for safety flee."

"Turn to the strong, you prisoners of hope." Jesus is willing to encircle you in the arms of his protection and love. Then turn to him, Christ and him crucified is the sinner's "stronghold." Here all are safe. All who now rest in Jesus shall enjoy eternal rest hereafter. Blessed Lord! lead me to the Rock that is higher than I. May all my hopes be in Jesus, the sinner's Friend. May he be made unto me wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. "The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my savior; my God is my rock, in whom I find protection. He is my shield, the strength of my salvation, and my stronghold."

Look to Jesus for wisdom to lead you safely through a dark, bewildering world of sin and folly, to the bright mansions of eternal glory. Lean on him for support, while you journey through the wilderness. Let him be always the beloved of our soul; always "the chief among ten thousand" in your estimation;

yes always the one altogether lovely One.

Look to a crucified Jesus for righteousness. He only can clothe the guilty, polluted sinner with the beautiful robes of redeeming righteousness- with the spotless garments of salvation. Every redeemed sinner in glory must be clad with the radiant vesture of a Savior's righteousness. This alone will make us appear beautiful in the eyes of Jehovah. This alone will place us before his throne, amid the glories of heaven. Blessed righteousness of the crucified Jesus! What glory does it bring to lost man! Then, with Paul, desire to "be found in Christ, not having your own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."

Look to Jesus for sanctification. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. The pure in heart shall see God. Jesus will wash every filthy, unclean soul that flies to him, in his own divine blood, and make that sinful soul shine with unsullied purity and perfect holiness through heaven's eternal day.

Look to Christ crucified for redemption. Trust in no other. Hope in no other. Christ is the redemption of his people. They look to him, and are saved. He has bought them with his precious blood. He has prepared them for glory. Through his all-atoning sacrifice, they shall "eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God," and be crowned with everlasting bliss.

O embrace a crucified Savior and rest on him in all his saving offices. Take him as your Prophet, Priest and King. Thus he will be your complete Savior; your all in all.

The pious author of the 'Christian Retirement', has the following beautiful remarks: "Christ is the salvation of all his dear, believing people; they look to no other; they love no other; or, if they love others, it is Christ in them who is the chief object of their affection. Here I behold a way of access opened to poor perishing sinners, through faith in the atonement of Jesus. Lord,

give me faith in your dear Son. Enable me to cast my soul without reserve upon your covenanted mercies in Christ Jesus. In him alone is eternal life. In him alone are treasured up grace, mercy, and peace. He that has the Son, has life; for this is eternal life, to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. Oh for a heart to believe unto righteousness! Blessed Lord, this heart you only can bestow. You know my wickedness and wretchedness; my frailties and follies; my helplessness and total alienation of heart from you. You know from what height of happiness I have fallen through original sin, and into what depth of misery I am plunged through willful transgression. But, Oh sovereign love! Oh! matchless grace! You have pitied me; you have sent your Son, your only Son, to save me. You have assured me that all who believe in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life."

In a word, look to Jesus as the great Physician of our sin-sick soul. He only can cure you of all your spiritual maladies. He only can clothe you with immortal health, and angelic vigor in the world of glory. Come to Him, and you shall drink of the healing waters of life, and eternally bloom in the paradise of God.

"How lost was my condition,
Till Jesus made me whole!
There is but one physician
Can cure a sin-sick soul!
Next door to death he found me,
And snatched me from the grave;
To tell to all around me,
His wondrous power to save.
The worst of all diseases
Is light, compared with sin;
On every part it gazes,
But rages most within.
'Tis palsy, plague and fever,
And madness- all combined,
And none but a believer,

The least relief can find.
From men great skill professing,
I thought a cure to gain;
But this proved more distressing,
and added to my pain.
Some said that nothing ailed me,
Some gave me up for lost;
Thus every refuge failed me
And all my hopes were crossed.
At length this great physician,
How matchless is his grace!
Accepted my petition,
And undertook my case.
First gave me sight to view him,
For sin my eyes had sealed;
Then bid me look unto him;
I looked, and I was healed.
A dying, risen Jesus,
Seen by the eye of faith;
At once from danger frees us,
And saves the soul from death.
Come then to this Physician,
His help he'll freely give,
He makes no hard condition,
"Tis only, look and live."

THE CROSS OF CHRIST, THE GLORY OF THE CHRISTIAN

"As for me, God forbid that I should boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of that cross, my interest in this world died long ago, and the world's interest in me is also long dead." Galatians 6:14

"Well may I glory in his cross, While he prepares my crown."

What wonders are manifested in the Cross of Christ! What fountains of joy does it uncover for the thirsty sinner! What oceans of divine grace does it reveal to the aspiring saint! What glories does it unfold to the ransomed believer! It is the power of God, and the wisdom of God, and the salvation of the soul. How it displays the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ to poor, perishing sinners! O boundless grace, that pitied us when lost! and that rescued us from everlasting burnings! The cross of Christ manifests the free, sovereign, matchless love of God to a lost world.

"How free the love, how rich the grace,
A pardoning God bestows;
To Adam's vile, apostate race,
In boundless streams it flows.
What joy arises in the heart
When Jesus' cross appears
Salvation to my soul impart,
Subdue my guilty fears.
Blessed Savior, speak the healing word,
Bid all my sorrows cease;
Oh, be my Great Atoning Lord,
My Righteousness and Peace."

What joys flow from the Savior's cross! It is the sight of that cross, which enables the sinner to read his title clear to a glorious immortality. The cross of Christ is full of rich, heavenly blessing. The pardon of sin, the justification of our persons, the sanctification of our natures, eternal life, immortal glory, the endless enjoyment of a triune God in heaven, are some of the blessings which it contains.

O my soul, pant after these blessings so fully treasured up in the cross of Christ, and so freely offered to dying sinners. Reader, come to the cross, and these blessings will descend on your head. You will then taste of the fountains of bliss in Immanuel's land, and bathe in the rivers of pleasures which eternally flow

through the realms of glory.

"O the sweet wonders of that cross,
Where Christ my Savior loved and died,
Her noblest life my spirit draws,
From his dear wounds and bleeding side."

Here we have the infinitely tender love, the immensely free, rich grace of the bleeding, dying Immanuel. What a sweet topic for contemplation! What a noble theme for the Christian to boast in! Well might the great Apostle of the Gentiles exclaim, "As for me, God forbid that I should boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of that cross, my interest in this world died long ago, and the world's interest in me is also long dead."

In the Scriptures the cross of Christ is used in three different senses.

1. It denotes the timber to which our Lord was nailed, and on which he expired. "He endured the cross, despising the shame." "He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." "The punishment of the cross was a Roman invention. It was made use of only in the case of slaves, notorious malefactors. The cross was made of two beams of wood crossing each other. It was laid on the ground and the criminal stretched upon it. A nail was driven through each hand, and one nail through both the feet. It was then lifted upright, and let fall into a hole, where it was wedged in. The crucified man was then left to die, hanging by his hands and feet. This was the death to which Jesus stooped. O how amazing was that condescension of God's own Son, which brought him from a glorious throne to a suffering Cross! Amazing condescension indeed! O, how brightly did that wonderful love of the blessed Savior blaze on Calvary, when he so cheerfully endured the death of the cross there for us sinners."

2. It denotes the way of salvation through Christ and him

crucified. "I know very well how foolish the message of the cross sounds to those who are on the road to destruction. But we who are being saved recognize this message as the very power of God. So when we preach that Christ was crucified, the Jews are offended, and the Gentiles say it's all nonsense. But to those called by God to salvation, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ is the mighty power of God and the wonderful wisdom of God."

3. It is used to denote the sufferings endured in following a crucified Savior. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." It was in the Atonement of Jesus made on the cross that the Apostle gloried. This furnishes the ground of the Christian's triumph. This endears the cross to his soul. This makes the sufferings of Calvary appear so glorious in his eye. It was the glorious, finished work of a crucified Redeemer on the ignominious cross, that drew from the Apostle's lips, this exulting language: "God forbid that I should boast save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." By the cross of Christ, is here meant the whole of that sublime scheme of redemption executed on Calvary, by the death of the Son of God.

To Paul this was all absorbing topic- his chosen favorite theme. On this adamant foundation, he built his hopes for eternity. This was the blessed source of all his joy- the sublime cause of all his boasting. He gloried in nothing else. At all times, and in every place he visited, Paul gloried in Christ and him crucified. Among Jews and Greeks, Barbarians and Scythians, the learned and the illiterate, this was his delightful theme; in this he exulted. From the top of Mars Hill, he waved the banner of the cross over the proud city of Athens. Nothing could cool the fervor of Paul's attachment to the cross of Christ.

"The sacred flame that was kindled on his way to Damascus," says the eloquent Gardiner Spring, "burned brighter and brighter, through darkness, through trial, through the floods and through the flames, until it rose pure from the scaffold

where he received the martyr's crown, and from where his spirit ascended to receive the crown that fades not away."

O that every reader would imbibe the spirit of Paul, and boast only in the cross of Christ! The cross of Christ is the Christian's boast. In every age this has been his song. Every true believer glories in Christ and him crucified. A ray of heavenly light from the cross beams on his soul, filling it with joy unspeakable and full of glory; enabling him to sing in the ways of the Lord and boast in the rock of his salvation. He sees the moral grandeur of the cross; its attractiveness; its dazzling glory. He is thus led to place all his hopes in the cross of the Man of Calvary, and to glory, before an ungodly world, in that atonement made by the blood of Jesus.

All his hopes of eternal felicity in heaven, spring from the cross of Christ. No wonder then, that he should extol that Savior who died to save him, and celebrate that wondrous work which procures for him endless bliss.

'Tis Jesus died to save,
'Tis Jesus lives to bless;
On high he dwells- the sinner's friend,
The Lord, our righteousness.
Then, Oh my soul, rejoice,
Extol your Savior's name;
Make mention of his dying love,
And celebrate his fame.
He claims your heart, your love;
He claims you for his own;
Oh cast yourself in willing bonds
Before his heavenly throne.

It is through a saving interest in the cross of Christ, that the Christian is enabled to reach the peaceful shores of a happy eternity. Well may he be enraptured with such a theme; well may he boast in such a cross! Not one blessing flows to him but

what comes from the cross of Jesus. How innumerable, how invaluable then are the blessings which proceed from the cross of Christ! Time cannot unfold them. Eternity will roll away, in telling their numbers, and in revealing their preciousness. In heaven, we will clearly see how much we owe to the cross of Christ. There, we shall rejoice through a blessed eternity in contemplating the wonders of the cross— in meditating on redemption's glorious work.

O my soul, boast in the cross of Christ now. Rejoice in the finished work of the Lord Jesus. "He that glories, let him boast in the Lord." Let him boast in a crucified Savior- in his atoning blood- in his perfect righteousness- in his vicarious death and joyful resurrection- in his triumphant ascension to glory- in his continual intercession at God's right hand for sinners. Let the Christian boast in that cross which has opened for him the gates of heaven, and which will seat him amid the ambrosial bowers of paradise, where he shall be perpetually fanned with the cool, balmy breezes of Immanuel's land, and enjoy sweet eternal communion with God and the Lamb.

Blessed cross that crowns the sinner with such bliss! Who would not boast in such a theme? Let me exhort the followers of the Lamb to boast in the cross of Christ. Let them boast in Christ and him crucified. "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall boast." "Let all those that put their trust in you rejoice; let them ever shout for joy; let those also who love your name be joyful in you." "Let the saints be joyful in glory; let them sing aloud upon their beds."

Oh! how often has the cross inspired the Christian with bright heavenly hopes, fired his soul with a foretaste of celestial bliss, and caused his heart to shout for joy amid the sufferings of mortality. There is nothing so animating to the Christian as a sight of Calvary. How despicable does the world appear in his view, when he obtains a glimpse of that cross on which his Savior died! Everything else loses its luster when, by the eye of

faith, the cross of Christ is seen. Have you seen the glory of the cross of a crucified Jesus? Have you come within sight of Calvary and seen the blood streaming from Immanuel's veins to wash away your sins, and save your soul? Are you delighted with this way of salvation? Does the cross of Christ fill you with joy? Have you seen its attractions? Then boast in it.

Amid all the varied scenes of life- in prosperity and adversity, in health and sickness, in life and death, the cross of Christ is the Christian's boast. Sooner would the children of God lay down their lives than cease to boast in this blessed theme. And they have done so, in thousands of instances. For their attachment to the cross, "they loved not their lives unto death." How those noble martyrs whose souls ascended to glory amid billows of flame and smoke, loved the cross! How they gloried in it. From the dreadful flames of persecution, many a shout was heard on high, "God forbid that I should boast, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

In the bloody days of suffering and death, the martyr's dying song at the burning stake has been, "Welcome the cross of Christ! Welcome the cross of Christ! Welcome life everlasting." Thus sweetly sung the dying Saunders, as he kissed the stake at which he was bound. Let the cross of Christ also be your boast. Rejoice in Jesus, your Savior. "Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice!" Let Christ and his glorious work for the salvation of sinners, be your song in the house of your pilgrimage; and when earth, with all its fascinating pleasures shall have passed away like a dream, you will rejoice in God, in your Savior, through the rolling ages of a blessed eternity. Standing on "the crystal sea of glass" before the eternal throne of heaven, you will raise a never-ending song of praise to Him who sits upon the throne; whose blood redeemed you to God, and in whose cross you gloried on earth.

Blessed Jesus! enable each reader to boast in your cross. Give us all hearts of faith to receive and rest upon you. May we realize

your preciousness. May your death be our life; your cross, our boast. Refresh our souls with the provisions of the cross. Crown our heads with its blessings. Lead us through the "green pastures" and "still waters" of divine grace, and when our pilgrimage on earth is ended, when life's short tale is told, bring us to that blessed home in the world of glory, which is the purchase of your cross.

"Behold me at the bleeding cross;
Wash out, dear Lord, each guilty stain,
Oh, may I count the world but loss
Your love my great, my richest gain."

For the numberless benefits and blessings, he derives from the cross of a loving Savior, the Christian has great reason to boast in it. It is "the tree of life" to the believing soul. Its fruit is spiritual and divine. Those who taste it, never hunger, never thirst, never die. The blessings which hang clustering on this tree of life are innumerable. Eternity alone can unfold them. Here we taste but drops from the fountainhead above; there we shall forever drink of the water of life in the paradise of God. In heaven we shall enjoy all the blessings of the cross of Jesus; and there we shall eternally boast in it. A few of these rich blessings we now select—

1. THE PARDON OF SIN. This is one of the blessings of the cross. The pardon of all our sins, original and actual, was obtained by the death of Christ. "Through this man (though a crucified Savior) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." There is no remission of sins but through the cross of Christ. This expiates our guilt, and sets us free. Here God, in his unbounded love, removes our transgressions from us, as far as the east is from the west. Here he speaks in merciful tones to the sinner. This is his comfortable language through the cross of Jesus: "Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord. No matter how deep the stain of your sins, I can remove it. I can make you as clean as freshly fallen snow. Even if you are stained as red as crimson, I can make you as white as wool."

Through the blood of the cross, pardon flows to a rebel world. O to have a saving interest in that cross which confers such an invaluable blessing upon our sinful race! Well may redeemed sinners boast in salvation by Jesus. "O my soul, my guilty soul, what are all the kingdoms of the world, and the glories of them, compared with this ineffable blessing!"

2. The cross of Christ PROCURES OUR JUSTIFICATION, RECONCILES US TO GOD, AND CLOTHES US WITH THE ROBES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. The cross of Christ justifies the ungodly. The sinner is accepted in the beloved. "By him all who believe are justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses." The cross of Christ procures our peace with God. "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." He has made "peace through the blood of his cross." Through the cross of Jesus we enjoy the favor of a gracious God, which is better than life.

By the cross of Christ, the world is reconciled to God. No wonder then that the atoning sacrifice of a crucified Savior, should be all our boast. No wonder that we should "rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." The cross of Christ invests the sinner with a robe of purity, the spotless righteousness of Immanuel. All the redeemed in glory have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. In heaven all are beautified with the wedding garment. The righteousness of a crucified Jesus covers all.

"That righteousness," says the pious Doddridge, "to which, on believing on him, you will be entitled, shall not only break those chains by which sin is, as it were, dragging you at its chariot wheels with a furious pace, to eternal ruin, but it shall clothe you with the robes of salvation; shall fix you on a throne of glory, where you shall live and reign forever among the princes of heaven; shall reign in immortal beauty and joy; without one

remaining scar of divine displeasure upon you; without any single mark by which it could be known that you had ever been obnoxious to wrath and a curse, except it be an anthem of praise to "the Lamb that was slain, and has washed you from your sins in his own blood." Well may we boast in the cross on account of its righteousness.

3. The cross of Christ DELIVERS US FROM THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD. "As for me, God forbid that I should boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of that cross, my interest in this world died long ago, and the world's interest in me is also long dead."

"A sight of Jesus on the cross,
Makes all this world appear as dross."

The Christian looks beyond this dying world to his eternal home in glory. The cross of Jesus enables him to soar on high, and leave the world behind him. He looks forward to the glory that is to be revealed in him. He sets his affections on things above. Oh, keep gazing on a crucified Savior, and the world will lose its charms. "Be of good cheer," says Christ, "I have overcome the world." We also shall overcome it, through his cross. It is a sight of the cross of Christ that weans the affections from sublunary objects, and centers them on heavenly and divine things. In this wicked world, the Christian thirsts for God, and pants to reach the mansions of glory. The language of his heart in this wilderness is thus beautifully expressed by the poet—

"I thirst, but not as once I did,
The vain delights of earth to share;
Your wounds Immanuel, all forbid,
That I should seek my pleasure here.
It was the sight of your dear cross,
First weaned my soul from earthly things,
And taught me to esteem as dross,
The mirth of fools, and pomp of kings.
I want that grace that springs from you,

That quickens all things where it flows;
And made a wretched thorn, like me,
Bloom as the myrtle, or the rose.
Dear fountain of delight unknown!
No longer sink below the brim;
But overflow, and pour me down
A living, and life-giving stream!"

4. Another blessing of the cross of Christ is the VICTORY OVER DEATH AND THE GLOOMY GRAVE. Death is the last enemy that the Christian has to encounter. But the cross of Christ crowns him with complete victory. It disarms death of its sting, and the grave of its terrors. When the swellings of Jordan roll over the believer's soul, the cross of Christ sustains him. When amid the gloom and darkness of death, a celestial beam from the cross of Christ often shines to guide the Christian pilgrim through the "valley and shadow of death," and to cheer his drooping soul with a prospect of the glories of the heavenly Canaan. The believer is then enabled to exclaim, "Even when I walk through the dark valley of death, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me."

It is the cross of Christ that puts this song in the believer's lips. It is Jesus, the sinner's Friend, that smoothes the passage to the tomb- to the realms of everlasting day. Precious, crucified Savior!

"Jesus can make a dying bed,
Feel soft as downy pillows are.
While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

The cross of Christ enables the dying Christian to come off the stage of mortal conflict, shouting with Payson, "Victory, victory! Peace, peace!" or with Simpson, "O death! where is your sting? What are you? I am not afraid of you. You are a vanquished

enemy through the blood of the cross!" The cross of Christ converts the 'king of terrors' into a messenger of peace. Now it is gain for the believer to die. When the Christian closes his eyes in death, it is only "to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." The cross of Christ enables the believer to finish his Christian warfare with this triumphant song, "O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

"Jesus, the vision of your face,
Has overpowering charms;
Scarce shall I feel death's cold embrace,
If Christ be in my arms."

5. The cross of Christ OPENS THE PORTALS OF GLORY FOR OUR RECEPTION. It admits us into the presence of God and crowns us with unutterable bliss. There is no way to heaven but through the cross of Christ. When the Cross of Christ was erected on earth, the gates of paradise were opened above. This leads the sinner to glory. The precious blood of Jesus that was poured out upon the cross, is the only procuring cause of heavenly felicity. Jesus died to make us happy- eternally happy. This is the blessed consummation of all his sufferings and death. This was the reason why he groaned in Gethsemane; why he bled and died on Calvary. It was to make you shine eternally in mansions of glory. This is the grand design of the preaching of the cross. It points sinners to a glorious immortality. This is one of its ineffable blessings. Salvation is by the blessed cross of Christ.

What tongue can express the felicity of the redeemed before the throne of God! What heart can conceive the unspeakable bliss that the ransomed sinner shall enjoy, to all eternity, through the cross of Christ! "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him." "In your presence," cries the Psalmist, "is fullness of joy; at your right hand there are pleasures for evermore." How different is

earth from heaven!

"Here griefs, and cares, and pains,
And fears, distress us sore.
But there eternal pleasure reigns,
And we shall weep no more."

In heaven, the redeemed shall have fullness of joy. What inexpressible joy must fill their souls when they shall see the King of Heaven in his beauty, when Jesus shall dwell among them forever and ever! Then shall they be ever, ever with the Lord. "I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, 'Look, the home of God is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will remove all of their sorrows, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. For the old world and its evils are gone forever.'"

Eternal felicity crowns all the inhabitants of heaven. Eternal glory shines around all the mansions of the blessed. The celestial city is illuminated by the glory of God and the Lamb. Of the glory of that heavenly city, in which the saints are to spend ceaseless ages, the following lively description, founded on the word of God, is furnished by the immortal Bunyan— "Now just as the gates were opened to let in the men, I looked in after them, and behold the city shone like the sun; the streets also were paved with gold, and in them walked many men with crowns on their heads, palms in their hands, and golden harps to sing praises with. There were also of those who had wings; and they answered one another without intermission, saying, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord. And after that, they shut up the gates; which, when I had seen, I wished myself among them."

Those happy souls, who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and who are on this account presented faultless before the throne of God, shall "serve him day and night in his Temple. And he who sits on the

throne will live among them and shelter them. They will never again be hungry or thirsty, and they will be fully protected from the scorching noontime heat. For the Lamb who stands in front of the throne will be their Shepherd. He will lead them to the springs of life-giving water. And God will wipe away all their tears." Who would not glory in the cross of Christ, when it confers so many rich, eternal blessings upon a sinful world!

In short, all the blessings that are bestowed upon the Christian in his pilgrimage through the wilderness, until he comes to the heavenly Canaan, and all the felicity he enjoys in that world of glory, flow directly from the cross of Christ. From the cross of Christ, he derives ample provision by the way, and when he reaches the mansions of glory, he eats of the fruit of the "tree of life" in the midst of the paradise of God. Here,

"Jesus the bread of life is given,
To be our daily food;
We drink a wondrous stream from heaven,
'Tis water, wine and blood.
Lord, tis enough, I ask no more,
These blessings are divine;
I envy not the worldling's store,
If Christ and heaven are mine."

Blessed cross of a crucified Savior, that brings such glory to God,
and such peace and good-will to man!

In conclusion, let me exhort you to boast in the cross of Christ, through life and all its vicissitudes; and when you stand on the verge of the grave, when you feel the chilly embrace of the last enemy; yes, when death shall strike its darts at your vitals, adhering to the banner of the cross, you will be enabled boldly and triumphantly to exclaim, "O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?"

When you arise to immortality amid the chaos of a crumbling world, while others, in despair, are calling upon the mountains

and the rocks to fall on them and hide them from Him that sits on the throne, then, dear believer in Jesus, you will glory in the cross of Christ. As you enter on the saint's everlasting rest, you will triumph in the cross of Jesus; and as you sail on the vast unbounded ocean of eternal blessedness, this shall ever be the unchanging language of your enraptured soul, "As for me, God forbid that I should boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of that cross, my interest in this world died long ago, and the world's interest in me is also long dead." Galatians 6:14

CONCLUSION.

SOLEMN APPEAL TO THE READER

Dear reader, allow the writer, before he lays aside his pen, perhaps never to resume it, to beseech you to be reconciled to God- to embrace Christ and Him crucified, as your only hope. You have a precious immortal soul to be saved or lost; a soul, the value of which exceeds in amount all the wealth of the globe, yes of thousands of worlds.

The redemption of the soul is precious. "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" The soul is destined to live through eternity in the bright realms of eternal glory, or in the dismal regions of eternal misery and despair. O did you ever seriously think of that solemn word, Eternity! Eternity! Forever! Forever! Think of it now. "But who can measure eternity? Compared with whose everlasting lines, myriads of years are infinitely less than atoms floating in the midday sun! All thought is lost in its immensity, and swallowed up in its fathomless abyss."

Eternity is yours- is mine. You shall shortly enter upon an eternity of boundless bliss or unspeakable misery. The trumpet of God shall soon summon a sleeping world to judgment. The

eternal destinies of all men shall soon be irrecoverably fixed. The righteous shall be welcomed to the kingdom of heaven, where they shall shine as the sun forever and ever! But Oh! how my soul trembles to think of the awful doom that shall be pronounced upon the wicked, on those who have rejected a crucified Savior, "Depart from me, you cursed ones, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

Did you ever ask. that dreadful question, "Who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Of the inhabitants of the pit it is said, that "their worm does not die", and there "the fire is not quenched." But, blessed be God, there is a way; the only way to escape the wrath to come. This way is through Christ and him crucified. "God has not appointed us to wrath; but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." Then flee to Christ, and you shall be saved with an everlasting salvation.

You have a loving Savior. In him compassions flow. Rest in his love; rely on his atonement, and glory in his cross. Our parting advice to you is, to take refuge in Christ and him Crucified; and when the last awful storm arise shall arise to crush an ungodly world, it will on waft you into the harbor of eternal glory. To the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ we commend you. In his hands we leave you.

May God grant that both reader and writer may meet that world of glory, where there is no more sin, nor sorrow, nor pain, nor death; and where God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes. Blessed with a saving interest in Christ and him crucified, and cheered with the hope of a glorious immortality, we will approach our graves in peace; "Like one that draws the drapery of his couch about him, and lies down to pleasant dreams," and at that solemn period, the resurrection of a sleeping world, we shall arise in a glorious immortal form, free from all corroding disease or painful death, and surrounded with the ineffable glories of the Deity, we shall engage in the sublime raptures of

celestial bliss, bathe in that pure river of the water of life that flows through the paradise of God, and drink of those perennial streams which issue from the fountain of life; while eternal ages roll away.

"In cheerful hope my soul relies,
Blessed Savior, on your dying love,
Until I reach the blissful skies,
And strike the golden harps above."

THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM, A GUIDE TO THE SAVIOR

**by David Harsha, Argyle, New York;
Sept. 15, 1863.**

PREFACE

The grand design of this volume is to exhibit, under the beautiful symbol of the Star of Bethlehem, the Savior in His personal and mediatorial glory; and to guide the reader to Him as the Lamb of God, who alone can take away sin. While dwelling on the beauty, excellence, and amiableness of Christ, His great atoning work on Calvary has been solicitously held forth, in its all-sufficiency, and as the only hope of a lost world as bringing glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men. It has been the author's aim to present the subject in a scriptural point of view, carefully regarding the divine declaration- 'To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.' It is believed that the

doctrines contained in the work are in accordance with the teachings of divine revelation; and that they will, consequently be cordially received by Christians of all evangelical denominations- by all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

May the Holy Spirit bring the truths presented in the following pages home to the heart of every reader, with saving power; and make this volume, like the star of Bethlehem, the means of guiding weary souls to the meek and lowly Savior. 'May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in Your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.'

O You, Who were in Bethlehem born,
The Man of Sorrows and of scorn,
Jesus, the sinner's Friend!
O You, enthroned in filial right,
Above all creature-power and might;
Whose kingdom shall extend,
Until earth, like heaven, Your name shall fill,
And men, like angels, do Your will:
You, whom I love, but cannot see,
My Lord, my God! look down on me;
My low affections raise;
The spirit of liberty impart,
Enlarge my soul, inflame my heart,
And, while I spread Your praise,
Shine on my path, in mercy shine,
Prosper my work, and make it Your.

Chapter 1: THE SAVIOR THE BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR, THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

Christ, the Lamb, in radiance sits enthroned,
The lively Image of His Father's grace.
O Flower of love! O glorious Morning Star!
O Sun of righteousness, whose healing wings
Brought life, and peace, and mercy from afar!
From You, the light, your beaming Fountain, springs,
That guides poor mortals in their weary way,
through black affliction's night, to pleasure's endless day. James
Scott.

Life is a journey; and all men are travelers. The race of human existence is momentary; but the journey beyond the shores of time never ends. In the glorious realms of felicity, or in the dark regions of woe, we will move onwards through the ceaseless ages of eternity. The future state of mankind is vividly represented in the Holy Scriptures; and we are there told how to gain the shores of immortal bliss, and to shun those of unending misery. The Word of God, in the plainest terms, sets before us LIFE and DEATH, and calls upon us, in strong and persuasive language, to choose life; while, at the same time, it admonishes us of our danger in continuing to disregard the invitations of mercy, and living in rebellion against Heaven. It becomes, then, a matter of the highest importance how we pass the brief period allotted to us on earth; for our life here is only preparatory to an existence equal with the ages of eternity. It is a serious thought, that the character we bear this side the grave we will sustain in the world to come. 'The character fixed through life adheres to us hereafter- the moral lineaments engraven here will retain the very same impress in our future state. There will be the

reconstruction of the body, but the spirit will be the same.'
(Chalmers)

At death, our state will be unalterably fixed; -and there is but a step between us and death- between us and the day of judgment. The time is just at hand when amid the solemnities of the last great day it shall be proclaimed from the glorious throne of Emmanuel; 'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still.'

Viewed in this light how important is the journey of human life! What weighty interests are connected with our fleeting moments! What inexpressible joys or sorrows await us in the eternal world as the harvest of a pious or ungodly life! 'Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.' 'The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.'

Oh, how carefully should we attend to the momentous concerns of our immortal souls while journeying to the tomb- to eternity! If we neglect these concerns, or make a false step in this all-important journey, how fearful will be our final doom! But if we walk in that path which leads to mansions of glory in the skies, how blessed will be our state through all the countless ages of vast eternity!

'Important journey! awful view!
How great the change! the scenes how new!
The golden gates of heaven displayed,
Or hell's fierce flames, and gloomy shade!
'Awake, my soul; your way prepare,
And lose in this each mortal care;
With steady feet that path be trod,
Which through the grave conducts to God.'

With every child of earth the grand inquiry should be, Is my pathway through life irradiated by heavenly beams? Have I the light of life? Do I enjoy the favor of God? Have I known the way of peace? Has the day dawned, and the day-star risen in my soul? Is the Bright Morning Star guiding me to the peaceful shores of a better world- a world of eternal pleasures- a Paradise of ineffable splendors- a kingdom of unfading beauty- a city of everlasting habitation? Or, is all dark and dreary around this earthly scene? Are destruction and misery in my way? Is there no fear of God before my eyes? Is my soul overspread with the gloom of sin, unbelief, and sorrow? Do I live without God, and without hope in the world?

Here let us reflect on the condition of man, before spiritual light breaks forth upon his soul- before he sees by the eye of faith, the bright and morning Star heralding the opening of an eternal day of light and glory, and guiding him through the, night of sin and sorrow to the rest and felicity of heaven, to that land where no natural sun shines, whose everlasting light is the glory of God and the Lamb.

Before conversion, man is like a traveler in a 'black and dark night,' pursuing his journey- over unknown and dangerous paths, without a single guide to conduct him to the end of his journey, to the beloved home of peace and happiness. Like the poor bewildered traveler, the sinner, in his natural state, rushes on, regardless of the impending danger, over the ruinous ways of sin and folly, with no light from heaven to point him to the happy home of immortality in the skies.

Our blessed Savior said, 'He that walks in darkness, knows not where he goes.' It is truly sad to reflect on the courses of man in his unconverted state. On what a frightful precipice does he stand, ready to fall into the abyss of unending woe! Respecting every sinner reclaimed by divine grace, may we not well inquire with the prophet: 'Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?'

Look again at the unrenewed state of man. It is one of fearful moral obscurity. It is the night of sin, in which the 'power of darkness' reigns with unlimited control in the heart. In this condition, the eye is closed in spiritual slumbers; the soul is involved in worse than Egyptian darkness; not a single ray of celestial light shines within; the understanding is darkened, all is impenetrable gloom. 'Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them; because of the blindness of their heart.' 'They grope in the dark, without light.' 'Yes, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine. The light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his candle shall be put out with him.'

The soul of the unrighteous is not only involved in moral gloom, but is also destitute of spiritual life and action. And in view of this melancholy fact, such a one is thus addressed by Him who 'holds the seven stars in his right hand,' and with whom is the fountain of life: 'Awake, you that sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light.'

The man in whose heart the rays of divine truth have never yet darted, likewise resembles the mariner on a violent sea, when the heavens are overspread with dark, angry clouds, when neither sun nor stars appear, and when a furious storm is ready to burst upon him. How alarming his situation! He is violently tossed upon the raging sea. The very next wave may overwhelm him. Every moment he is in danger of being lost. Such is the condition of the sinner- of the man for whom the cross of Christ has no attractions. As he sails on life's troubled ocean, he is ever exposed to the violent storms of divine wrath; his soul is in danger of being lost forever! 'The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. 'There is no peace, says my God, to the wicked.'

'Sinner! rouse from your sleep,
Wake, and over your folly weep;

Raise your spirit dark and dead,
Jesus waits his light to shed.
Wake from sleep, arise from death,
See the bright and living path;
Watchful tread that path, be wise;
Leave your folly, seek the skies.
Leave your folly, cease from crime,
From this hour redeem your time;
Life secure without delay,
Evil is the mortal day.
Do not be blind and foolish still,
Called of Jesus, learn his will;
Jesus calls from death and night,
Jesus waits to shed his light.'

Having adverted to the dark side of man's moral condition by nature, let us now turn to the pleasing views which present themselves to the eye at that happy hour when the Sun of Righteousness rises in the soul; when, relying on Jesus for the blessings of grace and glory, the Christian pilgrim begins his journey to the heavenly Canaan. When the grace of God is communicated to the soul, a great moral transformation is at once accomplished- a transformation more important than the creation of a world. This change is effected by the renewing of the mind through the power of the Holy Spirit. 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit.' 'Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.'

How wonderful and mysterious this change! 'The wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell where it comes, and where it goes: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.' He who has become the subject of regenerating grace, may truly say with the blind man whom the Savior restored to sight: 'One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.' He has become a new creature in Christ- 'Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.' Now is the divine

image stamped anew in the soul; now does the true Light shine; now is Jesus precious. 'Unto you therefore who believe, He is precious.' Now does the newly regenerated man obtain a glimpse of the matchless love, excellency, and glory of Him who came from God, the Friend of sinners, the Man of sorrows, the immaculate Victim of Calvary. Now is the Savior exalted far higher in his estimation than any earthly object, so that in the strong and beautiful language of faith he is ready to exclaim, 'Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.' 'My beloved is mine, and I am His.' He is 'the chief among ten thousand; yes, He is altogether lovely.' The desires of his soul are now continually directed towards the blessed Jesus.

'The desire of our soul is to Your name, and to the remembrance of You. With my soul have I desired You in the night; yes, with my spirit within me will I seek You early.' The soul now illuminated -with rays of heavenly light, is filled with joy and peace in believing; and its progress in the divine life is like that of the shining light, which shines more and more unto the perfect day. But look again at the light which beams upon the soul in regeneration; and mark the happy effect it produces. As in the creation of the natural world light was the first thing formed, so in the moral world it is the first effect of divine power in the regeneration of the soul. 'Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun.'

What a marvelous light is unfolded to the view of him whose heart is reached by the glorious beams of the Sun of Righteousness! The eyes of his understanding are enlightened to discern spiritual and eternal objects. To him the heavens are opened; and by the eye of faith, he beholds the King in His beauty, and the glories of the land of promise. On the wings of faith, he is borne away to the realms of day; while earth, with its transitory scene, vanishes before him, and vast eternity, with its untold and unutterable joys, fills his sight. He hears the songs of

angels as they touch their golden harps, and sing with loud voices- 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.' He hears the sweet notes of the redeemed before the throne, as they all unite in the wondrous new song of redemption- 'Unto Him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever.'

The glories of Emmanuel and the felicities of the saints' everlasting rest, are themes which daily engage the noblest powers of his mind in holy meditation- which afford him rapturous pleasure- which fill his soul with wonder and admiration. He is now a spiritually-minded man, guided by the star of Bethlehem to the 'meek and lowly' Savior, risen with Jesus to a new life of holiness, with, all his affections clustering around the glorified Redeemer- the Lamb in the midst of the throne- now become his 'boast through time,' Yes, and his 'bliss through eternity.' Oh, how delightful and transporting are the views of the soul enlightened by the Star of morning!

How widely different is the condition of man by nature and grace! Of the latter, the Scriptures declare; 'You were once darkness, but now are you light in the Lord.' 'For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.' 'But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that you should show forth the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.' Those who are delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, will often be favored, while on earth, with glimpses of heavenly glory, which may truly be called a, 'MARVELOUS LIGHT.' 'Such people,' says Leighton, 'see as it were a new world, and in it such wonders of the rich grace and love of God, such matchless worth in Jesus Christ, the Sun of righteousness,

that their souls are filled with admiration. And if this light of grace be so marvelous, how much more marvelous shall the light of glory be in which it ends!

He who has been brought from the darkness of depraved nature into the marvelous light of divine grace, may truly say, as he gazes on the rising splendors of the Sun of Righteousness: 'The darkness is past, and the true light now shines.' Yes, 'Tis past- the dreadful stormy night
Is gone, with all its fears!
And now I see returning light,
The Lord my Sun appears.'

The morning Star has now risen in his soul; and this Star is the blessed Savior, whose brightness in the eye of the believer eclipses all the splendors of the natural world; whose glory will be seen and admired by saints and angels to all eternity.

And here we would more fully contemplate the Lord Jesus in the character in which He is represented in the title of this introductory essay, as the bright and morning Star, the Sun of Righteousness, and Light of the world. But who can describe His beauty and excellency? Ah, what tongue can express His matchless loving-kindness to the sons of men? Oh, to be with Him, to be like Him, to see Him as He is in His heavenly kingdom- His countenance shining as the Sun- His brow encircled with 'many crowns'- His apparel all-glorious! Then shall we be able to celebrate in higher, sweeter tones, the praises of Him who, in unspeakable love and amazing condescension, deigned to assume human nature- to visit earth with tidings of immortality- to pour out His precious blood on Calvary for our redemption!

'Soon shall I pass the gloomy valley;
Soon all my mortal powers shall fail;
Oh, may my last expiring breath,
His loving-kindness sing in death!

Then let me mount and soar away
To the bright world of endless day:
And sing with rapture and surprise,
His loving-kindness in the skies.

UNDER THE BEAUTIFUL EMBLEM OF A STAR IS THE SAVIOR REPRESENTED IN THE SCRIPTURES. Balaam, in prophetic vision, exclaims: 'There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel;' and Zacharias, filled with the Holy Spirit, utters these glowing words when he prophesies of Jesus; 'The rising sun from on high has visited us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.' And as illustrative of the same figure, how beautiful and striking is the language of the Savior Himself, when revealing a glimpse of His heavenly glory to the apostle John, in the isle of Patmos: 'I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star.' And again; 'I will give him the morning Star.'

Here our Lord and Savior not only exhibits His own personal excellence- under this most appropriate symbol, but also holds out the promise of Himself and all His unsearchable riches to every one that overcomes, and keeps His works unto the end. How should such a glorious promise confirm our faith in God, enlarge our desires after spiritual things, enrapture our souls in holy thought, and make us ever grateful for those blessings, whose value eternity alone can unfold!

The Savior may be compared to a star because of the light, and grace, and glory which are in Him; and because He communicates these blessings to all that come to Him for illumination, wisdom, and instruction. It has pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell. Grace is abundantly poured into His lips; and His glory is as of the only begotten of the Father. With Him is the fountain of life; and in His light shall we see light. And from Him flow all the rich blessings of spiritual light and life, grace and glory- 'The law was given by

Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.' 'The grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ.' 'The Lord will give grace and glory.' Oh, what inestimable favors are these! The blessings of grace here, and glory hereafter- all that the soul desires or can contain!

The Savior may also be represented as a star because of His mediatorial glory- a glory which will ever excite the admiration of the redeemed in heaven, and with which they shall be crowned through all the ages of immortality. How cheering to the true believer is the declaration of a compassionate Redeemer- 'The glory which you gave Me, I have given them.' Transformed into the glorious image of Christ, the bright and morning Star, all the redeemed will at last shine as the brightness of the firmament- as the stars forever and ever. Oh, how glorious is Jesus, our Star, our Sun and Shield! How free, how immense the riches of His grace! 'O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusts in you.'

Is he a Star? He breaks the night,
Piercing the shades with dawning light;
I know His glories from afar,
I know THE BRIGHT, THE MORNING STAR.
'Is He a Sun? His beams are grace;
His course is joy and righteousness;
Nations rejoice when He appears
To chase the clouds and dry their tears.'

The Savior may be compared to a BRIGHT Star, because He is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person. Who can conceive the transcendent brightness of Jesus in His person, and in His work? 'You are fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into your lips: therefore God has blessed you forever.' The Creator of the universe, the appointed Heir of all things, He is the most glorious and illustrious of all beings. 'All kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him.' 'The Lord of hosts is His name; and

your Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall He be called.'

He may be compared to a MORNING Star, because his manifestation in the flesh foretold the close of a long and dreary night, and ushered the dawn of a brighter day than had ever before gladdened this sin-stained earth- the day of gospel light and peace- the day of heavenly glory and immortality. When the Son of God appeared on earth in the humble garb of humanity, when this glorious 'day-spring from on high' was seen in our horizon, the shadows fled away; the night of Jewish darkness was at its close; the day of Christian splendor opened; light beamed upon the nations sitting in darkness, and in the shadow of death; a new and living way back to a Paradise lost was opened; while, at the same time, all heaven rejoiced, and angels sang- 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.'

Oh, how glorious did this morning Star, this Harbinger of eternal day appear, rising over the plains of Bethlehem, amid the songs and joyful acclamations of angels, and the worship and admiration of men, conducting the wandering sinner through earth's dark and stormy night, to heaven's bright and peaceful shore!

'Behold the morning Star arise,
You that in darkness sit
He marks the path that leads to peace,
And guides our doubtful feet'

THE SAVIOR IS CALLED THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

'Unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings.' Most appropriately may He be called a Sun on account of His transcendent brightness, purity, majesty, and worth; and because he dispels all moral darkness, and gives light, and heat, and animation to all upon whom He graciously shines. But He is a Sun that infinitely surpasses all

created light. His glory suffers no eclipse. His brightness is essentially His own. Oh, if we have obtained but a glimpse of the glory of Emmanuel, how dim, in our view, will appear all the transient splendors of earth! How will we rise above these temporal things, and long for the beatific vision of the King in His beauty on His heavenly throne- of the Sun of Righteousness, shining in unclouded splendor in those new heavens, wherein dwells righteousness!

As the sun is a glorious luminary, so is Jesus. In His human and divine nature, and in all His works, he is 'glorious in holiness,' 'You are glorious and more majestic than the everlasting mountains!' And blessed be His glorious name forever: and let the whole earth be filled with His glory.'

He is also most pure; 'a lamb without blemish and without spot,' 'who did no sin, neither was deceit found in His mouth.' 'Every word of God is pure.' From Him alone proceeds the pure river of the water of life. How pure indeed is that Savior who has charged His angels with folly- in whose sight the 'stars are not pure!' 'You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity.'

He is, moreover, invested with royal majesty; and His worth cannot be declared. 'He is clothed with majesty.' 'O Lord, our Lord, the majesty of your name fills the earth! Your glory is higher than the heavens.' How most aptly, then, may the Savior be compared to the sun for His brightness, purity, majesty, and worth!

Now, look at the great work which the Sun of Righteousness accomplishes when He rises in the soul, and see how appropriate and beautiful is the emblem. He scatters the darkness of the night of sin and sorrow, and brings the day of grace, and joy, and eternal felicity. Yes, when Christ is formed in the soul, the hope of glory, light breaks through the clouds; the shadows flee away; a morning, clear, bright, and beautiful, dawns upon the moral vision- a morning without clouds- a day

which will never end; for where this Sun shines there shall be no night.

Sun of my soul! Oh Savior dear,
It is not night if You be near;
Oh! may no earth-born cloud arise,
To hide You from Your servant's eyes!

Christ, our Sun, communicates the choicest blessings to the moral world. Under His genial and fertilizing influence, the Church is enabled to put on her beautiful garments, and to shine in the perfection of beauty; and the very desert is made to rejoice and blossom as the rose. "All darkness flies away before Him: it was His arising in the world that made the day break and the shadows fly away. The types and shadows of the law were then abolished. It was His light that dispelled the mists of ignorance and idolatry, and He alone delivers the soul from the night of sin and misery produced by it. All the stars, and the moon with them, cannot make it day in the world; this is the sun's prerogative: nor can nature's highest light, the most refined society and morality, make it day in the soul; for this is Christ's jurisdiction.' (Leighton).

As the Sun of Righteousness, He gives light to all nations on whom He has risen with healing in His wings; and His glory will soon fill the whole world. His beams are circumscribed by no limits, nor are they confined to any particular nation, class, or denomination of men. Jesus is exhibited as the light of the Gentiles and the glory of His people Israel. 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus.' 'For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we are Jews or Gentiles, whether we are bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one spirit.' 'There is one body, and one spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.' Oh, how comprehensive and inspiring are these scriptural declarations respecting our Lord

Jesus Christ, whose glory will yet make the world as the garden of the Lord, and be the everlasting light of the saints above!

As the light which is emitted from the sun is free to all the nations of earth, so the light which emanates from Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, is free to all men, even the most depraved, those whom the Scriptures designate as 'the stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness.' The invitation is to all, without exception; 'Come, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.' How free, rich, and amazing is the grace of God, which brings salvation to lost and wretched man! Oh, let us prize this grace more highly.

As but one sun gives light to the world, so there is but one Sun of Righteousness; one Son of God; one Mediator between God and man; one Lord and Head of the Church. Christ is set forth as the only Savior of a lost world. Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.' Here is the only method of mercy- the only refuge from the storm of divine wrath. Then come to the Savior; build your hopes of immortal felicity on this only foundation- this Rock of Ages. See Him, who only has brought life and immortality to light, waiting to receive you. Take refuge in the arms of His mercy, and your guilt will be cancelled, the sting of death removed, and your soul eternally saved.

Who would not long for the revelation of Jesus in the soul, when His glories are so great, and the blessings He confers so immense! Oh, may the Sun of Righteousness rise in our souls with healing in His wings, shedding forth His marvelous light, and preparing us for beholding His brightness in that world of blissful immortality beyond the stars.

Christ, whose glory fills the skies,
Christ the true, the only light,

Sun of Righteousness, arise,
Triumph over the shades of night;
Day spring front on high, be near,
Day star in my heart appear.
Dark and cheerless is the morn,
Unaccompanied by Thee;
Joyless is the day's return,
Until Your mercy's beams I see;
Until your inward light impart,
Gladden my eyes and warm my heart.
Visit then this soul of mine,
Pierce the gloom of sin and grief,
Fill me, radiancy divine,
Scatter all my unbelief;
More and more yourself display,
Shining to the perfect day.'

THE SAVIOR IS REPRESENTED AS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. John describes Him as 'the true Light, which enlightens every man that comes into the world;' and this is His own declaration, 'I am the light of the world; he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.' And again, 'I have come as a light to shine in this dark world, so that all who put their trust in me will no longer remain in the darkness.' These words admirably express the excellency and glory of His character. It has been well remarked, that 'among all created excellences none can be borrowed more fitly representing Christ than that of light.'

He is called a Light because He is the author of the light of nature and grace; of eternal glory and felicity. It is He who gives light to those sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, revealing in the clearest manner the divine will concerning our duty to God and man. 'He reveals the deep and secret things: he knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him.' He discovers deep things out of darkness, and brings out to light the shadow of death.' The light which comes from Him, who is

the bright and morning Star, guides and cheers the Christian pilgrim on the troubled ocean of life, and conducts him in safety to the haven of heavenly rest, where all are forever sheltered from the storm and the tempest.

'Fair morning Star arise,
With living glories bright,
And pour on these awakening eyes,
A flood of sacred light.
The horrid gloom is fled,
Pierced by Your beauteous ray;
Shine, and our wandering footsteps lead
To everlasting day.'

It is the divine radiance from Him who came to save, which lights up the gloomy valley of death, dispels the fearful darkness of the grave, and causes the departing believer to break forth in the song of triumph- 'O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?' Yes, it is this glorious morning Star that enlightens and smooths the passage to the dark and silent grave: The Star that ever burns
Upon the tomb's dark confines,
still to cheer The soul, departing.'

It was the Father's promise, when He would send His only begotten Son into the world as its Savior, to give Him for 'a light of the gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and those who sit in darkness out of the prison-house;' and when the aged Simeon held the 'Child Jesus' in his arms he uttered this fervent prayer; 'Lord, now let you your servant depart in peace, according to your word: for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared before the face of all people; a light to reveal God to the nations.' When Isaiah, rapt in prophetic vision, sees Christ as the light of the church and the world, how sublime is the eloquence that thrills his heart and bursts from his lips! 'Arise, shine! Let your light shine for all the nations to see! For the glory of the Lord is shining upon you. Darkness as black as night will cover all the

nations of the earth, but the glory of the Lord will shine over you. All nations will come to your light. Mighty kings will come to see your radiance.'

O true Light, which enlightens every man that comes into the world, glorious Sun of Righteousness still shine, dispelling all moral darkness, until every nation beholds Your brightness-until every land rejoices in your life-giving beams.

O Sun of glorious splendor,
Shine with healing in your wing;
Chase away these shades of darkness,
Holy light and comfort bring.

Let the heralds of salvation
Round the earth with joy proclaim,
Death and hell are spoiled and vanquished
Through the great Emmanuel's name.
Take Your power, Almighty Savior,
Claim the nations for Your own;
Reign, O Lord of Life and glory,
Until each heart becomes Your throne.

The Savior is not only the Light of the world, but also of heaven; the light of that city which has 'no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it,' whose light is 'like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.' In the New Jerusalem above, the Sun of Righteousness will ever shine in midday splendor, while the nations of the saved will walk in His light through ceaseless ages. In that celestial world, all created light is unnecessary on account of the surpassing brightness of the Savior's glorified Person; and in the light which comes from Him will the redeemed forever behold the face of God with inexpressible joy. Happy is he who can say with the psalmist: 'As for me, I will behold your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake, with your likeness.'

With what emotions of wonder, admiration, and gratitude, should we contemplate the Savior as THE BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR, and LIGHT of the world! Blessed be God, that

He has given us such a glorious Light to guide us through the dark and bewildering scenes of mortality to a happy land beyond the river of death- a land where grows the fruitful tree of life, and where flow those crystal streams whose fountain-head is at the throne of the Eternal! It is a thought which should ever rejoice our hearts, that Jesus has appeared in the world as the daystar, the Sun of Righteousness, whose healing beams are bringing life, and peace, and immortality to countless millions once in spiritual darkness and death.

Oh, how great are the blessings which this true Light confers on the moral world- infinitely greater than those which the sun in yonder heavens pours upon earth. If the Sun of Righteousness had not risen upon us, as the day-spring to guide our feet in the path of peace, we would have groped in 'the dark without light' through our earthly course, and been finally doomed to the 'blackness of darkness,' through those vast ages which roll beyond the grave. Oh, then, let us be grateful for this Light which shines from heaven to guide our erring feet to a blissful shore. And let us earnestly endeavor to walk in the light of the Lord Jesus, and we will find that all His ways are ways of pleasantness, and that all his paths are peace; that, at the end of our pilgrimage, glory, honor, and immortality will be our reward in heaven.

The divine injunction is, 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.' 'Walk as children of light.' 'The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.' 'You are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.' If we walk as the children of light and of the day, we will be adorned with the resplendent robes of the Redeemer's righteousness, while journeying homeward and heavenward, until, translated to that brighter world, we shall shine with the reflected glory of Emmanuel, as the stars forever

and ever.

'Walk in the light! and you shall own
Your darkness passed away,
Because that light has on you shone,
In which is perfect day.
Walk in the light! and even the tomb
No fearful shade shall wear;
Glory shall chase away its gloom,
For Christ has conquered there;
Walk in the light! and you shall be
A path, though thorny, bright;
For God, by grace, shall dwell in you,
And God himself is light!'

Christians are called the light of the world; and the source where they derive their brightness is from the Star of Jacob- the Star of Morning-

'There, as to their Fountain, other stars
Repairing, in their golden urns draw light.'

The church must first be enlightened by Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, and then she will shine 'fair as the moon, and clear as the sun.' Then let all come to the Savior for spiritual light and life, and all the joys of salvation. If we remain at a distance from Him, if we listen not to His compassionate voice, if we refuse His invitation of mercy, if we quench His Holy Spirit, we will wander on in the 'darkness and blindness' of our minds until the shadows of an eternal night gather around us, until our immortal souls are forever beyond the reach of mercy. Oh, let us come at once to Jesus, who is waiting to shed His light upon us. Let us look to Him; and celestial radiance will beam forth upon our souls. 'They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed.' 'While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light.'

And while we linger on the shores of time, let our earnest

petition be that of the Psalmist- 'Lord, lift up the light of Your countenance upon us.' 'God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause His face to shine upon us.' In the expressive and appropriate words of Jonathan Edwards, 'This light gives a view of those things that are immensely the most exquisitely beautiful, and capable of delighting the eye of the understanding. This spiritual light is the dawning of the light of glory in the heart. There is nothing so powerful as this to support people in affliction, and to give the mind peace and brightness in this stormy and dark world.'

Christian pilgrim, let your thoughts daily dwell on the majesty, purity, excellence, and glory of Jesus, our Morning Star. As you gaze on the starry sky in the silent hour of night, and contemplate the magnificence of its glowing luminaries, oh, think of the Star of Jacob- of Him whose glory shines from heaven to earth- of Him who has come from mansions beyond the skies to these dark abodes of sin and death, that He might conduct us to the light and blessedness of heaven. Think of Him as the Babe of Bethlehem, as the Man of sorrows, agonizing in the garden, and expiring on the cross, that you might reach the skies and shine as a star in glory. Think of Him as bursting the bands of death; as ascending triumphantly to heaven; and as interceding for you in the presence of God. Think of Him as the brightness of the Father's glory, full of grace and truth, ready to bring peace and joy, grace and glory, to the weary spirit thirsting after happiness. Think of His amazing grace in undertaking and accomplishing your salvation- of the many mansions of felicity He has prepared for you above- of the unspeakable joys which await you in the skies.

O bright and morning Star, O glorious Sun of Righteousness, in Your boundless compassion, rise in my soul with healing in Your wings. Oh, shine as the day-star in my heart, to give me the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. Dispel the gloom of sin, and sorrow, and unbelief; and give inward light, and joy, and peace. 'Let your mercies come also unto me, O Lord, even your

salvation, according to your word.' Cheer my heart with the genial power of your love; elevate my affections from earthly to heavenly objects; and fill my whole soul with Your fullness. Be with me through all the changing and trying events of life's pilgrimage; in weakness be my strength; in sorrow my joy; in adversity my solace. When I sit in darkness, be a light unto me; when I descend into the valley of the shadow of death to close my eyes on all the scenes of earth, may all around me be bright and serene; and when the last breath is drawn and the last mortal struggle is over, oh, may some ministering spirit from the skies be sent to conduct my departing soul home to the far-off city of rest and felicity; then be my everlasting light, my glory.

O blessed Jesus, hasten that long wished-for day of heavenly beatitude, when your servants shall enter into those mansions of light, where their sun shall no more go down; when they shall be with You, where You are; beholding with unceasing admiration Your untold glories; when, clothed with the robes of immortality, they shall walk in Your light through the celestial realms, shining 'all glorious within;' when they shall be enraptured with the contemplation of Your finished work on Calvary, tuning on golden harps Your praise; and when, amid the unutterable splendors of Paradise, You shall conduct them to living fountains of waters, perennial streams of joy, boundless oceans of felicity. Speedily dawn, O happy day, upon my soul and the world. Let Your glory, O Emmanuel, soon fill the whole earth, until all the redeemed are gathered home to be forever with You. Then shall a multitude which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, behold with admiring eyes the ineffable glories of the MORNING STAR; then shall You, blessed Jesus, be eternally glorified in your saints, and admired in all then who believe.

O my soul, until that happy period arrives, keep gazing at the bright and morning Star; so shall Jesus become more and more precious to you; so shall the excellence of His Person and the riches of His grace be your sweetest song until mortality is

swallowed up of life- until you shall reach the home of the soul in your Father's house on high, and there begin the unending song of Moses and the Lamb.

'Arise, O bright and morning Star,
And send Your silvery beams afar;
Dispel the shades of dreary night,
And let me hail the dawning light.
Blinded by sin I went astray,
And, wandering left the heavenly way,
Dart forth Your soul-reviving rays,
And guide me all my future days.
With growing strength may I pursue
The course -which heavenly wisdom drew,
Until I shall reach the blissful shore,
Where pilgrims rest, and stray no more.'

THE SAVIOR IN HIS DIVINE NATURE

Oh, who shall paint Him? -Let the sweetest tone
That ever trembled on the harps of Heaven,
Be discord; let the chanting seraphim,
Whose anthem is eternity, be dumb;
For praise and wonder, adoration, all
Melt into muteness before they soar to You,
Oh, sole Perfection! Theme of countless worlds.
R. Montgomery

The most interesting, profitable, and elevating theme that can be presented for the contemplation of the Christian on his way to immortality, is the Person and glory of the Savior- the nature and excellences of His divine perfections; and the various relations He sustains to us in His mediatorial character. In vain will we search for another theme which possesses such irresistible charms for the truly pious. The excellency of the

knowledge of Christ Jesus in His person and work! How captivating a subject! With what pleasure should we dwell upon it! This made Paul count all else as comparatively trifling. How strong his language! 'Yes doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge Of Christ Jesus my Lord.' 'For I determined not to know any thing among you, but Jesus Christ and Him crucified.'

The saints in all ages have spent the happiest moments of their earthly pilgrimage in meditating on the Person of the adorable Redeemer, and tracing the never failing streams of His grace, flowing from the throne of God for the refreshment of souls thirsting amid the deserts of life. It is the presence of Jesus that brings heaven to the soul— and oh, what foretastes of future felicity have believers enjoyed upon earth, when they have kept Him before the mind as the glorious object of contemplation! How many precious hours have they passed while thinking of Him in the house and by the way— in the closet and the church! Even in the still hours of night, when they have thought upon His name, how often have they been ready to exclaim, while the fire burned within them; 'How precious also are Your thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!' 'My meditation of Him shall be sweet; I will be glad in the Lord.' 'My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise You with joyful lips; when I remember You upon my bed, and meditate on You in the night watches.'

It was the remembrance of the divine glories and wonderful works of Emmanuel, that so enraptured the mind of the psalmist, and tuned his harp anew. 'I will sing unto the Lord so long as I live— I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.' This caused Paul and Silas, in the prison of Philippi, to break forth in their midnight songs of praise. This has also made the martyr joyful at the stake; and caused thousands of God's children to smile even amid the swellings of Jordan.

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!

It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.
It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms the troubled breast;
It is manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary rest.'

To the Christian, while on earth, the remembrance of the name of Jesus will ever be as ointment poured forth; and when all the redeemed shall have taken up their golden harps in heaven, the name of the 'Child born,' and the 'Son given'— Emmanuel, God with us— will call forth the loudest notes, and tune the sweetest praise through eternity. And is it not most reasonable that Jesus should be the grand object of the soul's desire; and that He should be daily in our thoughts? Look at what He is in Himself—the embodiment of all that is truly great, and excellent, and lovely— clothed with every perfection of Deity— God over all, and blessed forever. How highly should He be prized on account of His personal excellencies! How much of our time should we spend in devout meditations on His uncreated glories!

But look again at what He has accomplished for the human race by His manifestation in the flesh— by satisfying the justice of God— by obeying the divine law— by atoning for our guilt— by suffering and dying in our room— by living to intercede for us— by opening the gates of Paradise, that we may be brought within its blissful bowers to eat of the fruit of the Tree of Life, which stands on the banks of living streams. Christ Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith; the captain of our salvation; the conqueror of our foes; the bestower of heavenly blessings; the only foundation of our hopes of future happiness— our all, and in all. How highly then should we esteem Him for His wonderful manifestations of divine compassion. In what lofty strains should we extol Him for what He has done to save our souls from eternal death! Here, let the saints be joyful in glory; let them sing aloud upon their beds.

O my soul, let it be your delightful employment daily to look unto Jesus in the exercise of faith, contemplating Him in the glories of His Person, and in the exhibitions of His grace.

THE PERSON OF THE SAVIOR IS DIVINE. His divinity is a fundamental article of our holy religion; the life and soul of all spiritual truth; and the foundation on which prophets, and apostles, and martyrs, and all true believers have built their hopes for eternity. And although many, in every age have labored hard to overthrow this grand doctrine of Christianity, yet it stands in Zion; a sure foundation stone; and never will the devices of man, nor the gates of hell, prevail against it. In vain has criticism been employed to erase from the Bible this glorious, fundamental truth, that the Savior of lost sinners is the eternal Son of God, possessed of Almighty power, unerring wisdom, and infinite goodness- that He is equal with the Father and Holy Spirit in all the perfections of Deity. Strange does it seem that any person, who professes to believe the Bible, should reject a doctrine so clearly asserted, and so firmly established by divine revelation.

On this point Scripture testimony is abundant. In many passages is the title of God ascribed to the Lord Jesus Christ, our blessed Savior. Open the inspired Volume and read: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the word was God.' 'Unto the Son, He says, Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.'" Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, 'He is over all, God blessed forever.' It has been well said, that 'this single passage furnishes a decisive answer to the question respecting the divinity of our Savior.' In other portions of the Scripture He is called 'the mighty God the great God;' 'the living God;' 'the true God and eternal life;' 'the King of glory;' 'the King of kings and Lord of lords;' 'the everlasting Father;' 'the Prince of the kings of the earth;' 'Jehovah our Righteousness;' 'the image of the invisible God;' 'the express image of His person;' 'Emmanuel, God with us.' How clear, strong, and conclusive is

such language? Is it not proof sufficient to establish the divinity of Jesus? The truth is here repeated again and again. If the Savior is not equal with God in all the glorious perfections of Deity, why are such titles given to Him? Is it not unreasonable as well as impious to ascribe such names to a mere creature, however excellent or exalted? Most assuredly it is. They can only apply to Him, who is in the form of God, and thinks it not robbery to be equal with God- the glorious Savior- the sinner's Friend; the Man of Calvary.

We have great reason to rejoice when we think of the Person of Christ. A divine Savior is ours: all the blessings of grace on earth and glory in heaven, are in His hand. He is mighty to save. Let us fearlessly entrust our souls to Him. He has purchased the Church with His divine blood. Let us wash our robes and make them white in His blood, and we shall at length be presented faultless before the presence of God in heaven. While we believe in Jesus as a divine Savior, we rest on a sure foundation- we recline on the arm of the Almighty. Christ Jesus, who is over all, God blessed forever, will be our refuge from every storm. Underneath and around us are the everlasting arms. He who framed the universe will guide us onward with 'His glorious arm' through the scenes of earth, until He leads us to living fountains of waters, amid the ineffable joys of heaven. How precious to receive a divine Savior to rest our all on Him! Oh, the delight which this doctrine of Christ's divinity affords to the sincere believer! Oh, the peace which it brings to the pious soul!

The divinity of Christ is proved by the divine perfections which are ascribed to Him in the Scriptures, and by the religious worship which is rendered to Him. Some of these peculiar attributes of the blessed Savior we would here notice.

ETERNITY PAST AND TO COME, BELONGS TO THE SAVIOR. Before the creation of mind or matter- from all eternity past- Christ Jesus lay in the bosom of the Father, enjoying with Him equal honor, power, glory, and blessing. He is declared by the

unerring word of revelation to have been 'in the beginning with God;' and to have existed 'before all things.' Hear the fervent prayer of Him who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, and whom the Father always delights to honor; 'And now, O Father, glorify me with your own self; with the glory which I had with You before the world was.' His eternal existence is, moreover, expressly declared by the titles which He assumes in the Revelation: 'I am the first and the last.' 'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.' This proves that Christ is truly and perfectly God, the only living and true God, the everlasting God; for none but a divine person could proclaim himself by such titles. This is a glorious perfection of the Deity. God has revealed Himself under titles similar to those which the Savior has applied to express His own absolute eternity. 'Thus says the Lord the King of Israel, and His Redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.' 'Who has wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the Lord, the first, and with the last; I am He.' 'Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am He; I am the first, I also am the last.'

In His addresses to the Jews, the Savior declares His infinite existence under a title which belongs to none but a divine person. 'Jesus said unto them, verily verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I AM.' When God made known His great and glorious name to His chosen people, the ancient Israelites, what title did he choose as most expressive of His divine nature and infinite existence? Was it not the same by which Jesus proclaimed himself to the Jews? 'And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM. And He said, Thus shall you say unto the children of Israel, I AM has sent me unto you.' One of the titles given to Christ in the ninth chapter of Isaiah is 'the everlasting Father,' and where in all the Scripture can we find a stronger passage to indicate the eternity of God Himself? No doctrine of Christianity is more clearly evinced than that of the eternal existence of the Son of God, and His original glory with the Father.

Besides those passages already quoted, the following may be adduced as also confirmatory of this fundamental truth. 'But you, Bethlehem Ephratha, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall He come forth unto me, who is to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.' (In Hebrew, 'from the days of eternity'.) This passage declares the advent of One whose goings forth have been from the days of eternity; and who will deny that it is a prophecy respecting our Lord Jesus Christ? It was fulfilled when the eternal Son of God divested Himself of His original glory, left the bosom of the Father, and assumed our nature- when, for the redemption of a lost world, God Himself was manifested in the flesh, and dwelt among men. When Jesus of Nazareth walked on earth in the likeness of men, in the form of a servant, despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, not having so much as a place to lay His head, He was, at the same time, Emmanuel, God with us, the Father of the everlasting age, the Prince of Peace, the true God, and the Eternal Life.

'And we know that the Son of God is come, and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true; and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.' Again, John calls Him 'that Eternal Life who was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.' Does not such language plainly teach us, that before His incarnation our blessed Savior was with the Father, eternally existing, invested with honor, power, and glory, and possessing every possible perfection of the Divinity? How then can his eternal duration be reasonably questioned by any one who professes his belief in divine revelation? That Jesus Christ, who is declared to be the power of God, and the wisdom of God, existed from eternity past, is also evident from His own language when describing His original and essential glory with the Father. 'The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His work of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, before the earth was.'

To us it is indisputable, that Christ existed before the universe was called into being- that His goings forth have been from the clays of eternity. How excellent, dignified, and glorious then must be His Person?

He was supremely blessed from all eternity past. Innumerable ages before the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy over worlds springing into being, the self-existent Savior was in the possession of unutterable bliss at the right hand of God. And when the foundation of earth was laid, and time commenced its course, He was still with the Father, enjoying His unceasing delight, and rich in all celestial blessings. 'Then I was by Him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him; rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.' What heart can conceive the original blessedness, the glorious excellency of the eternal Son of God! Look at His untold glory; and ineffable joy with the Father from everlasting ages. How intimate and endearing a relation does He sustain to God! 'The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father.' 'You loved me before the foundation of the world.' How expressive are these words of the blessed condition of Christ Jesus before His incarnation, when He was daily the delight of the Father, rejoicing always before Him! In those joyous mansions above, He enjoyed the everlasting delight of the Father, who calls Him His elect, in whom His soul delights. There He was with God, the Fountain of all delight, in whose presence is fullness of joy: and He could say, 'all things that the Father has are mine.' How rapturous then must have been His joy! He was rich indeed. In that exalted state He experienced no sorrow, no pain, no lack, no temptation, no hidings of His Father's countenance. He shed no tears in those mansions of glory, and everlasting joy.

Oh, how different was it with Him when He assumed our nature, veiled His glory, and came to these regions of mortality for the purpose of redeeming lost man! Here He was destitute, and afflicted, and despised, and rejected by Men. Here He was

oftentimes weary, while He had not where to lay His head. Here He wept tears of sorrow over ruined humanity, and even poured out His soul unto death for our sakes. It was not until He came to a world stained with sin, and stood as our representative, that it pleased the Lord to bruise Him, and to put Him to grief. And oh, how unutterable was that sorrow which He endured for us in Gethsemane, which caused Him to sweat great drops of blood, and to cry in the agony of his spirit, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.' 'Oh, my Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me.' It was not until He was extended on the cross, as our sacrifice, and bore our sins in His own body, that He was constrained to utter that most piercing; cry, 'My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?'

Blessed Jesus, did You leave the bosom of Your Father, and the felicities of the heavenly mansions to be invested with humanity- to endure such extreme, indescribable sufferings for my sake? Oh, matchless grace! Oh, infinite condescension! Even from eternity Your delights were with the sons of men. Amazing thought! How mysterious! How fathomless! At a thought so vast and so glorious, let the angels of God wonder- let the sons of men rejoice. O blessed Son of God, my Savior, may I ever acknowledge Your eternal existence, while I admire the surpassing glory and excellence of Your Person, and magnify Your boundless, incomparable love.

OMNIPOTENCE IS ASCRIBED TO THE SAVIOR. 'I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, says the Lord, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the almighty.' 'All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.' 'Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O most mighty, with Your glory and Your majesty.' In Isaiah, Christ is called the Mighty God. His omnipotence is peculiarly displayed in the creation of the universe- a work which the Scriptures plainly and repeatedly ascribe to Him. Creative power belongs to Deity alone; and of this power is Christ possessed. He is the Creator of animate and inanimate nature- the Former of all things. He spoke; and

worlds started into being. He said, Let there be light; and there was light. From His divine hand came this fruitful earth with its beautiful and diversified landscapes- its flowery fields and shady groves- its lofty mountains and extended plains- its purling streams and majestic rivers- its quiet lakes and vast oceans. But earth is only a small portion of His mighty work. Lift up your eyes, and gaze on the ample sky when the mantle of night has covered the world. View the heavens glimmering with stars. What a scene of magnificence is spread out in yon vast and immeasurable regions, where planets roll, and suns pour their floods of light! By the word of His divine power the, Savior called those countless luminaries into existence. 'Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who has created these things, who brings out their host by number; He calls them all by names, by the greatness of His might, for He is strong in power; not one fails.' How exalting to the mind of the Christian is the thought, that He who offered Himself a sacrifice on Calvary for the sins of the world is the same glorious Being that 'alone spreads out the Heavens, and treads upon the waves of the sea; which makes Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south.' 'All nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted to Him as less than nothing, and vanity.'

Without any exception whatever, the creation of all things is ascribed to the Savior in the most explicit terms. 'By Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they are thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him.' 'You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power; for You have created all things, and for Your pleasure they are and were created.' 'All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.' 'He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.' 'By whom also He made the worlds.' 'And You, Lord, in the beginning have laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Your hands.' 'For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things; to whom be glory forever.

Amen.' Now, if the universe was called into existence by the word of the Savior, as the Scriptures assert, then are His 'eternal power and Godhead' demonstrated; and in the face of all this Bible testimony, we may say with Dr. Owen, 'It is the highest rebellion against the light and teachings of God's word, to disbelieve His divine existence and power.' Oh, then, let us not withhold from the Savior that revenue of glory which is due to Him as the great Architect of the universe. Let us acknowledge His divinity, and declare His mighty acts. Let us praise Him whose divine hand has laid the foundation of the earth, and spread out the sky.

'Eternal Wisdom, You we praise,
Of You creation sings;
With Your loud name, rocks, hills, and seas,
And heaven's high palace rings.
Your hand how wide it spread the sky,
How glorious to behold!
Tinged with a blue of heavenly dye,
And starred with sparkling gold.
There You have bid the globes of light
Their endless circles run;
There the pale planet rules the night,
And day obeys the sun.
The noisy winds stand ready there
Your orders to obey,
With sounding wings they sweep the air,
To make Your chariot way.
There, like a trumpet, loud and strong,
Your thunder shakes our coast;
While the red lightnings wave along,
The banners of Your host.'

The omnipotence of the Savior is displayed not only in the creation of the universe, but also in its preservation. On this point, how strong and decisive is the language of Inspiration! 'By Him all things hold together.' 'Upholding all things by the word

of His power.' Here we are taught that the mighty frame of the universe is sustained in existence by the word of our divine Savior. How great then must be His power; and how illustriously does His divinity shine in the preservation, as well as creation, of these manifold works of His hand! He has not only kindled up the sun in yonder heavens, but caused it to shine with undimmed splendor for thousands of years. By the same divine power He preserves all the celestial bodies in due order, rolling them with perfect harmony in their proper spheres through the illimitable void.

'His hands the wheels of nature guide
With an unerring skill,
And countless worlds extended wide
Obey His sovereign will.'

To Him, all creatures owe the continuation of their existence, and all the blessings they enjoy. His kingdom rules over all. 'O Lord, You preserve man and beast.' He has set a boundary to the sea, and its proud waves obey His command. To Him is committed the providential government of the world; and by His unseen, almighty power He sustains all nature, animate and inanimate, giving life to every blade of grass, and motion to every particle of blood which circulates through the veins of the minutest animal. 'There is an unseen power, that rules the illimitable world, that guides its motions from the brightest star, to the least dust of this sin-tainted world. While man, who madly deems himself the Lord of all, is nothing but weakness and dependence.'

OMNISCIENCE IS ASCRIBED TO THE SAVIOR. This peculiar attribute of the Divinity is expressly applied to Him in different portions of the Scriptures. 'Lord, You know all things.' 'But Jesus did not entrust Himself unto them, because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, for He knew what was in man.' 'And Jesus, knowing their thoughts.' In the following words the Savior declares both His omniscience and incomprehensibility: 'All things are delivered unto me of my

Father; and no man knows the Son, but the Father; neither knows any man the Father, but the Son, and He to whomsoever the Son wills reveal Him.' Again, He says, 'I am He who searches thoughts and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.' In His message to the seven churches of Asia, He declares that it is His prerogative to search the heart, and to know the works of the sons of men. In each message this truth is expressed in the sentence— 'I know Your works.' In the blessed Savior are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. He searches Jerusalem with lighted candles. He has a perfect knowledge of every event that is transpiring in the remotest part of His mighty empire. Heaven, earth, and hell, are all unveiled before Him. His eyes, which are as a flame of fire, are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. Now, if Jesus knows what is in the hearts of all men, and if He is to judge them in righteousness, according to their works, then, certainly, He must be a divine person, possessing infinite knowledge.

In the omniscience of Christ there is an unfailing spring of joy and consolation for the real Christian. How inspiring to feel that we have a Savior who knows all our needs- whose eye is ever upon us for good- whose ear is always opened to our petitions. 'For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers.' 'I will set My eyes upon them for good.' Come then, you afflicted, tempest-tossed child of earth, and lay all your sorrows before an omniscient and compassionate Savior. Make all your desires make known to Him. He has a willing ear to hear you, a willing heart to love you, a willing hand to save you.

Weep not! Jesus hears you,
Hears your moanings broken,
Hears when you sigh wearily
All your grief have spoken.
Raise your cry, He is nigh,
And when the waves roll full in view,
He shall fix their "Hitherto."

Let its view this subject seriously and practically. Let its remember that Jesus knows all the thoughts that are passing through our minds. 'O Lord, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. You know when I sit down or stand up. You know my every thought when far away. You chart the path ahead of me and tell me where to stop and rest. Every moment you know where I am. You know what I am going to say even before I say it, Lord. You both precede and follow me. You place your hand of blessing on my head. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too great for me to know!' That divine Savior, who is now our Witness, and who will before long be our Judge, knows perfectly well what is the present inclination of our minds- whether our hearts are absorbed with the empty pleasures of earth, or whether we love Him supremely. Oh that each of us, from our inmost soul, may be enabled to appeal to Him as the Searcher of hearts, in the language of the apostle, 'Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You!' How happy to be thus firmly persuaded of the omniscience of Jesus! How happy to be conscious that we truly love Him; and that we can make such an appeal to Him in truth and sincerity! Here is a joy which the world cannot impart- which dwells only in the bosom of the true child of God. May this joy be ever yours- be ever mine.

O Omniscient Savior, we beseech You to watch over us amid all the scenes of earth. We are still on the ocean of life, exposed to its storms and its tempests; but while the waves dash on every side of us, may we see Your glorious Form on the troubled sea; may we hear Your animating voice- 'Be of good cheer; it is I; do not be afraid.' May we rejoice in the belief, that You know all things, and are intimately acquainted with all our ways. Guide us with Your counsel. Show us the path of life. Be our guiding Star until we reach the harbor of eternal rest. Be very near us in all the wanderings of our earthly pilgrimage. And oh, in that last, solemn hour which will terminate the voyage of life- that hour when all beneath the skies will prove unavailing- Oh, You, who know all the needs and desires of an immortal spirit at such a

time, stand by us and whisper words of peace, and comfort, and joy to our departing souls; and when we leave the shores of time, and embark on the boundless ocean of eternity, may we find that it is an ocean of blessedness, where not a wave shall ever rise-where not a storm shall ever beat. Oh, may we be among those, who will forever stand before Your heavenly throne on that 'sea of glass like unto crystal,' casting our crowns before You, who has redeemed us to God by Your blood, and ascribing unto Your name all the glory, and honor, and power through the ages of bliss.

ANOTHER ATTRIBUTE OF THE SAVIOR IS OMNIPRESENCE. This attribute, as it implies immensity of nature, can belong only to a Divine person. And He who is the faithful and True Witness has left these words on record for the encouragement and consolation of all His followers. 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.' 'And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' Now, unless He is a Divine Person, how can Christ Jesus, whom the heavens must receive until the times of the restitution of all things, be with His people on earth, in their different assemblies for religious worship, in all ages of the world? It is only by His divine nature that He is here in our midst to bless us and to do us good. And whenever or wherever we assemble for religious worship we may, according to His promise, expect His gracious presence to strengthen our hands; to cheer our hearts; to lift us above the cares, the sorrows, and the trials of the present life. When the Savior, in the days of His personal ministry, was teaching Nicodemus the necessity of regeneration, He was present in His divine nature, in Heaven, as well as on earth, and could say, at the same time, 'Even the Son of man who is in heaven.' If He is not really a Divine Person how could such language have been spoken by Him, who is called THE TRUTH- all the words of whose mouth are in righteousness? But He fills immensity with His divine nature, and is with His disciples in this valley of tears, as well as with the redeemed in mansions of heavenly felicity. Possessing this

glorious attribute of the Godhead, immensity of nature, He can say, respecting Himself: 'Am I a God at hand, says the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? says the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? says the Lord.'

It is a most comforting truth for the true Christian to know that his Lord and Savior possesses this divine excellence; to be assured that He, whom his soul so ardently desires, is with him at all times, in all places, and under all circumstances. Oh, how soothing to hear Him, who fills immensity with his presence, whisper in our ears, as we move onward in our journey through the wilderness of this world, still pitching our tent nearer and nearer the heavenly Canaan, 'My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest.' Let us think of this cheering promise. The blessed Savior will never forsake us if we put our trust in Him and follow Him, as the Lamb of God, wherever He goes. His gracious presence will go with us through the valley of mortal life; and leaning on His glorious arm, we will come up from the wilderness. And even here on earth He will give us a rest, as He has promised. 'And you shall find rest unto your souls.' 'The Lord will give you rest from your sorrow.' But oh, in the happy world beyond the grave He will give us a far more glorious rest. Yes, in that blessed world, where sin, and sorrow, and death can never come, His presence will go with us, and He will give us an eternal rest- a rest from sin, sorrow, pain, and all the ills of life- a rest with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob- a rest beneath the shadow of the Tree of Life in the midst of Paradise- a rest by the living Fountains of waters which issue from the throne of God- the rest of heaven.

O my soul, return unto your rest forthwith. Seek the gracious presence of Him who left His throne on high, to save you, to be with you always, and to give you rest. May the thought of the omnipresence of Jesus fill us with joy and consolation amid all the ways of life.

'His presence sweetens all our cares,

And makes our burdens light,
A word from Him dispels our fears,
And gilds the doom of night.'

Let us remember for our comfort, that the gracious eye of a divine Savior is upon us every moment of our existence, and that His everlasting arms are continually underneath and around us, protecting us from evil, shielding us from danger, and leading us to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. We cannot go from the presence of Israel's Shepherd, who is always and truly God with us. If we take to ourselves the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, His word will be true, 'Lo, I am with you always.' If we say, the darkness shall hide us from His presence; in the darkness as in the light He will still be at our right hand to defend and save us. If we make the grave our bed, He will be there to watch over our ashes, and to awaken us from the slumbers of the long dreamless night of death on the morning of the resurrection. If we ascend up into heaven, He is there, reigning in all the grandeur of His attributes; and through all those infinite ages of bliss, which roll beyond the judgment day- we will enjoy the 'presence of the Lord,' and behold 'the glory of his power.' Where, then, shall we go from His Spirit? or where shall we flee from His presence? Oh, that, like the psalmist, we could set the Lord always before us. Then we will have an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, when tossed by the waves and driven by the storms of life's ocean. Then we will not be moved because Jesus is at our right hand, and in our midst, a very present help in the hour of trouble and danger.

'Soul of the world, All-seeing Eye,
Where shall man from Your presence fly?
Say, would he climb the starry height?
All Heaven is instinct with Your Light.
Dwell in the darkness of the grave?
Yes, You are there to judge and save.
In vain on wings of morn we soar,

In vain the realms of space explore,
In vain retreat to shades of night,
For what can veil us from Your sight?
Distance dissolves before Your ray,
And darkness kindles into day.'

IMMUTABILITY, ANOTHER ATTRIBUTE PECULIAR TO GOD, IS ASCRIBED TO THE SAVIOR. 'Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.' The same truth is expressed in the words which the apostle quotes from the one hundred and second psalm, to prove the superiority of the Son of God to the angels. 'You, Lord, in the beginning have laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Your hands. They shall perish; but You remain: and they all shall wax old as does a garment; and as a vesture shall You fold them up, and they shall be changed: but You are the same, and Your years shall not fail.' These passages evidently refer to the Savior in His uncreated nature. They teach us that He is possessed of absolute immutability; and if so, He must be a Divine Person; for this attribute is incommunicable to a created being. This is a perfection of the Savior, which renders him very precious in the eyes of believers. Amid the scenes of changing and perishing mortality they can look heavenward, and rejoice in the blessed assurance, that in yonder realms of day they have a Friend, who is ever mindful of their highest interest, whose counsel is immutable, whose love is unchanging, whose delights are always with the sons of men. Yes, 'that love for men with which He prayed and died on the cross, ever dwells in His bosom, susceptible of no change, no decay.

'Immutable His will,
Though dark may be my frame,
His loving heart is still,
Unchangeably the same.
My soul through many changes goes,
His love no variation knows!'

On all beneath that celestial inheritance which fades not away,

mutability is written. Of the heavens and the frame of the world it is said, 'They shall perish.' Change is the portion of earth and its inhabitants. Alas! who does not know by sad experience how mutable are the conditions of life? Where are many of the friends of our youth? Gone to the land of darkness and forgetfulness. Yesterday they were with us, today they are not. And the friends with whom we are today taking sweet counsel, may, before tomorrow's sun shall set, be torn from us by the unyielding grasp of death. Oh, the instability of all created things! Oh, the vanity of the world! We see an end of all perfection here; but let us not confine our views to earth. Let us look to that blessed world which knows no change; on whose everlasting hills the Sun of Righteousness is always shining. Above all, let us think of the unchanging One there- of 'that same Jesus' who ever lives to plead our cause in the courts of heaven, and who will at length gather us home to Himself, that we may behold the glories of His Person, and enjoy through eternity His unchanging love. His heart knows no change. His love to His people is an everlasting love. 'I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore, with loving-kindness have I drawn you.'

In all ages, past, present, and to come, He is the same great, excellent, and glorious Person. The immutability of Jesus is the blessed source where flow some of our richest hopes and joys. What consolation is here for the mourner in Zion! Is the child of God deprived of near and dear friends by the stroke of death? In Jesus he has a Friend, an Elder Brother, who ever lives, and who ever loves; and he can say of this divine Friend,
'How can I bereaved be,
Since I cannot part with Thee?'

Amid all the vicissitudes and bereavements of earth it is our privilege and our happiness to confide in an unchanging Savior- a Friend that sticks closer than a brother; Jesus, the sinner's Friend. Most cheering is it to hear His voice from the sublime regions of immortal life, proclaiming, 'I am He that lives, I am

alive for evermore, Amen.' Oh, let us keep the far-reaching eye of faith continually directed towards our adorable Redeemer; and may the inspiring thought of His immutability fill us with the peace of God, which passes all understanding, and cause us to rejoice in the full assurance of hope unto the end.

DIVINE HONOR AND WORSHIP ARE RENDERED TO THE SAVIOR. This is required in the Scriptures; and it demonstrates His divinity; for certainly He cannot be the proper object of religious worship and honor unless all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Him. To worship a being inferior to the great God would be robbing Him of His glory. The command is: 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.' But as Christ, in His divine nature, is the immediate object of all religious honor and worship, as the Bible teaches us, He must consequently be the true God, and worthy of all the adoration and praise of His rational creatures. That divine worship is required in the Scriptures, to be rendered to Him by angels and saints, appears from the following passages: 'When He brings in the first-born into the world, He said, Let all the angels of God worship Him.' 'He is your Lord; and worship Him.' It is the will of the Father, that all men should honor the Son- 'That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honors not the Son, honors not the Father who has sent Him.'

To the adorable Redeemer every knee is required to bow, and every tongue to confess Him to be Lord. 'Wherefore God also has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.' We are, therefore, to ascribe to the Savior all infinite, divine excellencies; and to honor Him, according to the will of God, 'even as we honor the Father.' And that He is thus divinely honored no one can reasonably deny. By the angelic host before the throne of heaven He is unceasingly worshiped as God, who is over all, God blessed

forever. Paradise is continually resounding with His praise. Isaiah, in his sublime vision of the Savior's glory, beheld the divine honors that are rendered to Him by the angelic hosts of God in that spacious temple not made with hands- the royal mansion of Jehovah. 'I saw the Lord. He was sitting on a lofty throne, and the train of his robe filled the Temple. Hovering around him were mighty seraphim, each with six wings. With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with the remaining two they flew. In a great chorus they sang, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty! The whole earth is filled with his glory! The glorious singing shook the Temple to its foundations, and the entire sanctuary was filled with smoke.'

This glorious Person, whom the seraphim thus worship, is the Lord Jesus Christ, as we are told by the evangelist: 'Isaiah was referring to Jesus when he made this prediction, because he was given a vision of the Messiah's glory.' John 12:41. Oh, with what rapture is our blessed Savior adored by all those ministering spirits on high, those morning stars, those sons of God, who sang for joy when the corner-stone of earth was laid, and when the mysterious work of redemption was made known to them! And with what humility do they worship in that high palace of the King of kings and Lord of lords, veiling their faces with their wings, while they tune on harps of gold the praises of Christ, the Lamb, who sits enthroned amid the glories of heaven!

'High on a throne of burnished gold,
With rays of Godhead crowned,
Jehovah sat; His thunders rolled,
And glory sparkled round.
His flowing train of glittering white,
The spacious temple filled;
The angels, dazzled at the sight,
With wings their faces veiled.
Around the throne, in burning row,
The six-winged seraphs stood;

While millions, flying to and fro,
Tuned all their harps to God.
Thrice holy, holy, Lord, they cry,
The God of Sabbath's Thou;
Your glory fills the worlds on high,
And fills the world below.'

The Savior is worshiped by saints on earth. Patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs- the great and good of every age have paid Him homage. Abraham, Lot, Moses, and David worshiped Him. Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, prayed to Him amid a shower of stones, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' 'Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.' The dying thief on the cross prayed to Him- 'Lord, remember me when You come into Your Kingdom.' Paul offered up his fervent prayers to the Lord Jesus Christ, as well as to God the Father. 'Now God Himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you. And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another.' 'Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God our Father, who has loved us, and has given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work.' 'For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.' 'Follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.' 'With all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.' 'The same Lord over all, is rich unto all that call upon Him.' The New Testament closes with a prayer to the Savior; 'even so come, Lord Jesus.'

The Savior is worshiped by the redeemed in glory. And this adoration will continue without interruption through the unceasing ages of eternity. In their songs of praise, the redeemed inhabitants of those blessed mansions in our Father's house, confess the Savior to be Lord, to the glory of God the Father. There, no one withholds from Him that rich revenue of praise which is due to His divine name. All those countless millions who walk the golden streets of the New Jerusalem,

arrayed in the resplendent robes of salvation, are represented as casting their crowns at the feet of the Lamb in the midst of the throne, and uniting in one sublime, harmonious song of praise to the glorified Redeemer. 'Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.' 'Unto Him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.'

Thus we see, that divine worship is rendered to Christ in heaven and on earth. And in this exercise of religious worship, which has received the approval and sanction of God, we also see the divinity of the Savior and the excellency of His nature most illustriously displayed.

'Worthy the Lamb for sinners slain,
Cry the redeemed above,
blessing and honor to obtain,
And everlasting love!
Worthy the Lamb! on earth we sing,
Who died our souls to save;
Henceforth, O Death, where is your sting?
Your victory, O grave?'

Here, an important practical question may be asked— Are we rendering religious worship to the Savior? Do we adore Him as over all, God blessed forever? Do we Honor Him as our divine Redeemer, by committing the keeping of our souls into His hands, believing that He is able to present us faultless before the throne of the Majesty on high? If we ever hope to admire Him in heaven, we must be willing to honor Him on earth; we must commence the worship of Jesus here, or else we shall never learn the 'new song' of the 'hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.'

'Toil, trial, suffering, still await

On earth the pilgrim throng;
Yet learn we, in our low estate,
The church's triumphant song.

How can we have any satisfactory evidence of our interest in the joys and blessedness of heaven, if we are not, like the redeemed in glory, prostrating ourselves in humble adoration at the feet of Jesus, and giving Him the praise.

'Lord I until I reach that blissful shore,
No privilege so dear shall be,
As thus my inmost soul to pour
In prayer to Thee.'

Oh, that every heart might be drawn by the bands of love to the Lamb of God, and at the foot of the cross adore Him with seraphic ardor for accomplishing the mighty plan of redemption's work. Oh, that every tongue might speak the praises of His divine name, world with out end. 'The humbling of our souls before the Lord Christ, from an apprehension of His divine excellencies- the ascription of glory, honor, praise, with thanksgiving unto Him, on the great motive of the work of redemption with the blessed effects thereof- are things wherein the life of faith is continually exercised; nor can we have any evidence of an interest in that blessedness which consists in the eternal assigning of all glory and praise unto Him in heaven, if we are not exercised unto this worship of Him here on earth.'

(John Owen)

May all beneath the sky
Usurp my heart no more;
Oh, be my first, my chief delight,
My soul's unbounded store.

Blessed Jesus, grant unto me the true spirit of prayer; enable me to fix my affections on You, and to seek the things which are above. Oh, may I receive You as my only Savior- as One in whom dwells all the perfections of the Godhead. May I have grace to feel from my inmost soul, that You are worthy to receive all

glory, and honor, and power; for you have redeemed us unto God by Your blood. Daily ascribing to You all divine perfections and excellencies, may I pass the days of my appointed time in Your fear, and be prepared for Your service on high. Amid all the tribulations incident to humanity, may I invoke Your aid, and with my last breath, be found, like Stephen, committing my departing spirit into Your divine hands. Oh, then, when the valley of mortality is past, make me a pillar in the temple of God, to go no more out- to surround Your throne with unceasing songs of praise.

Oh! may our praises never cease,
While journeying towards the realms of peace;
Where saints in lovelier accents raise
A never-ending song of praise.'
In You all treasures lie,
From You all blessings flow;
You are the bliss of saints above,
The joy of saints below.
Oh come and make me Yours,
A sinner saved by grace;
Then shall I sing with loudest strains
In heaven, Your dwelling-place.
When standing round the throne,
Amid the ransomed throng,
Your praise shall be my sweet employ
While love inspires my song.'

It must afford the believer the purest and most sublime joy to know that his Redeemer possesses all the perfections of the divine nature; that He is the Creator and Preserver of the universe, and the proper object of religious worship. It is truly animating to be assured by divine revelation, that our salvation has been accomplished by this almighty Deliverer, who is none other than the Lord of glory- the eternal Son of God. We are redeemed to a glorious immortality by the blood of God Himself. 'Feed the church of God, which He has purchased with His own

blood.' Established in the faith of Christ Jesus, the Rock of Ages, our final happiness is certain and complete. No one is able to tear us from His arms. 'I will give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall man pluck them out of my hand.'

In the delightful contemplation of our Savior's excellencies we should spend many an hour of our earthly pilgrimage. Oh, how little do we know of His preciousness! If we could see him with the eye of faith in all His beauty and desirableness, the world, with its unsubstantial pleasures, would no longer hold a supreme place in our affection. We would live for a higher object. To promote the divine glory on earth, and to enjoy a triune God in heaven, would be the grand aim of our lives. Oh, then, as we journey towards the shores of an eternal world, let us daily look into the Scriptures, and study Christ in the excellency of His nature and work. The clearer views we have of Him, the more we will admire Him, and the more we will be like Him. Let us labor to have a familiar communion with Him. Let us prefer Him above the world and all its enjoyments. Then we will feel that heaven is our true home, and be prepared for those holy pleasures and employments which are at God's right hand. Let us remember that a great part of the happiness of that 'world of light', will consist in contemplating the excellencies of a divine Savior, and in ascribing praise to Him as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world- as the Author of eternal salvation. Yonder, the heavenly throng will be forever engaged in studying and admiring the infinite perfections, and amazing grace of Him in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

And if we would know more about God, we must look to Christ, by whom He is revealed. 'No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.' How pleasantly would our earthly pilgrimage pass, if by faith we daily studied the character of Christ Jesus, who, to the true believer, is the object of the strongest affection and highest admiration! Oh, may our hearts be more engaged

with His incomparable excellencies, viewing Him daily in the glory of His divine nature; in the excellency of His work, in the fullness of His grace, and in the revelation He has made of the character of God; His will respecting us, and His amazing love towards us. If thus exercised all our lives, how peaceful would be our latter end! How willing our departure to be with Christ! How joyful our eternity!

'Jesus, in Your transporting name
What blissful glories rise!
Jesus the angels' sweetest theme!
The wonder of the skies!'

Blessed Savior, may our souls be filled with delight, while meditating on Your divine excellencies, and the wonderful exhibition of Your redeeming grace. May we rejoice in the assurance, that You are the eternal Son of God, equal with the Father in all the perfections of Deity. May we adore You as the Creator of the universe and the Redeemer of the world. May we feel that You are precious in Your Person and in Your work; and prize You above all things. Oh, may our hearts glow with seraphic love to You, our Savior, when we think of Your amazing compassion for sinners, which led You to forsake the bosom of the Father, and the adoration of the heavenly host, for the manger of Bethlehem, and the cross of Calvary! Grant, that we may be favored with many a glimpse of Your glory; that we may know more and more about Your unsearchable riches, until we are fitted for that happy world, where You shall forever appear as the morning Star, the Sun of Righteousness, shining with undimmed splendor. Oh, may we be found daily contemplating You by faith as our divine and exalted Redeemer, rendering unto You all glory, honor, and thanksgiving, until faith is turned into sight, and hope into fruition- until we behold You in the upper Paradise, and praise Your name, with saints and angels, through the vast ages of felicity.

'Jesus, I love Your charming name,

'Tis music to my ear;
Sincerely would I sound it out so loud
That heaven and earth should hear.
Yes, You are precious to my soul,
My transport and my trust;
Jewels to You are gaudy toys,
And gold is sordid dust.
All my capacious powers can wish,
In You do richly meet:
Nor to mine eyes is light so dear,
Nor friendship half so sweet.
Your grace still dwells upon my heart,
And sheds its fragrance there;
The noblest balm of all its wounds,
The cordial of its care.
I'll speak the honors of Your name
With my last laboring breath;
Then, speechless, clasp You in my arms.
The antidote of death.

THE SAVIOR IN HIS INCARNATION

'Messiah comes! you rugged paths be plain;
The Shiloh comes, you towering cedars bend;
Swell forth, you valleys; and, you rocks, descend;
The withered branch let balmy fruits adorn,
And clustering roses twine the leafless thorn;
Burst forth, you vocal groves, your joy to tell-
The God of Peace redeems His Israel.'

'And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.'
'Here we may behold Deity incarnate: God manifested in human
nature! Turn aside, and see this great sight: contemplate this

object with fixed attention, until your heart is suitably affected by the contemplation: gaze with the eye of faith on this brighter "Morning Star," gaze on this nobler "Sun of Righteousness," until every sublunary object is eclipsed by its superior splendor.'
-Robert Hall

Hark, the glad sound! the Savior comes!
The Savior promised long!
Let every heart prepare a throne,
And every voice a song.
He comes the prisoners to release,
In Satan's bondage held;
The gates of brass before him burst,
The iron fetters yield.
He comes the broken heart to bind,
The bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of His grace
To enrich the humble poor.
Our glad Hosannas, Prince of Peace,
Your welcome shall proclaim;
And heaven's eternal arches ring
With Your beloved name. -Doddridge

The best tidings ever brought from the throne of heaven to this guilty, lost world, was the announcement of the advent of One, whose glorious mission was to redeem sinners from everlasting woe, and to crown them with immortal glory beyond the shores of time. If there is a theme, in the contemplation of which our hearts should feel most grateful to our Heavenly Father, it is this mystery of Godliness; the incarnation of the only begotten Son of God; God manifested in the flesh- a mystery of wisdom and love, of which the world cannot furnish a parallel. As we are the recipients of all those rich favors which accompany the manifestation of the Savior in our nature, is it not reasonable that we should feel most interested in a subject so extremely important? It is a subject which will afford us the most refined pleasure on earth, and the most rapturous joy in heaven. If the

holy angels ascribe praise and glory to God for the incarnation of our blessed Savior, should not man raise a louder song of praise? -man, to whom such goodness is so wondrously manifested in the gift of Jesus. Oh, let us draw near, and view this marvelous work, which will eternally excite the wonder and admiration of glorified saints, and be the source of their pure and lasting joys. Let us with gratitude and reverence contemplate the incarnation of the blessed Jesus. Let us gaze with the eye of the Christian on the Bright and Morning Star arising in our world of sin and wretchedness, bringing peace and salvation to our souls, and telling us of a glorious immortality beyond the grave.

Blessed Jesus, while the world follows after its delusive pleasures with the eye closed to the beauties of Your Person, and the ear stopped to the sound of the glorious gospel, and the lips sealed to the sweet song of the redeemed, may it be our delight to dwell on the incomparable excellencies of Your nature, the mysteries of Your incarnation, and the riches of Your grace.

THE CONDITION OF OUR FIRST PARENTS AFTER THEIR FALL. Man was created a holy and happy being, and placed in a terrestrial paradise of surpassing beauty, where he had everything his heart could wish or enjoy. In his pristine innocence the sweetest communion existed between him and his beneficent Creator. The heavens were beneficent, while peace and harmony reigned on earth. There was no commotion of the elements of nature- no wasting and destruction- no moral impurity- no disease- no death. Sin had not yet entered the blissful bowers of Eden to expel man from paradise, and to cover earth with signs of woe. How long our first parents continued in their state of original blessedness, we are not informed; but we know that the fearful hour of temptation came- that they disobeyed the Divine command, and sinned against God by eating the forbidden fruit. The fall of Adam involved the whole world in ruin, and woe, and death. 'By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men,

for all have sinned.' From this fearful state of sin and misery man was unable to extricate himself. He could not pay unto God a sufficient ransom; hence all seemed to be hopeless and lost. It was utterly impossible for him to answer that most important inquiry: 'What can we bring to the Lord to make up for what we've done? Should we bow before God with offerings of yearling calves? Should we offer him thousands of rams and tens of thousands of rivers of olive oil? Would that please the Lord? Should we sacrifice our firstborn children to pay for the sins of our souls? Would that make him glad?' Unless Divine justice is satisfied, the violated law fulfilled, and the sinner restored to the favor of God, the whole human race must be consigned to a place of irretrievable misery, prepared for the fallen angels, where no cheering ray of hope shall ever enter; a place, whose blackness of darkness no Sun of Righteousness shall ever dispel.

Oh, how fearful then was the state of our first parents after the fall, before a Savior was promised, while the door of life was yet closed! How poignant must have been their grief for the past! How fearful their forebodings of the future! Ah! where could they turn for help when they had incurred the divine displeasure, and lost communion with their Maker? They saw no way of escape. While they were continually exposed to innumerable misfortunes through life, the thought of approaching death would appall them- the thought of the fearful retribution of eternity would drink up their earthly joy. 'Thus all the prospects were dark and desolate. A desert of ruin spread immeasurably around them, without a habitation to which they might betake themselves for shelter, or even a friendly hermit to point out a hopeful end to their melancholy pilgrimage. Over their heads extended, without limits, a dreary and perpetual night, in which no lamp lighted their bewildered path, and not a star, not a ray of hope or comfort twinkled through the vast gloom of sorrow and despair.'

PROMISES AND PREDICTIONS OF A SAVIOR. While our first parents were in this forlorn condition, which has been briefly

depicted, the glorious gospel revelation was made known to them. Even before their expulsion from the Garden of Eden, the tidings of a Savior were conveyed to them in the cheering promise, that the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent. How truly amazing was this revelation; and how great must have been the gratitude it inspired in the bosom of the parents of the human race! Here we see the wondrous plan of redeeming love unfolded, and the gates of the upper and more glorious Paradise opened to an apostate race. Here, we behold the stream of divine mercy commencing its course on earth- that stream which now rolls a mighty river, making glad the city of God, and bringing immortal life and felicity to myriads of the human family. 'The spring of these waters of salvation, hidden in the counsels of God before time began, was opened immediately after the fall, and began to flow in a small but reviving brook. Increasing by degrees, and from the very beginning, making every place it passed through fertile and pleasant, it soon became a large stream. At length the main current of the gospel flowed in, and now it rolls on full of water, greatly enriching the earth, a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal; the streams whereof make glad the city of God, and shall do so, until this river empties itself into the ocean of eternity.'

The promise of a Savior was definitely made to the patriarchs. The heart of Abraham, the father of the faithful, was gladdened by the promise of Messiah, expressed in these words: 'In your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.' This illustrious patriarch saw by the eye of faith the Savior in His divine pilgrimage on earth, and the rising glories of His mediatorial kingdom. 'Your father Abraham,' says Christ to the Jews, 'rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad.'

The advent of our Savior is also the grand theme of prophecy throughout the Old Testament. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. And oh, that He, to whom so many of those predictions refer, would open our understanding, as He did that of the disciples of old, that we may understand those things

which are written in 'the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms,' concerning Him! The last words of Jacob contain a prophecy of the coming of Christ. 'The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from his descendants, until the coming of the one to whom it belongs, the one whom all nations will obey.' Moses prophesies of Christ Jesus, the true Prophet, whom God was to raise up for the salvation of Israel. 'The Lord Your God will raise up unto you a Prophet from the midst of you, from your brethren, like unto me; unto Him you shall hearken.' Isaiah, in his sublime visions, speaks most distinctly of the coming of a Savior, and the grand characteristics of His personal ministry on earth- the peaceful, flourishing, and glorious condition of His kingdom among men. 'For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.' 'Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel.' 'And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto those who turn from transgression in Jacob, says the Lord.' 'Behold, the Lord has proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say to the daughter of Zion, Behold, your salvation comes; behold, His reward is with Him and His work before Him.' 'Say to those who are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; He will come and save you.' Zechariah also prophesies of the Messiah, and calls upon the Church to rejoice greatly for His coming. 'Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, your King comes unto you: He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an donkey, and upon a colt, the foal of an donkey.'

Daniel foretells not only the appearance of Messiah, but fixes the very date of His advent. 'Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and three-score and two weeks.' The Psalmist, in lofty strains, sings of the coming of Christ in His kingdom. 'Blessed be He

that comes in the name of the Lord.' Haggai, in most express terms, speaks of the coming of our Great Deliverer, the Desire of all nations, before the destruction of the second temple; and shows that His presence would give to that temple a greater glory than was ever given to the former one, the magnificent temple of Solomon. 'The desire of all nations shall come and will fill this house with glory, says the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, says the Lord of Hosts; and in this place will I give peace, says the Lord of Hosts.' How well does this correspond with the character of Him who is called the Prince of Peace; of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end; of Him, who came to guide our feet into the way of peace, and who has said, Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you! The concluding words of the Old Testament contain a most remarkable prediction of the coming of the Lord Jesus, the Messenger of the everlasting covenant. 'Behold, I will send my Messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom you seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, whom you delight in; behold, He shall come, says the Lord of hosts.' But let us now turn to the accomplishment of these predictions in the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth.

THE BIRTH OF THE SAVIOR. When the time for the accomplishment of the prophecies respecting His advent arrived, our Savior actually appeared in the humble garb of humanity, and commenced His reign of peace upon the earth. How delightful to contemplate an event of such joy to the human race! And here, let us view with fixed attention some of the circumstances connected with the manifestation of so glorious a Person, and so great a Deliverer. Looking back over the land of Palestine more than eighteen centuries ago, let us think of that peaceful night in which the Prince of Peace, the Lord of Glory, made His appearance in human nature- that night in which new songs were heard over the plains of Bethlehem- that ever memorable night.

The fullness of time had come, when the Son of God is to be sent forth to redeem a world lying in sin. 'But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.' The long expected day has at length dawned to gladden and bless the world. Among the Jews of that time, many were 'waiting for the consolation of Israel'- the promised Messiah. To the pious and venerable Simeon it was revealed, 'that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.' About the time of the Savior's birth a general expectation prevailed among the Jews, that the coming of the Messiah was at hand. Nor was this opinion confined to the Jewish nation: it extended over a portion of the gentile world. Roman poets of that age sing of the coming of an extraordinary person, who should gain universal dominion, and restore the golden age of terrestrial bliss. Roman historians also allude to the same general expectation.

The Savior was born in Bethlehem, the city of David, during the reign of the Roman Emperor, Augustus Caesar. The place of His birth had been long before predicted by the prophet Micah, in these remarkable words- 'But you, Bethlehem Ephratah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall He come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.' How strikingly was this fulfilled! Augustus, having resolved to levy a tax on the Jewish nation, issues a decree requiring all the inhabitants of Judea to enroll their names for this purpose. In compliance with this command, Joseph and Mary, the parents of Christ, go up from Nazareth, where they lived, to Bethlehem, the town in which their family register was kept. And while they were there, amid the crowds of strangers who had assembled to be enrolled, the Savior of the world was born. Under circumstances of great voluntary abasement does He enter the world. He, who is truly the Father of the everlasting ages, and who now becomes an Infant of days, is found wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger; because there was no room in the inn. Ah! blessed

Jesus, the world has no room for You; the depraved heart of man has no place for You; You are despised and rejected by those who have their portion in this life. To them You are as a root out of a dry ground- without form or loveliness- having no beauty in their eyes. What ingratitude do You daily receive at their hands for such infinite condescension and love! Oh, may we give You a ready and joyful welcome, while others reject You and treat You with contempt. May we open wide the doors of our hearts, and earnestly cry- 'Come in, blessed of the Lord; why do you stand outside?' And Oh, may there be always room in our hearts to entertain You, our blessed Lord and Redeemer.

The glad tidings of the Savior's birth were announced by the angel of the Lord to the shepherds, watching over their flocks by night, on the plains of Bethlehem. These humble, pious men are at first thrown into the greatest consternation at the sudden appearance of the heavenly messenger, and the glory of the Lord shining round them; but their fear is banished, and their hearts cheered, when the celestial messenger communicates to them the joyful tidings of life and immortality through a new-born Savior. Never before was such an announcement made. Never before were such cheering tidings borne to the ears of a perishing world. Oh! let them be speedily published through every land, and resounded from shore to shore.

'And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.' Oh, what blessed tidings are these! Tidings of great joy not only to the Jewish nation, but also to the Gentile world- to all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues. The Star of Bethlehem now shines- the Sun of Righteousness has risen- Jesus is born! A Savior has come to redeem man from the bondage of sin, and the punishment of the divine law; and to restore him to Paradise; to advance him to far higher seats than those of earthly original bliss- to bring him to a celestial home of seraphic joys, far, far beyond those brilliant lamps which lighten

the nocturnal sky. Yes, He has come, whose royal titles are: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. What cause for holy joy is here! Can heaven and earth keep silent at the advent of so glorious and illustrious a Person, who comes on a mission of infinite goodness at which angels themselves are lost in astonishment? Let the universe sing for joy. 'Sing, O heavens, for the Lord has done this wondrous thing! Shout, O earth! Break forth into song, O mountains and forests and every tree! For the Lord has redeemed Jacob and is glorified in Israel.'

Hark! what sounds are those which are borne from on high to the ears of the trembling shepherds? There is music in the skies. All heaven is made vocal by the song. Do you not hear it? How sweetly do those sounds fall upon the ear! It is the song of the heavenly host, resounding among the hills of Judea, celebrating the rising glories of Jacob's Star, in 'a hymn more noble, more divine, than had ever before proceeded from their lips.' Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.'

Hark! what those holy voices mean-
Sweetly sounding through the skies?
Lo! the angelic host rejoices;
Heavenly hallelujahs rise.
Listen to the wondrous story,
Which they chant in hymns of joy:
'Glory in the highest; glory!
Glory be to God most high!
Christ is born, the Great Anointed,
Heaven and earth His praises sing;
Oh, receive whom God appointed,
For your Prophet; Priest, and King!'

Well might those holy angels rejoice, when the wisdom, justice, holiness, power, and mercy of God, were to be so illustriously displayed in the wondrous plan of redemption, by the

incarnation, life, suffering, death, resurrection, and intercession of Jesus. And here, let us pause for a moment, and reflect on the copious matter of the angelic song. It is a song which the angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, are now singing in yonder world of light and love- the Paradise of God. It is a new song, and will always be new to the inhabitants of heaven.

Its first note is, Glory to God in the highest. In the salvation of every soul, glory is brought to God, on earth and in heaven- in time, and through eternity. Of those reclaimed by grace, it is said: 'This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise.' 'I am glorified in them.' 'When He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all those who believe.' If the angels rejoice over the conversion of a single sinner, because the glory of God is advanced by the wonderful method of grace, what rejoicing will there be among them when the whole company of the redeemed are brought home to the celestial Mount Zion, to stand as eternal monuments of divine grace before the throne of God! Then will the sweet, sublime angelic song of 'Glory to God in the highest' forever resound among the hills of Paradise. Oh, how the angels love to see the glory of their divine Lord advanced by the wondrous and mysterious plan of redemption! And shall not man, whose nature Jesus assumed, and whose salvation He came to accomplish, raise a more exalted song? The promotion of God's glory should be the grand aim of our lives. We should glorify Him by receiving His blessed Son as our Savior; and our songs of praise for so unspeakable a gift should be ever ascending to the Most High. 'Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.'

In their sublime and harmonious song the angels ascribe glory to God in the highest. This we may understand as a call upon all the inhabitants of the celestial regions to render, in the highest degree, glory to God who dwells in the highest heavens, for this greatest manifestation of divine mercy- the love of God to sinners. 'At the birth of nature, the sons of God, the angels sang together, and shouted for joy; but when the Author and Lord of

nature is born, let them raise a loftier and more ecstatic anthem of praise.' Here, let them tune their harps anew, and sing of the divine glory.

But observe the last notes of this angelic song: 'on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.' How expressive of the grand object of the Savior's mission to the world! He came to make peace between God and man. This object He accomplished by His holy life of obedience to the divine law, and His atoning sacrifice on Calvary. It is the atoning blood of Christ, which speaks peace to the guilty, troubled conscience of those who, by faith, apply to it for relief. Of all who are guided to the blessed Savior, it may truly be said, 'Their peace shall be as a river; their righteousness as the waves of the sea.' Most emphatically is our Redeemer the Prince of Peace; and most gloriously has He proclaimed peace to the enemies of God. 'He makes wars to cease unto the end of the earth.' 'In His days shall the righteous flourish: and abundance of peace so long as the moon endures.' 'And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever.'

While dwelling in this world, where tumult, hostility, and deadly conflict prevail, our blessed Savior continually breathed words of peace and good-will to men; and when He was about to leave these sin-stained shores, and return to His Father's house above, one of the farewell blessings He bequeathed to his friends was peace. 'Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you.' Yes, "Peace" was the word our Savior breathed
When from our world His steps withdrew;
The gift He to His friends bequeathed,
With Calvary and the Cross in view;
Redeemer! with adoring lore
Our spirits take Your rich bequest,
The watchword of the host above,
The passport to their realm of rest.

After the choir of angels had sung their nocturnal song at the

birth of Jesus, they returned to their home above, where they see the face of God, and sing His praise evermore. As soon as the sound of the heavenly harps dies away, and all is again still around them, the shepherds resolve to go to Bethlehem, and see the thing which the Lord had made known unto them. There they find the new-born Savior, as the angel had told them, lying in a manger. There they find the true Shepherd of Israel- the great Shepherd of the sheep. With what wonder and admiration do they gaze upon this Babe of Bethlehem! With what joy do they fall down and worship Him as their Savior! Notwithstanding the lowly circumstances of His birth, they look upon Him as the Savior of the world. They received the announcement of the heavenly messenger as true; and now the oil of gladness is poured into their hearts. In their overflowing joy, they are ready to join the angels in their new hymn of praise for the incarnation of the Son of God. After witnessing the mysterious scene of Bethlehem, they, at first, publish the glad tidings abroad, and then return to their flocks, glorifying and praising God. 'And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.'

A most remarkable phenomenon attending the Savior's entrance into the world was the appearance of an extraordinary star, or luminary, in the heavens, which seems to have had no other work nor motion, but to tell of Him and lead to Him. This miraculous star, appearing in the East, attracted the Magi to Jerusalem, with this inquiry, 'Where is he that is born king of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him.' On leaving Jerusalem, in their search for the new-born king of Israel, the wise men were again gladdened with a sight of the star, which seems to have disappeared from their view for some time. 'And lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, until it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.'

Here the questions very naturally arise, What led the wise men

to believe that this star indicated the birth of a mighty king in Judea? What induced them to undertake their journey for the purpose of finding Him, and paying Him homage? It is the opinion of some critics, that their persuasion arose from Balaam's prophecy of the star that should come out of Jacob. Collyer, in his Lectures on Scripture Prophecy, says: 'It is difficult to account for the coming of the wise men from the East to Jerusalem, in search of Jesus, at the birth of our Lord, had not this prophecy been well known, at least traditionally, in their country, and understood to refer to the advent of the Messiah, then universally an object of greater or of less expectation. . . It can scarcely be doubted that Balaam's prophecies then still prevailed among "the Mountains of the East," and that these Sages understood this luminous appearance in the heavens to refer to Him, whom Balaam called "the STAR of Jacob.'" The pious Leighton, however, believes that they were divinely instructed regarding the grand object for which this star appeared; and in his opinion most will coincide. 'I conceive,' he says, 'all their skill in astronomy, and Balaam's prophecy of the star in Jacob, and the tradition of the Messiah and His star, and seers prophesying of them, could not make the language of this star thus clear and intelligible to them. There was no doubt, an extraordinary darting in of a higher light into their minds, clearer than that of the star, to make its meaning clear to them, and to draw them forth to this journey.'

We have seen, that when the star re-appeared to the wise men, they 'rejoiced with exceeding great joy.' What was the real cause of this joy? Did it not arise from the belief that they were about to see the salvation of God? By the re-appearance of the star, did they not have a visible token of the divine presence, and feel assured that their journey would terminate successfully? -that they would soon behold the new-born King of Israel, now that this new and bright star was guiding them onward?

What a fine illustration we have here of the feelings which exist in the newly regenerated man, where spiritual light shines into

his soul, guiding him to Jesus, and to an eternal day of glory! Such a one rejoices with exceeding great joy- a joy unspeakable and full of glory. It is this divine illumination from heaven, shining within the soul, that has caused believers in all ages to rejoice, like the wise men, with exceeding great joy. It has emboldened them in the hour of danger, made them take joyfully the spoiling of their goods, and enabled them to sing aloud for joy amid the flames of persecution.

Are you following the guidance of the star of Bethlehem through the dark wilderness of life? If you are, you will be led to the Sun of Righteousness; you will find Jesus; and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man can take from you. And in a little while, your eyes shall behold the King of Zion, your exalted Savior, in the heavenly mansions, where his glory will be no more veiled as it was on earth. This blessed vision may be very near. The sight of your Father's house above, may be ready to open upon your enraptured view. Angels may be waiting to conduct your happy soul to the glorious presence of King Jesus, who now reigns on heaven's highest, brightest throne. You may be about to sit down among that ransomed throng, who are now beholding the glory of Him, who was born in Bethlehem, and crucified on Calvary. You may be about to gaze upon that countenance which now shines as the sun- to see those hands which were for you nailed to the cross- to hear that voice, which alone can speak pardon and peace to the guilty, troubled soul. Oh, let us be thankful for that spiritual light which points us to such untold blessedness: and let our joy increase more and more, as by faith we see the Star of Morning, guiding us to glory and immortality. 'Exult in his holy name; O worshipers of the Lord, rejoice!'

When the wise men find the Savior they fall down, and worship Him. Notwithstanding the low and unhonored condition in which they see Him, they at once prostrate themselves in His presence with grateful hearts, paying homage to His name, and presenting unto Him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

What a noble example is here presented to us! When we find the blessed Jesus, we should acknowledge His majesty, worship Him as our divine Savior, while, at the same time, we should give Him the strongest affections of our hearts, and the best services of our lives. We should present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto Him, which is our reasonable service. We should honor Him with our substance, and with the first-fruits of all our increase. Counting nothing too valuable to be withheld from Him, we should be ready, if necessary, to part with life itself for the sake of Him who, in His incomparable mercy, laid down His own precious life for us, that we might never experience the second death- that we might be crowned with a blissful immortality. Let us now muse upon some of those great truths which are founded on the subject of this essay; and may we contemplate these sacred things with reverential esteem; and with our affections elevated above the transitory objects around us.

THE DIVINE CONSTITUTION OF THE PERSON OF THE SAVIOR AS GOD-MAN. That 'the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,' is a wonderful thought- a great mystery which can never be fully unraveled. But this is one of the most precious doctrines of the Bible; and the source of the Christian's purest and most rapturous joy. That the eternal Son of God really assumed human nature into personal subsistence with Himself, is a doctrine most explicitly taught in the Scriptures; and happy are we, if we can rest our belief on the plain teachings of the Word of God, rejecting all human opinions which are contrary to the pure Gospel revelation. The following passages prove the truth of our declaration, that Christ actually assumed human nature 'God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.' 'But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman.' 'Concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.' 'Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same. For truly He took not on

Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham.' 'Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He, humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.' Thus did Jesus Christ, the Eternal Word, the second Person of the Godhead, most truly assume a human soul and a human body, humbling Himself in a most astonishing manner, and yielding himself to sorrows, to sufferings, and to the death of the cross for us.

With respect to the glorious union of the divine and human nature in the Person of our adorable Redeemer, His name is called by the prophet 'wonderful.' He is wonderful not only in the constitution of His Person as God and man in two natures, but also in His offices and relations to us- in the manifestation of His unsearchable riches to the children of men. His whole life on earth was a life of wonders. He is Wonderful in His love, in His sympathy, in His meekness, in His humility, in His patience, in His wisdom, in His doctrines, in His miracles, in His sufferings, in His death, in His resurrection, in His ascension to heaven, and in His intercession at the right hand of God. He will be wonderful in His second coming; and through the ages of eternity His name will still be called 'wonderful.'

In the union of the divine and human nature in the Person of Christ, there is no confusion; each nature retains its own essential qualities distinct; and both constitute one most wonderful and glorious Person, who is truly Emmanuel, God with us, God in our nature. By His being manifest in the flesh, Christ lost nothing of His essential glory, greatness, majesty, and dominion. His assuming our nature caused no change in His divine Person. While He walked through this valley of tears in the likeness of men, in the form of a servant, He was as truly the brightness of His Father's glory, and the Supreme Ruler of the universe, as He now is, while enthroned in the bosom of celestial

bliss amid the heavenly throng, adored by seraphim and cherubim, and the spirits of the just made perfect.

And, as He is truly God, so He is truly man! 'Wherefore in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren; that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.' 'Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God.' One of the titles which the Savior loved to apply to Himself, in the days of His personal ministry, was that of the 'Son of man'- 'the Son of man who came down from heaven'; 'the Son of man who came to seek and to save that which was lost.' Christ assumed our nature, with all its sinless infirmities. He has a human heart, to feel for the woes of mankind. 'For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.' Like us He was subject to hunger and thirst, cold and heat, weariness and sorrow. But oh, whose sorrows were ever like unto His sorrows? Who ever agonized like the Sufferer of Gethsemane? Who ever endured such a death as that of the Man of Calvary?

'Like us a man, He trod on earthly soil,
He bore each pang, and strove in weary toil;
He spoke with human words, with pity sighed;
Like us He mourned, and feared, and wept, and died.'

The Grand Design of the Savior's INCARNATION. It was for the purpose of saving sinners, that Christ came from heaven to earth. Hear His own emphatic declaration: 'I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.' 'For the Son of man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.' 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.' How glorious was the object of His mission to earth! He came that we might find in Him a hiding-place from the storm and tempest of divine wrath, which is ready to break over an ungodly world. He came to proclaim the acceptable Year of the Lord- to break the chains of sin, and to bruise Satan under our feet; to open the prison doors,

and to confer on us the glorious liberty of the children of God. He came to enrich our impoverished souls with all spiritual and heavenly blessings; to lead us beside the still waters of divine grace; to implant holy desires in our hearts; to elevate our affections above a vain and perishing world; to clothe us with the garments of salvation; to give unto us who mourn in Zion, beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; to feed us with living bread; to open for us a fountain of immortal life; to pour out His Spirit upon us; to guide us to the shores of Emmanuel's land; to receive us to mansions of everlasting joy and glory in heaven. What a great work is this, which Christ came to accomplish!

The salvation of sinners- the conferring of endless happiness upon myriads of our guilty race, who might justly have been left to reap the fruit of their transgression with the fallen angels, in the regions of eternal darkness and despair. Who can tell what it is to be delivered from the thralldom of sin, and the fearful realities of the second death; to be reinstated in the favor and love of God; and to be crowned with the imperishable diadem of beauty and glory through those infinite ages of bliss, which roll beyond the grave!

All that our blessed Savior did on earth was to accomplish this great work of redemption- to glorify His Heavenly Father in the salvation of precious, immortal souls. He never failed to make this the grand design of His high mission. For this very object He became a man of sorrows. For this He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. For this He groaned in the spirit; for this He agonized in the garden, and expired upon the cross. For this He rose again, and ascended on High. And in the courts of heaven He still pleads our cause before God. Oh, what believer is not made to rejoice, when he considers the end for which the Savior became incarnate- for the purpose of redeeming his soul to God, and to the ineffable joys of heaven, Jesus visited earth, and trod the thorny path of life, until He endured the excruciating death of the Cross!

'For this He came and dwelt on earth,
For this His life was given;
For this He fought and vanquished death,
For this He pleads in heaven!
Join, all you saints beneath the sky,
Your grateful praise to give
Sing loud hosannas to the Lord,
Who died that you might live.'

IN THE INCARNATION OF OUR BLESSED SAVIOR THE MOST AMAZING CONDESCENSION IS MANIFESTED. Where, in the wide universe of God, can be found an instance of condescension so marvelous as that which Christ displayed, when He left the throne of heavenly glory, and the songs of seraphim and cherubim, to be cradled in the manger of Bethlehem, to become a man of sorrows, to dwell on earth in the disguise of a servant? How wonderful, that the Son of God, who lay from all eternity past in the bosom of the Father, should, for a season, lay aside the robes of His glory, forsake those high and heavenly mansions, with all their ineffable joys, and take upon Him the form of our degraded species, that we might be invested with the robes of righteousness, and shine as the sun in the kingdom of heaven! Here we behold the eternal Son of God, by whom were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, uniting Himself to frail, mortal man; to man who is but a worm; to man, who is like a wind that passes away, and comes not again. Oh, what condescension! How truly amazing!

The infinite condescension of our blessed Redeemer in assuming humanity, is a subject in which our minds should often be engaged in the most serious contemplation. And while dwelling on this marvelous and glorious theme, may our souls be filled with adoration, gratitude, and praise. When, in the exercise of a strong and lively faith, we look at the voluntary descent of Jesus into this lower world, and consider the unparalleled humiliation of His life and death, we will feel like

giving expression to the emotions of our hearts in language similar to this: 'That the Almighty should become the Savior of His rebellious creatures, by taking upon Him their nature that He, who rules over all worlds, should stoop, not to be a mighty monarch, but a humble carpenter; that He, who created and provided the foxes and the birds with holes and nests, should voluntarily leave Himself destitute of a place where to lay His head; that He, who is the great Proprietor of all things, should condescend to be supported by pious females, who ministered to him of their substance; that the Fountain of felicity should become a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; that the Lord of glory should be despised and rejected of men; that the Judge of the living and dead should stand, like a criminal, at an earthly tribunal, charged with crimes which He never committed, and condemned for transgressions of which He was declared innocent; that the Majesty of heaven should be spit upon, scourged, and crucified; that the Lord of life should pour out His soul unto death; this, this is the wonder of wonders- the unsearchable riches of Christ

"Not to be thought of, but with tides of joy;
Not to be mentioned, but with shouts of praise."

To view this subject in a proper light, we must take into consideration the essential and original dignity, majesty, and glory of Christ. He, who condescends to be born in the likeness of men, is the only begotten Son of God, equal and co-eternal with the Father. He is the second Person in the glorious Trinity; the same divine Being, some of whose excellencies, as revealed in the Scriptures, have already been exhibited in this work. This glorious Person, in His infinite compassion for perishing sinners, makes Himself of no reputation, and takes upon Him the form of a servant, and is made in the likeness of men. He, whose hand has laid the foundation of the earth, and whose right hand has spanned the heavens, even condescends to have those hands nailed to the cross. Being found in fashion as a man, He humbles Himself, and becomes obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Be astonished, O you heavens, at this!

What unexpected, unthought of condescension in the Lord of glory! What astonishment must this transition have excited in the minds of the heavenly host! 'Easily may we imagine,' says Dwight, 'that all heaven was lost in wonder, and buried in silence, to behold this transition from infinite glory to supreme humiliation, from the throne of the universe to a tenement of clay.'

It would be considered great condescension for an earthly prince to leave his throne and visit the wretched cottages of his most degraded and impoverished subjects, for the benevolent purpose of administering relief, and elevating to rank, and fortune, and office; but infinitely greater is the condescension of Christ, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who, though dwelling in ineffable light, and possessing every divine attribute, yet disrobes Himself of the glories of His vast domains, and comes to visit guilty and degraded man on earth, with tidings of peace and reconciliation, eternal life and felicity. The Prince of Peace stoops from His high and royal palace in the heavens to agonize- to bleed- to die for sinners on the earth. Oh! surprising thought. Oh! miracle of mercy. What language can express the voluntary descent of the Son of the Eternal God from the riches of heaven to the deepest and the most intense and overwhelming suffering on earth, that fallen man might be raised to the unmingled and everlasting joys of a serene and heavenly Paradise? What songs of gratitude can we raise for a condescension so unparalleled- for goodness so immense?

'And did the Holy and the Just,
The Sovereign of the skies,
Stoop down to wretchedness and dust,
That guilty worms might rise?
Yes, the Redeemer left His throne,
His radiant throne on high;
Surprising mercy! love unknown!
To suffer, bleed, and die.
He took the dying traitor's place,

And suffering in his stead;
For man, (O miracle of grace!)
For man the Savior bled!
Jesus, my soul adoring bends
To love so full, so free;
And may I hope that love extends
Its sacred power to me.
What glad returns can I impart
For favors so divine?
Oh, take my all; this worthless heart,
And make it wholly Thine.'

In this most wonderful condescension of Christ Jesus, we have a perfect pattern for our imitation; and the apostle calls up this example, when he enjoins on Christians the duty of exercising the grace of humility. 'Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.' 'Now I Paul myself beseech you, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ.' A proud and imperious spirit is most displeasing in the sight of Heaven. 'God resists the proud, but gives grace unto the humble.' Our blessed Savior is meek and lowly in heart; and if we would be conformed to His image, we must strive to imitate this choice example of humility which He has furnished us. This is one of the fruits of the Spirit: and if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. The high and lofty One, who dwells in the high and holy place, inhabiting eternity and the praises of Israel, dwells with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. Oh, let us study to increase more and more in the grace of humility. And if we would manifest this lovely disposition in our dally walk and conversation, we must look to a condescending Savior, and always bear about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus. If we are fouled cultivating this gracious affection in the true spirit of piety, we shall receive the approbation of heaven, and a rich reward in the life to come.

It is while exercising the grace of humility, that we are favored

with our brightest views of divine things. 'Cherish,' says John Howe, 'the great grace of humility; and be ever lowly in your own eyes. That temper carries it in even a natural disposition to delight in God. How sweet complacency will such a soul take in Him! His light and glory shine with great luster in the eyes of such a one while there is not a nearer, imagined luster to vie with. Stars are seen at noon, by those who descend low into a deep pit. . . . Down then into the dust- there you are in the fittest place and posture for delightful converse with God.' Leighton has beautifully remarked: 'Surely, the soul that has most of Christ, has most humility. It is the lesson He peculiarly recommends to us from His own example, which is the shortest and most effectual way of teaching, 'Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart. Jesus Christ is indeed the Lily of the valleys; He grows nowhere but in the humble heart. Said Rowland Hill, with much earnestness and simplicity, 'I love the poor, the lowly believer. See yon evening star, how bright it shines; how pure, how gentle are its rays- but look, it is lower than the heavens, than those that sparkle with a restless twinkling, in the higher regions of the sky. God keeps you low that you may shine bright. Where do the rivers run that fertilize our soil- is it on the barren top of yonder hill? No, in the valleys beneath. If you would have the river, whose streams make glad the city of our God, to run through your hearts and enrich them to His glory, You must abide in the valley of humility.'

'The saint that wears heaven's brightest crown,
In deepest adoration bends;
The weight of glory bows him down,
Then most, when most the soul ascends:
Nearest the throne itself must be
The footstool of humility.'

THE BENEVOLENCE OF GOD IS MOST ILLUSTRIOUSLY DISPLAYED IN THE GIFT OF HIS SON. The love of God is the original fountain of all our mercies. The Scriptures make known to us this great truth, that the glorious plan of redemption

originated in the infinite love of God the Father. 'For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.' Who can unfold the full import of this glorious declaration? Can the tongue of men or angels? No. It passes knowledge. The ages of vast eternity will be spent in contemplating this wonder of wonders, this mystery of mysteries- the love of God in giving His Son to sorrows, and to sufferings, and to death for us, that we might not perish, but have eternal life. In the gift of His Son to a lost world, God the Father has manifested the greatest love that has ever been made known to us. It is a love beyond human or angelic comprehension. Its contemplation fills the pious mind with wonder, admiration, and gratitude. It will forever employ the harps of angels and the redeemed in glory. It is a theme which will never be exhausted. It will be always new. It is the source of that wondrous new song in heaven; the source of all those rapturous joys in the presence of God on high. There is nothing like this love. All comparison bears but a faint resemblance to it. It is a great deep, a boundless ocean, incomprehensible as the other attributes of the divine nature. O Lord, Your mercy is great above the heavens; and Your truth reaches unto the clouds.

'The power of God does brightly shine in the creation, the wisdom of God may clearly be discerned in the government of things; but the incarnation of God is that work, is that dispensation of grace, wherein the divine goodness does most conspicuously display itself. How possibly could God have demonstrated a greater excess of kindness towards us, than by thus, for our sake and good, sending His dearest Son out of His bosom into this sordid and servile state, subjecting Him to all the, infirmities of our frail nature, exposing Him to the worst inconveniences of our low condition? What expressions can signify, what comparisons can set out the stupendous vastness of this kindness.' (Barrow)

In giving this love its just preeminence, the sacred writers point

to it as an example of unprecedented benevolence in God. 'In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' This love will appear more and more marvelous, if we consider the greatness of the Giver, and the insignificance and vileness of the objects upon whom it is bestowed. It is manifested by the great and glorious Jehovah to a world of miserable sinners. 'God commends His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' Oh! it is this which should excite our highest admiration, and our deepest gratitude. God first loved us: He loved us when we were rebels and enemies- wanderers from the path of duty and happiness- sinners of the most depraved character. When we were in this deplorable condition with no eye to pity, and with no arm to save us, the vast benevolence of God prompted Him to give His Son to die for us- to give HIMSELF. 'Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us.' 'And we have known and believed the love that God has to us. God is LOVE.' Here, let us pause, and wonder, and admire, and adore. Oh, what manner of love is this! How illustriously it shines! This moral attribute of God is so gloriously manifested in the gift of Jesus to a lost world, that all holy intelligences are filled with wonder and amazement when they think of such goodness. Angels are now dwelling on this theme with intense thought. The redeemed, who are now singing the song of Moses and the Lamb, are celebrating this love with unceasing delight. Saints, who are now traveling through this valley of tears, are looking heavenward, and longing to join the celestial choir, that they may learn to celebrate this unexampled benevolence in more worthy and exalted strains. Oh, who shall separate us from this love of God? Let it ever glow in our hearts; let it ever be extolled with our tongues. May it excites in us most sublime gratitude, while we journey as pilgrims through life; and be celebrated by us through the eternal day of glory.

This love is freely given to sinners. God gave His Son- unto us a Son is given. In His unfathomable love, God did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all. While we come to Christ, and receive Him with thankfulness as the free gift of God, and rest in Him for eternal salvation, let us be consoled by the thought that the divine benevolence will also be manifested towards us in all the events of life, making even our afflictions to work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. If our Heavenly Father has conferred upon us such an unspeakable gift as that of His beloved Son, how shall He not with Him, as the apostle says, also freely give us all things? Since He has given us the living bread from heaven, will He not provide for our temporal needs out of His unlimited fullness? Will He not lead us in the path of righteousness; protect us from every evil, give us the victory over our spiritual foes, and finally crown us with the glories of eternity? Yes, He will. 'My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.' 'All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours.' 'For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.'

THE LOVE OF THE SAVIOR IS WONDERFULLY DISPLAYED IN HIS INCARNATION. While the benevolence of God was the grand motive that prompted Him to give His only begotten Son as the Savior of a perishing world, love was also the cause which constrained the blessed Jesus to leave His heavenly throne and visit earth, that He might accomplish the eternal purposes of divine mercy in the salvation of sinners. And, oh, how boundless is that love which brings the Son of God, the Creator of the world, from such heights of glory to such depths of humiliation and suffering! Here is a manifestation of grace which exceeds all description, passes all knowledge, and is without a parallel in the annals of time or eternity. Well does the apostle speak of this wondrous theme, as, the love of Christ, which passes knowledge.' When, for the purpose of redeeming lost sinners,

the Son of God divests Himself of His heavenly glory, takes upon Him the form of a servant, and is made in the likeness of men, He manifests a love, the vehemence and vastness of which eternity itself can never fully declare. How was the mind of Paul elevated by noble conceptions, when he thought of the amazing grace of Jesus in becoming our Redeemer! With what deep emotions- with what sacred eloquence does he expatiate on this delightful theme! 'You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might be rich.' This caused him often to pour out his soul in earnest prayer to God, that the Gentiles might know the great love of Christ towards them. 'For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in Your hearts by faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, many be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge.'

Oh, who can measure the height and depth, the length and breadth of this admirable, rich grace! Most boundless compassion, reaching from yon bright throne of Jehovah in the heavens to this dark valley of mortality, raising myriads of the lost race of Adam, from the death of sin to the life of holiness and happiness; to the supreme, immortal felicities of a heavenly Paradise! How vain are words to express the stupendous grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in clothing Himself with our nature, that He might become a suffering man, and by His death upon the Cross, reconcile us to God!

Oh, the grace and love of the blessed Jesus! He, the most high God, blessed for evermore, consented to become man. He who was life, and gives life to all, became a mortal man. He was born to die. Because we were "partakers of flesh and blood; He also Himself likewise took part of the same." Oh, love beyond example or degree!

'Oh, may this love, in strains sublime,
Be sung to the last hour of time;
And let eternity confess,
Through all its rounds, the matchless grace.'

IN THE INCARNATION OF THE SAVIOR, HUMANITY IS MOST HIGHLY HONORED AND EXALTED. When the Son of God came from heaven and took upon Him the seed of Abraham, and was manifest in the flesh, human nature was raised from the lowest degree of wretchedness to a most exalted state of happiness- even above the seats of the highest seraph that adores, and burns with love, in the presence of God. In the Person of Emmanuel our nature is crowned with the highest honors, and the highest glories of Paradise. In heaven, the Man Christ Jesus now reigns over all things; on His head are many crowns, and He is invested with supreme power and authority, for the good of the Church. As our Forerunner, He has for us entered within the veil, and will in due time bring us to that state of honor, exaltation, and glory to which He is now advanced. What an honor is it to reign with Christ in heaven; to be made heirs of God, and kings and priests unto Him; to have our vile bodies fashioned like unto the glorious body of the blessed Redeemer; to shine as the sun in the kingdom of our Heavenly Father; to be made equal to the angels, to be clothed with immortal youth, vigor, and beauty; and to inhale forever the peaceful atmosphere of the upper Paradise! We shall never be able, in this life, to comprehend the greatness of the honor and blessedness to which human nature is advanced, in consequence of the incarnation and the atonement of the Son of God. We must wait until mortality is swallowed up of life; until we reach that better world, where the storms and darkness of earth never come; until in the splendor of immortal day, we shall see how great are our honors, how pure our joys, how bright our glories, how rich our inheritance with the saints in light. In the meantime let us rejoice, that Jesus is now invested with humanity on the throne of heaven; and that it is His will that we may also be partakers with Him in His heavenly glories.

What consolation is here for the weary Christian pilgrim journeying through a land of trial and conflict- of temptation and danger- of darkness and the shadow of death! Child of God, lift up your head with joy. Look heavenward. Who sits on yonder glorious throne? Who wields the scepter of the universe? Who controls the raging elements? Who says to the storms and tempests, Peace, be still? Who raises the poor from the dust, and exalts him to a throne among princes? Who beautifies the meek with salvation? It is Emmanuel- Jehovah Jesus in our nature- our Elder Brother- our Advocate with the Father. Most animating thought! Oh, let us look with the eye of faith to our exalted Redeemer; and we shall abide in more than earthly honor while pilgrims here, until we are carried by angels to the blissful seats of sanctified souls above, to live and flourish in the Paradise of God forever and ever. This honor have all His saints. Let the thought, that Christ will soon exalt us to those high and heavenly honors, brighten the sorrows of our earthly pilgrimage, and inspire us with hope in the darkest hour, until that day opens which shall never be darkened by a setting sun. Let us keep our eyes upon the adorable Jesus in His glorified humanity, at the right hand of the Majesty on high; and look forward with happy anticipation of the joys of heaven- of being admitted into His presence to receive all those divine honors and felicities which were purchased for us, when He condescended to become bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh.

Let us now bring all these things home to our hearts. Let us pause, and ask, How are we affected by this great and marvelous event, the incarnation of the eternal Son of God? Are we ready to join the angels in singing, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men? Or, is our heart unmoved at this highest manifestation of divine benevolence to a lost world- the gift of a Savior? Has the cheering light of the star of Bethlehem yet shone on our pathway to guide us to Him, Who is the Bright and Morning Star, and who brings an eternal day of

glory to the soul? Are we ascribing glory to God in the highest strains for the incarnation of His begotten Son, who is the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His Person? Do we experience the peace, which this Day-spring from on high brings to the soul? Are we admiring that vast, incomparable benevolence of God, which led Him to send His own Son to the world, in the likeness of men, to make atonement for sin? If we would see the wisdom, justice, power, and goodness of God most illustriously displayed, we must go to Bethlehem. There we will see the manifold wisdom of God. There we will see Deity manifested in the flesh, and learn the new song of redeeming love. There we will see man redeemed, the powers of darkness overthrown, the sting of death extracted, and the gloom of the grave dispelled. Then will the glory of the Lord shine around us, and we will listen with delight to the song of angels, and our own voices will be attuned to the harps of the heavenly world. Then will we return, like the shepherds, glorifying and praising God for all the things that we have heard and seen. Then will the angels' song be ours- ours through time- ours through eternity. Yes, in yon temple of light, the blissful abode of all holy intelligences, we will sing with rapture of the incarnation of Jesus, and the glory it brings to God and our own souls. Oh, with what transports of joy will we there behold Him, who was born in Bethlehem, still clothed with our nature before the throne of God, and reigning in all the grandeur of the divine attributes! It is impossible for us now to conceive with what feelings of wonder, and delight, and admiration, and gratitude, we will remember the mysterious scene of Bethlehem, in those serene mansions of the blessed, where the incarnate Son of God is the delight of every heart, and the theme of every song.

Let us endeavor now to have our hearts duly impressed with this great mystery of godliness, in which the human race is so deeply interested. Let us feel that no event of all earthly nature is so important to us as that of the incarnation of the Son of God. Let us remember that this will be the source of eternal joy to us, or greatly aggravate our punishment in the abodes of misery! What

a solemn consideration! Let us lay it to heart now; and come, without delay, to Bethlehem, the house of bread, that we may eat of that spiritual food which came down from heaven, and drink of that smitten Rock from whose side issue those streams which reanimate the spirit of him, who is ready to perish from thirst. Like David, let us long to drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem. Oh, that we could say with him: 'As the Deer pants after the water brooks, so pants my soul after You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.' Let us thirst for that spiritual, living water which Jesus alone can give. Let, us come to Him, and study and admire the mystery of God manifest in the flesh, and the amazing height, depth, and length, and breadth of divine love. He is the only way to the Father; walk in Him and He will lead you to a reconciled God. He is the Truth: believe in Him, and you will know all things. He is the Life: look to Him, and you will live forever. He will be Your guiding Star through the dark and stormy slight of earth, until the bright and happy morning of eternal day dawns- until you stand upon the peaceful shore- until you gaze upon the blissful skies.

O God, You who by a star guided the wise men to Your eternal Son, when He was manifested in the flesh, grant, in the immensity of Your love, that we, by the reception of spiritual light from You, may also be led to the only Savior for the blessings of grace and the joys of heaven. O merciful Father, give us an interest in Your Son Jesus Christ- in His atoning blood and righteousness; in His intercessory work in heaven; in the peacefulness of His kingdom; in the abundance of His riches; and in the beauty and excellency of that celestial inheritance which He has purchased with His precious blood.

Blessed Jesus, what shall we render unto You for Your unspeakable benefits to us! From Your glorious throne in heaven You condescended to regard man, 'that is a worm'- man, who is in Your sight less than nothing, and vanity. You did come from the realms of supreme felicity to a world of sorrow, to be invested with humanity- to feel for our infirmities- to make

peace between God and man; to endure the death of the cross for us. How highly have You distinguished us, in Your immeasurable kindness! We bless You that You have appeared as the Day-spring from on high, transforming our darkness into light, into glory. May we walk in Your light until we reach the bright and happy home of the blessed ones in heaven. And when we look at the glorious results of Your incarnation, sufferings, death, and intercession, may we be constrained from our inmost soul, to join in the angelic hymn, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to all whom God favors." Luke 2:14

THE SAVIOR'S MINISTRY

'His was a life of miracles, and might, and charity, and love.'

'Jesus of Nazareth- who went about doing good.'- Acts 10: 38.

'It was His glory, as it was His delight, to be the friend of the friendless, and the helper of the helpless; to pardon the sinful, and cleanse the polluted; to open the door of heaven to faith, and hold out the golden scepter to penitence; to suffuse with hope the eye of despair, and open a passage from the grave to the world of glory.' -Dwight .

Star of the land, in glory bright,
Through time's dark valley, Oh be my light;
Star of the sea, may your sweet beam,
Over life's troubled ocean gleam.
Star of the pilgrim, cheer my way,
A pilgrim to the realms of day;
Star of the blessed, around my head,
Your everlasting radiance shed.
Star of the morn, and of the gloom,
Of life, and of the cheerless tomb,
But more than star, my King, my Lord,
My God, by earth, and heaven adored,
My glory, wealth, and rapture be,
Now, and through all eternity.

THE SAVIOR IN HIS PERSONAL MINISTRY ON EARTH.

Hail to His rising from afar;
He is the bright and morning star;
His healing beams, O nations, bless;
He is the Sun of Righteousness;
To save His people from their sins,

Jesus His suffering life begins;
'Ere long, as Christ our sacrifice,
The Holy and the Just One dies.

-J. Montgomery

It is a most wonderful, important, and glorious truth, that the eternal Son of God, robed in humanity, has appeared in this world of spiritual darkness, as the blessed Day-spring from on high, to impart light to us, to guide our feet into the way of peace, and to conduct us to the realms of a blissful immortality beyond the skies. In His immeasurable benevolence for a lost world, the only-begotten Son of God comes forth from the bosom of the Father, places Himself between offended Deity and sinful man, receives the stroke of divine wrath, and breathes out His life a ransom for many. For more than thirty years He dwells in this weary world, leading a life of suffering from the manger of Bethlehem to the cross of Calvary. This divine pilgrimage of our blessed Savior deserves our most serious consideration; for with it our eternal welfare is inseparably connected. It is a subject of vast concern to the human race. It is the life of our precious souls. If we possess a saving knowledge of Him whom God the Father has sent forth to atone for our sin, heaven with all its untold glories will be ours. But if we reject the only Savior, and the divine doctrines He has taught, the wrath of God will abide on us through all the infinite ages of our existence. Let us, then, attend to those great truths which the Scriptures, in disclosing the scenes of our Savior's life, present for our instruction, comfort, and salvation. We have already viewed Christ as the Morning Star, the Sun of Righteousness, and Light of the world: we have contemplated the nature and excellence of His divine Person; and have followed Him in His wonderful transition from the throne of heaven to the manger of Bethlehem, when He embodied the attributes of Deity in an incarnate form, descending from supreme glory to the deepest humiliation, taking upon Him the form of a servant, that He might become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. And now we would glance at some of the remarkable scenes in

His holy life on earth, and muse upon the lessons they impart to us.

How delightful to trace the footsteps of our blessed Redeemer through this valley of tears, when he went about doing good, performing the noblest deeds, healing all manner of disease, working the most stupendous miracles, manifesting the purest and most unselfish benevolence, ministering the balm of consolation to the afflicted, and holding forth the glorious promise of life and immortality to a perishing world!

'My soul rejoices to pursue
The steps of Him I love,
Till glory breaks upon my view
In brighter worlds above.'

OUR SAVIOR'S LIFE ON EARTH WAS ONE OF POVERTY, REPROACH, AND PERSECUTION.

'For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might be rich.' The Son of God was not only invested in the robes of humanity, but also condescended to live in a state of voluntary poverty and persecution on earth. While the irrational creation was amply provided for, the blessed Jesus had not a couch of His own on which He could repose, when faint with fatigue. In His extreme poverty He could say, 'The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man has not where to lay His head.' The Possessor of heaven and earth, the Lord of all, in His voluntary humiliation, has not where to lay His head! Oh, what an unparallel exhibition of the vast benevolence of God to a perishing world! Oh, the depth of the riches of His love wherein God has abounded towards us, in sending His only-begotten Son to endure poverty, and reproach, and persecution for us! And what surpassing grace, that Christ Jesus, who was originally so rich in the glories of the celestial state, should, for our sakes, become so poor and despised on earth! What overflowing joy should spring up in our hearts, when we think that our blessed Savior voluntarily stooped to the

hardships of poverty, to persecution and revilings, for the purpose of raising us up to a participation of the unending joys of heaven: for the purpose of bringing us into a state of the most intimate and endearing communion with God, and all holy beings; for the purpose of refreshing our famishing and thirsty souls with the hidden manna, and the water of life; for the purpose of eternally enriching us with all those immense stores of heavenly blessings, which the eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, nor the heart conceived! Everlasting thanks and praise be rendered unto Your name, Oh divine Redeemer, for stooping so low in poverty, that we might be raised to the possession of the unsearchable riches of heaven. Oh, may the inspiring thought of Your surpassing grace towards the sons of men lift us above the cares, the sorrows, and the trials of life's weary way, and cause the voice of joy and gladness to be heard in our habitations, until crowned with consummate bliss in heaven, we take up the new and everlasting song of the redeemed, and celebrate the great and glorious mysteries of the gospel.

As soon as the Savior appeared in the world, He became the object of persecution and disdain. While an Infant, His life was sought by the cruel and jealous Herod; and He became an exile in Egypt. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.

He was despised and rejected—a man of sorrows, acquainted with bitterest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way when he went by. He was despised, and we did not care. Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God for his own sins! But he was wounded and crushed for our sins. He was beaten that we might have peace. He was whipped, and we were healed! Ah! did the Son of God receive such inhuman treatment from sinners whom He came to redeem? How plainly does this evince the deep-seated enmity of the natural heart against God, and His holy law!

One continual scene of reproach and persecution followed our Savior in the discharge of His mediatorial office on earth, until the crowning act of iniquity was accomplished, when His holy hands were nailed to the accursed tree, and when, quivering in agony on the bloody cross, He calmly bore in His bosom the revilings of all His persecutors. Trace His footsteps through the land of Judea, and see the bitter scorn, persecution, and calumny He endured while engaged in the blessed work of preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people. How often did the Jews, from envy, and prejudice, and hatred, conspire against Him to put Him to death! On one occasion we find them taking up stones to cast at Him; at another time we see them, filled with wrath, rising up and thrusting Him out of the city of Nazareth, and leading him unto the brow of the hill, that they might cast Him down headlong. When he had healed the impotent man, who had been diseased for thirty-eight years, we read of them persecuting Jesus, and seeking to slay Him because He had done these things on the Sabbath day. And after He had raised Lazarus, we see the chief priests and the Pharisees calling a council, and adopting measures to put Him to death. These proud and self-righteous rulers long to imbrue their hands in His innocent blood. The high priest and the scribes, Herod and Pilate, unite against the Lord of glory, while the common people, excited by their wicked rulers, cry, 'Crucify Him, crucify Him!' 'Not this man, but Barabbas.' 'And the voices of them, and of the chief priests prevailed.' How appropriately may this language be applied to the persecuted Savior, 'Princes have persecuted me without a cause.' 'For the enemy has persecuted my soul; he has smitten my life down to the ground; he has made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead.' 'Reproach has broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.' 'Remember, Lord, the reproach of Your servants; how I do bear in my bosom the reproach of all the mighty people; with which Your enemies have reproached the footsteps of Your anointed.'

It has been beautifully remarked by Jeremy Taylor, that 'all that Christ came for was, or was mingled with, sufferings; for all those little joys which God sent, either to recreate His person, or to illustrate His office, were abated, or attended with afflictions; God being more careful to establish in Him the covenant of sufferings than to relieve His sorrows. Presently after the angels had finished their hallelujahs, He was forced to flee to save His life, and the air became full of shrieks of the desolate mothers of Bethlehem for their dying babes. God had no sooner made Him illustrious with a voice from heaven, and the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Him in the waters of baptism, but He was delivered over to be tempted and assaulted by the devil in the wilderness. His transfiguration was a bright ray of glory; but then also He entered into a cloud, and was told a sad story, what He was to suffer at Jerusalem. When He rode triumphantly into Jerusalem, and was adorned with the acclamations of a King and a God, He wet the palms with His tears, sweeter than the drops of manna, or the little pearls of heaven that descended upon Mount Hermon, weeping, in the midst of this triumph, over obstinate, perishing, and malicious Jerusalem.' Now, can the faithful servants of Christ expect to be always exempt from persecution and reproach in a world where their divine Master was so cruelly and maliciously treated? No! They will be exposed to these trials until they reach the shores of that better world where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest. We are yet in an enemy's country; the world, the devil, and the flesh are all against us. 'All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.' Well does the Savior, in His valedictory discourse to His disciples on the evening before His suffering, remind them of the opposition and persecution they would meet with in the world. 'Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.' Oh, let us prepare for the conflicts of earth, remembering that while the day of life continues we must encounter its storms and tempests. 'Ordinarily,' says Richard Baxter, 'God would have vicissitudes

of summer and winter, day and night, that the church may grow externally in the summer of prosperity, and internally and radically in the winter of adversity; yet usually their night is longer than their day, and that day itself has its storms and tempests.'

If we are conformed to the blessed image of Christ, and follow His example, we must submit to be reproached by the world- to have our names cast out as evil. Yes, if we cleave to Jesus and the doctrines of the cross, and labor to bring others to Him, we must, like the apostle, suffer reproach. 'For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those that believe.' The world will endeavor to impeach our motives, misconstrue our actions, and tarnish our reputation. But while thus reproached for the sake of Christ, let us consider Him, and go forth unto Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach- like Moses, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. Like this great prophet and lawgiver, let our choice be wise for eternity; let us have respect unto the recompense of the reward, continually viewing the heavenly prize, the immortal diadem, which is ready to encircle the brow of the Christian, when he comes from the field of life's battle, more than a conqueror through the glorious Captain of his salvation. 'If you are reproached for the name of Christ, happy are you; for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.' 'Hearken unto me, you that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; do not fear the reproach of men, neither be afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but my righteousness shall be forever, and my salvation from generation to generation.'

My soul, with all your wakened powers
Survey the heavenly prize;
Nor let, these glittering toys of earth
Allure your wandering eyes.

The splendid crown that Moses sought,
Still beams around his brow;
Though soon great Pharaoh's sceptered pride
Was taught by death to bow.
The joys and treasures of a day
I cheerfully resign;
Rich in that large immortal store,
Secured by grace divine.
Let fools my wiser choice deride,
Angels and God approve;
Nor scorn of men, nor rage of hell,
My steadfast soul shall move.
With ardent eye that bright reward
I daily will survey;
And in the blooming prospect lose
The sorrows of the way

**THE SAVIOR TAUGHT THE MOST IMPORTANT, SUBLIME,
AND GLORIOUS DOCTRINES.**

As the great Teacher come from God, He daily taught and illustrated those things which concern the glory of His Heavenly Father and the salvation of man. He enlightens our minds respecting the nature and existence of God; our lost condition by nature; the will of God concerning our duty and salvation; the necessity of regeneration; the extent and spirituality of the divine law- the impossibility of justification by our own works- the necessity of faith, repentance, and holiness- and the certainty of a future state of reward and of punishment. He also exhibits His own character as the Son of God, and the Savior of a lost world; teaches the doctrine of redemption through His atoning blood; and declares His willingness to receive even the chief of sinners. Appearing as the great Luminary of the world, He scattered, by His teachings, the darkness which brooded over mankind respecting divine things, and pointed out the way to immortal life and felicity. He exhibits in the clearest light the momentous concerns of the soul- its inestimable value- its

salvation as most precious- and its loss as unspeakable. To warn sinners of their danger in continuing to reject the offers of the gospel, He speaks of the dark region of woe- of the worm that never dies- of the fire which is never quenched. And to animate His faithful servants amid the duties and trial's of life, point's them to the mansions of glory, where they will reign with Him- where they shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, at the banquet of redeeming love- where they shall be made equal to the angels of God- where they shall shine as the sun forever and ever.

Isaiah, with his prophetic pen, drew this most beautiful and striking representation of the nature and excellency of those doctrines which Christ was to teach in the days of His public ministry on earth: 'The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are blind; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto those who mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.' When our Savior had read a portion of these very words in the synagogue, He said to the Jews, 'This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.'

These truths He taught with divine authority, while His hearers listened with astonishment. The Jewish officers, who were sent to apprehend Him on one occasion, confessed, that never man spoke like this man. When He had ended His sermon on the mount, the people were astonished at His doctrine: for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. The Spirit of God and of glory rested on Him, and gracious words proceeded from His mouth. He makes known with authority and power all those things that He has heard from His Father. He

taught all those doctrines that the Father had directed Him to teach; and He met with divine acceptance. At the waters of baptism, and on the mount of transfiguration, a voice from heaven declares- 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased- hear Him.'

The MANNER in which Christ was to declare the great truths of His divine mission was also clearly foretold by the prophet. 'Look at my servant, whom I strengthen. He is my chosen one, and I am pleased with him. I have put my Spirit upon him. He will reveal justice to the nations. He will be gentle-he will not shout or raise his voice in public. He will not crush those who are weak or quench the smallest hope. He will bring full justice to all who have been wronged. He will not stop until truth and righteousness prevail throughout the earth. Even distant lands beyond the sea will wait for his instruction.' Through the whole period of His public ministry our blessed Savior was actively employed in preaching His heavenly doctrines, manifesting at the same time the most undaunted firmness, and the greatest meekness, humility, patience, tenderness and benevolence.

To spread the rays of heavenly light;
To give the mourner joy;
To preach glad tidings to the poor,
Was His divine employ.
Midst keen reproach and cruel scorn,
Patient and meek He stood;
His foes, ungrateful, sought His life;
He labored for their good.'

The doctrines which Christ taught are designed to console the wretched- to heal the wounds of the soul caused by sin- to bring us from spiritual darkness into spiritual light- to translate us into His peaceful, holy, and heavenly kingdom. They are food to the soul of the Christian- the joy and rejoicing of his heart- more to be desired than gold, yes, then much fine gold- sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. They abound with the greatest consolation for the believer at all seasons, especially in the hour

of adversity, pain, and death. How often they have calmed the troubled conscience, soothed the pillow of the afflicted, made the dim eye bright with hope, and caused the song of praise to come from lips 'quivering with agony!'

How often they have illuminated the dark confines of the grave, and enabled the believer to enter, with songs of triumph, into the joy of his Lord! 'My teaching will fall on you like rain; my speech will settle like dew. My words will fall like rain on tender grass, like gentle showers on young plants.' Deut. 32:2. 'The doctrine of the gospel is like the dew and the gentle rain that descends upon the tender grass, with which it flourishes, and is kept green. Christians are like the several flowers in a garden, that have upon each of them the dew of heaven, which being shaken with the wind, they let fall their dew at each other's roots, whereby they are jointly nourished, and become nourishers of one another.' -Bunyan

Oh, the preciousness of the doctrines of the Lord Jesus- so full of consolation for all believers in every period, in every circumstance, in every condition of life- so fraught with excellent precepts for the regulation of our conduct while here- so replete with promises of a rich, glorious, imperishable inheritance hereafter! How delightful to sit at the feet of Him, who is the way, the truth, and the life, and hear the gracious words which proceed from His mouth!

'Oh, happy they who know the Lord,
With whom He deigns to dwell,
He feeds and cheers them by His word,
His arms support them well.
He helped His saints in ancient days,
Who trusted in His name;
And we can witness to His praise,
His love is still the same.'

Here, let us ask- What impression do those divine truths which

the Savior has declared, make on our minds? Are we listening with the deepest interest and the greatest pleasure to the sayings of Him who has brought life and immortality to light? Do we regard them as the life of our souls- as all our salvation and all our desire? Can we say with Job: 'I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food?' or are we viewing them without concern? As we value the salvation of our precious immortal souls, let us see that those blessed truths, which Christ came to reveal to us, are most cordially received, obeyed, and loved. 'Listen to my counsel and be wise. Don't ignore it. Happy are those who listen to me, watching for me daily at my gates, waiting for me outside my home! For whoever finds me finds life and wins approval from the Lord. But those who miss me have injured themselves. All who hate me love death.'

Oh, Spirit of Light and Truth, we beseech You to bring those cheering doctrines, which distilled as the dew from the lips of the Savior, home to our souls with saving power. May they brighten our sorrows, dispel our fears, fill us with joy unspeakable, and prepare us for the participation of heaven's glories. Oh, take what is Christ's and show it unto us; guide us into all truth; comfort us in all our tribulations; lead us in the path of holiness, and bring its in due time to the far-off land of glory. Oh, send out Your light and Your truth: let them lead us; let them bring us unto Your holy Hill, and to Your tabernacles.

THE SAVIOR PERFORMED THE MOST STUPENDOUS MIRACLES. His life on earth was truly a life of miracles. Isaiah has depicted in vivid colors the nature of some of those miraculous works which the Messiah was to perform in the days of His public ministry on earth. While setting forth the flourishing condition of His kingdom among men, he says: 'And when he comes, he will open the eyes of the blind and unstop the ears of the deaf. The lame will leap like a deer, and those who cannot speak will shout and sing! Springs will gush forth in the wilderness, and streams will water the desert. The parched ground will become a pool, and springs of water will satisfy the

thirsty land.' We have only to turn to the history of our blessed Savior to see these predictions literally accomplished. How astonishing were the miracles He performed! How unlimited the control He exercised over the elements of nature, and all creatures! Life and death were in His hand. At His command disease vanished; the blind were restored to sight; the ears of the deaf opened; the lepers cleansed; demons cast out; the storms and tempests stilled; and the dead raised. Yes,
'When God came down from Heaven, the Living God,
What signs and wonders marked His stately way?
Broke out the winds in music where He trod?
Shone over the heavens a brighter, softer day?
The dumb began to speak, the blind to see,
And the lame leaped, and pain and darkness fled;
The mourner's sunken eye grew bright with glee,
And from the tomb awoke the wondering dead.'

'Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? who can show forth all His praise?' Let us follow Him, in thought, as He goes about, performing those miraculous works which confirmed His divine mission, and proclaimed the majesty of His Godhead. At Cana of Galilee, we see Him performing His first miracle, by turning water into wine, exhibiting His glory, that His disciples might believe on Him. 'This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed on Him.' On another occasion we see Him sailing with His disciples on the Sea of Galilee, in a furious storm which threatened them with destruction. He is asleep, while the ship is fearfully tossed by the waves and driven by the storm. The terrified disciples come to Him, and awake Him with these words: 'Lord, save us, or we perish.' With perfect calmness He rises, and with sovereign will speaks to the tempestuous elements; and the storm is calmed to rest. 'When He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.' The same voice which on the morning of the creation said, 'Let there be light; and there was light'; now says to the tempestuous sea, 'Peace, be still'. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. Instantly

nature yields obedience unto her Lord, and the raging storm is stilled in a moment. When the ocean is roused into fury by the raging wind, it continues in a state of agitation long after the tempest has ceased to roar; but when Christ speaks the word, the effect is instantaneous and complete. 'He makes the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.' 'Oh, Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto You? You rule the raging of the sea; when the waves thereof arise, You still them.' Yes, 'When raring winds
Rushed from their caverns, and resistless swept
The foaming waves, when hideous roared the storm,
As if the wild contending elements
Had strove for mastery, at His command
The tempest ceased, the towering billows sunk
In undulations calm, and zephyrs played
Upon the bosom of the peaceful deep.'

Blessed Savior, may we learn from the miracle of the stilling of the tempest, that our safety lies in being near You, in exercising faith in You, and in calling on You in the hour of danger, in the language of the disciples, 'Lord, save us, or we perish.' We are still on the tempestuous sea of life, and however bright our sky, and calm our sea at present, yet in a moment the winds may rise, the tempests break, waves roll on waves, and speedy and utter destruction stare us in the face. Oh, in that dark and stormy hour when all human aid will be vain, be awake to our dilemma, even unto our cause; stand by us, and still the raging tempest with Your voice of Omnipotence and compassion; compass us about with songs of deliverance; direct our vision beyond mortal scenes, beyond the narrow sea of life, 'unto the other side,' the peaceful shore of glory, where every earthly storm will be changed into a heavenly calm- where the trials of time will give place to the joys of eternity.

Oh, my soul, in the fearful hour of calamity- of temptation- of affliction- of bereavements, still look to Your Divine Master, who is interceding for You in yonder heavens, and whose voice alone

can say to the weary, troubled soul, 'Peace, be still'. If we would enjoy that peace which the world cannot impart, if we would die in peace, and be supremely blest beyond the ocean of life, let us keep in the ark of God, with our eye fixed on the Great Pilot, who will cause our tempest-tossed bark to ride triumphantly over every billow, and to enter with safety into the haven of eternal felicity. Amid all the turbulent scenes of earth, let us look for deliverance to Him whose voice stilled the waves of the Sea of Galilee, and whose hand upholds and governs the mighty universe. In the beautiful language of Robert Leighton, 'Nothing does so establish the mind amid the rollings and turbulence of present things, as both a look above them, and a look beyond them; above them, to the steady and good hand by which they are ruled; and beyond them, to the sweet and beautiful end to which, by that hand, they will be brought.'

When first the Savior wakened me,
And showed me why He died,
He pointed over life's narrow sea,
And said, "To yonder side.
I am the ark where Noah dwelt,
And heard the delude roar
No soul can perish that has felt
My rest- To yonder shore."
Peaceful and calm the tide of life
When first I sailed with Thee
My sins forgiven- no inward strife
My breast a glassy sea.
But soon the storm of passion raves
My soul is tempest-tossed
Corruptions rise, like angry waves,
"Help, Master, I am lost!"
"Peace! peace! be still, you raging breast,
My fullness is for thee-"
The Savior speaks and all is rest,
Like the waves of Galilee.'

In following our Lord still further in the accomplishing of His wonderful works, we see Him at one time on a mountain, praying alone in the evening, while His disciples are in a ship in the midst of the Sea of Gennesaret, tossed with waves, for the wind was contrary. In the fourth-watch of the night Christ comes to them, walking on the rough sea. He dispels their fears by saying, 'Be of good cheer; it is I; do not be afraid.' His hand sustains Peter from sinking, and His word causes the wind to cease instantaneously; a miracle which fills all in the ship with amazement, and leads those who were sailing with the disciples to come and worship the Savior, by saying, 'Truly, You are the Son of God.' Of Him who thus walks on the great deep, controlling nature in her wild uproar, it is beautifully written: 'Your way is in the sea, and Your path in the great waters, and Your footsteps are not known.' 'Who alone spreads out the heavens, and treads upon the waves of the sea.'

Again, we behold the Savior at the grave of Lazarus, proclaiming the majesty of His Godhead, showing that he is the resurrection and the life, uttering that thanksgiving prayer; 'Father, I thank You that You have heard Me,' and 'then Jesus shouted, "Lazarus, come out!" And Lazarus came out, bound in grave clothes, his face wrapped in a head cloth. Jesus told them, "Unwrap him and let him go!"

"Come forth!" He cries, "you dead!"
O God, what means that strange and sudden sound,
That murmurs from the tomb? That ghastly head,
With funeral fillets bound?
It is a living form-
The loved, the lost, the won,
Won from the grave, corruption, and the worm-
"And is not this the Son
of God?" they whispered, while the sisters poured
Their gratitude in tears, for they had known the Lord.'

The miracles which our Lord wrought in the days of His flesh

are so numerous, that we have space only to mention some of them. Besides performing those already named, we find Him healing the nobleman's son; raising the daughter of Jairus; healing the paralytic; healing the centurion's servant; raising the widow's son; healing the paralyzed man at Bethesda; opening the eyes of one born blind; restoring the man with a withered band; healing one deaf and dumb; and opening the eyes of two blind men near Jericho.

The grand design of these miracles was to manifest the glory of Jesus, to show the world the truth of His divine mission, and lead men to receive Him as the promised Messiah. The Christian religion is thus established amid the most astonishing and repeated demonstrations of miraculous power. 'It was a miraculous mercy that God should look upon us in our blood, and miraculous condescension that His Son should take our nature; and even this favor we could not believe without many miracles: and so contrary was our condition to all possibilities of happiness, that if salvation had not marched to us all the way in miracle, we had perished in the ruins of a sad eternity.'

IN HIS PUBLIC MINISTRY ON EARTH OUR SAVIOR MANIFESTED THE GREATEST SYMPATHY FOR THOSE IN DISTRESS. The history of His whole earthly course evinces that His heart was always full of sympathy for fallen man- that He was ever touched with the feeling of our infirmities. How often do we find Him moved with compassion for the children of earth, in their diseases, needs, temptations, persecutions, trials, and bereavements! How often do we see Him affording relief in the hour when all is trouble, and darkness, and grief; and when no human arm can bring deliverance or peace. So much did He sympathize with others in their distresses, that it is said, 'He Himself took our infirmities, and bore our sicknesses.'

Take the following instances in His life as illustrative of His ineffable compassion. On one occasion, when He looked on the five thousand whom He miraculously fed, it is said, 'He was

moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep without a shepherd: and He began to teach them many things.' When the leper came to Him with earnest request that he might be made clean, we are told that 'Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth His hand, and touched him, and says unto him, I will; be clean.' And see how his compassion flows, when the two blind men beseech Him to impart sight to them- 'So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately they received sight, and followed Him.'

But let us look again at the compassionate Savior of men, as He journeys from place to place, effecting His wondrous deeds of charity and love. Shortly after He had performed His miracle of healing the centurion's servant, we find Him 'with many of His disciples and many people,' approaching the city of Nain, and meeting at the gate of the city a sad procession following the remains of a young man to the grave. This was truly a melancholy scene. A widow has lost her only son- her support, and the solace of her life; and her heart is touched with the keenest anguish. She mourns for an only son; and who can describe the bitterness of such a mourning? 'Make mourning as for an only son, most bitter lamentation.' 'I will make it as the mourning of an only son.' 'They shall mourn for him, as one mourns for his only son.' The narrative respecting the youth of Nain is beautifully and touchingly related by the evangelist Luke. 'Now when He came near to the gate of the city, behold there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; many people from the city were with her. As Jesus witnesses this sad spectacle of grief, and sees the afflicted mother bathed in tears for the loss of her only son, He is moved with compassion, and immediately comes forward to relieve her distress. 'Soon afterward Jesus went with his disciples to the village of Nain, with a great crowd following him. A funeral procession was coming out as he approached the village gate. The boy who had died was the only son of a widow, and many mourners from the village were with her. When the Lord saw her, his heart overflowed with compassion. "Don't

cry!" he said. Then he walked over to the coffin and touched it, and the bearers stopped. "Young man," he said, "get up." Then the dead boy sat up and began to talk to those around him! And Jesus gave him back to his mother.' Luke 7:11-15

What a touching instance is here presented of the supreme tenderness of Him who gives unto those who mourn in Zion beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness! The pious mind will love often to turn to a scene which called forth so much compassion in Christ Jesus, who is the source of all life: who came to despoil the grave of its prey, and to guide the believer to that land where death is swallowed up in victory, and where all are robed in the garments of eternal salvation.

But let us recall another most impressive scene in the life of our blessed Savior. Let us consider Him at the grave of Lazarus, and see His tears of compassion freely flow. Approaching the tomb of His friend, and seeing the sisters of the departed weeping, and the Jews also weeping, who came to console the bereaved sisters, Jesus Himself 'groaned in the spirit, and was troubled.' And as He contemplates the melancholy scene in its true aspect-remembers the miseries which sin has brought upon our race-sees with His omniscient eye the graves in all ages opening to receive the remains of loved ones- and bears the cries of bereaved, agonized hearts, rising from earth's habitations down to the close of time- He gives vent to His own feelings in tears of sorrow. 'Jesus wept.' Amazing sight! The Son of God, the Creator of the universe, the Lord of glory in tears! How plainly do those tears show the tenderness of His humanity! And how animating for the mourner in Zion to think, that the heart of Jesus, now that He reigns in glory, is still full of sympathy, and full of love for His suffering disciples in this valley of tears! Oh, this is a sweet, a delightful thought- 'For we have not a High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities: but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.'

Weeping believer, you whose tears are flowing over the grave of a beloved friend, come to Jesus for sympathy, and tell Him all your grief. He has words of comfort for you- precious promises. He can console you as none else can. He is the same in all ages, the same yesterday, today, and forever. The eye that dropped its tears at the tomb of Lazarus, will be fixed upon you in all the scenes of anguish through which you may be called to pass before reaching the bright world of everlasting joy. Remember that He who is now seated on the throne of heaven, radiant in celestial glory, was once afflicted on earth, that He might know how to sympathize with you in the hour your unutterable anguish. Oh, rejoice that you have so sympathizing a Friend, who is ready to mitigate your grief, and to conduct you to those happy mansions, where pious friends shall be reunited to be separated no more, and where God shall wipe away all tears from the eye.

Who can tell how great is the sympathy of the Son of God, who came from the bosom of the Father; from the unapproachable splendor of Heaven; to bear our infirmities, to lighten our burdens, to wipe the tears from our eyes, and to turn our sorrows into everlasting joys? When you are called to take the last look of a beloved friend, and to follow his remains to the dark and silent grave, think of the Savior weeping at the tomb of Lazarus, sympathizing with the mourners- soothing their pain- cheering their hearts by the glorious declaration that He is the resurrection and the life, and that whoever believes in Him, though he were dead, yet shall he live. Always view Jesus as the great Sympathizer with His disciples; and in the time of your keenest anguish and sorest bereavement, look to Him for compassion and relief. He will regard your cries of misery. Yes, the Great High Priest of our profession, whose heart felt and bled for sinners, will speak soothingly to you, and send you the Comforter to be with you forever, and to give you a foretaste of heaven even in a world of tribulation. Oh, the ineffable compassion of our blessed Redeemer! In seasons of devout retirement let us often muse on these affecting words- - Jesus

wept!

'Jesus wept! These tears are over,
But His heart is still the same;
Kinsman, Friend, and Elder Brother,
Is His everlasting name.
Savior, who can love like Thee,
Gracious One of Bethany!
When the pangs of trial seize us,
When the waves of sorrow roll,
I will lay my head on Jesus,
Pillow of the troubled soul.
Surely none can feel like Thee,
Weeping One of Bethany!
Jesus wept! And still in glory,
He can mark each mourner's tear;
Loving to retrace the story
Of the hearts He solaced here.
Lord, when I am called to die,
Let me think of Bethany!
Jesus wept! That tear of sorrow
Is a legacy of love;
Yesterday, today, tomorrow,
He the same does ever prove.
You are all in all to me,
Living One of Bethany!

WHILE HE SOJOURNED ON EARTH THE SAVIOR SHED TEARS OF SORROW OVER LOST SINNERS. Here His divine compassion is again exhibited in a strong and marvelous light. When He looked at the impenitent sinner rejecting the offers of mercy and eternal life, and sporting on the very brink of destruction, His heart was made sorrowful. What tears of commiseration fell from His eyes when He thought of these things! 'Rivers of waters run down my eyes, because they keep not Your Law.' Take one most remarkable and striking example. Contemplate the Savior weeping over impenitent Jerusalem.

The time of His departure is at hand. The last week of His personal ministry has come; and He is now approaching Jerusalem for the last time. Gaining the summit of the Mount of Olives, from which so grand a view of Jerusalem is obtained, He pauses and gazes upon that city and its magnificent temple which shone under the rays of the sun, like 'a mountain of snow studded with gold.' He thinks of the fearful downfall of the city, whose wicked inhabitants had shed so much righteous blood, and whose darkest act of wickedness was so soon to be committed in His own crucifixion. The cup of Jerusalem's iniquity is now almost full. The cry is soon to be heard through her streets, 'His blood be on it us, and on our children.' The Savior knew this; but still He looks on the wicked and rebellious city with unutterable concern. Tears of compassionate grief start in His eyes, and roll down His cheeks. He utters a most bitter lamentation over the city, whose scenes of coming woe, and famine, and carnage, and desolation, all rise before His prophetic eye. 'As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace- but now it is hidden from your eyes."

We must remember that these compassionate tears of the Savior were shed in the hour of His triumphal entrance into Jerusalem, when the multitude cried, 'Hosanna to the Son of David; Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.' But amid all these loud hosannas that resound from the summit of Olivet, the compassionate Savior weeps over Jerusalem in her lost condition. He does not pause to drop a tear over his own sufferings now so near. No. He seems to forget all the agonizing scenes of Gethsemane and Calvary, while He mourns over the impenitent city. Oh, the pitying love of Jesus for sinners! Oh, the intensity of His disinterested benevolence!

But this is not all- His tender compassion is again manifested for the city that had slain the prophets, and rejected Him of whom they wrote- the great Prophet, the true Messiah. Soon after

reaching the city, perhaps when leaving the temple for the last time, He utters these other words of touching grief: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones God's messengers! How often I have wanted to gather your children together as a hen protects her chicks beneath her wings, but you were not willing. And now look, your house is left to you, empty and desolate." Oh, what melting tones of pity are these, coming from the lips of a despised and rejected Savior! What tender words of sorrow, respecting the city of His love- the city which He had chosen, and the house of which He said, 'My name shall be there.'

Let us admire the infinite compassion of Christ. We see how He pities sinners obstinately bent on their own destruction. He has no pleasure in their death. 'As I live, with the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked should turn from his way and live.' Oh, will not the tears of a compassionate Savior move the hearts of unconcerned sinners, and bring them to repentance? Will they still go on in the ways of sin, when out of compassion for their souls the Lord of glory weeps? Will they still despise that rich mercy which caused Him to weep, and bleed, and die? Oh, let us look to our merciful Redeemer before it is too late- before the door of life is forever closed- before our house is left unto us desolate. May the Savior never weep over us as He did over the impenitent sinners of Jerusalem; 'If you had known, even you, at least in this your day, the things which belong to your peace? But now they are hidden from your eyes.' Christ is now ready to receive us, and encircle us in the arms of His forgiving love, and carry us safely to the mansions of glory, where every tear is wiped away, where there is no more pain, nor sorrow; for sin finds no place in those blissful abodes.

Before the things which concern our everlasting peace are hidden from our eyes, let us come to Jesus, and abide under His shadow, and rest in His unchanging love. Then we will never hear from the lips of the Man of Calvary, who shall one day sit

on His great white throne to judge the world, those words which will fill the soul of the finally impenitent with indescribable terror: "I called you so often, but you didn't come. I reached out to you, but you paid no attention. You ignored my advice and rejected the correction I offered. So I will laugh when you are in trouble! I will mock you when disaster overtakes you- when calamity overcomes you like a storm, when you are engulfed by trouble, and when anguish and distress overwhelm you. I will not answer when they cry for help. Even though they anxiously search for me, they will not find me. For they hated knowledge and chose not to fear the Lord. They rejected my advice and paid no attention when I corrected them. That is why they must eat the bitter fruit of living their own way. They must experience the full terror of the path they have chosen. For they are simpletons who turn away from me-to death. They are fools, and their own complacency will destroy them." Let us now make sure of our interest in Christ, remembering that the shadows of life's evening will soon gather around us, and that there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave.

Oh, compassionate Redeemer, still look in pity from Your exalted throne upon a world of sinners. Let Your mercy and forgiveness be extended to those who have hitherto so unreasonably disregarded Your tears, Your entreaties, Your sufferings, Your death. Open their eyes that they may see the things which belong to their eternal peace. Show them the vanity of the world, the fearful termination of the ways of sin, and the solemn realities of eternity. Oh, reach out Your arm, and bring them from the horrible pit, from the miry clay. Set their feet on the Rock of Ages; and put a new song in their mouth, even praise unto our God. May they show forth Your loving-kindness from day to day, until, in the Jerusalem above, they forever stand before Your throne as trophies of Your rich and marvelous grace.

Now, will not Christians weep with the Son of God for sinners perishing in their midst? Oh, that every one of us could feel, in

some measure, the inexpressible tenderness of Jesus for the unconverted! Look at their fearful condition. See them going down to the pit of the lost- even now, standing on the verge of a gulf of irretrievable ruin. Oh, think of the loss of an immortal soul; and weep for the despisers of Emmanuel's mercy. Thus did Jesus weep. Ah! it must be a great calamity that causes the Son of God to shed these tears of grief, and to pour out His soul unto death. He knows full well how precious is the redemption of the souls of men. He has taught us that the soul is of infinitely more value than the world. 'For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?'

If we properly value the soul, we will grieve for those who seem to be living far from God and righteousness. And if we have the Spirit of Christ, we will not only mourn for them, but also labor to bring them to the footstool of mercy; to instruct them in the knowledge of divine truth; to point them to the crown which shines for the righteous in heaven; and to warn them of the doom which awaits the wicked in the land of woe. In language like that which was spoken by Moses to Hobab, we will beseech them to come with us as we journey through the wilderness of this world to the heavenly Canaan. 'We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come you with us, and we will do you good: for the Lord has spoken good concerning Israel.' And when we look on a world of impenitent, perishing sinners, we will be ready to exclaim with the prophet: 'Oh, that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!'

Did Christ weep over sinners?
And shall our checks be dry?
Let floods of penitential grief,
Burst forth from every eye.
The Son of God in tears,
Angels with wonder see!
Oh, be astonished, oh, my soul,

He shed those tears for thee.
He wept that we might weep;
Each sin demands a tear;
In heaven alone no sin is found,
For there's no weeping there."

THE SAVIOR IN GETHSEMANE

Then Jesus brought them to an olive grove called Gethsemane, and he said, "Sit here while I go on ahead to pray." Matthew 26:36

'Amid all the unspeakable torment of mind which Jesus suffered during His stay in Gethsemane, He still appeared in His divine greatness. How much soever the burden of God's wrath which lay upon Him crushed Him to the ground, His soul still took courage, and was strongly invigorated through His confident reliance upon His father.' -Sturm

GETHSEMANE can I forget? or there Your conflict see,
Your agony and bloody sweat, and not remember Thee?
When to the cross I turn my eyes, and rest on Calvary,
O Lamb of God, my sacrifice! I must remember Thee!
Remember You in all Your pains, and all Your love to me;
Yes, while a breath or pulse remains, I will remember Thee!
And when these failing lips grow dumb, and mind and memory
flee,
When You shall in Your kingdom come, Jesus remember me.
J. Montgomery.

GETHSEMANE is a name on which the Christian will ever delight to dwell in devout meditation. On earth its remembrance fills his heart with sublime joy; while in heaven it will call forth the most elevated and enrapturing songs to all eternity. And is it

not most reasonable that such should be the case? Can we ever forget a name so sacred in the life of our blessed Savior- a name, the very mention of which instantly brings to our view some of the most tender, and painful, and hallowed scenes the world has ever witnessed? No. It must be a name ever dear to us; and while, in the true spirit of a Christian, we think of the sorrow and anguish of the Redeemer, whom for our sakes poured out His soul unto death, we will not fail to remember Gethsemane with feelings of sorrow and joy, admiration and gratitude.

Oh, my soul, in the calm retreats of the closet, away from the stirring scenes of this vain passing world, in that place where the sweetest communion with Heaven is so often enjoyed, seriously contemplate Gethsemane as the solemn scene of Emmanuel's agony. Think of the sorrows of your Redeemer, when He became a victim on the altar of divine wrath; when the cup of trembling, and affliction and anguish was put in His hands; and when He drank it to the very dregs. Think what a price it cost the Son of God to redeem your soul from going down to the pit of the lost. See Him descending from heaven to become a man of sorrows on earth- a bleeding victim in the garden of Gethsemane, and on the cross of Calvary. See what intense sufferings He endured when He became the propitiation for our sins. Follow Him to the last solemn scenes in His divine pilgrimage- to Gethsemane- to the judgment hall- to Golgotha.

A suffering Savior has procured for us all the felicities of heaven; and should we not often remember Him in those agonies of His life and His death, by which such glory was obtained- a glory which surpasses all conception- a glory which reaches through all eternity- an exceeding and eternal weight of glory! And while we dwell on the closing scenes of His life on earth- those scenes of extreme sorrow- can our hearts remain unmoved at a contemplation so touching, so sublime, so glorious? Oh, may a consideration of this theme solemnize, elevate, and rejoice our hearts through all the days of our earthly pilgrimage!

SCENES PRECEDING THE SAVIOR'S SUFFERING. Before tracing the footsteps of our Savior to the garden of Gethsemane, let us advert to some of the scenes immediately preceding His sufferings and agony there. After having passed about three years in the discharge of His public ministry, the time came that He should, by His death, put away transgression, and make an end of sin, and make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness- that He should leave the world, and go to the Father. That last, painful hour of which He had often spoken- one of the most eventful since time began- is at hand; and with all His sufferings full in view, Jesus goes forth, in the vehemency of His love, to agonize, to bleed, and to die as our atoning representative.

He approaches His agony and death in a manner worthy of His glorious character as our Mediator, perfectly resigned to the will of Heaven, and firmly resolved to receive the stroke of divine wrath which the Father was to inflict on Him as our Surety. Hear Him expressing His acquiescence in the will of His Heavenly Father, and His resolution to suffer, the just for the unjust; 'The cup which my Father has given me, shall I not drink it?' 'I delight to do Your will, O my God: yes, Your law is within my heart.' He even looks forward with eager desire to the all-important hour when, by His vicarious sufferings and death, He should break the captive's chains, and let the oppressed go free. 'I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!'

For the purpose of accomplishing the great and glorious designs of divine grace, the Savior, accompanied by His disciples, goes up to Jerusalem for the last time. Most truly affecting are the events connected with His history during that solemn night in which He was betrayed. Guided by the Word of God, let us view them with the eye of faith; and we shall see in those actions and sufferings of Jesus that which will cause our hearts to rejoice with unspeakable joy, and to bless His holy name forever and ever. The soul of the Redeemer is now to be made an offering for

sin; the Lamb of God is now to bleed on the altar. Now is divine justice to be satisfied; the plan of salvation accomplished; Satan vanquished; death destroyed; and the portals of heaven opened to ransomed sinners. 'Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.' The work to be achieved is immensely great. No human or angelic arm can execute it; none but a divine Personage can carry out the mighty plan of redeeming a lost world. And in view of the vastness of the undertaking, no wonder that even the Savior Himself should be troubled in His human soul, and that His prayer to His Heavenly Father should be: 'Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour.'

O blessed Jesus! this was but the commencement of those last, extreme griefs which You did sustain, when it pleased the Father to bruise You, and to afflict Your soul for our sins. You had not yet reached the scenes of Your sufferings in the garden, in the judgment-hall, and on Calvary- You were not yet covered with a bloody sweat, nor crowned with thorns, nor nailed to the cross. But even then our sins transferred to You, made Your soul exceeding sorrowful, and agitated Your whole frame. How amazing the grace that dwells in You, our suffering, our adorable Redeemer! How brightly did Your incomparable love shine in that night of sorrow and pain, when You went forth to agonize in the garden! Oh, may we ever view with new and increasing delight the wondrous manifestations of Your infinite benevolence to Your disciples in those solemn moments when You were preparing to leave them and to die!

THE INSTITUTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER. One of the most precious memorials of the Savior's dying love was the institution of the Sacramental Supper. Before going forth to suffer in the garden, He gathers around Himself His disciples in 'a large upper room' at Jerusalem; and there institutes that holy ordinance which will be observed by the Church through all

time, as commemorative of His death and redeeming love. The occasion is one of the greatest interest and solemnity. How beautiful and impressive is the Scripture narrative of the institution of that sacred commemorative ordinance! 'Then at the proper time Jesus and the twelve apostles sat down together at the table. Jesus said, "I have looked forward to this hour with deep longing, anxious to eat this Passover meal with you before my suffering begins. For I tell you now that I won't eat it again until it comes to fulfillment in the Kingdom of God.'" Bread and wine, the emblems of a Savior's broken body and shed blood, are now distributed. 'As they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread and asked God's blessing on it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, "Take it and eat it, for this is my body." And he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them and said, "Each of you drink from it, for this is my blood, which seals the covenant between God and his people. It is poured out to forgive the sins of many.'

Here we have set before us, the bread of life, and the water of life- that bread of which if we eat, we shall never hunger; and that water of which if we drink, we shall never thirst. This is the life of our souls- the fountain of eternal life and glory. O my soul, come to this living fountain of waters- this deep, overflowing well of salvation, and quench your thirst in the never-failing streams; so shall you be refreshed and invigorated for life's journey and life's conflict, until at length, borne to Paradise by some appointed messenger from the skies, you shall forever drink of those crystal streams which flow 'fast by the throne of God.'

'Oh, fountain of eternal life,
Whose streams forever flow,
Spring up within my waiting heart,
And all your bliss bestow.
Refresh my soul with living streams,
Until holy fruits abound;
A chosen tree of righteousness,

On Zion's sacred ground.'

How amazing was the love of Jesus to His disciples in that sad night of His suffering and betrayal! He is not unmindful of them even in the hour of His deepest distress, when all the 'waves and billows' of divine wrath are about to pass over His own soul-when the mysterious agony of Gethsemane, and the racking torture of Calvary, rise before His vision in all their terrible forms. To the last He watches over His chosen friends with an eye that never slumbers, and a heart that never grows cold. So will Jesus command His blessing upon all those who truly confide in Him as their only hope and Savior. In a world of sorrowful vicissitudes He will sustain and cheer their fainting spirits with the ample provisions of His grace; and when the struggle of life is over, He will bring them, with crowns on their heads, and palms in their hands, to rejoice eternally with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the upper room of glory, in the Jerusalem above.

'Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end.' He suffers and dies with them in His heart. Our names are too deeply engraved in the heart of Jesus to be effaced by all the floods of sorrow that roll over Him. Nothing can extinguish the ardor of His love for sinners. Many waters cannot wench this love, neither can the floods drown it. Oh, the admirable love of Jesus in the hour of His parting with His disciples- in the hour of the anguish of His soul! Was there ever love, in earth or heaven, equal unto this?

THE SAVIOR'S VALEDICTORY DISCOURSE. Let us look again at the gracious conduct of our Lord towards His disciples in that most sorrowful night of His earthly sojourn, and while He, was still with them in that upper room. In that solemn hour He seems to forget His near approaching agonies; and instead of fortifying His own soul against the coming conflict, spends His last moments in administering comfort to His faithful disciples. After instituting the sacred supper He delivers His most

touching and consolatory valedictory discourse. Never before was such a discourse uttered. It is full of the tenderness and love of Emmanuel. The parting words of the blessed Jesus! What pious heart is not thrilled with a feeling of heavenly rapture when they are remembered?

And while the last words of the great and the good are carefully treasured in the mind by surviving friends, should not the dying words of the Lord Jesus be much more deeply engraved in the hearts of His followers? Where can we find such last words as those which came from the lips of the Son of God? In vain will we search for such words of heavenly wisdom as those with which the Savior closed His public ministry. Truly none ever spoke like Jesus. And if we would enjoy the greatest comfort, and find the highest pleasure, let us daily, as His faithful disciples, carefully treasure His sayings. Let us listen with heartfelt joy to those tones of more than human tenderness and love, which fall from His lips in that upper room at Jerusalem, while the eleven disciples are gathered around Him. In the outpouring of His heart He there speaks of the deep mysteries of the glorious gospel- tells His sorrowing friends that He is now glorified, and that God is glorified in Him- reminds them of His sudden departure- commands them to love one another- gives them His peace- promises them His Holy Spirit- assures those who He is going to prepare a place for them in those 'many mansions' in His Father's house; and that he will come again to receive them home to glory.

How the sorrowing hearts of the disciples must have been soothed, and how their prospects must have brightened, as their divine Lord and Master spoke, in accents so sweet and so cheering, of those 'many mansions' of glory, where they are to dwell with Him through a coming eternity, and where there is room and provisions for all the redeemed! And oh, what Christian pilgrim does not love to muse on so delightful a representation of heaven, his abiding, happy home! It is highly pleasing for us thus to think of heaven- to know that there are

'many mansions' prepared for us in our Father's house above, and that there is yet room in glory for all who may come to the Savior. Yes, there is yet room on the golden streets of the New Jerusalem- room in the presence of the angels of God- room in the presence of the King of glory. Oh, bow cheering the thought- 'In my Father's house are many mansion!' 'And yet there is room.'

'My Father's house on high,
Home of my soul, how nigh,
At times, to faith's foreseeing eye,
Your golden gates appear!
Ah! then my spirit faints
To reach the land I love,
The bright inheritance of saints,
Jerusalem above.'

THE SAVIOR'S LAST PRAYER. The Savior now offers that most wonderful and earnest prayer commencing with these words, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that your Son also may glorify You.' He prays for His disciples, that they may be preserved from the evil of the world, kept in unity, and sanctified through the truth. 'I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for those who You have given me; for they are Yours.' He also prays for all true believers in all ages of the world. 'Neither pray I for these alone; but for those also who shall believe on me through their word.' It is not the will of Christ that the heirs of glory, those whom He has redeemed with His precious blood, should be long separated from Him in this valley of tears. And this constrains Him to offer that fervent petition, that they might be with Him in the heavenly home, to behold His glory, and to share with Him in that glory which He had with the Father before the foundation of the world. 'Father, I desire that those also whom You have given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which You have given me.'

What most encouraging words are these for the disciples of Jesus, who are still struggling amid the sorrows and the conflicts of the present life! How glorious the hope of the believer! To be forever with Christ; to behold His glory; to enjoy His blessed society- this is heaven; this is the Paradise of God! This is what will constitute that fullness of joy which awaits the redeemed in those mansions of light beyond the shadowy valley of mortality. That all His sincere followers may enjoy this untold blessedness, Jesus prays on the very eve of His sufferings and death.

THE SAVIOR GOES WITH HIS DISCIPLES TO GETHSEMANE. The last prayer is now made. The hymn which closes the solemnity is sung; and the Savior, accompanied by His disciples, goes from that upper room, where He had uttered such heavenly words. 'And when they had sung a hymn, they went out unto the mount of Olives.' 'When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the brook Kedron, where was a garden, into which He entered, and His disciples.' Let us follow that little band to the scene of the Savior's agony. It is in the stillness of the night. The full-orbed moon is, perhaps, shining upon them as, in that solemn hour, they pass along the streets of Jerusalem towards the eastern gates. (It will be remembered, that the Passover was always observed at full And the fact of the moon being full at the time of the Savior's agony and death, proves that the extraordinary eclipse which took place while He was extended on the cross, was supernatural.) Leaving the city they descend Mount Moriah, and crossing the brook Kedron, soon arrive at the entrance of the garden of Gethsemane, situated at the foot of the Mount of Olives. This valley of the Kedron, with its large, spreading olive-trees, was a favorite spot with our Lord in the days of His public ministry. To the garden there He frequently resorted for meditation and prayer. Away from the noise and bustle of the crowded city, He loved, after enduring the heat and burden of the day, to meditate and pray in Gethsemane- a spot so favorable for repose, reflection, and devotion. There He had enjoyed the sweetest communion with His Father, and our

Father, while, at the same time, His human nature was strengthened for the discharge of His mediatorial work; and there He had often retired with His disciples at evening, to talk to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of heaven. For the last time in His divine pilgrimage, He now comes to this silent retreat, that He might drink His cup of agony, and prepare Himself for the death of the cross. Let us attentively consider Him as He approaches the garden with His eleven sorrowful disciples. With what a sad countenance does the Savior enter its peaceful enclosure, amid the gloom of that eventful night! Never before had He approached that garden-gate with a heart so full of sorrow.

'Then Jesus brought them to an olive grove called Gethsemane, and he said, Sit here while I go on ahead to pray.' How interesting, momentous, and solemn the period! The hour has come when our blessed Surety voluntarily suffers for us; but oh, who can describe that dreadful agony of soul which He endures when the Lord lays on Him the iniquity of it is all! Oh, the horrors of that hour, when Jesus, our Surety, appeared at the bar of Divine Justice, and paid the penalty for us sinners, that we might escape! Oh, sacred night, from whose bosom the brightest morning-star of hope and consolation has risen upon us, although with a blood-red light!

THE SAVIOR'S AGONY. Leaving eight of His disciples at the entrance of the garden, Christ takes with Him Peter, James, and John, a short distance from the rest, and begins to be exceeding sorrowful and sad, even unto death. 'Then Jesus brought them to an olive grove called Gethsemane, and he said, Sit here while I go on ahead to pray.' The storm of divine wrath is now ready to break on Him. All at once His soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. He is seized with an indescribable anguish which overwhelms Him. Though a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, He had never before experienced such sorrow as that which now presses Him to the ground, with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death. The words

of Jeremiah are now accomplished, in the suffering Savior- 'Lord, see my anguish! My heart is broken and my soul despairs.... My groans are many, and my heart is faint.' Withdrawing about a stone's throw from His three favored disciples, He first kneels down, and then falls on His face on the ground, and, in His deep distress, pours forth His earnest supplications to His Heavenly Father: 'My Father! If this cup cannot be taken away until I drink it, Your will be done.' Rising up from prayer, He goes with fainting footsteps to His three disciples, that He might perhaps find some sympathy in His unspeakable anguish; when, strange to say, He finds them sleeping. 'And He came unto the disciples, and found them asleep.' It is surprising, indeed, that the disciples should be sunk in deep sleep when their divine Lord and Savior is enduring such anguish of soul for their sakes- when He is preparing to leave them- when He is only a step from the cross. The suffering Savior first gently reproves them, and afterwards excuses their weakness. 'What! could you not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray that you enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.' How wonderful the compassion of Christ to weak humanity! How long He bears with the infirmities of His followers, while He seeks to promote their best interests.

Leaving His three disciples a second time, He again recedes a few paces, falls upon the ground, and offers the prayer- 'O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, unless I drink it, Your will be done.' Oh, what a prayer is this! So vehement, so importunate, manifesting in the Savior such perfect reliance on the will of heaven. Rising from the ground the second time He goes to His disciples, and again finds them overwhelmed with sleep, 'sleeping for sorrow.' A third time, He withdraws into solitude, falls upon the ground, and in the extreme anguish of His soul, offers the same earnest prayer- 'O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me unless I drink it, Your will be done.' The storm of spiritual conflict which had all along been increasing, now breaks in its violence over the Savior. Now does

He drink the bitter cup of sorrow to its very dregs- now does He endure the wrath of God- now does He struggle with the powers of darkness. Listen to the, bitter complaints of the Savior in His unspeakable sufferings for us sinners: 'The enemy pursues me, he crushes me to the ground; he makes me dwell in darkness like those long dead. So my spirit grows faint within me; my heart within me is dismayed.' Oh, how intense are the sufferings of our blessed Redeemer! His human nature is ready to sink under the anguish of His soul. His Father's smiling countenance is withdrawn from Him in these moments of darkness and distress. No human arm supports the solitary Sufferer of Gethsemane in this dread midnight hour.

A messenger from the skies is, at length, sent to strengthen His exhausted frame. 'And there appeared an angel unto Him from heaven, strengthening Him.' How deep the humiliation of our blessed Lord, that He should receive the assistance of an angel- a creature! Here we see Jesus made a little lower than the angels for the sufferings of death. The promise is now strikingly fulfilled- 'He shall give His angels charge over You, to keep You in all Your ways. They shall bear You up in their hands, lest You dash Your foot against a stone'

But the conflict is not yet ended. Another dreadful wave of sorrow comes over the Redeemer's soul, causing Him to sink in an indescribable agony to the ground to pray yet more earnestly- to weep in blood. It is now the darkest and most painful part of the conflict. The prophecy of the Psalmist is now accomplished, 'The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid. The sorrows of hell compassed me about; death itself stared me in the face. In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God.' While pouring out His soul before His Heavenly Father, in that earnest, thrice-uttered prayer, He is in a mysterious AGONY- an agony so great, and so piercing, that a bloody sweat breaks from His sacred body, and flows down in streams, moistening the ground on which He had fallen. 'And being in an agony, He prayed more earnestly: and

His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.' That remarkable prediction is now fulfilled in the prostrated and agonizing Savior. 'O my God, I cry in the daytime, but You hear not; and in the night season, and am not silent. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax: it is melted within me.'

On His pale brow the drops are large and red.
As victim's blood at votive altar shed
His hands are clasped, His eyes are raised in prayer
Alas, and is there strife He cannot bear,
Who calmed the tempest, and who raised the dead?
There is! there is! for now the powers of hell
Are struggling for the mastery- 'tis is the hour
When death exerts his last permitted power,
When the dread weight of sin, since Adam fell,
Is visited on Him who deigned to dwell
A man with men, that He might bear the stroke
Of wrath divine, and break the captive's yoke.
But oh, of that dread strife, what words can tell?
Those, only those which broke, with many a groan,
From His full heart- "O Father, take away
The cup of vengeance I must drink today-
Yet, Father, not My will, but Yours, be done!"

Oh, how strong were the cries, and how bitter the tears of Jesus in that hour, when God the Father poured upon Him a flood of wrath- when the sword of divine justice pierced His inmost soul- when the blood gushed from every pore of His sacred body! He is exhausted with crying for deliverance, while the waves of sorrow, the waters of affliction, break over Him; while the arrows of the Almighty are within Him, the poison whereof drinks up His Spirit, while the terrors of God set themselves in array against Him. Here we behold the Son of God fallen on the ground, and with intense bitterness of spirit, complaining of His great agony, and earnestly crying to His Heavenly Father for deliverance. How heavy the burden that lies upon His shoulders!

The ponderous burden of the guilt of millions. How bitter are His complaints, and with what a full heart does He pour them out before the Lord! In Him are truly accomplished the words of the Psalmist- 'I have come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. I am weary of my crying; my throat is dried; my eyes fail while I wait for my God.'

How tranquil does all nature seem to be, while the Lord of the universe thus writhes in agony, and weeps in blood! There is, perhaps, scarcely a sound to be heard, save the gentle murmurs of the Kedron, or the stirring of the passing breeze, or the rustling of the spreading olive trees. Midnight's mantle covers the land, and all around is sweet and tranquil, while in the deep and dark recesses of Gethsemane, a piercing agony is crushing the heart of the Man of sorrows, and an angel is wiping the bloody sweat from His aching brow.

'Tis midnight; and on Olivet's brow
The Star is dimmed that lately shone;
'Tis midnight, in the garden, now,
The suffering Savior prays alone.
'Tis midnight; and from all removed,
The Savior wrestles alone, with fears;
Even that disciple whom He loved
Heeds not His Master's grief and tears.
'Tis midnight; and for others' guilt
The Man of sorrows weeps in blood;
Yet he that has in anguish knelt,
Is not forsaken by His God.
'Tis midnight; and from ether plains
Is borne the song that angels know;
Unheard by mortals are the strains
That sweetly soothe the Savior's woe.

Oh, my Savior, how extreme must have been Your sufferings at that solemn and eventful moment, when Your sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling on the hallowed ground of

Gethsemane! What fear, what amazement, what horror, then seized upon Your holy soul! Who ever suffered thus? Oh, once afflicted Redeemer, none can comprehend the nature or severity of Your sufferings in the garden! None can tell how great was that spiritual conflict which forced Your life's blood from You. We must leave the mystery of that appalling scene for eternity to unfold in all its greatness, and in all its glorious results.

Let us often repair to Gethsemane, and witness that most solemn scene, when, on the ground and amid the gloom of midnight, our blessed Savior offered, 'with strong crying and tears,' that thrice-uttered prayer, 'O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.' With the eye of faith let us contemplate our Redeemer as He lay agonizing for us in that fearful hour, the hour and the power of darkness, when the sorrows of death encompassed Him, and when the pains of hell got hold upon Him, when He was red in His apparel, and His garments were like him that treads in the wine-press; when He was treading the wine-press of God's wrath alone.

'But now, see where He lies
On the cold ground, exposed to thick, dark air,
And all the fury of the maddening skies!
See how each nerve and vein
Trembles and throbs with torture! how His eyes
Start from their seat with anguish and despair!
What drops of sanguine sweat roll down again
From His fair limbs! "O Father, O remove,
If possible, this cup, yet not My will,
But Yours be done!" O agonizing love!'

But at length the affecting scene of the Savior's mighty agony draws to a close. The thrice-uttered prayer is offered to His Heavenly Father, and though the bitter cup does not pass His lips, yet He is strengthened to drink it. 'He shall drink of the brook in the way therefore shall He lift up the head.' He knew it

was for this purpose He had come into the world, that He might suffer 'many things,' and as the Lamb of God, atone for our sins. 'For this cause I came unto this hour.' And for the joy set before Him, He patiently endures all His sufferings. Amid His bitterest complaints are still heard these words of cheerful resignation; 'Father, not my will, but Yours be done.' The third time He rises from the ground, now moistened with His blood, goes to His disciples, and says to them, 'Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour is near, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us go! Here comes my betrayer!'

THE SAVIOR'S BETRAYAL. The eventful hour of Christ's betrayal has come. In the deep of night a multitude of men, armed with swords, staves, and spears, are sent to seize the agonizing Savior. Having descended Mount Moriah, and crossed the Kedron, their lanterns and torches are seen glistening amid the gloomy bushes of the valley, as they approach the garden, now consecrated by the sufferings of the Holy and the Just One. Coming up to the pale and bleeding Savior, the traitor gives the appointed sign for His apprehension. 'Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?' falls from the lips of the meek and lowly Jesus. And now as the band of soldiers approach Him, Jesus said, Whom do you seek? They said, Jesus of Nazareth. He said, I am He. But no sooner are these words uttered than that whole murderous band fall to the ground like dead men. What a striking exhibition of divine power in the Man of Nazareth! A ray of His divinity shines forth, and His enemies stagger and fall to the ground, as if struck by a thunderbolt. This shows that the sufferings of Christ were voluntary; for in the very midst of His greatest distress, while His friends were preparing to desert Him, and flee for their own safety, He could call to His aid legions of holy angels, and crush His enemies by a single blow. 'Don't you know that I can now pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?' 'The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place.' Without His own consent, Christ could not have been delivered into the

hands of sinners. 'But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?' How shall the salvation of a lost world be accomplished unless the Lamb of God bleeds and dies?

The holy and the innocent Jesus is at length seized, while the disciples forsake Him and flee? The remarkable prediction of Zechariah is now accomplished- 'Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, the man who is my partner, says the Lord Almighty. Strike down the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered...' He who 'was not rebellious, neither turned away back,' is bound and hurried away through the streets of Jerusalem to the house of the high priest, and to the judgment hall, there to be scourged, and mocked, and condemned to the ignominious and excruciating death of the cross. The tragic scene of His crucifixion on Calvary will be the theme of the following essay. In the meantime, let us reflect on some of the important and sacred lessons, which the sufferings of Jesus in the garden impart for our edification and consolation in the divine life, until we are prepared to enter upon those scenes of seraphic joy in heaven- until we there behold, in the midst of the throne, 'the Lamb that had been slain,' the once suffering Man of Gethsemane and Calvary- until we there learn the new song of Moses and the Lamb, and forever celebrate the wonders of redeeming love, and the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations.

THE CAUSE OF THE SAVIOR'S AGONY. Here we may inquire, What was the procuring cause of our Lord's agony in Gethsemane? Why was He so deeply afflicted there? Why did such inexpressible agony seize upon Him? Why did those large drops of blood flow from His sacred body? Why was His human nature thus smitten by the penal fires of Heaven's wrath? That grief which He bore could not have been for the sins of His own soul; for He was holy, harmless, and undefiled, separate from sinners. He did no sin, neither was any deceit found in His mouth. It could not have arise from the natural fear of death; for there being no inherent sin in His Person, there could have been

no sting in His death, as in the case of fallen man. 'The sting of death is sin.' Did His deep distress arise from the fear of enduring the painful death of the cross? No. Could the Savior have displayed less courage the multitudes of His faithful followers, who have endured death in its most excruciating forms, that they must pass to glory and immortality, and wear the martyr's crown? Oh, no; it was not such fear that took hold upon the Savior in Gethsemane's peaceful enclosure and that led Him to pray so earnestly for the removal of the cup of horrors He was then tasting.

What then wrung out those bitter complaints from the heart of the Man of sorrows, which melted His very soul for heaviness? 'Oh, my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.' It was our sins, imputed to Him, that caused the Lord of glory thus to agonize. God the Father made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Yes, in that terrible hour, when Jesus was stretched in agony, the dreadful weight of our sins was laid upon Him as our surety and atoning representative. He then bore the stroke of divine wrath, which, if He had not received, must, have been inflicted upon us sinners to all eternity. Thus He endured all that weight of grief for our sakes. He was made sorrowful for us, that we might rejoice forever in the heavenly mansions. He suffered those indescribable pains for us, that night, be permitted to enter that land respecting which it is said, 'Neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away.' He was bruised for us, that the precious balm of the gospel of His grace might be poured into our wounds- that all our moral maladies might be healed- and that eternal health, strength, beauty, and excellency might be ours, when mortality is swallowed up of life.

Oh, let us ever keep this glorious, soul-entrancing truth before our eyes- that our divine Redeemer suffered in Gethsemane and on Calvary, as the Mediator of a lost world, as our satisfying Substitute, who has borne our grief's, and carried our sorrows,

and on whom the Lord has laid the iniquity of us all! In this light it will be always delightful for us to view the solemn scene of Gethsemane; while the sacred lessons we learn from it will promote our spiritual and eternal well-being. We will then, even while on earth, learn much of the deep and sacred mysteries of Emmanuel's agony. We will then see a glory beaming amid the gloom of that dread night to cheer the Christian pilgrim on life's weary way; to scatter the darkness of the tomb and to fill heaven with rapturous joy and unceasing praise.

THE EVIL OF SIN DEMONSTRATED FROM THE SAVIOR'S AGONY. From the sufferings of Jesus in Gethsemane, we may see the great evil of sin, and the fearfulness being ourselves compelled to bear the punishment due to our transgressions through all eternity. Ah! was it sin that caused such inexpressible agony in the Savior's human soul, when as our Substitute He bore our guilt, and made atonement for our sins? Did our sins bring on Him all that 'indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, which caused His heart to melt like wax in the midst of His affections, forcing from Him that mysterious bloody sweat, and constraining Him to pray yet more earnestly? What an evil then must that be which caused a God of love thus to bruise His only begotten and well beloved Son! When Christ assumed our guilt, and undertook to pay the penalty of a violated law, God the Father could not spare Him. He must be encompassed with grief, and overwhelmed with sorrow; the sword of divine justice must awake against Him, and smite Him; He must be brought to the dust of death, even the death of the cross. If we had not sinned, we would never have need of a Savior 'being in an agony.' Oh, that we could grieve from our inmost soul for those sins which caused our blessed Redeemer to agonize in the garden! Let us mourn over these sins with a godly sorrow, while at the same time we admire the boundless compassion of the suffering Jesus for our guilty souls; while we adore His name for condescending, in His incomparable love, to suffer in our room and stead.

Here a solemn question arises, If the Son of God thus suffered when He undertook to reconcile an apostate world to offended Heaven, how shall those who finally reject the only Savior- the only sacrifice for sin- the great salvation- stand before a holy and righteous God to answer for their numberless and aggravated transgressions? When such people open their eyes in the next world, a world of retribution; what fearfulness, and anguish, and despair will seize upon their lost spirits through that terrible night of 'the blackness of darkness' reserved for the finally impenitent! Oh, how insupportable must be the weight of the wrath of God, who is a consuming fire to all the workers of iniquity! It is truly a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. But oh, once agonizing Savior, let us not despair of Your pardoning mercy, while the door of life is yet open, while You are yet calling to us in tones of unutterable compassion to come to You, that we may have life; and while we remember that those sufferings of Yours in Gethsemane were endured for sinners, even the vilest of the vile. Oh, grant us an interest in Your vicarious sacrifice. May we feel that the oppressive burden of our guilt has been removed from our shoulders, and borne by You, Oh bleeding Lamb of God. May those sweet words now sound in our ears like enrapturing music from the sties- 'There is, therefore, now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.' Sinful and unworthy as we are, still may we repair at once to You as our only hiding-place, our only refuge from the storm of divine vengeance, from the wrath to come. Oh, hide us in Gethsemane, until the voyage of life is ended, until every storm is past, until every wave is stilled, until we reach those blissful shores, those 'ever verdant vales and sunny hills,' where sin shall no more enter to defile; where pain shall be no longer experienced; where we shall obtain joy and gladness; and where sorrow and sighing shall forever flee away!

'Oppressed with grief, overwhelmed with fear,
Where can I find a refuge near?
Dear Savior, unto You I flee,

Oh! hide me in Gethsemane.
My sins assume an awful form;
Around I view the rising storm;
I fly, my only Lord, to Thee,
Oh! hide me in Gethsemane.
In that sweet garden You did bear
Of guilt and pain my awful share;
Your bleeding form methinks I see
Extended in Gethsemane.
Oh! fill my heart with fervent love;
To You, let each affection move;
From sin preserve me ever free,
While sheltered in Gethsemane.'

PRAYER THE GRAND SOURCE OF CONSOLATION IN TEMPTATION AND AFFLICTION. One of the most important truths the sufferings of Christ teaches us is, that prayer is the grand source of consolation to the children of God in seasons of temptation and affliction. 'Who among you afflicted? let him pray.' And the greater our sorrows and our conflicts, the more earnest and importunate should be our supplications. When our heart is overwhelmed and in perplexity, let us draw near to God, who, in His super-abounding mercy has said: 'Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.' When we see that the darkest clouds are rising- that a furious storm of affliction is impending- let us, like our blessed Savior, go to Him who is able to save our souls from death, and say in the language of faith: 'Oh, my Father- my Heavenly Father- let this bitter cup of sorrow, this heavy trial, pass from me; nevertheless, not my will, but Yours, be done.' Let us go repeatedly to our Heavenly Father in prayer for relief from our oppressive burdens, or support under them.

Our Savior prayed three times most earnestly before the burden on His soul was made lighter. The more His sorrows increased, the more earnestly He prayed. His perseverance in prayer was indefatigable. Paul prayed three times before he received the

answer: 'My grace is sufficient for you; for my strength is made perfect in weakness.' Let us then follow the example of Christ and His faithful servants, and never give up prayer until God removes our cup of sorrow, or gives us grace and strength to accept it with perfect composure.

And let us see that in all things we resign ourselves to the will of God. Thus did Jesus. 'Though He was a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered.' Then may we look up with confidence to Him, who has suffered for us, and made our burden light indeed, and say 'When the clouds of adversity darken my prospects, and the night of sorrow obscures my way, then, O blessed Jesus, support my fainting steps, cheer my drooping soul with Your celestial promises, and give me strength and courage equal to my day.'

In all our afflictions and trials- and in this world we shall have many tribulations- may we be enabled to say, after the example of our Lord and Savior- 'Not my will, but Yours, be done.'

My God and Father, while I stray
Far from my home, on life's rough way,
Oh, teach me from the heart to say,
"Your will be done!"

If You should call me to resign
What, most I prize; 'twas never mine;
I only yield You what was Yours;
"Your will be done!"

Renew my will from day to day,
Blend it with Yours, and take away
All that now makes it hard to say,
"Your will be done!"

Then, when on earth I breathe no more
The prayer, often mixed with tears before,
I'll sing upon a happier shore,
"Your will be done!"

Though the bitterest cup of human woe should be put into our

hands by our Heavenly Father, yet may we receive it with composure, and say, in imitation of the example of the Son of God, our Savior, 'The cup which my Father has given me, shall I not drink it?' If Christians were to be always in such a happy frame of mind in seasons of adversity, how much more composed would they be even in this world of temptation and tribulation- this land of darkness, and of the shadow of death! Feeling assured that all things were working together for their good, they would even rejoice amid all their tribulations, knowing that tribulation works patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope. In the gloomiest hour of earthly trial, they would discern beyond the storms of life the glorious sunshine of eternal day; while, at the same time, they would feel that every wave of sorrow and affliction was only bearing them nearer the peaceful and happy shore.

Let the afflicted believer be inspired with consolation from a consideration of the brevity of his trials, and the eternal weight of glory which is to succeed life's momentary ills. Though Jesus endured so much suffering, yet the conflict was soon over: and now He who was once stretched in the garden of Gethsemane- trembling in every limb, and bleeding from every pore- is exalted to the throne of the universe in yonder heavens, and reigns supreme Lord of all. His struggle with human infirmity- with sin- with the powers of darkness, is over forever! So it will shortly be with you, His sincere follower; and the end will be as glorious- for the same glory that the Father has given the Son, shall be given by Christ to all those who enter the gates of the celestial city.

Your affliction, besides being light- especially in comparison with the sufferings of Jesus- is also momentary. The cup of eternal salvation is just ready to be given you. The last rough wave shall soon bear you safely home to the desired haven of immortal felicity- to the sunny shores of Emmanuel's land- to the Paradise of God, where the song is continually sung of the Lamb that was slain, and where hearts, that were once crushed

with anguish on earth, shall overflow with joy through endless ages; for God shall there wipe away the last tear from every eye. Oh, then, how delightful will it be to think of the sorrows of earth's pilgrimage, while crowned with all the bliss of the heavenly home! Then with our once agonizing, but now exalted and glorified Redeemer, we shall walk the golden streets of the New Jerusalem, robed in garments of glory, and forever enjoy all that felicity which the mind, in this imperfect state, utterly fails to comprehend.

THE LOVE OF THE SAVIOR MANIFESTED IN HIS AGONY. The agony of Jesus in Gethsemane affords us an evidence of the most amazing love- a token of the greatest benevolence to our guilty race. Here we have one of the brightest displays of that supreme, unutterable mercy which constrained the only begotten Son of God to leave the bosom of the Father and the joys of heaven, that He might bear the stroke of divine vengeance due to man for sin, and ransom us from the fearful haunts of eternal darkness and woe. Here is grace- abounding grace- the exceeding riches of grace- the unsearchable riches of Christ. The love of Jesus in thus suffering for sinful, erring man, is a theme so mighty, so astonishing, so mysterious, that the highest intelligences in the celestial world fail to measure its vast dimensions, though they are continually studying it with intense thought. It is a love so amazing, and so glorious in its manifestations and in its results, that it will fill all heaven with new songs of praise through the ages of eternity. Yes, we believe that after millions of ages shall have passed, the remembrance of the unparalleled love of the Son of God, in submitting to His last sufferings in the garden, and on the cross, will call forth, if possible, even sweeter songs than were heard on the golden plains of heaven, when the whole company of the redeemed first struck 'their harps, and sang: Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.'

As the saints in heaven will be continually advancing in divine

knowledge, they will be better able, after the lapse of so many ages of blissful study, to comprehend the vastness of the love of a once agonizing Redeemer- a love which human language entirely fails to unfold in all its length, and breadth, and depth, and height. While musing on this wondrous theme, it extends before us like a boundless and unfathomable ocean- an ocean in which the mind even of the loftiest seraph is lost in wonder, delight, and admiration.

'What depth of sovereign love,
What breadth before me lies!
Its height is heaven above,
Its length exceeds the skies.
An ocean deep and wide,
Where angel minds are lost,
An ever-swelling tide,
Refreshing every coast.'

It is, then, a love immeasurable, eternal, stronger than death, which leads Christ to the garden of Gethsemane, there to endure His mysterious agony, and to make His soul an offering for sin. Oh, the amazing grace of our Lord Jesus Christ! As none ever endured such unspeakable anguish of soul as the divine Sufferer of Gethsemane, so none ever manifested such incomprehensible love. Here we would pause, and exclaim: 'O love divine, how do our hearts expand at the contemplation of Your beauty! How blissful it is to escape from a selfish world to meditate on you, to sun ourselves in your light, and to know that we are reposing on your bosom. What a happiness is this- what a foretaste of heaven in the house of our pilgrimage! O love, stronger than death, and more invincible than the grave, never depart from our view! Oh, be the star to shine upon us day and night; and the colder the wind of a self loving world blows upon us during our sojourn here below, the more brightly do you display to the eyes of our spirits the gracious radiance of your heavenly beauty!

Now, do we not desire to love Christ supremely, who is so much fairer than the children of men, and who has manifested the

highest benevolence and compassion to us? Shall we any longer place our holiest affections on created and perishing objects, withholding them from Him who is altogether lovely? Shall we any longer despise so compassionate a Redeemer? In the exercise of genuine faith, let us forthwith repair to Gethsemane, and behold Him bowed to the ground in agony, struggling for us, that we might be elevated from our misery, and drink forever of the cup of salvation. Look at Him, withdrawn a short distance from His disciples, praying and agonizing in solitude. Oh, will we not be moved by the sight of the blessed Jesus, trembling for us with mysterious fear- overwhelmed with indescribable anguish- His sweat falling like blood-drops on the ground?

This is the glorious One whose sufferings and whose majesty are so expressly described in these remarkable words; 'Who is this who comes from Edom, from the city of Bozrah, with his clothing stained red? Who is this in royal robes, marching in the greatness of his strength? "It is I, the Lord, announcing your salvation! It is I, the Lord, who is mighty to save!" Why are your clothes so red, as if you have been treading out grapes? "I have trodden the winepress alone; no one was there to help me. In my anger I have trampled my enemies as if they were grapes. In my fury I have trampled my foes. It is their blood that has stained my clothes. For the time has come for me to avenge my people, to ransom them from their oppressors. I looked, but no one came to help my people. I was amazed and appalled at what I saw. So I executed vengeance alone; unaided, I passed down judgment.'

Will not the sorrows which Christ endured for our sakes inspire us with an earnest love to Him, with a living confidence in His vicarious mediation, with a humble reliance on the infinite merits of His atoning sacrifice? Hear Him ask from the depth of His soul, which, amid the appalling scene of Gethsemane, was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: 'Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? behold, and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow, which is done unto me, with which the Lord has afflicted

me in the day of His fierce anger.' Oh, then, let us love the Savior with all our hearts.

Blessed Jesus, may we remember You in the various scenes of Your divine pilgrimage, when You were engaged in accomplishing the work of redemption- in healing the sick, in imparting sight to the blind, in giving feet to the lame, in stilling the tempest, in raising the dead; but in an especial manner may we think of You in that last, eventful night, when Your soul was exceeding sorrowful, when the sins of a multitude which no man can number pressed You to the ground in agony, and when there appeared an angel unto You from heaven, strengthening Your exhausted frame. Oh, may we remember You in a way that will bring glory to God, and peace to our souls. May our faith be in lively exercise, while our hearts overflow with love to You, our great and glorious Redeemer, whose deepest anguish has procured for us the most rapturous joy. May all that is within us be stirred up to magnify Your holy name for such a wonderful manifestation of divine grace. Oh, may we see You as the Lamb of God, our sacrifice, wounded and bruised for our transgressions, suffering more than the mind can conceive, that we might be at rest and enjoy the smiles of a reconciled God through all the ages of immortality.

How wonderful Your compassion, how strong Your love, how constant Your faithfulness to the children of men! Oh, look in pity upon us pilgrims journeying through a land of darkness, temptation, and sorrow. Oh, be our guide through all the varying scenes of life- our support in death- our bliss through eternity. Enfold us in the arms of Your love; impart to us Your peace; dwell in our hearts by faith; and guide us in the way to heavenly glory. May we be enabled cheerfully to take up our cross daily, and follow You continually, knowing that though we may be called to pass through fire and water, yet You will at length bring us out into a wealthy place, even to the heaven of heavens. Subdue the power of sin in our souls, and make us Yours in truth and sincerity. On You may we be enabled to roll the

burden of our sin; for You only can bear it. Oh, may we feel the sweet, transforming influence of Your blessed Spirit filling our souls with sacred love, and peace, and joy.

May the solemn scene of Your sufferings in Gethsemane make a deep and abiding impression on our hearts, and cause us to love You more, and serve You better than we have ever done. What gratitude do we owe You, our suffering Savior, for what You have performed in our room and stead! Blessed be Your name for bearing the wrath of offended Heaven for us- for becoming obedient to those bitter agonies, and that painful, accursed death, that we might enjoy an eternity of bliss in the celestial Paradise. May we ever trust in You; rejoice in Your name; and magnify Your love. May You be the glory and the joy of our hearts through time; and in yonder realms of light and felicity, where You are ever present, and where saints and angels dwell, may we enjoy Your society, and with the choirs of the heavenly host, celebrate Your praise through the Sabbath of eternity.

Let the disciple of the Savior, in his devout meditations, often endeavor to bring the solemn scene of Gethsemane home to his heart. And oh, while we muse on the mysterious agony of Jesus, may our souls be touched with that godly sorrow which works repentance to salvation not to be repented of. Let us pray earnestly for clearer evidences of an interest in the sufferings of the Savior, and in the atonement which He has made.

While, we reflect on His agony in the garden, let us learn to bear up patiently under our own brief trials. How little are the afflictions of our earthly pilgrimage compared with those endured by Him, who, through all His life on earth, was a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief- whose visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men! By His sufferings Christ has sweetened the cup of human woe, and smoothed the path of affliction. And every Christian should be ready to exclaim, as he traces the footsteps of the Savior from Gethsemane to Calvary- 'Blessed are you to us, you

rough, toilsome pathway through the dust! The footsteps of the Son of God have distinguished you; you have been moistened with His blood. Can you conduct us elsewhere than to Him? Oh! with silent resignation, with steadfast, manly firmness, will we pursue you, so long as our Father commands. We know, from the example of our Redeemer, how you end; what a victory awaits the faithful ones who follow the Son of God.'

The trials of earth will not harm us, for they are ordered by infinite love, and designed to sanctify and prepare us for the pure, and holy, and blissful employments of heaven. Death itself will now be our unspeakable gain, since our Savior by his sufferings has dispelled its gloom, and from the swellings of Jordan opened a pathway to the glory of the celestial Canaan. Once more, as you turn to Gethsemane-
'Bring the thrilling scene
Home to your inmost soul- the Sufferer's cry,
"Father, if it be possible, this cup may You
Take away- Yet not my will, but Yours."
The sleeping friends who could not watch one hour,
The torch, the flashing sword, the traitor's kiss,
The astonished angel, with the tear of Heaven
Upon His cheek, still striving to assuage
Those fearful pangs that bowed the Son of God
Like a bruised reed. You who has power to look
Thus at Gethsemane, be still! be still!
What are your insect-woes, compared to His
Who agonizes there? Count your brief pains
As the dust atom on life's chariot-wheels,
And in a Savior's grief forget them all.'

THE CRUCIFIXION

When with deep agony His heart was racked,

Not for Himself the tear-drop dewed His cheek,
For them He wept, for them to Heaven He prayed,
His persecutors- " Father, pardon them;
They know not what they do."

"When they came to the place called Calvary, there they crucified him, along with the criminals--one on his right, the other on his left." Luke 23:33

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning?"
Psalm 22:1

'Ah see! His bleeding arms are extended wide; He stretches them out to every sinner. His hands point to the east and west; for He shall gather His children from the ends of the earth. The top of the cross is directed toward the sky; far above the world will its effects extend. Its root is fixed in the earth; the cross becomes a wondrous tree, from which we reap the fruit of our eternal reconciliation.' -Krummacher

THE SAVIOR AT HIS CRUCIFIXION.

Behold Him now
Suspended on the cross! On His pale brow
Hang the cold drops of death; through every limb
The piercing torture rages; every nerve
Stretched with excess of pain, trembles convulsed.
Now look beneath, and view the senseless crowd;
How they deride His sufferings, how they shake
Their heads contemptuous, while the bitter taunt,
More bitter than the gall they gave, insults
The agony of Him on whom they gaze.
But hark! He speaks, and the still hovering breath
Wafts His last prayer to all approving Heaven
'Forgive them, for they know not what they do!'
-C. P. Layard.

We are now to contemplate the most solemn scene ever presented to the view of man- the crucifixion of our Savior. What sight so impressive, affecting, and sacred as that of the Son of God in human nature, the Creator of the universe, the Lord of life, suspended on the ignominious cross- hanging in agonies and death! And for whom is He thus lifted up from the earth? For the righteous? for the noblest intelligences of the universe? Oh, no. For sinners- for a world of rebels are His bleeding arms extended on the accursed tree. Oh, what wonder of wonders is this! What infinite condescension! What mighty love! As the Christian turns to Calvary, what hallowed thoughts arise in his mind! What various emotions are awakened within him! What sorrow and joy, wonder and praise, alternately prevail in his renewed heart! Let us view this most solemn scene with the deepest reverence; and may the holy Spirit bring the divine truths which it displays, home to our souls with power, enlightening them with the saving knowledge of Christ crucified, and showing us by this great mystery of godliness the path of life- a life of immortal felicity, and joy, and glory, beyond the precincts of mortality.

THE SAVIOR'S TRIAL AND CONDEMNATION. While turning our eyes from the sacred scenes of Gethsemane, in that momentous hour when the soul of the Savior was wrung with anguish, and when His body was bathed in blood, we behold Him hurried away by the band of soldiers from the garden, with weary, fainting footsteps, re-crossing the Kedron, and conducted up Mount Moriah. On entering the city He is first led to Annas, the ruler of the Sanhedrin. Annas sends Him, bound to Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. It is past the hour of midnight, but yet there is no repose for the Savior, though He greatly needed it after enduring His terrible conflict in the garden. View Him now, while you think of the pains He has just undergone in Gethsemane. What traces of sorrow do you still discern. in that 'visage so marred' by the stroke of divine justice- by the weight of sin- by the breaking forth of a mysterious,

bloody sweat? How weak and exhausted does He still appear!

Oh, how little do we think of the sufferings of Jesus in that night when, 'with wicked hands,' He was taken and brought as a lamb to the slaughter! Let us view Him as He stands arraigned as a criminal before Caiaphas. There stands the Holy One of Israel to be judged by sinners! There Jesus stands as our representative, bearing our sins! There stands the Lamb without spot, to be slain to take away our guilt! False witnesses are sought by the chief priests and elders, and all the council of the Jews, to condemn Him to death. The predictions of the Psalmist are now literally accomplished. 'False witnesses rose up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not.' 'False witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty.' Many false witnesses come forward; yet their testimony disagrees. At length two false witnesses come and testify that Jesus affirmed He was able to destroy the temple of God and to rebuild it in three days. But even their testimony is conflicting. How meekly and patiently does the Savior listen to all the false accusations His enemies and persecutors are bringing against Him! No contradictory statements, no severe invectives fall from His lips. He remains silent amid the reproaches cast upon Him. The wicked Caiaphas, who had already declared that Jesus should die, at length rises with indignation, and says to the meek and innocent Savior: 'Well, aren't you going to answer these charges? What do you have to say for yourself? But Jesus remained silent.'

What a noble pattern of suffering innocence do we here behold in the Man Christ Jesus! Now are fulfilled the words of the prophet Isaiah, 'He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth.' But still the mockery of a trial, devoid of all the principles of justice goes on, until the crowning accusation is brought forward. In the lighted chamber of Caiaphas, where the scribes and the elders were assembled, Jesus is accused of

blasphemy, and judged to be guilty of death. Now all manner of insult and indignation is heaped upon His sacred Person by the men who hold Him. They deride Him; spit in His face; buffet Him; smite Him with the palms of their hands; and having blindfolded Him, strike Him on the face, and cry with malicious mockery, 'Prophecy unto us, Christ, who hit you?' Hundreds of years before it occurred, this very scene of insult and derision was predicted by the prophet Isaiah, in those remarkable words: 'The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to those who plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting.'

O my soul, consider with what unruffled patience the Savior bore Himself amid all the insults of that wicked examination and trial, when the rulers of the Jews were thirsting for His innocent blood, when Peter denied Him, and all the disciples forsook Him! Was there ever before such an example of patient suffering? Oh, how patient was the blessed Jesus amid all His sufferings, until on Calvary He commended His spirit into the hands of His Father, and bowed His head in death! What sorrows did He undergo! and with what patience did He suffer them! Patient, when Judas unworthily betrayed Him with a kiss- patient, when hurried from one place to another- patient, when Herod and his men of war set him at nothing- patient, when Pilate so unrighteously condemned Him- patient, when scourged and crowned with thorns- patient, when His cross was laid upon Him, and when He was reviled, reproached, scoffed at, and every way abused. Lord Jesus, grant me patience after this example, to bear Your holy will in all things. Oh, Jesus, who now sits at the right hand of God, to support all who suffer in a righteous way, be my advocate for grace, that in all my sufferings I may follow Your example, and 'run with patience the race that is set before me.' Let us always look to our Savior for the noblest example of patience in suffering.

But at length that last sad and terrible night of the Son of God

wears away, and morning breaks. The sun rises and pours a flood of light upon the world, while with the Sun of Righteousness it is still the hour and the power of darkness. What an eventful morning! What a momentous day! Before the sun would again set, what scenes were to occur on Calvary! what a work was to be accomplished there! Scenes which the sun could not behold; a work which will be celebrated through ages, countless as the stars of heaven, or the dust of earth!

Early in the morning, when the great Sanhedrin, or council of the Jews, assembled, Jesus was brought before their tribunal, and falsely accused, examined, condemned, bound, and hurried away to the judgment hall of Pilate, that the final sentence of death might be pronounced upon Him. What disciple of the Savior can contemplate that most malicious and unjust trial without feelings of heartfelt sorrow, as he sees his divine Master cruelly insulted and beaten by the Jewish rulers and the Roman soldiers? Draw near and view the meek Man of Nazareth standing before those ferocious men. See how vehemently He is accused of sedition by the 'whole multitude' that follow Him to the hall of Pilate: see how He is mocked by Herod, and arrayed in a gorgeous robe, and sent again to Pilate: and while Pilate is about to release Him, because he could find nothing worthy of death in Him, hear the infuriated multitude vociferate, 'Crucify Him, crucify Him!' 'Not this man, but Barabbas!'

Truly was it prophesied of the enemies of the blessed Redeemer; 'They swarmed around me like bees; they blazed against me like a roaring flame.' Barabbas is released, while the innocent and holy Jesus is scourged by the Roman soldiers; and, at the command of Pilate, delivered into the hands of the Jews to be crucified. 'So Pilate, anxious to please the crowd, released Barabbas to them. He ordered Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip, then turned him over to the Roman soldiers to crucify him.' Jesus is now taken unto the 'common hall' by the soldiers, stripped of His garments, and clothed in a purple robe. A crown of thorns is placed upon His head, a reed in His hand; and in

derision and scorn He is saluted, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' Now the soldiers spit upon Him, smite Him on the head with the reed, and strike Him with their hands.

Behold Him now with the crown of thorns on His head, while the soldiers with heavy blows drive those thorns into His temples, which force the blood down His cheeks. "Then Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said, "Here is the man!" Why does Pilate thus exclaim? Does he exhibit the Savior in derision? Or does he imagine the sight of His bleeding and disfigured form would excite compassion in the bosom of His enemies, and lead to His release? If so, how great must have been his surprise on hearing the chief priests and officers; when they saw the Man in that pitiable condition; exclaim, in their animosity, malice, and fury: 'Crucify Him! Crucify Him!'

But here let us pause, and behold the Man, the Man Christ Jesus, the Lamb of God standing before the infuriated Jews, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe? His face stained with blood, and His whole Person bearing the marks of cruelty. How astonishing the sight! Emmanuel, God in our nature, suffering by the hands of those whom He came to redeem- wearing the piercing crown of thorns, and bleeding for sinners! He whose throne is in the heavens, and who is exalted far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, stooping to such torture- made such a spectacle 'unto the world, and to angels, and to men!' This is certainly a sight which, if seriously beheld, is calculated to make the deepest impression on our hearts. Oh, let us draw near, and with the eye of faith, behold the Man. Behold the face of Him, who is fairer than the children of men, crimsoned with blood; see His sacred head bowed in agony amid the shouts of derision, and the cries of, 'Crucify Him! Crucify Him!' Let us look steadily and earnestly on our suffering Savior, until He becomes unspeakably precious to our souls; until His love is abundantly shed abroad in our hearts; until in the blissful light of heaven we behold Him in the

midst of the throne, as the Lamb that was slain, and join in the unending song of the church triumphant- a song sweeter than angels sing- 'All praise to him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by shedding his blood for us. He has made us his kingdom and his priests who serve before God his Father. Give to him everlasting glory! He rules forever and ever! Amen!'

There is no sight so purifying and elevating to the soul operated upon by the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, as that of a suffering Savior voluntarily taking upon Himself the burden of our guilt, and making atonement for our sins. May this sight never fade from our view during our passage through life; may it refresh our souls in the hour of death! Oh, what heavenly peace flows down to the faithful beholders of the Man Christ Jesus, wearing the thorny crown, and the purple robe!

'See! from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down
Did ever such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?'

This is a sight which will support us in the hour of temptation and deep distress. Oh, tempest-tossed and grievously afflicted children of God, who may have been long walking in darkness, having no light, we invite you to behold the Man, bearing your iniquities in His own body, His face and His garments stained with blood, that you might be clothed in the white robes of His righteousness- that through His divine blood you might obtain eternal redemption, and enter the gates of the New Jerusalem with everlasting songs of joy, and with never-fading crowns of glory. When sin oppresses, when Satan accuses, when your own conscience condemns, fix your eye of faith on a suffering Redeemer. Behold the Man; and derive strength and courage from the look. You cannot come into condemnation now, if you are a sincere penitent. No matter how great or aggravated your sins may be, the blood which flows beneath that crown of thorns is all- sufficient to wash away your guilt. It was shed for this very purpose. It is blood of wondrous virtue. Oh, then, come to Jesus;

wash your robes, and make them white in His blood. Touch the hem of His purple robe, and virtue will come forth to heal your soul. Then with rapture will you sing through all eternity of the infinite efficacy of that blood by which you have been redeemed to God- then will you forever behold the Man of Nazareth, the Son of God, not in a state of deep humiliation and suffering, but crowned with all that divine majesty and glory which He had with the Father before the world was. Oh, blessed sight!

Let those who have hitherto neglected or refused to look to Jesus, now behold the Man. 'Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!' Behold Him, and live. 'Look unto me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.' The suffering Savior has procured for you the pardon of sin, the favor of God, and a life of endless felicity beyond the grave. By His precious blood 'shall He sprinkle many nations.' Ah! if you do not behold Him now, with thankfulness and joy, as your Savior, there is a day approaching when, with terror, you shall behold Him coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory, to judge the world. Then you who have pierced Him by your sins, and refused to look to Him for pardon, shall behold the Man when it will be too late to receive His pardoning mercy; when you must forever drink of that bitter cup of wrath, which the Savior in the garden emptied for those who have fled to Him for refuge. Then every eye shall behold Him, and they also who pierced Him. How unlike the Man of Sorrows, how unlike the pale and agonizing Sufferer of Gethsemane, how unlike the tortured 'Man of Calvary', will He then appear! Oh, let us look to Him now by faith; and in that great and dreadful day, when the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, we shall lift up our heads with joy, while the despisers of His mercy, in terror and despair, are calling upon the mountains and rocks to fall on them, and hide them from the face of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb!

BEARING HIS CROSS, THE SAVIOR IS LED TO CALVARY.

The sentence of death has been passed upon the Son of God: He has endured the most shocking insults from the officers of the priests, and the soldiers; and now the bloody sentence is to be executed. Amid a crowd of His bitterest foes, Jesus, the Lamb of God, is led away to the scene of His crucifixion. A few sorrowing friends follow Him 'afar off;' while multitudes view the scene with but little concern. Let us— in spirit, follow the procession as it moves along the streets of Jerusalem, and passes through the gates of the city towards Calvary. Let us carefully trace the footsteps of our Savior to the Cross; and witness, with feelings of solemnity, the lowest steps in His humiliation.

'And they took Jesus, and led Him away. And He, bearing His cross, went forth unto a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha.' What a sight is that which now meets our astonished gaze! The Savior going forth to die, bearing His own cross upon His shoulders, while the blood still flows down His cheeks from the thorns that pierced His temples! Well may Isaiah, rapt in prophetic vision, ask with wonder: 'Who is this who comes from Edom, from the city of Bozrah, with his clothing stained red? Who is this in royal robes, marching in the greatness of his strength? It is I, the Lord, announcing your salvation! It is I, the Lord, who is mighty to save!' With what astonishment must all heaven have gazed on this sad and mysterious scene! Yet we hear no complaints from the lips of the lowly, and oppressed, and afflicted Redeemer. What unexampled meekness and patience are manifested by Him who could, by His word of omnipotence, have laid His enemies lifeless at His feet! What gratitude and praise shall we render to the blessed Savior for thus, in His immeasurable love, voluntarily bearing our sins in His own body!

But look again! Behold the Man of Sorrows oppressed with the burden He bears. Behold Him, whose arms sustain the pillars of the universe, bending towards the ground under the weight of His cross! Behold Him, whose voice stilled the waves of the sea, and called the dead to life, almost prostrated at the feet of His

enemies! No wonder the strength of Christ's human nature should now be exhausted under the burden laid on Him. No wonder that groans are now uttered by the suffering Savior. Look at Him but a few hours before this affecting scene occurred, when He lay agonizing in Gethsemane, exposed to the cold, damp, midnight air, drinking the horrible cup His Father had given Him, while mysterious drops of blood from His sacred body were falling to the ground. Look at Him in this weak and exhausted condition, seized, bound, dragged from the garden, arraigned before Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate, and Herod- buffeted and scourged, His face disfigured, and His temples pierced with the crown of thorns. Can you wonder that Jesus should now be exhausted when He so recently endured the most piercing agony, and the most cruel treatment? Do not these sufferings of His seem to you, even without His crucifixion, to have been most violent and bitter grief's, to have been awful and dreadful scenes?

But view the scene in another light. It was not merely the weight of that cross-piece, which bowed the Son of God in pain and exhaustion to the ground. It was not merely the fatigue, nor the loss of blood, nor the prospect of a painful and ignominious end, that caused the pallor of death to pass over His countenance. It was a burden far greater than the cross on His shoulders. It was the infinite wrath of God due to sin. It was this heavy burden that most severely oppressed the Savior. It made Him faint. It cost Him His precious blood. To His cross were nailed both sin, and the curse of the law; and both were laid upon His shoulders. Thus He bore our sins upon the cross. When we behold this mysterious sight, the Lord of glory, the Son of the Eternal, in our nature, bowed to the ground in weakness and pain for our sakes, we may truly exclaim with the prophet: 'Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.'

'He sunk beneath our heavy woes,
To raise us to a throne
There's never a gift His hand bestows
But cost His heart a groan.'

O my Savior, when I view You bearing the cross, and sinking under it, may I be deeply affected with a proper sense of Your extreme sufferings, and the infinite evil of sin— the procuring cause of Your death. May I also view, with admiration and gratitude, Your condescending grace here so illustriously displayed. Most willingly and patiently did You bear the cross on earth, that I might wear a crown of glory in heaven. How infinite Your mercy in stooping so low in humiliation and suffering, that ruined man might be crowned with all the happiness of the celestial world! In imitation of You may I be enabled to take up my cross daily, and follow You through evil as well as good report, remembering You have said, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.' Since You have borne the cross for our sakes, the burden You impose on us is indeed light. In Your boundless benevolence for the sinful, the lost, and the wretched, You have said, 'Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and you shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.' In compliance with Your command, and supported by You, may I always be found bearing Your burden, and my cross, up through the wilderness of this sin-stained world, to those blissful abodes, where I shall rest and rejoice forever at the Fountain of all felicity.

Let us still bear our cross cheerfully and patiently, while we follow the sacred steps of the Lord Jesus. Though our path be rugged, and beset with enemies; though our hearts often faint, while innumerable evils encompass us; yet may we remember, that it is by the cross we reach the kingdom of heaven and the crown of everlasting life. And why should we fear to take up that which will conduct us to a heavenly kingdom and a never-fading crown of glory?

When the cross was removed from the shoulders of Christ it was laid on Simon, a native of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus, 'that he might bear it after Jesus.' The procession again moves along, leading the innocent victim, the immaculate Lamb of God, to be immolated on the summit of Calvary. Immense crowds of people are following, many of whom are doubtless, strangers assembled from different parts of the country, to observe the Passover. Among this mixed multitude, we may well suppose, were not a few who had experienced in their own bodies the healing power of Jesus. These would follow Him with sorrowful steps. Many women bewailed with tears His near approaching death. 'And there followed Him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented Him.' The heart of Jesus is touched for these mourners. He could bear the reproach and insults of the rabble with patience, and without uttering a word; but now He speaks. Oh, when are the lips of Jesus ever sealed to the voice of grief? When is His heart insensible to our woes? When does He not sympathize with us in distress? When does He not pity the miseries even of those who reject Him, and say in their heart- 'We will not have this Man to reign over us?'

Though Calvary is within sight- though the dreadful scenes of His crucifixion are fully in view- yet He seems to forget His own deep distress, while He turns to the weeping women, and says, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts which never nursed. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?' Ah! what a fearful picture of distress was before the mind of the Savior when He uttered these words! Before the eye of Him, who declares the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, arose the terrific scene of the destruction of Jerusalem by

the Romans. He sees the city encompassed with armies; and the Roman eagle waving in triumph over the ruins of the magnificent temple. He hears the moans of the dying inhabitants as they are swept off by the famine, the pestilence, and the sword. Yes, and on His vision rises that dreadful scene so vividly described by Josephus- the crucifixion of so many of the Jews before the gates of Jerusalem, by the command of the Roman general, that at last there was neither room to erect crosses near the walls, nor wood sufficient for crosses. In view, then, of all the woe and carnage of that dreadful siege of Jerusalem under Titus, which took place in less than forty years from that time, and which Josephus tells us exceeded all the calamities which had befallen any nation from the beginning of the world, well may the Savior address those touching words to the women who lamented His death.

THE SAVIORS CRUCIFIXION. At length the place appointed for the crucifixion of Christ is reached. 'When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals- one on his right, the other on his left.' With our hearts deeply affected, let us now contemplate this most solemn scene of our Lord's crucifixion. And, while we turn our eyes to the cross, let us not stand at a great distance, and take a 'far off' look at a crucified Redeemer, like those of whom it is said, 'they stood afar off, beholding these things;' but let us draw near, and see this great and marvelous sight which the angels beheld with astonishment, and which has brought glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men. Oh, let us draw close to Christ by faith in His atoning blood, and be clothed in His spotless righteousness. Behold Him, as He reaches the summit of Calvary, after His wearisome and painful way to the cross. See Him laid upon the ground, with His arms stretched out on the cross-piece which he had carried, and to which He is nailed. Listen to the sound of those heavy blows, which drive the nails through the palms of His blessed hands. See His persecutors now driving other spikes through His feet, which fasten them to the upright post. Thus is the prophecy of

the Psalmist fulfilled: 'They pierced my hands and my feet.' See the cross now erected with its bleeding Victim nailed to it. Now behold the Son of God suspended upon the accursed tree, His whole weight hanging on the spikes through His hands and feet, His blood flowing in streams from the wounds, enduring pains the most extreme and griefs the most bitter, encompassed by His reviling persecutors, assailed by evil spirits, and forsaken by His Father! ' My enemies surround me like a pack of dogs; an evil gang closes in on me. They have pierced my hands and feet. I can count every bone in my body. My enemies stare at me and gloat. They divide my clothes among themselves and throw dice for my garments. In this condition He is left to die, with the two thieves as his companions. Thus the Lord of glory, while bearing the sins of many, is numbered with the transgressors, and makes His grave with the wicked.

While the Savior hangs in indescribable torture on the cross, let us listen to His dying words. To the very last He is employed in doing good, and in accomplishing the great work on which He had been sent into the world. Even on the cross He is not inactive. His hands are still stretched out to bless and to save. His heart is still full of compassion and pity. His voice is still uttering words of forgiveness and love to the sinful and the wretched. Oh, what affecting, consoling, and blessed words fall from the lips of the Son of God before He bows His head in death! Let us carefully attend to those last sayings of the Lord Jesus, uttered while He was enduring the deep agony of a crucifixion.

THE SAVIORS FIRST SAYING ON THE CROSS. The first saying of Christ on the cross is the prayer for His persecutors. It was offered when His heart was racked with the deepest agony; when His persecutors were in the very act of driving the nails through His hands and feet, or shortly after the cross was erected, when they had accomplished their wicked work. How natural to suppose that the innocent Sufferer would now pray for the destruction of His persecutors! But hark! What gentle

accents do we hear falling from the pale, quivering lips of Him who is stretched on yonder bloody cross? They are the breathings of the dying Savior, whose cheek is dewed with tears of compassion for lost sinners, and whose boundless love has constrained Him, amid excruciating pain, derision, and reproach, to give His holy life a ransom for many. From that cross on which the world's Redeemer hangs and bleeds, the wondrous prayer is borne to heaven- 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.'

Oh, what unexampled benevolence is displayed in this prayer! How unlike the utterances of the natural heart- how like the language of Him who is love! Behold the Savior's meek, forgiving eye raised from the cross in patient agony, and read in that eye the vastness of His redeeming love. The dying Jesus praying for His murderers! What more touching scene can be presented for our admiration, gratitude, and praise? And was not that remarkable prayer answered? Yes, not long after, many who had shouted, with the chief priests and scribes, 'Away With Him, Crucify Him,' were heard to cry out in heartfelt sorrow, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' Under the touching sermon of Peter on the day of Pentecost, 'about three thousand souls' were added to the church; and soon after, 'the number of the men was about five thousand.' The apostles were directed to make the first offers of peace and pardon, through the atonement made on Calvary, to those very people who had imbrued their hands in the blood of the Son of God. 'Beginning at Jerusalem' was the command.

I hear a sound that comes from far;
It fills my soul with joy and love;
Not seraphs' voices sweeter are,
That echo through the courts above.
'Tis mercy's voice that strikes my ear,
From Calvary it sounds abroad,
It soothes my soul and calms my fear;
It speaks of pardon bought with blood.

And is it true that many fly
The sound that bids my soul rejoice,
And rather choose with fools to die,
Than turn an ear to mercy's voice.
With such I own I once appeared,
But now I know how great their loss;
For sweeter sounds were never heard,
Than mercy utters from the cross.'

But amid all that unspeakable compassion and love which the Savior manifests on the cross, the people, the rulers, and the soldiers, still go on to deride and reproach Him, by saying, 'So! You can destroy the Temple and build it again in three days, can you? Well then, if you are the Son of God, save yourself and come down from the cross' 'Himself He cannot save.' 'If you are the son of God, come down from the cross.' 'If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him: for He said, I am the Son of God.' The soldiers part His garments among them; cast lots for His coat; and sitting down, watch Him there. But let us listen further to the consoling and majestic words of Jesus on the cross.

THE SAVIOR'S SECOND SAYING ON THE CROSS. His next saying is His address to one of the malefactors, who desired the Savior to remember him when He should come into His kingdom. 'And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.' How full of grace, mercy, and truth, is the Redeemer of mankind! To the end of His earthly sojourn He loves to promote the spiritual and eternal welfare of the fallen and the erring, verifying His own declaration, 'I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.' In what a happy light is He here exhibited to us from the cross- in His own death saving the dying malefactor! While nailed to the accursed tree, enduring the most indescribable suffering both of body and soul, He turns His gracious eye to the penitent thief, and addresses to him these cheering words, 'Truly, I say unto

you, today you shall be with me in Paradise.' What more animating words could have been spoken by the Savior to one whose past life was stained with sin, and who was now punished for his transgression, and about to appear before the Judge of heaven and earth! Today you shall pass with me through the gates of Paradise. Today you shall drink wine with me in my Father's kingdom, and eat of the fruit of the Tree of Life, which grows in the midst of Paradise. Today you shall enjoy the most blissful and intimate communion with me in those heavenly mansions which are irradiated by the glory of God and the Lamb. Wondrous grace indeed! This precious promise must have rejoiced the soul of the penitent thief in the highest degree, and made death itself appear to him as a conquered enemy; with its sting extracted and its terrors fled.

Yes, we seem to hear from the lips of that once wretched man- but now, at the eleventh hour, reclaimed by sovereign grace- the shout of triumph amid the piercing agony of a crucifixion, and in the near prospect of dying, 'O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory? Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.' 'Today!' How glorious the transition to that poor dying thief! Little did he think, when that last morning of his life dawned, that the day of his wretched execution was to end in such happiness; that the storm of angry elements of the morning would be changed into so blessed an evening's calm. Conceive of the rapid and glorious change! In the morning nailed to the cruel cross- in the evening wearing a golden crown! In the morning cast out as too vile for earth- in the evening welcomed into the highest heaven! In the morning blaspheming a dying Savior- in the evening with that Savior in Paradise! In the morning pierced with sorrows more bitter than the nails in his hands and feet- in the evening ceasing from care and pain, and enjoying a peaceful rest! In the morning surrounded by angry foes, in whose curses he joined- in the evening received among angels and the spirits of the just, joining in the chorus of the redeemed! In the morning on earth- in the evening in heaven! In the morning on the borders of hell- in the

evening caught up to Paradise. How marvelous, how matchless the richness of Divine grace! 'Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin!'

This was the first fruits of the blood of the cross. Precious fountain of redeeming blood! How many thousands, once as vile as the dying malefactor, have since washed their robes in this blood of the Lamb, that was shed for the remission of sins- thousands who are now with Christ in Paradise. Yes, with Christ in the better country above- in the goodly land of Emmanuel, enjoying the benefits of His vicarious sacrifice on Calvary- monuments of the all-sufficiency of His atoning blood to save- beholding His surpassing glory- now tasting of the immortal fruit of the Tree of Life- now sitting under its delightful shadow- now standing before the throne, and joining in all the sweet, and melodious, and transporting songs of the heavenly temple!

In view of all the blessedness that awaits the whole family of the redeemed, as the purchase of a Savior's blood, what voyager on life's stormy ocean, desiring to find the peaceful haven of eternal rest, is not ready to breathe from his inmost soul, the prayer, 'Oh! blessed Jesus! support my spirit when I come to die, with this comfortable promise, "This day shall you be with me in Paradise." We indeed, suffer justly the sentence of death. Oh, You who did nothing amiss, and yet did suffer for me; remember me, O Lord, now that You are in Your kingdom.'

There is a fountain filled with blood
drawn from Emmanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see
that fountain in his day;
And there have I, though vile as he,
washed all my sins away.

Dear dying Lamb, Your precious blood
shall never lose its power
Till all the ransomed church of God
be saved, to sin no more.

E'er since, by faith, I saw the stream
Your flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
and shall be till I die.

Then in a nobler, sweeter song,
I'll sing Your power to save,
When this poor lisping, stammering tongue
lies silent in the grave.

THE SAVIOR COMMENDS HIS MOTHER TO THE CARE OF THE BELOVED DISCIPLE. As Christ hangs in the midst of His dying agonies, see Him affectionately commending His sorely-tried mother, who stands near the cross, to the care of John, the beloved disciple. Turning to her whose cheek is bedewed with tears, and whose soul is wrung with the most poignant grief, He addresses these words: 'Woman, behold your Son!' It has been observed, that 'He called her not mother, lest she might grieve the more from the tenderness of her intense love.' After uttering these words, He fixes His eye on the beloved disciple, who was standing near the deeply-grieved mother of our Lord, and says, 'Behold your mother!' 'From that hour,' we are told, 'that disciple took her unto his own home.' How tender the regard of Christ for her in whom the prophecy of Simeon was then fulfilled: 'Yes, a sword shall pierce through your own soul also.'

Has the tender kindness of the Redeemer for His own, who are in the world, ever been equaled? Oh, no. It infinitely surpasses all the manifestations of human tenderness. It is unutterable. He never for a moment forsakes those who are found doing the will of His Father, and whom He regards as His brother, and sister, and mother. They are always kept as the apple of His eye-

engraved upon the palms of His hands- borne upon His breastplate, and set as a seal upon His heart, and upon His arm. All their needs are supplied out of His unwasting fullness. His eye of love is ever upon them during their earthly pilgrimage; and He knows how to deliver them out of all their troubles. 'Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivers him out of them all.' Oh, let us ever rely on His providential care, and confide in His unchanging love.

In this saying of Christ, the church is furnished with an excellent pattern for the proper discharge of some of the most important duties of human relationship. He has commended filial love and duty in the strongest terms: and if we would follow His blessed steps, let us carefully observe the divine command: 'honor your father and your mother; that the days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God gives you.'

THE MYSTERIOUS DARKNESS. It was at the third hour of the day at nine o'clock in the morning, that Jesus was nailed to the cross. For three hours He hangs in indescribable torture, patiently enduring all the scoffs and reproaches of His foes. His last prayer for His persecutors has been offered. He has rescued the penitent thief from the pit of the lost, and assured him that, in a few hours, he should be crowned with the glory and felicity of Paradise. He has commended His mother to the care of the beloved disciple. During all this time nature does not seem to sympathize with the divine Sufferer of Calvary. All is tranquil. No thunder rolls along the heavens: no lightnings flash across the sky: no earthquakes upheave the lofty mountains. In the bright sunlight smiles the rich landscape of Palestine, now clothed with all the verdure of spring. But look again. How changed the scene! It is now mid day. Noon time has come! when lo! all at once, a horrible darkness gathers over the land, filling many a heart with terror and dismay, and hiding the tragical scenes of Calvary from the view of the insulting and persecuting foes of Christ. But more than this; the heavens are turned into blackness. The sun, refusing to shine on a scene so shocking, veils his face in midnight darkness, while Emmanuel

is suffering more than mind can conceive- while the cold drops of death stand on the pale, agony-wrung brow of the Son of God, the Savior and Friend of sinners. Now is literally accomplished the prediction of Amos, 'And it shall come to pass in that day, with the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth on a clear day.' 'And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land, until the ninth hour.' 'And the sun was darkened.'

'The sun beheld it- No, the shocking scene
Drove back his chariot: midnight veiled his face;
Not such as this; not such as nature makes;
A midnight nature shuddered to behold;
A midnight new! a dread eclipse (without
Opposing spheres) from her Creator's frown!
Sun! did you flee your Maker's pain? or start
At that enormous load of human guilt,
Which bowed His blessed head; overwhelmed His cross;
Made groan the center; burst earth's marble womb
With pangs, strange pangs! delivered of her dead?
Hell howled, and Heaven that hour let fall a tear;
Heaven wept that man might smile!
Heaven bled that man might never die!'

THE SAVIOR'S PIERCING CRY. During that mysterious, natural darkness, which enveloped the whole land from the sixth hour until three o'clock in the afternoon, the human soul of our blessed Savior was surrounded with the most dreadful spiritual darkness and desertion. From the commencement of the supernatural darkness until about its termination, He seems to have remained silent. He drinks the bitter cup of God's wrath due to sin. The powers of darkness fiercely assail Him. He enjoys no sensible communion with Heaven. It is the gloomiest period in His whole life. But at length His agony is so piercing that He is constrained to utter the most touching words of grief. His Father- His own Father- in whose bosom He had lain from

eternity- His Father, by whom He was always beloved, has withdrawn the light of His countenance from Him; and from His cross arises a most piercing and agonizing cry.

At the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, 'My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?' Oh, how mysterious, how solemn, how affecting is this cry! It is the most doleful that ever came from the lips of Christ during His sorrowful sojourn from the manger to the cross. While in the garden, enduring His great spiritual conflict, He did not cry in this manner. He could then address His Father, as being near Him, to assist Him in His mysterious agony. He could then say: 'O my Father; if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.' But now on the cross how different His cry- 'My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?' Ah! how dreadful must it be to experience the withdrawal of the countenance of Him in whose favor is life, and in whose frown is death. This was the heaviest wave that ever went over the human soul of Jesus; and it made the last hour of His pilgrimage the hour of unspeakable suffering. He had patiently endured the seizure of His person, the forsaking of His disciples, the cruel trial, the unjust condemnation, the mocking, the scourging, the bearing of His cross, the reproaches of His persecutors, the assaults of His spiritual foes, and all the torture of a crucifixion; but when His Father hides His face from Him He is well near overwhelmed.

All His former sufferings came short of this trial. To the Savior this was truly the hour of darkness- of reproach- of temptation- of pain- of desertion. Yes, while His blessed body- is quivering in every nerve from excruciating pain - while wicked men and devils surround Him, he enjoys no sensible communion with His Father. No one can conceive what anguish must have been experienced by the Son of God under the hidings of His Father's face by Him who had always enjoyed His Father's presence, and His Father's love; and who could ever say, 'I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.' 'Oh, my Savior, no tongue can describe, no angel can fathom the abyss of Your suffering for me

a sinner! As I cannot reach the infinite height of Your love and Your glory in heaven, so I cannot descend into the depth of Your sorrows when here on earth. I can only wonder and adore.' (Rowland Hill)

Let us often remember those hours of darkness and desertion when Jesus was stretched on the cross; and while we think of our suffering and deserted Savior, let us also consider the cause of that internal, overpowering conflict, which at last caused His grief to burst forth in a cry that wrung the hearts of His friends with sorrow, and filled heaven with astonishment. Ah! why does He thus groan in Spirit! Why does He hang on yonder cross, uttering with 'strong crying and tears' these doleful words, 'My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?' It was not the nails which pierced His hands and feet, nor the agony of a crucifixion, that caused this mournful cry. He was now offering himself a sacrifice for the sins of the world; and as our Surety He suffered all that divine justice required to bring the sinner back to God and to glory. Here is the great mystery of Godliness: the Father bruises the Son, and puts Him to grief for our sakes; and all those cries, and tears, and groans of Him, whom the Father appointed to accomplish our salvation, were for us.

If Christ had not interposed and made peace by the blood of His Cross, if He had not assumed our guilt and stood in our room, He would never have experienced such anguish of soul, nor uttered so doleful a cry; for God the Father would never have deserted His beloved Son. But when He voluntarily undertakes to redeem man, when He comes in the great name of God to save us sinners, the Father forsakes Him, because that on His shoulders was then laid the enormous load of human guilt. How should it excite our hearts to gratitude and praise, when we remember that all Christ suffered on the cross was for sinful humanity. He then endured pain that we might enjoy pleasure. He suffered the hidings of His Father's countenance, that the light of that countenance might shine upon us; that we might have gracious communings with the Father of Spirits; that we might enjoy the smiles of our Heavenly Father's love; that God

might be our everlasting light. Oh, what do such voluntary humiliation and suffering demand from us? What can we render to our Divine Surety for His amazing and unparalleled love to us? Surely our warmest affections should be given to Him who was thus mindful of us in our lost condition.

'Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.'

Let our whole lives be passed in celebrating His redeeming love, and contemplating His excellence and beauty, so that we shall be prepared to dwell in His presence on High, there unceasingly to behold His face in righteousness, and to trace, as the ages of glory roll, the streams of His boundless, unfathomable love flowing in ever widening channels through all eternity. And oh, may we now have grace to feel, as we turn to the cross of the sinner's Friend, that for our sakes came the doleful voice, 'My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?'

Oh, what a groan was there! a groan not His.
He seized our dreadful right; the load sustained,
And heaved the mountain from a guilty world.'

THE SAVIOR'S THIRST. After uttering the piercing cry, 'My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?' and knowing that all things were about to be accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, Jesus said, 'I thirst.' Who can wonder that He should complain of extreme thirst amid the agonies He was enduring on the cross? He has received no refreshment since the commencement of His awful conflict in Gethsemane, where the arrows of the Almighty were within Him, the poison whereof drank up His spirit. He has suffered so much from the effusion of blood that He can now say, 'My life is poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax, melting within me. My strength has dried up like sunbaked clay. My tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth. You have laid me in the

dust and left me for dead.' For nearly six hours He has endured the most inconceivable suffering on the cross, until His strength is dried up like a sunbaked clay- until His tongue cleaves to His jaws- until He is brought into the dust of death. And now, in the extremity of His sufferings, He cries, 'I thirst.' The soldiers forthwith fill a sponge with vinegar, and hold it up to His parched lips. He meekly receives the bitter potion; and immediately after, He utters His last two sayings; and then resigns His spirit into the hands of His Father.

When our Lord had received the vinegar mingled with bitter gall, the prophecy was fulfilled, 'They gave me also gall for any food; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.' The sufferings which caused the Savior thus to thirst were both physical and mental. At that solemn moment He could say, 'My heart is smitten, and withered like grass. I am weary of any crying: my throat is dried: my eyes fail while I wait for my God.' 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.' Oh, how great were the sufferings of His soul, which was then enduring the righteous displeasure of God against sin! The hand of His Father was now heavy upon Him for our sakes. His soul was filled with grief, and His moisture 'turned into the drought of summer.' On the cross He thirsted for God. His soul panted after Him. He longed for rest in the bosom of His Father. He thirsted for the pleasures of the heavenly world, and the light of the Divine countenance which was withdrawn from Him.

He also thirsted for the accomplishment of our salvation. He thirsted that the believer might thirst no more. 'He that believes on me shall never thirst.' He was dried and parched with burning thirst that our spirits might be refreshed, while passing through the earth, with the pure, soul-reviving water of life, clear as crystal. He thirsted, that the streams of salvation might break out in the desert of this world. He thirsted, that the redeemed might forever drink of the river of pleasures in the Paradise of God. There, 'they shall be abundantly satisfied with the fullness of Your house; and You shall make them drink of the

river of Your pleasures.' There, 'they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more.' How wonderful is the grace of Christ to a lost world!

'Oh, the rich depths of love divine;
Of bliss a boundless store
Dear Savior, let me call You mine,
I cannot wish for more.
On You alone my hope relies,
Beneath the cross I fall,
You are my life, my sacrifice,
My Savior, and my all.'

THE SAVIOR'S SIXTH SAYING ON THE CROSS. The unutterable anguish of Jesus is drawing to a close. His sixth saying, 'It is finished,' falls on the ears of the astonished spectators. Information more joyful, more glorious, could not have been communicated to man. In these words is contained all that an immortal spirit can desire; peace with God- the richest blessings on earth- the highest felicity in heaven. 'IT IS FINISHED.' Glad tidings! Now can Christ address the Father in these words: 'I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You gave me to do.' The illustrious Sufferer who hangs on yonder cross, has finished His divine mission on earth- His wearisome journeys through the land of Israel- His works of benevolence, and mercy, and miracles- all His sorrows and agonies as our representative. He has finished the great work of redemption- finished transgression- made an end of sin- made reconciliation for iniquity- and brought in everlasting righteousness! He has pointed out the way of peace- bound up the broken hearted- reclaimed the wanderer- preached the gospel to the poor- revealed the purposes of God respecting the salvation of sinners, and brought life and immortality to light.

The types and prophecies concerning His death are fulfilled; the great atoning sacrifice is offered; the ransom is paid; divine justice is fully satisfied; the promises are sealed; the powers of

darkness are vanquished; man is saved, and God glorified. Nothing now interposes between Heaven and earth. The last barrier in the way of the sinner's salvation has been removed. Now the gates of Paradise are opened wide to the children of earth, and celestial glory shines forth. It encircles the humble believer; leads him through green pastures beside the still waters; and guides him to those blissful realms, where the tabernacle of God is with men- where the shadows of death are past- where grief is changed to songs- where God is all in all.

How serene, how full of confidence, how triumphant does Christ appear in His last moments! The sublime thought of the happy result of His death, sustains and soothes Him amid the most extreme pain. Now does He see of the travail of His soul, and is satisfied. He rejoices in spirit. 'Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices; my flesh also shall rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in hell: neither will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.' Behold the triumph of the Redeemer in His death. He did not commit His spirit into the hands of His Father, and expire, until He knew that all things pertaining to the redemption of man were accomplished. Then, with a loud voice, He exclaims: 'It is finished!'

At the sound of this victorious cry, we believe that Satan and his legions trembled and fled; while the hosts of God on high tuned their golden harps anew, and sang 'as it were a new song,' when they saw the 'Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David,' seize the prey out of the hands of the mighty, prevail over death and hell, and lead captivity captive. What rapturous joy must have sprung up in the bosom of those pure, celestial beings, when they saw that the work of redemption was finished! Into this glorious mystery we are assured the angels desire to look. And shall we neglect or despise so great salvation? Shall we ever be deaf to the blissful sound which comes from Calvary- from the lips of the dying Friend of sinners, 'It is finished.' May this sound from the cross ever strike our ear with the sweetest melody. It proclaims pardon, peace, and eternal life to a sinful,

guilty world. No sound is so sweet to the ears of an awakened and anxious sinner as that which conveys the tidings of a finished salvation. Then look to the Cross, O you who feel the heavy burden of sin— you around whom the galling chains are fastened, and who are taken captive by Satan at his will. Come to the Savior. He will break your chains, and give you rest, peace, joy, and immortality; for with His dying voice of love and mercy He has proclaimed, respecting man's salvation- 'It is finished!'

'Hark! the voice of love and mercy
Sounds aloud from Calvary;
See the rocks are rent asunder,
Darkness veils the mid-day sky;
"It is finished!"
Hear the dying Savior cry.
Oh, what joy to helpless sinners,
These triumphant words afford!
Heavenly blessings, without measure,
Flow to us through Christ the Lord.
"It is finished!"
Saints His dying words record.
Tune your harps anew, you seraphs!
Strike them to Emmanuel's name;
All on earth, and all in heaven,
Join the triumph to proclaim,
"It is finished!"
Glory to the bleeding Lamb.'

THE SAVIORS LAST WORDS ON THE CROSS. Having now accomplished the grand object of His mediatorial office on earth, the Savior prepares for the last struggle- the solemn and affecting moment of death. Look again at yonder cross, and listen to the last cry of the Son of God. It is not one feebly uttered. No; it is aloud cry. It is the voice of One who has power to lay down His life and to take it again. It is the cry of One who voluntarily expires. 'And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father, into Your hands I commend my spirit.' The last

words of Christ are spoken. His last solemn act is performed. In what divine majesty does He now appear to the believer! How great and sublime are His parting words! After having come from His Father, and accomplished His Father's will, He calmly and confidently commits His spirit into His hands; in accordance with His own declaration, 'Yes, I came from the Father into the world, and I will leave the world and return to the Father.'

The first saying of Christ on the cross is the prayer, 'Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do;' and His last, is the prayer, 'Father, into Your hands I commend my spirit.' Thus He commences and ends the scene of His suffering with prayer. What a noble example is here presented for the imitation of believers in the closing hours of their earthly pilgrimage! May the last words of Jesus be our support and our joy when we approach the margin of the dark river of death. Then, while relying with cheerful hope on the merits of the Redeemer, may we say with a smile on our countenance, and the love of God shed abroad in our heart, 'Father, into Your hands I commend my spirit. You have redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.'

Let us now commit our spirits into the hands of our Heavenly Father, and our compassionate Redeemer, that they may be safely preserved unto the day of glory, and admitted into mansions of unending felicity. If our souls are faithfully entrusted to the hands of our divine Savior, we may rejoice even amid the swellings of Jordan; for when our earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, our spirits shall immediately pass to a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Then, while we are passing through the valley of the shadow of death, we may confidently sing with the Psalmist, 'God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for He shall receive me.' While we thus close our eyes on all the transitory scenes of earth, we will open them amid the seraphic splendors of eternal day, and find ourselves with Christ in Paradise. Oh, then, in health, in sickness, and in the solemn

hour of death, let us commit our spirits to the hands of our Heavenly Friend; and all will be well.

Like the blessed Savior, the true child of God leaves this valley of tears with prayer on his lips; and thus engaged he is conducted by ministering spirits into the mansions of eternal peace, where the prayer of earth is exchanged for the praise of heaven. what a happy thing to bid adieu to earth with this prayer, offered in the fervency of a living faith in the merits of the Redeemer, 'Father, into Your hands I commend my spirit.' 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!' And how many thousands of those who now stand with adoring gratitude and praise before the celestial throne, rejoicing with unspeakable joy in the Divine presence, have thus passed the valley of mortality, and been caught up into Paradise with Christ! Visit the dying believer, who is strong in faith, and listen to the last words he whispers, and see how he follows the example of his Lord, calmly resigning his spirit to the Divine hand with prayer. Yes—

'Hear the last words the believer says.

He has bidden adieu to his earthy friends;

There is peace in his eye that upward bends;

There is peace in his calm confiding air;

For his last thoughts are God's, his last words, prayer.'

THE SAVIOR EXPIRES. When Christ had addressed His Father in His last words of prayer, He immediately yielded His spirit into the hands of God. 'And having said thus, He gave up His spirit.' Amazing sight! The Holy and the Just One bows His head in the agonies of death! The Lord of glory expires on the accursed tree! Messiah the Prince is cut off; but not for His own iniquity. Let us gaze upon this solemn scene, until our hearts glow with gratitude and love to the dying Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

'See where man's voluntary sacrifice

Bows His meek head, the Lord of glory dies!

Fixed to the cross His bleeding arms are bound,

While copious mercy streams from every wound.'

He who is the life of the universe voluntarily lays down His own life a ransom for sinners! He, whose brightness is the light of heaven, and who is the true Light of the world, veils His light in the region and shadow of death!

THE SIGNS ATTENDING THE SAVIOR'S DEATH. While we gaze on an expiring Savior, and see His blood flowing from the cross, and listen to His last words, other scenes meet our astonished view, and claim our serious attention. It is the voice of nature proclaiming the greatness of Emmanuel. While men are denying the divine claims of Jesus of Nazareth, and with wicked hands crucifying the Son of the living God, the very rocks cry out, and 'all the frame of the world acknowledges the dominion of the Son of God, whom man despises.' No sooner had Christ yielded His breath than the earth felt a wondrous shaking, and 'gave a groan as if she too was about to expire.' At the solemn moment of the Savior's death, the earth quakes- the rocks are torn asunder- the mountains tremble- the veil of the temple is rent in two- the tombs burst open, and the dead spring to life. 'At that moment the curtain in the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, rocks split apart, and tombs opened. The bodies of many godly men and women who had died were raised from the dead after Jesus' resurrection. They left the cemetery, went into the holy city of Jerusalem, and appeared to many people.'

What a solemn spectacle! Never before was such a scene witnessed by man. Well may the day be overspread with darkness, and the light of the sun fade in the heavens- well may the earth quake to its foundations, and the sepulchers open, when the Refuge of Judah, the Holy One of Israel, the glorious and mighty Lord of creation, hangs in death!

'Well may the cavern depths of earth
Be shaken, and her mountains nod;
Well may the sheeted dead come forth

To gaze upon a suffering God!
Well may the temple-shrine grow dim,
And shadows veil the Cherubim,
When He, the chosen One of Heaven,
A sacrifice for guilt is given!

Those wonderful signs which attended the death of Christ made no little impression upon many of His persecutors. The Roman centurion, the commander of the band of soldiers who attended at the cross, was one of those who were most affected. When he saw the heavens turned into darkness at noonday, the earth quaking, and the rocks rending; and especially, when he thought of the divine conduct of Jesus on the cross, and heard Him cry with a loud voice at the very point of death, and saw that He so calmly and confidently committed His spirit into the hands of His Father, he feared greatly, while at the same time he gave vent to his feelings in the exclamation, 'Certainly this was righteous man.' 'Truly this was the Son of God.'

After witnessing the solemn scene of the Savior's crucifixion, the whole multitude left the sacred spot with deep emotions. 'And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts and returned.' But let us stay on Calvary; and not be borne away with the torrent of this vain, thoughtless, and sinful world. Let us daily contemplate the Savior's cross. Glory shines from it. The sweetest songs of heaven have respect to it. It gives rise to the happiness of the whole redeemed host of God. O my soul, seriously and steadily look at your Redeemer offering Himself a sacrifice for your sins. Behold the Son of God, hanging on the accursed tree, making peace between God and man by the blood of the cross! On the sacred summit of Calvary the church was purchased with the blood of Emmanuel. There a fountain, which cleanses from all sin, has been opened. There the precious blood of Christ, as a Lamb without blemish and without spot, has been shed. See it streaming from the cross for the salvation of the world—speaking better things than the blood of Abel—pleading for

pardon, peace, and reconciliation— opening the gates of the heavenly city, that the righteous nation which keeps the truth may enter in. This is the fountain of which Zechariah prophesied, 'In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.'

You pilgrims, who are journeying through a dry and thirsty land where there is no water, come to this fountain for refreshment; here wash your robes, and make them white, that you may be prepared to sit down at the marriage-supper of the Lamb, and to walk with Christ in white, as those who are worthy. Behold the water of endless life flowing from the side of the blessed Jesus, the true smitten Rock; and as you journey through the burning sands of life, keep close by this Rock- the Rock of our salvation.

Amid all the changing scenes of our earthly pilgrimage- in the sunshine of prosperity- in the gloom of adversity- when blessed with health, and when prostrated on beds of affliction- may we turn our eyes with gratitude and love to the cross of Christ, around which beam the most resplendent rays of divine love. On that peaceful mount, where all is sprinkled with atoning blood, may we always rest; and when we come to yield our breath, may our last thoughts be of Calvary, and our last words those of the apostle, 'As for me, God forbid that I should boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of that cross, my interest in this world died long ago, and the world's interest in me is also long dead.'

When on Calvary I rest,
God, in flesh made manifest,
Shines in my Redeemer's face,
Full of beauty, truth, and grace.
Here I would forever stay,
Weep and gaze my soul away;
You are heaven on earth to me,
Lovely, mournful Calvary.'

How differently does the blessed Jesus now appear in His state of exaltation! Lift up your eyes from the scene of His humiliation and suffering on earth, and by faith behold Him in heaven. His head, which was once encircled with the crown of thorns and smitten with a reed, now wears 'many crowns' of glory. His visage, which was once marred more than any man, now shines like the sun in his strength. His eyes, which were once suffused with tears and swelled with grief, are now 'as a flame of fire.' His voice, which once uttered those doleful cries in the garden and on the cross, is now 'as the sound of many waters.' He, who was once nailed to the cross, and derided as the King of the Jews, has now on His robe and on His thigh a name written, 'King of Kings and Lord of Lords.' He, who was once hurried away by His insulting and persecuting foes, with faint and weary steps, to the scene of His crucifixion, is now followed by the armies of heaven with unending hallelujahs. He who was once crucified on Calvary, in the midst of the two thieves, now appears in the midst of the heavenly throne as the Lamb that was slain, radiant in all the glory of His divine and human nature, while the voice of the great multitude before the throne is saying, 'Alleluia! for the Lord God omnipotent reigns.' 'Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Your ways, Oh King of saints. Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? for You only are holy.' 'Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him who sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever.'

Blessed Jesus, may the consideration of Your sufferings and death make a deep and permanent impression on our hearts, leading us to forsake the ways of sin, and to look to You for the blessings of grace and glory. We adore You for becoming our representative, and for removing the guilt of our sins by Your vicarious death. Oh, may we be drawn to You by the sweet, attractive influence of the cross, and be conformed to Your

blessed image in all things. Fulfill in us Your words, 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself.' May we incline our ear, and come unto You; may we hear, that our souls may live; and make with us an everlasting covenant, even Your sure mercies. Draw us, we beseech You, by the bonds of a living faith to the cross; and may we ever dwell beneath its peaceful, refreshing, and life-giving shadow. Fill our souls with spiritual light and comfort; sanctify us with Your blood; and give us Your Holy Spirit to abide with us forever. May we repair, without delay, to that healing fountain which has been opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness. And while resting in devout meditation on Calvary, may our hearts be pervaded with Your love, and our tongues extol the riches of Your redeeming blood. There, in that serene and sacred light which beams around the believing soul, may we learn much of the mystery of Your boundless grace, in expiring upon the Cross, that we might be embraced in the arms of divine mercy, and raised from the pit of the lost, to the throne of heaven, to reign with You forever and ever.

There may we see the infinite evil of sin in Your death- how highly displeasing it is in the sight of God. There may we see that it was our sins which prostrated You in Your mysterious agony in the garden, and nailed You to the cross. There may we see mercy and truth meeting together- righteousness looking down from heaven- the law honored- justice satisfied- man reclaimed, and grace abounding to the very chief of sinners. And forbid that we should trample under foot Your precious blood, by which the Church has been redeemed. May it be sprinkled on our hearts, so that the destroying angel will spare us in the day of divine wrath, when all the enemies of the Lord shall perish. May we have a saving interest in Your sufferings and death. Clothe us in Your perfect righteousness; and may we rely with implicit confidence on the infinite merits of Your atonement. While passing through this valley of sin and sorrow, may we always enjoy the precious fruits of Your redeeming love; and when we pass the river of death, may we be arrayed in the robes of glory,

and forever partake of those blessings which are the purchase of Your death, and which exceed all that the eye has seen, or the ear heard, or the heart conceived. With cheerful hope may we now approach the grave, praising You for disarming death of his terrors, and for illuminating the dark valley by Your own passage through it.

Oh, may we spend our most delightful earthly moments in celebrating Your death, until we arrive at the realms of everlasting light, and peace, and joy, where, amid the unfading beauties and pleasures of the heavenly Canaan, You shall feed us, and lead us unto living fountains of waters- while the arches of heaven are ringing with the sweet notes of the song of redemption on Calvary: 'Unto Him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever! Amen.'

'Come to Calvary's holy mountain,
Sinners ruined by the fall;
Here a pure and healing fountain
Flows to you, to me, to all,
In a full perpetual tide,
Opened when our Savior died.
Come in poverty and sinfulness,
Come defiled without, within;
From infection and uncleanness,
From the leprosy of sin,
Wash your robes, and make them white:
You shall walk with God in light.
Come in sorrow and contrition,
Wounded, impotent, and blind;
Here the guilty, free remission,
Here the troubled, peace may find;
Health this fountain will restore,
He that drinks shall thirst no more.
He that drinks shall live forever;

It is a soul-renewing flood,
God is faithful- God will never
Break His covenant in blood;
Signed when our Redeemer died,
Sealed when He was glorified.'

THE SAVIOR'S DEATH

'Lovely was the death
Of Him whose life was love!'

"I am the Living One; I WAS DEAD, and behold I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades." Rev. 1:18

"Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13

"But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners." Romans 5:8

'Oh, unspeakable love! Oh mercy inconceivable! Oh most amazing condescension! that God, for the sake of man, should be made man- that God, for man, should die in the flesh- that He should submit 'to be tempted in all things like as we are.' See at how inestimable a price man was redeemed- man, who had enslaved himself to the devil; and had he not been ransomed at so vast a price must unavoidably have suffered eternal damnation.' -Augustine.

THE SAVIOR IN HIS DEATH.

O Savior God! O Lamb once slain!
At thought of You, Your love, Your flowing blood,
All thoughts decay; all things remembered fade;
All hopes return; all actions done by men
Or angels, disappear, absorbed and lost.' -Pollok

The trial and condemnation of our blessed Savior have already been presented to our view. We have traced His weary footsteps from the judgment hall to the summit of Calvary. We have seen

Him extended on the cross. We have listened to His last words, and seen Him expire amid the convulsions of nature. Let us now behold Him taken from the cross, and enclosed in the silent tomb, while, at the same time, we consider some of those great practical truths connected with His death.

THE BURIAL OF THE SAVIOR. It was a dark, melancholy period to those disciples of Jesus, who were eyewitnesses of His crucifixion, when they saw Him nailed to the accursed tree, and heard His dying groans on Calvary. What extreme sorrow must have filled their hearts during those solemn hours of His suffering, when even inanimate nature was giving signs of sympathy and mourning- when the heavens were clothed with blackness, and when the earth trembled.

When the multitude assembled on Calvary to witness the crucifixion of Christ had dispersed, and when the evening had come, the few faithful friends of our Lord, who were spectators of His decease, could not endure the thought of leaving Him still extended on the cross after death, as it was usual to do with those who were crucified. Among that little band there was 'a disciple of Jews' more bold than the rest, Joseph of Arimathea, who went to Pilate, and asked that he may take away the body of Jesus for burial. Pilate at first doubted whether Christ was yet dead, as in ordinary cases of crucifixion death did not take place in so short a time; but when he had ascertained the certainty of His death, he finally granted the earnest petition of Joseph. Preparation was now made for the interment of Jesus. Fine linen was procured, with myrrh and aloes to purify His body, 'as the manner of the Jews is to bury.' 'Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a long linen cloth. He placed it in his own new tomb, which had been carved out of the rock. Then he rolled a great stone across the entrance as he left.'

The lowest step in the humiliation of our Savior has now been taken. Clothed in the garbs of death, He is laid in the new tomb of Joseph, and the great stone is rolled to the door of the

sepulcher. Now is accomplished the prophecy of the Psalmist, 'You have brought me into the dust of death.' It was on Friday evening that the body of Jesus was committed to the grave, in the presence of a few of His devoted followers. After the solemn scene was ended, all appear to have retired from the sepulcher except some women who had followed the Savior from Galilee. 'Some women were there, watching from a distance, including Mary Magdalene, Mary (the mother of James the younger and of Joseph), and Salome.' How much to be admired is the conduct of these pious women on that most sad, memorable, and important occasion. They still linger on Calvary after all the multitude, with fearful hearts, had returned. They come near the tomb, behold how the body of Christ is laid in it, and see the great stone rolled at the door of the sepulcher. Though all seems sad and dreary around that sacred mount, they still watch there until the shadows of evening begin to gather over the landscape, and to render still more gloomy the tomb in which Jesus sleeps. They are the last at the sepulcher, manifesting their highest regard for the memory of Him who had so freely bestowed upon them His pardoning mercy- who had sustained and soothed them amid the trials and changes of earth, and guided them in the path which leads to a bright and happy world beyond the grave. At length, leaving the sepulcher, they go to prepare 'spices and ointment,' intending to return after the Sabbath for the purpose of showing more respect to their Lord and Master.

All this time the rulers of the Jews were not idle. Their rage against the Lord, and against His Anointed, was not yet satiated. Remembering that Christ had predicted His own resurrection after three days, and determined, if possible, to prevent its accomplishment, they go to Pilate, and ask that a guard of soldiers may be stationed over against His tomb. Their wish is granted. Pilate replied, "Take guards and secure it the best you can." So they sealed the tomb and posted guards to protect it.' The utmost precaution has now been taken by powerless and wicked men to overthrow the divine prediction of Him, in whose hands are the keys of hell and of death- of Him whom it was

impossible for the cords of death to hold. Soon was that guarded sepulcher to burst open- soon was He who was 'crucified in weakness,' to rise. by 'the power of God'- soon was that Roman guard to tremble, and fall to the ground as dead men. But before we see the sepulcher open, and the Savior rise in divine majesty, let us consider His death in some of its important relations- as accomplishing the grand designs of Jehovah respecting our race- as bringing peace, righteousness, and salvation to guilty, depraved, lost man, and glory to God in the highest- and as displaying the richness and marvelousness of the divine benevolence.

PREDICTIONS CONCERNING THE SAVIOR'S DEATH. It was by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God that Christ was taken, and by wicked hands crucified and slain. He who rules over all things prepared the way for this astonishing and solemn event, and in various ways made it known to the world long before it occurred. The law and the prophets have particular reference to the death of Jesus. The Psalms are full of predictions relating to His sufferings and death. The bleeding sacrifice on Jewish altars shadowed forth the great expiatory sacrifice, the Lamb of God, that would, in the fullness of time, take away the sin of the world. The paschal lamb, the scapegoat, and the brazen serpent, all pointed to Christ, our Passover, extended on the cross, and slain for us. The whole Mosaic dispensation had respect to His death, as the propitiation for the sins of the world. It all foreshadowed the great mysterious event on Calvary. The law was a shadow of good things to come concerning Christ.

Scripture prophecy has clearly set forth our Savior's death, with the circumstances attending it. Of Him, who was to be the great and good Shepherd of Israel, and who was to lay down His life for His flock, it was prophesied: 'Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man who is my fellow, says the Lord of hosts; smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered...' In that fearful night when Jesus was apprehended after His

agony in the garden, He called the attention of His disciples to the accomplishment of this remarkable prediction of His death. "Tonight all of you will desert me," Jesus told them. "For the Scriptures say, 'God will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'

His trial and condemnation were clearly foretold by Isaiah. 'He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare His generation? for He was cut off from the land of the living: for the transgression of my people He was stricken.' He was dragged from Gethsemane to the house of the high priest, and the judgment hall of Pilate, and, by a most unrighteous sentence, condemned to death. The very sufferings He endured, while undergoing the mockery of a trial before Caiaphas and Pilate, are clearly brought before our view by the prophetic pen of Inspiration. 'I give my back to those who beat me and my cheeks to those who pull out my beard. I do not hide from shame, for they mock me and spit in my face.' This was 'the very manner in which our Savior was treated, as we have already seen. He was mocked- buffeted- struck in the face- a crown of thorns was placed upon His head- and a reed in His right hand. 'And they spit upon Him, and took the reed, and smote Him on the head.' It was foretold that Christ would be bruised, scourged, and pierced. 'But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.' 'They pierced my hands and my feet.' 'And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced.' We read of the fulfillment of these predictions in the gospel narrative. 'Then Pilate took Jesus, and scourged Him.' 'One of the soldiers, with a spear, pierced His side.' His hands and feet were also pierced with nails.

How vividly are the sufferings of our Savior on the cross represented by those holy men of God, who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit! It was foretold that He would die among criminals. 'He was numbered with the transgressors.' 'He made His grave with the wicked.' In fulfillment of this, the

Evangelists tell us that Christ was suspended on the cross between two thieves; while it is added, 'And the Scripture was fulfilled, which says, And He was numbered with the transgressors.' According to prophecy, Messiah was to be buried in the sepulcher of a rich man. 'With the rich in His death.' We have seen that Jesus was laid in the tomb of Joseph, 'a rich man of Arimathea.' The very parting of His garment was foretold by the inspired Psalmist. 'They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my robe.' As the accomplishment of this, Aye read, they 'parted His garments, casting lots.' It was foretold, that amid all His sufferings, He was to be reproached, taunted, and scorned by His persecutors; and the very words they were to use in reproaching Him are mentioned. But I am a worm and not a man. I am scorned and despised by all! Everyone who sees me mocks me. They sneer and shake their heads, saying, "Is this the one who relies on the Lord? Then let the Lord save him! If the Lord loves him so much, let the Lord rescue him!" How literally was this fulfilled when our blessed Redeemer was enduring the pains of the cross, and the wrath of God due to our sins, His persecutors still manifested their extreme enmity towards Him, exclaiming in derision- "And the people passing by shouted abuse, shaking their heads in mockery. "So! You can destroy the Temple and build it again in three days, can you? Well then, if you are the Son of God, save yourself and come down from the cross!" The leading priests, the teachers of religious law, and the other leaders also mocked Jesus. "He saved others," they scoffed, "but he can't save himself! So he is the king of Israel, is he? Let him come down from the cross, and we will believe in him! He trusted God—let God show his approval by delivering him! For he said, 'I am the Son of God.' "

It was foretold that, in His great thirst, vinegar and gall should be offered to Him. 'They put gall in my food and gave me vinegar for my thirst.' When Jesus was hanging on the cross, encompassed by His persecutors, we are told, that 'Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a stick, and offered it to Jesus to drink.' The very

language that Messiah would use in His last moments, was foretold in these remarkable words; 'My God, my God! Why have you forsaken me? Why do you remain so distant? Why do you ignore my cries for help?' Just before the Savior expired on the cross, we are told by two Evangelists, that He cried with a loud voice, 'My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?' The exact accomplishment of these striking predictions concerning the death of our Lord and Savior, should confirm our faith in His divine character, and lead us to rely with an unshaken confidence on His infinite merits for a happy and glorious immortality. May the cheering light of this 'more sure of word of prophecy', which shines in this world of moral darkness, guide our wandering steps to Him who is the bright and Morning Star-whose transcendent beauty, and excellency, and glory, will be the sublime, enrapturing theme of the heavenly throng through all the innumerable ages of bliss.

THE SAVIOR'S DEATH WAS A MOST COSTLY SACRIFICE. What could be so costly as this- the shedding of the blood of Emmanuel? This was the richest gift that heaven could confer on a world of transgressors.

Of all the gifts Your hand bestows,
Oh Giver of all good,
Not heaven itself, a richer knows,
Than my Redeemer's blood.

It is the precious blood of Christ, streaming from the cross, by which we are redeemed to God. 'You know that we were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.' How costly is the price of our redemption! Who can estimate the value of this divine oblation? It is a sum too vast for human computation. It is of matchless worth!

If we would view this subject in a proper light, we must consider the infinite dignity and excellency of the Person of Christ, the depth of His humiliation, and the original character of those for

whom He gave His life a ransom. While we think of Him as possessing equal and untold glory with the Father, from the days of eternity, we must also look at Him coming into the world to be persecuted and despised- to endure hardships, torture, and pain- to be most truly a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief- to suffer and bleed in the garden, and to yield His breath amid the agonies of a crucifixion.

All this, we must remember, was for apostate man- whose heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. This price was not paid for the redemption of fallen angels. 'For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham.' And the angels who kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.' How significantly does the apostle say; 'For you are bought with A PRICE;' -a price infinitely costly and glorious! And well is it added, in consideration of this most costly sacrifice, 'Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.' Here is a most powerful incentive to diligence and fervency in the Christian life- to lead us to devote ourselves entirely to the service of Him who claims us as His own, and who has ransomed us with so vast a price. 'For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.' Should not such a consideration as this arouse us from our deep, spiritual lethargy, and make us live for God and a glorious immortality.

O Christian, when you think of the inestimable price which was paid for your redemption, may a song of praise ascend from your inmost soul to Him who has loved you, and washed you from your sins in His own precious blood. Unceasingly lift up your hands to God, and bless His holy name for providing such a sacrifice for our sins, even His only begotten Son, the brightness of His glory, the express image of His Person, the Creator and

Preserver of the universe. Adoringly we would we say with the apostle; 'Thank God for his Son—a gift too wonderful for words!' How alarming and dreadful is the condition of those who lightly esteem this costly sacrifice, since 'there remains no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries!' The last efficacious sacrifice for sin has been offered; when Christ appears again, it will be 'without sin unto salvation.' Then learn to prize this sacrifice. It is too precious to be slighted. Flee to the Lamb of God. Take refuge in His atoning sacrifice; and the storms of divine vengeance will never break upon you; for God is now pacified towards you by the death of His Son.

You, who are interested in the death of Jesus, look upwards with joy and hope. The heavens are serene and smiling: no clouds overcast the sky of yonder bright world to which you are hastening. Jesus has made peace by the blood of His cross, and brought us near to God, and to the eternal enjoyment of His favor and love. In a little while, you, who are glorying in this costly sacrifice, will enter the gates of that City which shines like the sun, whose streets are pure gold, whose gates are pearls, and whose light is the glory of God and of the Lamb. '...your salvation will come like the dawn. Yes, your healing will come quickly. Your godliness will lead you forward, and the glory of the Lord will protect you from behind.'

'Not all the blood of beasts
On Jewish altars slain
Could give the guilty conscience peace
Or wash away the stain.
But Christ, the heavenly Lamb,
Takes all our sins away;
A sacrifice of nobler name
And richer blood than they.
My faith would lay her hand
On that dear head of Thine,
While, like a penitent, I stand,

And there confess my sin.
My soul looks back to see
The burdens You did bear
When hanging on the cursed tree,
And hopes her guilt was there.
Believing, we rejoice
To see the curse remove;
We bless the Lamb with cheerful voice,
And sing His bleeding love.'

THE DESIGN OF THE SAVIOR'S DEATH. The grand design of the Savior's death was the promotion of God's glory in the salvation of countless multitudes of the human race, who were enthralled by the bondage of sin, Satan, and the world. All those sufferings of the blessed Jesus in the garden, in the judgment hall, and on the cross, were endured for this very purpose, that a complete, glorious atonement might be made; that man might be reconciled to God, saved from sin, delivered from the wrath to come, sanctified through the truth, and finally brought home to the mansions of glory. And as soon as the death of Christ was accomplished, the anger of God was turned away from us, because His justice was satisfied, the law magnified and made honorable, and an acceptable sacrifice offered for sin. The design of Christ's death is a glorious, refreshing theme, on which we would dwell more particularly.

THE SAVIOR DIED TO MAKE ATONEMENT FOR SIN. This is the grand doctrine of Christianity- the foundation on which all our hopes of future felicity are established- the principle which sustains us amid all the trials of life, and which cheers us in the evening of our earthly pilgrimage, when the soul is about to pass to the shores of an eternal world, and to appear before the bar of God. Nothing can be more animating to the awakened, anxious, trembling sinner, than the divine declaration, that Jesus died to save him: and for the consolation of all such, this doctrine is exhibited in the clearest light throughout the Scriptures. 'For I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received, how

that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures.' 'For in that He died, He died unto sin once.' 'For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.' 'But now once at the end of the world He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.' 'For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.' 'By His death He has finished the transgression, and made an end of sin.' 'Who gave Himself for our sins.' How wonderful that Christ the eternal Son of God, should thus voluntarily give Himself up to sufferings and to death, to make atonement for sin!

O my soul, attentively consider this most astonishing and mysterious event- Jesus, the brightness of the Father's glory, giving Himself for sin! May this blessed truth dwell in every heart, and its praises be uttered by every tongue. Let us ever magnify the riches of this grace. If the Redeemer had not died to save us, what would have been our future destiny? Would not the redemption of our souls have ceased forever? Who could have saved us if Jesus had not left His throne, to bring salvation to us?

THE SAVIOR DIED TO RECONCILE US TO GOD. 'And you, that were once alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now has He reconciled, in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and unblameable, and unreprouvable in His sight.' Man was originally at peace with God; for he was created in holiness and happiness; but when sin entered the garden of Eden, his career of rebellion and enmity commenced. And since that sad hour, the whole world has been lying in wickedness- far from God, through enmity against Him. How astonishing that the mind of man should be filled with such inveterate enmity against its blessed Creator- that it should hate His holy and righteous law; slight the only remedy for all our spiritual disease, the Gospel of His Son; delight in that which is impure and odious in the sight of heaven- love the heavy burden of sin; and take pleasure in provoking God to anger by all manner of wicked works! 'Hear, O heavens! Listen, O earth! This

is what the Lord says: "The children I raised and cared for have rebelled against me!" "The heavens are shocked at such a thing and shrink back in horror and dismay, says the Lord.'

It is, indeed, a sad truth, that man has raised the flag of rebellion against heaven- that his mind, in a state of nature, is enmity itself against the ever blessed God. 'The carnal mind is enmity against God for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.' Every unrenewed man hates God, the most excellent and glorious Being, the Fountain of all light, and life, and felicity, the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God. He does not love to think of the nature of that Being who is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and who cannot look on iniquity. God is not in all his thoughts. The language of depraved hearts to God is, "...they say to God, 'Go away. We want no part of you and your ways. Who is the Almighty, and why should we obey him?' Job 21:14-15.

Now, to bring the wicked, and rebellious heart of man into a state of reconciliation with God, our blessed Savior assumed humanity, and poured out His precious blood upon the cross. By this costly sacrifice the glorious work was accomplished: and now, 'You, who once were far off, are made near by the blood of Christ.' In His death He effected, in a most wonderful and mysterious manner, our reconciliation to God. 'When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son.' 'And all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation.' In the striking and expressive words of Bunyan, 'Is this indeed the truth of God, that Christ was made to be sin for me? was made the curse of God for me? Has He indeed borne all my sins, and spilt His blood for my redemption! O blessed tidings! O welcome grace!' 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name.' Now has peace come; now the face of heaven is altered: "Behold, all things have become new." Now the sinner can abide God's presence, yes, sees unutterable glory and beauty in Him.

This is the glory of the great reconciling work on Calvary— it brings us near to God. It brings us into a state of friendship with the Father of spirits- a state in which the believer, even on earth, is filled with the peace of God, which passes all understanding; while, at the same time, he is prepared for the highest pleasures, the purest joys, and the most enrapturing scenes in heaven. What perennial streams of pleasure, arising from an interest in this divine reconciliation, will flow to those who have overcome through the blood of the cross, when they are made pillars in the temple of God, to go no more out- when from the mansions of the blessed, it shall be proclaimed: 'I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, the home of God is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will remove all of their sorrows, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. For the old world and its evils are gone forever."

Through eternity it will be a matter of the greatest wonder, as well as the sweetest and most sublime song, that the great God, the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity- whom we had by wicked works so highly offended- should ever have 'reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ;' and condescended to dwell with us who were once so vile, and rebellious, and wretched. Oh, the depth of the riches of the mercy of God!- a mercy surpassing all wonders- boundless as the heavens- vast as eternity. Will God in very deed dwell with man reconciled to Him by a suffering Savior? Yes, He will. By this 'new and living way' of reconciliation, we may come to Him, and dwell in His presence, where is fullness of joy, and pleasures for evermore.

'Glory to God in heaven above,
On earth sweet peace and sacred love;
Good will to men- the foe is foiled,
And God and sinners reconciled.'

Are WE reconciled to God by the death of His Son? Are we at peace with Heaven through the blood of the cross? Is God in all

our thoughts? Is Jesus precious to us? Are we renewed in the spirit of our mind? Do we delight in the things of God? Are our affections elevated far above earthly objects? Do they center on the Savior, and on spiritual, heavenly, and eternal things? If so, then we are reconciled to God. Then is God pacified towards us. Most desirable and happy state, to be reconciled to God! But, on the other hand, are we still alienated from the life of God- still without God, and without hope in the world- still in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity? Do we set our minds on earthly things, and cling to them with an unrelenting grasp? Do we still forget God, and heaven, and eternity? This is to be unreconciled to God. And how fearful is such a state, especially in a day of gospel reconciliation! What will become of us who reject those gracious terms of peace- this last reconciliation- and put the grace of God far from ourselves? If God is unreconciled to us, who will sustain us amid the trials and conflicts of earth? Who will 'speak peace' to our soul when about to embark on the boundless ocean of eternity? Who will smooth our dying pillow, and point us to a blessed rest beyond the grave? Who will open to us the gates of the celestial city, that we may enter in, and walk its golden streets? How can we appear before the tribunal of our unreconciled Judge to answer for the innumerable transgressions of our lives? How can we listen to His just and irrevocable sentence of condemnation?

While you still linger on the borders of the ocean of eternity- while God is yet waiting to be gracious, while the blood of Jesus yet speaks peace to your soul, we beseech you to be reconciled to God. Make peace with Him through faith in Christ. 'Acquaint yourself now with Him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto you.'

'O Savior; may we never rest
Till You are formed within;
Till You have calmed our troubled breast,
And crushed the power of sin.
Oh, may we gaze upon Your cross,
Until the wondrous sight

Makes earthly treasures seem but dross,
And earthly sorrows light.
Until released from carnal ties,
Our spirit upwards springs;
And sees true peace above the skies,
True joy in heavenly things.
There, as we gaze, may we become
United, Lord, to Thee;
And in a fairer, happier home
Your perfect beauty see.'

THE SAVIOR DIED TO DELIVER US FROM THE WRATH TO COME. 'Even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come.' 'For God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.' When man sinned, he became exposed to the fierce wrath of God. 'For because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the children of disobedience.' Of every unbeliever it is said, 'The wrath of God abides on him.' But who can describe this wrath? Who can tell how terrible it is? In the Scripture it is spoken of as a 'worm that never dies' 'a lake which burns with fire and brimstone' 'the fierce wrath of God' 'everlasting punishment.'

Now, from all this wrath, Jesus by His death on the cross delivers us. How cheering to the awakened and anxious sinner is the glorious announcement which the gospel makes! Oh the sacred page this precious truth is most conspicuously exhibited—that Jesus endured the weight of divine wrath due to us for sin. Yes, in His unparalleled love, He sustained the dreadful load in our place, and by His own blood discharged the mighty sum of human guilt! 'Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.'

The death of Christ works for us a complete deliverance from all the penal consequences of sin in the world to come. 'Who is He that condemns? It is Christ who died, yes, rather that is risen

again, who is at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.' God, in His incomparable benevolence, is now saying to every one who is interested in the death of His Son- 'For a small moment have I forsaken you, but with great mercies will I gather you. In a little wrath I hid my face from you for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on you, says the Lord your Redeemer.'

How great should be our gratitude to Him, who by the costly price of His blood has ransomed us from an eternity of woe. As we journey through life, we should bless God every day for His boundless mercy in the gift of His Son to us sinners: and we should ever adore the Savior for His sacrificial offering to appease the wrath of offended Heaven. We should continually rejoice in God our Savior. 'And not only so, but we also rejoice in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.'

What exercise so delightful, in a world where sin has abounded, as recording the rich grace of our God, and chanting the praises of the sinner's Friend! May we never cease, while passing through the wilderness of earth, to extol in sweetest songs the wonders of redeeming love! And when the darkness of mortality is past, may it be our blissful employment in that bright temple beyond the skies, the home of the saints, to raise a never-ending song to the Lamb that sits upon the throne. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all His benefits: who forgives all your iniquities; who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from destruction; who crowns you with loving-kindness and tender mercies.'

'Bless the Lord, my soul, and sing
Unceasing praises to Your King,
Whose love through all His counsels shines,
Transcendent, matchless, and divine.'

Oh great and merciful Deliverer, who died to save us from the

pains of hell, we adore Your holy name, and magnify Your wondrous grace. We praise You for assuming our nature, and sustaining the dreadful load of divine vengeance, when we were without strength to bear it. We thank You for making Your soul an offering for sin in our stead, and delivering us from the wrath to come.

'What thanks I owe You, and what love;
A boundless, endless store;
Shall echo through the realms above,
When time shall be no more.'

Before the storm comes let us fasten to Him who came to save: let us build our hopes of eternal felicity on Christ alone; for He is the only sure, immovable foundation. 'For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.' In Him we are safe- safe amid the storms of time, and the flames of the last great day of wrath- safe through all the circling years of eternity. The storm may come- the winds may blow- the waves may dash- the rain may descend- but in Christ we will stand unmoved, while the wicked fall around us; for we are fixed on the Rock of Ages, against which no power is able to prevail. We are upheld by those hands which have stretched out the heavens, and from which no one on earth or hell is able to cast us down. 'In the Lord Jehovah is the Rock of Ages.' 'And a man shall be a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.'

THE SAVIOR DIED TO OBTAIN ETERNAL SALVATION FOR US. By His obedience, sufferings, and death, he has become 'the author of eternal salvation unto all those who obey Him.' 'Having obtained eternal redemption for us.' All the felicities the redeemed shall enjoy through the ages of immortality will come from the fruits of His death.

'These lively hopes we owe
To Jesus' dying love;
We would adore His brace below,

And sing His power above.'

Who can tell what those heavenly felicities are, which our blessed Lord and Savior has obtained for us? Can any one have a proper conception of the glory of Heaven? No. It is a bliss beyond all thought; it is declared that eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of men, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.' It is a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, in comparison with which the 'splendor of earth' is but a fading flower- a shadow which passes quickly away. Great indeed is that salvation which Jesus, by His agony and death, has procured for us. Unspeakable are the blessings it brings to the redeemed in the mansions above.

It includes a deliverance from all condemnation- brings the believer under the shadow of the tree of life in the midst of Paradise- supplies him with the hidden manna- conducts him to living fountains of waters- invests him with the robe of righteousness- places upon his head a crown which never fades, and fills him with joys which never end. It includes the most sweet, intimate, and lasting communion with a triune God- with the holy angels- with the great and good of every age and nation, that innumerable company who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ. It delivers him from all the ills of the present life. In yon bright-walled city of the New Jerusalem, there are no storms- no conflicts - no darkness- no sickness- no death. There the Sun of Righteousness is always shining in meridian splendor- and under His beams all is joy and gladness. There Jesus, in His own glorified humanity, will lead His ransomed ones to fountains of immortal bliss; and with a gentle hand, wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Yes, His own soft hand shall wipe the tears
From every weeping eye,
And pains, and groans, and griefs, and fears,
And death itself shall die.'

By the expiatory sacrifice of Himself, our blessed Savior has not only obtained eternal glory for us, but as the Captain of our

salvation, He will finally conduct us into the 'inheritance of the purchased possession,' where we shall ever remain as monuments to the praise of the glory of His grace. And how consoling to the afflicted child of God is the thought that his eternal salvation is near- so near that there is but a step between him and the felicities of heaven. The glory of the upper world is ready to be revealed to us. 'Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.' The night is almost passed. The day is at hand. The Morning Star appears. In a little while, the Sun of Righteousness will rise with His effulgent beams, and shine in those new heavens, wherein righteousness dwells, rejoicing the countless multitudes of glorified saints.

Christian pilgrim, when your momentary existence on earth is passed, you will experience all the blessings of that eternal life which Jesus gives. And how swiftly is time passing over you, bearing you onward and upward to the land of pleasure, rest, and praise. Already you may be drinking your last cup of earthly sorrow. Already your last conflict may have commenced. You may be ready to finish your course with joy- ready to depart in peace and triumph, to receive the crown of righteousness in heaven. God may be now sending forth some angelic messenger to carry your happy spirit to Abraham's bosom; and you may be just ready to say to your weeping friends- I am going home to my mansion in the skies, to be clothed with the garments of salvation, and to drink at the fountain of living waters. I am going home to Jesus, my elder Brother, my everlasting Friend, my Savior, my God. I am going home to meet those dear friends, who have gone before me to the saints' rest, and to join the innumerable company of angels, and the redeemed, in celebrating the wonders of Calvary- the unsearchable riches of Christ. In that heavenly home, I shall enjoy, through an unclouded day, the blessings of eternal salvation purchased by the Redeemer on the cross. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

'What reason have we to rejoice now, when we think how near eternity is, and how short the journey through this wilderness,

and that it is but a step from earth to heaven. With joy, then, let us look upwards to the everlasting hills- to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; for our 'redemption draws near.'

'Awake, you saints, and raise your eyes,
And raise your voices high;
Awake, and praise that sovereign love,
That shows salvation nigh.
On all the wings of time it flies,
Each moment brings it near;
Then welcome each declining day!
Welcome each closing year!
Not many years their rounds shall run,
Nor many mornings rise,
Before all its glories stand revealed
To our admiring eyes.
You wheels of nature, speed your course;
You mortal powers, decay;
Fast as you bring the night of death,
You bring Eternal Day.'

THE SAVIOR'S DEATH WAS NECESSARY FOR OUR SALVATION. It was necessary to carry into effect the eternal counsel of God. 'But you followed God's prearranged plan. With the help of lawless Gentiles, you nailed him to the cross and murdered him.' 'That is what has happened here in this city! For Herod Antipas, Pontius Pilate the governor, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were all united against Jesus, your holy servant, whom you anointed. In fact, everything they did occurred according to your eternal will and plan.' The sufferings and death of Jesus were only the accomplishment of that grand scheme of redemption, devised in the ages of eternity by God the Father. When, in the fullness of time, the Son of God came to execute His mediatorial office, every pain he endured, every groan He uttered, every torture that was inflicted on Him, was laid out, for Him by the eternal Father. All was necessary.

His death was necessary for the expiation of sin. If He had not condescended to suffer, and bleed, and die, the gates of Paradise must have remained forever closed against the sinner, and one universal wail of despair ascended from the human race. In the gospel dispensation, blood must be shed before the sinner could be redeemed to God. Without shedding of blood is no remission. Mark how emphatic is the language- 'no remission.' But the blood which flowed on Jewish altars could not take away sin. 'For it was not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.' 'Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood, He entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.' Now when the blood of Christ was poured out on Calvary, we, who were afar off from God and glory, were brought near to Him in whose favor is life, and in whose presence is fullness of joy. Delightful thought!

While with wonder and gratitude we think of the stupendous work of redeeming man, a message most welcome and cheering comes to us through the revelation which has been made from heaven. It is the song of salvation. It is the gospel sound. It is the voice of God, proclaiming pardon and peace to a lost world through the shedding of the blood of Christ. Listen to it, you who are ready to say, There is no hope, and to lie down in sorrow and despair- "Comfort, comfort my people," says your God. "Speak tenderly to Jerusalem. Tell her that her sad days are gone and that her sins are pardoned. Yes, the Lord has punished her in full for all her sins." Here, we have the greatest cause for admiration, gratitude, and praise. How can we sufficiently admire the matchless grace of our Redeemer in interposing in our behalf, and saving us by the shedding of His blood! How can we adequately express our gratitude to Him for favors so great and divine! Should we not praise Him forever? Should we not adopt the beautiful language of the Psalmist: 'I will extol You, my God, O King; and I will bless Your name forever and ever. Every day will I bless You; and I will praise Your name forever and ever!' Should not our love towards Him constantly increase, as we journey through life, until it burns with seraphic ardor in

the courts above?

'Praise, then, His glorious name,
Publish His exalted fame!
Still His worth your praise exceeds,
Excellent are all His deeds.
Praise again the joyful sound,
Let the nations roll it round!
Zion, shout, for this is He,
God the Savior dwells in thee.'

O divine Savior, whose blood streamed from the cross, to cleanse us from the defilement of sin, and to open the everlasting doors of glory for us, inspire us with the strongest love to You for that most marvelous display of Your condescension and benevolence. Fill our souls with transporting views of the glory of Calvary. May we see the preciousness of the blood of the cross, its suitability to our need, and the necessity of its being shed, to bring us back to God and to the joys of Paradise. May we have redemption through Your blood, obtaining the forgiveness of all our sins, according to the riches of Your grace. May we go on our way rejoicing in a reconciled God, and making mention of Your righteousness, of Yours only; and when we come to contend with the last enemy, even death, the sting of which is sin, may Your blood speak peace to our departing souls, still every tempest that may arise within us, silence all our accusers, and cause us to rejoice with unspeakable joy as we pass the valley of mortality to awaken amid the realities of eternal scenes.

It was necessary that the Savior should become obedient unto death, before He entered upon His state of glorification as our Mediator at the right hand of God, for He 'could not have a mediatorial glory until He had offered His mediatorial sacrifice.' This is strongly set forth by the Savior Himself, in His beautiful and expressive discourse to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus. 'Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to

enter into His glory?' Before He would be exalted to those realms of bliss, where He now sways the scepter of the universe, He must endure the bitterest sorrow, and torture, and pain, and agony. He must be buffeted, spit upon, reviled, crowned with thorns, nailed to the cross, assailed by the powers of darkness, forsaken by God the Father, and left to expire in the agonies of an accursed death.

Here, then, is the grand foundation of His exaltation, as well as our own future happiness- His suffering those things which were necessary for Him to suffer, to fulfill all that the prophets have spoken of His obedience unto death. From the lowest step in His humiliation and suffering, He rises to the highest seat in glory. 'He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall He lift up the head.' When He 'purged our sins' by His sufferings and death, the 'everlasting doors' of heaven were opened for Him; and, as the King of glory, He has entered and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.' Most highly did God the Father exalt Him. Most gloriously was He recompensed, when by His own blood He entered into heaven, to appear in the presence of God for us. As the reward of His atoning work, God received Him back to glory, made Him Lord both of the dead and living, and gave Him dominion over all things. 'Wherefore God also has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.' 'Now we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor.'

Glorious Redeemer, from those mansions of bliss, where You are now clothed in divine majesty and mighty power, stoop down in pity and compassion upon us pilgrims in a land of darkness, in a vale of tears, in the valley of the shadow of death. O You, who, amid scenes of extreme sorrow, walked this gloomy pathway to that bright world on high, we beseech You to nerve our feeble

arm for enduring the tribulations of the world; support us in the darkest hour of adversity, and amid the fiercest assaults of the foes of our salvation. While on earth, You sympathized with the sons and daughters of affliction, and now in glory You are still touched with the memory of our woes. May this consideration animate us amid the most painful vicissitudes and afflictions of time. May we also see that You, the Captain of our salvation, were 'made perfect through sufferings,' and for the sake of these sufferings, exalted in the heavenly places to a throne and a scepter which will endure forever.

And may we see that 'much tribulation' on earth is also necessary to make us perfect, and to prepare us for entering upon the saints' everlasting rest. What we most implore is Your strength and gracious presence 'in the fires,' and 'in the waters.' O blessed Savior, be with us in all the sufferings of our earthly course; and when the last battle is fought, and the last enemy conquered, grant that we, having overcome through Your blood, may sit with You on Your throne, even as You have overcome, and are sat down with Your Father on His throne.

THE SAVIOR HIS DEATH HAS MANIFESTED THE GREATEST LOVE TO MANKIND. 'Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' 'Now, no one is likely to die for a good person, though someone might be willing to die for a person who is especially good. But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.' Here is indeed unexampled love. Christ died not only for His friends, but for His enemies. Here is love whose vastness cannot be told- which passes all knowledge- which fills the mind with wonder and joy. What amazing love is here seen in the sufferings and death of the Savior! The eternal Son of God agonizing for us in Gethsemane and on Calvary- pouring out His blood for the remission of our sins! Surely, there never before was such a manifestation of love to the sons of men. How great must be that love which brought Emmanuel from the heights of glory to the depths of suffering, from a

throne of felicity, to endure the death of the cross! We may sooner fathom the deepest ocean, or measure the dimensions of earth, or scan the height of heaven, than comprehend the vastness of the redeeming love of Jesus. 'You see in Him an ocean of love without bottom, without bounds, overflowing the banks of heaven, streaming down upon this poor world to wash away the vileness of man! It is an ocean we cannot fathom it. The best act of our souls towards Christ's love is admiration, astonishing admiration, until the heart is quite overwhelmed with it- until our thoughts and understandings are, as it were, lost: the soul is taken out of itself, and laid in the dust as nothing, to be swallowed up in a holy contemplation of the unspeakable, inconceivable love of Jesus Christ.' (Owen)

With all the brightest discoveries we can make of this love, it is but comparatively little we know of its nature and vastness this side the grave. It has a height to which no intelligence can soar, a depth which no one can fathom, a breadth and length which can never be measured. Here let us pause, and exclaim with astonishment and admiration, when we consider the ways of God to man. "Oh, what a wonderful God we have! How great are his riches and wisdom and knowledge! How impossible it is for us to understand his decisions and his methods! For who can know what the Lord is thinking? Who knows enough to be his counselor? And who could ever give him so much that he would have to pay it back? For everything comes from him; everything exists by his power and is intended for his glory. To him be glory evermore. Amen.

'And to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge!'
'O love divine!- harp, lift up your voice on high!
Shout, angels! shout aloud, you sons of men!
And burn, my heart, with the eternal flame!
My lyre; be eloquent with endless praise!
O love divine! immeasurable love!
Stooping from heaven to earth, from earth to hell,
Without beginning, endless, boundless love!

Above all asking, giving far, to those
Who nothing deserved, who nothing deserved but death. Saving
the vilest! saving me! O love Divine!

In vain will we search for language to express the magnitude of this divine love. It has a length which reaches from everlasting to everlasting; a breadth that encompasses every intelligence and every interest; a depth which reaches the lowest state of human degradation and misery; and a height that throws floods of glory on the throne and crown of Jehovah. A glory beams from the Savior's love, which enkindles holy rapture in the minds of the heavenly host, and gives rise to the sweetest songs of Paradise. Yes—

'This subject fills the starry plains
With wonder, joy, and love;
And furnishes the noblest strains
For all the harps above.'

Can the loftiest seraph that adores in the presence of Jehovah fathom the depth of this love? No! It is a mystery which the minds of men and angels cannot fully unravel— a theme the contemplation of which will ever pour new rays of glory into the noblest intellects on high, while this mighty subject will remain unexhausted through the ages of bliss. "Can you solve the mysteries of God? Can you discover everything there is to know about the Almighty? Such knowledge is higher than the heavens—but who are you? It is deeper than the underworld—what can you know in comparison to him? It is broader than the earth and wider than the sea."

If we would learn something of its vastness, we must consider the character and dignity of Him by whom it was manifested. Had one of those holy angels who minister in the presence of God on high clothed himself with garments of humanity, and amid the most intense and indescribable sufferings, finished his earthly course on a cross, for the purpose of redeeming a race of sinners from everlasting destruction; how immeasurable would

have been the benevolence displayed in such a condescending act? It must have filled us with amazement, and excited the strongest feelings of gratitude. But how shall we express our admiration and praise, when we see Him whom seraphim adore, stooping from heaven to earth, to encircle the vile in the arms of His mercy; when we see Him, who is infinite in power, and majesty, and riches, and glory, voluntarily placing Himself in the room of rebels on earth; when we see Jesus, the brightness of His Father's glory, stretched upon the cross, racked with the most intense pain of body, and soul, and suffering for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God!

How amazing that He, who, by His infinite power, could have at once annihilated our rebellious race, or consigned us to everlasting punishment, should, for a season, divest Himself of His heavenly glory, visit earth, stoop so low in humiliation, become so poor, suffer so much, endure such a shameful, painful, and accursed death, for the purpose of making us eternally rich, holy, and happy in the Paradise of God! Here is the most sublime exhibition of the marvelous grace of our blessed Lord and Savior towards us sinners. 'For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might be rich.

The contemplation of the Savior's love in his death, fills all holy minds with a delight which the men of the world never experience. It is a stream of pleasure which will ever flow to refresh the pious soul, and to fill it with rapturous joy. On earth it is the Christian's daily theme of contemplation, and in heaven it will be his unceasing song. Here on earth, we know but little of its origin, its effects, and its fruits; there, with angels and the redeemed we shall continually study its dimensions, and learn much of its greatness and incomparable excellence. Here, we see it as through a glass darkly ; there, we shall view it in the brightness of heaven's light. Here, we only taste of the stream of love; there, we shall freely drink at the never-failing fountain,

while the ceaseless ages of glory are revolving.

The dying love of the Savior! What glory will it bring to the redeemed in those blissful realms beyond the Skies! Look forward to that solemn period when the heavenly invitation has been given to the righteous: 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' The whole family of God is before the throne; and on heaven's golden plains is sung a new song which employs every celestial harp. It is the song of redeeming love! It has respect to Him who expired on Calvary. How sweet are those heavenly notes which are tuned by the harmonious voice of saints and angels: "And they sang in a mighty chorus: "The Lamb is worthy—the Lamb who was killed. He is worthy to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing." "And then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea. They also sang: "Blessing and honor and glory and power belong to the one sitting on the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever." Thus will the love of the Savior in His death be celebrated through all the ages of immortality.

What impression has this Divine love made upon our minds? Can we view all this manifestation of infinite compassion and benevolence with a cold or indifferent heart? Are we insensible to the strongest love that has ever been manifested to the world? Do we still make light of this grace of Jesus? Let us not despise such amazing love. Let us turn from every earthly object, and fix our thoughts upon the love of the Savior in His death. Here, let our meditations be sweet: and let us say with the inspired penmen: 'We will delight in Your love more than wine.' 'We love Him, because He first loved us.' 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,

neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'

Adorable Redeemer, what wondrous love did You display, while stretched on the cross, suffering under the weight of our sins? Then You manifested a love which all the floods of divine wrath could not extinguish a love which wicked men and devils could not diminish- a love stronger than death. How shall we speak of love so astonishing as Yours, O Friend of sinners! Its glories surpass all thought! It is the sweetest theme of saints and angels before the throne! It is the wonder of heaven.

'Well might the skies with wonder view,
A love so strange as Thine,
No thought of angels ever knew
Compassion so divine!'

Surely it was nothing but infinite love that brought You, blessed Jesus, from the mansions of glory to the manger of Bethlehem, and the cross of Calvary. You well knew beforehand all those sufferings that were to be endured by You in manifesting Your redeeming love to a world of sinners. The agony in the garden, the stripes and buffetings in the judgment hall- the piercing of Your hands and feet- the revilings of Your foes- the conflicts with the powers of darkness- the overwhelming bitterness of Your Father's wrath- the weight of a world's guilt laid upon You- the bitter cry of desertion- the burning thirst, the pain and agony of that fearful hour, when the light of the sun faded in the heavens, when the earth trembled, and when the graves burst open- all, all were clearly foreseen by You. And though You knew every ingredient in that bitter cup which the Father gave You to drink, yet Your language was, 'Yes, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do Your will, O my God; yes, Your law is within my heart.'

In Your incomparable love for us, most willingly did You go forth with 'garments dyed in blood' to suffer and to die. Oh,

reveal Your dying love to our souls, and transform us into Your most holy image. In flame our cold affections with new displays of Your benevolence, and may we be enabled in some measure to comprehend with all saints what is its breadth, and length, and depth, and height of Your love. May the wondrous theme of Your redeeming love be our delightful study on earth- may it refresh our souls in the hour of death- may it be our song through all eternity.

Your dying love, O Lord, reveal
That love which melts the heart of steel;
Each stubborn will in mercy bow,
And lay the rebel sinner low.
Arise, Oh Sun of Righteousness,
And all Your waiting people bless;
Arise upon our hearts, and shine
Until every heart be wholly Thine.
In flame our cold affections, Lord;
Renew them by Your quickening word;
Bind every thought in willing chains,
Until not a rebel thought remains.'

Blessed Jesus, we beseech You to give us a saving interest us in Your atoning work on Calvary. Without a personal interest in those blessings which You have purchased by Your death on the cross, we will be truly miserable. 'Truly, in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains; truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel.' In vain is true and permanent happiness sought for in the things of this world: all beneath the skies is unsatisfying to all immortal spirit. Then raise our affections above these vain transitory objects, and worldly cares, which so much engross the attention of the men of the world. May we experience those imperishable joys which will enrich our souls to all eternity. May Your death be our life- our hope- our joy- our glory. Wash away our guilty stains in Your blood, and prepare us for the endless pleasures at Your right hand. Then may the joyful day soon arrive, when

some celestial messenger shall conduct our souls to the rest on high, in the mansions of Your Father's house, where praise shall be our beloved employment, while crowned with immortal felicity in the presence of God and angels, and of the spirits of just men made perfect.

'It is by Your Death we live, O Lord;
It is on Your cross we rest,
Forever be Your love adored,
Your name forever blest.'

THE SAVIOR'S RESURRECTION

'Early hasten to the tomb,
Where they laid His breathless clay
All is solitude and gloom-
Who has taken Him away?
Christ is risen! He meets our eyes.
Savior, teach us so to rise.'

"You are looking for Jesus, the Nazarene, who was crucified. He isn't here! He has been raised from the dead! Look, this is where they laid his body." Mark 16:6

"But the fact is that Christ has been raised from the dead. He has become the first of a great harvest of those who will be raised to life again." 1 Cor. 15:20

'The consideration of our Lord's resurrection should strengthen our faith, and quicken our hope in God, causing us firmly to believe His word, and confidently to rely upon His promises, especially those which concern our future state.' -Barrow.

'The wisdom of God, the righteousness of God, and the truth of

God, did all shine forth in their fullest beams, in the raising Him from the dead; which was the top stone of our reconciliation, as His death had been the cornerstone and foundation.' -Charnock.

THE SAVIOR IN HIS RESURRECTION.

Majestical He rose: trembled the earth;
The ponderous gate of stone was rolled away;
The keepers fell, the angels, awe-struck,
sunk into invisibility, while forth
The Savior of the world walked, and stood
Before the sepulcher, and viewed the clouds,
Empurpled glorious by the rising sun. -Graham.

The divine declaration that Jesus has risen from the dead is most cheering to the true Christian. If our blessed Surety who was voluntarily brought to the dust of death for us, had not burst the bars of the grave and risen for our justification, all our hopes of future bliss must have been buried in the tomb. Our pilgrimage on earth would have been dark and lonely, and our descent into the valley of death sad and despairing. In vain would we have looked for sympathy and support in the solemn hour of the spirit's departure to its everlasting home. No bright morning-star would have appeared in our sky, to foretell the rising of the Sun of Righteousness- to point us to a blissful immortality beyond the dark and silent grave. No precious promises would have glowed on the pages of the Scriptures, to tell us of a risen and glorified Redeemer- of saints being raised in His likeness- of the songs of a complete and glorious salvation- of the rivers of pleasures in Emmanuel's land- of the boundless stores of divine riches laid up for the righteous in the mansions of the better country. Without the joyful tidings of the Savior's resurrection, how could the Bible have proved a lamp to our feet, and a light to our path? How important, then, is the doctrine of the resurrection of Christ! for upon it we build our hopes of eternal life. We cannot estimate this subject too highly. It is a fundamental article of Christianity- the very pillar and

ground of the truth, as it is in Jesus.

While we would here essay to dwell upon some of the leading particulars of this delightful theme, and consider the great consolation it affords to a world over which death reigns, let us rejoice evermore in the blessed assurance that Jesus has risen indeed. Let us regard His resurrection as a most joyful event. And in the divine belief of it, let us repair to Him whose arms are now stretched out from the throne of heaven to save the lost; and we shall find, that in committing our souls to His care and keeping, He will guide us safely through life with His counsel, be with us in death, and on the morning of the resurrection take us up in His own likeness, to participate with Him in that glory with which He is now crowned in the celestial Paradise.

THE TIME OF THE SAVIOR'S RESURRECTION. It was on the morning of the third day after His crucifixion, that Jesus rose from the dead. It was on the first day of the week, 'very early in the morning,' while 'it was yet dark,' that this bright and Morning Star rose from the regions of darkness and the shadow of death. 'A morning then dawned which is to be followed by no evening; a brighter Sun arose upon the world, which is to set no more; a day began which shall never end; and night and darkness departed to return not again.' Then did the blessed 'day-spring from on high' revisit us with increased glory. Most appropriately did Christ, the true Light, rise 'early in the morning.' He agonized in Gethsemane in the gloom of midnight; He suffered on Calvary in darkness; now He rises in light.

He rises early. He does not leave His disciples long to mourn His absence. On the eve of His departure, He said to them: 'A little while, and you shall not see me; and again, a little while, and you shall see me.' Deep, indeed, was their distress, when they saw His body committed to the grave on the evening of the day of his crucifixion: and with hearts much affected with grief did they return from the sepulcher, to pass the cheerless hours of the night. But brief was the period of their tears, as is the case with

all the children of God. 'Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.' In His infinite grace our blessed Lord shortens, as far as it is for His glory and our good, the period of our earthly trials, making our afflictions both light and momentary.

As the darkness of that last night in which the Savior lay in the tomb begins to disappear before the returning light of morning, angels descend from heaven to witness the triumphs of the cross; to roll away the stone from the sepulcher; and to rejoice over the resurrection of the Son of Man. The hour at length comes, when He, who voluntarily laid down His life for sinners, takes it again amid illustrious displays of divine power and glory. How solemn and momentous was the period of the Savior's awakening from the sleep of death! With the eye of faith let us draw near, and within sight of the sepulcher, witness the rising of our divine Redeemer. While gazing on the solemn scene we see the great stone suddenly rolled away from the door of the sepulcher by a messenger from heaven, whose countenance was like lightning, and whose clothing was white as snow. We see life returning anew into the cold inanimate body of the Man of Calvary. We see Him come forth and stand before the open sepulcher; while, at the same time, we feel the ground trembling; we see the rocks cleaving, the graves of saints opening, and the Roman guards alarmed and terrified, falling to the ground like dead men. How impressive is the narrative which the Evangelist Matthew gives of this solemn and miraculous event! 'Suddenly there was a great earthquake, because an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and rolled aside the stone and sat on it. His face shone like lightning, and his clothing was as white as snow. The guards shook with fear when they saw him, and they fell into a dead faint.'

THE APPEARANCE OF THE SAVIOR TO HIS DISCIPLES. Let us now consider the appearance of the Savior to His disciples after His resurrection. On the first day of the week, 'at the rising of the sun,' those pious women, who were last at the sepulcher,

come first to it, bringing the 'sweet spices' which they had prepared for the purpose of embalming His body. But little did they imagine, as they hastened towards Calvary at the dawn of that joyful day, that Christ was now no longer under the power of death- that He had risen victoriously from the grave- that His body had no more need of being anointed with 'sweet spices'- that He was now clothed with the robes of immortality- that death could have 'no more dominion over Him'- that He could now exclaim in language of exultation, 'O grave, where is your victory?' If they had known all this, they would have been overjoyed; but 'as yet they did not understand the scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.' The brightest glories of Calvary had not yet shone into their hearts, disclosing to them the moral grandeur of the atonement.

Now, depressed in spirit, they set out for the garden and the sepulcher; and with eager footsteps advance towards the sacred spot. The thought of passing the guard stationed near the tomb, does not seem to have occasioned fear in them. Their only inquiry is, 'Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulcher?' Notwithstanding this impediment in the way of performing a benevolent work, they still proceed. Let us imitate them in seeking Him who was crucified. Let us early tread the path which leads to Him, relying on His promise, that those who seek Him early shall find Him. Let us not fear on account of the difficulties by the way. Let not the depravity of our hearts, nor the devices of Satan, nor the opposition of the world, keep us for a moment from looking to the blessed Jesus.

O my Savior! may not the empty and transient pleasures of earth turn away my heart from following You with whom is the unfailing fountain of all felicity. May I seek You continually in Your word, and in the ordinances of Your grace; so that I may be prepared for beholding Your face in righteousness on the peaceful shores of the heavenly Canaan.

'Why should earthly beauties tear me
From the Fountain of all bliss,

From that Lord who waits to bear me
To a happier land than this?
Faith already seems beginning
To approach that land of rest,
Where I shall have done with sinning,
And with endless peace be blest.
Hastening to those heavenly treasures
Baser joys I leave behind;
Earth with all its boasted pleasures,
Shall not move my steadfast mind.'

The women at length reach the tomb in which the Redeemer was laid. They find it open, the great stone rolled away, and the guard of soldiers terrified and dispersed. They enter into it, but the body of the Lord Jesus is not there. He has risen. Of this glorious truth they are assured by an angel, whose dazzling appearance at first filled them with great fear. 'So they entered the tomb, and there on the right sat a young man clothed in a white robe. The women were startled, but the angel said, "Do not be so surprised. You are looking for Jesus, the Nazarene, who was crucified. He isn't here! He has been raised from the dead! Look, this is where they laid his body.'

Here we have more than human testimony respecting the resurrection of Christ. It is confirmed by the sure testimony of an angel from heaven. This celestial messenger informs the women that Christ has risen, while, at the same time, he invites them to survey His empty tomb. 'Come, see the place where the Lord lay.' They find the Savior has abandoned the sepulcher. They see His grave-clothes laid aside. He is no longer in that chamber of darkness. He is risen. Blessed truth! Early in that eventful morning death was despoiled of his prey. O grave, where is now your victory? You have yielded to the triumphs of the cross. You are forever vanquished. From your fear, we are delivered by the rising of the Star of Morning. As we now turn our eye to the open tomb of Jesus, the angelic declaration comes to inspire us with sweet hope, and to raise our affections to those

things which are above, where Christ now sits on the right hand of God- He is not here- for He has risen.

Hark! the herald angels say,
Christ, the Lord, is risen today!
Raise your joys and triumphs high,
Let the glorious tidings fly.
Love's redeeming work is done!
The battle's fought, the victory won!
Lo, the sun's eclipse is over;
Lo, he sets in blood no more.
Vain the stone, the watch, the seal;
Christ has burst the gates of hell;
Death in vain forbids His rise;
Christ has opened Paradise.
Lives again our glorious King,
"Where, O death, is now your sting?"
Once he died our souls to save.
"Where's your victory, boasting grave?"

Triumphant Redeemer, death could not hold You; the grave could not retain You; the stone, the seal, the keepers could not confine You to the regions of darkness. At the appointed time You arose, achieving a glorious triumph by destroying him that had the power of death, and delivering those, who, through fear of the last enemy, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. You have paid the price of our redemption in Your death, and are risen again for our justification- for the purpose of pleading our cause in heaven, and receiving the highest honor, power, and glory as the only Mediator between God and man. Oh, risen and exalted Savior, while here in the house of our pilgrimage may we always speak Your praise with a joyful heart, and in yonder heavenly home of the righteous, sing in seraphic strains the triumphs of the cross- of the wonders of redeeming love! 'I will extol You, my God, O King, and I will bless Your name forever and ever.'

'Hosanna to our conquering King;
All hail, incarnate Love;
Ten thousand songs and glories wait
To crown Your head above.
Your victories, and Your deathless fame
Through the wide world shall run,
And everlasting ages sing
The triumphs You have won.'

Come near and look into the grave of Jesus. Behold the place where the Redeemer of the world lay. Consider how deep was that humiliation which brought Him to the dust of death, for the purpose of raising us to glory, and honor, and immortality. Contemplate the vastness of that love which constrained Him to make His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death. And as you think of His tomb, let all fear and sorrow be banished from your mind, let cheerful hope return; let devout rapture be enkindled in your soul; for He has risen, and secured our resurrection to eternal life. He has irradiated the dismal chambers of the grave, and made them places of repose to the bodies of the saints until the blissful morning of the resurrection.

And now as we look steadily and earnestly into the sepulcher of the Man of sorrows, while angels whisper in our ears the soul-entrancing words, 'He is not here: for He has risen,' let us also surrey with joy our own empty graves; for we, too, are risen with Jesus, and our life is hidden with Christ in God, and we are the heirs of a glorious immortality in the skies. How sweet the thought! What transporting joy does it bring to the good man, even amid his earthly toils, and conflicts, and distresses! Here is a source of ineffable happiness.

Then, let us not confine our views to the narrow house appointed for all living. Let us look with lively hope beyond the grave of the Christian. Let us look upwards, where all is bright, and joyous, and happy. Yonder, on Zion's hill, is the true,

abiding home of the ransomed of the Lord. To that happy home the soul of every believer passes as soon as he falls asleep in Jesus. The child of God never sees death, because He, who is the resurrection and the life, has triumphed over the king of terrors, spoiled principalities and powers, and showed us the path to the realms of 'unending day'. 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my words, he shall never see death.'

'When by a good man's grave I muse alone,
Methinks an angel sits upon the stone;
Like those of old, on that thrice-hallowed night,
Who sat and watched in clothing heavenly bright;
And with a voice inspiring joy, not fear,
Says, pointing upwards- that he is not here,
That he is risen!'

Shortly after His resurrection Christ appeared first to Mary Magdalene. 'Now when Jesus was risen, early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils.' How full of tenderness and compassion is our Lord and Savior! How freely does He forgive our iniquity! Mary Magdalene, once a notorious sinner, is reclaimed by sovereign grace- becomes a true penitent, and is honored with the first sight of the risen Savior. To her much was forgiven- and she loved much. She was greatly- humbled on account of her many sins, and highly exalted by the Savior after her conversion. Here is certainly great encouragement for all true penitents. If we sincerely confess our sins and repent of them, He who came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, will, in the multitude of His tender mercies, freely forgive us, reclaim us from the error of our ways, and give us the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

If we cleave closely to Him, He will graciously manifest Himself to us, and show us more and more of the beauty and excellency of His Person, the greatness of His love, His suitableness as a Savior, and the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints. How wonderful is the loving-kindness of Him who

reveals the deep and secret things- who has made known His ways to Moses, and His acts to the children of Israel!

Soon after His appearance to Mary and her companions, the Savior makes Himself known to Peter, whose name was particularly mentioned by the angel when he declared the resurrection of Christ to the women, and directed them to communicate the glad tidings to the disciples. 'But go your way, tell His disciples and Peter.' Here is another remarkable instance of the compassion of Jesus to His erring disciples. In denying His Lord and Master, Peter committed a very grievous sin; but having heartily repented of it, he was now in deep spiritual distress, and must speedily be comforted, lest he should be swallowed up with over-much sorrow. And how great was his joy when the news of the Savior's resurrection was received! How eagerly did he press towards the sepulcher, that He might see Jesus! So does the sincere penitent earnestly seek Christ in the night of spiritual desertion. In such gloomy seasons his language is: 'I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek Him whom my soul loves.' To such a penitent, nothing is so welcome as a sight of the Crucified One; for He alone can impart joy to the trembling and anxious sinner conscious of having committed aggravated sin, and say to Him: 'Son, be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven.' Peter most affectionately received the newly-risen Savior, and fearlessly did he ever afterwards stand up for His cause until his own ransomed spirit was borne on high, to wear the martyr's crown.

The Savior next appears to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus, a village about seven miles from Jerusalem. One of the disciples, we are told, was Cleopas, and the other is supposed by many to have been John. As they journey on, depressed in spirit, conversing together about 'all these things which had happened,' Jesus joins them in their walk. After listening a short time to their remarks, He begins to talk to them of the necessity of the sufferings, death, and resurrection of Messiah, and as the

consequence and reward of His sufferings His entrance upon His mediatorial glory. He then explains to them the scripture passages concerning His own divine mission to our lost world, and shows those who the divine predictions have been actually accomplished. What a happy effect must those words of heavenly wisdom, which came from the lips of the newly risen Savior, have produced in the minds of those holy men, whose theme was Jesus of Nazareth! Their hearts their glowed with sacred love and strong desire after the things of God. It was indeed good for them to be there.

As they approach the village of Emmaus, they are unwilling to let Jesus leave them, though He had not yet made Himself known. They constrain Him to abide with them, as the evening was now drawing near. He accepts their hospitalities, eats with them, and in the breaking of bread, reveals Himself to them. 'As they sat down to eat, he took a small loaf of bread, asked God's blessing on it, broke it, then gave it to them. Suddenly, their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And at that moment he disappeared!' Who, that is renewed by the Spirit of God, does not love to think of the journey to Emmaus, and the heavenly conversation by the way! What a noble example is here presented for the imitation of the way-worn pilgrim of earth, while traveling to the mansions of rest in heaven! Let him associate with those whose conversation is in heaven, and talk together by the way, of all those things that concern the spiritual kingdom of our blessed Savior. Then may we expect that Christ will draw near to us, and make a clear discovery of the matchless excellencies and glories of His Person and work to our disconsolate souls, irradiating them with beams of divine light, raising our affections far above sublunary objects, and transporting us with blessed visions of the felicities of heaven. Then will we better understand the import of these precious promises, 'I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.' 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.' 'Then those who feared the Lord spoke with each other, and the Lord listened to what they said. In his

presence, a scroll of remembrance was written to record the names of those who feared him and loved to think about him. "They will be my people," says the Lord Almighty. "On the day when I act, they will be my own special treasure. I will spare them as a father spares an obedient and dutiful child.'

Then will our passage through life be one continued Emmaus journey: every day we thus walk will be a Sabbath day's journey towards the mansions of bliss; and we shall enjoy many a sweet foretaste of heaven upon earth. A risen Savior will then reveal Himself to our souls in His word and ordinances; and with open face we shall behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and be changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. Then will our hearts burn within us, while He opens to our understanding the Scriptures, and while in the breaking of bread at the sacramental table He makes himself known to us, and grants us sweet communion with Him.

Blessed Jesus, may Your presence go with me as I journey through the wilderness of this world. Abide in me continually by Your Spirit, and may I experience the fulfillment of that cheering promise- 'Lo, I am with you always.' O You whom my soul loves, let me see Your countenance, let me hear Your voice; for Your voice is sweet, and Your countenance is lovely. Abide with me, for the day is 'far spent.'

Abide with me from morn 'till eve,
For without You I cannot live.
Abide with me when night is nigh,
For without You I dare not die.'

As the storms of life gather around me with a threatening aspect, O merciful Redeemer, may I cleave more closely to You, enjoy sweeter communion with You, taste more and more of Your goodness, until my soul, freed from its earthly tabernacle, shall ascend to dwell forever in Your glorious presence, to enjoy the smiles of Your countenance, and to feast on the hidden manna in the celestial Paradise.

The same evening in which Christ makes Himself known to the two disciples, He appears to the ten apostles assembled in Jerusalem, Thomas being absent. He there gives them His peace, breathes on them the Holy Spirit, and shows them His hands and His side, bearing the marks of the nails and the spear. They see, they believe, they rejoice. 'Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord.' A few hours before, they 'mourned and wept;' now they are filled with joy, and with the Holy Spirit. Now do they realize the sweetness of that blessed promise, 'I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy shall no man take from you.'

When Jesus is absent there is great cause for lamentation; for then all is cheerlessness and sterility with the soul; but when His presence is enjoyed, the very desert is made to rejoice and blossom as the rose. Oh, the joy that the soul experiences when by faith it sees the Lord Jesus, and hears Him whisper- 'Peace be unto you!' How are the disciples overpowered with emotions of wonder, and admiration, and gratitude, when they gaze upon the wounds inflicted upon Jesus- when they behold the print of the nails in His hand, and the spear in His side! May we also be glad at the sight of Christ, while we walk by faith, until we come to behold Him in the midst of the heavenly throne, appearing as a Lamb that had been slain; and with sublime, everlasting joy adore Him for giving Himself for our offences, and rising again for our justification.

'May each revolving year inflame
Our zeal, delight, and love;
'Till round the throne we chant His name
In purer strains above.
Oh! come, you servants of the Lord,
His endless praise proclaim
In gladsome notes His love record,
For, worthy is the Lamb.'

Blessed Savior, during our passage through this valley of

mortality, be in our midst to sustain and soothe us by Your gracious presence, and to gladden our hearts by manifesting to us the many tokens of Your goodness. May we rejoice in the belief that You are risen indeed, and have carried with You from the tomb the marks of Your crucifixion, for our eternal wonder and admiration. May we be continually making new discoveries of Your infinite perfections, and wonderful works in saving souls from death, and forgiving a multitude of sins. May we daily look into Your Word, and there read the immensity of Your benevolence towards our guilty race. May we see that the fountain of eternal life has been opened in Your pierced side; and that we are invited to come and drink of the water that You give us; so that our souls may be invigorated, our joy full, our salvation certain and complete. Oh, may we experience Your rich grace in our hearts on earth; and beyond the shores of time, taste Your goodness through the circling ages of eternity. Then around Your heavenly throne we shall celebrate the triumphs of Your death and resurrection; and with gladsome notes praise You through an eternal Sabbath, whose brightness no shadows of night shall ever obscure.

'Through this wild wilderness I roam,
Far distant from my blissful home;
Lord, let Your presence be my stay,
And guard me in this dangerous way.
Temptations everywhere annoy,
And sins and snares my peace destroy;
My earthly joys are from me torn,
And often an absent God I mourn.'

The next Sabbath after His first appearance to the ten apostles, Christ comes again, and stands in the midst of them, and salutes them as before, by saying, 'Peace be unto you.' Thomas was now present. To him the story of the Savior's resurrection had appeared unbelievable. When told by the other disciples, that they had seen the Lord, he replied, 'Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of

the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe.' No sooner had Jesus saluted the disciples than He turned to Thomas, and addressed to him these touching words: 'Reach here your finger, and behold my hands; and reach here your hand, and thrust it into my side; and do not be faithless, but believing.' It is enough. His incredulity immediately vanishes. The voice of the Savior- the expression of His countenance- the beaming of His eye- the sight of His wounds- produce an irresistible effect upon his mind. He seeks no additional evidence to convince him that Jesus is risen; but forthwith makes a noble confession of the truth, and of his faith in Him, by exclaiming, 'My Lord and my God.'

This is the language of the strongest faith. Can we, in truth and sincerity, adopt it as ours? Or are we still 'faithless and unbelieving?' Will not the voice of Jesus, in His Word, convince us of the truth of His resurrection, and establish us in the most holy faith of the gospel? Hear His own declaration uttered from the realms of immortality, 'I am the living one who died. Look, I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave.' In His infinite compassion He calls us to look upon Him, and live. 'Behold me, behold me.' 'Behold, it is I' He shows us His hands and His side; and tells us that He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities- that the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and that with His stripes we are healed. Let us rise from the slumbers of unbelief, stretch forth the hand of faith, and exclaim with Thomas, 'MY Lord and MY God;' and with David, 'O my soul, you have said unto the Lord, You are my Lord;' and with Job, 'I know that my Redeemer lives;' and with Paul, 'I know whom I have believed;' and with Solomon, 'My Beloved is MINE, and I am His.'

Adorable Savior, how patiently did You bear with the infirmities of Your disciples! How tender was Your care for them! How great Your condescension in thus manifesting Yourself to Thomas for the confirmation of his faith! Oh, risen One, may I also accept You as my Lord and Savior. Lord, I believe; help my

unbelief.' Though I do not at present see You with the bodily eye, yet may I discern You by the eye of faith, and rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, being thoroughly convinced of the truth of Your resurrection, and fully persuaded of having a personal and saving interest in Your infinite merits. May I be among those of whom You have said, 'Blessed are those who have not seen, and yet have believed.' May my affections for You be daily increasing in strength and fervency, as I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, until in mansions of light beyond the skies I see You as You are, cast my crown before You, and with the fervor of a seraph adore You through a vast eternity.'

To Jesus, the crown of my hope,
My soul is in haste to be gone,
Oh, bear me, you cherubim, up,
And waft me away to His throne!
My Savior, whom absent I love,
Whom not having seen I adore;
Whose name is exalted above
All glory, dominion, and power.'

After His resurrection Jesus appeared again to His disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, in Galilee, where He ate with them, and said to Peter three times, 'Simon, son of John, do you love me?' It was probably about the same time that He appeared to 'five hundred brethren at once,' on a mountain in Galilee, where He had promised His disciples, before His death, to show Himself to them after His resurrection. 'But after I have risen, I will go before You into Galilee.' The angel alluded to this appearance of Christ, when he said to the women, 'Go quickly, and tell His disciples, that He is risen from the dead, and behold, He goes before you into Galilee; there you shall see Him.' How delightful to think of this meeting of the Savior with the five hundred brethren, in connection with that blessed reunion of the redeemed on the shores of the Galilee above- the place to which Jesus has gone before us- the place which He is now preparing

for us, where we shall see Him face to face, be ever with Him, and behold His glory! 'O Galilee above, you land of perfect union with Him, who is the object of our love, how does the thought of you exalt and cheer our spirits during our pilgrimage through this valley of tears! O Galilee beyond the clouds, how blest is he, whom Jesus has preceded, in order to prepare a place for him on your ever verdant valleys and sunny hills!'

The last appearance of the Savior, after His resurrection, was to all the apostles, when He led them to Bethany, and ascended to heaven in their presence. Paul thus speaks of the order of His appearance to the disciples: 'He was seen by Peter and then by the twelve apostles. After that, he was seen by more than five hundred of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died by now. Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles. Last of all, I saw him, too, long after the others, as though I had been born at the wrong time.' And Luke tells us that to the apostles 'He showed Himself alive after His passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen by them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.'

The disciples had perfect evidence of the resurrection of Christ during those forty days He remained on earth. He was not only seen by them, but He conversed with them on spiritual and divine things. He walked with them, and ate and drank with them on different occasions; hence it was impossible they should be deceived with respect to His resurrection. And as this doctrine was to be the foundation on which Christianity should rest, the Savior appeared to them again and again, until all doubts were removed from their minds- until they could go forth, and boldly proclaim to the world the glorious truth, that 'This same Jesus has God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.' 'But God raised him to life three days later. Then God allowed him to appear, not to the general public, but to us whom God had chosen beforehand to be his witnesses. We were those who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.' The

apostles were chosen witnesses of the resurrection of Christ; and their strong united testimony cannot be overthrown. May we then receive it as sure and incontrovertible; and say with Paul, 'But now has Christ risen from the dead, and has become the first-fruits of those who slept.' Resting in this belief, let us muse still further on some of the great and soul-supporting truths connected with His resurrection.

THE SAVIOR ROSE FROM THE DEAD IN GREAT MAJESTY. Look again at the solemn and mysterious scene. Bright messengers come from heaven, to witness the splendors of His resurrection, and to announce the glad tidings to the weeping disciples. When the Lord of glory rises, the great stone is rolled away from the sepulcher by angelic hands; the earth quakes; rocks are rent asunder; the soldiers, filled with terror, tremble and flee, and fall to the ground like dead men; and many holy people, who were sleeping in their tombs, awoke, to grace the triumph of the Conqueror of death.

The Savior now comes from the tomb, crowned with honor, and majesty, and glory. The sun, emerging from an eclipse and shining again in his splendor, is but a faint emblem of the Sun of Righteousness rising from the gloomy chambers of the grave, and shining with the most glorious luster. How unlike the 'Sufferer of Calvary' does He now appear, walking forth from the rock-bound sepulcher, attended by angels in shining garments! No dark clouds now gather over Him: no furious tempest breaks upon Him: no cry of desertion comes from His lips: His Father is reconciled, and His foes vanquished. He has laid aside all the sorrows and infirmities of human nature, and appears as the Prince of Life, in all the inaccessible splendors of the Godhead.

Yes, blessed Jesus, when You left the tomb, Your last conflict was over, Your last cup of sorrow emptied, Your last pain suffered. Now do You rise in Your excellent majesty, and show to the world that You have gained the victory over death and hell, that absolute dominion is Yours, that You are the Head over all

things for the church. When we think of the great majesty and glory with which You arose from Your lowest state of humiliation in the dust of death, we may truly say with Your servant of old, 'Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as Head above all.

THE SAVIOR WAS RAISED FROM THE DEAD BY THE POWER AND GLORY OF GOD. This act is particularly ascribed to the Father, though the other persons of the blessed Trinity were concerned in it. The sacred writers dwell with much emphasis on this point. 'Whom God has raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be held by it.' 'Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father.' 'And God has both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by His own power.' 'And now, may the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, equip you with all you need for doing his will. May he produce in you, through the power of Jesus Christ, all that is pleasing to him. Jesus is the great Shepherd of the sheep by an everlasting covenant, signed with his blood. To him be glory forever and ever. Amen.'

Thus by the power of the Father was the Son of God raised from the sleep of death to a life of immortal glory, honor, power, and felicity. When Christ had satisfied all the claims that divine justice had against Him as our Surety, it was not possible that the chains of death should hold Him; and in token of His acceptance of the atoning work of the Mediator, God the Father raised Him from the dominion of the grave, and exalted Him to His own right hand in the heavenly places.

What cause of rejoicing has he whose hope is placed on the redeeming work of the Savior! Jesus is risen. And now are we begotten again unto a living hope by His resurrection from the dead, to all inheritance incorruptible; and undefiled, and that

fades not away, reserved in heaven for us, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Now we may boldly exclaim with Paul, 'Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God who justifies: who is He that condemns? It is Christ that died, yes, rather that has risen again.' Here is the grand source of the Christian's joy; and here let us rest our faith and build our hopes for eternity. Let us firmly rely on the divine testimony respecting the resurrection of Christ, and derive encouragement and supreme delight in God from the cheering declaration.

Christ was raised from the dead, that our 'faith and hope' might be in God; and if we flee for refuge to this 'hope set before us,' our joy and consolation will be great. We will look forward with ardent hope to the realization of all those 'exceeding great and precious promises' contained in the word of God; and we will descend into the valley of the shadow of death in the hope of a blessed resurrection by the power and Spirit of God. How consoling to the departing believer is the thought that God will also raise him up from the darkness of the grave, as He did the Lord Jesus, our Forerunner, our Elder Brother, our unchanging Friend! 'Knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.'

THE SAVIOR, BY HIS RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD, WAS DECLARED TO BE THE SON OF GOD WITH POWER. Here He appears in His proper majesty- in the glories of His divinity: 'this act of God raising Him, not only showing Him to be, but in some sort constituting Him the Son of God' While on earth, His glory was, in a great measure, 'veiled' from mortal view, that man might converse with Him, and that He might perform, in an humble manner, His mediatorial work. Here, He appeared in weakness, as a Man of sorrows, as One continually acquainted with grief. It is true, that even while He tabernacled in the flesh, a 'ray of His divinity' occasionally shone forth in a most illustrious manner, for the confirmation of the faith of his servants and the relief of the afflicted. So numerous and

astonishing were the miracles he performed, that it was asked by many of the people, 'When the Messiah comes, will He do more miracles than these which this man has done?' But amid all those scenes of miracles and might, He still appeared in the form of a servant, to obey, suffer, and accomplish all that the Father required of Him, in consequence of His assuming our sins, bearing our griefs, and carrying our sorrow- He was crucified through weakness but raised in power. What greater demonstration of His divinity can we ask than the fact, that He rose from the dead by His own power? When He left the tomb He verified His own divine prediction, that He had power to lay down His life, and to take it again; while at the same time He manifested to the world, that He is the Son of God; yes, that He is God over all, blessed forever.

What unsearchable riches of grace and glory are contained in the animating doctrine of the Savior's resurrection! When holy Paul viewed the subject in its vastness- when he saw how intimately it is connected with our regeneration, justification, sanctification, and resurrection to eternal life- he seems to overlook everything else, and longs for a more intimate acquaintance with those sublime and heavenly truths on which are founded the Christian's hope of endless felicity. 'As a result, I can really know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead. I can learn what it means to suffer with him, sharing in his death, so that, somehow, I can experience the resurrection from the dead!' Like the great apostle may we, also, earnestly desire to know more and more about Christ, in the power and glory of His resurrection, as well as in the fellowship of His sufferings.

IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE SAVIOR WE HAVE A CERTAIN PLEDGE AND PATTERN OF OUR OWN RESURRECTION TO GLORY AND IMMORTALITY. 'For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.' Although it is appointed unto men once to die, yet blessed be God, we will not always sleep in the grave. The night of death

will pass rapidly away, and the morning soon come, when our own graves shall open amid a dissolving world- when we shall come forth, delivered from the garments of corruption- when we shall forever lay aside the garb of the grave, as Jesus did on the joyful morning of His resurrection.

'With joy like Christ's, shall every saint
His empty tomb survey;
Then rise, with His ascending Lord,
To realms of endless day.'

As our glorious head and Representative, Christ, in His resurrection, has triumphed over death, and, at the same time, given us a living hope of following Him from the dismal mansions of the tomb, to a land where the shadow of death never comes- where all is blooming and joyous in the everlasting splendor of the Sun of Righteousness. How blessed the assurance that Jesus has risen, and 'has become the first-fruits of those who sleep'- that He is 'the First-Born from the dead!'

It affords us the highest pleasure to contemplate His resurrection as the procuring cause and pledge of our own. And how soul-comforting is the truth, that we shall rise from the sleep of death in the likeness of our risen and glorified Savior, who 'shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself!' 'Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.'

Blessed fruit of the Redeemer's resurrection! Well may we exclaim with the Psalmist: 'I will behold Your face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with Your likeness.' Our resurrection to eternal life and glory was rendered certain when Jesus, by His own divine power, burst the massive bars of the tomb, and ascended to His Father and our Father, to His God and our God. And by virtue of our 'union to Him', we

shall finally awake from our sleep in the dust of death, and come from our graves in His likeness, to sing on the peaceful shore above, the song of Moses and the Lamb.

As Christ was raised from the dead by the power of the Father, so is the believer quickened into new life by the same divine power and glory. 'We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.' Our resurrection to spiritual life is an act of Almighty power. In this work the same power is required that is necessary to create a world. It is the voice of God alone that can call the sinner from the deep, sepulchral stillness of this natural state, and awaken in him a new and holy life. 'But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so very much, that even while we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's special favor that you have been saved!) For he raised us from the dead along with Christ, and we are seated with him in the heavenly realms-all because we are one with Christ Jesus.'

Blessed and delightful truth! We are quickened together with Christ; we are raised up together; we are made to sit together on a heavenly throne. What heart call desire more than the blessings here set forth? Who can enjoy more? Oh, the riches of divine mercy! To God, Who is rich in mercy, we owe our resurrection with Christ to a life of immortal beauty, and vigor, and glory.

Have YOU been awakened from your spiritual slumbers by the power of the Father? Have you been raised up with Christ? Is the life of God kindled in your soul? If so, then will you walk in newness of life, and be conformed to the image of our risen Redeemer. Then will you contemplate Him with increasing delight in 'the power of His resurrection,' and walk more closely

in the likeness of that resurrection.

Ever blessed God, our Heavenly Father, breathe on us Your quickening power, and awaken in us a new life. Oh, may the same power that called the Savior from the tomb, be exerted in bringing us from spiritual darkness into the marvelous light of the new creation in Christ Jesus. May the Holy Spirit be in us as a well of water springing up into everlasting life. May the graces of the Spirit be continually in lively exercise in our souls, renewing our comforts, cheering our footsteps in the path to glory, sweetening our communion with Heaven, and making us fruitful in every good work. 'Awake, O north wind; and come, O south wind; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my Beloved come into His garden, and eat His pleasant fruits.'

Our Heavenly Father, we beseech You to shine upon our pathway, and lead us to the realms of everlasting day; and on those happy shores, beyond the dark waters of the Jordan of death, may we ever sing of that power and grace which quickened and raised us to eternal life, in the presence of Him in the likeness of whose resurrection we have been planted together. 'Save me from my enemies, Lord; I run to you to hide me. Teach me to do your will, for you are my God. May your gracious Spirit lead me forward on a firm footing. For the glory of your name, O Lord, save me. In your righteousness, bring me out of this distress. In your unfailing love, cut off all my enemies and destroy all my foes, for I am your servant.'

Let us rejoice that Jesus has risen from the dead. The day in which He rose was one of great gladness to the universe. There was joy in the regions of glory, and there was joy on earth. With what inexpressible joy did the angels descend from heaven to roll away the stone from the sepulcher, and to hail their rising Lord! How they must have rejoiced to see Jesus lay aside the garments of mortality, and forsake the dark tomb! 'Praise the Lord, you angels of his, you mighty creatures who carry out his

plans, listening for each of his commands. Yes, praise the Lord, you armies of angels who serve him and do his will!"

Around His sacred tomb
A willing watch you keep;
Until the blessed moment came
To rouse Him from His sleep.
Then rolled the stone,
And all adored
Your rising Lord
With joy unknown.'

We are told, that the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord after His resurrection. Like them may we too rejoice, when, by faith, we see Him rising from the tomb and ascending to heaven, to prepare for us mansions of bliss in His Father's house. Let us rejoice with the whole family of the redeemed in songs of triumph and praise for the victories He has achieved over death and the powers of darkness. And especially as each Sabbath morning pours its welcome light around our habitation, let us commemorate with rapture our Savior's resurrection; and through that day of sweet peace and sacred rest, often think of His rising again to enter into His glory, to bestow upon us His richest blessings, and to guide our feet into the way of heavenly peace. 'This is the day the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it. Please, Lord, please save us. Please, Lord, please give us success. Bless the one who comes in the name of the Lord. We bless you from the house of the Lord.' 'You are looking for Jesus, the Nazarene, who was crucified. He isn't here! He has been raised from the dead!'

'Yes, the Redeemer arose,
The Savior left the dead;
And over our hellish foes
High raised His conquering head;
In wild dismay
The guards around

Fell to the ground,
And sunk away.
Lo, the angelic bands
In full assembly meet,
To wait His high commands,
And worship at His feet;
Joyful they come,
And wing their way
From realms of day
To such a tomb.
Then back to heaven they fly,
And the glad tidings bear;
Hark! as they soar on high,
What music fills the air.
Their anthems say,
"Jesus who bled
Has left the dead;
He rose today."
You mortals, catch the sound,
Redeemed by Him from hell;
And send the echo round
The globe on which you dwell
Transported cry,
"Jesus who bled Has left the dead;
No more to die."
All hail, triumphant Lord;
Who saves us with Your blood!
Wide be Your name adored,
Oh, rising, reigning Lord.
With You we rise,
With You we reign,
And empires gain,
Beyond the skies'

THE SAVIOR'S ASCENSION

Lift up your heads, you gates, and O prepare,
Your living orbs, your everlasting doors,
The King of glory comes!
What King of glory? He whose massive might
Subdued Abaddon, and the infernal powers
Of darkness bound in adamant chains,
Who, wrapped in glory, with the Father reign,
Omnipotent, immortal, infinite!

"Then Jesus led them to Bethany, and lifting his hands to heaven, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up to heaven." Luke 24:50-51

"It was not long after he said this that he was taken up into the sky while they were watching, and he disappeared into a cloud."
Acts 1:9

'It was, indeed, our Lord's ascension which unlocked the gates of heaven, before shut upon us by our sins; which quenched the flaming sword, and discharged the mighty cherubim which guarded Paradise from all access to men.' -Barrow.

THE SAVIOR IN HIS ASCENSION

Lift up your heads, you everlasting gates,
And give the King of glory to come in;
Who is the King of glory? He who left
His throne of glory for the pang of death;
Lift up your heads, you everlasting gates,
And give the King of glory to come in;
Who is the King of glory? He who slew
The ravenous foe that gorged all human race!
The King of glory, He whose glory filled
Heaven with amazement at His love to man,

And with divine complacency beheld
Powers most illumined bewildered in the theme.' -Young

The divine mission of our blessed Savior on earth is, at length, accomplished; and the time has come when He must ascend on high to carry on His mediatorial work in the courts of heaven. His last weary footsteps from the manger to the cross have been taken; His last agony has been endured; He has been nailed to the accursed tree, and laid in the gloomy grave; He has risen again in triumph, and appeared at different times to His disciples, confirming their faith in Him as the Messiah, and preparing them to be witnesses to all nations, of His resurrection and His majesty. Having remained on earth forty days after His resurrection, and spoken to His chosen friends of things pertaining to the kingdom of God, the salvation of the soul, and the welfare of the church, the hour has come which His own words, uttered at different times, must be accomplished, 'I go unto Him that sent Me.' 'I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and Four God.' 'I go to prepare a place for you.'

THE SAVIOR LEADS HIS DISCIPLES TO BETHANY. For the last time Jesus gathers around Him His disciples, and gently leads them to Bethany, the sacred spot chosen for His ascension. 'And He led them out as far as to Bethany.' What Christian does not love to contemplate the Savior and His disciples in their last visit to Bethany, and listen to the farewell words of Him who came to redeem the world? With the Word of God in our hands, let us follow them as they go to the scene of the ascension. Leaving Jerusalem they would, in all probability, tread the same path on which they had so frequently set out in their visits to the Mount of Olives. Descending the valley of Jehoshaphat, 'a deep and narrow ravine, which runs from north to south, between the Mount of Olives and Mount Moriah,' they would cross the Kedron, and pass by the Garden of Gethsemane.

Here let us pause for a moment, and contrast this visit with the

one made by the Savior in that night of suffering, when, after having instituted the sacramental supper and comforted His disciples, He came out with them, and went, 'as He was wont, to the Mount of Olives.' Then how different was it with Jesus! Then how exceedingly sorrowful was His soul, when He went forth to bear the sins of a world. And how severe were His sufferings, when prostrated on the ground in that dark night of conflict and anguish, when the very sod beneath Him was moistened, with 'great drops of blood' from His sacred body, and when the agonizing cry came from His lips, 'O my Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will!' Now, those terrible hours in Gethsemane are past. Now, the Savior lifts up His head with joy. Now, has He finished His redeeming work. Now, is He about to return with shouts of triumph to the mansions of bliss, to wear His crown of mediatorial glory, to be highly exalted at the right hand of God.

As we have already seen, He leads His disciples to Bethany, 'the town of Mary and her sister Martha,' the home of love, around which so many tender and interesting associations cluster. Here He had but recently given a proof of His divinity by calling Lazarus from the grave; and now He gives another still more glorious one in His own ascension to the heavenly home. He shows that He is not only the resurrection and the life, but Lord of heaven; yes, that He is exalted far above all heavens, that He might fill all things.

In His former visit to Olivet, when He went out to agonize there, we have seen that He paused at the foot of the mountain in the garden of Gethsemane, and that the place was to Him a valley of tears; now we see Him ascending the Mount which becomes to Him a scene of the most rapturous joy. How well is the life of the Christian here represented. To him earth is truly a valley of tears and trials; but when he ascends Mount Zion- when he rises with Jesus to the everlasting hills of Paradise, all tears shall be wiped away and all sorrows excluded, while he shall rejoice in God his Savior through all eternity.

Here, let us learn, like Jesus, our great Exemplar, to go up, with our souls possessed in patience, from the valley of humiliation and tears to the mount of joy and glory. Our blessed Lord and Master has taught us by His own perfect example, which we are to copy, that the cross is the way to the crown; that our severest earthly trials may become precious stepping stones to heaven. At the foot of Olivet He suffers, He drinks of the brook by the way; on the top of the same Mount He lifts up His head with joy, He ascends with shouts of triumph to the heaven of heavens. Happy, indeed, are they, who, relying on the atoning work of Christ for salvation, are crying to God from the depths of their afflictions; they will soon rise to the Mount of eternal pleasures. Conducted by angels, they will shortly be borne above the storms and darkness of these lower regions to the peaceful and glorious Mount Zion, the City of the living God; the heavenly Jerusalem.

THE SAVIOR BESTOWS HIS BLESSING ON HIS DISCIPLES. Having reached the scene of His ascension the Savior attends, during the few moments He lingers on earth, to the spiritual welfare of His disciples. He doubtless soothes and cheers their hearts made sorrowful by the thought of their losing His bodily presence, by promising them the Holy Spirit, and by other manifestations of His tender regard for them. With outstretched arms He pours upon them His parting benediction. 'And He lifted up His hands and blessed them.' How delightful to think that the last words of Jesus on earth were those of mercy! It well suited the character of Him who was henceforth to be a 'merciful and faithful High Priest' in the inner courts of heaven, thus to leave earth. Moses, before he ascended Mount Nebo, to view the promised land, and to be seen no more on earth, until his reappearance on the mount of transfiguration, 'blessed the children of Israel.' And here Jesus, the great Prophet like unto Moses, pronounces a blessing upon His chosen friends just before He is taken from them. This is His delightful work. He was sent to bless us in turning away every one of us from our

iniquities.

During His divine pilgrimage He had always been mindful to bless His disciples; and even now, while He stands on Mount Olivet, ready to be attended in His ascension to heaven by thousands of His mighty angels, and to sit down at the Father's right hand in glory, He is still engaged in the work of promoting the spiritual welfare of His faithful followers on earth. Instead of being wholly occupied with the thought of His own glorious ascension and exaltation to the throne of the universe, He thinks of those feeble ones whom He is leaving in a world of sorrow and persecution; and stretches out His arms to bless them. Oh, to have listened to His blessed words at the parting moment! Were they not like those precious words already uttered by Him?- 'Let not your heart be troubled.' 'I go to prepare a place for you.' 'Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you.' 'I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man takes from you.'

Holy Jesus, You have blessed Your saints with peace. Your last look on earth was one of love- Your last act one of blessing. You have redeemed Jacob, and glorified Yourself in Israel. You have ascended to heaven, full of grace and truth.

Christ having loved His own who were in the world, loved them unto the end. He was in the very act of blessing His disciples when the cloud bore Him away. 'And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.' As long as their eyes could behold His glorified form borne heavenward they could doubtless discern Him still blessing them. His benediction was unfinished when He left the world, but the work has ever since been carried on in the courts of Paradise- on the Mount Zion above. The promise is still made good to the Church, 'The Lord shall bless you out of Zion.' 'I will abundantly bless her provision.' 'I will satisfy her poor with bread. I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall shout aloud for joy.' 'The Lord has been mindful of us: He

will bless us; He will bless the house of Israel: He will bless the house of Aaron. He will bless those who fear the Lord, both small and great.'

O, adorable Savior, who is highly exalted at God's right hand, 'look down from Your holy habitation, from heaven,' upon us weary pilgrims in this valley of tears; and crown us with Your blessing. Do, we beseech You, bless us out of Zion. Command Your loving-kindness in the day-time, and in the night may Your song be with us. O that You would bless us indeed, with all spiritual and heavenly blessings from Your own unwasting fullness. 'Save Your people, and bless Your inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up forever.' Be our constant Guide through a bewildering world; and while we remain here, lead us to the streams of grace- to the mount of ordinances- to the feast of fat things which You have there prepared, where our souls may be refreshed with Your richest blessing, until in death we hear the joyful welcome to the skies, 'Well done, good and faithful servants; enter into the joy of your Lord.'

'Gently, Lord, O gently lead us
Through this gloomy vale of tears,
Through the changes Thou'st decreed us,
Until our last great change appears.
O refresh us with Your blessing,
O refresh us with Your grace,
May Your mercies, never ceasing;
Fit us for Your dwelling place.
When temptation's darts assail us,
When in devious paths we stray,
Let Your goodness never fail us,
Lead us in Your perfect way.
O refresh us with Your blessing.
In the hour of pain and anguish,
In the hour when death draws near,
Suffer not our hearts to languish,
Suffer not our souls to fear.

O refresh us with Your blessing,
When this mortal life is ended,
Bid us in Your arms to rest,
Until by angel hands attended,
We awake among the blest.
O refresh us with Your blessing.
O then, crown us with Your blessing,
Through the triumphs of Your grace;
Then shall praises never ceasing
Echo through Your dwelling-place.
O refresh us with Your blessing.'

THE SAVIOR ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN. 'He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.' 'For Christ has not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.' 'Who has gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God.' He ascended up far above all heavens, and entered the palace of Jehovah, the third heaven- the place where God manifests Himself in the most illustrious manner, and where He is worshiped with the most profound reverence by all the celestial inhabitants. It is not for us to determine in what particular part of Jehovah's mighty empire heaven is located. If it had been necessary for our salvation to have known this, He, who came from those heavenly mansions to reveal the will of God to man, would also have fully enlightened our minds on this point. It is sufficient for us to know that heaven is a place of inconceivable glory and blessedness, the seat of the divine majesty, where the throne of God is erected, where holy angels dwell and adore, where the spirits of just men made perfect are singing the song of Moses and of the Lamb, and where all the redeemed, in glorified and immortal bodies, shall finally be brought to be forever with the Lord.

When Jesus spoke to His disciples of His departure from earth, He called it an ascension to His Father and their Father, to His God and their God. Hear His language further on this point: 'I

have come forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world and go to the Father.' 'And now, O Father, glorify Me with the glory which I had with You before the world was.'

From Mount Olivet Christ actually returned to the bosom of the Father- to His original and eternal dignity. In the presence of His wondering disciples He ascended to the glorious place and company from which He originally came- to 'that place of all in situation most high, in quality most holy, in dignity most excellent, in glory most august; the inmost sanctuary of God's temple above, not made with hands; the most special presence-chamber in the heavenly courts.' As He passed from the gaze of His disciples, He immediately entered within the veil, the holiest of all, the holy places not made with hands- into 'those intimate recesses of inconceivable and incommunicable glory, the place of God's more especial presence and residence.' There His glorified body now is, and will continue to be, until the times of restitution of all things, until He shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, and with power and great glory.

How it should rejoice us to know that our blessed Savior has ascended to heaven; that He is now seated on His glorious throne; and that He will soon come and gather us home to Himself in that better country, where we shall behold Him face to face, still clothed with that glorified body, which in His infinite love He assumed for us, and shining in all His ineffable splendor as the Sun of Righteousness! Christ intended that the news of His ascension to heaven should cheer the hearts of His disconsolate disciples, when, on the morning of His resurrection, He directed the weeping Mary to go to them with this message from His lips; 'I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.' May our souls be refreshed by these words, while we think of the glorious place to which Christ has ascended, and of the endearing relation which the Father and the Son sustain to us in the bond of the everlasting covenant!

THE SAVIOR ASCENDED IN A TRIUMPHANT AND GLORIOUS MANNER AND WAS RECEIVED WITH THE GREATEST ACCLAMATIONS IN THE COURTS ABOVE. 'You have ascended on high, You have led captivity captive.' 'God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet. Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises.' In the ascension of Christ we have a most illustrious display of His triumph over all His and our foes. As none ever spoke like Jesus, so none ever triumphed like Him. Even while He was extended on the cross, as a bleeding agonizing victim, in the midst of the most severe conflict with the powers of darkness, He triumphed over sin, Satan, and death itself. He came from the grave in triumph, and now as He ascends from the heights of Olivet, He gives the clearest manifestation, that He is still 'the Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.' Having spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in His cross, He is now received up into glory with a shout and the sound of a trumpet.

If we are the true followers of Christ, we shall also, at the close of our earthly pilgrimage, triumphantly ascend to the realms of glory. By faith in that divine blood which was poured out upon the cross, we shall be more than conquerors over all our foes. Like Paul, we may, through grace, be enabled to say in our last moments, when angels are ready to conduct us to mansions of felicity in the skies, 'I have fought a good fight.' 'Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.' Or like Payson, we may exclaim, while contemplating our earthly conflicts now about to cease forever, 'The battle's fought, the battle's fought, and the victory is won! The victory is won forever! I am going to bathe in an ocean of purity, and benevolence, and happiness, to all eternity.' Then let us gird on the Christian armor, and fight under the banner of King Jesus, so shall we triumph with Him through all the ages of a blissful eternity. We may even now adopt the language of exultation and

praise; 'Thanks be unto God, who always causes us to triumph in Christ.'

What a glorious hour was that for the Savior, when, after having finished His work on Calvary, He ascended to His heavenly throne! With the admiring and adoring disciples on the heights of Olivet, gaze on the solemn and mysterious scene. See Him rising majestically from the earth, until a bright cloud, emblematic of the Divine presence, receives Him out of the sight of beholders on earth. He is not alone in His ascension. Thousands of angels attend Him with songs of triumph to the throne of God. In allusion to His glorious and triumphant ascension the Psalmist says: 'The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place.' With the eye of faith contemplate the Savior as He is thus accompanied to His Father's throne; and think of the glory and triumph which crowned Him when He entered heaven. Listen to the sublime song of the heavenly host as the pearly gates of the new Jerusalem are opened for the King of glory to come in, and take possession of His kingdom and receive His crown. 'Open up, ancient gates! Open up, ancient doors, and let the King of glory enter. Who is the King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord, invincible in battle. Open up, ancient gates! Open up, ancient doors, and let the King of glory enter. Who is the King of glory? The Lord Almighty-he is the King of glory.'

Now the arches of heaven resound with the sweetest music, while the praises of our all-conquering Emmanuel are thus celebrated. Now every angel sounds on his golden harp the praises of Christ our mighty King; sings of His glories and His triumphs; and welcomes Him to the blessed regions of immortality. We believe the following scripture passage has particular reference to the solemnity, the joy, and the triumph of that hour, when Christ, in human nature, passed through the everlasting gates of glory, and was seated at the right hand of God: 'Then I looked again, and I heard the singing of thousands

and millions of angels around the throne and the living beings and the elders. And they sang in a mighty chorus: "The Lamb is worthy-the Lamb who was killed. He is worthy to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing."

Praise Him still, you bright hosts on high, while saints join with you in extolling the rich grace of the Lamb who was slain.

'When all arrayed in light
The shining Conqueror rode,
You hailed his rapturous flight
Up to the throne of God;
And waved around
Your golden wings,
And struck your string
Of sweetest sound.
The warbling notes pursue,
And louder anthems raise;
While mortals sing with you
Their own Redeemer's praise
And you, my heart,
With equal flame,
And joy the same,
Perform your part.'

THE SAVIOR ASCENDED TO OPEN THE GATES OF LIFE AND IMMORTALITY TO MAN. Now the riches and glories of the celestial Paradise are freely offered to us, and those shining gates on high are continually thrown wide open for our entrance. No cherubim with flaming sword now stand at the gates of Paradise to exclude us from entering in, and partaking of the fruit of the tree of life, and drinking at the fountain of immortality. Now we have 'boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh.' O you, whose hearts are absorbed with the passing objects around you, lift up your eyes to the heavenly Canaan. See this new and

living way opened to that better land, by the ascension and exaltation of the Savior. Why should the fast-fading scenes of earth engage so much of your affection, since there is an infinitely nobler inheritance in heaven, to which there is now so free and easy an access? Why should you confine your views to this region of vicissitude, pain, and death, since the land of immortality lies before you in all its beauty, richness, excellency, and attractiveness; and since the command is given, 'Arise, and possess the land?'

Why should you exclude yourselves from that world where flows the pure river of life, since a highway has been prepared, and the message proclaimed in your ears, 'Ho, every one that thirsts, come to the waters!' 'Whoever will, let him take the water of life freely.' Why should you perish eternally, since the heavens are opened, and crowns of glory shining for the faithful? By faith in Christ seek an entrance into that happy world, where you will behold the face of God our Savior in righteousness, and dwell forever in His glorious presence.

THE SAVIOR RETURNED TO THE THRONE OF HIS GLORY TO TAKE POSSESSION OF THE HEAVENLY INHERITANCE FOR US, AND TO PREPARE MANSIONS OF FELICITY FOR OUR RECEPTION WHEN THE VOYAGE OF LIFE IS PAST. This is a soul-comforting thought to the believer, walking by faith in a world of sin, and sorrow, and death. How cheering to know that we have a Friend on high, preparing for us the most sublime joys! Christ did not return to the celestial mansions in His own name merely, or for the sole advancement of His own glory. No. When He made His triumphant entrance into the glorious sanctuary above, it was that, as our great High Priest, He might enter into the most holy place FOR us. 'Where the Forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus.'

In those heavens to which He ascended from Mount Olivet, He is now preparing for us many mansions of felicity- many crowns of glory- many garments of salvation- many songs of praise-

many palms of victory; yes, infinitely more of heavenly goodness than the mind of man can conceive. 'Oh, how great is Your goodness, which You have laid up for those who fear You; which You have wrought for those who trust in You before the sons of men!'

THE SAVIOR ASCENDED ON HIGH THAT HE MIGHT BESTOW UPON US THE MOST PRECIOUS GIFTS. 'When he ascended to the heights, he led a crowd of captives and gave gifts to his people.' 'You have received gifts for men; yes, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.' Among these divine favors is the gift of the Holy Spirit, a most precious fruit of the Savior's ascension. It was necessary that Christ should enter into His heavenly glory before the Holy Spirit should be given in an extraordinary measure. In that beautiful, consolatory discourse to His disciples on the eve of His suffering, our Savior reminds them of this important truth. 'It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you.' The Spirit's operation was greatly restrained until the Savior, in His glorified humanity, entered the heavenly sanctuary to appear in the presence of God for us. Hence it is said by John, with reference to a certain occasion, 'The Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.'

When the Savior left His sorrowing disciples alone in this valley of mortality, and returned to His Father and the glories of heaven, how mindful was He of the promise He had made concerning His blessed Spirit! How soon were the hearts of the disciples made glad under the gracious influence of this Heavenly Comforter! How wondrously was He 'poured out' upon them on the day of Pentecost, when the words of the prophets were so gloriously accomplished! 'And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour

out no Spirit.' 'I will pour water upon him who is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon your seed, and my blessing upon your offspring.'

How true has the Savior been to His word! How often, in later times, has He blessed His church with remarkable outpourings of His Holy Spirit! Look at the great revivals of religion, which have taken place since the days of the apostles; and you will still see in every age the blessed effects of the Savior's ascension, and the rich manifestations of His goodness. May the Holy Spirit continue to be poured out upon us in the largest measure, until the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

The Spirit is given to supply the Savior's absence, and to apply to our souls the redemption finished on Calvary. It is His blessed work to glorify Jesus- to testify of Him. 'But the Comforter, who is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name; He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said unto you.' 'He shall glorify me: for He shall receive of me, and shall show it unto you.' 'But when the Comforter has come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He shall testify of me.' By His divine operation 'the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts;' and through His power we are renewed- sanctified- filled 'with all joy and peace in believing,' and 'abound in hope' of a blissful immortality.

The Spirit reveals the Savior to our souls in a manner that renders Him exceedingly precious in our estimation. He shows us His excellence- the perfections of His divine nature, as the brightness of the Father's glory- His power, as the Creator of all things- His wisdom- His immutability- His eternity. He exhibits to us the amazing love of Jesus to sinners- the wonders of His incarnation- the amiableness of His life on earth- the spotless purity of His character- the unparalleled sufferings of His life- the fruits of His death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession.

He shows us His suitableness to our needs as sinners; points us to Calvary, and whispers in our ears the cheering truth, that we have redemption through the blood of Jesus, even the forgiveness of sins. He comforts us amid all the tribulations of earth, by assuring us that our trials are but light and momentary, by perfecting His strength in our weakness, by bringing to our remembrance the many precious words of the Lord Jesus, by communicating to us the things of God, by lifting our hearts above the world, and by pointing us to a home of rest and glory beyond the skies; where tribulation, and anguish, and death, never come. Yes, by His divine power thus operating on our minds, He enables us to look far beyond the present; to direct faith's far-reaching eye to our Father's house, and the fountains of immortal life, flowing through those 'sweet fields beyond the swelling flood,' the sight of which makes us long to be there, that we may see Jesus as He is, and taste His goodness on the shores of the promised land. Oh, then-

'Descend from heaven, immortal Dove,
Stoop down and take us on Your wings,
And mount and bear us far above
The reach of these inferior things.
Beyond, beyond this lower sky,
Up where eternal ages roll;
Where solid pleasures never die,
And fruits immortal feast the soul.'

Oh, Spirit of truth, come and enlighten my mind with a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus; and may I know and choose the way to eternal life. Reveal the Savior to my view in all the beauty of His Person, the excellency of His character, and the richness of His grace. Convince me of sin; show me my danger; and lead me as an humble penitent to the foot of the cross, the only hiding-place from the wind- the only covert from the tempest. There may I be enabled by Your aid, to see the burden of my sins sustained by the Redeemer when He hung upon the cross in agonies and death; and with admiring eyes,

may I behold Him as my Savior, my Lord, and my God. Let Jesus be unspeakably precious to my soul, while, through Your assistance, I discover in Him an infinite fullness of grace, and truth, and glory. Oh, come and make my heart Your dwelling-place; be my Comforter in a world of tribulation; be my Guardian, my Sanctifier, and my Guide. Prepare me for all the events of my earthly pilgrimage; and conduct me, at length, to the blessed enjoyment of the inheritance of the saints in light.

'Blessed Spirit! beautify my soul
With humble joy and holy fear;
Your power can make the wounded whole,
And bring each gospel blessing near.
Descend and dwell within my heart;
The Savior's image let me bear;
Then bid me hence with joy depart,
And angels' bliss forever share.'

Blessed Jesus, from Your sacred throne in glory, shed on us Your Holy Spirit. Oh, may He come down 'like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth;' and may His graces distill as the dew, enlightening, cheering, refreshing, and beautifying our souls. May we seek the Lord until He comes and rains down righteousness upon us. May we seek Your Spirit continually, knowing that without Him we are helpless; that if any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. Blessed be Your name, You have encouraged us to pray for the Spirit, to ask Him of the Father. 'If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?'

IN THE ASCENSION OF THE SAVIOR HUMAN NATURE IS ADVANCED TO THE HIGHEST DIGNITY, HONOR, AND FELICITY. How cheering to the believer is the thought, that He who is bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, is now seated on a heavenly throne, and wields the scepter of universal dominion! Human nature was never so honored as when Christ assumed it;

and never so advanced and ennobled as when He ascended with it to the mansions of glory. In heaven, our nature, in the Person of Jesus, is far exalted above that of seraphim and cherubim; for we read of 'angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject unto Him.'

Yes, He who, in His incomparable love, condescended to assume humanity, and 'was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death,' is now 'crowned with glory and honor' above all those bright angelic messengers who stand in the presence of God to perform His high commands. 'Being made so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.' 'For unto which of the angels did He at any time say, You are my Son, this day have I begotten you? And again, I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to me a Son?' Here is a matter of wonder and admiration to saints as well as to angels themselves; a mystery which all those holy intelligences around the throne above, are endeavoring, with their mighty energies, to unfold; a mystery which will be the wonder and the study of ceaseless ages. Humanity united to divinity, and raised above angels in dignity and honor! How wonderful!

What an honor is it to be a Christian; to be thus united to the Son of God; to be redeemed by His precious blood; to be advanced to such unspeakable dignity, and honor, and happiness in heaven, to be brought even nearer the throne of Jehovah than those pure and excellent spirits who have never sinned, and who have always been clothed with the most illustrious majesty! 'This honor have all His saints.' What a soul-entrancing thought!

'And what, in yonder realms above,
Is ransomed man ordained to be?
With honor, holiness, and love,
No seraph more adorned than he.
Nearest the throne, and first in song,
Man shall his hallelujahs raise;

While wondering angels round him throng,
And swell the chorus of his praise.'

ONE GREAT Lesson THE ASCENSION OF THE SAVIOR TEACHES US, IS THE ELEVATION OF OUR MINDS ABOVE THE TRANSITORY OBJECTS OF EARTH TO THE PERMANENT FELICITIES OF HEAVEN. 'Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits at God's right hand in the place of honor and power. Let heaven fill your thoughts. Do not think only about things down here on earth.' It is the privilege of believers to do not be only quickened together with Christ, but made to sit together with Him in heavenly places. When He ascended to the mansions of glory, we virtually rose with Him to the same state of felicity. Heaven is now our true, abiding home. While on earth we are strangers and pilgrims, far from our final rest. And while such is our condition here, should we not often think of our heavenly home? Should not heaven attract us more and more as we journey through life? Shall we still cleave to earth, since Christ has obtained eternal salvation for us, and passed into the heavens to prepare a way for our entrance into those unending joys in the presence of God?

Oh, let our best affections be placed on those spiritual and divine things above. Let the noblest aspirations of our minds be after a more intimate knowledge of Jesus in His ascension and session at God's right hand. Let us look beyond this valley of tears and keep our eyes fixed on that better country where the Savior ever reigns in glorious majesty- where the fountains of bliss ever flow - where the tree of life ever spreads its delightful shade and yields its immortal fruits- where all is unending joy, and love, and peace, and felicity!

Oh! sweet abode of peace and love,
Where pilgrims freed from toil are blessed,
Had I the pinions of a dove,
I'd fly to you and be at rest.'

Let our hearts be more and more disentangled from the cares and temptations of the present life- let us live in the world as those who are not of it- as those whose treasure is in heaven, and whose hearts are there also. The nearer a Christian comes to heaven the less he loves or esteems the world; just as a mariner when he leaves port, the land he has left behind him appears less and less in his view, until it seems to shrink to a point and at last totally disappears. If we are quickened into a new and spiritual life by the gracious operation of the Holy Spirit, our affections will rise heavenward. We will be continually lifting up our eyes to the hills, from where our help comes from, endeavoring to bring the realities of future, eternal things more vividly before our minds, and to realize our interest in them.

O my soul, rise above these earthly scenes; and, on the wings of faith, soar to the realms of the blessed, where Jesus is enthroned in unspeakable glory, reigning as the life, the hope, the treasure, and the head of believers.

'Look up, my soul, toward the eternal hills,
Those heavens are fairer than they seem,
There, pleasures glide in its crystal rills,
There, not a dreg of guilt defiles,
Nor guilt disturbs the stream;
There is no cursed soil, no tainted spring,
No roses grow on thorns, nor honey wears a sting.'

Blessed Jesus, we rejoice that You have accomplished our salvation on earth, and ascended triumphantly into heaven to enter into Your glory, to appear in the presence of God in our behalf, and to prepare a blissful home for us. We beseech You to show us Your glory, and to raise our hearts, our hopes, and our desires, to that blessed world to which You have ascended. O may our souls be daily rising, in holy thought, towards those 'sweet fields arrayed in living light,' where the 'weepers cease to weep,' and where the ransomed of the Lord shall forever obtain joy and gladness. May our thoughts become heavenly, and our hearts be attuned to those songs with which the arches of

heaven shall resound to all eternity!
'Deign from Your glory, Savior, now to shed
On us Your quickening Spirit's influence,
That risen with You, our hearts with strong desire
May seek the things above, and join the strain
Of seraphs that surround Your sapphire throne,
Mingle our songs with theirs, until, in one tide
Of harmony, the pealing anthem roll
Over the eternal hills, and waft Your deathless fame.'

O my Savior, wean my heart from earth, and enable me to place my affection on things above. May I be truly risen and exalted with You. May I dwell with delight on the glories of Your ascension, and the honors which were bestowed upon You when the portals of bliss were opened for Your entrance, and when a voice from the Father, said, 'Sit at my right hand, until I make Your enemies footstool under your feet.' May I rejoice to know that You still wear our nature on the heavenly throne, and that You will be clothed with it to all eternity, for the admiration, the joy, and the happiness of the redeemed.

Prepare me for ascending to be with You in the mansions of light, to behold Your matchless glory, and to sit with You on Your throne. As I pass along the valley of life, may Your gracious presence go with me; and when I stand on the banks of the river of death, while the scenes of earth are forever vanishing from my view, oh, may I hear You whispering in my ear the blessed words, Today shall you be with me in Paradise.

'Then, Savior, then, my soul receive,
Transported from this valley to live
And reign with You above;
Where faith is sweetly lost in sight,
And hope in full supreme delight,
And everlasting love.'

THE SAVIOR'S INTERCESSION

But now One Offering, never to be renewed,
Has made our peace forever. This now gives
Free access to the throne of Heavenly Grace,
No more base fear and dark disquietude,
He who was slain- the Accepted Victim- lives,
And intercedes before the Father's face.'

"Who then will condemn us? Will Christ Jesus? No, for he is the one who died for us and was raised to life for us and is sitting at the place of highest honor next to God, pleading for us." Romans 8:34

"Therefore he is able, once and forever, to save everyone who comes to God through him. He lives forever to plead with God on their behalf." Hebrews 7:25

'It is by Him that we have our access to God, not only by virtue of His merits, but by His continual act of mediation: it is He, that with the golden censer, at the golden altar before God, offers up the incense of our prayers, consecrated and perfumed by His hand.' -Barrow.

THE SAVIOR IN HIS INTERCESSION.

Now by the throne of God He stands,
Aloft the golden censer bears,
And offers, with high priestly hands,
Pure incense with His people's prayers
Well pleased, the Father eyes the Son,
And says to each request, "It is done.'
-Montgomery.

One of the most pleasing and profitable themes that can be

presented for the contemplation of the Christian, is the Savior in His intercessory work for us at the right hand of God. It is calculated to be a perpetual source of joy to the believer amid all the duties, the trials, and the conflicts of His earthly course. But this subject is sometimes too much overlooked by professing Christians, and its value not sufficiently estimated. We dwell repeatedly, and with peculiar satisfaction, on the grand events of the Savior's life; we trace with fixed attention His footsteps from the manger to the cross; we think very often of the last days of His divine pilgrimage; we dwell intently on the scenes of His agony, His trial, His crucifixion, His burial, His resurrection, and His ascension; but we too often lose sight of Him as a Priest on the heavenly throne- as interceding for us within the veil. Now, while our minds are engaged in devout meditation on a suffering Redeemer, we should also view Him with equal interest as reigning and interceding for us in the courts of heaven- as our Advocate with the Father before His throne of righteousness. We should follow Him from the Mount of His ascension to the unseen world, and behold Him at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for our daily sins.

THE SAVIOR IS A COMPASSIONATE INTERCESSOR. This delightful and endearing characteristic of the Savior as our Intercessor, is expressly asserted in the Scripture. 'Therefore, it was necessary for Jesus to be in every respect like us, his brothers and sisters, so that he could be our merciful and faithful High Priest before God. He then could offer a sacrifice that would take away the sins of the people.' 'And because he is human, he is able to deal gently with the people, though they are ignorant and wayward. For he is subject to the same weaknesses they have.' 'This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same temptations we do, yet he did not sin.' Our great High Priest has a perfect knowledge of all our miseries; for He has Himself emptied the cup of human woe. Having experienced all the sinless infirmities of our nature, He knows how to feel for us in those trials which we are called to endure in our passage through life. He was made perfect

through suffering. His pathway through earth was strewn with the thorns of affliction. The waves of the greatest sorrow went over Him in Gethsemane and on Calvary. All this He endured that He might have a sincere feeling of our infirmities, and finish the work of our salvation. And, as no one can comprehend the greatness of His sufferings, so none can fathom the depth of His compassion. He has lost none of His immense goodness and pity for us since He has left this world of sorrow. Though exalted at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, His nature and affections are still the same. Yes, He is still a most compassionate Savior- a most sympathizing High Priest.

'Exalted high at God's right hand,
And Lord of all below,
Through Him is pardoning love dispensed,
And boundless blessings flow.
And still for erring guilty man
A brother's pity flows;
And still His bleeding Heart is touched
With memory of our woes.'

Let us rejoice that we have a compassionate High Priest in the heavens; and never fail to apply to Him for an interest in His merciful intercession. This cheering truth should encourage us to exercise strong faith in Him, as our Almighty Savior. In all the trials and temptations of life, let us repair to Him with the plea of the Psalmist, 'Lord, have mercy on me. See how I suffer at the hands of those who hate me. Snatch me back from the jaws of death.' Let us cleave more closely to our compassionate Intercessor, when most severely tossed upon the ocean of life, and when ready to sink beneath the foaming waves. Then we will taste and see that the Lord is, indeed, merciful and gracious- then will we experience the sweetness of His promises. 'For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.' 'Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord has comforted His people, and will have mercy

upon His afflicted.'

THE SAVIOR'S INTERCESSION IS EFFICACIOUS. Its efficacy is founded on the atonement which was made on Calvary. When Christ laid the foundation of our eternal redemption, by the pouring out of His blood upon the cross, and His rising again from the dead, He entered with His own blood into the Holy Place, even into heaven, as the great High Priest of our profession, to appear in the presence of God for us. The Father now hears Him always in our behalf, for He has rendered a perfect obedience to all the Divine requirements. He has magnified the law, and made it honorable. He has finished the work which the Father gave Him to accomplish for a fallen world; and, in consequence of this, He can say, respecting His intercession for us: 'Father, I thank You that You have heard me.' 'I know that You hear me always.'

If our Savior was heard on earth in the supplications He offered with strong crying and tears, while encompassed with the sinless infirmities of our nature, will He not now be continually heard, while exalted far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and crowned with the ineffable glories of heaven? Will not every plea be rendered most efficacious by the greatness and dignity of His Person- by His relation to God- by the love which the Father has for Him as His only begotten Son, and the brightness of His glory- by the righteous plea which he ever makes- by His being set forth by the Father Himself as the propitiation for our sins- by His having performed all the commands of the Father respecting the redemption of a fallen world- by His holy life of obedience and sufferings on earth- by His agonies in Gethsemane, and His expiatory sacrifice on Calvary?

From a consideration of the prevalency of His intercession, Christ says to His disciples, 'Whatever you shall ask the Father in my name, He will give you. Hitherto have you asked nothing in my name; ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be

full.' How efficacious is the intercession of our Lord and Savior; and what rich blessings has it obtained for us! It has procured the gift of the Holy Spirit as our guide; sanctifier, and comforter. It has effected the pardon of innumerable transgressions. It has reclaimed the backslider, and sustained many a tempest-tossed and despairing soul. It has furnished the believer with strength in the midst of weakness, and enabled him successfully to repel the attacks of his spiritual foes. It has rendered his services acceptable in the sight of God, and put gladness in his heart. It has opened the gates of heaven to an innumerable multitude of ransomed saints who have already passed from earth; and its infinite efficacy will forever preserve them in that holy and happy abode, where they are now resting with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and singing the songs of salvation, unto God and the Lamb.

THE SAVIOR IS OUR ONLY INTERCESSOR. 'If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' That we have Jesus as our Advocate with the Father, pleading our cause in heaven, is one of the most precious and cheering truths in the whole Bible.

While in this world, where depravity universally prevails, and where the work of sanctification is incomplete, we are constantly liable to fall into sin, and grieve the Holy Spirit. And how frequently do some of the most eminent saints actually commit sins of an aggravated nature! Hear the language of inspired penmen. 'For there is not a just man upon earth that does good, and sins not.' 'Innumerable evils have compassed me about, my iniquities have taken hold upon me so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head, therefore my heart fails me.' 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' 'We lie down in our shame, and our confusion covers us: for we have sinned against the Lord our God.'

Sometimes the waves of temptation are so mighty, and dash so

violently against the Christian, that he is overwhelmed, and ready to give up all for lost. At such a season, while he remembers his sin, how unspeakable is his distress, until he looks again to the proper source of consolation! His soul is overspread with fearful darkness, while conscience condemns; and Satan, his subtle enemy, accuses him before God. Then he is bound in affliction and iron- his soul is melted because of trouble- he remembers God, and is troubled. He is afraid to look up to His Heavenly Father. The thought of God's inflexible justice, and the horrors of the second death, fill him with dismay. All is midnight with his soul- a darkness that may be felt. Then he feels like David when most deeply distressed on account of sin: 'a sword is within his bones;' 'tears his food;' while his soul is cast down within him. While the shadow of spiritual desertion thus overspreads his mind, he is ready to complain in the bitterness of his anguish with the tried Psalmist; 'Save me, O God, for the floodwaters are up to my neck. Deeper and deeper I sink into the mire; I can't find a foothold to stand on. I am in deep water, and the floods overwhelm me. I am exhausted from crying for help; my throat is parched and dry. My eyes are swollen with weeping, waiting for my God to help me. 'Pull me out of the mire; don't let me sink any deeper! Rescue me from those who hate me, and pull me from these deep waters. Don't let the floods overwhelm me, or the deep waters swallow me, or the pit of death devour me.' 'You have laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps. Your wrath lies hard upon me, and You have afflicted me with all Your waves.' 'I hear the tumult of the raging seas as your waves and surging tides sweep over me.'

Now, when a Christian has deeply fallen into sin, and is experiencing all that distress of mind consequent upon transgressing God's holy and righteous law, the thought of an interceding Savior, a divine Advocate with God, is the very thing calculated to banish darkness and sorrow, and bring solid peace and joy to his mind. The remembrance of these precious words, brought home to his soul by the Holy Spirit, saves him from

despair; 'if any man sins, we have an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' How deliciously does his soul feed upon these words; they are the joy and rejoicing of his heart. Now he is enabled to confess his sins with tears of penitential sorrow, and to look upwards with confidence, remembering that he has an Advocate with the Father in the courts of heaven- that Jesus there stands to plead with God for him- that He is always there to present the memorials of His death before the Father, and to ask Him, that for the sake of the atonement made on Calvary, his sins may be forgiven, the joys of salvation restored, and the loving-kindness of our God continued to him. Now does the sorely afflicted saint feel how precious Christ is as an Advocate with the Father. Now hope returns once more; the Sun of Righteousness shines; and the tempest-tossed pilgrim of Zion again enjoys the rest and peace which Jesus gives, and the smiles of Heaven.

'The trembling sinner now
Can boldly plead with God;
And mercy can bestow
The pardon bought with blood
Your truth, which never fails,
A blessed assurance gives;
For Christ the Lord prevails,
And high in glory lives.
He lives, to intercede;
To send His Spirit down
To help His people's need,
And all His mercies crown.'

THE SAVIOR'S INTERCESSION IS PERPETUAL. He ever lives to intercede for all those that come unto God through Him. 'He ever lives to make intercession for them.' His priesthood is unchangeable. 'But this man, because He lives forever, has an unchangeable priesthood.' Christ is made a Priest after 'the power of an endless life.'

Under the Old Testament dispensation, incense, a 'rich perfume made of sweet spices, was commanded to be offered morning and evening continually. This was called 'a perpetual incense,' and typified the continual intercession of our Redeemer, as well as pointed to the infinite merits of His sacrifice to God- a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savor. The intercessory work of the Savior will continue without intermission, until all the redeemed are presented before the throne, as the perfection of His mystical body- as 'the fullness of Him that fills all in all.' It will reach into eternity. It will continue through the ceaseless ages of glory. The continuance of the happiness and holiness of the redeemed will then be the great subject of this intercession.

The high priests under the law entered but once a year into the Holy of Holies, but our great High Priest forever sits in the most holy place on high, that He may render His intercession perpetual, and give continual efficacy to His atoning sacrifice. Yes, in the inner courts of heaven He ever appears in the presence of God in our behalf; living to intercede for us- to plead for the pardon of our daily sins- to procure for us strength in the hour of temptation- to answer the accusations of our adversary, the devil- to render our services acceptable in the sight of Heaven- to bless us with ample communications of His grace- and to send us the Holy Spirit, that by His divine and saving influence, spiritual life may be imparted to our souls, our graces quickened, our spirits refreshed, edified, and comforted amid all the tribulations of the world.

How happy they who have a saving interest in the perpetual intercession of our great High Priest! They are the objects of His supreme regard. Their names are engraved upon the palms of His hands- their ways are continually before Him. The Holy Spirit is given to them- the love of Emmanuel pervades their hearts- they rejoice in the Lord always- their souls are feasted with the bounties of divine grace- they eat of the hidden manna, and drink of the living water. Their souls are purified, and their affections sanctified and elevated to the throne of God. They

know that their Redeemer ever lives for them in the courts of Paradise. By faith they see Him standing at the altar of incense as the great High Priest, with His golden censer full of incense, to offer it with the prayers of all saints, upon the golden altar which is before the throne.

This inspires there with a lively hope, and enables them to come boldly unto the throne of grace. Like the Psalmist, when God had enlarged his heart, they now run in the way of the divine commandments, favored with many a sweet foretaste of the everlasting pleasures of the redeemed in glory, until they are carried by angels to the celestial realms, where the intercessory prayer of the Savior is fulfilled, 'Father, I desire that those also whom You have given to me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which You have given me.'

Our eternal safety consists in Jesus ever living to intercede for us. While His hands are raised in prayer, we shall prevail over all our foes- our spiritual life will be continued- and we shall at length cast anchor in the peaceful haven of a blissful immortality. 'Because I live, you shall live also.' Let us then entrust our cause to Jesus, our great High Priest, who has passed into the heavens. He will not fail to plead it continually and successfully in the inner courts of the celestial temple. His ever living to intercede for us in the presence of God, shows that His sacrifice for sins has been accepted by the Father- that He has overcome death, the grave, and hell- that as the Prince of Life He holds in His hands the keys of the invisible world, and can open the doors of heaven to all who by faith in His blood are knocking for admission into the regions of light and felicity. Oh, it is a happy thought, that in those bright celestial courts above, Jesus our faithful and merciful High Priest ever lives to sprinkle the blood of His atoning sacrifice upon the mercy-seat, and to cover it with the cloud of incense which arises from His own sacrificial offering unto God, that our sins may be covered, that we may be freed from the curses of the law, and that, through His mediation, our persons and services may be accepted in the

sight of the everlasting Father! What sounds more animating in the ears of believers than the declaration, 'He ever lives to make intercession for them?'

Precious truth! Should it not establish us on an immovable foundation? Should it not fill our hearts with joy unspeakable and full of glory? Should it not call forth new songs of praise unto our God? Should it not cause us to dwell daily in sublime and holy meditation on the home of the blessed ones in heaven, where Jesus ever lives, and reigns, and pleads on His priestly throne, and where all is love, and peace, and never-ending bliss? Should it not lead us to exult with the apostle over every foe that would now condemn us in the sight of God? 'Who is he that condemns? It is Christ that died, yes, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.'

'Tis Jesus died to save,
'Tis Jesus lives to bless;
On high He dwells- the sinner's Friend,
The Lord, our righteousness.
Then, oh, my soul, rejoice,
Extol Your Savior's name;
Make mention of His dying love,
And celebrate His fame.
He claims your heart, your love;
He claims you for His own
Oh, cast yourself in willing bonds
Before His heavenly throne.'

IN HEAVEN THE SAVIOR INTERCEDES FOR US BY PRESENTING THE MEMORIALS OF HIS SACRIFICE BEFORE THE THRONE. The manner of His intercession by presenting His sacrifice before God, was typified by the Jewish high priest sprinkling the blood of the sacrifice on the mercy-seat, in the most holy place. Christ appears in the midst of the heavenly throne as the Lamb that was slain. John, in his sublime

vision of the celestial world, says: 'And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain.' His intercession is a continual memorial of His vicarious death. He continually presents the merits of His blood before God, and pleads for us sinners. The Father will not condemn any sinner who now relies on the infinite merits of the Redeemer's death. All is now pacified. The blood of Christ's atoning sacrifice is sprinkled upon the mercy-seat; and sinners may now approach unto God and live forever.

THE SAVIOR INTERCEDES FOR US BY PRESENTING OUR NAMES BEFORE THE FATHER, WITH THE MOST TENDER AFFECTION, AS OUR REPRESENTATIVE. On the great Day of Atonement, when the high priest entered into the most holy place, he bore the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, engraved upon twelve precious stones, in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart. So Jesus, the faithful High Priest, and representative of His spiritual Israel, bears the names of all believers upon His heart, while interceding for them within the veil, in the heavenly sanctuary. What an inspiring thought! How great the privilege of the true child of God! His name is affectionately remembered before God by our merciful High Priest in the heavens. The promise of Christ is, 'He that overcomes, the same shall be clothed in white clothing; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before His angels.'

How blessed are those who have a saving interest in this intercession! The world may despise them; but Jesus will love and honor them. In all circumstances and conditions in life, they are ever precious in His sight. They live near His heart; they are set as a seal upon it; they are engraved on the palms of His hands, and carried in His bosom. They are His precious jewels; and will ever adorn His mediatorial crown. His loving kindness will never depart from them; nor will their names ever be erased from the book of life. 'Behold, I have engraved you upon the

palms of my hands; your ways are continually before me.'

Arise, my soul, arise;
Shake off your guilty fears;
The bleeding Sacrifice
In my behalf appears
Before the throne my Surety stands,
My name is written on His hands.'

ONE OF THE GREAT BLESSINGS FOR WHICH THE SAVIOR INTERCEDES IS, THAT WE MAY BE PRESERVED FROM THE EVIL OF THE WORLD. 'I pray not that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.' 'Therefore he is able, once and forever, to save everyone who comes to God through him. He lives forever to plead with God on their behalf.' Before he reaches the blissful shores of the heavenly Canaan, the Christian pilgrim is compelled to pass through a land stained by sin, where he finds a thousand evil influences thrown around his pathway, tending to draw him from God. Now, Jesus prays, that we may be delivered from all evil, and especially from the assaults of Satan, the prince of darkness. In the words which Christ addressed to Peter, we have a very explicit allusion to the intercession that is made for us when the Wicked One is endeavoring to draw us from the path which leads to the joys of heaven. 'Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not.' Thus is our Savior, in His intercessory work before the throne, exercising the tenderest concern for our preservation from all evil, and the continuance of our Christian graces, until we come to enjoy the sunshine of eternal glory, and to be forever beyond the reach of all the evil of this present world.

SALVATION TO THE UTTERMOST IS ANOTHER GLORIOUS FRUIT OF THE PERPETUAL INTERCESSION OF THE SAVIOR. 'Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost, who come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to

make intercession for them.' Where can we find more sustaining and soothing words? Oh, blessed and cheering truth- that our divine Intercessor is able to save to the uttermost!

Our Redeemer is described by the prophet as being 'mighty to save.' He is able to save to the uttermost because he is the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace. He is able to save to the uttermost because He has, by His atoning work on the cross, made reconciliation for our iniquities, and removed every barrier in the way of our access to God. He is able to save to the uttermost because He ever lives to present the memorials of His sacrifice before God continually, as a complete satisfaction for all the sins we daily commit.

Here then is salvation for the vilest transgressors. Look up, you awakened and anxious one, whose sins are as scarlet- a burden too heavy for you to bear. Here is salvation for you. Salvation from sin and wrath- a complete, eternal, glorious salvation! You may now be in the horrible pit and the miry clay; but the blessed arm of our great Intercessor can raise you up, and put the new song of salvation in your mouth. You may be one of the vilest transgressors on the earth, yet He can bring deliverance to your soul, and procure the remission of all your sins, though they may have been committed with increasing aggravation through many a year. Then direct your troubled eyes to Jesus, remembering that He ever lives to intercede for us; that His salvation is to the very uttermost; and that it is still His delightful work to save souls from death, and to hide a multitude of sins.

'The Lord of Life, with glory crowned,
On heaven's exalted throne,
Forgets not those for whom on earth
He heaved His dying groan.
The promised joy He then obtained
When He ascended hence,
Up from the grave to God's right hand

A Savior and a Prince!
His glory now no tongue of man
Or seraph bright can tell,
Yet still the chief of all His joys,
That souls are saved from hell.'

THE SAVIOR INTERCEDES FOR THE FINAL GLORIFICATION OF THE SAINTS. 'Father, I desire that those also whom You have given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which You have given me.' Here, we see what is the will of our blessed Savior respecting us. It is that we may be with Him in the heavenly home, to behold His matchless glory, and to rejoice with full, unending joy in His presence. And as soon as our work on earth is accomplished, and we are fully prepared for the joys of heaven, we are removed hence. We fall asleep in Jesus; we depart to be with Christ; to behold Him face to face, and to enjoy through heaven's unclouded day, the full manifestations of His amazing love. Then will His intercessory prayer be answered; then will we truly behold His transcendent glory, and be forever with Him.

What joy should this impart to us in prospect of death! And what consolation should it administer to those who are mourning the loss of pious friends! This thought is beautifully illustrated by an excellent writer, who says: 'When our pious friends are taken from us, we are apt to give way to the violence of our feelings, and to mourn as if a sad calamity had befallen them. But should we not consider, that the event which we deplore, is to them unspeakable gain, the end of their faith, and the completion of their hope? They have gone to behold Him whom they love, and to rejoice forever in His presence. Should we not remember that, in this case, the prayers of Christ have prevailed over our wishes and entreaties? For why have they died at this time? Has death come by chance, or by the blind operation of natural causes? Have they fallen without special appointment? Has God no concern in what has taken place upon earth? If not a sparrow perishes without the knowledge of God,

still less can it be supposed that a holy man leaves the world without His call. His death is the answer of the Father to the prayer of His Son. It is the means of introducing into the presence of the Savior, and into the embraces of His love, His dear disciples, for whom He shed His precious blood. He desires that they should be with Him, and this messenger is sent to conduct them to their home. This is the reason that our tears, and sighs, and fervent supplications, were of no avail; for how could they succeed in opposition to the prayer of the all-powerful Intercessor! This is a pleasing view of the death of believers. It shows us that it is indeed a blessing to them; and, as it is calculated to moderate our sorrow, so it should make us pray for their life, with entire resignation to the will of the Head of the Church.'

THE THOUGHT OF THE SAVIOR'S INTERCESSION SHOULD EXCITE US TO OFFER PRAYERS TO GOD, AS THEY ARE ACCEPTED IN THE NAME OF THE GREAT INTERCESSOR. Prayer is the motion of our renewed hearts towards God. It lifts the soul to Him in sweet and heavenly communion. 'Unto You, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.' It calls down upon us the choicest blessings of heaven. It brings our spirits near the throne of God, and fills them with inexpressible delight. It elevates our views and affections far above a world of sensual and perishing enjoyments. In the Scripture, prayer is called a breathing as well as a cry. 'You have heard my voice; do not hide Your ear at my breathing, at my cry.' It is the vital breath of the Christian. No true child of God can live without it. If we have the spirit of adoption, we will be often crying, 'Abba, Father.'

Now, the intercession of Christ should cause us to come with confidence to the throne of grace. The inspiring thought of an ever living and sympathizing High Priest in the heavens, who is there, interceding for us by presenting our prayers before God, led the apostle to draw the noble inference, 'So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it.'

And if we would find acceptance in the sight of God, we must offer our prayers in the name of Christ. We are 'accepted in the Beloved.' Our prayers must be put into the golden censer which Christ, as the angel of the everlasting covenant, holds in His hands; and they will then be presented by Him with much incense, and acceptance before the throne of God. This characteristic of our Lord's intercession is forcibly represented in the Revelation. 'Then another angel with a gold incense burner came and stood at the altar. And a great quantity of incense was given to him to mix with the prayers of God's people, to be offered on the gold altar before the throne. The smoke of the incense, mixed with the prayers of the saints, ascended up to God from the altar where the angel had poured them out.' Our prayers can never come up with acceptance before God, unless they pass through the hands of Christ, the Angel of the everlasting covenant, the only Mediator between God and man, whose infinite merits are continually rising up in a cloud of fragrant incense before the throne of heaven.

Let us highly esteem this great privilege of praying in the name of an interceding Savior, and be more engaged in so delightful and profitable an exercise. Let us be daily expressing the sincerest desires of our souls to Him, whose ear is ever ready to hear us, whose eye is always watching over us, and whose hand is ever stretched out to bless and save us. We are strongly encouraged to come to the throne of grace with boldness, since Jesus the Son of God, our great and sympathizing High Priest, has passed into the heavens, to live and act for us in the capacity of an Intercessor.

Would you now taste and see that God is good? Then come to the throne of grace in the name of Jesus. Would you receive the remission of all your sins? Then come to the mercy-seat. Would you obtain the inestimable blessings of the better covenant? Then come by prayer to Him who is the glorious Administrator of this covenant, and by whom grace and truth are extended to the world. Would you be prepared for the pure, and holy, and

sublime joys of heaven? Then come by prayer to Him who has gone to prepare mansions for us in our Father's house above.

We should keep our heart in a continual praying frame, and come to the throne of grace with confidence, perseverance, fervency, and deep reverence, depending on the assistance of the Holy Spirit. We must come with holy affections, relying on the sacrifice of Christ, and viewing Him as our Intercessor before the throne. Then will the light of God's countenance be lifted upon us, and He will graciously hear and answer us. The sacred command is: 'Watch and pray;' 'Pray without ceasing.' Christ is ever reaching out the golden censer towards us; and waiting to present our prayers to God the Father, and to perfume them with His 'much incense.'

Let us be much engaged in the holy exercise of prayer in seasons of affliction, in the day of trouble, in the hour of temptation, and in times of spiritual desertion. 'How sweetly,' says Leighton, 'can the soul retire into Him, and repose in Him, in the greatest storms! I know nothing that can much dismay him who can believe and pray. Continuing always in prayer. If afraid of fainting, yes, if at the point of fainting, this revives the soul, and draws in no less than the strength of God.'

Let us rejoice that we have such an Intercessor in heaven; One who prays for us, that our faith may not fail; One who presents our petitions before the throne; One who has encouraged us to come with boldness to the throne of grace; One whose will is that we may soon be with Him where He is; that we may behold His glory. As we journey towards our heavenly home, may we spend a part of every day in pouring out our hearts in communion with God through our only Mediator and Intercessor; and when the time of our departure is at hand, may we be found breathing out our souls to our Heavenly Father, in earnest prayer, until the very sunshine of Paradise gladdens our weary spirits- until we stand on those blissful hills which are encircled with rays of heavenly glory, and of which God is the

everlasting light.

'Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Unuttered or expressed;
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.
Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.
Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer the most sublime strains that reach
The Majesty on high.
Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air;
His watchword in the hour of death,
He enters heaven with prayer.
Prayer is the contrite sinner's voice,
Returning from his ways,
While angels in their hymns rejoice,
And cry, "Behold he prays!"
O You by whom we come to God,
The life, the truth, the way,
The path of prayer Yourself has trod,
Lord, teach us how to pray.'

IN THE INTERCESSION OF OUR SAVIOR AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, WE HAVE A MANIFESTATION OF THE GREATEST LOVE. The same divine love that caused Him to lay down His life for us sinners, still constrains Him, in a state of glory, to carry on the design of salvation- to make intercession for transgressors. His love for us is so strong and constant, that amid all the sublime joys of Paradise, the delight of His Father, the adoration of angels, and the songs of the redeemed, He never forgets to plead the cause of our souls before the throne of God. Oh, the grace of our interceding Redeemer, our Advocate

with the Father! How rich and boundless! May it be the sincere desire of our hearts to know more and more about the love of Jesus, in His intercession, that we may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Adorable Redeemer, we bless You for the great love which You have manifested in the performance of Your atoning work for a world of transgressors. You have not only died for our sins, but live to plead our cause in heaven, that we may be saved by Your life. We rejoice that You are an able, compassionate, righteous, and prevalent Intercessor. Oh, may we experience the blessings of Your intercessory work, and have an interest in those all-prevailing prayers which You offer to the Father, in the heavenly sanctuary. Be our Advocate on high; continually plead our cause before the throne. And oh, when our last earthly conflict is past, may we reach those blessed realms, where our griefs shall be changed to songs, and the prayer answered, with respect to ourselves, 'Father, I will that those also whom you have given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory.'

'Tis Jesus pleads His people's cause,
Before the eternal throne;
Presents the merits of His blood,
And claims them for His own.
Oh! for a lively, vigorous faith,
To feel this blessing mine;
Make me, oh Lord, of saving grace
A monument divine.
Father! behold me in Your Son;
Oh! send Your Spirit down,
To fit me for eternal joys,
And seal me for Your own.

THE SAVIOR'S COMING

'The day of wrath, that dreadful day
When heaven and earth shall pass away!
What power shall be the sinner's stay?
How shall he meet that dreadful day?
When, shriveling like a parched scroll,
The flaming heavens together roll,
And louder yet, and yet more dread,
Swells the high trump that wakes the dead?
On that day, that wrathful day,
When man to judgment wakes from clay,
Be You, O Christ! the sinner's stay,
Though heaven and earth shall pass away.'

'Behold, He comes with clouds; and every eye shall see Him.'
'For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.'

'There seems no event, the contemplation of which is more fitted to still the spirit unto seriousness, or bring it up to the high resolves of Christianity, than the coming advent of the Savior-an advent on one side of which lie all the recollections of time, and on the other side all the retributions of eternity.' -Chalmers

THE SAVIOR IN HIS SECOND COMING.

'Tis done: again the conquering Chief appears,
In the dread vision of dissolving years;
His vesture dipped in blood, His eyes of flame,
The Word of God His everlasting name;
Throned in mid heaven, with clouds of glory spread,
He sits in judgment on the quick and dead;
Strong to deliver; saints! your songs prepare;
Rush from your tombs to meet Him in the air.
But terrible in vengeance; sinners! bow
Your haughty heads, the grave protects not now;
He who alone in mortal conflict trod
The mighty wine-press of the wrath of God,
Shall fill the cup of trembling to His foes,

The unmingled cup of unexhausted woes;
The proud shall drink it in that dreadful day,
While earth dissolves, and Heaven is rolled away.
-Montgomery.

In His most beautiful and touching valedictory discourse to His disciples on the eve of His suffering, our blessed Savior graciously assured them, that He was going to prepare a place for them in His Father's house, and that He would come again and receive them to Himself, that they might be always with Him, to behold His glory, and to receive that crown of righteousness which fades not away. And in the joyous day when, from Mount Olivet, He ascended to heaven in the presence of His disciples, who were looking so steadily and earnestly after Him as He entered into the bright cloud which received Him from their sight, His second coming was thus announced by two angels in white apparel, who appeared to grace the solemn and triumphant scene: 'You men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him go into heaven.'

In the plainest and most striking manner has divine revelation brought before our view the second coming of our Savior, describing it as connected with an exhibition of the greatest grandeur, power, majesty, terror, and glory. It is an event of conspicuous prominence in the sacred volume; and it demands our most careful and serious consideration. Where can we find a more sublime theme of contemplation than that which exhibits the Son of Man, the Lord of glory, descending from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God- revealed in flaming fire- attended with all His mighty angels- seated on the throne of His glory- calling the dead from their tombs, and changing the living- pouring a flood of vengeance on those who know not God, and who obey not the Gospel; and bestowing the unfading crown of righteousness on a multitude that no man can number, redeemed out of every

kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation! It is an event, too, which deeply concerns us all- a scene which we shall witness with triumphant joy, or indescribable terror- a scene from the beholding of which we shall rise to the realms of bliss, or go down into everlasting woe.

And now, with our minds solemnized, and as expectants of that glory which shall be revealed at the revelation of Christ, let us, in the light of God's Word, and with eager and joyous anticipation, contemplate that coming day of recompense, when the Savior shall appear in the clouds, seated on His great white throne of royal splendor- when the heavens shall pass away with a great noise- when the elements shall be dissolved- when the world shall be in flames; and when, from the face of Him that sits on the throne, both the earth and the heaven shall flee away.

THE CERTAINTY OF THE SAVIOR'S COMING. He will certainly come again. This great truth is expressly, repeatedly, and solemnly declared in the Word of God. On this point we would adduce the following Scripture testimony. 'Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people.' 'Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousand of His saints.' He who now fills the mercy-seat above, will come to occupy the judgment-seat established in these visible heavens before an assembled universe.

The doctrine of a general resurrection of the righteous and wicked at the last day, and of a judgment, when all men must render up their final account with joy or grief, is most clearly exhibited in the Bible. 'The hour is coming in which all who are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; those who have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and those who have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.' 'And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God.' 'And Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead, that they should be

judged.' 'For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father, with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works.' 'For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.' 'But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.' 'In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel.' 'He comes to judge the earth: He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth.' 'It is appointed unto men once to die, but after that the judgment.'

Thus is it manifest from the Scriptures, to say nothing of the argument furnished by the light of nature in support of this truth, that there will be a general judgment, when the actions of all men shall be scrutinized, and a just recompense rendered to every man according to his character and works. Then, should we not often seriously think of the second coming of Christ, and the solemnities of the day of general judgment, while, at the same time, we study to live with a wise reference to that final account which we must render to the righteous Judge of all mankind?

THE TIME OF THE SAVIOR'S COMING. The precise period of His second coming is not revealed to any creature in the universe. It is one of the secret things that belong to God. It is concealed from the holy angels, and even from the human soul of the Savior Himself; for it is expressly declared, 'Of that day and that hour knows no man, no, not the angels who are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father alone.' How vain and presumptuous, then, are the attempts of man to fix the precise date of that period when the Savior shall be revealed from heaven, since the great secret is concealed in the bosom of the eternal Father! But the day of judgment is appointed by the Supreme Ruler of the universe. 'He has appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness, by that Man whom he has ordained.'

The coming of Christ, as we are assured by divine revelation, will be sudden and unexpected. It is compared to the flashing of lightning, so sudden and surprising will this appearance be. 'For as the lightning comes out of the east, and shines even unto the west, so also shall the coming of the Son of Man be.' It is, moreover, compared to the unexpected coming of a thief in the night. 'For you yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction comes upon them.' How needful then is the divine admonition, 'Watch, therefore; for you do not know what hour your Lord will come.' 'Therefore you also be ready; for in such an hour as you do not think, the Son of Man comes.'

Before the Savior appears again in the clouds of heaven, the mystery of God must be finished, all the prophecies of Scripture accomplished, and the last saint robed in the spotless righteousness of Emmanuel, and prepared for the pure, and holy, and sublime joys of heaven. 'Then wonderful times of refreshment will come from the presence of the Lord, and he will send Jesus your Messiah to you again. For he must remain in heaven until the time for the final restoration of all things, as God promised long ago through his prophets.' 'Then comes the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power. For He must reign, until He has put all enemies under His feet.'

The time of the Savior's second coming will soon arrive. 'For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.' 'Behold, the Judge stands before the door.' In a little while we must all stand before the tribunal of God. How explicit and emphatic are the last words of Jesus at the close of the volume of revelation! As those who love His blessed appearance, let us always listen to them with consolatory expectation, and the greatest pleasure: 'Surely I come quickly.' Thrice happy he who

is always watching and waiting for the coming of the Savior—whose hope is in His word, and the language of whose heart is, 'Make haste, my Beloved, and be like a roe or to a young deer upon the mountains of spices.'

THE MANNER OF THE SAVIOR'S COMING. He will appear in a manner suitable to the dignity of His Person and office. He will descend from heaven in all the majesty of His divine and human nature. He will come in the clouds of heaven, arrayed with that glorious body which He now wears in the mansions above. 'Behold, He comes with clouds; and every eye shall see Him.' 'The Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.' Then will He be seen riding in the heavens by His great name JAH, and in His excellency on the skies. Then truly will He make the clouds His chariot; and walk upon the wings of the wind.

In the giving of the law on Sinai, when the Lord came down in the sight of all the people of Israel, we have a faint representation of the dreadful majesty with which He shall be revealed from heaven to execute His righteous law, and to gather His redeemed ones home to the city of rest. On that solemn occasion, when the awful majesty of Jehovah was displayed before the thousands of Israel, the earth shook, the heavens dropped, and Sinai itself was moved. Then there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the Mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceedingly loud. 'All Mount Sinai was covered with smoke because the Lord had descended on it in the form of fire. The smoke billowed into the sky like smoke from a furnace, and the whole mountain shook with a violent earthquake.' 'And the mountain burned with fire unto the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness.' Then was the voice of the Eternal heard in the trumpet which sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, shaking the hearts of the children of Israel with fear, and causing even Moses, the man of God, to 'exceedingly fear and quake.'

Amid such manifest tokens of a present Deity, how terrible must have been the sight and the sound! But still what little resemblance will all this bear to the awful scene of the last day! Oh, who can conceive the dreadful majesty, the awful pomp, the intense splendor with which the Lord of glory shall appear in that day when He shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God; when all that are in their graves shall hear His all-powerful voice, and come forth- when the light of the sun shall fade- when the hills shall melt like wax, and the mountains smoke- and when the heavens and the earth shall flee away from His presence!

He will come with POWER. To Christ our Judge all power in heaven and earth is given; and on the morning of the resurrection He will manifest the exceeding greatness of His power before an assembled world. With absolute authority He will call upon the dead to awake from their sleep in the dust; and they will instantly obey the divine summons, and come forth. The same almighty voice that spoke the universe into existence, will then sound through the dismal mansions of all graves. What a solemn thought!

He will come with GREAT GLORY. His manifestation is called 'the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.' He will appear in His own glory, in the glory of His Father, and of the holy angels. Of the glory of Jesus no human tongue can properly speak; it is a subject too vast for us, in this valley of mortality, to understand; it will be the unexhausted theme of eternal ages. On the mount of transfiguration the disciples got a glimpse of the glory of our Savior when His face shone as the sun, and His clothing was as white as the light. To Paul a little of this glory was manifested when Jesus appeared to Him in 'a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun.' And the beloved John, in his blessed vision on the Isle of Patmos, beheld the ineffable glory of the Redeemer, when he saw 'standing in the middle of the lamp stands was the Son of

Man. He was wearing a long robe with a gold sash across his chest. His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow. And his eyes were bright like flames of fire. His feet were as bright as bronze refined in a furnace, and his voice thundered like mighty ocean waves. He held seven stars in his right hand, and a sharp two-edged sword came from his mouth. And his face was as bright as the sun in all its brilliance.' But vain are words to express the divine majesty of the only begotten Son of God, who dwells in light inaccessible and full of glory. To comprehend this theme more fully and satisfactorily, we must wait until this mortal shall have put on immortality, and all this unutterable glory be revealed to us.

The Savior will appear in the glory of the eternal Father. As we have already seen, there was a most remarkable manifestation of the glory of the Deity at the dispensation of the law on Sinai, when 'the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the Mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.' Now, in all this glory will the man Christ Jesus be invested, when He shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

On that solemn day the heavenly host will adorn His triumph. He will come with the holy angels- 'When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels.' The transcendent brightness of these celestial beings will add much to the grandeur, the solemnity, and the terrors of that 'great day of dread, decision, and despair.' When but a single angel appeared at the Savior's resurrection, we are told that his countenance was as lightning, and his clothing white as snow; and that for fear of him the keepers shook, and became as dead men. How majestic, then, will be the scene, when the innumerable company of mighty angels, clothed in their resplendent robes of glory, shall leave the realms of bliss, and attend the King of kings and the Lord of lords in His advent to the judgment of the great day! Oh, what a splendid celestial retinue will then be seen!

In His second coming the Savior will be accompanied by all the saints who have gained the shores of bliss. 'Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousand of His saints.' 'Those also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.' Then will all the spirits of the just made perfect descend from heaven with Emmanuel, to be reunited to incorruptible, immortal, and glorious bodies to sit in judgment upon the wicked- to receive the welcome to eternal life- and to pass with the triumphant Savior to the celestial inheritance prepared for them from the foundation of the world. Oh, blessed reunion of soul and body! Who does not desire to be among that happy number of ransomed spirits whom God our Savior will bring with Him on the joyous morning of the resurrection? Blessed sleep in Jesus! which is followed by an awakening in the likeness of the Son of God, and by an unending day of heavenly glory! When we come to resign our spirits in death, Oh, may we calmly and sweetly fall asleep in Jesus, so shall we, too, be among the myriads of blessed spirits who will be brought with the eternal Judge to share in the glories and the joys of the general resurrection.

'Asleep in Jesus! peaceful rest!
Whose waking is supremely blest;
No fear- no woe- shall dim that hour,
That manifests the Saviors power.
Asleep in Jesus! oh, for me
May such a blissful refuge be
Securely shall my ashes lie,
Waiting the summons from on high.'

The Savior is moreover, represented as coming 'in flaming fire.' A devouring fire goes before Him, and after Him a flame burns. Daniel, in his sublime vision of the kingdom of Messiah, describes His throne of judgment as being 'like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him.'

Who can conceive the terrible majesty of the second coming of the Lord to execute His vengeance upon all the workers of iniquity, especially those who have not obeyed the Gospel- who have despised the only refuge from the fierceness of divine wrath!

Here let us pause for a moment, and reflect on the wide difference between the manner of the first and second coming of the Savior. When He first appeared in the world it was in the form of a servant- as a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. When He shall come the second time, He will appear as a glorious King- as God over all, blessed forever- His human nature no more subject to pain, or under the dominion of death. In His first coming He was born in a stable; cradled in a manger, and surrounded by only a few feeble friends. At His second advent He will appear in all the grandeur of His divinity, shining gloriously on His great white throne, attended by all the hosts of heaven. In His first manifestation, He came to be judged and condemned to death by wicked men. In His second coming, He will appear as the Judge of both the living and the dead. In His first divine mission to the world, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross--wore a crown of thorns, and endured the most piercing grief, and the most racking torture. In His second revelation from heaven, He will appear as the One to whom every knee shall bow, and tongue confess- wearing that crown of glory which He had with the Father before the foundation of the world- the rays of His glory beaming forth on every side- and His light shining as the morning- as the bright and Morning Star.

When we think of Christ in the depth of His humiliation, let us also contemplate Him in His glorious exaltation at the last day. By faith behold Him on His radiant throne of judgment. How unlike the sufferer of Gethsemane! How unlike the man of Calvary! Yet it is the same Jesus, who was taken, and by wicked hands crucified and slain, who now appears in all this royal majesty. Oh, the inconceivable glory of His second coming,

when the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll- when they shall flee away from the presence of Him who sits on the throne!

The Lord shall come! the earth shall quake;
The mountains to their center shake;
And withering from the vault of night,
The stars shall pale their feeble light.
The Lord shall come! but not the same
As once in lowliness He came;
A silent Lamb before His foes,
A weary man and full of woes.
The Lord shall come! a dreadful form,
With rainbow wreath; and robes of storm;
On cherub wings and wings of wind,
Appointed Judge of all mankind!

THE OBJECT OF THE SAVIOR'S COMING. He will come to judge the world. 'The Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom.' 'He has appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom He has ordained.' What a scene will occur in that great and dreadful day of the Lord! Let us look forward to His solemn and majestic appearance. Behold the Judge descending from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. Hark! The voice of Him who once yielded His breath on the accursed tree, amid the severest pain and the deepest agony, now echoes through the expanse of the heavens, and is heard in the silent halls of death. The trumpet sounds. The earth trembles. What an amazing scene is now witnessed! Every grave opens, and all the dead, reanimated by the voice of the Son of God, come from the land of darkness and deep forgetfulness, invested with incorruptible and immortal bodies, some of them rising to glory, others sinking to woe. What countless millions of human beings, long buried in the sleep of death, are now seen springing to new life, and hastening to judgment! Those who have found a watery grave will not be overlooked in the great day of universal

judgment. Look again. The sea gives up the dead. 'And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them, and they were judged every man according to their works.'

Those who are found alive at the dawn of the last day, undergo a change equivalent to death, and, like those raised from the dead, are clothed with incorruptible and immortal bodies. 'Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet call, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.' 'For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we who are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.'

When the dead are raised and the living changed, the righteous will be gathered by the ministry of angels before the great white throne of the Redeemer. 'And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.' The wicked will also be brought before the tribunal of Christ by the same instrumentality. 'The Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all who offend, and those who do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.' The throne of judgment will then be set, and the books opened. What an exalted conception do we have of this glorious scene in the apocalyptic vision! 'And I saw a great white throne, and I saw the one who was sitting on it. The earth and sky fled from his presence, but they found no place to hide. I saw the dead, both great and small, standing before God's throne. And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to the things written in the books, according to what they had done. The sea gave up the dead in it, and death

and the grave gave up the dead in them. They were all judged according to their deeds.' Behold the Savior thus seated upon the throne of His glory, His great white throne established upon the clouds. There He will be visible to the whole world. There every created being throughout the universe shall see Him. There our eyes shall see Him, and our ears shall hear the final sentence from His lips. What a solemn and soul-searching thought!

'The judgment! the judgment! the thrones are all set,
Where the Lamb and the white-vested Elders are met!
All flesh is at once in the sight of the Lord,
And the doom of Eternity hangs on His word!
O mercy! O mercy! look down from above,
Creator! on us, Your sad children, with love!
When beneath, to their darkness, the wicked are driven,
May our sanctified souls find a mansion in Heaven!'

In the great and terrible day of judgment, the righteous and the wicked will be divided into two classes. The former will be placed at the right hand of Christ; the latter at His left. The glorious Judge will then proceed to pass the final sentence. It is first pronounced upon the righteous, in these words: 'Come, you who are blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' What joyous words! What a glorious invitation! The righteous are invited to inherit the heavenly kingdom- a kingdom, the riches, and grandeur, and glory of which infinitely surpass all the splendor of this perishing world- a kingdom which has been prepared for them in the ages of eternity- a kingdom where no discord prevails- where every heart is pervaded by intense love- where the winds of adversity never blow- where no pain is experienced- where separation of friends by death is never feared- where all the redeemed are made kings and priests unto God, and serve Him day and night in His holy temple.

Here we see the source of the felicity of the saints- they are

blessed of the eternal Father. In comforting His disconsolate disciples, Christ said to them- 'The Father Himself loves you.' 'Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.' Let us never forget that the grand scheme of redeeming love originated in the infinite love of God the Father; and that, if we love the Savior and believe in Him, we shall be loved by the Father and blessed by Him in life, in death, on the morning of the resurrection, and through all the ages of eternity. 'He who loves me,' says Christ, 'shall be loved by my Father; and I will love Him, and will manifest myself to Him.'

Having pronounced the joyful sentence of acquittal upon the righteous, the Savior will now pass the dreadful sentence of condemnation upon the wicked. To those on His left hand the Judge will say, in a voice which will echo through the expanse of heaven; 'Depart from me, you cursed ones, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.' With what indescribable terror will these dreadful words fill the souls of the lost! How overwhelming the thought, that the door of mercy will now be forever closed to those who, while pilgrims on earth, neglected or despised the great salvation.

What emotions crowd upon our mind, as we reflect on those last words of Christ to the wicked! To the righteous there are no last words of the Redeemer. Oh, blessed and delightful thought! While His voice will be speaking peace to them as they shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father above, never, never will it be heard in the abodes of darkness, to soothe the sinner amid the wailings of eternal woe, or to give him a single promise of future happiness. And while the ransomed throng around the heavenly throne will ever remember with rapturous joy those life-giving words: Come, you who are blessed of my Father; with what piercing grief will the lost ever dwell on these last words of the Savior- Depart from me, you cursed!

'Yet, to the lost there are, indeed, last words
Of Christ. The lost will ever think on these,

And in the ages of eternity
With sharpened recollection call them up-
Depart, you cursed! What lest words are these,
To dwell upon forever!- to recall
The melting melancholy tones of pity,
Mixed with severity of God, in which
The Son of Man pronounced eternal woe!

Look at the misery of the wicked, when the dreadful sentence of condemnation is passed upon them. 'And these shall go away into everlasting punishment.' See them descending to the regions of woe. See the massive gates of those dismal mansions of despair opening to receive them. Truly are they driven away in their wickedness; they are driven front light into darkness-into everlasting punishment. Of the severity of this punishment no mind can conceive. It includes the loss of communion with God, the loss of the divine favor; the loss of the soul; the loss of heaven with all its supreme and perpetual joys. Then will gather around the wicked the shades of that night whose blackness of darkness no morning light shall ever dispel. How dreadful the thought!

Let those who are now despising or neglecting the Savior, think of the fearful doom which awaits them, if they continue impenitent until death and judgment overtakes them, until they are forever placed beyond the possibility of obtaining salvation. When you have heard the solemn and truthful declarations of God's word respecting the future punishment of the wicked, why will you not lay these things to heart? Why will you remain any longer in the City of Destruction? Why will you not flee this hour to the City of Refuge? Why will you throw away the riches of a blissful immortality for the momentary and unsatisfying pleasures of time? As you advance in the broad and crooked ways of sin, your soul is in danger of being lost. You may be placing the judgment day afar off; but the night of death, when your eternal state will be irrevocably fixed, will soon overtake you. Before you are summoned before His judgment-seat, oh,

may you obtain a saving view of Christ seated upon the throne of grace, ready to dispense to you the blessings of grace and glory. Listen to the voice of mercy still sounding in your ears, 'As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn, turn from your evil ways; for why will you die?'

It is a cheering thought, that you may yet obtain mercy, and forgiveness, and eternal life. Look up, then, with hope and confidence in the bleeding Savior. The Star of Morning still shines to illuminate your pathway to the mansions of glory. Jesus is ready to receive you; and angels are waiting to rejoice over you in the presence of God. You may yet gain the blissful shores of immortality, and walk the golden streets of the New Jerusalem. You may yet be among that happy, adoring company, who, invested with robes of celestial light, are conducted by the Lamb, in the midst of the throne, to fountains of perennial bliss. Then seize the present moment, and hasten to the only Hiding-place from the storm and the tempest; and, amid a dissolving world, you will lift up your heads with exultation and ecstasy, at the right hand of Christ, to hear Him pronounce you blessed of His Father, and to be invited by Him to the mansions of eternal felicity.

Let us now contemplate the happiness of the righteous when the joyful sentence of acquittal is pronounced upon them, and when, with bodies resembling that of the Savior, they begin to shine as the sun; the holiness, and the love, and the happiness of heaven, beaming in their countenance and sparkling in their eyes. 'And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into eternal life.'

'But lo! far off, the righteous pass
To glory; from the King's right hand,
In silence, on the sea of glass,
Heaven's numbers without number stand,
While He, who bore the cross, lays down

His priestly robe and victor crown;
The mediatorial reign complete,
All things are put beneath His feet.'

Here is the consummation of the happiness of the saints; the realization of all their hopes; and the accomplishment of all the divine promises respecting the bestowment of celestial bliss. In the likeness of the Son of God, they awake to everlasting life, and pass, at once, into the possession of the promised kingdom of glory. No one can comprehend the import of these words- Eternal Life! It is a life which consists in beholding the face of God in righteousness, in being conformed to His image, in contemplating the glory of the Redeemer, and in the enjoyment of sweet and uninterrupted communion with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is a life of exemption from all the pains, and sorrows, and afflictions of earth- a life of the most extensive knowledge, the most perfect holiness, the most rapturous joy. It is ETERNAL Life! In heaven this perishable body is raised imperishable, and this mortal body raised to immortality. Yes, on those bright and happy shores beyond this valley of tears there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain. As soon as those words of heavenly invitation fall from the lips of the Savior, the happy hour will have arrived when all the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads.

Behold the righteous now, as the command goes forth, 'Open the gates, that the righteous nation which keeps the truth, may enter in.' See! heaven, with all its pure, and sublime, and perpetual joys, opens to receive them. They enter in through the gates into the city: they go to experience that fullness of joy which is in the presence of God, and to tune, on golden harps, the song of Moses and the Lamb. How enrapturing is their prospect, as they enter the mansions of eternal day, and see before them an ocean of glory, without a bottom, or a shore! What joy springs up in their hearts, as they behold the life-giving countenance of Jesus! What glory do they receive from Him! And what songs of

gratitude and praise do they continually raise to Him who sits on the heavenly throne- the Lamb that was slain!

Let us now look at the present world when the divine Judge has pronounced His final sentence; and when a mighty angel, standing upon the sea and upon the earth, with uplifted hands, shall swear by Him who lives forever and ever that time shall be no longer. How quickly does the glory of 'terrestrial things' pass away! A fire is kindled by the breath of the Son of God, and all the works of man- all the products of his art- all the objects of his inventive genius- are enveloped in the flame. The earth itself is burned up, or purified by fire. See the devouring element spreading over the whole fabric of nature. See earth's everlasting hills, and mountains, and valleys, and plains, melting with fervent heat, and vanishing like smoke at the presence of the Lord. But look upon these visible heavens- they, too, are wrapped in that dreadful flame which encircles the earth. In that awful day 'the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.' Unto this fire of the Almighty we are told by the word of God, that the present heavens and earth are reserved. 'And God has also commanded that the heavens and the earth will be consumed by fire on the day of judgment, when ungodly people will perish.' How awful the period! The heavens on fire, and passing away with a great noise; the mountains quaking at the presence of the Lord; the hills melting with fervent heat; the sun turning into darkness; the moon into blood; the stars falling from heaven; and the heavens and earth fleeing away from the face of Him who sits on the throne! 'Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment.'

The Savior will come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all those who believe. Then will He appear in perfect beauty for our eternal admiration and joy. With what brightness will the Star of Morning then shine? With what intense splendor

will the Sun of Righteousness then beam? and in His light how clearly shall we see light? With what inconceivable delight will we then behold His glory, and celebrate the depths of divine love! How deeply will we then drink of the rivers of pleasures which flow at His right hand! If the sight of Jesus, by the eye of faith, is so delightful to the Christian while on earth, how rapturous will be the joy to behold Him face to face! How will we admire Him, when we gaze upon His glorious form, shining like the sun in his strength, and hear His gracious voice, and see His life-giving countenance!

Oh, blessed sight, to see Jesus with our bodily eyes- to see Him, who once wore the crown of thorns on earth, invested with the scepter of universal dominion, and ready to bestow upon us all the bliss of heaven! The eye that beholds Him with admiration shall weep no more; for the last tear shall be wiped away in His glorious presence where fullness of joy eternally reigns. Then shall we behold His face in righteousness, and be forever satisfied with His likeness. Then, truly, shall our eyes see the King in His beauty; and behold the land that is yet very far off. What beauty and excellency will we then discover in the Person of our adorable Redeemer! What riches of grace and glory will we see Him confer upon us! And how will all this cause us to admire Him, and to adore His name! Oh, may our earnest desire be, thus to behold Jesus, at His second coming, and to glorify and admire Him through those eternal ages which roll beyond the judgment day. Then, on that bright and happy morning, when we rise from the tomb, to gaze on the Savior descending from heaven in terrible majesty, we may sing with emotions of joyful triumph, 'Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him and He will save us! This is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.'

Blessed Jesus, we beseech You now to manifest to us the excellency and glories of Your Person, so that in the day of judgment we may see You in the beauty of holiness, and be brought with gladness and rejoicing into Your presence, to

glorify and admire You in regions of celestial bliss, and to join the choir of saints and angels in the never-ending songs of Paradise.

THE DAY OF THE SAVIOR'S SECOND COMING WILL BE ONE OF UNUTTERABLE JOY TO THE RIGHTEOUS. With what transports of joy shall we, who believe in Jesus, hail the dawn of that long-promised, long-desired day, when we shall be raised from the dust of death, in the likeness of our Redeemer, to hear His blessed sentence; to sit with Him on a throne of glory; to become the companions of holy men and angels; and to be crowned with all the happiness of heaven! It is impossible for us now to conceive the joy which will fill the glorious assembly of the redeemed, when, in the great day of final accounts, they are accepted, acquitted, and presented faultless before the throne of God. Then will these glorious words be accomplished, 'Yet we have this assurance: Those who belong to God will live; their bodies will rise again! Those who sleep in the earth will rise up and sing for joy! For God's light of life will fall like dew on his people in the place of the dead!' Oh, it is sweet to think that we shall awake from our slumbers, 'low in the ground,' to rejoice with a triumphant Savior, and to sing the new song of heaven. What joy will fill the rising saint, when he sees that he has left behind Him all sin, and sorrow, and pain, and tears; and that He possesses a body which is ever to bloom with youth, and beauty, and vigor, and to shine as the sun through the endless ages of eternity! Then will have come the period of our complete redemption, when, arrayed with the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, we shall lift up our heads with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Then will every believer receive that crown of life, to which holy Paul looked forward with such rapturous delight, when he was just finishing his earthly course. 'I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only,

but unto all them also that love His appearing.' By this crown, all the blessings of glory are represented- all the riches of the celestial Paradise, with its tree of life, its immortal fruits, its rivers of pleasure, its mansions of bliss. O blessed crown! It will produce in the mind of every believer the most joyful emotions. It will make him shine as the sun in the kingdom of heaven. It fades not away. It will be worn through ceaseless ages. Let it be our desire now to engage in the good fight of faith, and to lay hold on eternal life, so that, at the glorious appearing of the Savior, we may receive this crown of righteousness, and rejoice forever more.

On the morning of the resurrection there will be a most joyful meeting between Christ and believers. The Christian, while a pilgrim here, is sometimes filled with supreme joy when he thinks of an absent Savior. 'You love him even though you have never seen him. Though you do not see him, you trust him; and even now you are happy with a glorious, inexpressible joy.' But what will be the joy when we shall meet Him in the judgment day, to sit down with Him at the banquet of redeeming love! How unspeakable! how full of glory! With what joy shall we hear Him welcome us to His glorious home, where He Himself will rejoice over us with joy; rest in His love, and rejoice over us with singing!

The meeting of Christian friends will make the day of Christ one of exceeding joy to the righteous. With what indescribable pleasure will we then meet those pious friends, with whom we so reluctantly parted on the shores of time, and over whose graves we shed so many tears of sorrow! Christian friends will then be reunited to be separated no more. This delightful truth is exhibited by the apostle as the grand source of consolation to believers now mourning the loss of pious friends. 'And now, brothers and sisters, I want you to know what will happen to the Christians who have died so you will not be full of sorrow like people who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus

comes, God will bring back with Jesus all the Christians who have died. I can tell you this directly from the Lord: We who are still living when the Lord returns will not rise to meet him ahead of those who are in their graves. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the call of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, all the Christians who have died will rise from their graves. Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and remain with him forever. So comfort and encourage each other with these words.'

Oh, the joyful meeting that will take place on the morning of the resurrection between the members of pious families- a meeting that will know no separation through the infinite ages of bliss! Then will our Christian friends rise from the grave, in the glorious image of the Son of God, to meet us on the peaceful shore above, and to rejoice with us in the presence of the Savior forever and ever. Oh, then-
How will our joy and wonder rise,
When our returning King
Shall bear us homeward through the skies
On love's triumphant wing!'

THE DAY OF THE SAVIOR'S SECOND COMING WILL BE ONE OF AGONIZING TERROR TO THE WICKED. It is called the terror of the Lord. 'Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.' With what unutterable anguish will he, who has lived without God and without hope in the world, behold the dawn of that tremendous day! A day far more terrible to the self-condemned sinner than all the horrors of dissolving nature and a world on fire. What fearfulness will surprise the impenitent, in that day of final separation, when he hears the sound of the trumpet of God, and sees the heavens and the earth fleeing away from the face of Him who sits on the throne! How terrible to him will be the sight of the Judge coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory! Then every eye

shall see Him, and they also who pierced Him. How can he, who has pierced the blessed Jesus by his sins, and despised His all-cleansing blood, behold Him coming to judgment? And where can he now flee for safety? Can he hide himself from the presence of the glorious Judge whose eyes are as a flame of fire? Will the everlasting hills, or the lofty mountains, conceal him from those omniscient eyes? Oh, no! In vain will he then cry to the hills to fall on him, and the mountains to cover him from the presence of an avenging Lord! They will flee away, and leave the wretched transgressor exposed to his just and terrible doom. 'Then the kings of the earth, the rulers, the generals, the wealthy people, the people with great power, and every slave and every free person-all hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains. And they cried to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of the one who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of their wrath has come, and who will be able to survive?" 'Oh, what a day of crushing trouble! What a day of confusion and terror the Lord, the Lord Almighty, has brought upon the Valley of Vision! The walls have been broken, and cries of death echo from the mountainsides.'

They who, through life,
By conscience and religion's warning voice
Unmoved, their prostituted hearts resigned
To sin, with the keen horrors of remorse
And anguish rent, call on the lofty hills
To cover their apostate heads. Alas!
Too late contrition comes: the doom is past'

THE THOUGHT OF THE SECOND COMING OF THE SAVIOR SHOULD LEAD US TO PREPARE FOR SO SOLEMN AND IMPORTANT AN EVENT. We should now flee from the wrath to come by accepting the offers of mercy through a crucified Redeemer. This is the only way by which the guilty may escape that fearful doom which is rapidly coming on an impenitent world. Without this reconciliation to God by Jesus Christ, we

will be exposed to that storm of divine vengeance which shall burst upon this sinful world when the trumpet of God shall sound, and the dead awake. It was the consideration of the terrors of the last day- the fearfulness of appearing before the judgment-seat of Christ without an interest in His atoning work- that made the apostles persuade men, with all earnestness, to be reconciled to God through Him who was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Now let us, in this day of salvation, be persuaded by the solemn and impressive words of divine revelation, to lay hold on the hope set before us- to enter into the Ark of heavenly repose- of perfect peace and safety. 'Go home, my people, and lock your doors! Hide until the Lord's anger against your enemies has passed. Look! The Lord is coming from heaven to punish the people of the earth for their sins. The earth will no longer hide those who have been murdered. They will be brought out for all to see.'

How, diligent should we now be, that, in the day of judgment, we may be found in Christ Jesus. 'So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.' It was the thought of a future judgment that led Paul to give his solemn charge to Timothy, respecting the faithful discharge of the ministerial office. 'And so I solemnly urge you before God and before Christ Jesus-who will someday judge the living and the dead when he appears to set up his Kingdom: Preach the word of God. Be persistent, whether the time is favorable or not. Patiently correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching.' Oh, let us now prepare for the coming judgment: let us now be wise, and listen to the divine admonition- 'Prepare to meet your God.' We may now disregard these solemn words, but we cannot escape this meeting with God in the day of judgment. There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves from the omniscient eye of the Judge of all mankind. In that searching day, when the righteous will scarcely be saved, where shall the guilty sinner appear? If we are not safely sheltered in the Ark, Christ Jesus, how shall we escape

utter ruin when the rain descends, and the floods come, and the winds blow?

Let us now look at the coming tempest, and hasten to the only Hiding-Place before the day of wrath dawns. How dreadful to think of meeting that storm unprepared- of being swept away by it into the regions of sorrow and despair! 'I see,' exclaimed the eloquent Dr. Griffin, in a burst of the most solemn and piercing eloquence, 'I see a storm collecting in the heavens; I discover the commotion of the troubled elements; I hear the roar of distant winds. Heavens and earth seem mingled in conflict; and I cry to those for whom I watch, A storm! a storm! get into the ark or you are swept away. Ah, what is it that I see? I see a world convulsed and falling to ruins; the sea burning like oil; nations rising from under ground; the sun falling; the damned in chains before the bar; and some of my poor hearers among them. I see them cast from the battlements of the judgment-seat. My God! the eternal pit has closed upon them forever!' Oh, if we are not then in the divinely appointed Ark, how can our ears endure that voice, at which the earth melts- that reproof at which the pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished? In that day the lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted.

Let us daily think of that strict account which we must give to Him that is ready to judge the living and the dead; for 'every one of us shall give account of himself to God.' How solemn the thought, that we must render an account to Him of our time, our talents, our words, our actions. 'But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.' Let the young, the gay, the thoughtless, remember these piercing words, 'Young man, it's wonderful to be young! Enjoy every minute of it. Do everything you want to do; take it all in. But remember that you must give an account to God for everything you do.' Let us now seriously think of the judgment to come, and turn to the Lord with all our heart. Absorbed in the pursuit of worldly objects, and looking so

attentively at the things which are seen, how seldom do we solemnly contemplate the approaching advent of the Savior to judgment! Let us endeavor, hereafter, to keep this scene of dreadful solemnity and grandeur before the eye of our mind. Let us often think of the Savior descending from heaven in all the glories of the Godhead- sitting upon His great white throne, and summoning the world before His judgment-seat. In the striking language of John Howe, 'Why do we not live as if we were now entering into the eternal state, and as if we now beheld the glorious appearing of the great God our Savior, when we are as much assured of them as if we beheld them? Why do we not oftener view the representation of the heavens vanishing, the elements melting, the earth flaming, the angels everywhere dispersed to gather the elect, and them ascending, caught up to meet the Redeemer in the air, ever to be with the Lord? What a trifle will the world be to us then!'

We must all soon stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. The day of the Lord is at hand. The scenes of the judgment will soon be witnessed by an assembled universe. We shall soon hear the voice of the archangel and the trumpet call of God? What account will we then give at the bar of God? What sentence will we then hear? We shall soon be welcomed by the Savior to the mansions of everlasting glory, or banished forever from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power. Should not these solemn declarations, which are founded on the word of Him who is Truth, lead us to give all diligence to prepare for that 'great day for which all other days were made?' Does not this subject, which is so intimately connected with our present comfort, and future welfare, demand our most serious, undivided attention?

And now, will we pass over this theme of infinite consequence to us, and still sport with our salvation, on the very brink of destruction? Oh, in this inestimable moment let us commit our souls to the hands of the Son of God, our Savior, persuaded with Paul, that He is able to keep that which we have committed unto

Him against that day. How blessed are those who, in the day of judgment, are found depending on the merits of the Redeemer-abiding in Christ! 'And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.'

Let the thought of the Savior's second coming excite us to constancy in our Christian course, and to hold fast the faith once delivered to the saints. Let our faith and patience hold out a little longer, and we shall safely reach the end of our brief pilgrimage, and be forever at home in our Father's house above-in the many mansions of celestial bliss. Will not the sound of that heavenly invitation, 'Come, you who are blessed of my Father,' abundantly compensate us for the sufferings of our momentary passage through life? Will not one moment's experience of the joys of heaven cause us to forget all sublunary pain and sorrow? Oh, let this thought animate us to be still found on the side of Christ, contending earnestly for His cause, amid the opposition of the world, the temptations of the evil one, and the depravity of our own hearts.

Let us through life follow the Lord fully, so that, at death, and in the judgment day, we may be brought into the promised land of heavenly rest. 'Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.' Christian pilgrim, we shall soon behold that glorious morning of the resurrection, on which our happiness will be consummated. Then we, who have confessed the Savior on earth, will be owned by Him before His Father and the holy angels. 'Whoever therefore,' says Christ, 'shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father who is in heaven.' Then shall the unutterable splendors of the New Jerusalem burst upon our enraptured vision: then shall every child of God exchange the sighs of his earthly pilgrimage for the joys of heaven: then shall we be Forever with the Lord!

'Forever with the Lord!
Amen, so let it be;
Life from the dead is in that word,
'Tis immortality.'

Blessed Jesus, prepare us; we beseech You, for the solemn and amazing scenes of the last day- for sharing in the glorious resurrection of the just- for hearing the joyful welcome to life everlasting. May we now have a saving interest in that peace which You have made by the blood of the cross: may we be washed in that fountain which has been opened for sin and for uncleanness: may we be covered with the robe of Your righteousness. And in that awful day, when the heavens and the earth shall pass away, oh, be our strength, our stay, our shield, our exceeding great reward. With the glorious company of the redeemed- with apostles, and prophets, and martyrs, clothed in white- may we then pass from Your judgment-seat to the mansions of heavenly felicity, to be crowned with immortality. Oh, then, may our names be found enrolled in the book of life, and owned by You, so that we may be presented faultless before the presence of Your glory with exceeding joy. May we now be among those who are waiting for You, and who love Your glorious appearing. May our life be now hidden with You in God, so that when You, who are our life appears, we may also appear with You in glory. And may that blissful morning soon dawn, when all Your ransomed saints shall awake to everlasting life, and shine as the brightness of the firmament- as the stars forever and ever. Why do the wheels of Your chariot tarry? Come, Lord Jesus! Come quickly!

'The day of Christ; the last, the dreadful day;
When you and I, and all the world, shall come
Before His judgment-seat, to hear their doom
Forever and forever; and when they
Who loved not God, far, far from Him away
Shall go- but where banished? and with whom?
And they who loved Him shall be welcomed home
To God, and Christ, and Heaven, and Heaven's array,

Angels and saints made perfect- may the scene
Of that dread day be always present here
Here in my heart! That every day between,
Which brings my passage to the goal more near,
May find me fitter, by His love made clean,
Before His throne of justice to appear.'

THE SAVIOR'S INVITATION

Time's sun is fast setting- its twilight is nigh
Its evening is falling in cloud over the sky;
Its shadows are stretching in ominous gloom,
Its midnight approaches- the midnight of doom!
Then haste, sinner, haste, there is mercy for thee,
And wrath is preparing- flee, lingerer, flee!

Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Matthew 11:28

The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." Let each one who hears them say, "Come." Let the thirsty ones come-anyone who wants to. Let them come and drink the water of life without charge. Rev. 22:17

'COME; all things are ready. See, heaven is opened! Behold angels and the spirits of just men made perfect, waiting for your arrival! See the golden scepter of forgiveness extended before you! Approach, and touch, and live forever.' -Dwight

COME TO THE SAVIOR

Jesus! refuge of my soul,
Let me to Your bosom fly,
While the raging billows roll,

While the tempest still is high!
Hide me, O my Savior!
hide Until the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide;
Oh, receive my soul at last. -Charles Wesley

In the preceding pages some of the most touching scenes in the Savior's life, with reflections on the excellency and holiness of His nature, have been exhibited. Guided by the Word of God we have dwelt on His original glory, when He was with the Father, rejoicing always before Him, and when His delights were with the sons of men. We have followed Him in His wonderful transition from heaven to earth, and listened to the song of a multitude of the heavenly host at His incarnation, ascribing glory to God in the highest, and proclaiming peace on earth, good will towards men. We have followed Him in some of His works of benevolence, when He went about continually doing good, preaching the gospel, and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people. We have contemplated Him in His amazing and mysterious agony in Gethsemane, and in His painful and ignominious death on Calvary. We have seen Him laid in the silent tomb, and rise again at the third day. We have looked after Him as He ascended triumphantly far above all heavens, and viewed Him standing at the right hand of God, interceding for us in the heavenly sanctuary. And, lastly, we have looked forward through all coming time, and fixing our eyes on that momentous period, when the heavens are to be rolled together as a scroll, and when the earth is to utter its expiring groan, we have contemplated Him coming again in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Now, we would ask, what impression have all these things produced in our mind? Have we considered them seriously? And have they been the means of guiding us to the blessed Savior, or of constraining us to esteem Him more highly? Have they purified and gladdened our hearts with that hope which 'makes

not ashamed?' Have we made a proper application of these solemn truths to our souls?

In this concluding essay we would endeavor to enforce more fully the great duty of coming to the Savior for the blessings which He has purchased for us by the obedience of His life, and His sufferings and death- blessings which are offered to us in the everlasting gospel, without money and without price- blessings which will lead us into the 'green pastures,' and beside the 'still waters' of divine grace, as we journey through earth's wilderness, and bring us, at length, into that blessed state of heavenly repose under the tree of life, and by the living fountains of waters, in the midst of the Paradise of God.

If we would enjoy all the good that an immortal soul can desire, we must come to the Savior for the blessings of grace here, and glory hereafter. We must enlist forthwith under the banner of His cross; for now is the accepted time. Today we must listen to His voice: tomorrow may be too late. For all the blessings of the everlasting covenant of grace we must come directly to Him, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. The blessings which are treasured up in Christ for the supply of the needs of those who repair to Him, are so numerous that we have only space here to mention some of them.

COME TO THE SAVIOR FOR PARDON. Pardoning mercy is God's free, gracious acceptance of a sinner upon the satisfaction made to His justice by the death of Jesus. It is the most joyful sound that can fall on the ears of sinners doomed to die. It is one of the richest gifts of divine love. It descends from heaven, and brings the blessings of peace to the troubled soul. It is a pardon bought with blood- it is sealed in the blood of Emmanuel. It is the remedy of all our guilt. It frees from the burden of sin, dissipates the horrors of despair, and soothes the guilty soul. It removes the sting of death, and enables the believer to enter with new songs of triumph into the joy of his Lord.

I feel the weight of nature's guilt,
Beneath the ponderous load I groan;
Oh! may the blood on Calvary spilt
For all my crimson sins atone!
Blest Jesus! speak the pardoning word;
Salvation to my spirit bring!
Then will Your grace those joys afford,
Which from Your cross to sinners spring.
Redeemed from guilt and slavish fear,
My soul shall wing its way to Thee!
While faith beholds her title clear
To blissful immortality.

In the Gospel there is pardon for the most guilty. 'Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as white as wool.' This is one of the most gracious and encouraging promises in the Bible. It affords the greatest encouragement to the most depraved. But listen again to the voice of pardoning mercy. Hear the language of the inspired apostle Paul- 'This is a true saying, and everyone should believe it: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners-and I was the worst of them all. But that is why God had mercy on me, so that Christ Jesus could use me as a prime example of his great patience with even the worst sinners. Then others will realize that they, too, can believe in him and receive eternal life.' What super-abounding grace is here! It extends to the very chief of sinners. While reflecting on a truth so inspiring to those who are conscious of guilt in the sight of Heaven, well may we exclaim with wonder and joy: 'Where is another God like you, who pardons the sins of the survivors among his people? You cannot stay angry with your people forever, because you delight in showing mercy. Once again you will have compassion on us. You will trample our sins under your feet and throw them into the depths of the ocean!'

Now, we must come to the Savior for this pardon. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace. 'Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.' Christ has borne our iniquities; and it is through His blood alone, which is of infinite value, that we can find this forgiveness of sins. His blood can efface the deepest stains of iniquity. It has done so in innumerable instances. It cleanses us from all sin. 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.' 'I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me.' 'Whatever our guiltiness be,' says Rutherford, 'yet when it falls into the sea of God's mercy, it is but like a drop of blood fallen into the great ocean.'

'O Savior! in that tide
Which from Your pierced side
On Calvary's mount was poured out like wine,
Cleansed my polluted soul,
The wounds of sin make whole,
And breathe Your Spirit over this heart of mine.'

Oh, the riches of this pardoning mercy of our adorable Redeemer! May it be the burden of our song through all eternity.

The pardon which the Savior has obtained is offered to all. A free, full, glorious invitation is extended even to those who are most deeply stained with the guilt of enormous sins- to the most guilty and wretched of earth's inhabitants. 'Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of men.' 'Hearken unto me, you stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness: I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry:' 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly

pardon.' 'Ho, every one that thirsts, come you to the waters, and he that has no money; come, buy and eat; yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.' 'The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is thirsty come. And whoever will, let him take the water of life freely.'

'Savior! and do You speak
Such gracious words to me?
Do You the wanderer seek
Who basely fled from You?
Will You my footsteps guide
To where Your sheep beside
The living streams abide?
I come, I come, with shame and grief oppressed,
Your feet embrace, and shelter in Your breast.'

Let all, then; come to the Savior for this inestimable blessing-pardon of sins. Let none, however vile or unworthy he may be, exclude himself from this pardoning mercy- a mercy which we all need, and without which we will perish forever. Let not a sense of enormous sin keep us for a moment from coming to Him, who came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. In all our guilt and depravity let us repair to Him that we may receive an abundant pardon. 'Those who are whole need not a physician, but those who are sick.' In the precious blood of Jesus, the Great Physician of souls, our wounded consciences will find healing; and by faith in His atoning blood, we shall finally be admitted into that better country, where the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick; for the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.

Many, on account of the greatness of their sins, are discouraged from coming to the Savior for pardon. They are so burdened with conscious guilt, that they seem to imagine their iniquities are too aggravated for even the Savior to pardon. This is a most unjust and unreasonable view of that grace of God, which brings

salvation to the most vile. It is lightly esteeming the amazing love and compassion of Him, who, in the very midst of His agonizing pains on the cross, prayed for His persecutors- 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.' The Savior will exclude none on account of enormous sins. Let us come to Him, feeling the need of His forgiveness, and using the plea of the Psalmist, 'For Your name's sake, O Lord, pardon my iniquity; for it is great.' Under the banner of the cross pardon is now proclaimed to all penitents, though their sins are as scarlet and red like crimson. 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' If we now come to the Savior, we shall find a cordial welcome; our sins shall be forgiven; our robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb; and our names enrolled in the book of life, among the living in the New Jerusalem.

'Search the records of; the saved,' says an eloquent writer, 'and you will see names of the most atrocious offenders who were pardoned, and sanctified, and are now with God. Ask them how they escaped the wrath to come, and entered the everlasting rest? With one voice they will exclaim, He loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood! Ask all the family of grace who shall speedily join the celestial throng, how they obtained deliverance from the curse, and access to that absolutely holy God? With equal unanimity they will reply, We are accepted in the Beloved! There is, therefore, redemption through His blood. Let the doubting, disconsolate sinner throw himself, with all his guilt and vileness, into the arms of this forgiving mercy. It never yet repulsed any one who came in the faith of the Mediator's blood, and it will not begin its repulses with you. Go without delay; go with all boldness in this blood; and you shall find as cordial a welcome as grace can give you.'

Oh, how soothing is the voice that whispers to our troubled spirits- 'I, even I, am He that blots out your transgressions for My own sake, and will not remember your sins.' 'But you are

washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.' 'Son, be of good cheer; your sins be forgiven.' 'That was the grace, softer than oil, sweeter than roses, which flowed from His lips into the sinner's wounds, and which being poured into the contrite heart, not only heals, but blesses it, yes, and marks it out for eternal blessedness.' (Leighton). Let us ever behold Jesus as the Lamb of God, who takes away our sins; and go on our way to the peaceful and happy shores of the better country, extolling that marvelous grace which has pardoned all our sins, and brought us near to God.

'Forgiveness! it is a joyful sound,
To rebel sinners doomed to die
Publish the bliss the world around;
You seraphs, shout it from the sky!
It is the rich gift of love divine;
It is full- out measuring every crime;
Unclouded shall its glories shine,
And feel no change by changing time.
For this stupendous love of heaven,
What grateful honor shall we show?
Where much transgression is forgiven,
Let love with equal ardor glow.
Cheered by the hope of pardoning grace,
We come Your mercy, Lord, to prove;
Like weeping Mary, let us taste
A pledge of Your forgiving love.

Blessed Jesus, weary and heavy-laden, I would come to You for Your pardoning grace. I would turn my eyes to the cross: I would behold the stream of salvation flowing from Your pierced side: I would look to You and live. Forgive, I beseech You, all my iniquities, and release my burdened soul. Oh, may the blood of sprinkling be applied by faith to my conscience, preserving me from guilt, and enabling me to walk in the light of Your countenance all my days, until the messenger of death shall waft

me to the blissful home on high, where I shall meet with that glorious company of prophets, apostles, and martyrs, who have washed their robes and made them white in Your blood, and join them, in nobler strains than I can now reach, in songs of praise to You, who has loved us, and washed us from our sins in Your own blood.

'Oh, let Your precious blood divine
Wash all my sins away!
Then shall my soul resplendent shine,
Through heaven's eternal day.'

COME TO THE SAVIOR FOR PEACE. 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.' 'These things I have spoken unto you, that in me you might have peace.' This is a blessed gift, and we must come to Jesus for it. It is His delightful work to impart peace to the trembling conscience. Our souls can never enjoy perfect peace unless they are stayed on HIM, who is the Prince of life and peace. From the blessed Savior proceeds that heavenly peace which gladdens our hearts, and beautifies us with the fruits of righteousness, unto the glory and praise of God. The righteous are led forth with peace. 'Great peace have those who love Your law: and nothing can make them stumble.' 'And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places.' 'Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.'

Now, would we enjoy that sweet peace of God which passes all understanding? Then let us come to the Savior; and in Him we shall find this solid and permanent peace, to compose, and strengthen, and uplift us in our journey through a world of storms and afflictions, until we reach the peaceful shore above, where, amid the unclouded splendors of Emmanuel's land, we shall cease from our labors, and sorrows, and pains, and

conflicts, and enter upon that rest which remains to the people of God.

'Blessed Savior, speak the healing word,
Bid all my sorrows cease;
Oh, be my great atoning Lord.
My righteousness and peace.
You are my refuge and my rest,
Sweet peace in You I now may find;
The richest streams of heavenly grace,
To soothe and calm my troubled mind.'

COME TO THE SAVIOR FOR JOY. Says Jesus to His faithful disciples, ' These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.' All sublunary joy is vain, and quickly passes away. True, lasting joy is a blessing which does not spring from earthly sources. It descends from above; it comes from the blessed Savior; it flows from a faithful reception of the gospel of His grace. It is one of the fruits of the Spirit, and is promised to the believer. It is a stream which will never fail. 'Your joy no man takes from you.' 'Everlasting joy shall be unto them.' Like a river, deep and wide, it will flow through all time, invigorating and enriching the saints of the Most High, until it empties itself in the ocean of eternal felicity before the throne of God. It is a holy serenity of soul- a joy unspeakable, and full of glory. It is the strength of the believer; it fills his soul; it purifies his affections; it lifts his sanctified mind above the sorrows of the present world to the land of supreme, everlasting joy.

This sacred joy of the Christian springs up in all its rapturous emotions when the cross appears to our view- when we believe that Jesus, with all the infinite riches of His grace, is ours- that God is our reconciled Father- that heaven is our future home. How blessed in a world like this, where earth-born joys so swiftly pass away, to be assured that there are holy and rapturous joys in Christ, which can never perish!

'Thrice blessed, you saint of the Lord;
In Jesus your refuge is found;
Oh! trust to His promise and word,
And joys shall increase and abound.
Yes! joy shall increase like a stream;
Your peace, like the waves of the sea;
Your grace into glory shall beam;
And Jesus your portion shall be.'

But who can describe this holy joy which the Savior gives, the voice of which is heard in the tabernacles of the righteous? It is called 'the oil of joy' 'the joy of the Lord'. Oh, the unutterable joy that arises in the heart when, by faith, the Redeemer is seen in His mediatorial glory- when the soul eats of the bidden manna and drinks of the living stream! How many of the servants of God, while on earth, have been favored with the largest communications of this sacred joy of the Lord! What foretastes of the joys of heaven are sometimes vouchsafed to them while musing on the great things of God!

It was while in this heavenly frame of mind, that the pious Doddridge penned these lines to a beloved friend- 'It is pleasant to read, pleasant to compose, pleasant to converse with my friends at home, pleasant to visit those abroad- the poor, the sick- pleasant to write letters of necessary business, by which any good can be done- pleasant to go out and preach the gospel to poor souls, of which some are thirsting for it, and others dying without it- pleasant in the week-day to think how near another Sabbath is; but, oh! much more pleasant to think how near eternity is, and how short the journey through this wilderness, and that it is but a step from earth to heaven.' Experiencing the same high and holy pleasure of mind, he wrote, at a later period, in this happy strain- 'Last Lord's day was our sacrament day, and indeed it was a most comfortable one to me; my joy at that ordinance was so great, that I could not well contain it. I had much ado to forbear telling all about

me, as well as I could- for it would have been but in a very imperfect manner- what a divine flame I felt in my soul. Were it possible to carry such impressions through life, it would give the soul a kind of independence far too high for a mortal existence. It was indeed, in the most literal and proper sense, a joy unspeakable and full of glory.' The eminent John Howe, in a remarkable record of his personal experience, inscribed in his study Bible, speaks of the sublime joy which filled his soul on two occasions, and tells us that what he 'sensibly felt' on one of these, far surpassed the most expressive words his thoughts could suggest. 'I then experienced an inexpressibly pleasant melting of heart; tears gushing out of my eyes, for joy that God should shed abroad His love abundantly through the hearts of men, and that for this very purpose my own should be so signally possessed of and by His blessed Spirit.

Another most remarkable outpouring of this stream of sacred joy, which comes from the Savior, and which so transports the soul of the believer, was vouchsafed to the devout John Flavel. Being once on a journey, he set himself to improve the time by meditation; when his mind grew intent, until at length he had such ravishing foretastes of heavenly joys, and such full assurance of his interest therein, that he utterly lost the sight and sense of this world and all its concerns, so that for hours he knew not where he was. At last perceiving himself faint, he alighted from his horse and sat down at a spring, where he refreshed himself, earnestly desiring, if it were the will of God, that he might there leave the world. His spirit reviving, he finished his journey in the same delightful frame; and all that night passed without a wink of sleep, the joy of the Lord still overflowing him, so that he seemed an inhabitant of the other world.

Let us come to the Savior, that His joy may remain in us, and that our joy may be full. And though we may not, while on earth, experience such transports of holy joy as were vouchsafed to those men of God, whose experience we have just recorded, yet

the time is at hand when Jesus shall appear to our joy- when we shall come to Zion with everlasting joy upon our heads; when we shall experience a joy truly unspeakable and full of glory. Then will be fully accomplished the words of the prophet; 'Be glad; rejoice forever in my creation! And look! I will create Jerusalem as a place of happiness. Her people will be a source of joy. I will rejoice in Jerusalem and delight in my people. And the sound of weeping and crying will be heard no more.' 'They will shout with joy like warriors dividing the plunder.' Then will have come that morning of joy, which shall never be followed by a night of weeping.

We beseech you to come to the Savior for this heavenly joy, which He is waiting to give you: and then, amid all the changing scenes of your earthly course, you may sweetly sing- 'Even though the fig trees have no blossoms, and there are no grapes on the vine; even though the olive crop fails, and the fields lie empty and barren; even though the flocks die in the fields, and the cattle barns are empty, yet I will rejoice in the Lord! I will be joyful in the God of my salvation. The Sovereign Lord is my strength! He will make me as surefooted as a deer and bring me safely over the mountains.' 'I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness.'

'How sweet the sacred joy that dwells
In souls renewed by power divine;
Where Jesus all His goodness tells:
Oh! may this joy be ever mine!
Descend and bless Your servant, Lord,
Your loving Spirit now impart;
Speak You the all-enlivening word,
And seal salvation to my heart.
From earth and all its fleeting toys,
Be all my fond desires withdrawn;
Oh, fill my soul with heavenly joys,

Of endless bliss the glorious dawn.
Then shall my raptured spirit sing,
In strains of pure celestial love;
When borne on some kind seraph's wing,
I soar to brighter worlds above.'

COME TO THE SAVIOR FOR REST. How precious is His own invitation, 'Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke fits perfectly, and the burden I give you is light.' Our wearied souls will never experience true rest until we come to Jesus. In vain will we seek for perfect, uninterrupted rest in earthly things. This fleeting, sin-stained world is not the place of our rest. The sacred command is- 'Arise, and depart; for this is not your rest: because it is polluted, it; shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction.'

Now, where shall we go for this blessing except to Him, who came from Heaven to bring perfect rest to our weary souls, and who has returned again to those blessed mansions to prepare a place of eternal, joyful rest for us- a sweet repose beyond the storms of life, where sin and care no more disturb- where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest? Let the weary pilgrim of earth come to the Savior, who has promised to give him rest. 'For thus says the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, In returning and rest shall you be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.' Are you burdened with guilt and fears? Are you heavy laden with innumerable transgressions? Have your iniquities taken hold on you, so that you are not able to look up? And does not your heart fail you when you think of all this? Now, do you not desire rest for your soul? Then come to Jesus, and lay down your burdens at the foot of His cross; look up with the eye of faith to His bleeding side; plead for an interest in 'the blood of sprinkling, that speaks better things than that of Abel;' and you will enjoy rest on earth- spiritual rest, peace of conscience, a sweet serenity

of soul- and beyond the grave you will rest forever in the blissful home of the redeemed; in the bosom of Abraham; in the arms of Jesus. Comply with the Savior's gracious invitation: come to Him, and He will surely give you rest- a rest from the accusations of a guilty conscience- the condemning power of the law- the corroding cares of life- the sorrows of the world- the fear of death, judgment, and future punishment. Cast all your cares upon Him; rest in His love; trust in His promises; and look forward with joy to that long-desired day when you hope to rest with Him in the mansions of bliss.

Oh, divine Savior! be my portion, the lot of my inheritance. Then shall I rejoice in the midst of sorrows, and be calm in the midst of storms. Oh, speak peace to my troubled soul, and then all shall be still. Blessed Redeemer! all who come to You find rest unto their souls; and I would now come. Receive me in mercy. Cause me to know You as my Savior, and to rejoice daily in the joyful sound of mercy extended to the chief of sinners.

'There's a hand of mercy near me,
Though the waves of trouble roar;
There's an hour of rest to cheer me,
When the toils of life are over.
Happy hour! when saints are gaining,
That bright crown they longed to wear;
Not one spot of sin remaining,
Not one pang of earthly care.
Oh! to rest in peace forever,
Joined with happy souls above;
Where no foe my heart can sever
From the Savior whom I love.'

COME TO THE SAVIOR FOR COMFORT UNDER THE ILLS OF LIFE. The Christian's journey through this world is attended with many trials, afflictions, temptations, and sorrows. If he has his hours of holy joy, he has also his seasons of severe trial, when he needs the supporting arm of Jesus, his faithful,

almighty Friend, to keep him from sinking beneath the waves of life's ocean. 'In the world,' says the Savior, 'you shall have tribulation.' 'We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.' 'Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.' Some of the ills that we are called to endure in our passage to the better country, are the loss of worldly substance, the opposition of an unbelieving world to our Christian profession, the corruptions of our own hearts, and the assaults of spiritual foes, bodily afflictions, and the removal of our friends by death.

In this world of mutability we are exposed to continual vicissitude of fortune. In a day, or an hour, all our worldly substance may be swept away. The sunshine of prosperity does not always last; clouds of adversity suddenly arise to darken our sky. 'For riches are not forever; and does the crown endure to every generation?' Change is written in the most legible characters on everything connected with human affairs. Today we may be in the most prosperous circumstances; tomorrow, reduced to extreme poverty. 'Will you set your eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle towards heaven.'

In the world we will often meet with opposition at the hand of the unrighteous. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. But while reposing in the Savior, the Christian is happy even amid the hatred, the scorn, and derision of those who have never experienced the true pleasures of a religious life. 'Blessed are you,' says Christ, 'when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven; for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.'

As long as we are in this world of sin, we are exposed to many temptations and weaknesses. In the best of saints there are

remains of sin, which will never be entirely eradicated until the period of our complete redemption comes. While contending with the depravity of our hearts, we are, at the same time, exposed to the attack of spiritual foes. How severe is the conflict which the saint is often called to endure with the enemies of his salvation! How often, in the course of his earthly pilgrimage, is he ready to cry out, from a sense of his inward corruptions and his exposure to the assaults of the evil one: 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' 'I shall now perish one day by the hand of my foes.' While looking around him for help, he sees that none but Jesus is able to deliver him- he flees to Him for refuge, and is safe. In that precious blood which was poured out upon the cross, he is more than a conqueror over all his inward corruptions, and his spiritual foes. His language now is: 'I thank God through Jesus Christ my Lord.'

Here, we are subject to numerous physical ailments. The most violent diseases invade our system, and we are speedily stretched on beds of pain. 'He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain.' 'You have tested us, O God; you have purified us like silver melted in a crucible. You captured us in your net and laid burdens on our backs.' To the children of God afflictions are sent in mercy. They are directed by love. They are designed to unite us more closely to the Savior, to mortify indwelling sin, to purify our hearts, to wean us from earth, to elevate our affections to that blessed world where there shall be no more pain. 'And have you entirely forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you, his children? He said, My child, don't ignore it when the Lord disciplines you, and don't be discouraged when he corrects you. For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes those he accepts as his children.' 'As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.' 'My child, don't ignore it when the Lord disciplines you, and don't be discouraged when he corrects you. For the Lord corrects those he loves, just as a father corrects a child in whom he delights.' 'Happy are those whom you discipline, Lord, and those whom

you teach from your law. You give them relief from troubled times until a pit is dug for the wicked.'

Here, death removes our dearest friends from our sight, and consigns them to the silent grave. How soon are the tenderest earthly ties broken! In an instant, death enters the happy family circle, and removes a kind husband, or an affectionate wife, a beloved son or daughter. How frequently are several members of the same household, at nearly the same time, stretched on the bed of death; while the hearts of surviving relations are rent with piercing agony! Thus 'friend after friend departs,' thus 'star after star declines, until all are passed away.' Now, how delightful is it to trust in the Savior in the time of bereavement, when the heart is crushed and earth made desolate! How blessed, at such a season, is the privilege of coming to Him, who is the Resurrection and the Life; and of hearing His voice whispering in our ears the soothing words, that our pious father and mother, brother and sister, husband and wife, son and daughter, shall live again; and that we, if followers of them, shall soon meet them in a world where parting is unknown- where there is an eternal calm for those who weep, a blissful rest for every weary Christian pilgrim! In the day of bereavement we can find no support like that which Jesus gives to our fainting souls.

How cheering is it then to open the Volume of Inspiration, and read the glorious declaration: 'For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus comes, God will bring back with Jesus all the Christians who have died.' Now will the Savior be unspeakably precious to us; now will heaven be still more attractive, when by faith we behold our pious friends translated to that happier world to shine in the light of a perfect, unclouded day. Oh, how exhilarating to think, with regard to those who have died in the Lord, that 'every gem which death rudely tears away from us here, is a glorious jewel forever shining there;' that 'every Christian friend that goes before us from this world is a ransomed spirit waiting to welcome us in heaven!'

Now, where are we to look for support, when encompassed with these, earthly ills, unless to Him who has so kindly assured us, that His grace is sufficient for us; for His strength is made perfect in weakness? And how cheering in the dark night of time, when the Christian is tossed by the tempest, and driven by the storm, to look upward, and by faith's eye discern, beyond the surrounding gloom, the Bright and Morning Star still guiding us onward to the port where all is calm and peaceful; to a world where all is irradiated by the splendor of a Sun that never sets—where the last grief is banished, and the cup of everlasting joy placed in every hand! 'The Great Counselor,' says Thomas Brooks, 'puts clouds and darkness round about Him, bidding us follow at His beck through the cloud, promising an eternal and uninterrupted sunshine on the other side.'

'Oh! who could bear life's stormy doom,
Did not Your word of love
Come brightly bearing through the gloom,
A peace-branch from above!
Then sorrow, touched by You, grows bright,
With more than rapture's ray,
As darkness shows us worlds of light
We never saw by day!'

By such cheering views of spiritual things our souls will be sustained in the hour of adversity; for we will then perceive that Jesus is on our side, and that every breeze of earthly sorrow is only wafting us to those high and heavenly abodes, where temporal ills are forever unknown. We will then rise above the storms of life, and be enabled to say with Paul, in the midst of trouble; 'I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.' Oh, then, when pressed by pursuing foes, or when ready to sink under the accumulated ills of life, let us come to Him who is the hope of Israel, the Savior thereof in the time of trouble. Our help is from Him. He is our defense. He will not allow our foot to be moved. He will keep our souls in safety. His

eye will ever watch over us. He will preserve us from all evil. 'The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. And those who know Your name will put their trust in You; for You, Lord, have not forsaken those who seek You.' 'You are my hiding place; You shall preserve me from trouble; You shall compass me about with songs of deliverance.' 'He shall deliver you in six troubles: yes, in seven there shall no evil touch you.'

Weary mariner on life's tempestuous ocean, when afflictions cloud your sky, and billows roar around you, cling to the Savior in grateful, confiding love. Amid all your difficulties and dangers, He will whisper consolation to you, and support your fainting soul. Yes, amid floods of tribulation, if you are found relying on Him, a 'still small voice' will be heard, reanimating and cheering you with the richest consolation and the choicest promises. You will then be enabled to bear with composure the trials of life, knowing that, like the Captain of our salvation, you must also be made perfect through suffering; and that these light and momentary afflictions are working for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

You will then experience the sweetness of the divine promises, and in the midst of outward trouble, enjoy inward peace. Yielding the peaceable fruit of righteousness in your soul, these trials will bring your faith and love into lively exercise, compose your agitated spirit, and enable you to glorify the Lord even 'in the fires.' And 'when He gives quietness, who then can make trouble?'

It is the blessed privilege of believers, in their afflictions, to have One like the Son of God walking with them in the midst of the fire. In all the afflictions of the saints, Christ is with them; and He will bring them out of the 'furnace' as gold tried in the fire-purified seven times. 'In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them.' 'Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life; you stretch out your hand

against the anger of my foes, with your right hand you save me.' Thrice happy they who come to such a Savior- who enjoy such a consolation! 'Happy are you, O Israel, who is like unto you, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of your help, and who is the sword of your excellency!' 'Happy is that people that is in such a case; yes, happy is that people whose God is the Lord!'

'O for a breeze of heavenly love,
To waft my soul away,
To that celestial place above,
Where pleasures never decay.
Come, my Savior, O my Savior,
Come and bless Your people now,
While at Your feet we humbly bow,
O come and save us now;
Then we will sing our sufferings over,
And praise You evermore.
Eternal Spirit, deign to be
Our Pilot here below,
To steer through life's tempestuous sea,
Where stormy winds do blow.
From rocks of pride on either hand,
From quicksands of despair,
O guide us safe to Canaan's land,
Through every latent snare.
Anchor us in that port above,
On that celestial shore,
Where dashing billows never move,
Where tempests never roar.'

COME TO THE SAVIOR FOR SUPPORT IN THE HOUR OF DEATH. We are all standing on the shores of time, and before us stretches the unfathomable ocean of eternity. To this vast abyss the millions of earth's inhabitants are fast hastening. Every day that closes, every hour that passes, every moment that flies, is bringing us nearer to it. On its mighty surface every human being must soon embark; for what man is he that lives, and shall

not see death? 'Generations come and generations go, but the earth remains forever.' The grave is the home appointed for all living. Everything passes away. A great and mighty river, for ages and centuries, has been rolling on, and sweeping away all that ever lived, to the vast abyss of eternity. On that darkness light does not rise. From that unknown country none return. On that devouring deep, which has swallowed up everything, no vestige appears of the things that were. And still-

'The air of death breathes through our souls,
The dead all 'round us lie;
By day and night the death-bell tolls,
And says, "Prepare to die!"
The loving ones we love the best,
Like music all are gone!
And the wan moonlight bathes in rest
Their monumental stone.'

Death is the messenger that conducts us into the invisible world; and this messenger may be very near us. One step more, and his icy hand may be laid upon us to remove us from our dearest friends on earth, to dissolve all the attachments of life, to hide from us all earthly scenes, and to open to our view the solemn realities of an eternal world. It is appointed unto men once to die- and who will deny that it is a most serious thing to die- to appear before the bar of God- to leave this world, and enter upon an untried state of existence?

Now, will we not need more than human support in that solemn and trying hour when the skill of physicians is baffled- when the tears of friends are unavailing- when the cold sweat stands on our aching brow- when the pulse is ceasing to beat- when our body is about to return to the dust as it was, and our spirit, to God who gave it? Where then is this desired aid to be found? In the divine and compassionate Savior. Yes, all the support that is necessary to smooth, and enlighten, and cheer our passage to the tomb, is found in Jesus. The believer who comes to Him for

sustaining grace in his last hour, will find that death is a disarmed foe- that the grave has been hallowed for his repose by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Standing on the Rock of Ages, he can look down into the gloomy mansion of the grave with composure and even with triumph. In death the Savior whom he has loved in life, will be very near him, showing Himself a very present help in trouble, consoling him with the promises of His grace, and cheering him with a blissful hope of immortality. Then will He indeed speak peace to the departing believer, whose death is precious in His sight.

How soul-comforting to hear the voice of Jesus, speaking to us in tones of the tenderest kindness, as we approach the river of death- 'When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you; when you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon you.' That voice which has so often spoken to us in life, through the word and ordinances of divine grace, will not be silent when we come to die. It is the blessed privilege of believers to hear the words of Jesus, while standing on the banks of Jordan.

'Yes, in death,
Amid the tumult of the body's pain,
That voice is heard, telling the sufferer
Of comfortings and of supportings, through
Jordan's cold waters; and its mellow tones
Linger until the last, then break in all
The ravishing, exulting airs of heaven.'
How blessed then to have the arms of Jesus, the Conqueror of death, upholding our shrinking souls, shielding us from all alarm, sweetening our passage through the dark valley, and conducting us safely through every tempest, and through every billow, into the promised rest above!

To the saint death is an unspeakable advantage, as it is the passage from the wilderness of this world to the heavenly

Canaan; the entrance to our Father's house, in which are the 'many mansions' of glory. It delivers him from all the evils incident to humanity- terminates his period of discipline, toil, trial, conflict- and brings him into a state of perfect holiness and happiness before the throne of God in the highest heavens. Hence, we read on the sacred page, 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yes, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.' Death is numbered among the treasures of a Christian. Whether 'life or death- all are yours.' 1L 22. It is his great gain. The last day of his life is to him the opening of immortality. 'For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.' As soon as death terminates the believer's existence on earth, he enters upon the inheritance of all those exceeding great and precious promises which the Word of God holds forth to the children of faith. He passes at once from the darkness of earth to the light and glory of the celestial world. He puts off the mortal body, for that building of God, that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. He exchanges this valley of tears and death for a world from whose blissful mansions all sorrow flees away, and where there shall be no more death. He goes to meet, on a happier shore, the friends he loves- his companions in faith- and to share their heavenly rest, and to join with them in their celestial music.

He departs to be with Christ; and oh, what sincere follower of the adorable Redeemer, who is now enthroned amid heaven's ineffable glories, would not rather be absent from the body, to be present with Him! With what earnest affection did holy Paul desire to be with the blessed Savior, who is now holding out the crown of life to the faithful- who is ready to embrace us all with His gracious arms! 'For I am in a strait between two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better.' Viewing our latter end in this scriptural light, may not every child of God, as he thinks of the blessings which death brings to the righteous, say with Job: 'I would not live always.'

'Who, who would live always, away from his God,

Away from yon heaven, that blissful abode,
Where the rivers of pleasures flow over the bright plains,
And the noontide of glory eternally reigns
Where the saints of all ages in harmony meet,
Their Savior and brethren transported to greet,
While the songs of salvation unceasingly roll,
And the smile of the Lord is the feast of the soul?'

We invite you to come to the Savior for support in the solemn hour of death. Would you be filled with the blissful hope of immortality as you stand on the borders of the ocean of eternity? Then come to the Savior! The righteous has hope in his death. And it is the religion of Christ alone that inspires this blessed hope in the departing believer. The Gospel is that glass which gives a fair and delightful prospect of those hills of Paradise and pleasure that lie beyond the grave. Would you be delivered from fear, while walking through the valley of the shadow of death- while standing on the banks of that river through which we must all pass? Then come to the Savior; and you may confidently say: 'Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff they comfort me.' It is the glory of the Christian religion thus to raise the soul above the fear of death. Would you be delivered from the power of the last enemy? Then come to the Savior, and you may say- 'God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave; for He shall receive me.' Would you be delivered from the sting of death? Then come to the Savior, exercising firm faith in the blood of His cross; and you may exclaim in the language of exultation, while descending the banks of the Jordan of death, and about to step into its dark waters- 'O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.' How can we endure the thought of meeting the messenger of death without the supporting arm of the Savior? Will not 'the terrors' of the last enemy fall heavily on us, if we are not found in Christ, the sinner's Friend, our only stay? How can our weary souls engage

in that last, mortal conflict, if the Captain of our salvation is not leading us on to victory and to glory?

'If you have run with the footmen, and they have wearied you, then how can you contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein you trusted, they wearied you, then how will you do in the swelling of Jordan?' If we will not come to Him who has conquered death for believers, who will smooth and enlighten our passage through the rough and shadowy valley? Who will still the tossing of the stream of death and hush its roar? Who will calm our fears, and sustain our spirit in the last hour of its earthly struggle? Who will command the billows of death to waft us to the desired haven of eternal rest? Who will hold out for us the crown of life? Who will disclose to us the beauties and glories of heaven? Who will bring us to the mansions of felicity? Who will feed us with the bread of life, and lead us to the living fountains of waters? None but He who has the keys of death, and of the invisible world, can perform all this for us. It is the Savior alone, who can turn the night of death into the morning- even a morning 'without clouds'.

He will guide us safely over the ocean of life to yonder shore, where there is uninterrupted sunshine and ineffable joy. 'For this God is our God forever and ever. He will be our guide even unto death.' Oh, then, 'seek the Lord, and you shall live!' Come to the Savior for all these blessings. Come; for all things are ready. Then, in the hour of death Christ will be your refuge; then will His everlasting arms be underneath you; then will His rod and staff comfort you; then will He be with you until the last; and you shall awake amid the unutterable splendors of heaven, to be forever with the Savior in mansions of light and felicity. Then will the words of prophecy be finally accomplished in your happy experience: 'I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be your plagues, O grave, I will be your destruction.'

Happy, indeed, will be the departure of him who has truly come

to the Savior for support in the hour of death. Though darkness may sometimes gather over his soul, yet it will speedily be dispelled by the piercing beams of the Sun of Righteousness. With him all is calm and serene; for his sins are forgiven. He has peace within: joy beams in his countenance. His soul is delighted with joyful prospects beyond the grave. He is filled with strong consolation. The sweet thought of going to his heavenly home now occupies his mind, elevating his views, and cheering his spirit. He thinks of the glories of his final rest- its fullness of joy- its blessed inhabitants- its delightful employments- its never-ending pleasures. He feels, that while earth is passing from his view, the portals of those blessed mansions of light are opening for his entrance, and he knows, that in yonder home of the redeemed he will die no more. Now is he joyful in glory; now does he sing aloud on his bed.

Said a pious minister of the Gospel, who was remarkably sustained by the Savior in his last earthly moments: 'Oh, that I had strength to shout! I feel so happy; I hope soon to be able. Oh, the precious Savior; what is the world to me, with all its vanity? Give me Jesus. Do not weep for me, I am going home.' How well are the feelings of the departing Christian, who is cheered and consoled by the sight of these glorious mansions looming through the mists of the dark valley, expressed by these beautiful and touching lines-

'My heavenly home is bright and fair;
Nor pain, nor death can enter there.
Its glittering towers the sun outshine,
Those heavenly mansion shall be mine.
I'm going home, I'm going home,
I'm going home, to die no more!
My Father's house is built on high,
Far, far above the starry sky
When from this earthly prison free,
That heavenly mansion mine shall be!
While here a stranger far from home,
Affliction's waves may round me foam;

And though like Lazarus, sick and poor,
My heavenly mansion is secure.
Let others seek a home below,
Which flames devour, or waves overflow,
Be mine the happier lot to own,
A heavenly mansion near the throne.
Then fail this earth, let stars decline,
And sun and moon refuse to shine;
All nature sink and cease to be,
This heavenly mansion stands for me!
I'm going home, I'm going home,
I'm going home, to die no more!

Let us admire the rich grace of the Savior, who has provided such strong and blessed consolation for believers in the hour of death- a consolation which enables us to say: 'Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.' 'My flesh and my heart fails; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.' Let us rejoice, that even in the dark valley of death, and in the swelling of Jordan, Jesus appears as the Star of Morning, to guide us to the light and blessedness of heaven's unclouded day. Let us keep our eyes fixed on this bright and Morning Star amid all the events of our earthly pilgrimage, until the glory of Emmanuel's land beams upon us- until we take up the song of salvation on the eternal bliss of Paradise.

Lord Jesus, bright and Morning Star, be my guide through life- my support in death- my portion through eternity. In the solemn hour of my departure be very near me, to sustain my drooping head, to fill me with hope and joy, to roll back the foaming wave, and to smooth my passage to the realms of day. O You, who, in Your amazing love for sinners, did condescend to assume our nature, and to die for us, illuminate with rays of heavenly light my pathway through the shadowy valley, dispel all the gloom of the grave, and lead me, with songs of victory, into the regions of life and immortality- the promised land of rest, beyond the

swelling of Jordan. Yes-
'When the valley of death appears,
Faint and cold this mortal clay,
Kind Forerunner, soothe my fears,
Light me through the darksome way
Break the shadows,
Usher in eternal day.'

COME TO THE SAVIOR FOR THE FELICITIES OF HEAVEN.
No created being can tell how great and invaluable those heavenly blessings are, which the Savior has procured for His followers. 'Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.' In the Word of God, however, we obtain a 'glimpse' of the glory of the redeemed before the throne, and with the blessed Volume of Inspiration in our hands, let us here, briefly, muse on some of their ineffable joys.

The redeemed dwell in a City of light, the new Jerusalem above, whose walls are of precious stones, whose gates of pearl, and whose streets of pure gold. How magnificent is the description which the apostle John gives of this glorious city, which he saw coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband!- 'So he took me in spirit to a great, high mountain, and he showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. It was filled with the glory of God and sparkled like a precious gem, crystal clear like jasper. The city was pure gold, as clear as glass. The twelve gates were made of pearls-each gate from a single pearl! And the main street was pure gold, as clear as glass. No temple could be seen in the city, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. And the city has no need of sun or moon, for the glory of God illuminates the city, and the Lamb is its light. Its gates never close at the end of day because there is no night. And all the nations will bring their glory and honor into the city. Nothing evil will be allowed to enter-no one who practices shameful idolatry and dishonesty-but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.'

What a flood of light is poured over that golden city, whose glory emanates from the uncreated One, with whom is the fountain of all light and felicity! Let us ascend the Mount of Pisgah, and by the eye of faith, view the grandeur and magnificence of the heavenly City- that City which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. See! no shadows fall on those blessed mansions in the City of our God. All, all is brightness there- no night there. For there He, who is the brightness of the Father's glory, the Sun of Righteousness, shines with unveiled splendor, making endless day. It is the blessed vision of His face that renders the City so glorious; for the Lamb is the light of it. There, no natural luminary is needed; for we shall walk in the light of Emmanuel's countenance through an unending day. 'And they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God gives them light: and they shall reign forever and ever.' Oh, who is not ready to welcome the long sweet light of the City of our God- the unbroken, eternal sunshine on the banks of the pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb!

The redeemed enjoy the best society. 'No, you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to thousands of angels in joyful assembly. You have come to the assembly of God's firstborn children, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God himself, who is the judge of all people. And you have come to the spirits of the redeemed in heaven who have now been made perfect. You have come to Jesus, the one who mediates the new covenant between God and people, and to the sprinkled blood, which graciously forgives instead of crying out for vengeance as the blood of Abel did.'

They dwell with God, and behold His face in righteousness. 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.' 'Blessed are the pure in heart:

for they shall see God.' No heart can conceive the blessedness of this beatific vision. To see Him who is invisible- to see the blessed God with the eye of the mind- to enjoy perpetual communion with Him- is a source of the purest and most rapturous joy. Oh, to dwell forever with God in that blissful realm of love, where we shall see Him not through a glass darkly, but face to face- where we shall know as also we are known! What clear and enrapturing views of the perfections of the Divine nature will there be afforded us! On those shores of life and immortality none will ever have reason to say with afflicted Job- 'Oh, if only I knew where to find God, I would go to his throne and talk with him there! Behold, I go forward, but He is not there; and back ward, but I cannot perceive Him: on the left hand, where He does work, but I cannot behold Him: He hides Himself on the right hand, that I cannot see Him.'

The saints in light behold the glory of the Redeemer, sit with Him on His throne, and enjoy His companionship. Says Christ, 'Father, I will that they also whom You have given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory. which You have given me.' 'To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and have sat down with my Father in His throne.' To be with Christ, to sit with Him on His throne, to enjoy His companionship, to behold His glory- will constitute the very heaven of the redeemed. Oh, with what rapture of spirit will we then behold His glory, when we see Him as He is, invested with all the perfections of the divine nature, shining as the Bright and Morning Star- as the brightness of His Father's glory, and the express image of His Person!

In heaven we shall have the society of the innumerable company of holy angels; and there we shall also sit down at the banquet of redeeming love with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob- there we shall meet the saints of all ages and nations- a great multitude, which no man can number- and mingle with them in blissful harmony, celebrating the praises of Him that sits upon the throne, forever and ever.

The redeemed sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, the new song of salvation. 'And they sang a new song with these words: "You are worthy to take the scroll and break its seals and open it. For you were killed, and your blood has ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. And you have caused them to become God's kingdom and his priests.' 'Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever.' 'After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white and held palm branches in their hands. And they were shouting with a mighty shout, "Salvation comes from our God on the throne and from the Lamb!"

How ravishing is this song, the theme of which is salvation by the cross of Christ! Standing before the throne of God, and serving Him day and night, the redeemed are swelling forevermore the strain of praise to Him who once was slain on Calvary. It is pleasant to sing this song of salvation as we journey homeward; but oh, how sweet to sing it on golden harps by the banks of the pure river of the water of life, in the midst of the upper Paradise, when all the ransomed ones shall meet, 'from sin and sorrow free!' How unspeakable the bliss! 'And I heard a sound from heaven like the roaring of a great waterfall or the rolling of mighty thunder. It was like the sound of many harpists playing together. This great choir sang a wonderful new song in front of the throne of God and before the four living beings and the twenty-four elders. And no one could learn this song except those 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth.'

Oh, when shall we listen to the melody of heaven? When shall we rise to join the music of those brighter skies? When shall we sing in exalted strains the song of Moses and the Lamb? How ardently have the children of faith desired this heavenly felicity!

How have they longed to reach the peaceful heaven- to mingle with the choirs of saints and angels round the throne, to take up the heavenly harps, and sing the hallelujah, blessing, honor, glory, and power, to Him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb forever and ever!

'That heavenly music! what is it I hear?
The notes of the harpers ring sweet in the air
And see, soft unfolding those portals of gold;
The King all arrayed in His beauty behold!
O! give me, O! give me the wings of a dove!
Let me hasten my flight to those mansions above
Ay, it is now that my soul on swift pinions would soar,
And in ecstasy bid earth adieu evermore!

The redeemed rest from sorrow and pain, and all the ills and burdens of the present life. Emmanuel's land is one of sweet, everlasting repose. When we land on that peaceful shore, where no billows ever beat, where no tempests ever roar, our days of toil and suffering will have forever ended. There the last tear is wiped away by our Father's hand. 'And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.' 'Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sits on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.' Oh, blessed world, where sin, and sorrow, and sighing, and death never come; when shall your ineffable glories open to my enraptured view? When shall I see the King in His beauty, and the land that is very far off?

While sitting under the shadow of the Tree of Life in the midst of Paradise, how delightful will it be to look back on the way by

which the Lord has led us through the wilderness of this world, and to think of those great tribulations out of which we have come! How will the thought sweeten our heavenly repose, and cause us to ascribe unceasing praise to Him who led us forth by a right way, that we might go to a city of habitation- that we might enjoy a peaceful rest in the heavenly Paradise. Oh, the sweet thought- 'There remains therefore a rest to the people of God.' Yes-

'There is an hour of peaceful rest,
To mourning wanderers given;
There is a tear for souls distressed,
A balm for every wounded breast,
It is found above- in heaven!
There is a soft, a downy bed,
It is fair as breath of even',
A couch for weary mortals spread,
Where they may rest their aching head,
And find repose in heaven!'

The redeemed will never die. 'And there shall be no more death.' In the resurrection the saints will rise to immortality, and be clothed with bodies like unto Christ's glorious body. Eternal health and vigor, strength and beauty, will be given to them. Then death will be forever swallowed up in victory. How unlike this region of mortality is yon blessed world! Here, our dearest and most valuable friends are removed from us by the relentless arm of death. There, they shall live forevermore. Here, we must soon, very soon, part with those we love the best. There, there shall be no more separation- no more change through the circling years of eternity!

The felicity of the redeemed will be eternal. In those brighter skies the Sun of Righteousness will never set: there He shall always shine in meridian splendor; and from His gladdening and life-giving beams all mourning shall forever flee away. There, God will be our God forever and ever. Blessed thought! Eternity is the crowning glory of the felicity of the redeemed.

'But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: you shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.' 'And they shall reign forever and ever.' The crown which they wear is an incorruptible one- a crown of glory, that fades not away. The kingdom which they inherit is an everlasting one. The house which is prepared for them by an ascended Savior, is 'eternal in the heavens,' and from it they 'shall go no more out.'

How delightful, in a world like this, where the dearest ties are so quickly broken, where the cup of joy is so soon emptied, to think of that unchanging day beyond the grave- of those blessed scenes of permanent delight- of joys the most rapturous- of a fellowship the most sweet, intimate, and enduring- of a whole eternity of love! What consolation is there in the thought of the endlessness of heaven's joys! How it expands the affections of the soul, and raises them above this passing world! How it bears us above the cares, the trials, and afflictions of our pilgrimage, and causes these very tribulations to redound to our future, everlasting welfare!

Now, who is not ready to come to the Savior for those heavenly felicities? He has prepared them for believers: and it is His royal prerogative to bestow them upon all who come to Him. His own language is; 'I give unto them eternal life.' This includes all the blessings of glory. How clear and emphatic the language! Yes, Jesus will bring His redeemed ones to the City of light, the heavenly Jerusalem, dwell with them, put new songs of praise in their mouths, remove from them all sorrow and pain, give them fullness of joy, invest them with white robes, and crown them with immortality.

And now, shall we remain away from the Savior, since the fountain of eternal life- of supreme bliss- is with Him? and since He so freely dispenses His divine favors? Let us repair to Him for these felicities, and He will enrich us ever more. Let us come with faith in the blood of His cross; and when we pass from earth, we shall dwell in those mansions which have been

prepared by His grace, and enjoy all those pleasures which flow in the presence of God.

COME TO THE SAVIOR NOW. 'Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.' How solemn and important are these words; and how deeply do they concern us pilgrims of a day, pressing on to an eternal abode! Now is the time for us to come to the Savior: now is our day of salvation. Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.' The present moment only is ours; the very next may find our spirits before the bar of God. How invaluable then, to us, is this moment for securing a saving interest in the Savior, and the joys of heaven! The invitations of the gospel are given in the present tense, because of the shortness of time, the brevity and uncertainty of life, and the impossibility of obtaining redemption beyond the grave. Let us here reflect on these momentous topics.

How many souls have gone down to the pit of the lost, by refusing or neglecting to come to the Savior in this accepted time and day of salvation- now. Many still imagine they will have time enough to attend to the important concerns of salvation. Before them long years of earthly pleasure rise up in prospect; while, perhaps, tomorrow the current of life will suddenly stop in their veins, and the icy hand of death lay them low in the dust. 'Today man is, tomorrow he is not seen.' In the Scriptures the brevity of our life is expressed under various similitudes, such as the flower of the field- the wind- a leaf driven to and fro- a shadow- a runner- the swift ships- an eagle hastening to the prey- an handbreadth- a span- a vanity- a dream- a tale that is told. 'My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope.' 'Behold, You have made my days as an handbreadth; and my age is as nothing before You: verily, every man at his best state is altogether vanity.' 'Our days on earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.' 'For what is your life? It is like vapor, that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away.' 'All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withers, the flower fades.' 'In the

morning it flourishes, and grows up; in the evening it is cut down, and withers.'

'Like tender flowers, we open the bud,
And greet the morning ray;
But before it is noon we droop and fade,
The creatures of a day.
Yet on this little day of life
What mighty things depend
Eternal torments, or the joy
That knows no bound nor end.'

We should come to the Savior now because our time is short, and its continuance every moment uncertain to us. 'Remember how short my life is, how empty and futile this human existence!' 'The time is short.' Oh, the brevity of time! Oh, the rapidity of its flight! Look back on past years- how quickly have they gone! And how swiftly does the present moment fly, still bearing our life away! How few properly weigh the value of time! What multitudes spend its golden hours on empty joys, refusing to come to the Savior for the glories of immortality! And how many never stop to think of the endless joys or griefs which are suspended on time's flying moments! Let us regard the voice which calls us to the Savior now- this precious instant, Now. This moment 'strive to enter in at the strait gate.' 'Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near.' 'Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, where you go.'

Let us seriously reflect on the shortness of time, that we may be led to seek the Savior now, while the day of grace continues- while the golden scepter of forgiveness is extended to us. Today the portals of heaven are opened for us; tomorrow they may be closed upon us FOREVER. Then let us not say with Felix, 'Go your way for the time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for you.' Let us instantly flee to the cross of Jesus. When we

have such a brief space in which to attend to the interests of our souls, should we put off those momentous spiritual concerns until what we call a more convenient season, since 'death stands watching at our side, eager to stop the living tide?' What folly, what infatuation for pilgrims, who tarry here but a night, to pursue a course of procrastination in matters of religion! If we refuse or neglect to come to the Savior now, we may never have another opportunity. Tomorrow's sun may rise on our lifeless remains. The grave may be ready to receive us, and the green turf to cover us.

Such has been the case with thousands, who were dreaming of long years of earthly happiness, and neglecting the blessed Savior and His great salvation. While in health, death has come up into their windows; and they have suddenly passed away as a vision of the night. Some of them, doubtless, thought of coming to the Savior in future days, but alas, 'tomorrow' never rose on them. They failed to improve the present hour; and now, all of life's precious moments have fled- they have forever lost that 'inestimable treasure, time'- they have lost their souls- they have lost heaven- they have lost all that is good, and incurred all that is evil. 'How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly, consumed with terrors.' 'One dies in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet.' 'Moreover, no man knows when his hour will come. Like fish in a net or birds in a snare, people are often caught by sudden tragedy.'

How little do we think of the shortness of time and the nearness of eternity. And how seldom do we take into serious consideration the weighty concerns which are suspended on the present hour. If we had more just conceptions of the vanity and brevity of our life, we would be more diligent in attending to our spiritual concerns at the present time. Look again at the shortness and frailty of human life. Look at past generations. Where are they now? In the grave- the land of darkness and forgetfulness. How brief has been their existence! They have passed away like the morning cloud and early dew. Look at the present generation. How it vanishes! In a little while, every

living thing that now moves on the face of the earth, will have forever disappeared from it. Look forward to future generations. The same great change will take place with regard to them. All, all are marching to the grave and their places on earth shall know them no more. Oh, that we might be induced by these reflections to come to the Savior NOW. Oh, that we might lay these things to heart. 'Oh, that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end.' 'Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live forever.' 'Where are the men,' asked Chalmers, in one of his most thrilling and solemn discourses- 'Where are the men who a few years ago gave motion and activity to this busy theater? Where are those farmers who lived on the ground that you now occupy? Where are those laboring poor who dwelt in your houses and villages? Where are those ministers who preached the lessons of piety, and talked of the vanity of this world? Where are those people who, on the Sabbaths of other times, assembled at the sound of the church-bell, and filled the house in which you are now sitting? Their habitation is the cold grave, the land of forgetfulness And we are the children of these fathers, and heirs to the same awful and stupendous destiny. Ours is one of the many generations who pass in rapid succession through this region of life and of sensibility. The time in which I live is but a small moment of this world's history. When we rise in contemplation of ages that are past, the momentary being of an individual shrinks into nothing. It is the flight of a shadow; it is a dream of vanity; it is the rapid glance of a meteor; it is a flower which every breath of heaven can wither into decay; it is a tale which as a remembrance vanishes; it is a day which the silence of a long night will darken and overshadow. In a few years our heads will be laid in the cold grave, and the green turf will cover us. The children who come after us will tread upon our graves; they will weep for us a few days; they will talk of us a few months; they will remember us a few years; then our memory shall disappear from the face of the earth, and not a tongue shall be found to recall it. How perishable is human life, yet no man lays it to heart!'

How short is the space between us and the grave! What is our life? It is truly a vapor, that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away. What is time? It is a stream which is rapidly bearing us all to the boundless ocean of eternity. In a little while a mighty angel will stand with one foot upon the sea and one upon the earth, and with uplifted hands swear by Him that lives forever and ever, that time shall be no longer. Let us ask again, with all seriousness, WHAT IS TIME?

I asked an aged man, a man of cares,
Wrinkled, and curved, and white with hoary hairs;
"Time is the warp of life," he said, "Oh tell,
The young, the fair, the gay, to weave it well!"
I asked the ancient, venerable dead,
Sages who wrote, and warriors who bled;
From the cold grave a hollow murmur flowed,
"Time sowed the seed we reap in this abode!"
I asked a dying sinner, before the tide
Of life had left his veins- "Time!" he replied;
"I've lost it! ah, the treasure!" and he died.
I asked the golden sun and silver spheres,
Those bright chronometers of days and years;
They answered, "Time is but a meteor glare,"
And bade us for Eternity prepare.
I asked the Seasons, in their annual round,
Which beautify or desolate the ground;
And they replied (no oracle more wise),
"Tis folly's blank, and wisdom's highest prize!"
I asked a lost spirit, but oh, the shriek
That pierced my soul! I shudder while I speak!
It cried, "a particle! a speck! a mite
Of endless years, duration infinite!"
Of inanimate things my dial I
Consulted, and it made me this reply-
"Time is the season fair of living well,
The path of glory, or the path of Hell!"
I asked my Bible and it said,

"Time is the present hour, the past is fled;
Live! live today! tomorrow never yet
On any living being rose or set!"
I asked Old Father Time himself at last;
But in a moment he flew swiftly past-
His chariot was a cloud, the viewless wind
His noiseless steeds; which left no trace behind.
I asked a mighty angel, who shall stand
One foot on sea, and one on solid land;
"By Heaven," he cried, "I swear the mystery's o'er;
"Time was," he cried, "but Time shall be no more!"

We should come to the Savior now, because he is at the door. And what is eternity- vast, boundless ETERNITY? Who can properly speak of it? Who can unfold the mighty import of this single word, ETERNITY? No one. And let us remember that we are candidates for eternity- heirs of everlasting bliss or woe! Oh, then, let us endeavor to feel that we are walking on the very borders of the eternal world; and prepare, by coming to the Savior now, for that land of solemn, unchanging realities- for an eternity of glory in heaven.

Let us come to the Savior now, because the salvation of our souls is precious, and their loss unspeakably great. The present time is called the day of salvation; and the passing hours are given to us, that we may attend to the all-important concerns of our undying souls. And how solemn the thought that 'every moment that God gives to man, shall return at the appointed day, and make its report of every deed, and whisper, and thought before the judgment throne!' The soul is of divine origin, and it shall live through all eternity in supreme bliss; or inconceivable misery. How important then is the salvation of an immortal spirit! Who can properly estimate the value of a single soul? It is worth infinitely more than the whole world. 'For what shall it profit a man,' asks the Savior Himself; 'if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?' How dreadful,

beyond conception or description, for an immortal spirit to be hastening to the pit of the lost, despising the merciful, invitations of the blessed Redeemer! Who can describe the miseries of a lost soul, when the door of the bottomless pit has closed upon it forever? In the thrilling language of Robert Hall, 'But what, my brethren, if it be lawful to indulge such a thought, what would be the funeral obsequies of a lost soul? Where shall we find the tears fit to be wept at such a spectacle? Or could we realize the calamity in all its extent, what tokens of commiseration and concern would be deemed equal to the occasion? Would it suffice for the sun to veil his light, and the moon her brightness; to cover the ocean with mourning, and the heavens with sackcloth; or, were the whole fabric of nature to become animated and vocal, would it be possible for her to utter a groan too deep, or a cry too piercing, to express the magnitude and extent of such a catastrophe? '

To prevent so great a loss as that of the soul, let us come to the Savior now, cast ourselves at His footstool, and implore His rich mercy. Let us now listen to His entreating voice, and behold Him knocking at the door of our hearts. Let us now open the door, and He will come in, and sup with us. 'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; If any man hears my voice, and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and be with me.' Then all things will be ours- all the blessings of the everlasting covenant- all the glories of heaven. Then, when we are about to finish our earthly course- when we stand on the banks of Jordan, and see the crown of glory shining for us in the promised land beyond the shores of time, we may sweetly and joyfully sing-

'My race is over, the prize is won,
My everlasting bliss begun,
And every evil gone.
See, see, the trooping angels come,
Upon their wings to bear me home,

Sent from my Father's throne.
I see the palm that I shall bear,
And crown of glory my head shall wear,
Bought with my Savior's blood;
Warm on my heart I feel the joy,
Which ever shall my harp employ;
I live on angels' food.
My breast in fire seraphic glows,
I drink the stream of life that flows
Pure from the throne divine.
My Savior's face I now shall see,
Who died and rose again for me,
And in His presence shine.
Now, now I shall forever share
The place of rest His hands prepare,
And join the hymning band,
That sing, while kindling rapture swells
Each bosom, endless glory dwells
In our Emmanuel's land.
Come now, attending angels, come,
And waft me to my promised home;
Haste, haste, the skies explore-
I mount, I fly, I burst away,
I mingle with eternal day,
And sin and weep no more.'

Before closing this volume, we would once more earnestly invite you, as you value the salvation of your soul, the favor of God, and the joys of heaven, to come to the Savior now, and learn of Him the path to glory. Daily meditating on His Person and His redeeming work, come to Him for those heavenly blessings which He alone can confer, and which will make you eternally rich. May the Holy Spirit bring these truths borne to your heart with divine efficacy, constraining you to love the blessed Savior, to extol the riches of His grace, and to live to His glory on earth, until in heaven you shine as a star forever and ever. May your language now be that of the apostle Paul, 'For I determined not

to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.' 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.' On life's dark and troubled ocean, may Jesus be your STAR, to guide you safely to the port of heavenly peace. Oh, while His voice of mercy sounds aloud, listen to his gracious words, 'I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star. The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.'

Blessed Jesus, while You are waiting to be gracious, may we be enabled by Your grace to come to You, that our guilty souls may be washed in Your precious blood; that we may be clothed in Your spotless righteousness, and prepared for the mansions of never-ending bliss. You our only hope, our trust, our stay; and may all our well-springs be in You. May we now embrace You as our divine Redeemer; and daily live on Your infinite fullness. Deeply interest us in the everlasting blessings of Your atonement and intercession; and may we be no longer insensible to Your wondrous love as displayed in the work of redemption. May Your love pervade our hearts, and bring us that peace which passes all understanding. May we daily search the Scriptures, which testify of You, and be made wise unto salvation.

May we now attend to the one thing needful, remembering the time is short; that the night comes in which none can work; and that there is no salvation in the grave, on the verge of which we stand. May our souls be weaned from the vanities of this transitory world, and placed on the sublime, and holy, and unending joys of the saints' rest, in the upper Paradise. May Your name and Your work be very precious to us in all our wanderings as pilgrims of earth. May the sincerest desires of our souls be to know more and more about the infinite excellence of Your Person, and the marvelousness of that grace, which You

have so abundantly manifested to the world in Your death upon the cross for transgressors. May the great mystery of godliness-God manifested in the flesh- be the subject of our high and holy meditation in the house of our pilgrimage, until death shall bear us to the courts of the celestial Zion, where we shall see You face to face, and learn the new and everlasting songs of the general assembly and Church of the first-born.

May we now love to think of You in Your original glory with the Father, before the foundation of the world was laid, or the sky spread out, when Your delights were with the sons of men. May we delight to contemplate the object of Your glorious mission to earth, and to trace Your blessed footsteps through this valley of tears, from the manger to the cross, and from the grave up to God's right hand. May our hearts be cheered by the sweet thought of Your continual intercession for us in heaven; and may we greatly rejoice when we look forward to Your glorious appearing at the last day. Awaken us from our spiritual slumbers; and deeply impress on our minds the interesting, important, and solemn lessons which these sacred truths teach. May the bright beams of Your grace shine into our hearts, causing us to behold Your splendor as the Sun of Righteousness, and to rejoice in Your salvation.

O blessed Savior, may we be truly guided to You; enlightened and sanctified by Your grace; and safely carried in the arms of Your love through all the agitated scenes of life to the land of eternal rest beyond the swelling of Jordan. In death may we sing of Your loving kindness, and Your power to save our souls; and when we pass the valley of mortality, oh may we find mansions of glory prepared for us in Your Father's house, where You shall feed us, and lead unto living fountains of waters, and wipe away all tears from our eyes. Oh, grant, that in those blissful realms of everlasting light, where peace and rest forever dwell, we, may be among that happy throng who shall encompass Your throne with the songs of salvation; and behold with rapturous delight Your glory as that of the only begotten of the Father; as the glory

of the Star of Jacob- the Bright and Morning Star.

'When marshaled on the nightly plain,
The glittering host bestud the sky;
One Star alone, of all the train,
Can fix the sinner's wandering eye.
Hark! hark! to God the chorus breaks,
From every host, from every gem;
But one alone the Savior speaks,
It is the Star of Bethlehem.
Once on the raging seas I rode,
The storm was loud, the night was dark,
The ocean yawned, and rudely blowed
The wind that tossed my foundering bark.
Deep horror then my vitals froze,
Death-struck, I ceased the tide to stem;
When suddenly a Star arose,
It was the Star of Bethlehem.
It was my guide, my light, my all,
It bade my dark forebodings cease;
And through the storm and danger's thrall
It led me to the port of peace.

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