

THE

CHILD'S BIBLE COMPANION.



1877.

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Contents.

	PAGE.
Aunt Mary's Talk	35, 39, 52, 63, 76, 88, 106, 117, 124, 138
Baby found under a Stone, The	10
Baffled Pirates, The	51
Beautiful Story of Ruth, The	84
Beware of Secret Foes!	110
Bible Lessons about Birds—The Eagle.	136
Bible Talks	65
Boy's Hard Struggle, A	44
Bright Sunbeam in a Dark Cloud, A	9
Camel The, or Life Through Death	12
Camel in the Desert, The	74
Child's Confession of Christ, A	23
Child's Thanks for the Bible, A	135
Christ for Us Always	135
Finding of Moses, The	3
First Talk with Our Little Ones	2
"God will Take Care of Baby"	12
How a Child Learned her Lesson	120
In Kings' Palaces	91
Jonah, The Prophet	26
Kindness of God, The	112
Kisses of His Mouth, The	133
Letter to Our Little Ones, A	21
Lessons from Summer	70
Light in a Dark Place, A	46
Little Birds in Time of Snow	14
Little One Safely Housed, A	60
Little Talks About the Bible.	II, 21
Marie, the Little Martyr	78
More of Katie N'S History	59
Negro's View of the Subject, The	119
Obedience and Disobedience	56
On Snares	129
Out in the Snow	134
Out of the Mouth of Babies.	141
Peter in Prison	53
Russo-Turkish War, The	108
Reading and Arithmetic	122
Scape Goat, The	140
Singing of Birds, The	48
Snow Storm, The	24
Story of Isaac, The	31
Synagogue of the Jews	75
Talk about Snow, A	19
Tour through Palestine, A	5, 16, 28, 40, 57, 67, 81, 93, 103, 113, 126, 142
Three Ways in which the Word of God was Treated	98
"'Tis a Comin' Teacher"	99
Tommy's Verse	34
Voice from a Little One, A	86
Voice from the Coal Mine, A.	62
"What Hinders You from Coming to Jesus?"	131
"Were I to Read it, My Heart would Fall into It"	105
Wild Ass, The	47
Word for the Little Ones, A	96
Word of God a Light unto Our Path, The.	101

POETRY.

	PAGE.
Love of God to Little Ones, The	4
Beautiful Home in the Sky, The	15
Best Robe, The	119
Child's Questions, The	131
Do You Pray	79
God Sees Us Always	27
Going to the Golden City	50
"Jesus Bless Thy Little Lamb"	51
Italian Boy, The	72
I Love to Read the Story	79
Kite, The	144
Lowest Place, The	144
Praise Ye the Lord	43
What the Sparrow Chirps	38

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Bethlehem	114
Boaz and Ruth	109
Camel, The	12
Camel in the Desert	73
Cedars of Lebanon, The	16
Chaos	64
Christ for Us Always	135
David Slaying Goliath	61
Disobedient Prophet Slain by a Lion, The	55
Dream of the Golden City, A	49
Fall of the Walls of Jericho	127
Feeding of Birds, The	13
Finding of Moses, The	1
Gibeonites Deceiving Joshua, The	40
Grapes of Eschol, The	115
Hezekiah Reading the Law	121
In Kings Palaces	91
Jerusalem	80
Jonah Cast into the Sea	25
Joppa from the Sea	5
Joshua Commanding the Sun to Stand Still	42
Key to the View of Jerusalem	81
Light unto Our Path, A	101
Northern Part of Palestine (Map)	18
Out in the Snow	133
Peter Delivered from Prison	54
Paul Preaching Before Felix	97
Reading the Long-lost Scriptures.	20
Rebuilding of Jerusalem	102
Samson Grinding in the Mill	28
Scape Goat, The	140
Scenes in the Life of David	67
Song of the Bird, The	37
Solomon and the Queen of Sheba	85
Southern Part of Palestine (Map)	8
Summer	71
Snares	129
Synagogue of the Jews	75
"'Tis a Comin' Teacher"	99



THE CHILD'S BIBLE COMPANION.



THE FINDING OF MOSES

FIRST TALK WITH OUR LITTLE ONES.

"OH, thank you, mamma, for this new picture book. Why, there is little baby Moses taken out of the bullrushes! You have often told me about him, and I know that fine lady with the large feather over her head is the daughter of the great king Pharaoh, and those ladies giving her the ark are her maids; and, dear mamma, there is the sister of Moses yonder, in the distance, to see what will become of her dear little brother. How glad she must have been to see the king's daughter so pleased with him. But, look mamma, at that large text, how pretty it looks. I can't read it yet, but I know you will teach it to me, won't you, mamma?"

Such is the sweet prattle of some bright-faced fellow, and it is to please such we present some of our pictures. These they can read long before they can tell one letter from another. Yes, little chatter-box, we hope to make you very happy, and to call forth many a bright smile, and merry laugh, by the pretty pictures you will see in THE CHILD'S BIBLE COMPANION. I know you like to see pictures of plants and pusseys, bow-wows and flowers, and trees and pretty green fields.

Well, we intend every month to give one picture for you, and at least one whole page, sometimes two, in large letters all for yourself, and so you must always ask your mamma or sister kindly to read them to you, till you are able to spell them out for yourself.

But you are not all little ones, and for you who are growing up and desire interesting instruction, this monthly is chiefly commenced. Many of your parents know the Lord Jesus, and often speak to you of Him, and, may I not say, that not a few love to hear of that blessed Saviour? Yes, I know some have found out that, young as you are, you are sinners before God, and by some means, you cannot tell, perhaps, how it was, you have found out that Jesus died for you; and some of you have found out, also, what sorrow and trouble there is in this poor world. "Oh, yes," says one, with a sorrowful face, "I had a dear loving mother, but she fell sick, and long did I watch by her bed side, and she got worse and worse, and she used to look at me so kindly, and

tell me Jesus would take care of me; and one day she told me to trust in Him, and then she died, and my heart has been sad ever since,"

Well, dear troubled ones, it is to just such as you, we desire to tell what a Saviour and Friend the Lord Jesus is, and to teach you, from God's own precious Book, some things that will make you really happy.

The Bible, too, is full of the most beautiful stories in the world, and every month, one who loves you much, if the Lord will, will have nice little talks about it, which will make it very interesting; and I am sure you will like the little stories that will come up in the Tour through the beautiful land of Palestine; and we hope to give you many pictures that will help you to understand all you read. We give this month a map of the southern part of Palestine, and hope to give the other half next month. If you take care of these you will find them very useful while on this supposed journey. The picture of Joppa was drawn a little time ago by one who greatly loves the little ones. He took a real journey through Palestine and drew many pictures, some of which, through his kindness, you will see.

One word to Christian parents and teachers. It is no thought of ours to relieve you of your proper responsibility; but we desire to be fellow helpers, and to share your privilege of training up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. It is surely a dark day when every evil influence is brought to bear on the training of children. The Word of God is especially undermined, and the foundations of divine truth are being swept away. We desire to provide reading that will deeply interest, give lasting and useful instruction, but most of all draw and keep the heart near to God. We count on the prayers of all and affectionately ask the aid of such as have a real heart for children, and gift to help them.

We hope especially to make THE CHILD'S BIBLE COMPANION a favourite in all our Sunday schools, and affectionately ask you, in reading the papers with the children, to more fully unfold suggestions which may be thrown out from time to time.

THE FINDING OF MOSES.

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES.



OD takes care of little children. A very young baby-boy of only three months old was lying in an ark by the side of a great river. There are crocodiles in that river now. Perhaps there were some then. There certainly were worse enemies than wild beasts near the child. A wicked king lived close by, and he wished to drown it in the river. Besides, the baby was alone; how could it live? It would die of hunger in a short time. Poor baby! You might have thought it must die. Perhaps, dear children, you have cried sometimes because the room was dark, or because mamma left you for a few minutes, but I do not think you ever were in such trouble as baby Moses. The wicked king, the wild animals near him, and he all alone among his enemies, nor could he run away, for he was only three months old. He was not even old enough to understand his danger. Well, dear children, that little baby was as safe there as if he had been in his mother's arms. How could that be? God was watching over him. His kind mother had made the ark and put him in it, but she had not trusted to the ark to keep her darling. She had trusted him to God. His elder sister stood a little way off to watch, but she could not have saved him from the king or the crocodiles. God kept the baby safe. His mother had trusted him to God, and God is faithful. The daughter of the wicked king came down to wash, and God put it into her heart to take him in and bring him up. Now, dear little ones, why do you think God wrote down this story for you in His Word? It was to teach you to trust Him. Can you look up to God and say to Him, "What time I am afraid I will trust in Thee?" Will he not take care of you?

But there is something still more wonderful to tell you. God's own dear Son came down and was a little helpless child. And the wicked king Herod tried to kill him. But God took care of His Holy Child, Jesus. What a wonderful thing that the Lord, the King of Glory, should become a little child in this wicked world, where He knew His enemies would seek to kill Him. "But God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name." *Phil. ii. 9.*

“It is not the will
of your Father which
is in heaven that one
of these little ones
should perish.”

MATT. xviii. 14.

THE LOVE OF GOD TO LITTLE ONES.

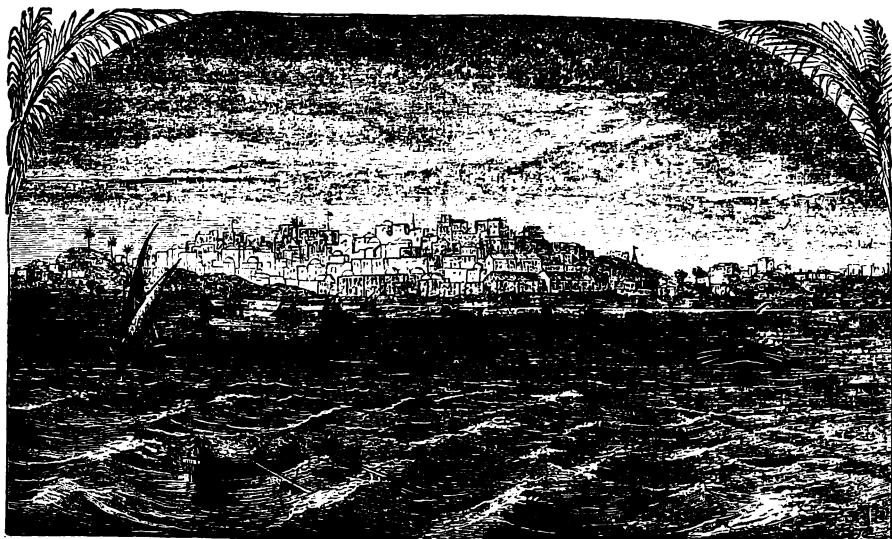
OH! how God delights in giving
Little, helpless one, to thee,
Every moment that you're living,
Some kind gift from Him you see.
All the care, so fond, so tender,
All the love which round you flows,
He makes loving hearts to render—
For your infant need He knows.

But no mother's fond caresses,
Of His mighty love can tell;
No one God's own heart expresses
But the Son He loves so well;
He who left His home of glory,
Where His Father's heart He knew,
Came down here to tell the story
Of His Father's love to you.

All that God loved best He gave you—
Jesus, all He had, gave too;
Laid His birthright down to save you,
Now that birthright shares with you.
For He's sitting in the glory,
All His Father's grace to give,
If you will believe the story,
That He died that you might live.

Here, by living and by dying,
Jesus told God's love, and died;
Wicked men, His love denying,
Would not listen—turned aside.
They, like Esau—Oh, sad story!
Threw God's precious gift away;
That same Jesus, now in glory,
Is God's gift to you this day.





JOPPA FROM THE SEA.

A TOUR THROUGH PALESTINE WITH MY CHILDREN.

CHAPTER I.

I AM sure many of you, dear children, would like to hear something about that beautiful Land of which we read in the Bible, that Land where our blessed Lord walked and laboured, was crucified, and ascended to heaven, to which He will come again, and where He will reign gloriously. The pleasantest way to learn all about Palestine will be, I think, to imagine ourselves to be taking a tour through the country.

Before starting, I will tell you that this land we are about to go through has many names, which you will meet with in your Bible. It is called Palestine in *Exodus* xv. 14, and this name came from the Philistines, who for many hundred years lived in part of the country. They were among the inhabitants whom the Israelites should have destroyed, but they did not do so, and the Philistines very often oppressed the Israelites and troubled them. This country is also called the land of Canaan, because Canaan, the grandson of Noah, settled here with his family, and his children

increased in number till they filled the land. They were called Canaanites, and were divided into many tribes: the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. They lived in the land when Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were in it, and they were conquered by the Israelites under Joshua. The land of Canaan was also called "the land of promise," because God promised it to Abraham, and the land of Israel, because the Israelites lived there.

But we must start on our tour. We will suppose ourselves to have come by steamboat all along the Mediterranean. What did the Jews call the Mediterranean?

Children.—They called it "The Great Sea."

Yes, because it was the largest sea near their country. It is not easy to find a good landing place along the coast of Palestine. Some harbours were made in old times. The Tyrians had a very good one (shew Tyre) between the island and the coast, but Tyre is now in ruins. The Romans made one which they called Cæsarea, after one of

their emperors, but the stones of which it was built are now at the bottom of the sea. If we go to the little town of Jaffa, we shall find a small port.

What was the old name of Jaffa ?

Ch.—It was called Joppa.

What happened there ?

Ch.—Solomon had the great cedars brought here.

Yes, they came in floats on the sea from near Lebanon. A float is what we should call a raft. The cedars were first felled on the heights of Lebanon, then all the branches were cut off, and the trunks thrown into the mountain torrents, which carried them down to the river Leontes. (see map). There, the woodcutters, who had with great difficulty followed their course down the torrents, would come and fasten many trunks together, so as to make a large raft. These rafts would be towed by boats all down the Leontes, and other Lebanon streams, till they came to the wide sea, near Tyre. Then larger and stronger ships would tow them as near to the coast as they dare, till they came to Joppa. Now picture to yourselves the little town of Joppa, when the boats brought in these rafts. How many of Solomon's "servants" would be there! Israelitish officers looking after gangs of Canaanitish slaves, distributing the work, and arranging for the slaves to drag these great trunks up the steep and rugged roads leading to Jerusalem, where they were built into the temple.

I remember reading somewhere that these great, proud cedars may put us in mind of ourselves. We are naturally so proud and haughty, and think so much of ourselves, but when the Lord will take us and put us into His temple, He must cut off our branches of self-conceit and pride, and lay us low, and make us know that we are under sentence of death. It is cedars which have been *cut down* that He graciously places in His house. But we must think about Joppa. What other events happened there ?

Ch.—Peter had the vision of the sheet let down with all the animals in it, on the house top, where he had gone up to pray, and became very hungry.

Do you know what was the meaning of that vision ? It was God's way of teaching Peter that the death of Christ had broken down that middle

wall of partition which separated the Jews from the Gentiles. Amongst many other things, God had told them that they were not to eat the flesh of certain animals, such as the pig, and the hare, and others. All the other nations used to eat the flesh of these animals, and so the Jews could not take their meals with them. But now Peter was a Christian, and God taught him that he might eat with any other Christian of any nation. Peter was wondering at the vision and was thinking of what God had said to him, "Arise, Peter, kill and eat," when three men came to the door, and some one told him that they wanted to speak to him. Then God, by His Spirit, told Peter to go with them. They were Gentiles, that is, not Jews; he went with them to Cæsarea, and there he preached the gospel to the Roman officer, Cornelius, who had sent them; and he and his friends believed and were saved. This vision, and this visit of Peter was God's way of teaching a new and wonderful lesson, that now Jews and Gentiles are alike before God. Now let us hear a little more about Joppa. Where was Peter staying when he had the vision ?

Ch.—At the house of Simon, who was a tanner, and lived near the sea.

Yes, they pretend to shew the house now, but I am afraid it is not the same house. Tell me something else about Joppa ?

Ch.—Dorcas died there.

Yes, but she was also brought to life again. Whom did the Lord send to take His servant out of that death-sleep ?

Ch.—Peter.

Yes, Dorcas was a very useful woman; she spent her time in caring for others, making garments for poor widows, &c., and when she was dead these poor widows stood weeping round her bed, because they thought they had lost their friend. But how good the Lord was! He gave them back their friend, that she might help and comfort them a little longer. Little girls! some of you do not like work, your little fingers get weary, and little eyes want to look at something else; the next time you are tired of your work, will you remember that the Lord Jesus is pleased when you work well, that it is a happy privilege He has given to the women He has saved, to work for His poor. And He counts it as if it were done for Him; He looks

upon us as stitching for Him when we are working for the members of His body. While you are young, dear little girls, you cannot make things, but you can learn to make them. I think I am speaking to some whom the Lord has won, and who will be very glad to know that He likes to see them caring for those whom He loves. An old English poet, George Herbert, has said,

"Who sweeps a room, as for Thy laws,
Makes that, and the action fine."

Outside Jaffa there are many gardens and orchards richly stocked with fruit. You see whole groves of orange trees, and hundreds of oranges hanging from each tree. The fruit is much larger and has a pleasanter taste than in England. Boys and girls bring in basketsful of them, and lay them in heaps; they are sold ten for a penny! Just try to fancy an orange twelve inches round; you can find out how large that is by cutting off a bit of string twelve inches long, and then making it into a round. Such an orange held up by a little child to his face would quite hide the features. Think of clusters of such oranges hanging on hundreds of trees; and peaches, nectarines, grapes, pomegranates, figs, olives, all of marvellous size; mulberry, acacia and palm-trees growing near. Was it not a rich and beautiful land which God gave to His people of Israel?

Now for two more questions. To what tribe did Joppa belong?

Ch.—To the tribe of Dan.

Yes, and here it was that Dan remained in ships, instead of coming to the "help of the Lord against the mighty." (*Joshua* xix. 46; *Judges* v. 17.) Who once sailed from Joppa when he had much better have gone another way?

Ch.—Jonah, when he fled from the Lord.

It is time to leave Jaffa; we must get on our horses, and ride out through the gate, guarded by Turkish soldiers, because the Holy Land is now in the hands of the Turks. We ride along a wide path with hedges of cactus or prickly pear, on each side; cypresses and minossas give us a pleasant shade. After some time we come out on the plain of Sharon (map.) Here are many flowers, the iris, wild tulip, red poppy, pheasants' eye, mignonette, cowslip; quite a carpet of different colours; we do not quite know which was called

"The Rose of Sharon," that we read of in the *Song of Solomon* ii. 1.

We shall stop by the way at Lydda, now called Ludd. Travellers often rest here, and lunch, in the middle of the day. What happened here?

Ch.—The Apostle Peter came and stood by the bed-side of suffering Eneas, and said, "Eneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole." And Eneas was made quite well.

Towards evening we reach Ramleh, the ancient Arimathea. We go to a house where travellers are received, and in the evening we walk on the roof, and look around. Orange, lemon, and palm-trees are planted in groves round the little town, and we can see into the court-yards below, where the various families are eating their evening meal, and preparing to lie down for the night in the open air. All towns in Palestine are like this one; each house is built round an open court. There is a tent or an arbour on the roof of almost every house, where the people often go to sit or rest, as they used to do in old times. I told you Ramleh was called Arimathea. Can you tell me who lived there?

Ch.—Joseph of Arimathea.

He was one of the Councillors of the Sanhedrim, or great assembly that ruled the Jews, and when they condemned our blessed Lord Jesus, he would not agree with them, but came and took the body of the Lord and buried it. Who was with him when he did this?

Ch.—Nicodemus helped him to bury the Lord's body.

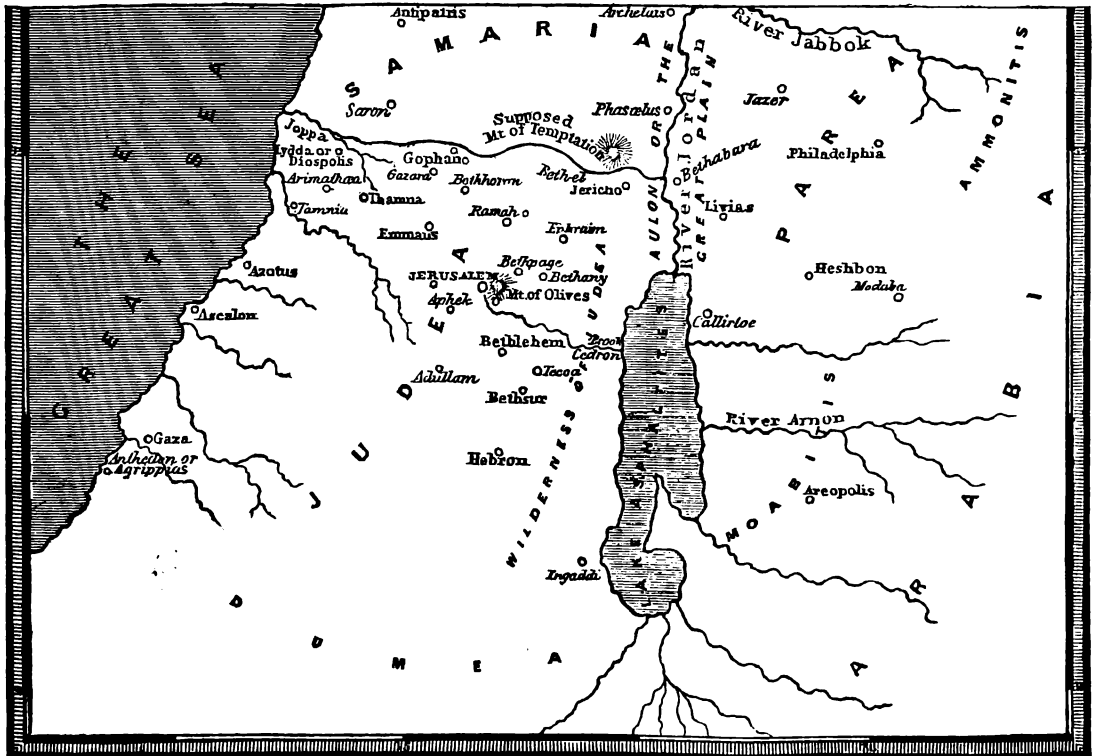
All the way from Joppa to Ramleh is a long ascent, and now we are among the hills which formed in old times part of Mount Ephraim. I once read a description of Palestine, in which the southern half of the country was compared to a boat turned upside down. On one side is the Great Sea, on the other the deep valley of the Jordan and the Dead Sea. The keel of the boat represents the central hill country, and from it rise several hills higher than the rest, like sea shell stuck on the keel of the boat. The most remarkable of these hills is that called Neby Samwil. Let us go to the top of this famous hill and look around. In order to get

there we must go down to the bottom of the valley we have been coming up, and turn into another valley, where we ride past two places mentioned in the Bible, Beth-horon the lower, and Beth-horon the upper. One was called *lower* because it was lower down the hill, nearer the sea-coast, and the other was further inland, and higher up. After we have passed the two Beth-horons we ride on up the valley of Wady. Many of the roads in Palestine are small, stony paths by the sides of mountain torrents; any child who has travelled in the mountains of Scotland or Switzerland will understand what they are. There is often not room in the path for two to ride abreast; the horses follow each other, going in single file, but though the road is rough and stony, the horses are used to it, and do not often stumble.

We will suppose that we have at last arrived at

the top of Neby Samwil, which is the highest hill in this part of the country. It was called by the Crusaders, "Mountjoye," which is an old French word, meaning "hill of joy," and it was so called because they were very glad to reach the top, as there they got their first view of Jerusalem. The name Neby Samwil means the "Prophet Samuel," and the hill is so called because Samuel is said to have resided there, and to have been buried there. It is certain that he did live in this part of the country, and it is not unlikely that his house, which was also his tomb, was on this height; if so, this is the site of the old town Ramah. *1 Samuel ix. 11. and xxv. 1.* From the top of this hill we have a splendid view of a large part of the Holy Land, one of the most wonderful views in the world. And yet the space of country that you see is not very large.

(To be continued).



THE SOUTHERN PART OF PALESTINE.

A BRIGHT SUNBEAM IN A DARK CLOUD.



WILL tell you a short story, children, of a dear little girl I met with on my journey from London to Peterborough. "Oh!" I think I hear some little boy say, who lives, perhaps, in a village in the far north of Scotland, or it may be at the other end of the world in Australia, "I would so like to hear about London,—the big river Thames, and the old Tower, and the great buildings, and that wonderful railway running under the houses, and all the beautiful parks." Well, I may hereafter tell you some useful stories, and perhaps some sad ones too, about London and its scenes, from which also we may get nice little lessons. And then some kind friend who loves you as much as I do, living a long way off, in Melbourne, or New York, or Calcutta, may tell us interesting things about their big cities that London children, and others, too, would much like to know.

We have arrived at King's Cross station, one of the great starting points for the North of England. What a busy scene! There is the great long train for the north. How frightened children cling to their mothers, and mothers are afraid of getting into the wrong carriage. What patience the porters need, to answer everyone's question all in a moment. Now the fingers of that great clock tell us the train will be off in two or three minutes; the guard calls out "Take your seats!" and then comes the banging of doors, the shaking and kissing of hands, the kind good-byes; and there are tearful eyes, and sad partings, perhaps, never to meet again. What looks pass between that young boy on the platform, and that sorrowful father in the carriage! They are to part, it may be, for the first time, and that dear boy, for the first time in his life, feels himself a real lonely stranger in London's great city; and that father's heart bleeds as it never bled before at leaving such a loved one alone! One of you dear boys may

be so left some day, and what can comfort you, then, and who can take care of you, then? What a blessing if you and your father, at such a time, can look up with full confidence to the Lord Jesus, who Himself was once a lonely stranger, and can call Him not only your Saviour but your living friend!

But there goes the loud shrill whistle, and off we start under no end of bridges and through dark tunnels; and soon we are in the country, dashing away at thirty or forty miles an hour.

And now begins my little story. We had not passed more than one or two stations, when I found myself alone with a happy-looking girl, about ten years old. It was just holiday time and supposing she had left school with a merry heart to spend her holiday at home, I looked kindly on her and said, "I suppose, my child, you are on your way to see your mother?" In an instant I found my words had gone as a dagger to her heart. A cloud came over her face, a tear trickled down her cheek, her lip quivered, and at once I saw she had no mother to see! I can't tell you how sorry I felt that I had so wounded her tender heart. I looked at her with real pity, my own heart yearning over her, for well could I feel her sorrow, I, too, having lost a father when just about her own age. Hoping to heal the wound I said, with some emotion, "Perhaps your beloved father will meet you at the station." An instant burst of grief, a flood of tears, and bitter sobs, told the sad tale—she was a motherless and fatherless child! I cannot tell you, dear children, the sorrow of my heart at that moment. In silence we wept together, and it was some time before I could speak a single word. How I longed to comfort her, but felt that only the Lord Jesus could heal such a broken heart. In my helplessness, I lifted up my heart to Him for just the word that would soothe her troubled soul. While we were both weeping, I said to her with a trembling

voice, "There is a word in Scripture which says, 'When father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up,' do you know anything of Him who utters these sweet words, the Lord Jesus Christ?"

I wish, beloved children, you could have seen the instant change which came over that dear child's face. The tears were still there, but there came over it a smile, like the bright rainbow in a summer's shower, as with a clear voice, she said, "Oh yes, sir, I do know Jesus, for He is my Saviour." A little startled at such an unexpected reply, I added, "But are you quite sure of that?" "Yes, sir, I have no doubt about it." "But," again I said, "are you not a sinner?" "Yes, sir, I know I am a sinner, but Jesus died to put my sins away."

What a good confession! How sweetly it fell on my ears! I was not sorry now that I had grieved her, and very pleasant was our talk for nearly an hour longer. How happy we were together, she a bright-faced little girl, and I an old grey-headed man, but the one Spirit that had made us both one in Christ, had given us the same joys, and the same hopes. Very simple and sweet was the tale she told me of how the Lord had brought her to know Himself, a little of which I will now tell you.

It was somewhere about a year before, when at school, one of her school-fellows fell sick, and it was soon whispered amongst the children she could never get better. This made her much afraid. "Oh," she thought, "if I were to die, what would become of me? I know my sins are not forgiven." And so she was afraid of God. But the dying girl was a dear friend of hers, and in her sickness they talked together, and she found her friend was not only not afraid to die, but was very happy, and knew for sure that she was going to Jesus who had loved her, and died for her. The Lord used the testimony of this child to bring her to a knowledge of His love, and now she knew that Jesus Himself had borne all her sins in His body on the tree.

When she had told me this nice story, I read to her, from the 10th of John's Gospel, what Jesus says about His being the Good Shepherd, and laying down His life for the sheep, and giving them eternal life, that they never perish, and that none should be able to pluck them out of His hand.

Then we came to my station, and we said, "good bye," and parted, perhaps not to meet again, till the Lord Jesus comes and takes us all to be with Himself and like Himself for ever.

Dear children, can you say, like this little girl, "Oh, yes, I do know Jesus, for He is my Saviour?"

THE BABY FOUND UNDER A STONE.

SOME years ago a Missionary in Africa was coming home in the evening, when he heard a faint cry in the forest, and thinking it might be some kitten that had strayed from the village, he turned into the wood to look for it. He did not succeed in finding it, and was turning homeward, when he heard the cry again, and at the same time put his foot on some loosened earth. The fearful thought flashed across his mind that the noise was the cry of a baby, which had been buried by its mother. He immediately went down upon his hands and knees, and as he had no spade, he scraped away the earth with his hands. Presently he came upon a large, flat stone; he lifted it up, and underneath was a little

baby! Its mother had made a hole, and thrown it in, and flung a stone upon it to crush it to death. The hole was not, however, wide enough to let the stone down to the bottom, so the little one's life was spared. The Missionary took up the darling child, and brought it home to his wife: she took it in, and brought it up in the "nurture of the Lord." Little Sarah, as they called the child, grew up, learned about the Lord, believed on Him, and was saved. Just think how God took care of this little child. She is to be in the glory with His own dear Son, who died for her. God would have her learn about Him, so He saved her from her cruel mother, and the stone did not kill her.

LITTLE TALKS ABOUT THE BIBLE—No. 1.



EAR young friends, each of you has a Bible which you call your own, and I believe many of you love this precious Book; perhaps some pages and verses are particularly well remembered, because they recall a pleasant reading with a dear friend, a father or mother.

It is a happy thing to love God's Word while we are young; but we should not be content with knowing only parts of the Bible; we should try to know all God has written for our instruction. If you were away from home, and a dear friend wrote you a long letter, you would not be content with reading only one page, or a sentence here and there; you would read it all from beginning to end. Now the Bible is your heavenly Father's letter to you. Should you not study it all, and find out what He has to tell you?

There are many things to know about this precious Book of God; when it was written, and how; what books it contains; in what languages it was written at first, and how it was translated into English. But knowing all this will not do you any good if you do not study the Bible itself, which is the "word of life" for our souls. It is, however, both interesting and useful to know these things, and I hope to be able to give you some of this information from time to time.

The word Bible means book. It comes from the Greek word "Biblos," which was first applied to the inner bark of the Linden or Teil tree, and afterwards to the bark of the Papyrus, materials on which people used to write, before they had found out how to make paper. In the same way the word *liber* meant in Latin the bark of a tree, and then afterwards it came to mean *book*. Hence our word library. So the word *book* itself is of the same origin as the word *beech*, the name of a tree, on whose bark it is often quite easy to write. Thus, when we call the Scriptures the Bible, we really give them the name of *the Book*. There are many, many books in the world, but this alone is THE Book of God.

I want now to speak to you about the books of the Bible. I hope you know the names and order of those books. If not, begin to learn them this very day. You will find a list of them at the beginning of the Bible. There are sixty-six in all, thirty-nine in the Old Testament, and twenty-seven in the New. Now if you learn eleven names each day, it will take you just six days to learn them, and, I am sure, dear children, you will agree that you *ought* to know the names of all the books God has written for you.

If you know a little about these books, you will soon see that they are beautifully arranged. First, there are eighteen books of History, from Genesis to Job, which tell us what God did for man from the Creation, till about 500 years before the Lord Jesus came. Then come four teaching books, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, and then seventeen books of Prophecy, telling what God is going to do on the earth. In the New Testament, there are first five books of History, then twenty-one teaching books, called Epistles, thirteen of which were written by St. Paul, and then one of Prophecy.

So there is something of the same order in both Testaments; History first, then teaching, and lastly Prophecy. The Old Testament is much longer than the New, and some parts of it are difficult for you to understand; but if you will not be discouraged, but will go on reading God's Word, and ask Him to explain it to you, you will find a great blessing, and such happiness as you cannot imagine.

The first five books were called the "Law," by the Jews. They were written by Moses, 1,500 years before our Lord Jesus came. The names of these books are—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. Genesis means *the beginning*. Exodus means the *coming out*, because in it the story is told of the Israelites coming out of Egypt. Leviticus tells what the priests and Levites had to do in the Tabernacle,

Numbers tells the number of the Israelites; first, how many they were when they left Sinai, and began their journey in the desert, and at the end, their number when they had wandered there forty years. Deuteronomy means the law given over again. After the Pentateuch, which means five books, we have Joshua, Judges, Ruth, two books of Samuel, two of Kings, and two of Chronicles; then Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, and Job. All these are books of History. Then come the Psalms of David, the Proverbs of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon, after which begin the Prophets; first, the four greater Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, and then the twelve lesser Prophets, called so because their books are shorter; Hosea,

Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

It is rather difficult to remember in order the names of these lesser Prophets. It may help some to think that Malachi comes last, because he was the last who prophesied before the Lord came, and he tells about John the Baptist coming, just before his book, come Haggai and Zechariah, who prophesied while the second temple was building, just before the time of Malachi. Before these books come two others beginning with H and Z, Habakkuk and Zephaniah, and before them two which come in alphabetical order. Micah and Nahum.

A BEAUTIFUL infant had been taught to say —and it could say little else—“God will take care of baby.” It was seized with a dangerous illness, and at last lay as if dead. The loving mother wept aloud, when once more the little creature opened its eyes, looked lovingly in its mother’s face, and in a faint voice said, “God will take care of baby!” The sweet voice had hardly ceased, when the infant spirit was in heaven.—*Last Words of 500 Remarkable Persons.*

THE CAMEL, or Life through Death.

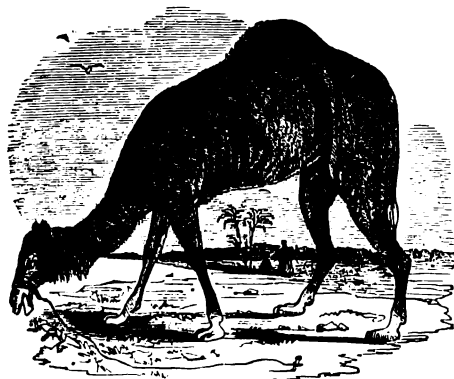
WHO of our little readers has not often read about the camel, and looked at pictures that represent it. The home of the camel is the East, and therefore we read a great deal about camels in the Bible. You will recollect that Abraham had camels, and Job is said to have had 3,000 of them. If you take your Bibles and look out all the places where camels are mentioned, you will find it quite interesting.

It is in desert, sandy countries that camels abound. The great use of the camel is to carry people and their goods across the vast deserts. On this account it has been called the “ship of the desert,” or “land ship,” by the people of the east, and its feet are peculiarly constructed so as not to sink in the sand; but the most

remarkable feature in the construction of the camel is that by which it is enabled to go for twenty or thirty days without drinking.

Within the body is a cavity, divided into little chambers that fill when the animal drinks, and with the supply of water thus stored up he is enabled to take his long journeys across the desert, where often many, many days are travelled without meeting with any water.

Travellers have to carry their water with them in



leather bags, and sometimes the water gets all exhausted so that they are in danger of dying of thirst; and then what do you think they do? They kill the camel that carries them, and save their lives by drinking the water they find inside the camel. Is not this “life through death?”

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Sunday Schools or others desiring quantities, by applying direct to the Publisher, can have them at a reduction.

THE CHILD'S BIBLE COMPANION.



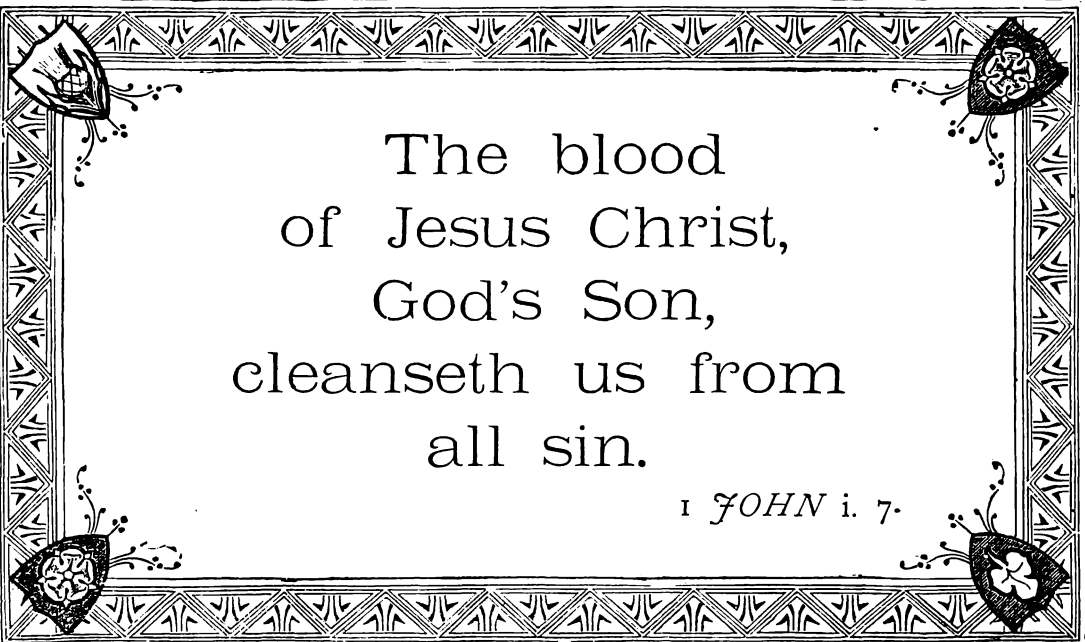
LITTLE BIRDS IN TIME OF SNOW.

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES.

SEE how the birds crowd around the little girl in our picture. Neither robins, nor ravens, nor sparrows are afraid of her. The ground is thickly covered with snow, the berries are all eaten from the trees, so in love to the birds, she has gathered up the crumbs, prepared a plentiful breakfast, and when she opens the window, there they all are, and they seem to say, "Good morning, dear little Miss;" and when they have eaten to their full, they nod their little heads, as if to say, "Thank you, thank you," and away they fly.

Every such little child is carrying out the will of God. The Bible asks "Who provideth for the raven his food?" *Job xxxviii. 41.* The Lord Jesus gives the answer: "They neither sow nor reap; neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them." *Luke xii. 24.* As to the sparrows, He says, "Not one of them is forgotten before God." When the snow has covered up all their food, you may have thought "now the poor birds must all die." Ah! no; it is just then He puts it into the heart of a little child, like the one in the picture, to love them; and so, by their little fingers, He gives them food. Birds belong to God, and He never forgets a single one. Won't you, dear children, remember them too?

But this is a sad world even for pretty little birds! A little story will tell you what I mean. Behind my house, just outside of big London, there is a fine clump of trees. There the blackbird, the robin, and the sparrow have their home. When first I went there, we threw a few crumbs of bread on the balcony. The sparrows saw them at once; they hopped nearer and nearer, until led on by one little bold fellow, half a dozen were soon picking away as boldly as possible. So it went on for about a week, and then came a great calamity. One morning, in the midst of their breakfast, there was a sudden fright, and off they fly in great alarm! What can be the trouble? Ah! there is pussy with a pretty little bird in her mouth, and it is dead in a moment! Dear children, what does this mean? Do you think there was anything like this in Paradise? Ah! no, all was very good there. But when Adam sinned against God, everything was altered. Sin changed even the nature of animals. Cold winters and cruel natures, as well as wicked hearts, are all the fruit of sin. What a sad thing it is then to sin against God!



The blood
of Jesus Christ,
God's Son,
cleanseth us from
all sin.

1 JOHN i. 7.

A BEAUTIFUL HOME IN THE SKY.

THE Saviour, Jesus, is gone to prepare
Such a beautiful home in the sky,
And He says He will come,
And take to that home,
Every sinner that's born from on high.

How sweetly their voices shall praise Him there,
For the blessings His hand has bestowed,
They shall shine there bright
In their robes of white,
For they all have been washed in His blood.

And crowns they shall wear of the purest gold,
And a wonderful song they shall sing,
And each shall cast down
His glittering crown
At the feet of the heavenly King.

And happy, amid this bright joyous throng,
Shall many a little one sing,
May I join them, and raise
My voice to the praise
Of the Giver of every good thing!

I'd like to go to that heaven so bright,
For joy beams in that world on each face,
But if there I would go,
On earth I must know,
As my Saviour, the Lord of that place.





THE CEDARS OF LEBANON.

CHAPTER II.



THE whole of Palestine, from one end to the other, is not larger than Wales. It is 140 miles long, about the distance from London to Bristol, and 40 miles broad. That part which we see from this central height could easily be crossed by an express train in two or three hours.

But, dear children, God often takes up little things to do great things with them. He told the Jews in old time; "The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because you were more in number than any people: for ye were the *fewest* of all people; but because the Lord *loved* you." This is something like what we are told in the first of Corinthians: "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." God took up the small nation of Israel

and made them His people. God takes up poor ignorant people, weak and sickly people, and teaches them, and makes them a blessing to others. He takes also *little children*, and makes them praise Him. "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast Thou perfected praise." *Matt.* xxi. 16. Let us now look in detail at the view before us.

On the *East* (map) we shall see the mountains of Moab, which rise like a grand wall forming a back-ground to the picture. These were some of the mountains of which the Psalmist sang.

"Look how the hills on every side
Jerusalem enclose;
So stands the Lord around His saints,
To guard them from their foes."

At their foot runs the deep chasm of the Dead Sea; we cannot distinguish the water, because it is too low down.

Turning towards the *South*, we see, about five or six miles from where we are standing, the city of Jerusalem, and the mount of Olives by its side; the hills just above Bethlehem are also visible; but the town itself nestles lower down out of sight; further off is Hebron.

If we look towards the *West*, we see the long straight line of coast on which the waves of the "Great Sea" are always dashing. Close by it there is a strip of sand, then a broad belt of green, eight or nine miles wide, which marks the plain of the Philistines, and further north that of Sharon. It was in these plains that there grew such an immense quantity of corn that the little country of Palestine was able to supply other lands with food. Hence came the twenty thousand measures of wheat which Solomon gave to Hiram as food for his household. *1 Kings* v. 11. And here grew the corn that Judah sold to the Tyrians. *Ezek.* xxvii. 17. In the time of Herod, too, the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon were still dependent on Judah for their corn. *Acts* xii. Looking along this plain towards the south we see various ruins, which mark the places where once stood the proud cities of Ashdod and Ekron. Those cities belonged to those strong, fierce enemies of Israel, the Philistines, who often marched out through their gates to carry destruction into the ranks of the poor Hebrews. Heaps of ruins alone are left to tell us where they once stood.

Turning to the *North*, we see Bethel, Ramah, Geba, and Michmash, and further off the great plain of Esdraelon, which is watered by the river Kishon, and just at our feet is the town of Gideon, now called El-Gib.

Now let us try to remember some of the things that happened at the different places which are to be seen from our mountain height. First, there are the beautiful mountains of Moab. Who went to the top of one of those heights?

Ch.—Moses went up there to see the land which he was forbidden to enter.

"And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the Lord shewed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan, and

all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea, and the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar." Do you know why Moses was not allowed to go into the promised land?

Ch.—It was because he spoke hastily, when he smote the rock.

Yes, he spoke "unadvisedly with his lips;" you see how strict God's law is; one hasty speech shut Moses out of the promised land. It may make us tremble, to think of how much consequence one word is in God's sight. We cannot think too much of sin; we cannot imagine how bad it is in God's sight. But let us go on further with Moses' story: We read "The Lord buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor, but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." You might have thought that was the end of the story of Moses, but it is not so. If you turn to the New Testament, you will find Moses again. But where is he then? He and Elijah "appear in glory" with the Lord Jesus on the Mount of the Transfiguration. Now, dear children, that wonderful story tells you something about God. God had to punish Moses for his naughty speech, and shut him out of Canaan, but He would still act in grace and love towards him, and of His own pure love, God let Moses see and be in the glory with the Lord Jesus when He was on earth. How good it was of God thus to honour His servant Moses. If you think about this story of Moses, you will learn two great lessons: first, distrust yourselves: even a little sin will bring you into great trouble; and secondly, trust God, "He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."

We mentioned Ashdod among the places whose ruins we see from the Neby Samwil. You may like to know that Ashdod is the same as *Asotus*, where Philip the Evangelist was found when the Spirit of the Lord caught him away. Ashdod was one of the five chief cities of the Philistines. The names of these cities were: Ashdod, Askalon, Gaza, Gath, and Ekron. Try to remember these five names, two begin with A, two with G, and one with E. When you think of Ashdod as it used to

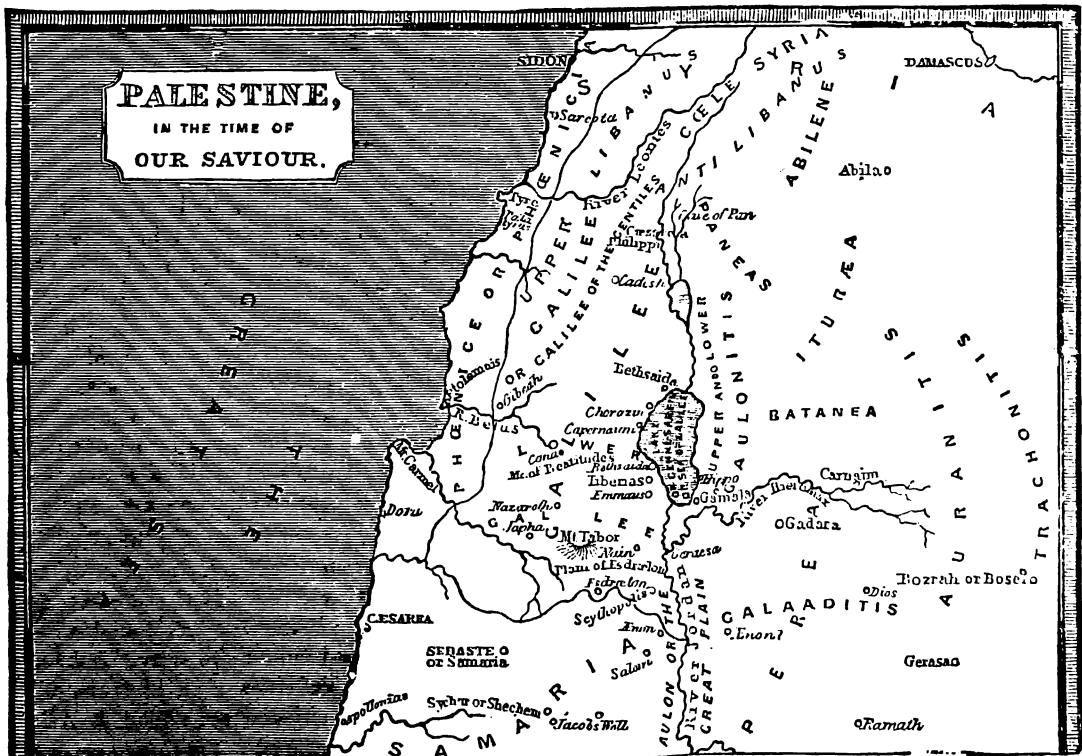
be, when it was a great walled city, then remember a wonderful thing that happened there. There was a great idol temple, where the Philistines kept the image of Dagon, their god. It was a very ugly idol, partly like a fish. The Philistines had gained a great victory over the Israelites, and they had even taken the ark of the Lord. It was because the Israelites had not been faithful to the Lord that He allowed this to happen. But the Philistines were very proud of having gained such a victory, and they brought the ark in great triumph, and put it in the temple just by the side of the idol. But when they returned in the morning they found their idol fallen down on his face before the ark. They put Dagon up again in his place, but, the next morning the same thing happened again, and Dagon's head and even his hands were cut off. So the Philistines were afraid to keep the ark any longer, and like selfish men that they were, they took it to their neighbours, the

men of Gath. But the inhabitants of that city soon wanted to get rid of the ark, for God had sent them great diseases; so they, selfish in their turn, wished to send it to Ekron, but the men of Ekron would not have it, and sent it away out of their country.

Another day we will see what became of the ark, but meanwhile let us think for a moment of those proud Philistines, who only knew the gracious God of Israel, as a God ready to punish them. They did not humble themselves or turn to Him, but fought against His people for many years, until at last "God helped" king Uzziah against them, and he pulled down the walls of proud Ashdod and Gath, and the whole country was in the hands of Israel.

Gaza, another of the cities of the Philistines, was also famous in story. Who can think of something that happened there?

(To be continued).



THE NORTHERN PART OF PALESTINE.

A TALK ABOUT SNOW.



ARE you not glad to see the snow? How beautiful and white it is! How softly it falls to the earth, covering with a warm mantle all the tender roots, keeping them safe from the cold, that they may shoot up next spring.

Snow is very often mentioned in the Bible. "He giveth snow like wool." Can you tell me one of the qualities of the snow?

Ch.—Snow is very *white* and *bright*.

When the Lord Jesus was transfigured, His raiment was said to be "white as snow." *Mark* ix. 3. David, when he had sinned, asked God to wash him, and then he would be "whiter than snow." *Psalms* li. 7. And when God's people had sinned very much, He said to them, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith 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 wool." *Isa.* i. 18. The beautiful fresh-fallen snow has not one speck on it. It is whiter than anything else. Hold a white sheet near the snow, you will see that it does not look at all white. Why do you suppose the Lord says those whom He washes are white as the snow?

Ch.—It is because the blood of the Lord Jesus takes away *every spot*.

Now for another quality of the snow.

Ch.—It is very refreshing if put in the mouth.

Yes, its coldness is referred to in the word of God. "As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters." *Prov.* xxv. 13. This seems to show that snow water was used in hot weather for cooling drinks as people often use ice now. It is said that a faithful messenger refreshes the people who employ him. Are you not sometimes sent out on an errand, little children? It is a pleasant thing for the dear mother or friend who sends you to know that you *can be trusted*, that you will do your *very best* to accomplish the thing you are sent to do, or to bring the thing you were told to fetch.

An idle messenger is compared to some very disagreeable things. "As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him." *Prov.* x. 26. Do you remember God sending a messenger who was unfaithful, and went just the opposite way to that where God told him to go?

Ch.—Yes, Jonah was sent to preach to the men of Nineveh, but did not like to go, and fled "from the presence of the Lord." *Jonah* i. 3.

Now try to think of a faithful messenger?

Ch.—The Lord Jesus was a faithful messenger.

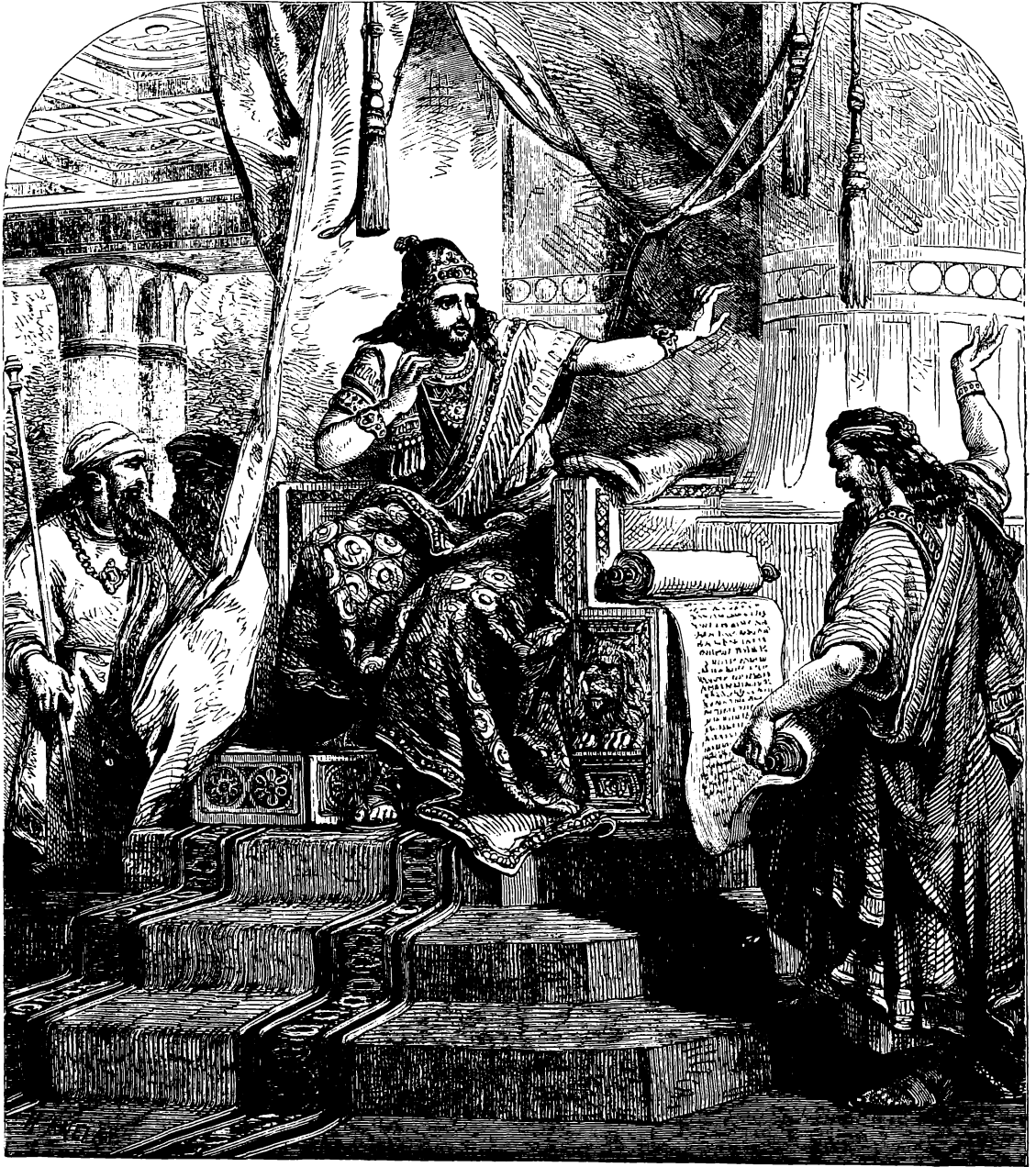
Yes, He was God's messenger, sent to tell us God's thoughts about us, and He was perfectly faithful, so that God spoke from heaven and said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Now for another question about the snow. Where is it mostly found?

Ch.—On the top of mountains.

Yes, there is more snow on the high mountains than elsewhere, and God has beautifully arranged that the snow on the hill-tops should melt gradually, and fill the streams, which feed the great rivers, so that the snow on the mountains forms vast reservoirs which supply the earth with water. The hotter the summer, the more the snow melts, and the more full do the streams and lakes become. You will easily understand this if you live in a mountainous country, but, though you may never have seen mountains, if you will try to think about it, you will understand it a little.

Now perhaps you would like to hear of something that happened on a snowy day. Snow is rarely seen in Palestine, and not being accustomed to the cold, an idle man would be likely to stay at home at such a time. "The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold:" *Prov.* xx. 4. But one of David's mighty men did not do so; Benaiah, that was his name, went down and "slew a lion in the midst of a pit on a snowy day." *2 Saml.* xxiii. 20., and *1 Chron.* xi. 22.



Reading the long-lost Scriptures before King Josiah.

LITTLE TALKS ABOUT THE BIBLE—No. 2.



THE Old Testament was written at first in Hebrew, and the New Testament in Greek. Some parts of the former (Daniel and Ezra) were written in another language, the Chaldee, which is something like the Hebrew, and was spoken by the Jews after they had been in Babylon. The Old Testament was translated into Greek about 285 years before Christ. The whole Bible has been translated into a great many different languages. Perhaps some day we may talk about these translations.

The books of the Bible were written separately, as God taught different people to write them. They were not printed, as our Bibles now are, for nobody knew how to print till about 400 years ago. They were written by hand on parchment or vellum. What are these?

Ch.—Parchment is the prepared skin of the sheep, and vellum that of the calf.

These materials are extremely durable, and will not tear. Some of the old manuscripts, which are kept with great care, are more than a thousand years old. These parchments are not formed into books with leaves and covers, but are large rolls, which the reader has to unroll, as he reads on. Such ancient copies of the Old Testament are to be seen in some of the Jewish synagogues, in different parts of Europe. There is one in the synagogue at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, in Germany. It is kept with great care, and shown to visitors.

There is an account in the book of Jeremiah of the writing of some of the prophecies. Jeremiah, taught by God, dictated to Baruch, "And Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words

of the Lord, which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book." *Jer.* xxxvi. 4.

We find also the Apostle Paul saying that he had written the Epistle to the Galatians *with his own hand.* *Gal.* vi. 11. He also asks Timothy to bring him some parchments. We can imagine what they were used for.

We can scarcely form an idea of the value set by the people of God on these ancient *rolls* containing the precious Word of God. We read of the good king Jehoshaphat sending the Levites and princes all through the land with the book of the law of the Lord. The Levites were to read it in every town to the assembled people. There were probably very few copies of the law then existing, perhaps only two or three. If all the kings of Judah had done what God told them to do, each king would have written out a copy of the law, and kept it for his own private study. *Deut.* xvii. 18, 19. Then there would have been many more copies of the law in the land. But the Jews neglected the good law of their God, and at one time it was completely lost. In the reign of the young king Josias, while they were cleaning out the temple, they found a copy of the law of the Lord. The king had it read before him. He had evidently never heard it before, and was very much struck with its solemn denunciations against sin. It was probably at the same time that the Prophet Jeremiah speaks of his great joy when the words of the Lord were found. "Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." *Jer.* xv. 16. When the Jews returned from Babylon, they assembled to hear the law read, and Ezra stood on a pulpit of wood, and the Levites explained it to the people. Daniel had a copy of the law with him in Babylon.

LETTER TO OUR LITTLE ONES.

told you, dear children, that some who live a long way from England would be led to tell you interesting stories from distant lands. Here is one written to you by a believer in the Lord Jesus, who was born, and has spent most of his life on one of the mountains of Lebanon, in Palestine.

I could tell you a strange tale about the writer of this letter. His elder brother was the first who learned to read in all that part of the country; and he was the next; and by reading the Bible he found out what a sinner he was, and learned and believed in the Lord Jesus, and for many years has spent his time and money in teaching the

same blessed truths to little children who live on those old scripture mountains. His letter is about one of these little girls, and you will see what great things came from her learning to read the Bible.

My dear Children,

I have been reading "THE CHILD'S BIBLE COMPANION." I am much pleased with the account about Palestine. I have lived there all my life and would like to tell you many things about that country.

First, I must tell you our country is no longer what it was in King Solomon's time, a land flowing with milk and honey. It has been neglected for many hundred years, and most of the people are very poor, and very ignorant.

There used to be great forests of cedar trees on the mountains of Lebanon, as you were told in last month's CHILD'S BIBLE COMPANION, from which the wood was got to build Solomon's Temple. But they are nearly all gone now, and only in one place are any to be found. But the mountains are there still, and they are as big as ever, many thousand feet high, and many miles long, and many, many thousands of people are now living on them and in the valleys around.

But they are not like the people in England, for scarcely any of them can read a single letter, and they know nothing of the Lord Jesus Christ and very very few have ever seen a Bible.

But now I am going to tell you about a little girl who did learn to read, and how greatly God blessed her because she was faithful to the little knowledge she had learned of Him. Her name was Miriam. And this was the way she learned to read.

Many years ago a Mahometan was staying at her father's house, and he taught her eldest brother to read. This brother taught his younger brother and Miriam his sister. At this time she was only twelve years old. At the age of fifteen, she was given in marriage, as is common in our country, and her father gave her on leaving his

house a Bible, printed in our language by the London Bible Society. By reading this she was led to see the difference between the dreadful superstitions of our land and the simple worship of the Lord Jesus Christ, who loved us, and died for us. She soon began to tell her husband these things, and to read to him out of the word of God. She told him how wicked it was to worship any but the God and Father of the Lord Jesus.

This made her husband very angry; and now she had to suffer persecution for Christ's sake. But the Lord strengthened her, and as often as she had opportunity she would still speak to him of the Lord. One Sunday morning when her husband came from the Greek church, he found her as usual reading her Bible. This put him in a great rage, and being quite unable to control himself, he ran for a large knife, and threatened to kill her if she would not give up her Bible. This was a sore trial for Miriam. What now was she to do? She quietly lifted up her heart to the Lord, then rose, and placing her Bible in a box, she sat down and wept before him. She prayed for her husband as she had never prayed before. She sought to be more gentle and kind than ever; and what do you think, dear children, was the result? God was pleased to open his heart; he also believed Jesus, and received the salvation of his soul! This was a great joy to Miriam. She taught him to read, and after a time he became a useful servant of Christ, and by his preaching many have been brought to know Christ, and have been saved.

Miriam is now mother of five daughters and two sons. Two of the daughters are serving the Lord in Palestine, and one is in England learning the English language, after which she hopes to return to Syria to assist in teaching little children the knowledge of the Gospel of the blessed Lord.

Will the dear praying children in England pray for Miriam and her family?

Your affectionate friend,

E. J. S.

A CHILD'S CONFESSION OF CHRIST.



LAST month I told you a story of a dear little girl who had lost both father and mother; but who had found in Jesus the Lord not only a Saviour, but a living, loving friend. Now I want to tell you of another child still younger, from whom I learned a great lesson, and who said a nice little word, which proved a blessing to myself and many more besides.

The great God, the Father of Jesus, loves children, and I believe is saving a great number; and sometimes little children learn His love more quickly, and His kind ways too, more clearly than older people. So it was with the little one I am going to tell you about.

It was not in a railway carriage, nor in the busy streets, nor at a great meeting, I first met her. Oh no! where do you think it was, dear children? It was in a solemn place! Picture to yourselves a small room, and a tiny bed, and in it a little child, pale, and wasted, and weak, and hardly able to speak a word. How she suffers! and there is her fond loving mother, weeping and sad, and expecting every hour to be the last. And yet, dear little ones, is not this a common sight? The youngest of you, if you think but a moment, would readily tell me of some little companion, perhaps a brother or sister; nay, of more than one, even younger than yourselves, who once were as bright and happy as you, but now their little bodies are in the cold grave, and you will see them here no more for ever! Is not this very sad? How is it that so many even little children suffer so much, and then die, and have to be buried out of sight? Oh! there is one little verse in the Bible that tells all about it, and it is this: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Yes, that is it. Sin is the cause of it all. What a dreadful thing then sin must be!

Well, I knelt by the side of this dying little one, as I then thought; and I spoke to her of Jesus, and His dying love. I told her I thought she would soon be with Him; (both mother and child

knew Jesus) but she opened her little languid eyes, and, to my surprise, said, "Yes, sir, but if Jesus has any little thing for me to do for Him, He can raise me up again, even yet." I wondered much at such a child speaking in that way, but two years after I found out what it meant.

For so it was, she did not die: nor did I see her again till the end of that time. When I next met her she seemed well, and bright, and happy. She had forgotten me, but I wondered if she was still as happy with the Lord. I thought I would search her little heart; and so, looking her full in the face, I said, "My child, if you were to die this moment, what would become of you?"

For an instant she was startled, but only for a moment, and then in a clear, soft, solemn voice replied:

"I should go right up and be with Jesus, Sir."

"But," I said, "are you not conscious of being a sinner,—of sinning even every day?"

Her eyes fell, a cloud came over her face, and again she said;

"Yes, sir, I know I am a sinner, and I know that I sin, even every day."

"Then," I hastily replied, "how could you be received into heaven?"

The cloud came again, but only for a moment, and then a bright smile of real inward joy shone on her face, and looking fully in mine she sweetly answered, in these most impressive words:

"Yes, sir, I know I am a sinner, but 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.'"

That was enough. How beautiful! How it rejoiced my heart! What a nice little bit of service for Jesus it was to bear such a blessed clear testimony to the value of His precious blood!

Many a time have I told this simple story to some doubting, troubled soul, and many a time God has used it to strengthen their faith and give them comfort.

But some one is reading this who cannot say "His blood has washed *my* sins away." And

perhaps you are troubled about it. If I could look into your hearts what a sorrowful sight it would be. "Oh yes," you say, "I know I am naughty, I try to put on a brave look, and I have often tried to forget it; my father and mother think me a merry careless child, but at times I am very sorrowful, I feel my bad tempers, my self-will, my pride of heart; and I have tried to be better, but I can't; and then, when I get alone, I cry, and am afraid of God, and dare not think of death; and oh! I do so wish that I was like that little girl."

My dear child, I have been just like that, and know all about it. But, better still, Jesus knows it too. Yes, the very One who died for you, but who is at this very moment seated on the throne of God, crowned with glory and honour, yes, He knows all your troubles; and He knows you can't help yourself; He knows the more you try,

the more you will break down. And what do you think He wants you to do? I will tell you. He wants you to talk to Him; to tell Him everything in your heart. "What," you say, "all my bad thoughts, all my wicked tempers?" Yes, my child, He wants you just to tell Him everything. He wants you to think of Him, to look in His face, to see the tenderness and pity and love that shine there. He wants you to know Himself, and that will make you very happy.

Oh, look up! What do you see on the throne? The Lamb of God who has been slain. Why was He slain? "He died, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." And God was satisfied; yea, well-pleased, and raised Him from the dead, and has given Him glory, and all this that just such troubled souls as yours might be saved from death, and delivered from the power of sin, and made happy now and happy for ever.

THE SNOW - STORM.



TWO little children were playing on the side of one of the mountains of Scotland, when a blinding snow-storm came on. They lost their way, wandered on, straying further and further from home, till they became so cold that they could not walk, and both prepared to lie down and sleep under an over-hanging rock. Before they went to sleep, the youngest said to his brother, "Let us pray like we do at home when we go to bed." So both knelt down and began to pray. Just then a man passed. He was hurrying home, struggling with the storm, and was rather afraid of losing his way in the dark. He heard a gentle voice, which seemed to

reach his ear between the gusts of wind. He listened; the voice came again. He stopped, and directed his steps towards the place where the sound came from, and there found two little ones, whose limbs were becoming benumbed with cold. They were his neighbour's children; he took one in his arms, and led the other by the hand, but soon he had to carry both, for the oldest was too cold to walk. He was getting on but slowly, when happily he met the children's father, who had come out with a lantern, to look for his precious treasures. You may picture to yourself the happy meeting, and how all thanked God that night, for having "heard the voice" of the little boy, who prayed before he lay down to sleep.

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THE CHILD'S BIBLE COMPANION.



THE PROPHET JONAH CAST INTO THE SEA.

FOR THE LITTLE ONES.

THE PROPHET JONAH.

THERE was a man who tried to run away from God. This was the Prophet Jonah. God sent him to preach to the inhabitants of a very large city called Nineveh. But Jonah did not want to preach to them. Perhaps he was afraid, for God had told him to tell them that if they did not repent of their wicked conduct they would be utterly destroyed; and perhaps Jonah did not like to carry such a message as that to a large city full of wicked men. But whatever the reason may have been, Jonah did not wish to obey God, so he went to a sea-port called Joppa, and embarked in a ship which was going to Tarshish, a town that was a long way from the place God had told him to go. And while he was in the ship, Jonah went to sleep.

But God caused a great wind to blow, and there was a great tempest on the sea, which frightened the poor sailors very much. Jonah was the only one who understood that *God* had sent the storm, and he told the sailors that he feared "the Lord, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land."

He asked them to throw him into the sea, telling them that if they would do so the sea would become calm, and they would be saved. At first the sailors refused, hoping that they would reach the land; but at last they saw that they must be lost unless something was done, and they threw Jonah into the sea.

But God did not allow Jonah to be drowned. He had prepared a great fish to swallow the Prophet, and Jonah remained alive in the fish for three days and three nights. Then Jonah prayed.

He had not prayed when he tried to run away from God; he had not prayed instead of sleeping on the ship; but now that he is in such trouble, he prays. Ah, if Jonah had remembered that God was only doing what was good for him, he would not have run away.

Directly Jonah prayed, God heard and answered his prayer, and saved him. "And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land."

Then Jonah went and preached to the inhabitants of Nineveh, as God had commanded; and the men of the city repented of their wickedness, and God pardoned them.

GOD SEES US ALWAYS.

Do you remember another man who wanted to hide from God ?

Yes, Adam ; he tried to hide behind the trees in the garden of Eden.

Why did he wish to hide himself ?

Because he had disobeyed God. He had done what was wrong, and he was afraid of God.

Did the trees hide him from God ?

No ; God saw him and called him.

Yes, dear children, and God showed him that He could forgive him. "Unto Adam also, and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them."

If Adam had understood that God was ready to forgive his sin, he would not have been afraid to meet Him.

"For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether.

Whither shall I go from Thy spirit, or whither shall I flee from Thy presence ?

If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there ; if I make my bed in hell, behold Thou art there.

If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea ;

Even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me.

If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me ; even the night shall be light about me.

Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee, but the night shineth as the day ; the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee."—Psalm cxxxix. 4—12.

"CAN ANY HIDE HIMSELF IN SECRET PLACES THAT I SHALL NOT SEE HIM? SAITH THE LORD. DO I NOT FILL HEAVEN AND EARTH? SAITH THE LORD."

JER. xxiii. 24.

Is it true that God can see
From the sky, a child like me ?
Does He see me in the night
Just as well as in the light ?
Does He see me from His throne,
Though I may be quite alone ?

Yes ; God sees me, all I do,
All I feel, He knows it too ;
Sees me in the darkest night,

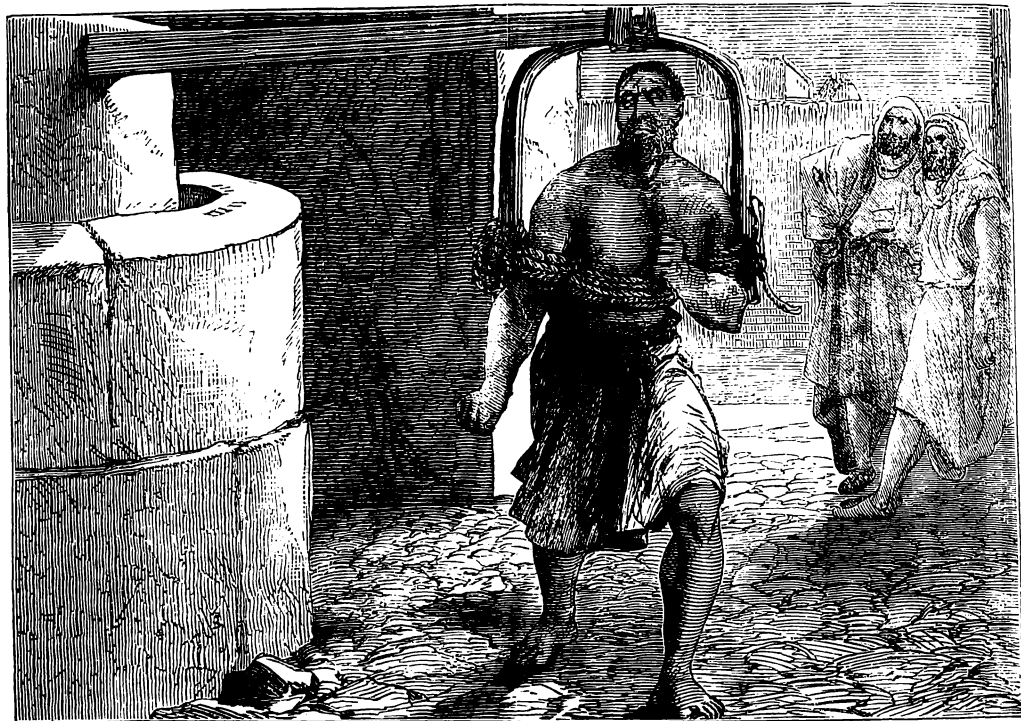
Quite as well as in the light ;
Knows my thoughts, hears all I say,
Watches me both night and day.

Then, Lord, let each action be
Such as Thou dost love to see ;
Let me, in whatever place,
Be a witness of Thy grace ;
Then I shall not fear Thine eye,
Though Thou seest from the sky.

FOR THE TINY ONES.

God can see me every day,
When I work and when I play ;
When I read and when I talk,
When I run and when I walk.

When I eat and when I drink,
When I sit and only think ;
When I laugh and when I cry,
God is watching ever nigh.



SAMSON GRINDING IN THE MILL.

CHAPTER III.

IT was from Gaza that Samson carried away the doors of the city.

Yes, he took the doors of the city, gate-posts, bar and all, and put them on his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of a hill before Hebron. If you look at the map you will see that he must have carried them nearly across the country, a distance of perhaps thirty miles, and part of the way, at least, up a very steep hill. Gaza was afterwards the scene of his deep humiliation, and his final triumph. The Philistines had taken their great enemy prisoner, put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, where they "bound him with fetters of brass, and he did grind in the prison-house." "Then the lords of the Philistines gathered them together for to offer a great sacrifice unto Dagon, their god, and to rejoice; for they said, Our god hath delivered

Samson, our enemy, into our hand. And when the people saw him, they praised their god; for they said, Our god hath delivered into our hand our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, which slew many of us. And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison-house, and he made them sport; and they set him between the pillars. And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them. Now the house was full of men and women, and all the lords of the Philistines were there, and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport. And Samson called unto the Lord, and said, O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once

avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes. And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left. And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein; so the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life."—Judges xvi., 23—30.

The story of Samson is a very sad one. God had made him very strong, in order that he might conquer the enemies of Israel. But he was unfaithful, and did not obey the Lord, so that He let him fall into the Philistines' hand, and he who ought to have been the conqueror, was conquered.

But even then the Lord let His goodness be seen, and when Samson was a blind prisoner, and actually dying, God gave him a great victory, so that more than three thousand men and women were killed by him.

Samson may remind us by contrast of the Lord Jesus, of whom God says, "I have laid help upon one that is mighty."—Psalm lxxxix., 19. "He was *faithful* to him that appointed him."—Hebrews iii., 2. And yet He died,—He, the just, died for the unjust. And in His death He gained the great victory for us over death, Satan, and the world. "He bruised the serpent's head." "Death is swallowed up in victory."

Gaza will also recal another scene more peaceful and happy than the death of Samson. It was about twelve hundred years later; the city of Gaza was still standing, and the road to it was desert, perhaps on account of the many wars that had taken place in the country. An officer of the court of Candace, an African queen, was returning from Jerusalem, where he had been to worship, when the Holy Spirit said to Philip the Evangelist (whom the Lord had, in a remarkable way, led to the spot just before) "Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the Prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some

man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the Scripture which he read was this—He was lead as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this, of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing."—Acts viii., 29—36; 38, 39.

Near the Neby Samwil is the site of Bethel, which has been so famous in the history of Israel. It is now the bare side of a hill, covered with flat stones, one of which may, perhaps, have served Jacob for his pillow. But, uninteresting as it may be in outward appearance, its history is full of instruction. Abraham halted here soon after he came into the land of Israel, and here he built an altar to the Lord. He afterwards went into Egypt, fearing famine in Palestine, but the Lord brought him back to Bethel, and then he called on the name of the Lord. It was while he was there that Lot separated from him.

The next account we have of it is when Jacob lay down to sleep there, and the Lord spoke to him from the top of the ladder. And Jacob called the place Bethel, which means "The House of God." Many years after, Jacob returned to the place, not alone, but with eleven children, and many camels, oxen, asses, and sheep. And God appeared to him again, and promised to bless him.

Nearly a thousand years after, we find very sad things happening at Bethel. Jeroboam, "who

made Israel to sin," set up one of his golden calves there; and here he put out his hand to seize the man of God, who came out of Judah to reprove him, but his hand was dried up, and the altar that he had made before the golden calf, was rent, and the ashes poured out. The man of God prayed, and the Lord restored to Jeroboam the use of his hand. But neither the judgment nor the mercy had any effect on Jeroboam, who continued his wicked way.

The story of the man of God is very solemn, and as it happened at Bethel, I will tell it you now. The King asked him to come home and eat bread, but he refused, because God had told him not to do so, and set off on his journey. Unhappily, however, he stopped on his way, and sat under an oak tree not very far off, and an old prophet, who lived in Bethel, went and found him there, and asked him to come back and eat with him. To understand the thing, you must remember that Bethel was, at this time, a very wicked town, and that almost all the people who feared God had left it, and all the country over which Jeroboam ruled. All the Levites, who were the teachers of Israel (Deut. xxxiii. 10), had gone to Jerusalem, that they might be near the temple where the true God was worshipped. "And after them, out of all the tribes of Israel, such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel, came to Jerusalem." (2 Chron. xi. 16). Now this old prophet had not gone with the others; he seems to have remained on contentedly in the wicked town of Bethel, and he even invited this man of God to come and pay him a visit there. All this was displeasing to the Lord. The man of God, however, listened to the old man, and went home with him, and sat down to meat. But now we see how fearful a thing it is to disobey God. While they were at dinner, the Lord made the old prophet tell his friend how wrong he had been, and that in consequence he should never reach his home. After he had eaten, the old prophet saddled his ass for the man of God, and he set out homewards. But he had not gone far, when a lion met him and slew him. And some men passed by, and saw this marvellous sight; the lion

was standing by the ass, and the dead body of the prophet, and had neither torn the ass, nor devoured the dead body. The lion had been more obedient than the "man of God;" he had done exactly what God told him, neither more nor less. The men who saw it came and told it in Bethel, and when the old prophet heard it, his conscience at once told him whose body it must be. He told his sons to saddle the ass, and he immediately went to fetch the dead body of his friend. He laid it in his own grave, and wept over him, saying, "Alas! my brother!" He might well weep, for he had caused the death of the "man of God."

This gives us a striking warning not to tempt others to do wrong. Suppose two children playing near a river, and their mother had told them not to go near the edge of the water, and then one invited the other to come beyond the bounds the kind parent had marked out, and the one who was invited went near, and fell in, and was drowned. O how sad the other would feel when he knew he had been the cause of his brother's death! Dear children! mind that you are not tempters! What a dreadful thing it would be to you to see the child you had tempted going to ruin!

Three hundred years later, the good young King Josiah destroyed the altar which Jeroboam had made, but he did not touch the tomb of the "man of God."

Two prophets speak about Bethel; Amos and Hosea. The first had been a gatherer of sycamore fruit, a herdman, but the Lord called him to be a prophet, and he went even into the idol temple, into the king's chapel, and there delivered the Lord's message. And Amaziah, the priest of the golden calf, told him to flee into the land of Judah, and tried to get the King of Israel to do him some hurt. Hosea, the other prophet who told of the destruction which was to come on Bethel, seems to have lived about a hundred years, and to have prophesied during eighty years. But the men of Bethel listened neither to Hosea, nor to Amos, and they were carried captive to Nineveh, and their golden calf was taken as a present to the King of Assyria. Hosea, x. 5, 6.

(To be continued.)

E. H., Vevey.



GOD SPEAKING TO JACOB FROM THE TOP OF THE LADDER.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

KATIE N— was surrounded with everything this world could give to make her happy, and she had plenty of health and spirits to enjoy what was given her. But she was a lonely child, and the very exuberance of life and fun made her only more intensely sad and solitary in herself. She heard a great deal about God; but that was a subject she never cared about. She delighted in reading; but if a passage occurred about God, or a quotation out of the Bible, she always skipped it. Perhaps you think Katie was a very naughty child; she was not a bit more naughty than other children are; but she did not know God. She saw no beauty in Jesus that she should desire Him; her heart was enmity to God. She was very quick, and also diligent at her lessons; and yet she was seldom able to say her Scripture correctly. This was a source of sorrow to Katie, for she felt it very humiliating to have it returned to her. One day she had to learn some verses in the Gospel of John; but the words of grace and truth would not abide in her un-receptive mind. Three times over her teacher returned the book, that she might learn it more perfectly. The third time Katie took the Testament, read the verses over, and, feeling that she could not make her memory hold the words, she dashed the book across the room in a burst of passion and despair. Her teacher, who loved the Lord, was greatly pained by such conduct, picked up the Testament, and said to Katie, "I shall give you no more Scripture to learn." Poor Katie! she was to be treated as a rejector of God. She tried to be glad, but her pride did not like it, for we all like to be *thought good*, whether we are so or not. Something whispered to her that it was a great relief to have no verses to say; but deep down in Katie's heart there was a great pain. One, two, three, four days passed. At last

Sunday came. Was Katie to learn no verses, even on Sunday? She shut herself up alone in her room to think. Then she took up the Testament, while her little hands trembled with agitation, and she felt cold all over; she thought she would really *try*, and she did try, but the verses would not stay with her. At last she burst into tears, and threw herself on her knees, and said, "Oh, God, do make me able to learn it." She knelt there a long time, as if she was waiting for God to say He would. At last she got up, and tried again, calmly and quietly; out loud she read the verses over, and, for the first time, it struck her that they were beautiful, and a thought sank down into her heart that pained her like a burning thing;—it was this: How dreadfully bad my heart must be not to like the very words that Jesus spoke when He was down here;—and from that moment Katie began to wish to be converted. She went down stairs, and, going very softly up to her teacher, she put the Bible into her hand. She took it silently, and Katie slowly and solemnly repeated every word correctly, while her teacher's heart rose up in thankfulness to God, who had not permitted the enemy to triumph; that Katie had not gone to another Scripture, but had really overcome, where she had failed.

At this time Katie was about ten years old. One day she heard some grown-up people say that a very good man was coming to preach, and that he was remarkably blessed to little children. Katie listened eagerly to these accounts, and though she would not allow anyone to know her feelings, she secretly hoped that she might hear him, and be converted too; for she felt more and more unhappy and lonely, and it seemed to her that the only truly happy people were those who loved God. One evening it was proposed that Katie should go with her nurse to hear this good man. Her heart bounded inwardly, and as she put on her hat, she thought—"perhaps I shall come

home quite changed." She went—the place was full of children—some attentive, others careless. The moment the preacher began, Katie fixed her eyes upon him, and listened with such earnestness that when she went home she was able to write it all down. But alas! she did not feel converted. This was a great disappointment. Why, think you, was Katie's desire not granted? Was it not a right desire? Was God unmindful of her desire? Was Jesus slow to reveal Himself to a heart that wanted Him? Oh, no! He delights to respond to the very weakest movement of a heart towards Him—and let me assure you of what is more blessed still—no heart ever yearned for Christ until Christ's heart had first yearned for it. We love Him because He *first* loved us; and if you have the smallest longing towards the Lord, you may be sure that He has put that longing there, in answer to His own desire for you.

Do you know why Katie could not see Him as her Saviour? Because she was looking into her own poor little miserable heart to see some wonderful change wrought *there*! She read all the stories of conversion in the New Testament, and in all there seemed to come some wonderful change, so Katie thought; and she fancied that, like Paul, scales might fall from her eyes, or that she would see a vision, or hear words said to her, and all this mistake was because Katie did not know that she was *Lost*! that her heart was so bad that God would not trust it one bit—but that away from her altogether, before ever she was born, God had settled the whole question of sin in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ—she had nothing to do with it. God had done it all; that is what Katie did not know; and now she became very careless, and tried for a long time to forget all about it. She threw her whole heart into all that was pleasant, and she thought she would soon get gay and thoughtless like other girls.

But there is a Person in Heaven set down at God's right hand, and that Person had His eyes on Katie all the while. He knew every thought in her heart, whether by day or by night; and He loved her, He thought of her as one for whom He had

died on the cross. He was the Good Shepherd who gave His life for the sheep, who loves His little lambs, and who goes after them until He finds them, and when He finds one missing lamb, what does He do? He carries it home in His arms, rejoicing, and saying, I have found my sheep which was lost. Reader, you were also a missing lamb from the fold of Christ. Are you now being carried in those arms that were once stretched out upon the cross for you? Oh, the pain to that Holy One, to hang upon a shameful cross, and all for sinners, such as you and me, for "in Him is no sin." Thus the Good Shepherd watched over Katie.

It was soon after this that she lost one whom she greatly loved. She had been lonely before, but now she felt as if the earth was too desolate to be borne, and she said to herself, "I must have God, or I shall die." Katie had plenty of kind friends; many who loved her, but none could give her happiness, and she felt that Jesus could. Katie was beginning to feel what it is to be lost—a lost soul! God far away, and all darkness around. Many nights she lay awake for a long time thinking sad and dreadful thoughts—that God heard everyone but her; that perhaps He never would hear her; and a great deal more that Satan was glad to make her think. But when Jesus went up to heaven, God sent His Holy Spirit down into the world to stay here till Jesus comes back again; and when Satan tells children what is not true about God, the Holy Spirit comes and says something too. He is a great deal stronger than Satan, and He knows all God's love and power. So that if people would only listen to Him instead of listening to Satan they would always know what is *true* of God. Thus one night the Holy Spirit whispered into Katie's heart the question, Did not Jesus say: "He that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out?" And then such a number of verses came into Katie's mind, that she was quite surprised; and she began to think over the whole life of Jesus; she recalled the lovely story of His birth, and of the shepherds rejoicing in company with the heavenly host; that a Saviour was born for man; the thought of His

lowly life, and of His terrible death; and as it came to her mind that that perfect One had suffered in the sinners' place, the words "It is finished" seemed illuminated before her eyes. "It is finished" she repeated, *what is finished? all is finished, and finished for me, for me!* She jumped out of bed, and though the room was quite dark, it seemed lighted up to Katie, as she knelt there and spoke, for the first time consciously, to the One who had finished all for her, who had given her eternal life that she might never perish. She asked Him to tell her if she was mistaken, and to make her quite sure if she was right, and as she spoke to Him, He felt so near it almost seemed as if He touched her, and as if a cord from Him was cast around her, and that she was tied to Him for ever.

And truly so it had come to pass. Jesus had bound up in the bundle of life with Himself this poor desolate child, whom nothing in this world could satisfy; whom no one could make happy but Himself; and, as she lay down again on her pillow, she felt such calm rest come over her as of a tired child who had found rest on a mother's arm. The Good Shepherd's arm was round about her, and there was joy in the presence of the angels of God over the lamb that was found by the Shepherd. When Katie awoke, and the daylight came, she thought "Oh I have been only dreaming—it is all fancy." The thought was

agony. Then she thought, that is not being converted; but the feeling as of a cord around her made her spring out of bed, and pray to God to make it all true, and not to let her lose what she had got; and the more she talked to God, the more she saw it all, and the more true it all became. So whenever she could get a quiet moment she kept telling it over to God,—how He had done it all, and how much He must have loved her. But what she thanked Him for most of all was His mercy in showing her what He had done. Now she began to feel so happy; she seemed to have something to live for—to learn more about Jesus.

And *now* came the change *in* her which Katie had so longed for. She opened her little Bible, which had been a dreaded page to her, and she felt a pang as she thought of how she had hated those very words of the great and holy God,—how He had not struck her with blindness, or put it out of her reach; but had now given it to her as her most precious possession on earth. And so it proved to Katie on through her whole life. Till she was an old woman, the word of God was her companion, her comfort, her resource; so that she used often to say she could never be lonely again.

The Shepherd's bosom bears each lamb
O'er rock, and waste, and wild,
The object of that love I am—
And carried like a child.

TOMMY'S VERSE.

TOMMY was a little waif, gathered into a ragged-school in the north of the metropolis. Possessing many of those traits of character which are only to be found in those poor children who have no home but the streets, he attracted our particular attention, and we were sorry indeed when, for several days, we missed him from the school. How anxiously did we await his return! for we thought he would come, and at last he came. He was brought to us as a truant, and we took him to our own room, that we might speak to him alone.

"Why were you not at school, Tommy?"

"'Cos my mammy collared a pair o' boots, an' the bobby took her."

"Can you sing?"

"Yes, sare."

"What?"

"'Jesus lubs me; yes I knows.'"

And then he sang his verse out of time and tune, but full of expression.

Poor lad! A few hours later we saw his mother before the judge, and committed to prison for twelve months. A few days later we saw the father committed to prison from the same dock. But Tommy,

although forsaken by father and mother, yet went on singing,—

“Jesus loves me; yes I know,
For the Bible tells me so;
Little ones to Him belong;
They are weak, but He is strong.
Yes, Jesus loves me;
The Bible tells me so.”

Where Tommy is now we know not. We lost sight of him two years since, but some months ago we told Tommy's story to the children under our care in the north of England. Little Willie heard us, and Tommy's verse sank into his young heart like good seed into good ground. Willie's father had been a soldier, but had died, and his mother had died too. Willie loved his mother dearly, but little thought how soon *he* would fall asleep. Jesus gathers His little lambs, and folds them in His bosom.

Willie fell sick, and after a long and painful illness rapidly faded away.

We told him that the physician had said he could not live, and spoke to him about Jesus, and the simple plan of salvation.

How earnestly did he listen to the story of the cross, and of Jesus bidding the little ones to come.

“I will pray to Him while I have the chance,” said he.

One day we laid him upon a couch in our own room, and for a short time he was left alone. When the matron entered, he exclaimed,—

“Oh, I am *so* happy, so happy! I do love to hear the girls in the home sing ‘Jesus loves me.’”

As his end drew near he called the matron to him that she might tell him “the sweet story of old.”


Often did he desire to die; but when told that God had an *appointed* time, his reply was,—“Then I'll wait.”

Several of his school-fellows gathered round his little bed, that they might see their playmate once more. We enquired if he needed anything, when he desired them to sing Tommy's verse, “Jesus loves us!” This they did, and then a verse of that beautiful hymn commencing, “Oh, won't you be a Christian while you're young?” But he was too weak to hear more, and the little ones bade the sufferer farewell.

A little later he desired his nurse to arrange his few treasures in his box for his tiny and only sister. This done, he took a little drink, laid his head upon the pillow, and fell asleep in Jesus. He gave us a message to take to his school-fellows,—it was very short,—“Tell them to meet me in Heaven.”

We have briefly told you the unvarnished story of little Tommy and Willie, and the little verse.—
Extracted.

AUNT MARY'S TALK ABOUT THE PRECIOUS THINGS OF GOD.

 AUNT MARY is so glad to tell her little Talks to the many dear children who read this paper! They may not have read the former “Talks,” but she will try to make everything as plain as possible, so that if any are not able to get the first little volume, she hopes they will understand all she has to tell them.

Days, months, and even a whole year passed away before Aunt Mary again saw her little nephew. Often had she wished he were sitting by her side, that she might talk to him about the precious things of God. Aunt Mary did not forget the question Willie put to her when they were last together.

Would my little readers like to know what that question was?

At their last talk he heard a little about the new creation of God, to whom every one who believes in Jesus, the Son of God, as his own Saviour, belongs. The Lord Jesus Christ, now in the glory of God, and hid in the heavens, is the head of the new creation. When Jesus went back to His Father He sent the Holy Spirit from the glory into this world, and the body of every believer, or of every member of the new creation, is a temple for the blessed Spirit to dwell in. Aunt Mary told Willie God's new creation would never be spoiled as the beautiful old one had been. The

man whom God set over the first creation, as its head, ruined it, though God had wished him to enjoy it all with Himself. When God had finished the first creation, He looked upon it with great delight, and said it was "all very good." It must have been so, and God could rest in it, because it was all His own workmanship. It was perfect, like everything which comes from God.

When Willie heard this, he said, "I should like to know what the old creation things were with which God was so very well pleased."

Would my young friends like to hear what further talk Aunt Mary had with Willie about these old creation things?

Aunt Mary thought they would like to do so, and has written what follows, that they, as well as her little nephews, Dodo and Willie, may learn more of what Scripture teaches us about God, His wonderful works, and His tender, gracious ways with man. May the blessing of the Lord rest on every mother, who, seeking to interest her child in the precious things of God, may read these pages to him; and may each child who listens to what his dear mamma may read, yield his heart to the precious Saviour, who lovingly said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me."

"Bring your Bible, Willie, for we shall wish to look at what is written in the first chapter of the book of Genesis. Tell me, dear, which book in the Bible is Genesis?"

"It is the first book in all the Bible, and Revelation is the last."

"Quite right, Willie. Genesis tells us of the creation and beginning of everything, and Revelation speaks of the end of these things, as well as of God's judgment on all that is not pleasing to Him. When that judgment takes place, those who do not now yield to Jesus as their Saviour must meet Him as their Judge, and then He will cast them into the lake of fire. In Genesis we do not read of God acting in judgment, but of His coming out full of blessing, and making this earth a lovely dwelling-place, ready for the man He intended to put there. Would you like me to tell you a very curious name that has been given to the book of Genesis?"

"Very much, Aunt Mary, by what funny name has it been called?"

"The seed-plot of the Bible."

"How very odd! Why did it get such a name?"

"Because in the book of Genesis God tells us a *little* about the very many things, of which He speaks *much more* elsewhere in Scripture. There is, however, something spoken of in Genesis of which there is never again mention made in the Bible. Something which there never will again be in this world."

"What can that be, Aunt Mary?"

"We read in Genesis of an *innocent* man. Adam and the wife God gave to him were *innocent* when He placed them in the beautiful Garden of Eden, but they ceased to be so when they disobeyed God. Then they became sinners, and never again could be *innocent*. This is why we never hear of an *innocent* man after the second chapter of Genesis. Even the little baby when it is born into this world is a sinner, because it is descended from Adam. You will remember I told you this when we spoke of the difference between Adam before he fell, and the Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the angel said to Mary before His birth, 'That *holy* thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.' Luke i. 35. He was different from any other child that was ever born into this world, but he was something more than innocent. He was *holy*. My young readers may learn the difference between *innocent* and *holy*, if they will turn to page 162 of "Aunt Mary's Talk about the Precious Things of God." There they may read what Willie was told as to the difference between the *holy* Lord Jesus, and Adam, when he was an *innocent* man.

(To be continued.)

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THE CHILD'S BIBLE COMPANION.



THE SONG OF THE BIRD

WHAT THE SPARROW CHIRPS.



I AM only a little sparrow,
 A bird of low degree,
 My life is of little value,
 But the dear Lord cares for me.

He gives me a coat of feathers,
 It is very plain, I know,
 Without a speck of crimson,
 For it was not made for show.

But it keeps me warm in winter,
 And it shields me from the rain ;
 Were it bordered with gold and purple,
 Perhaps it might make me vain.

But now that the spring-time cometh,
 I will build me a little nest,
 With many a chirp of pleasure,
 In the spot I like the best.

I have no barn or storehouse,
 I neither sow nor reap,
 God gives me a sparrow's portion,
 And never a seed to keep.

If my meat is sometimes scanty,
 Close pecking makes it sweet ;

I have always enough to feed me,
 And life is more than meat.

I know there are many sparrows,
 All over the world they are found ;
 But our Heavenly Father knoweth
 When *one* of us falls to the ground.

Though small, we are never forgotten,
 Though weak, we are never afraid,
 For we know that the dear Lord keepeth
 The life of the creatures He made.

I fly through the thickest forest,
 I alight on many a spray,
 I have no chart or compass,
 But I never lose my way.

I just fold my wings at twilight,
 Wherever I happen to be,
 For the Father is always watching,
 And no *harm* can come to me.

I am only a little sparrow,
 A bird of low degree,
 But I know the Father loves me—
 Dost *thou* know His love for *thee* ?

AUNT MARY'S TALK ABOUT THE PRECIOUS THINGS OF GOD.

But, Aunt Mary, does God tell us in the Bible *all* He ever did ?

No, He only tells us so much as He sees it needful for us to know. People have got into a sad mess by guessing about things, which God has not told us. Many of the learned men of this world have done so, and thus they are not really so wise as the little child, who listens to what God has written in His Word, and asks no questions. (1 Cor. i. 27). But before we look into Gen. i., I would like you to learn a verse, which you must endeavour to keep in mind, whilst we read the account given to us by God in the Scriptures of the Old Creation, and the way He arranged everything on this earth to please Himself.

What is the verse, and where shall I find it in my Bible ?

It is the 3rd verse of the 11th chapter of the Hebrews. Let us read it together first, and then you may repeat it to me all by yourself : "*By faith* we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen *were not* made of things which do appear." Now Willie, how is it we are to understand all about the Old Creation ?

By "faith."

Very good, and a little girl once said when asked the meaning of faith, " It is believing what God says, and asking no questions." Now you will remember what Heb. xi. 3 teaches us. Creation means God causing, by His word, something to be, though there was nothing out of which that thing could be made. God alone could do this. How wonderful His power is ! It is quite beyond us to understand the greatness of His power. We should be afraid of the Mighty God if He were not our Father, but how very reverently we should think of our Father in heaven, when we remember He is the Wonderful, the Almighty God, who can cause anything to exist by merely saying " Let it be." But, Willie, there is something more wonderful than all this. Think of this great and

powerful God coming into this world as a helpless little babe, so that we might know God as our Father, and have all fear of the mighty God taken out of our hearts ! The Lord Jesus was God manifest in the flesh. He was the Godhead in the form of a lowly man, who said to His brethren, " I am among you as him that serveth." How low the mighty God stooped ! No one was ever so humble as the Lord Jesus, and yet He was God. That same blessed man is now in heaven, and He asks us to continue thinking *how He loved us*. But then God is not the Father of every one in the sense of which we are now speaking. Un-saved people have not had their fear of God taken away. They may well be afraid of God, for His mighty power will all be against them, because they refuse now to come to Jesus and to know God as their Father. They will have to meet Him, for we read " The small and great (shall) stand before God, . . . and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works " (Rev. xx. 12). But let me see if you know the meaning of the word *Creation* ?

It is God saying a thing was to be, and it was, though there was nothing out of which He could make that thing.

Quite right, Willie, dear. Now look at the first verse of the first chapter of Genesis ; for that is what we are taught with regard to the heavens and the earth.

But why does it say the earth was without form, and that it was all dark ? Did God create it like that ?

Ah, I see you have been looking on to the second verse ; but we do not know how many years there were between the creation of the heavens and the earth, of which we read in the first verse, and the state into which the earth had got as we find it described in the second verse. This is one of the things which God did not feel we required to know, but in another part of Scripture He has told us He did not create it so.



THE GIBEONITES DECEIVING JOSHUA AND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL.

There are two or three places near the Neby Samwil, which we must talk about. First, there is Gibeon, whose name means "a hill," as do Geba and Gibeah. The first syllable of these words is the same as that in Gibraltar. That is an Arabic word; it means the rock or hill of Tarifa, a great general who came over from Africa, and conquered Spain. The Arabic language is very much like the Hebrew, and the word "Gib" in Hebrew means a hill. Gibeon was a very famous hill. It is not far from the Neby Samwil, and not quite so high. Can you remember anything about the Gibeonites?

Ch.—They deceived Joshua, and the children

of Israel. They made them think they had come from a great distance, when they really were their neighbours.

Yes, they put on old shoes, and worn clothes, and took mouldy bread with them, and old wine skins which had been mended, and then went with all these things to the camp of Israel. They said that they had come a long journey and wanted to make a treaty with them. Joshua suspected them at first, but they told him lies, and shewed him the state of their victuals, and so Joshua and the princes swore that they would not hurt them. They did not, however, ask counsel of the Lord, which they ought to have done. Had

they sought to know the Lord's mind, they would not have been taken in by such a trick. Men "lie in wait to deceive." "They deceive the simple," but they can never deceive those who ask counsel of the Lord. There is nothing so dangerous for us as to think *we know*, and to imagine that we can get on by our own understanding. "Lean not to thine own understanding."

Three days after Joshua and the army of Israel found that they had been deceived, and that the Gibeonites were among the nations whom God had told them to destroy utterly. So they made them slaves, and the Gibeonites had to hew wood and draw water for the Levites and priests who did the service of the Lord's altar.

It is, however, very interesting to see how the Lord over-ruled the wickedness of the Gibeonites, and the folly of the Israelites. All the other kings of the Canaanites were very angry with the Gibeonites for having played them false in this way; they had reckoned on Gibeon, which was one of their chief cities, to help them against the Israelites, and now that the Gibeonites had allied themselves to Israel, they all united to attack it. The kings of Jerusalem, of Hebron, of Jarmuth, of Lachish, and of Eglon joined their armies together, and marched upon Gibeon, and began to set siege to it.

The Gibeonites sent to Joshua and the army of Israel to come and help them, and Joshua immediately ordered all the soldiers to follow him from Gilgal, in the plain of Jordan, where the camp was, up the steep ravine that led to Gibeon. They marched all night, what soldiers would call a forced march, past Ai, which they had taken, and took the Amorite army by surprise, coming upon them over the heights to the east of Gibeon. The Canaanites fled up towards the west, till they came to Beth-horon the upper, then they hurried down the wady which leads to the maritime plain, and as they were descending, the Lord cast great hail stones from heaven upon them, and they died. "Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still

upon Gibeon; and thou, moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies." (*Josh. x. 12. 13.*) So God, who made the sun and moon, bade them help the victory of His people Israel; the enemies could not make use of the darkness of night to escape, nor Israel lose the advantage of the victory by being obliged to wait for the daylight to return.

This is not the only occasion on which God, the great Creator of all, has interfered with His own prescribed order of day and night. He did it again in Hezekiah's reign, when the shadow returned backward ten degrees. And again, when the Lord Jesus was on the Cross, darkness was made to cover all the land at mid-day from the sixth hour to the ninth.

God will again interrupt the course of day and night, and those seasons, which he has made. The time will come when "the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken." (*Matt. xxiv. 29.*) "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." (*2 Pet. iii. 10.*) All God's works are in His hands; He can lay them by for a time, change their laws, or destroy them entirely, as He pleases. God has darkened the sun in the middle of the day, and He has forbidden it to go down at its usual appointed time, and He will "fold up the heavens *as a vesture*," which we lay aside when done with. But of this we are certain; He will never change His mind towards His own people. If you believe in Jesus, dear children, you have eternal life, and you may see the sun put out and the stars fall from heaven, but you need not fear, "*your life is hid with Christ in God.*"

But to return to the Canaanites; they had everything against them, because they were "fighting against God." The hail-storm, the sun and the moon, all was against them.

(*To be continued.*)



JOSHUA COMMANDING THE SUN TO STAND STILL.

LINES IN ONE SYLLABLE FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES.

PRAISE YE THE LORD.

Cast round your eyes,
Both far and near :
See this great world,
So bright, so fair,
How came it here ?
Not art of man
Could plan its frame,
Nor hands of man
Could form the same ;
No : from the Lord
Of all it came,
Made by His Word.
Praise ye the Lord !

'Twas in six days
The world was made,
The sky was spread,
The earth was laid,
The sea was stay'd ;
The ground was clad
With all that grows.
And all that breathe
In air, earth, seas,
Made by the Lord,
To life arose,
All good. Praise Him who
[made them.

When man was made
The last, the best,
God gave him rule
O'er all the rest ;
With soul to love
And voice to praise
The Lord of life,
Through all his days.
Good from the Lord's
Own hand he came :
But sin brought on
Him death and shame.
But there is One
Of might, and will,
To change our hearts,
And save us still.

Then trust His grace and
[praise His name !

Oh let our lives,
And all we have,
Lead up our hearts
To Him who gave.
The more we view
His works and ways,
The more our tongues
Shall speak His praise.

“ All things were made by Him, and without Him
was not anything made that was made.”

JOHN i. 3.

“ He hath made everything beautiful in His time.”

ECCLES. iii. 11.

A BOY'S HARD STRUGGLE.

AND THE VERSE THAT TOOK HIM "RIGHT INTO HEAVEN."

William A. T. was the eldest son of a family of ten. At an early age he was apprenticed to a machinist. William loved his mother, who was a widow, very dearly, and even from that early age he struggled hard to provide for her and the family. This strain of hard work soon told on his constitution. At twenty, severe symptoms of disease set in; and after weeks of dreadful suffering he was removed to a hospital at C——. Instead of improving he rapidly became worse, and his body was soon covered with painful sores.

But poor William had a deeper sorrow than this. By some means, good and affectionate as he truly was to his now sorrowful widowed mother, he had found out he was a sinner, and he was weary with the burden of his sins.

It was just at this point, on Lord's day morning, October 8th of last year, I received a message that William was dying, and without Christ. Unable at that moment to go myself, I at once requested a young man to visit him. What was my joy to receive, the same evening, the following note:—"I cannot sufficiently thank you for sending me to the hospital. While I was there I believe poor William A. T. found peace. He told his mother he could die happy now, and begged her to tell all his friends he was saved."

I want to tell you, dear children, some of the simple words he said to me, the next day, as to the way he was saved; how sorrowful he had been before, and how happy he was till the moment he fell asleep in Christ. "I do bless God," he said, "that He sent that dear young man—he came and said, 'I am sent by M. C., and I have come to know if you are resting in the blood of Jesus, whether you have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ?' I said, 'Have I nothing to do but believe?' 'Nothing at all. God says, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.' The Lord Jesus Himself says, 'Verily, verily, I say

unto you, he that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.' Oh! I shall never forget his face as he looked down on me, and the words he spoke seemed to come before me as a bright light. *It was just what I wanted*, and I felt I could give myself up to the Lord. That dear young man, I do love him so." Then speaking of his past life, he said, "I had heard the Word of God scores of times, and thought it was too simple to be saved only by believing. I have often prayed, and sometimes I thought God heard my prayers, and sometimes that He did not. When I was told I was only to believe, I used to think—but what about *my sins*? Many a night I would lie awake, and pray and promise that the next day I would think of good things, and try and live more seriously, but some little thing would come along and throw me back, and at night I would think how can I pray to the Lord for these things again when I've lived as I have to-day? Often when singing beautiful hymns I would cry, but it all passed away, and there was *no satisfaction*, for I was such a great sinner. All I did seemed of no use, and when I heard that salvation was only believing, I thought, ah! but I've got a great deal to do, I've got to have all my sins forgiven and lead a good life, and so there was *no satisfaction*."

The day following this first interview, he said with great fervour, "I feel sure I'm saved. I don't think if God spares me I shall ever alter from this." I read to him the tenth chapter of John, dwelling on the verse, "No man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand," and told him he was not saved because he *felt* he was, but because God says, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." (John iii. 36.) I said, "Perhaps to-morrow Satan may try and make you believe you are not saved." Laying his hand on the Bible

he said, "But Satan cannot alter *that*," and, blessed be God, his whole trust was in His word, unflinching, unwavering trust.

On one occasion I found him groaning from the pain in the legs, which he described as like knives scraping the flesh from the bones; he said, "Pray for me, please, I keep asking the Lord as I lay here to give me relief if it is His blessed will." I knelt and entreated for him, and the groans became less and less, and as I rose he said, "My pain is easier now."

About this time I asked if his mother were a Christian. "She professes to be," he replied, "but I cannot say if she believes as I do now," and he was very anxious for me to see her; we arranged that, God permitting, I should meet her the next day. The opportunity was given. After speaking to her about her son, I said, "Have you peace with God?" She replied, "No, I don't feel prepared to die, though I've been so anxious about my son; I've often prayed, but my prayers are so dry and simple. There must be a wonderful change." Her poor son began to weep bitterly, and to plead with her; I never witnessed such an affecting scene. "Oh' mother," said he, "why did you not tell me this before, I am unhappy to hear you say this;" and, turning to me, he said, "Read her that beautiful verse that *took me right into heaven*." I read, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, *hath* everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." "Yes! do you see, mother, *believeth . . . hath* everlasting life? I am depending *entirely* on this verse. I have nothing else to depend upon. Now don't look at your prayers. Do you think of the load of your sins? So did I; I used to think God could not look upon me with such a load of sin. He saw me lying here, wretched, and not able to find any satisfaction, and then He sent that young man to tell me this. Now tell me, mother, do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ?" Slowly but surely the confession came, "I do believe, I do see it as I never did before." "Oh! mother, will you meet me in heaven? Now don't say 'I hope so,' never say hope again—say yes,"

The earnest pleading and tears of that dear suffering one for his mother, whom he so earnestly loved, was intense,—he clenched her hand and kissed it with great affection. I afterwards learned from her of the miserable state she had been in for two years, looking into her own heart and seeing nothing but sin, looking into God's word and seeing her condemnation as a sinner; but with tears of joy she exclaimed, "The burden is gone now, and I can give up my dear son to the Lord, He is doing all for the best."

William spoke of his only brother with great earnestness. "Oh! my dear brother, if he would only give himself up to the Lord he would be so happy; but he is well and strong; he is a good hard-working lad. When I think of my brother and sisters, without Christ and without hope, it preys upon me." I never saw such gratitude as he showed for any little kindness; he told me that all was now being done for him that was possible, and that if he were a prince, he could not have better attention. He said, "I used to think it was hard to lie here and suffer, but I don't now. I do so long to be with the Lord, I should be glad if He took me to-night. I think sometimes in the night I can see Him standing looking down on me. Tell Mr. S—— I am longing to be with Jesus."

I had been prevented from seeing him for a few days; when I went again he said, "A young man came into the hospital suffering severely, having been hurt by falling from a ship's mast. In the night I heard him groaning in pain, and being unable to move to go to him, I asked him if he could come and sit by me, as I wanted to speak to him. He was nearly blind, but with much effort felt his way along the beds, guided by my voice. I took his hand and said, 'I want to know if you are resting on the blood of Christ?' He said, 'Yes, I am; I've been a wicked lad, but I had a good father, and he kept praying for me, and now I'm trusting in the Saviour.' 'Then,' I said, 'we shall meet in heaven, brother.' The next day the poor fellow died."

It may be, some of my dear youthful readers, like poor William, have got a weary heart. You too have felt a load of sin pressing heavily on your

soul. If so, let me tell you his last words, "I shall soon meet you in heaven, I'm resting on the blood." Dear sorrowful child, when you by faith can look up and see Jesus on the throne of God

—the Lamb that was slain—and can say, "I'm resting on the blood," you will find that you have a blessed resting-place for your heart.

M.C.

A LIGHT IN A DARK PLACE.

"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."

What does this verse mean? How can the Word of God be a lamp to our feet?

I will try and explain it to you, dear children. Suppose you had to take a long walk on a dark night in winter, what would you take with you?

We should take a lantern.

And what would you do with the lantern?

We should carry it in our hands, that we might see the path.

Yes, it would throw its light on the path, and this is what the Word of God does. The other day one of you asked me what we ought to do to those who treat us unkindly. What did I tell you?

You said, "Pray for them which despitefully use you."

Where did I find those words?

In the Bible.

Yes, so this verse shows us one of the ways in which the Word of God is a lamp. It shows us how to act when we are treated unkindly. David was once in very great trouble. He had sinned against God, and was very unhappy. And while he was so unhappy, God sent him a message by a prophet. It was this, "The Lord also hath put away thy sin." How glad David must have been to get such a message. It was like a lamp shining on the path. And God wrote it in His Book, that it might be a light to us too, dear children. I could tell you a great many verses which God has given us to be like lamps for us. All God's Word is a lamp which will light us, if we will only let it do so.

Thy Word my feet shall guide,

Along the narrow way,

Oh keep me ever near Thy side,

Nor let my footsteps stray.

What is a candlestick for?

To put a candle in.

Does a candlestick give any light?

No, it cannot give any light by itself, but when it holds a candle it is very useful.

Now dear children, you who believe in the Lord Jesus, God wants you to be like little candlesticks. You have no light in yourselves; by nature your own hearts are dark and know nothing about God. But when the Word of God shines in us, it is as if God had lighted a candle and placed it in a candlestick, that others might see the light.

The moon has no light in itself, but you know what a bright beautiful light it gives. The reason is this; the moon turns towards the sun, and when the sun has set, and we cannot see it, it shines on the moon, and the moon reflects the light on us. The bright star which we see in the west, after the sun has set, is also a reflection of the light of the sun. The star has no light in itself.

May our hearts learn to turn towards the Lord Jesus, and then we shall be like little stars reflecting His brightness, while He is away.

"I am the light of the world, he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John viii. 12.)

"The light of the body is the eye, if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." (Matt. vi. 22.)

THE WILD ASS.

DO you know who it is whom God compares to a wild ass?

He compares disobedient, unruly man to a wild ass. You will find the verse in Job,—“Vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt” (ch. xi. 12).

To be compared to a colt is not very flattering; a colt is so foolish, and unable to take care of itself. But God does not merely say “a colt,” He says an “ass's colt.” We generally think asses stupid, but they are not so stupid as the man who does not obey God, as you may learn by the history of Balaam (2 Pet. ii. 16). Nor is it merely *the colt of an ass*, it is the colt of a *wild ass*.

Do you know why we are compared to a wild ass's colt? It is because the wild ass will not be controlled. “He regardeth not the crying of the driver”—“his foot is unshod” (Job xxxix. 5—8). “He scorns the multitude of the city.” “He snuffs up the wind at his pleasure” (Jer. ii. 24, 25). What would you think of such a free life? He must like to be free. No tiresome shoes on his feet! No saddle on his back! No driver's whip behind him! Perhaps some of you may think that you would like that sort of life, but God is wiser than we are, and you will find that *He* knows what is best for us. God does not approve of *wild ass ways*, because He knows such ways are not really for our good and happiness, and God wants us to be really happy. The wild ass “searches after every green thing,” but finds very little to eat, for “his dwellings are the barren land.” He will not have a master, and the consequence is that his “throat” is “dry” with “thirst.” While the owner of the obedient domestic ass is giving him a good meal of food and drink, the wild ass is scouring over the desert often without sufficient of either.

Does that remind you of any story in the New Testament? Do you remember the story of the Prodigal Son? He thought it would be very pleasant to be away from home, and to do as he liked, but he was soon so hungry, he would have

been glad to eat the food which was given to the swine, “but no man gave unto him.”

Now compare with this the tame ass, which has a master who gives him a comfortable crib. He “knows his master's crib” (Isa. i. 3), because he has experienced its comforts, and remembers the good food and refreshing rest he has had there. He has somebody to think of him and provide for him. The Lord Jesus tells us that His sheep “know” Him, and David, who was one of them, could say, “The Lord thinketh upon me” (Psalm xl. 17). He was not like a “wild ass,” he was glad to be provided for, and thought of.

The Bible tells us something more about domestic asses. The Lord Jesus rode upon an ass when He entered into Jerusalem as King, the Son of David, who had a right to reign there. A great multitude spread their garments in the way, and cried, “Hosanna to the son of David; blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.” But a few days after that “they crucified him.” Princes used to ride on asses in the Eastern countries (Judges v. 10; xii. 14). Those who “sit in judgment” were princes or judges, they were the great men. No wild ass ever had the privilege of serving a judge or prince, and it was on an ass which had an “owner,” a master, that the Lord Jesus rode into Jerusalem. It was of the obedient ass that it is said, “The Lord hath need of him.”

Now dear children, has our little talk about the wild ass made you think of anything in yourselves? Do you know that you have in you a nature like that of the wild ass? You like *your own ways*! Alas, we all do, and God has to teach all His children that their own way is a bad way, and that His way is the only good and happy path for them! But He wishes us to behave as *children*, and be guided by His eye, not as the horse or mule, which need the “bit and bridle” to hold them in. May each one hear the voice of the Good Shepherd, and be led by Him into “green pastures.”

THE SINGING OF BIRDS.

HOPE there are not many of my little readers who are not delighted by the singing of birds, even if it be but the chirp of the city sparrow.

And I hope there are no little children who do not love birds, for even if they were not so charming in themselves, we ought to love everything which God saw was of importance enough for Him to make.

You remember, in the first chapter of Genesis, when it tells about God making the earth, and getting it ready for the man, it was on the fifth day that He made the fowls that fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. He had been making the grass and trees and fishes, and the sun, moon and stars; but, before He made the cattle He made the birds. Now should not you have thought that when He made grain and grass and cattle, and all those useful things, He would have thought the world was ready enough for man, without the birds and flowers?

One time a little bird taught Luther a lesson. He was filled with care and anxiety about various things, so that he was quite depressed, when a little bird came along, and went to bed on a tree, under his window. He just smoothed his feathers, tucked his feet under his wings and went to sleep. "Well," Luther thought, "that is just how my Father would have me to be, without care," and then the Lord preached a sermon to his heart about "consider the ravens; for they sow not, nor reap, which have neither store-house nor barn, and God feedeth them; how much more are ye better than the fowls."

Some years ago I was in a place where each morning there was such exquisite music of birds as only you who have lived in the country can know. But what do you suppose my thoughts about it were? I thought these little creatures are doing God's will as I cannot do it; each day they exactly obey those instincts which God has implanted within them, and their music as it rises

up to God's ear is very sweet to Him. But as for me, I can only make discord. There is not a single harmonious note which ever ascends from my heart to God, and I wept tears of agony at the thought.

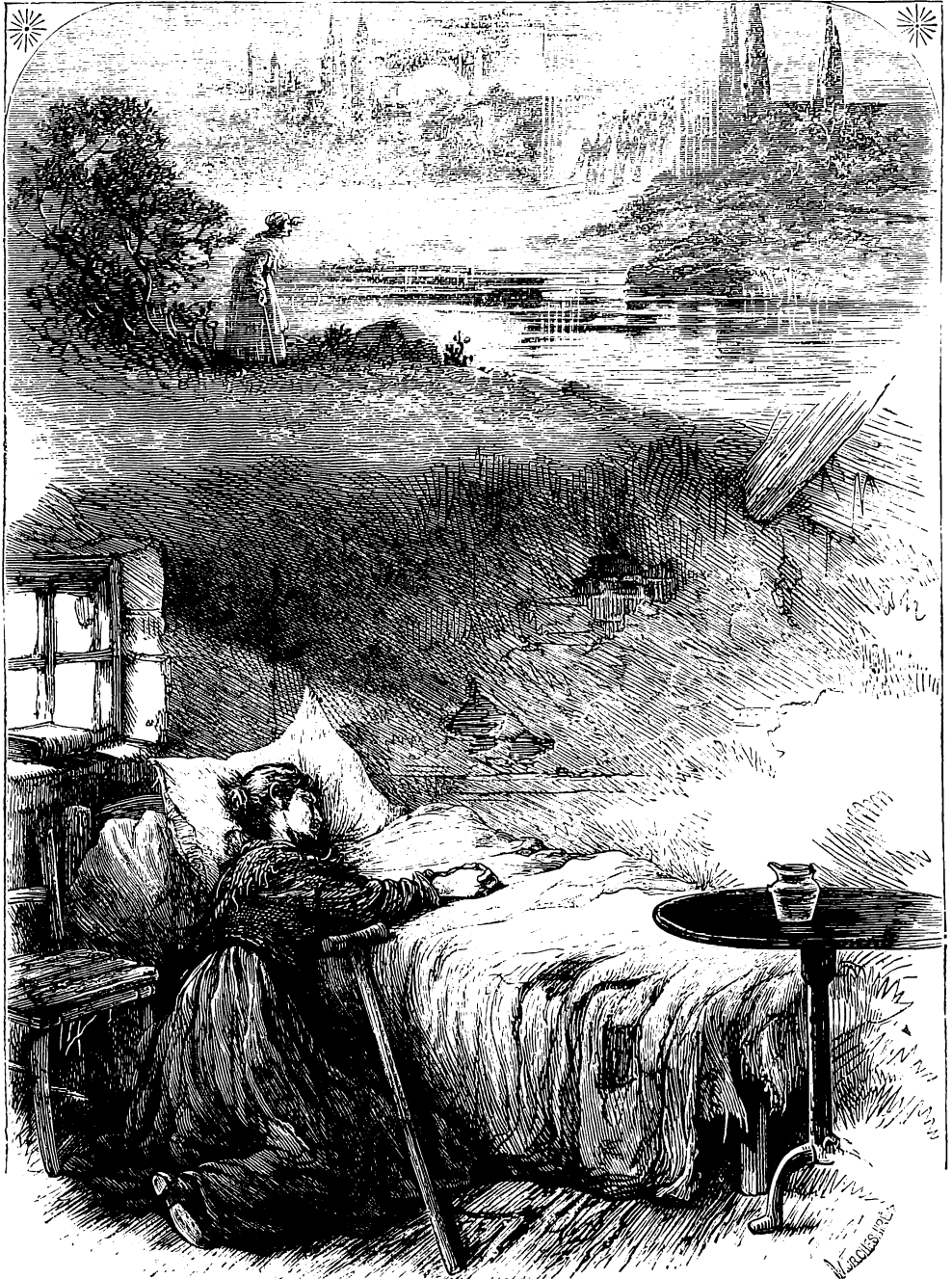
Can you tell me how it was that my heart, your heart, the hearts of all, got so out of harmony, with God? It was not always so, surely, for "He looked upon all that He had made and pronounced it very good." It was sin, was it not, that brought this discordant principle into our world?

But then God could not bear that it should be always so; He wanted to hear songs again from His creature man, that He had made so good, and He planned it so (but I must tell you that it is just like God to do so,) that there should come to His ears far sweeter, richer songs from His vile creatures, WASHED in the blood of the Lamb, than ever came from Adam, or even from the angels. For instance, this is one of them—"Unto Him, who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests to God, even His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever."

Now, dear child, will you not ask Jesus to take the discord out of your heart, so that you may sing the NEW SONG? It is a song that never was heard before, in all God's creation; even the angels listen to this new song in adoration and wonder. And what is so wonderful about it is that none but WASHED SINNERS can sing it.

God does not invite any righteous people, only sinners. He does not invite GOOD children, but BAD children, and when such come to Him, He never turns them away, but puts this song into their mouth. Will you come? "And they sing a NEW song, saying, Thou art worthy, for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation." (Rev. v. 9.)

THE CHILD'S BIBLE COMPANION.



A DREAM OF THE GOLDEN CITY.

GOING TO THE GOLDEN CITY.

Lame and old, lame and old,
She lived alone in a mud-built cot,
Walls and windows let in the cold ;
Desolate, desolate seem'd her lot.

Food in winter was hard to win,
Fuel to warm her harder still ;
She had buried her last of kith and kin ;
She was poor and lonely, and old and ill.

Never a fire in her tiny grate
Had shone to-day with its feeble spark :
The sun was setting in pomp and state—
Setting, to leave her alone and dark.

Whence the light in her aged eye ?
Whence the smile on her furrow'd brow ?
'Tis a beam from the Saviour's throne on high,
A seal of His presence with her now.

Surely for some the golden gates
Are opened awhile ere they enter in,
And they taste the glory which yet awaits
The spirit ransom'd from death and sin.

She knelt on her rough, uneven floor,
And bent her cheek on the broken bed ;
And want and weakness were felt no more,
For tears of joy were the tears she shed.

" O Father in heaven, Thy love has been
Ever around me in weal and woe :
I thank Thee for all that mine eyes have seen,
Of all Thy faithfulness here below.

" I thank the Great Shepherd that follow'd me,
And made me one of His happy flock ;
And though from His side in heart I oft stray,
My feet, praise His grace, ne'er slip off the Rock.

" And day after day Thy Spirit's grace
Has led me on with unwearied love,
And now I soon shall behold Thy face
In the happy home of Thy saints above.

" Father in heaven, be with me still !
Jesus, my Saviour, oh, quickly come !
Free me from every earthly ill,
And bear me speedily, safely home !"

The widow slept ; and while her eyes
Were closed in slumber, a dream she dream'd,
Filling her soul with sweet surprise,
So strange and yet so true it seem'd.

When morning dawns, and the widow wakes,
" It could only have been a dream," she cried,
" How swift a journey the spirit takes !
I thought at first I had surely died."

Her scanty store for a scanty meal,
She carried in to a neighbour's near ;
" I should like the warmth of your fire to feel,
And to eat my morsel in comfort here."

" Ay, ay, come in ; there is always room,
And put thy chair in the old man's nook,
And tell him something to chase his gloom,
Out of thy favourite, holy Book.

" Thou hast a scanty breakfast." " Nay,
It is enough," she quickly cried.
" The promise fails not from day to day,
I know my Father will still provide.

" And if so be He should want me home,
It is a token that's easily read :
Whenever he means to bid me come,
And not before, He will stop the bread."

" You're happy, Nancy ?" " Ay, ay," she cried ;
" And so would you be, if you were me ;
There's never a sinner for whom Christ died
Whose life on earth should unhappy be.

" And yesternight I was dreaming, too,
A happy dream you would like to hear ;
A dream, I know, which is mostly true ;
I wish the end might be true and near.

" I stood, I stood by a river's side ;
And far away on the other shore
Was the golden city, its gates flung wide ;
But there was no one to take me o'er.

" I saw the shining ones in the street ;
I heard their harp-strings music pour ;
I saw them waiting my soul to greet ;
But there was no one to take me o'er.

" I thought I saw where the Saviour's throne
Shone in the midst of that city fair ;
Oh, how I longed to be up and gone !
And suddenly, suddenly, I was there !"

She ceased ; and after a pause they said,
" And what did you see in that city fair ?"
No answer. Her spirit to heaven had fled ;
Suddenly, suddenly, she was there !

THE BAFFLED PIRATES.

A company of Moravian Missionaries were on their way from London to St. Thomas, on board the ship "Britannia." Nothing remarkable occurred till they one day discovered a pirate vessel. The pirate ship approached till within gunshot of the "Britannia," and then began to pour in a heavy fire. There were grappling irons on board; strong sharp hooks, fixed to long ropes, ready to throw into the "Britannia," and hold her fast, while the pirates should board her, and do their work of destruction. It seemed that there was little chance of escape from such an enemy. But the captain whose heart was sinking at the terrible prospect, did not know what powerful helpers he had below in the few peaceful Missionaries, whose fervent prayers were then ascending, through the noise of the fight, to heaven.

The moment the pirates tried to throw their grappling irons across to the other ship, their own was tossed violently, and the men who held the ropes fell into the sea. Vexed by this disaster, the pirate captain resolved to fire at the 'Britannia' till she sank with repeated shots. But this effect strangely failed also, for the balls missed their aim. The smoke of the frequent discharges was very dense, and hung about the vessels for some minutes, hiding them from each other's view. At last a sudden gust of wind cleared it away, and to the amazement of the pirate captain, the 'Britannia' was seen at a distance with all her

sails spread to the wind, speeding swiftly away from the attack, and they were forced in great anger to abandon their cruel purposes. Thus wonderfully had God appeared, and saved the vessel in answer to prayer.

"It is better to trust in the
Lord than to put confidence in princes.

Ps. cxviii. 8, 9, 11.

"Call upon me in the day of trouble,
I will deliver thee, and thou shall glorify
me."

Ps. l. 15.

JESUS BLESS THY LITTLE LAMB.

Jesus bless Thy little lamb,
Weak and foolish as I am,
Bear me in Thy mighty arm,
Safe from every fear and harm.

Thou did'st call me to Thy side,
Trembling in the desert wide,
Bid me all my bleatings cease,
Hushed my fears and gave me peace.

Lord, Thou art my Shepherd kind,
All I need in Thee I find;

But I fear my foolish heart,
Lest it should from Thee depart.

Call me nearer, when I cry,
Let me in Thy bosom lie,
Turn these wandering eyes, I pray,
From each vanity away.

And whene'er in folly's way,
Thy poor lamb begins to stray,
By Thy dying love and pain,
Turn me, Lord, to Thee again.

AUNT MARY'S TALK ABOUT THE PRECIOUS THINGS OF GOD.

All that ever came from the hand of God was perfect and beautiful. Learned men who can read the Bible in the languages in which the Holy Ghost wrote it have explained the meaning of a verse in Isaiah, which lets us into a great secret about the first two verses in Genesis. Tell me, Willie, in what languages the Bible was written by God.

I do not know that yet, Aunt Mary.

But you would like to know, so listen to me, darling. The Old Testament was written in the Hebrew, and the New Testament in the Greek tongue.

Then, Aunt Mary, how do learned men, who can read Hebrew books, say we should understand the verse in Isaiah, which tells a secret about the two first verses of all the Bible?

Turn to Isaiah xlv. 18, and watch how I read the verse. I shall do it as the learned men say it ought to be read. "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens, God himself that formed the earth and made it, he hath established it, he created it, *not without form and void* (in our book it is 'not in vain'), he formed it to be inhabited; I am the Lord, and there is none else.' Now, Willie, God did two things; He created the earth, and then it was perfect and beautiful, as all His works are. Long after, we do not know how long, He formed the earth to be inhabited by man. We read of the *creation* of the heavens and the earth in Genesis i. 1; and in Genesis i. 2, of the time when God came to *arrange* the earth, or make it fit for man to live upon. Then, to know the state in which God found the earth when He came to put it in order, we must read the second verse of the chapter. Read it to me, dear.

That is the verse I was looking on to, Aunt Mary, "And the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep." But how did the earth get into such a terrible state?

Scripture does not inform us; but some great convulsion must have taken place.

Is a convulsion something like an earthquake, when the earth all trembles beneath our feet?

It is; but this earthquake must have been more severe than we can form any idea of.

Did you ever feel an earthquake?

Yes, three times I have felt the earth tremble, because of an earthquake; but the last time it was very different from the former occasions.

Was it very bad the last time?

Yes, so bad that the bed on which I lay slipped from one end of the room to the other, and the wall of the house was rent from top to bottom; but that was nothing to what happened in a town not far from where I then was. I was travelling through Cashmere, a beautiful country to the north of India. There the people worship little stone idols, and there are certain creatures they regard as sacred.

What creatures do they think are sacred?

Those I specially heard of were the fish. So the waters swarm with fish, because they are not allowed to be caught. Then ducks are everywhere swimming about on the beautiful lake, on which the chief town, Serrinugger, is built.

How pretty and cheerful it must look, with the fish swimming about in the water, and so many ducks paddling everywhere on the bright sunny lake.

Very bright and cheerful the scene looked, and the great man of the country, called the Maharajah, had men going about all round his palace feeding the fish and the ducks, and taking care of the white bulls, which are also regarded by the Hindoos as sacred.

Was his palace very fine also?

Very; and it shone in wondrous splendour under the bright eastern sun. You may imagine what a rich man he is, when I tell you the dome on his palace is all covered with gold, and he has a wonderful avenue which leads from the lake to this splendid palace.

What is wonderful about the avenue, Aunt Mary, were the trees very fine?

On each side of the avenue they were like two dense green walls. There are no less than seventeen hundred poplar trees in this avenue. They were all growing so near to each other, that a little boy, like my dear Willie, could not pass through between two of them.

And how long was that very beautiful avenue?

Only a mile and a half, so you may fancy how closely the trees grew together. Well, it was near this splendid palace, and by the side of the lake of Serrinugger, that this fearful earthquake took place.

(To be continued.)

PETER IN PRISON.

ACTS xii.

IF you will read over this chapter very carefully, dear children, you will see that it speaks of two men, whose character and circumstances God brings before you. The stories of these two men seem to be placed side by side, in order that we may compare them together. One is the king of a beautiful country, rich and flourishing, at peace with his neighbours, and flattered by them, and by his own subjects: the other is a simple countryman, a fisherman, shut up in a dungeon, with soldiers to guard him. You may imagine the crowds going on their usual course, and passing by the walls of the great fortress prison without enquiring who was within; they pushed on to get to Herod's reception hall, those individuals thinking themselves happy who could get access to the grand show inside; but no one cared whether Peter lived or died.

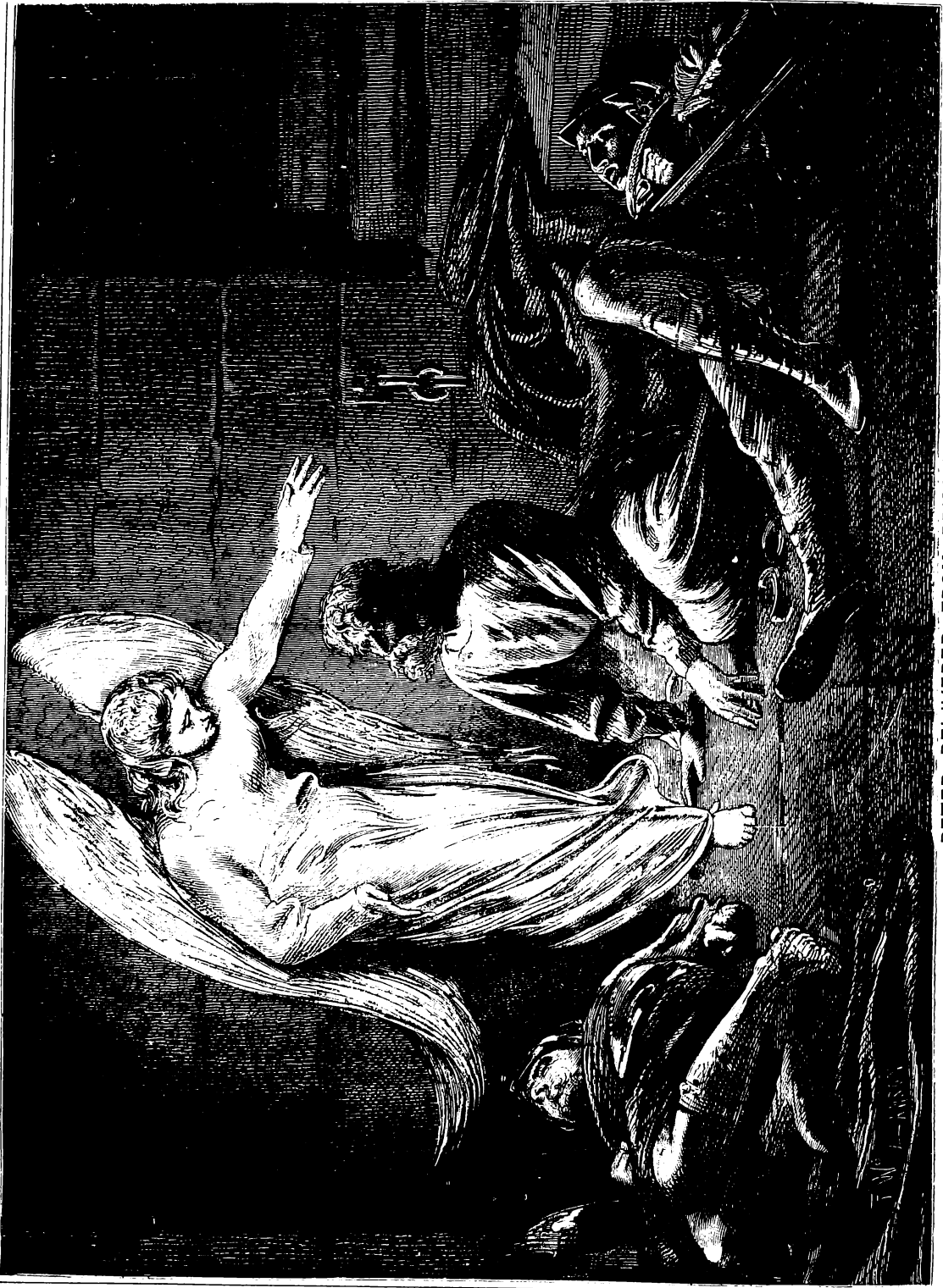
God, however, looked down on the busy city, and saw things differently from man. One of His *own messengers* was shut up in prison, and the blood of another—(James), had just been added to the many whom the city of Jerusalem had murdered. But there were a few in the city whose thoughts were something like God's thoughts. What were they doing? They were praying—praying that God would get Peter out of prison. You might have said, dear children: How useless to pray! There were thick walls all round the cell where Peter was; could God get him out in spite of them? Yes; those people believed that God was Almighty, and they believed that God loved Peter, and that He loved them, and they

wanted Peter back again to teach them and help them. They did not think of the thick walls, or of the great gates with iron bars, or of the chains which bound Peter fast, or of the sixteen soldiers who kept him. They simply looked at God, and thought that the walls, the bars, the chains, and the soldiers, were nothing to God. And God heard them, and sent His angel, who brought Peter out of prison, and restored him to his friends, that they might praise God together.

Some days after, the angel was sent on another message. Herod was on his throne, and the people were all round him, shouting out their wicked flatteries in his ear, calling his voice "the voice of a god and not of a man." And God sent His angel, who smote Herod, and "he was eaten of worms and died."

Which was best off, dear children? Peter alone in the dark dungeon, or Herod on his throne surrounded by admiring multitudes? You will all say that you would rather have been in Peter's place than in Herod's. Peter had the Lord with him, and the Lord's people praying for him.

Learn another lesson—that is, "There is nothing too hard for the Lord;" go to Him in all your difficulties and troubles. Stone walls and iron bars are nothing to Him. Another lesson is: "Join *together* to pray, as Peter's friends did." "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." *Matt.* xviii. 19.



PETER DELIVERED FROM PRISON.

THE DISOBEDIENT PROPHET SLAIN BY A LION.



OBEDIENCE AND DISOBEDIENCE.



OUR two centre pictures present a great and striking contrast. They tell us, too, how easily God can accomplish His purposes. Both Peter and the Prophet were servants of God. One delivered from death; the other given up to death. A mighty messenger from heaven frees the one; a terrible wild beast from the thick forest destroys the other. What do these two events teach us? Two things;—God is wonderfully kind; and God is exceedingly strict. Nay, two things more; God loves to be obeyed; and He will never pass over disobedience. “The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him.” But God is not mocked; when even His own servants are disobedient He will deal with them because of their sins.

The rulers were angry with Peter because he persisted in telling the people that God had raised Jesus, whom they had crucified, from the dead; but Peter said we ought to obey God rather than men. Thrice had they cast him into prison. Twice had the angel of the Lord opened the prison doors. As to the man of God, he had no wish to be rebellious. He was deceived by a fellow prophet. There might seem some excuse in this. Besides, up to that point he had been brave, bold, and faithful. He feared not the wrath of wicked Jeroboam, nor would he take his gifts, “but he was disobedient unto the word of the Lord, therefore the Lord delivered him unto the lion.” How solemn is all this!

God told Jonah to go to Nineveh and cry against it, for its wickedness had gone up before Him. But Jonah was disobedient, and fled from the presence of the Lord. You know well what followed, and how he was cast into the sea, and the floods compassed him about; all God's billows and waves passed over him, the weeds were wrapped about his head, and his soul fainted within him. But Jonah is raised up to proclaim to the people of Nineveh, “Yet forty days, and Nineveh

shall be overthrown!” Now see what God thinks of obedience. The people of Nineveh believed God, confessed their sins, and cast themselves on His mercy. “And God saw their works that they turned from their evil ways, and God repented of the evil that He said He would do unto them, and He did it not.” And so He spared Nineveh, that great city, wherein were more than a hundred and twenty thousand little ones, every one less than the least of my readers, for not one could tell his right hand from the left; and much cattle.

Then, remember the obedience of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. More mighty, and in places of greater dignity than the mightiest of England's great nobles, they refused to worship Nebuchadnezzar's magnificent image. That image was more than a hundred feet high, all of gold; and when it was dedicated there was such a gathering of nobles, and princes, and mighty men, and such a scene of grandeur, as, perhaps, the world never saw before nor since. The recent pageantry in India, when the mighty princes of all the East, with their thousands of elephants and gorgeous retinues—the grandest display of glory in modern times—sembled to proclaim Queen Victoria Empress of India; this was as mere child's play to the dedication of Nebuchadnezzar's image. But great as they were, and in the face of all this grandeur, and spite of the terrible fury of the king, they could calmly say, “We will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image.”

The result you know. They were cast bound into the furnace; but not only did the fire touch them not, but One like the Son of God walked about with them in the midst of the flames!

Now see a contrast. This same king was mighty, but most wicked. Daniel told him the threatenings of God. “Break off,” said he, “thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor.” But his disobedient heart repented not, and in twelve months he was driven from men, a wild maniac; he ate grass like an ox, his hair grew like eagle's feathers, and his nails as the claws of a bird.

The five kings fled, and hid in a cave at Makke-dah, which was a town in the maritime plain. Soon Joshua and all the army of Israel came, and took the kings out of the cave; they made them lie down, and they put their feet on their necks, to show they were conquered. Then they hanged them on a tree, and passed on to all the neighbouring towns and took them. If you look out these places in a map, Libnah, Lachish, Eglon, Hebron, and Debir, you will see that they are situated in the southern part of the country, so that the victory of Gibeon led to the subjection of the whole of southern Canaan. Thus did the Lord bring good out of evil; the Israelites had unwisely made peace with the Gibeonites, but the Lord graciously gave them victory over enemies much greater and stronger than they were.

Gibeon was also the scene of Solomon's prayer for wisdom. He was about twenty years old, but felt himself a little child, going to undertake the work of ruling God's people. So he went to Gibeon, the high place, where the tabernacle then was, and asked God for wisdom. And God approved of his request, and made him the wisest man that ever lived; and people came from all parts of the world to hear the wisdom of Solomon. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." (*James* i. 5.) Will you ask God for wisdom, dear children? God loves to give, and to give liberally.

Another remarkable battle was fought in this part of the country. The Philistines had invaded the country, and they were pitched at Michmash, which is on the top of a hill opposite the hill of Geba. There is a valley between the two hills. Saul, and all the army of Israel, were at Gilgal, in the valley near the Jordan, and the soldiers were so terrified, that, though they had at first gathered round him trembling, they had crept away and hid themselves in the caves of the hills around. The Philistines then had it so much their own way, that they disarmed the soldiers of Israel, made them give up all their swords and spears, and left them merely their agricultural implements. Only Saul and Jonathan had been allowed to keep their

swords. Some of the Israelites fled across the Jordan into the land of Gilead, and the Philistines divided themselves into companies, and went through the land just where they liked, to rob and spoil. Jonathan, the son of Saul, was with his father, and the army had now moved up from Gilgal to Gibeah. But there were only 600 people with Saul, and he was afraid to advance against the enemy. Jonathan, however, thought he would like to attack the Philistines; so, trusting the Lord to give the victory, he started off with the young man who carried his armour, and said to him, "Come and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised; it may be that the Lord will work for us: for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few." And his armour-bearer said unto him, "Do all that is in thine heart; turn thee; behold I am with thee according to thy heart" (*1 Sam.* xiv. 6, 7.) They climbed up a steep cliff on their hands and feet, he first, and his armour-bearer after him, and the Philistines fell before Jonathan, and his armour-bearer slew after him, and that first slaughter, which they made, was about twenty men. "And there was trembling in the host, in the field, and among all the people; the garrison, and the spoilers, they also trembled; and the earth quaked: so it was a very great trembling. And the watchmen of Saul, in Gibeah of Benjamin, looked; and behold, the multitude melted away, and they went on beating down one another. And Saul and all the people that were with him assembled themselves, and they came to the battle; and behold, every man's sword was against his fellow, and there was a very great discomfiture" (*vs.* 15, 16, and 20). Then all the Israelites who were hid in the caves, came out and joined the army, and those who had hitherto been false to their country, and had taken part with the Philistines, left them, so that Saul had quite a large army. And "the Lord saved Israel that day." Now Saul had told the Israelites not to eat anything before they gained the victory, and had said that any who did so should be cursed, and during the battle they came to a wood, "and there was honey upon the ground; but no man put his hand to his mouth; for the

people feared the oath. But Jonathan heard not when his father charged the people with the oath, wherefore he put forth the end of the rod that was in his hand, and dipped it in a honey-comb, and put his hand to his mouth" (ver. 25—27). Saul wanted to kill him for his disobedience. But the people said unto Saul, "Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: as the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day. So the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not" (ver. 45).

We must not stop to talk about Saul's character now. He lived in the part of the country which we have been studying in this chapter. His home was at Gibeah, 1 *Sam.* x. 26; he was of the tribe of Benjamin, to whom all this high land belonged. You will observe that we have called the country *high land*. It was 2,000 feet above the plain on the shore of the Mediterranean, and 3,000 feet above the level of the Jordan. Neby Samwil is 2,650 feet above the sea, and Bethel 2,400 feet. You may form some idea of the height of these hills by remembering that Snowdon is 3,500 feet above the sea, and Helvellyn, Skiddaw, and Cross Fell are each 3,000 feet high.

The whole portion belonging to the tribe of Benjamin is hilly; there may be an allusion to this fact in the prophecy of Jacob; "Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil." *Gen.* xlix. 27. Many of the men of Benjamin were famous for shooting with bows and arrows. Some of Saul's relatives were so clever that they could hurl stones and shoot arrows with both hands. 1 *Chron.* xii. 1,2. There is a beautiful thing recorded of them, that while David was fleeing from Saul, they came and joined themselves to him. They were men who could not only fight, but who were also morally brave. They dared to displease their relation, though he was king, that they might go with the one whom God had said should have the kingdom.

It is a great thing, dear children, to be morally brave. Many cowards can fight. Peter drew his sword, as he thought, to save the Lord Jesus from

His enemies, but he could not face a maid when she charged him with belonging to Him. He was a moral coward; hence his lies, and his denial of Jesus. The only sure way to be morally brave is to trust in God. Do the right and leave the rest to Him.

"Fear Him, ye saints, and ye shall then
Have nothing else to fear;
Make you His service your delight,
He'll make your wants His care."

"O fear the Lord, ye His saints; for there is no want to them that fear Him." *Ps.* xxxiv. 9.
"Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." *Ps.* xxxvii. 3.

Let us then follow the example of the brave mountaineers of Benjamin, and recognise Jesus Christ as our Lord. He is God's anointed King, and though men would not have Him, and crucified Him, yet do you, dear children, be brave to own Him as your Lord. You are by nature as cowardly as others, but if you let Christ win your hearts, you will not be ashamed to own Him who has saved you.

The famous valley of Elah begins close to Ramah, runs south-westward near Jerusalem, [and then opens out into a much larger valley, which ends in the sea-side plain. Can you tell what happened in this valley?

Ch.—David killed the Giant.

Yes, let us read the chapter together. "Now the Philistines gathered together their armies to battle, and were gathered together at Shochoh, which belongeth to Judah, and pitched between Shochoh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammim. And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and pitched by the valley of Elah, and set the battle in array against the Philistines. And the Philistines stood on a mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side; and there was a valley between them. And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span."

(To be continued.)

MORE OF KATIE N'S HISTORY.

PEACE WITH GOD.

AFTER Katie knew herself to be a child of God, she found that she had much to learn about herself as well as about God. At first she was so happy, and the study of God's word gave her such real joy that she felt everything was quite changed to her. There was also a change in her, for she now liked things that formerly she used to dislike, and she found herself wishing for quite a different sort of pleasures. Thus Jesus was teaching her heart to *value Him*; all His ways with His own, whether they are young or old, are for this purpose, to make Himself more dear to us, more necessary to us, and more known by us. If, therefore, we are not continually finding that He is more and more to us, we are not enjoying His great love to us as we might. It was many months after Katie knew the Lord that she began to be very unhappy about sin. She could not understand why, if Jesus had put all her sins away on the cross, as she believed He had, she should ever be troubled with evil thoughts and feelings, or why she should give way to frivolity or ill-temper,—things which caused her very bitter pain, and self-searching. She used to confess it to God, and own that she knew that Jesus had died to put her sins away. But alas, when opportunity came, she was sure to fail again; so that she began to think that she could not be a child of God at all; for she knew that God is holy and cannot bear sin; and she knew that she ought to be holy too, for God has said, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." The more she longed to be holy the more she felt that she was thoroughly unholy, and that everything in her was just the opposite of holiness. She did not know what to do. Her heart was like the ocean in a storm, it tossed up and down and could find no rest.

At last one day some unknown hand sent her a little book called "Peace with God." The title fell on her heart like music. "Peace!"—what would she not give to have it? Katie thought.

"Peace with God," how sweet the words sounded! She read the little book two or three times through, and felt soothed enough to take up her Bible; there, wherever she turned over the leaves, something about "peace" was on the page. "Peace be unto you,"—"He hath made peace,"—"Justified by faith we have peace with God,"—"The God of peace," and many more. So Katie prayed that God would give her peace with Him, and that He would never let her lose it again. And now she began to learn that she had a nature that was enmity to God, which means that the natural or carnal mind has a will which is not God's will; that it dislikes God, and is opposed to everything that suits God and His holiness. Katie had learned before that she was a lost sinner, until the Good Shepherd found her, and taught her to know His voice; but it was a very terrible thing to find out that although Jesus had loved her and given Himself for her, there was no good thing in her, that she had a nature that liked everything better than God; so that when the Spirit of God gave desires after holiness, the carnal mind was enmity; and when she wished to do right, the frivolity, or ill-temper, or selfishness of her carnal mind was there, hindering her desire to do right. This would be no sorrow to a person who had not a new nature, born of God, or who did not know that he was washed in the blood of Jesus. But to one who does know this, and who longs to be like Jesus in mind and thoughts and ways, it is very great sorrow, and the heart says: Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? But God has answered this question in His Word. The deliverance is "through Jesus Christ our Lord." How does He deliver? By His death. Oh what a wonderful fact is the death of the Lord Jesus Christ! and how it magnifies the great necessity for that Perfect One to die; to know that I needed His death to put away my sins; but even more than this. I needed to be redeemed from all iniquity; to be delivered

from a body of death, from this nature which we have as children of Adam, the first man; which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts; in it dwells no good thing; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Jesus died to deliver me out of that child of Adam state altogether, and to put me in a new state, **IN HIMSELF BEFORE GOD**,—that is Peace!

Now if I fail, is it sorrow? Surely it is, if my conscience is happy before God; but instead of making me doubt that Jesus has saved me, it makes me feel more deeply than ever how great, how necessary is His salvation. Those who see my failure condemn me, and my own heart condemns me more than all. But it only drives me to hide my heart and conscience in the One who has delivered me, it drives me to find my

place *in Him* who is my Saviour. His presence is the only place where I can say there is no condemnation to them which are *in Christ Jesus*. Blessed place to abide, *in Him*, and He invites us to it. "Abide in me." In the presence of God there is peace, and in the grace of Christ I get power to deny the carnal mind; and they that walk in the Spirit do not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.

How sweet the plea from all to flee,
And shelter in my Saviour!
Oh precious grace! in Him's my place,
In God's eternal favour.
Jesus the goal before my soul,
The One I know in glory;
While I'm on earth I'll tell His worth,—
The saved one's sweetest story.

A LITTLE ONE SAFELY HOUSED.

IN a small room, down a narrow court, a mother sat one evening by the bedside of her dying boy, He was her only child, and she loved him as she loved her own soul. His gentle, obedient, and loving spirit had, like the bright sunbeams, often cheered her in her darkest moments; and his youthful voice, singing the sweet hymns that he had learned, had often raised her spirit from earth to heaven.

His cheerful obedience to his parents was most beautiful to witness. Often, when his mother gave him permission to go out and play in the court with his companions for half an hour, he would run in two or three times, saying, "Mother, is the half-hour up yet?" afraid lest he should keep out a minute over the time, and thus disobey her.

He much prized the children's service, but was unable through weakness to attend for some time previous to his death. But he did not murmur, for he felt the sweet presence of Him who

"Loves us still,
When we're very weak and ill."

For twelve years Johnny had been a pilgrim in life's wilderness, and now he had reached the silent river of death.

His dear mother sits by his bedside to smooth his dying pillow, and give him the farewell kiss; but she cannot cross the river with him. Will he have to cross **ALONE**? Is there no loving friend on the **OTHER SIDE** to cheer and **WELCOME** him?

Oh, yes; listen to his dying words:—

"Mother, **SEE!** There's **JESUS!**"

"Where, Johnny?"

"**THERE**, mother! Don't you **SEE** Him? He's standing with His arms so, mother."

Here the dying boy stretched out his arms as wide open as he could, to show how the loving arms of Jesus were open to receive him.

A few minutes more, and little Johnny had crossed the river, and his happy spirit was safe in his Saviour's bosom.

Is there room in Jesus' arms for **YOU**, my little reader? Oh, yes! Although so many dear children have found rest and peace there, "yet there is room"—room for **YOU**, my little friend.

Those kind arms once stretched out on Calvary's cross in agony and blood, are **OPEN WIDE** to receive you.

Oh, then, come to Jesus **NOW**, while you are **YOUNG**, and he will give you a loving welcome, and will make you one of His own dear children.

THE CHILD'S BIBLE COMPANION.



DAVID SLAYING GOLIATH.—See page 67.

A VOICE FROM THE COAL MINE.

HAVE you ever seen a coal mine? Perhaps you do not know where coal comes from? It is dug out of the ground. When people think there is coal in a place, they make a very deep hole; sometimes they come to water, and then they have to pump it away before they can dig any more. Then they make passages in which men work, by candle, or lamp light, for it is quite dark underground. There they work with hammers and pick-axes till they knock out great lumps of the black shining thing we call coal. So now when you see a bright fire blazing and crackling so cheerfully, you will think of those poor colliers who have worked so hard in the dark and cold to get coal to make a fire for you.

But I am going to tell you a story of some men who worked in a coal mine, in one of our large mining districts. They were just going home one evening, when they heard a roar of rushing water; the men fled, and many of them got out safely, but fourteen were left in the mine imprisoned behind a thick wall of coal. The water poured into all the passages, and there was no way of escape. The people outside supposed that the fourteen men were drowned. But no—God gave them time to think of Him in that awful moment. He could hear them from the depths of the coal mine, and the Holy Spirit could speak to them of Jesus, who, though He was the holy, sinless Son of God, had gone down into death and darkness and the grave, that He might put away sin.

And so perfectly and entirely did He put it away that God is now "just" in accepting any one who can say, "He did that work for *me*," and even a collier, buried alive in the depths of the earth, might raise his heart to God and own Jesus as his Saviour. God would hear, and would write that happy collier's name in His Book of Life, so that should the cruel waters drown him, his soul would be with Jesus for ever; or should he come out into the light of this world again, he would be God's child, born again unto eternal life.

God does see, and God does hear, and the Lord Jesus Christ has said, "Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out," and, in His mercy, He gives every one of us opportunity to come to Him. If we refuse to listen to Him, the day will come when the Lord Jesus Christ, who is now offering Himself to us as our *Saviour*, will be our *Judge*, and we shall have to give account to Him. There will be thousands who will joyfully confess, "Thou hast Thine own Self borne our sins in Thine own body on the tree; Thou hast washed us from our sins in Thine own blood," and Jesus will know those who know Him, their names He has already written in the "Lamb's Book of Life." But alas! there will be many who will try to hide their faces, and to fly from Him, because they have never accepted Him as their Saviour.

Dear children, if Jesus is not your Saviour *now*, He will be your Judge *by-and-by*. And so with those fourteen colliers. Doubtless they will thank God through all eternity for that accident, if in that dark and terrible pit, they learned the way of escape from the still darker and more terrible pit which yawned in front of them. But to return to my story. Soon the people outside heard a knocking from within; this is great joy to their friends; so they all set to work to make a hole for them to escape by. Pick, pick, pick, hammer, hammer, hammer, they work all day and all night too, and when one set of men are tired another set take up their tools. Now the wall is thin enough for those outside to speak with those inside. At last a hole is made, and they are just about to creep through it, when a fearful explosion is heard. It is the gas out of the coal, escaping, and it comes with such a rush through the hole that the man nearest to it, who, it seemed, would be the first to be saved, is shot through the hole and killed; the other four escape quite safely, nine still remain, with a wall of water on one side, and of coal on the other. Divers go down into the water, but they cannot reach them; they must pump it all away. So they pump on

still, and pick and hammer still, till, at last, they hear their voices and can listen to their tale of woe. They have had nothing to eat for five days, and are starving.

Soon those outside are able to force a tube through a narrow opening, and to pour some milk into the cell, but it is too dark inside to see the tube or to find the milk. The bad air, too, has put out all the lamps of those outside, so that they cannot see to work until they have pumped good air down the shaft. But their comrades' lives must be saved, no matter how great the risk, or toil; and so they work on; and now the victory is gained, and the loving, patient, hearty workers have the joyful reward of helping their suffering friends out alive, and of receiving their grateful thanks for their great deliverance.

But now you have heard how the miners were saved from the dark coal-pit, I want this story to lead you to think of how God saves a soul from hell, for the sinner who does not know God is lost. He is in much greater darkness than those men were at the bottom of the mine, and he is in danger of a far more terrible death, "and after death the judgment," when both soul and body are cast into hell,—into a fire that will never be put out. Dreadful to be ten long days and nights in a coal pit; but what is that in comparison with being cast for ever into the bottomless pit, where Satan and his angels are? These things are all quite true, for God has said them. People may try not to believe them, or to think of them, but heaven and earth may pass away, but not one word that God has spoken can ever pass away.

I want you to think about this, dear children, and to see how dreadful is the fate of those who believe not the gospel, who do not come to Jesus *now*, and own Him as their Saviour. In the mine

the chief suffering was that of hunger, but in hell they will have a more terrible want than hunger; there, when it is too late, they will find out that *they want Jesus!* Then they will wish that they had a *Saviour*, some one to make a way for them to escape out of everlasting torment. In the mine they had one joy, that of hope, they hoped to see their friends, and the light of day again. But in *hell* there will be *no hope*—no *end* to their misery!

God has provided a way of escape from the pit *now*,—Jesus is that Way. When the sinner catches sight of Him as the Saviour, he is "delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of His (God's) dear Son," he has eternal life, and his heart rebounds with love to the One who has saved him. May God grant that those brave miners, and all who read their story, may be among those who shew forth the praise of Him who calls out of darkness, into His marvellous light.

Here in my solitude, all in the dark,

Where nothing cheering can reach me;

Here without priest, reader, or clerk,

I'll look to Jesus to teach me.

His Name like a ladder of light came down,

It shone mid the darkness around me;

A way of escape to my Saviour's throne,

Tho' the waters of death surround me.

It is well to be prisoned alone with God,

Twice blessed to feel that He's near me;

'Tis well to be brought face to face with death,

Thrice blessed to know that He hears me.

I'm in His company—led by His hand,

Where every blessing can reach me;

His marvellous light wherein I stand,

With the Holy Spirit to teach me.

AUNT MARY'S TALK ABOUT THE PRECIOUS THINGS OF GOD.

"Then, do you think, Aunt Mary, the convulsions which shook the earth were more severe than the earthquake you felt in India?"

"Very, very much more severe, for those who

study the rocks tell us that the things which had been in the earth's centre were brought to the very surface. The earth had been, as it were, turned upside down and inside out, but God



allowed all this for the comfort and blessing of man."

"How could that be, Aunt Mary?"

"Because in that way God caused the coals and other things found in the earth, which are useful and required by man, to be brought near to hand. Now they can all be found by digging a little way into the ground, but previously they had been in the very heart of the earth. Without some great convulsion which brought them to the surface, man could not have reached them."

"And are we not told in the Bible when or how this great shaking took place?"

"We are nowhere told in the Bible when or how this convulsion took place, and as God has told us in His word all he wants us to know about the earth's formation, it would be wrong and foolish to imagine anything about it."

"And do you think God will again allow this world to be without form and void before He makes 'The new heavens and the new earth'?"

"What we read is that the earth and the heavens are to flee away from before the face of Him, who will sit on the Great White Throne to judge the unsaved."

"How will that be, Aunt Mary?"

"Peter tells us it will be by fire. I will read the passage to you, Willie." 'The heavens and the earth that now are, are reserved unto fire . . . the heavens shall pass away

with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also and the works which are therein shall be burned up.' 2 Peter, iii., 7, 10. All that we now see will be dissolved or will pass away. Then God will make the new heavens and the new earth. Perhaps He may form them out of the earth and the heavens which we see at present, but they will be quite changed, for they will have been purified by fire."

"Oh what a dreary, dismal place the earth must have been before God set it in order. Did anyone move about on it?"

"We read that the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters. He at least saw the desolation which everywhere prevailed.

"Then was it God the Father who gave all the orders about re-forming the desolate earth?"

"I think we may say, God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, were all engaged in the works of which we read in verses 1 and 2 of the first chapter of Genesis. Elsewhere it is said, the Lord Jesus was 'the Creator of all things.' 'By Him (the Son of God) all things were created that are in heaven, and that are in the earth, visible and invisible. All things were created by Him and for Him.' Col. i. 16. And again in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the work of creation is ascribed to the Son of God. 'God hath spoken unto us by His Son, by whom also He made the worlds.' Heb. i. 2. Then again, when God was about to arrange the formless dark earth, we are told 'the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.'"

"Then, Aunt Mary, were the heavens ever without form, and desolate, like what the earth was before God put it in order?"

"Scripture nowhere says the beauty of the heavens was ever marred. David, in his 19th Psalm, says, 'The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handywork.' God did not allow the sin of man to spoil His work in the heavens, as, alas, has been the case with the earth, which He gave to man, that, on it, he might be the image or representative of God. The prophet Isaiah speaks in a beautiful way of the heavens; he says, 'Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things,

that bringeth out their host by number; He calleth them all by names, by the greatness of His might; for that He is strong in power, not one faileth.' When we look up into the glittering starry heavens we should think of the greatness of our God, who created these things, and remember that in His own bright glory He sits enthroned above these starry skies. The brightness of His glory surpasses that of the sun at noon-day. I told you this, Willie, when we spoke of the conversion of the great Apostle Paul. Jesus is in that scene of transcendent glory, the lowly Man who walked through this world to the praise of His Father in heaven. When here He told His disciples not to think of themselves, or of anything they could do, not even that which God had given them power by His Spirit to do for the glory of His name, but to rejoice that their names were written *in heaven*. But I must bring our present talk to a close, and another day I hope to tell you how God set to work, and what He did in each of the six days, during which time he was putting the earth into order and beauty. But I said the Lord Jesus is now hid in the heavens, far beyond the starry sky. He would like us now, as well as His disciples of old,

to whom He said it, to rejoice that our names are written in heaven. He ever bears us on His heart before His Father. Willie, darling, from day to day, and hour to hour, let us think of this, and look up, watching for 'the Bright and Morning Star' to shine forth. Jesus calls Himself by that beautiful name. As 'the Bright and Morning Star' He will come to take us all to be for ever with Himself in the Father's House. Jesus likes 'His own' to be always on the outlook for Him. We do not know the moment when 'the Bright and Morning Star' may be seen in the heavens, but He has said to His waiting people, 'Behold, I come quickly,' Rev. xxii. 21. It may be, before you go to bed to-night. Can we look up to Our Lord, and say 'Come Lord Jesus'? When He comes, Willie, when "the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which 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."

R.

BIBLE TALKS.

DO you know who was called the "man after God's own heart?"

It was David who was so called.

1 Sam. xiii., 14.—Acts xiii., 22.

Why did God call him so? There must have been some particular reason that God should give so beautiful a name to a man. We shall perhaps find out that reason if we observe the contrast between David and the king who preceded him. Who was that king?

It was Saul.

Yes, and what was there in the character of Saul that God did not approve of? He was always offering sacrifices, and thinking about the outward observances of the law, yet he never

pleased God. David did not neglect God's law, but he understood the love and tenderness of God's heart, and trusted God *because he knew Him*, which Saul never did. David says, "They that know Thy name will put their trust in Thee."—Ps. ix. 10. Do you know God in this sense, dear children? Can you not think of some dear friend, a father or a mother, perhaps, of whom you can say, I know him so well, I am sure he would like this or that? If you seek to know God as David did, you will soon learn what God would like, and what He would not like. I will tell you a story out of Saul's life, and another out of David's life, which will explain what I mean.

The Philistines, those bitter enemies of Israel,

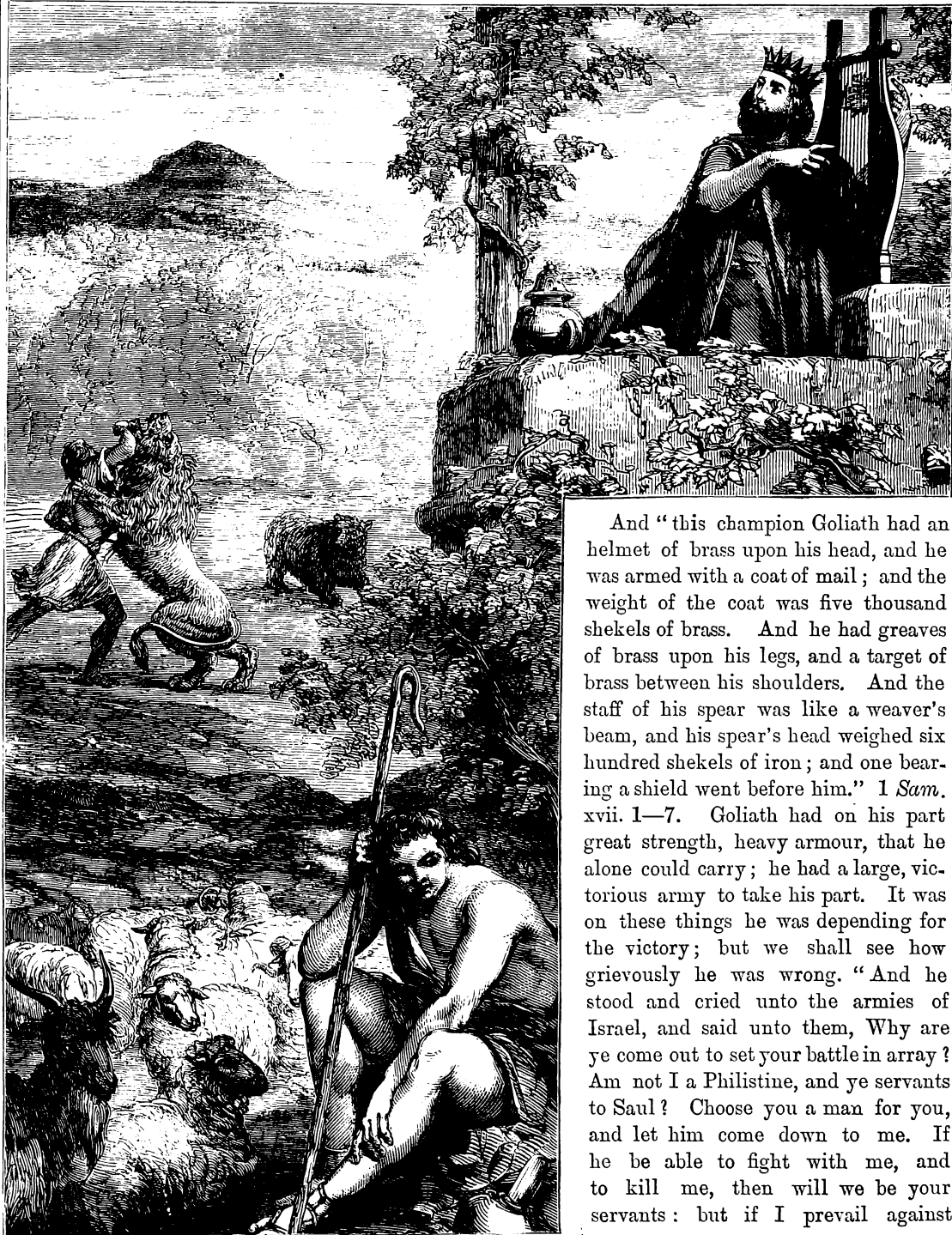
had come up against the Israelites, who were so frightened that they hid themselves in the caves of the mountains. The Philistines took all their swords and spears, except those belonging to Saul, and his son Jonathan. What do you think Saul did instead of taking care of the people and leading them bravely against the enemy? First, he disobeyed God, and instead of waiting for Samuel, as God had told him to do, he "forced" himself, and offered a sacrifice. God was not at all pleased. Saul ought to have obeyed God and waited, then he would have seen how God could deliver; God did not care for a sacrifice which was not offered willingly, and out of a thankful heart; so that for Saul to *force* himself to offer a sacrifice, was not the way to be acceptable to God. But after Samuel had told Saul that God was angry, instead of changing his way, Saul went on from bad to worse. Meanwhile, Jonathan, with his armour-bearer, attacked the enemy; God gave them the victory, and the army of the Philistines was struck with terror, and the soldiers began fighting with each other. Saul then gave out an order that no one was to eat anything until the enemy was conquered. Jonathan did not know his father had said this, and took a little honey. Saul wanted to kill him for it, but the people would not have him killed, and his life was spared. But this was not all. The people were, of course, very, very hungry, and when they took some cattle from the enemy, they killed them as quickly as possible. God had forbidden them to eat meat with the blood in it, but in their great hunger they disobeyed His command. If Saul had not given such a foolish order, the people would not have been so hungry and would not have been tempted to do what was wrong. But when Saul heard of the people's disobedience, instead of being sorry for what he had done, he made things worse by sending out another order, that every Israelite was to come and kill his ox or sheep at a stone which had been placed near the king, so that he might see that it was done properly. Just imagine all those poor hungry soldiers, waiting to come by turn to kill the cattle in the king's presence before they could get any supper. If you

read the chapter you will see that the priest advised Saul to ask counsel of God, which he did, but God 'did not answer him. Saul's way was altogether wrong. He knew nothing of God's heart, and all his religion was hateful to God. In Proverbs xv. 8, we read, "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord;" and the next verse tells us that "The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord."

Now, we will take as a contrast to Saul's conduct that of David. Once, when he and his faithful followers were very hungry, he came to the town where was the tabernacle and the priest. The shewbread was there, which was put before God, who had said that none but the priests might eat it. Now what did David do? He knew God—He understood the heart of God, and was sure He would not say "David, stay out there and be hungry; you must not touch the bread, you must leave it for the priests." No, he knew God would wish him to have it; so he asked the priest for it, and the priest, who also knew God's mind, gave it to him. Do you know how we may be quite sure that God approved of David's taking the shewbread? I will tell you. The Lord Jesus Himself, when He was on earth, mentioned the act with approval. He was speaking to the Pharisees, whose religion was very much like Saul's, and He said, "Go ye and learn what this meaneth: I will have mercy, and not sacrifice."

Now, dear children, let me ask you whether you have yet learned to trust God's heart of love. Are you still like Saul, thinking that you must please God by some works of your own; saying your prayers because you *must* say them; doing things because you *MUST* do them, *forcing* yourself, so to speak, as Saul did; or do you know God as your Father? Do you love God because He has loved you, and has given His Son to die for you? Do you love to speak to Him as you love to speak to your dear parents? Do you go to Him in trouble and trust His *heart*?

The Lord grant that you may be thus taught of God, dear children. Then you will be really happy,—happy all your lives down here, and happy throughout a long eternity.



And "this champion Goliath had an helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass. And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders. And the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron; and one bearing a shield went before him." 1 *Sam.* xvii. 1—7. Goliath had on his part great strength, heavy armour, that he alone could carry; he had a large, victorious army to take his part. It was on these things he was depending for the victory; but we shall see how grievously he was wrong. "And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? Am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? Choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against

him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us. And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together." ver. 8—10. He taunts the Israelites with being "servants to Saul,"—they, he means, are slaves, *he* is free. The world often taunts Christians with being in bondage; they little know the happy liberty of the service of love. *Gal.* v. 13. But to those who know not God, the Lord says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." *John* viii. 34. The proud Philistine paid dearly for his boasted freedom, when David's stone sank into his forehead; and those who talk of being free, will certainly find out to their cost that they are slaves to sin and to *death*.

"When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid." ver. 11. Saul and the soldiers of Israel might well be dismayed, while they looked at the great giant. When Peter looked at the waves he began to sink, but when he had his eye upon the Lord Jesus, he walked upon the water.

"Now David was the son of that Ephrathite of Bethlehem-Judah, whose name was Jesse; and he had eight sons; and the man went among men for an old man in the days of Saul. And the three eldest sons of Jesse went and followed Saul to the battle: and the names of his three sons that went to the battle were Eliab the firstborn; and next unto him, Abinadab; and the third, Shammah. And David was the youngest: and the three eldest followed Saul. But David went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Beth-lehem. And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself forty days. And Jesse said unto David his son, Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched corn, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy brethren; and carry these ten cheeses unto the captain of their thousand, and look how thy brethren fare, and take their pledge." Vers. 12—18.

Who besides David was sent by his father with kind messages for his brethren?

Ch.—Joseph was sent out of Hebron to see how his brethren were going on.

How did they receive him?

Ch.—They received him very badly, put him into a pit, and then sold him into Egypt.

Was anyone else badly treated by his brethren?

Ch.—Moses was rejected by the Israelites when he came to save them from the Egyptians.

There was another who was rejected; who was he?

Ch.—The Lord Jesus Himself.

Yes, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." *John* i. 2.

"And David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and took, and went as Jesse had commanded him, and he came to the trench, as the host was going forth to the fight, and shouted for the battle. For Israel and the Philistines had put the battle in array, army against army. And David left his carriage in the hand of the keeper of the carriage, and ran to the army, and came and saluted his brethren. And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake according to the same words: and David heard them. And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid. And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up: and it shall be that the man who killeth him the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel. And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God? And the people answered him after this manner, saying, So shall it be done to the man that killeth him. And Eliab, his elder brother, heard when he spake unto the men: and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle. And David said, what

have I now done? Is there not a cause? And he turned from him toward another, and spake after the same manner: and the people answered him again after the former manner. And when the words were heard which David spake, they rehearsed them before Saul; and he sent for him. And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him: thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine. And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth. And David said to Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock; and I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. David said, moreover, The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the Lord be with thee."

The point with David was, that Goliath was the enemy of the living God. He had dared God to His face. Israel was God's people, and the cause of Israel was the cause of God. God would take care of His own name; this was David's strength: He argued thus:—It is for God's honour that this Philistine should be conquered; therefore, I am sure he will direct my sling, and make me victorious.

Dear children, learn to use David's argument against your enemies. One of you has a bad temper; another has an idle habit; a third has a naughty wayward will, and a fourth is vain. Now, if you belong to the Lord, these evil things are a great trouble to you. Perhaps you have tried to become good-tempered, to be less wayward, and to be more diligent or humble; you have done your best; but you have not succeeded, and you are quite discouraged. Did you ever think that these evil things are God's

enemies, and that He hates them more than you do? Now go to God about it; put the matter into His hands; ask Him to conquer His own enemies in you, and he will do it, for it is for His own honour that your hearts should be wholly His.

"And Saul armed David with his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail. And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go, for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these, for I have not proved them. And David put them off him." Vers. 38 and 39. David had not made trial of Saul's armour, and a happy thing it was for him that he had not tried it, but he had proved *God*, and the eternal God had not failed him. Saul argues from what he sees, and from what men would think wise; arm yourself, he would say, as well as possible, if you have to encounter so formidable an enemy. But David reasons from faith: God is going to give the victory; what do I want with Saul's armour? It would only have hindered him. If he had accepted Saul's armour, he would have been like some mistaken people, who, finding themselves constantly doing wrong, and wishing to become better, go and shut themselves up and separate themselves from others, as if the walls would keep them from sinning. But they do not conquer Goliath, for the giant sin dwells within.

Little children, perhaps you put on Saul's armour when you get up in the morning, thinking "I will be good to-day." Did you ever observe that such a resolution never kept you from sinning? Whose armour is the Christian to put on?

Ch.—He is to put on the "Armour of God."

Yes. Let us now see what David did. "And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip: and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine. And the Philistine came on, and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield went before him. But when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him; for he was but a youth, and ruddy,

and of a fair countenance. And the Philistine said unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field. Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into my hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel; and all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands. And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell

upon his face to the earth: so David prevailed over the Philistine, with a sling and a stone, and smote the Philistine and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David. Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled; and the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines until thou come to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron: and the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way to Shaaraim, even unto Gath, and unto Ekron. And the children of Israel returned from chasing after the Philistines, and they spoiled their tents. And David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem; but he put his armour in his tent." Vers. 40—54.

The sites of some of the places mentioned in this narrative are not accurately known, but in a general way you can understand how they fled down into the maritime plain to Ekron and Gath; and thus God gave a great victory to His people, in answer to the faith of one believing boy.

LESSONS FROM SUMMER.



HE summer, the sweet time of flowers and fruits, has come. The little ones as well as the older ones enjoy the beauties it brings. From the lowly violet, and modest lily-of-the-valley, to

the lofty oak of the wood, all have a voice, and breathe out words that bid you believe.

Who kept them all the long, cold Winter so quietly waiting for the warm sun to swell their buds and bring them forth in all their glory? The same God that says to each little boy and girl, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." All these trees and plants you see bringing forth rich flowers and delicious fruits, only for a time have life and beauty. Winter comes upon them again, and they fade and die. But the Lord says to you, "He that believeth on

Me hath everlasting life." Who has cared for the flowers, and dressed one in pure white, another in rich crimson, another in beautiful blue, with green of various shades around them? The same dear Father who cares for you, and will dress you and feed you. Believe Him when He says, "God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory." "If then God so clothe the grass, which is to-day in the fields, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more will He clothe you, O ye of little faith."


Who fills the many trees we see at this season of the year with such beautiful flowers? Who watches over them days and weeks, and brings forth from these flowers luscious fruit? The same loving Lord who said, "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such



is the kingdom of heaven," who is now speaking to the heart of each little one, telling them His love for them. And now, will you listen to Him; believe His love, His longings for you? Let Him live in you, bringing forth fruit. And as these trees blossom, spreading around sweet fragrance and bearing fruit, even so you, in believing, will send forth fragrance to the honour of His name, and bear fruit to His praise. So shall you be His disciple.

My darling child, let the trees, plants, flowers, and fruit, talk to you this summer. They do not make much noise when they talk, but quietly give you words of truth. One tells of God's care to clothe you; another of His care to feed you; another tells of sweet blossoms that come to fruit. All tell of death. But you have heard how the "Father sent His Son to be the Saviour of the world." Do not turn from it and blight the blossoms, but let them bring forth fruit.

THE ITALIAN BOY.

 WAS on a fair Italian morning,
 Terésa watched the radiant lea ;
 The sun its brightest beams was pouring,
 And lighting up each hill and tree.

"And thus," said she, "a Sun of Glory,
 Has shone into my darkened heart ;
 I've learnt how Jesus suffered for me,
 And He has bid my fears depart.

And now, how gladly would I labour
 That others too may know my Lord
 I'll watch—perhaps some passing neighbour,
 Would stop and hear His blessed Word.

Who can that poor boy be, I wonder,
 Limping each day so sadly by ?
 He seems on something sad to ponder,
 And often heaves a mournful sigh-

And in his hand, he always carries
 A few poor flowers together tied ;
 See, now with weariness he carries,
 Leaning against the old wall side.

Come here, my boy, come here and tell me,
 Where do you live, and what's your name ?
 Where do you take that little nosegay,
 And how did you become so lame ?"

"My name, kind ma'am, is poor Guiseppe,
 I live behind that sloping hill ;
 When I was small, my mother dropped me,
 Going to work, at yonder mill.

"And now she's ill, and none can cure her,
 And every day she's worse I see ;
 It grieves me sore to see her suffer,
 A mother good she's been to me.

"They tell me of the Virgin's powers,
 And that she is so kind and sweet,
 And so I take these humble flowers,
 And lay them at her picture's feet.

"Perhaps she'll help"—"O child, you grieve me,
 For all your trouble is in vain ;
 It is the Lord alone, believe me,
 From whom relief you can obtain.

"Once I, like you, was all mistaken,
 And put my trust in Mary too ;
 But I to hear God's Word was taken,
 And learnt that she can nothing do.

"Go home, my child, and in your chamber,
 Tell out your wants to God alone ;
 Don't fear, 'twas He who sent the Saviour,
 Who surely did for sin atone.

"What! did you never hear of Jesus ?
 Both Mary's Son, and Mary's Lord ;
 Oh! He is very kind and gracious,
 To all who rest upon His Word."

"But I'm afraid—for He is Holy,
 And I'm so bad—He will not hear."
 "What, He, who when a man so lowly,
 Dried many a time the mourner's tear ?

"I have a Book, it tells the story
 Of all His love to sinful man—
 And how He left His own bright glory—
 I'll lend it you—if read you can."

"Alas I can't, but oh how gladly
 I'd hear about this loving friend!"
 "Well, my dear child, don't sigh so sadly,
 I'll read it you, if you'll attend.

"And if you like, I'll come some evening
 And sit beside your mother's bed ;
 And then while you and she are listening
 I'll read the words that Jesus said.

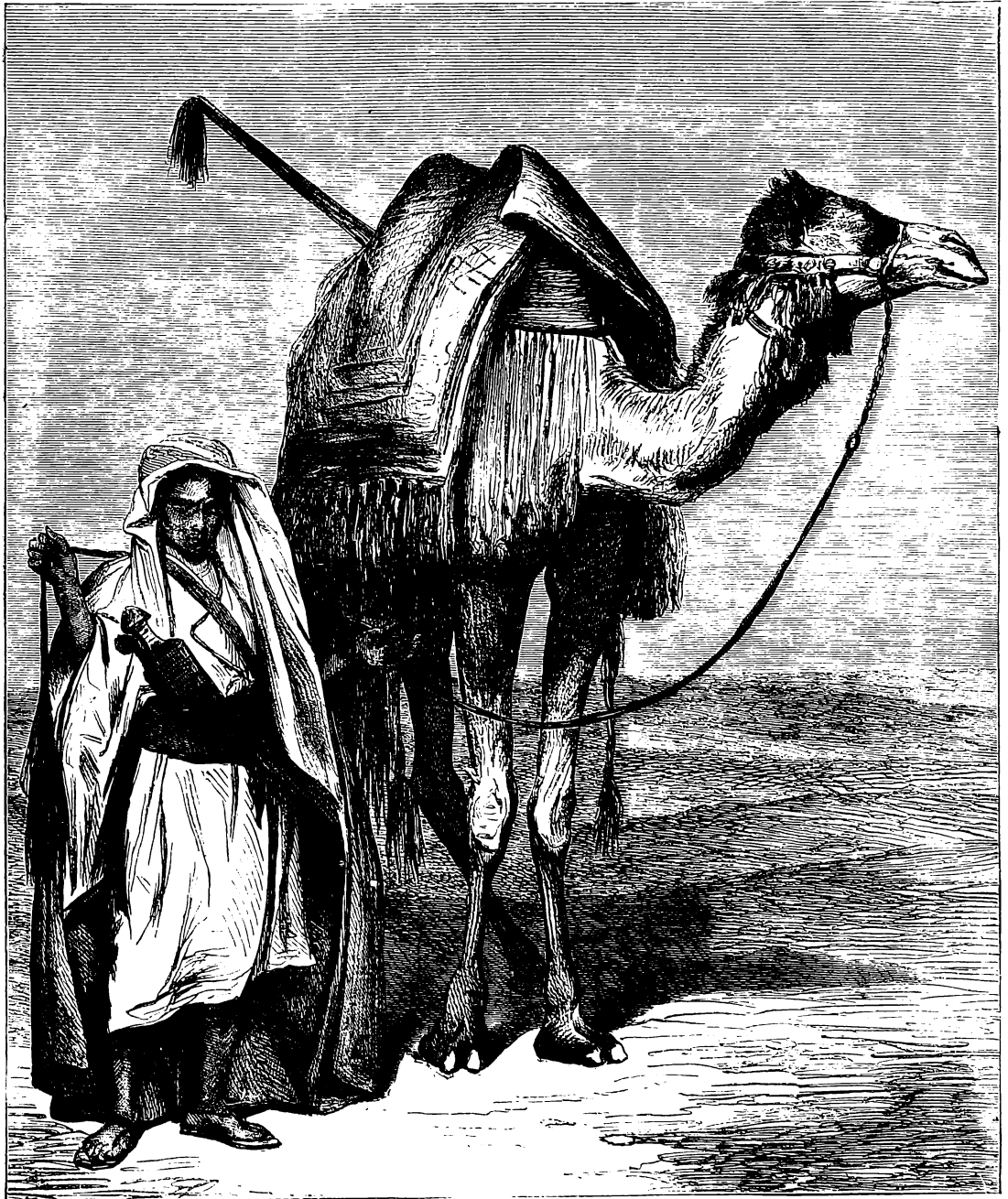
"And how He died that He might save us
 From all our sins, and endless pain."
 "And do you think this kind Lord Jesus,
 Will make my mother well again ?"

"Yes! if He please, but oh, far better,—
 If she believes His dying love,
 He'll wash away her sins, and take her,
 If she should die, to dwell above."

And thus Terésa found her mission,
 Speaking of Him she loved so well ;
 And will not you, too, little Christian,
 The same sweet story try to tell ?

H.

THE CHILD'S BIBLE COMPANION.



THE CAMEL IN THE DESERT.

THE CAMEL IN THE DESERT.

WHAT a dreary and desolate place is a desert! The Bible speaks of that one through which the children of Israel journeyed as a "waste howling wilderness." This is in Arabia, and lies between the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan. It is hundreds of miles wide, having a few spots where a spring of water and a little green grass may be found, but all the rest is sand. And high winds sweep over these, filling up the springs sometimes, and often covering travellers, with sand. The way of travelling is upon camels, animals that God has specially fitted for just such places. Their feet are suited for the sand, so as to pass along easily, and swiftly, too, when it is needed. Besides this, they have within them a reservoir for water, that holds water apart from the stomach, so as to supply a second stomach when water is needed.

Does not this seem like a locomotive with its "tender," that can run for hours? So a camel can go for many days on this supply of water. Besides, it has something else that is like a "tender" to a locomotive. You know that the car attached to a locomotive is called a tender, and is filled with wood or coal, besides water, and these supply food and drink for the "iron horse" as it is called. Now where do you think the camel keeps his supply of food, on the strength of which he can travel so many miles, when there is no chance to eat? That is in his body, too, but it is where his keeper can watch to see how the supply holds out. It is the camel's hump, that great hunch on his back, upon which the rider sits.

Before starting out on their long journeys, the drivers are careful that this hump be in good condition, by giving the camels plenty of food. It is, of course, fat that gathers there, by their eating. What a perfect provision this is for the very work and place in which they are put.

But often in crossing the desert both water and food become exhausted. How dreadful is such a scene! When the last drop of water is gone, the poor driver knows well that his faithful friend

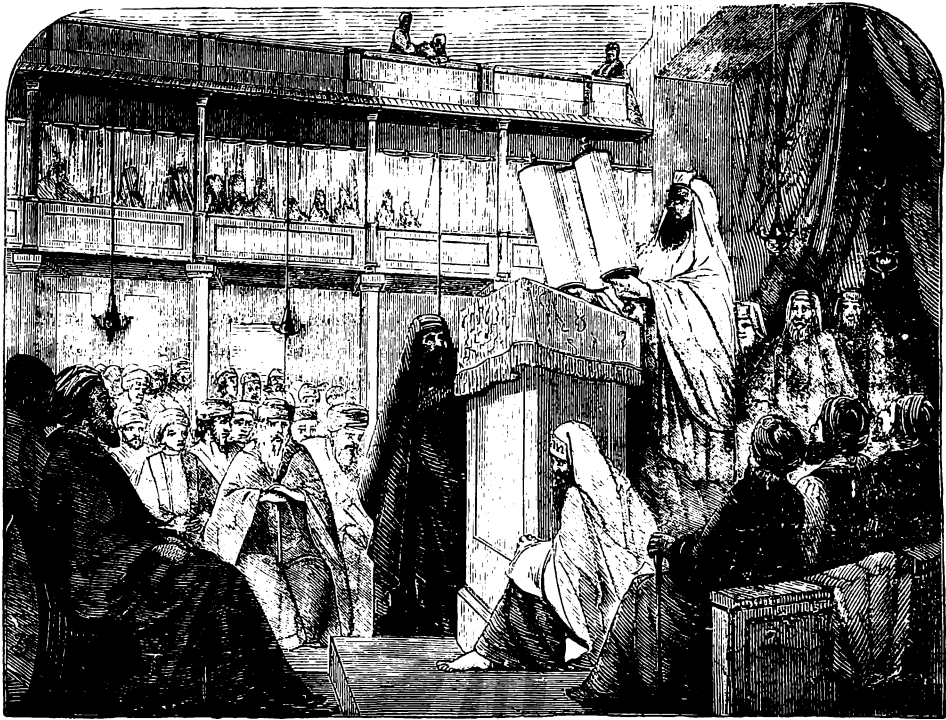
will struggle on but a few more miles at most. He will then stagger like a drunken man, fall heavily to the ground, and in a few more minutes he is gone. His poor rider, helpless and alone, leans sadly against his last friend, the camel, to breathe out his life, too. It is a dreary scene. All around is desert, and death has been there before, for the bones of other camels and other travellers lie bleaching all along the desert.

But suppose a friend is nearer than he thinks. A caravan is passing at a distance, and some Prince with abundant resources, and as kind as he is able, sees this dark object lying a little off the route, and comes to find out what it is.

And now, what would he tell this poor starving, dying man? That he must provide for himself—that if he will get up on his beast, and come on with them, he will get plenty? No, but without asking him to do anything, he will give him something to revive him, and carry him on his own beast to the place of plenty and safety. The poor dead thing, that once carried him, will not do now. Nor will he need it, nor his own provisions any more. This friend in the desert will do all.

How like Jesus Christ, who came to ~~SEEK~~ and to ~~SAVE~~ the lost. Where do you think He finds us? Lost and guilty, with sentence of death upon us, as good as dead. Dear children, He finds every one of us in a desert, a barren, thirsty wilderness indeed, where, sooner or later, except found and saved by Him, we must perish, all of us.

The blessed Lord Jesus, that He might save you, came Himself into this very desert, died there, as the Scriptures say, the just for the unjust. Has He found you there, dear child? Do you confess that you deserve death? that you are like this poor helpless traveller, lost and dead, as to yourself? Then you are just the one for Him, the great SEEKER and FINDER, and here He is. Do own Him as your Saviour, and rest only and completely on Him. Leave everything to His hands, and you shall find all things in Him.



A SYNAGOGUE OF THE JEWS-

YOU have read about synagogues in the Bible, I know. This is meant to show the inside of one. They were meeting-houses of the Jews, for reading the Law and the Prophets. Now, many people would think that very good, and just what would please God, for these houses for meeting were found in every city at the time this picture is meant to show. It was about the time of Christ, and a little after He had risen and gone to heaven. If you think for a moment, you will see how strange and sad it was for people to be rejecting God's own Son, and everything He told them of God His father, and then crucify Him, and yet go on meeting together every Sabbath, to read and hear the Law, as though all was right between them and God. Hundreds of years before this, at the time you read of in the book of "Kings," God wanted them to read His Law, and they would not, but went into idolatry. The whole story of their treatment of God is very

dreadful, from the beginning of their history, till God drove them out of their land, and said they were not His people. But now, when He no longer was with them, no longer dwelling in the land as He did in those days, they tried to take up all the things He wanted them to do in those early days, such as keeping the Sabbath, offering sacrifices, keeping the feasts, and attending to the reading of the Law, which was His word.

But, you may say, was not that right? Well, let us see. Suppose your mother had told you to do something for her, and you refused, though she showed you all about it, and offered you a reward as well as that best reward of pleasing her. At last she would be forced to punish you, by putting you in the corner, or away in some other room, until you were ready to acknowledge your wrong. But, instead of acknowledging that you were wrong and she was right, and taking your punishment in a proper spirit, you go to work at

the very things she wanted you, at first, to do, in direct rebellion and disobedience. Your doing that now, would be without her permission, and therefore, the worst thing you could do. The Jews had altogether, as a people, departed from God, and now to have all these things was to have them without Him. You see that they showed this by crucifying His Son, and then keeping the Sabbath, and the feast of the Passover, as if nothing had happened.

Thus we have the evil heart of man made known. But then we have God's love told, too, to meet it. Although the Jews crucified the Son of God, the very first word of good news about the blood of Christ cleansing from sin, was sent to them.

The picture shows us one of the times when this was done. Although men showed their hatred of God in crucifying Christ, God showed His love in it.

Now, if you will turn to the thirteenth chapter of Acts, you will find the whole explanation of this picture. After reading the first few verses, go on to verse 14, and there you will find Barnabas and Saul, afterwards called Paul, in the synagogue at Antioch.

The Law and the Prophets had been read, a broken law and despised prophets, which all pointed to Christ, and which all condemned them now. For that law said, "Thou shalt do no murder," and they had murdered the Son of God. And then the law could only tell them, they must die, after having committed murder. So, what a sad thing it was to meet together, week after week, and listen to the law, as though having it and

listening to it could do any good, not thinking for a moment of the awful word, "cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to DO them." They could not do them. They were themselves undone. Who could do anything for them? Only GOD!

And so, when they invited Barnabas and Paul to speak, Paul stood up, as you see him here, and told them only of God's doings. You will see this in verse 17. "The God of this people of Israel," is the one he speaks of as doing everything. And that is the only thing to tell them. When man is ruined and guilty, the only question is, what will God do? And His word tells us. He loves man and He comes to undo all that man has done by sin. This is the great story of the whole of the Scriptures.

And now, dear child, this story in the 13th of Acts will have to be told another time, but I want to have you to know that God is the one who loves you. If you know yourself sinful and helpless, in Him is your help. In the Lord we have righteousness and strength. He has put His Son to grief, that He might give you joy. Christ came forth from the bosom of the Father, full of grace and truth, and those that simply rest on Him, believing what God says about Him, have eternal life. You have come into the world the child of a lost man, and the first thing you find out is, you, too, are lost. But in God is your help. Simply believe in Him. Rest on the work that Christ did on the cross. That is God's way of saving out of all our troubles.

AUNT MARY'S TALK ABOUT THE PRECIOUS THINGS OF GOD.

Not very long after Aunt Mary had talked with her little nephew about the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the state into which the earth afterwards fell, they were walking together in some pretty green fields not far from Willie's home. They were getting near to a row of fine old lime trees. A hurricane of wind and rain had destroyed one of them, and it lay torn up by the roots, on the ground under the shade of the

other trees. Aunt Mary thought it would be nice to rest for a little and to sit upon the trunk of the magnificent tree whose glory was all going into decay. The afternoon was very fine. It was late in the summer, but the grass was green, and the scene was a tempting one.

"What do you think, Willie," said Aunt Mary, "might we not rest upon the trunk of the fallen tree, and enjoy a little longer this gentle breeze?"

Then we might talk together about the Precious Things of God."

"Oh! Aunt Mary, it would be charming to tell me here in the green fields about God's making all that we see in this world in six days."

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(To be continued.)

the very things she wanted you, at first, to do, in direct rebellion and disobedience. Your doing that now, would be without her permission, and therefore, the worst thing you could do. The Jews had altogether, as a people, departed from God, and now to have all these things was to have them without Him. You see that they showed this by crucifying His Son, and then keeping the Sabbath, and the feast of the Passover, as if nothing had happened.

Thus we have the evil heart of man made known. But then we have God's love told, too, to meet it. Although the Jews crucified the Son of God, the very first word of good news about the blood of Christ cleansing from sin, was sent to them.

The picture shows us one of the times when this was done. Although men showed their hatred of God in crucifying Christ, God showed His love in it.

Now, if you will turn to the thirteenth chapter of Acts, you will find the whole explanation of this picture. After reading the first few verses, go on to verse 14, and there you will find Barnabas and Saul, afterwards called Paul, in the synagogue at Antioch.

The Law and the Prophets had been read, a broken law and despised prophets, which all pointed to Christ, and which all condemned them now. For that law said, "Thou shalt do no murder," and they had murdered the Son of God. And then the law could only tell them, they must die, after having committed murder. So, what a sad thing it was to meet together, week after week, and listen to the law, as though having it and

listening to it could do any good, not thinking for a moment of the awful word, "cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to DO them." They could not do them. They were themselves undone. Who could do anything for them? Only GOD!

And so, when they invited Barnabas and Paul to speak, Paul stood up, as you see him here, and told them only of God's doings. You will see this in verse 17. "The God of this people of Israel," is the one he speaks of as doing everything. And that is the only thing to tell them. When man is ruined and guilty, the only question is, what will God do? And His word tells us. He loves man and He comes to undo all that man has done by sin. This is the great story of the whole of the Scriptures.

And now, dear child, this story in the 13th of Acts will have to be told another time, but I want to have you to know that God is the one who loves you. If you know yourself sinful and helpless, in Him is your help. In the Lord we have righteousness and strength. He has put His Son to grief, that He might give you joy. Christ came forth from the bosom of the Father, full of grace and truth, and those that simply rest on Him, believing what God says about Him, have eternal life. You have come into the world the child of a lost man, and the first thing you find out is, you, too, are lost. But in God is your help. Simply believe in Him. Rest on the work that Christ did on the cross. That is God's way of saving out of all our troubles.

AUNT MARY'S TALK ABOUT THE PRECIOUS THINGS OF GOD.

Not very long after Aunt Mary had talked with her little nephew about the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the state into which the earth afterwards fell, they were walking together in some pretty green fields not far from Willie's home. They were getting near to a row of fine old lime trees. A hurricane of wind and rain had destroyed one of them, and it lay torn up by the roots, on the ground under the shade of the

other trees. Aunt Mary thought it would be nice to rest for a little and to sit upon the trunk of the magnificent tree whose glory was all going into decay. The afternoon was very fine. It was late in the summer, but the grass was green, and the scene was a tempting one.

"What do you think, Willie," said Aunt Mary, "might we not rest upon the trunk of the fallen tree, and enjoy a little longer this gentle breeze?"

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(To be continued.)

MARIE, THE LITTLE MARTYR.

I SHOULD like very much to tell you a story of a little girl. This little girl's name was Marie, and she lived in France. I dare say that most of you know that most of the inhabitants of France are Roman Catholics. Instead of praying to the Lord Jesus, they pray to images, not images of gods, as the poor heathen do, but images of men, who they think have been very good in their lifetime, and so they have gone to heaven.

It is the priests who make the people worship these images, and besides this they will not let them read the Bible, and at the time I am writing about, any one who was found reading the Bible, could be burnt alive as a punishment.

'But the father and mother of little Marie had a Bible, and they would not throw it away; but kept it, and read it, and in it they read how the Lord Jesus Himself listens to our prayers, and how He came to save us.

As soon as the priests found out that they would pay no attention to what they said, they were very angry, and tried to catch them in order to put them in prison. Marie's father knew this, so took his wife and child away from their pretty cottage home, with its climbing roses and sweet flowers, and went to hide in a town some way off. But while here, Marie's mother died. Before she died, she called her little girl to her and taught her one verse out of the Bible. Would you like to know what it was? It was this, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Little Marie never forgot this verse, and I wish you would not forget it either.

As soon as this little girl's mother was dead, her father was obliged to take her away from the place they were in, and this time they went to hide in a poor shed, with two other men, who also loved Jesus. Little Marie was often very cold and very hungry here, for they could get but

little food, for fear of being caught, and sometimes the rain came through the roof. Then her father would take her on his knee, and tell her stories about Jesus, and how He loves little children, and carries them so safely in his arms.

But at last, one cold, rainy day, they heard a great noise, and several men came in and seized Marie's father and his two friends, and tied their hands behind them and led them away. Little Marie followed. She was not afraid of the men, for her father was there, and best of all, she knew Jesus would take care of her, so she just prayed one little prayer to Him, and went with the men without any fear. They were put in prison that night, and Marie slept peacefully in her father's arms. But when the morning began to dawn, the father wakened his little girl, and with a start she exclaimed :

"Oh, father! where am I? I was dreaming I was far away in a beautiful place, and I saw my mother, too; but I did not speak to her, because Je-us was there, and I wanted just to look at Him, He looked so kind, so very, very kind. Father, won't Jesus soon come and take us there?"

"Marie," replied the father, "I think He will soon take me: but you may be left here."

Then taking out his little Bible, he placed it in her little hands. "Do not lose that my child," he said, "for in it we can read about Jesus, and what He wishes us to do!"

They were prevented from saying any more by the entrance of some soldiers, who led them away to the market place. There were a great many people there, but there was a cleared space in the middle, in which three posts were driven. Marie's father and his two companions were taken into this by some soldiers and bound to the posts; bundles of fagots were piled around them and then set on fire. The smoke and flames soon hid these brave men from view.

Marie, meanwhile, stood wondering at all that passed; but when she saw the fire, she gave a

great cry, and sprang towards her father, but before she could reach him she was roughly seized by a soldier. "Are you a heretic, too?" he said.

"I don't know what a heretic is," cried Marie, "but if my father is a heretic, I am one too, for I love Jesus, and I KNOW He loves me, for He says so, and He has been punished so that I might go free."

"Burn her, burn her," exclaimed the crowd of rough, excited men, who were standing by; "throw the little heretic in the fire;" and more than one

hand was stretched forth to force her into the flames, and in a few moments the little child's spirit was with the Jesus she so loved.

Yes, Marie was at home now; her life had not been long—only seven short years—but still she suffered for Jesu's sake. But remember, it was not because Marie was good that she went to Heaven; she was no better than you are, but she believed in the Lord Jesus, and the same Jesus who took care of her will take care of you, and is asking you to come to Him now. P.B.

"I LOVE TO READ THE STORY."

I love to read the story
Of Jesu's acts and ways,
Of all His love and goodness,
Of all His truth and grace;
I always love to linger
Upon the precious theme,
It makes my soul so happy,
And draws my heart to Him.
He loved to cheer the weeping;
He loved to soothe the sad;
To heal the broken-hearted,
And make the mourner glad;
When little ones pressed round Him,
He sent them not away,
But with a smile of kindness
Sweet words to them would say.
Yes, Jesus loved the children,
Which anxious mothers brought,
And He bestowed upon them
The blessings which they sought;
And oh, methinks that angels
Beheld the happy scene,
And they, too, loved the children,
Which had with Jesus been.
But now the gentle Jesus
Is gone so far away!
Yet not too far to listen
When little children pray.
For though up there in glory,
He still is "Jesus" there--

The Friend of little children,
As He was ever here.

And soon again He's coming,
O what a happy day!
Yes, Jesus soon is coming
To take His saints away!
And in the cloud of glory
Which Him shall then surround,
Shall many happy children,
His loved, His own, be found!

A.M.

DO YOU PRAY?

Children, do you ever pray?
Ah, one answers, "No, not I;
'Twill be time enough to pray
When I am about to die."
Say not so! How many pass
Quickly from the world below;
In a fleeting moment called
To the dark, dark grave to go.
O, bethink you! Jesus calls,
Listen to His voice to-day;
Then, believing in His name,
You shall find it sweet to pray.
Prayer and happy praise shall then
Cheer you as you onward roam;
Heir of glory, child of grace,
Peace your treasure, heaven your home.

A.M.



JERUSALEM, AS IN THE DAYS OF THE LORD JESUS.

W. P. Taylor del.

CHAPTER III.

WE must now leave the Neby Samwil, and turn southward toward Jerusalem.

We shall explain the geographical position of Jerusalem by saying that "Its latitude or distance from the equator, is the same as that of the northern end of the Dead Sea; its distance from the Mediterranean about thirty-one miles, and its distance from the Dead Sea and Jordan Valley, fifteen miles. Jerusalem is not built on a level surface, but on the crowns and sides of several hills. Nearly

through the middle of the city, from north to south, runs a valley, and nearly through it again from east to west runs another. Thus the city is divided into four quarters, each of which may be said to cover a hill. These hills are Mount

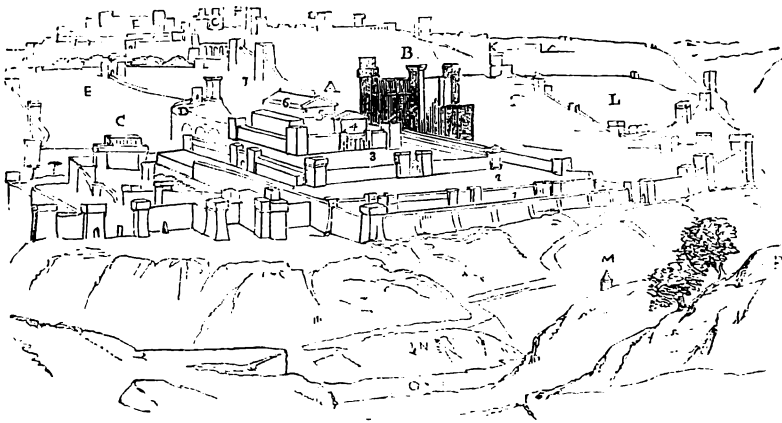
Moriah, on the south-east, Mount Zion on the south-west, Abra on the north-west, and Bezeth on the north-east.

The "Valley of Jehoshaphat" runs along the eastern side of the city, close under the lofty wall, rapidly deepening as it advances southward. This valley is often called the Kidron, or the brook Kidron, in the Bible. On the east of the ravine rises the Mount of Olives, between three and four hundred feet high. From the spur of this hill is obtained the most beautiful view of Jerusalem, and here Our Blessed Lord was, when "He beheld the city and wept over it." Travellers often go

to the same spot to see the whole city spread out before them. They have described it as the most wonderful view in the world. You stand on the hill, high above the city; just opposite rises Mount Moriah, on which Solomon's Temple used to stand, and behind it rises the still higher Mount Zion. Now try and think of what happened on the Mount of Olives.

Ch.—It was on the Mount of Olives that our Lord endured His agony in the garden of Gethsemane.

Yes, and you may still see in this garden, some very old olive trees which may have been growing at the time He was there. From another part of the hill, Solomon built the idol temples for Chemosh and Moloch, and on account of the sad scenes of idolatrous worship which took place there the whole



KEY TO VIEW OF JERUSALEM.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>A The Temple built by Herod.
B The Fortress and Palace of Antonia.
C The Old Palace of Solomon, and the King's Gardens.
D Herod's Bridge over the Valley of the Tyro. caon.
E Mount Zion, or the Upper City.
F Herod's Palace and Gardens.
G Tower of Hippicus.
H Tower of Phaselus.</p> | <p>I Tower of Mariamme.
K Tower of Haanael and of Hez-kiah.
L Bezetha.
M Tomb of Absalom.
N Valley of Jehoshaphat.
O The Brook Kidron.
P Mount of Olives.</p> | <p>2. The Second Court, or Sanctuary and Court of the Women.
3. The Inner Court, where stood the Altars of Burnt Sacrifice.
4. The Gate called Beautiful.
5. The Court of the Priests.
6. The Holy of Holies.
7. The Valley of the Tyropæon, dividing Zion from Acra, or the Lower City.</p> |
|---|---|--|

TEMPLE.

1. The Outermost Court.

Mount came to be called "the Mount of Offence" and "Mount of Corruption." 2 Kings, xxiii. 13. Not far from this spot is the field where Judas hanged himself, called ever after, "The field of blood."

Along the western side of the city runs the valley of "Gideon." This valley also deepens rapidly, as it first runs southward, and then, having passed the city, sweeps round the base of Mount Zion eastward, to unite with the valley of Jehoshaphat some distance below. The lower part of the valley, running under the south of Zion, is generally known by a distinct name—the

valley of "Hinnom." The valley of Hinnom was infamous for its human sacrifices. There Ahaz and Manasseh made their own sons to pass through the fire to that blood-thirsty god Moloch, or Saturn. Often the gracious God of Israel rebuked His people for this wickedness. Jer. vii. 31—32. From the word Hinnom was formed the word *Gehenna*, a name also applied to this valley; and the Lord Jesus used this word when speaking of the fire which never would be quenched. The two valleys of Jehoshaphat and Gideon then join and form the Wady, which leads down into the Jordan, near Jericho.

Not far from the point where the valley which runs through the city issues into that of Jehoshaphat is the fountain of Siloam. What happened at Siloam?

Ch.—It was there that the Lord sent the blind man to wash.

The region in which all three of these valleys come together—beautiful now even in its meagre cultivation, was, it is thought, the site of the "King's Gardens," and bordering it was the "spring or well of Enrogel."

A most interesting view of part of Jerusalem presents itself to the spectator standing near the confluence or meeting place of these valleys. From the depths of Jehoshaphat and Hinnom, Moriah appears truly a mountain, and Zion the citadel of David. There are five gates of Jerusalem now in use; the Damascus gate on the north, the Jaffa on the west, the Zion and Dung gates on the south, and St. Stephen's gate on the east. Of these the Jaffa gate is most used.

The Jews' quarter lies between Moriah and Zion; under the lofty west wall of Mount Moriah is a little court named the "Jews' Wailing Place." The massive stones of the wall seen at this point, probably constituted a part of the enclosure of Solomon's Temple. It is very sad to see the poor Jews every week assemble in this court, weeping and wailing, kissing the stones and pressing their foreheads against them.

Jerusalem is often said by travellers to have the appearance of a city in ruins; all the houses look ready to fall: but we will not dwell on its sad

state at the present moment. Let us, in imagination, sit together on one of the stones of this dear old city, and see if we can learn the history of what God has done here in past time.

Carry your minds back as far as you can, rather more than 3,000 years ago, about one thousand four hundred years before the Lord Jesus came into the world. The city of Jerusalem was then called Jebus, and the Canaanites lived there. Judges i. 21. Joshua xv. 63. Two armies, one of the tribe of Judah, the other that of Benjamin, came against the town, and managed to take possession of the lower, or northern part; but the southern part, the citadel, remained in the hands of the Jebusites. From the top of their cliff they looked down upon the Israelites, and laughed them to scorn, and defied them to take their rocky fastness. I am sorry to say that this state of things lasted for about four hundred years, the men of Israel not caring to take the fortress, and traveller after traveller contentedly passing by the Canaanitish town of Jebus without ever considering that the town belonged to the Lord, and that they ought to take it away from the Canaanites. It is said of Israel during that time that they "did every man that which was right in his own eyes;" they went about their own business, "turned every one his own way," and forgot that the central city in the Lord's land was trodden by the Jebusites.† That is like some people who have begun to learn the Lord's love to them. They know that He has forgiven them, and that they are His, but they do not care that the citadel of their heart should be in His hands alone. He does not reign supreme within, and they do not want Him to do so; they "do that which is right in *their own eyes*" and perhaps they contentedly say, like the Israelites, We cannot help it. This is not as it should be. The Lord wants our whole heart; He says, "My son, give me thine *heart*." It is said of Caleb and Joshua, that "they followed the Lord *wholly*," and the Lord approved of them for it.

The city of Jerusalem remained in the hands of the Jebusites until the time of David, the "man

† The word Jebus means 'trodden down.'

after God's own heart," and it was in his reign that the Israelites took the "stronghold of Zion." The Jebusites mocked them at first from the ramparts, thinking David would never dispossess them, but he took the citadel and made it his own dwelling. God had told him that He would dwell in Mount Zion. Listen to what the Lord says to David in Psalm cxxxii. 13—16. "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he desired it for His habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread. I will also clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall shout aloud for joy." The word Jerusalem means a "peaceable habitation."

It was soon after David had taken the town that he went to fetch the Ark of God from the distant city of Kirjath-jearim, in the south-west of Palestine. Unhappily David forgot to do it in God's order, and he put the Ark on a new cart, whereas the Levites ought to have carried it on their shoulders. When the oxen came to a rough place in the road, they shook the ark, and Uzzah put out his hand to hold it. This was a thing which ought not to have been done, and the Lord smote Uzzah, and he died. David, seeing this, was very unhappy about it. I do not think the King quite understood at first what he had done wrong, but he left the ark at the house of a Levite, named Obed-Edom, and went home, thinking that he could not dare to have the Ark of so holy a God with him in Mount Zion. It was perhaps something like Peter, who, when he saw how mighty the Lord Jesus was, in bringing the great draught of fishes to his net, knelt down and said, "Depart from me, O Lord." But both David and Peter learned to know God better afterwards. David, later on in his life, when not able to go up to the tabernacle, longed, he says, to see God's glory. "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?" So Peter, after the Lord was risen from the dead, just after another miracle of a draught of fishes, jumped out of his boat into the water to get quicker to the Lord. Do you know what made the

difference? It was just this, that Peter knew Jesus better. He had denied Him, and the Lord had turned and looked upon him. That sorrowful, solemn, heart-searching look from his Lord and God, taught Peter what Jesus was, and now he hastens to Him of whom he was before afraid.

So David learned to know God better, and he saw that he need not be afraid to have the Ark with him in Jerusalem. He went home to Mount Zion, and all Israel obeyed him. Hiram, also, king of Tyre, sent him cedar trees from Mount Lebanon, and masons and carpenters, who built him a palace. But while all this was going on, an enemy appeared. Not liking to hear that all Israel was united under David the king, the Philistines came up to attack him. David asked God whether he should go out against them. God told him to go and fight, and gave him the victory. And David called the place where he had gained that victory, Baal-perazim, which means "a place of breaches." Again the Philistines came up, and we are told that God went out before him to smite the host of the Philistines, and they fled from Gibeon to Gaza. (Find these places on the map.)

After his return, David prepared a tent for the Ark of the Lord, and having discovered what his fault had been, he told the Levites that they were to carry it on their shoulders. They did so, and the Ark was brought up with great shouting and gladness into the city of David. All the men of Israel were there, and a great many women too, and David offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings before the Lord. Then he blessed the people in the name of the Lord, and gave each man and woman a good piece of meat and some wine. 1 Chron. xvi. 1—3. He had learned how good God is, and so he could pray down blessings on others. Dear children, are you afraid of God? Afraid to be alone with Him? Afraid to die and meet God? Afraid when you think of the judgment-seat? Or have you learned to know God so that you love to be with Him?

(To be continued.)

THE BEAUTIFUL STORY OF RUTH.



NE of the most beautiful stories that God has written for us, is that of Ruth. You have often read it, have you not, children? Why is it that God writes stories that interest us more than any that man gives, do you know? I will tell you one reason. There is so much love in them, for God is love, and He is telling His own thoughts and ways, in what He gives in the Bible. It is His own word. There is always more than the thing that happened, what is called the incident, in them. There is a great deal of God in them. He loves us greatly and He takes these ways of showing that.

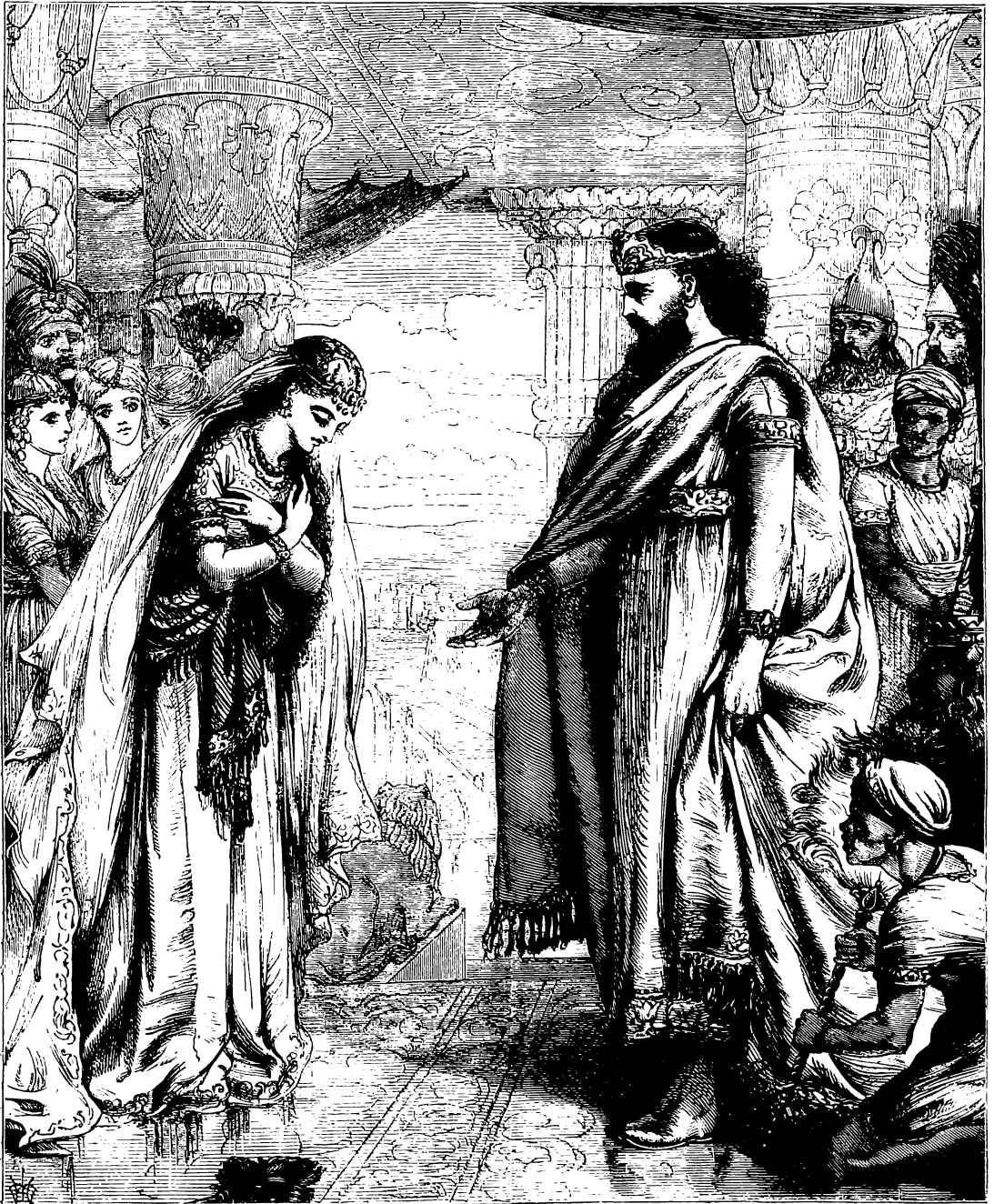
The Moabites were enemies of Israel, and of God, and He had said that they should never enter into the congregation of the Lord, because of their bad treatment of the Israelites, on their journey through the wilderness, Deut. xxiii. 3, 4. But now this woman, who was one of that race, having become the wife of one of the children of Israel, was, by his DEATH, introduced into the land. Do you see how strangely "death" enters into every blessing in the Scriptures? We have been telling you of this, in many of the numbers of this little paper. And here it is again. Naturally, this heathen woman, if her husband had lived, and had wanted to return to his land, would have had to be separated from him; but death was the means of bringing her to where the true God was. So we are told that we, who were afar off, are made nigh, by the blood of Christ, Eph. ii. 13. That means, that, while as sinners we could not get near to God ourselves, nor enter heaven, by Christ's death we can, and may be sure of a welcome.

How kindly Ruth was received, when she came with Naomi! She took her place with her mother-in-law, in acknowledged emptiness. The Lord had made them both know what that was.

See what a way God has of acting in love. The Moabites had refused bread to the Israelites in former years, but Ruth comes into the land at the time of barley harvest, to find plenty in the provision made for the stranger, and the widow, and the poor. I should like you to look at Leviticus xix. 9, and especially Deut. xxiv. 19, for there you will see that God told them when they harvested their fields, to leave some of the wheat, and if they forgot a sheaf, not to go back after it, but to leave it for the poor, and the fatherless, and the widow, to gather or glean. And Ruth was all of these three, for there was neither father nor husband to provide for her, and she was a stranger. And, dear child, you must know that long ago, God provided for you, as a needy one, and without strength, and a sinner. And it is all in Him, towards whom we were strangers, whom we never knew, nor cared to know.

But through whom did God provide for Ruth? By a kinsman, a near relative. So God has done all for us, through One who came down, and became a man, a child of a human mother, just as you are. In Hebrews ii. we are told, that as we were partakers of flesh and blood, He likewise took part in the same, on purpose that He might help us. Thus He became our kinsman. As I have supposed that you know the whole story, I have not told it, but only given a word or two, here and there. The last thing we read of this poor gleaner is that she became the wife of this rich and mighty man, and that from her, David the king was descended; and a greater than David, even Jesus, as you will see in the first chapter of Matthew. It was fitting that this story, that tells so much of God's love in Christ, should tell us that. Do you not find that God is thinking about Christ, all the way through the Scriptures? Take Christ for your own, with a perfect trust, no matter how sinful or miserable you are yourself, for in Him is life!

THE CHILD'S BIBLE COMPANION.



SOLOMON RECEIVING THE QUEEN OF SHEBA.

(See page 95)

A VOICE FROM A LITTLE ONE.

PART I.

“**D**OES YOU LOVE GOD?”

The question came from a sweet pair of lips. Opposite sat a young gentleman of striking exterior: He and the child were travelling in a stage coach in one of the American States. The latter sat on her mother's knee. Her little face, beautiful beyond description, looked out from a frame of delicate lace-work. For four hours the coach had been toiling on over an unequal road, and the child had been very winning in her little ways,—lispingsongs; lifting her bright blue eyes often to her mother's face; then falling back, in a little, old-fashioned, contented way, into her mother's arms, saying, by the mute action, “I am happy here.”

For more than an hour the dear babe, scarce yet entering the rosy threshold of her fifth year, had been answering the smiles of the young man, who had been pleased with her beauty. He had nodded his head to her little tunes; he had offered her his pearl-handled penknife to play with, and, at last, his heart went over to her at every glance. The mild blue eyes, full of the innocence of a holy love and a trusting faith, made his pulses leap with a purer joy, and, as the coach rattled on, he began to wish the end of the journey were not so very near.

The child had been sitting for the last fifteen minutes regarding the young man with a glance that seemed almost solemn; neither smiling at his caresses, nor at the dear face that bent above her.

A thoughtfulness seemed to spread over the young brow that had never yet been shadowed by care; and as the coach stopped at the inn-door, and the passengers moved uneasily preparatory to leaving, she bent towards the young man, and lisped, in her childish voice, these words:—“Does you love God?”

He did not understand at first, in the confusion, and bent over nearer; and the voice asked again, clearly, almost eagerly—

“Does you love God?” the thoughtful, inquiring eyes, meantime, beaming into his own.

The young man drew back hastily, blushing up to the very roots of his hair. He looked in a sort of confused, abrupt way at the child, who, frightened at his manner, had hidden her face in her mother's bosom, turned to the coach door, gave another look back, as if he longed to see her face, and then he left the coach.

He hurried to his hotel; but the little voice went with him. There seemed an echo in his heart, constantly repeating the question of the child, “Does you love God?”

Several gay young men met him at his hotel. They appeared to have been waiting for him, and welcomed him with mirth that was almost boisterous. They had prepared an elegant supper, and, after he had been to his room, escorted him to the table. The full gleam of the gas fell upon the glittering furniture; red wines threw shadows of a lustrous crimson hue athwart the snowy linen. There were mirth, wit, faces lighted with pleasure,—everything to charm the eye and please the palate; but the young man was conscious of a void never experienced before. His heart ached to see the child again; and ever and anon he seemed to hear her words—

“Does you love God?”

His name was Gilbert. Only twenty-three years of age, he was a good scholar, and esteemed by his friends a genius. Already he had made his mark as a writer; but he had never thought, as he thought to-night, on the solemn import of that simple question—

“Does you love God?”

It came to him when he held the red wine to his lips; it was heard amid the clatter of the billiard-balls, and the shouts of merry laughter that filled the wide room, everywhere. Which ever way he turned, he saw the earnest glance of that blue-eyed child, heard the low voice singing, the low voice laughing, the low voice asking thrillingly—

"Does you love God?"

It followed him to his bedside. He had tried to drown it in wine, in song, in careless levity. He strove to sleep it away, but heard it in his dreams.

The next night he met a fashionable friend. He was to take her to some place of pleasure. She was very beautiful in dazzling robing. The gleam of pearls, and the lustres of silk and lace vied with each other to enhance her loveliness; but even as she came sailing into the room with smiles upon her young red lips, and a welcome in her words, there came, too, floating noiselessly at her side the presence of that angel-child. The better feelings her innocent presence had awakened were yet warm; and, before he knew it, the young man said, quickly and earnestly, "Does you love God?"

"What do you mean?" exclaimed the young girl, with a start of surprise.

"I was thinking as you came in of a lovely child I saw yesterday," he replied. "As I was in the act of leaving the coach, she called me up, and asked me that question."

"And what, pray, put it into the child's head? What did you answer?"

"I am ashamed to say I was not prepared with an answer," replied the young man, casting down his eyes.

That night pleasure had no gratification for him. His feet trod languidly the mazes of the dance; his smiles were forced; and more than once it was said of him, "He does not seem himself."

No; he was not like the gay, thoughtless self of former years. There was a still pool lying in his bosom, the waters of which had never before been disturbed. Now a little child had dropped a pebble in it, and the vibration was to go on through eternity!

PART II.

THE RESPONSE TO NETTIE'S QUESTION.

FIVE years have passed away. Dust-soiled and travel-weary, a thoughtful man walked through

the principal street of a large western city. As he went on, apparently absorbed in his own meditations, his eye accidentally encountered a face looking down from the window of a handsome house. His whole countenance suddenly changed. He paused an instant, looking eagerly at the window, and in another moment his hand was on the bell-handle. He was ushered into the very room where sat the lady of the house.

"You will pardon my intrusion," he said, "but I could not pass by, after seeing you accidentally at the window. I have never forgotten you or your little girl, who, five years ago, in a stage coach, put to me the artless question, 'Does you love God?' Do you remember?"

"I think I do," said the lady, smilingly, "from the circumstance that you seemed so much startled and confused; but my dear child asked almost every person with whom we met, that or similar questions."

"Her innocent face is graven on my heart," said the young man with much emotion. "Never since that day have I been tempted to do that which my conscience would not sanction, but the earnest, serious gaze with which she regarded me before she asked that question, has come to my mind. Would she remember me, do you think? Absurd thought! of course she would not. But I should remember her anywhere, under any circumstances. Can I not see her, madam? Is she at home with you? I long to take her in my arms, and hear once more the voice that God has used to draw my heart to Him."

Strange that, in his eagerness, he did not notice that paling cheek, the quiver of the mother's lips, the sudden placing of her hand against her heart. Strange also that he did not mark the absence of pattering feet; of little gentle indications that a child's fingers had been busy in the room about him.

Suddenly, as he ceased speaking, there came over him a startling consciousness. He saw the tear-stained cheek turned towards the window; he noticed the garments of sombre hue; *he heard the silence* reigning within.

"Madam—is—the child——?"

"She is in heaven," came low and brokenly from the trembling lips.

The young man sank back on his seat, agitated, dumb—sorrowful that he had so rudely torn open the still bleeding wound in that womanly heart.

"This is sad tidings," he said, after a long pause, and his voice was troubled. "Dear little angel! she is, then, speaking to me from the grave."

The mother arose, and beckoned him to follow her. Into a little hallowed chamber she went, where, in a case, were the books the child loved, her Bible, her beautiful rewards, her childish toys.

"There," said the mother, now quite broken down, and sobbing as she spoke, "there is all that is left on earth of precious Nettie."

"No, madam; that is not all that is left. I am here a monument of God's mercy, made so through her holy influence. Before she asked me that question on that eventful day, my mind was a chaos of doubt, of bewildering and conflicting errors. I had dared to question the existence of an Almighty Creator. I had defiantly thrown my taunts at Him, who, in great forbearance, has

forgiven me. My influence for evil was unlimited; because men looked up to me, and chose me for their leader. I was going the downward path,—groping blindly in a great labyrinth of error, and dragging others with me. Madam, by this time I might have been a debauchee, a libertine, a God-defying wretch, but for her unlooked-for question—

'Does you love God?'

Oh! that voice! that look! that almost infinite sorrow! that divine pity, that, through her, glanced into my soul! Madam, these tears bear witness that your child left more than precious dust and perishing toys."

Utterly broken down, the strong man wept like a child. All he said was true; for he held the hearts of men in his hands. In genius he was one of the strong ones of the earth; and all that powerful mind was engaged in spreading the tidings of man's salvation through Jesus Christ.

Oh! God uses little children to do a mighty work.

Reader in the sweet accents of that babe of heaven, is there not a voice in your heart saying

"Does you love God?"

AUNT MARY'S TALK ABOUT THE PRECIOUS THINGS OF GOD.

"Yes, Aunt Mary, but does God set the man He saves in order, in the same way He made the world look beautiful, so that it might be a home for Adam and Eve?"

"That is one of the chief things I wished to talk to you about to-day,—you are going to hear of that which has been called *the world's new birth*, and I think you will see in it a picture of that which God does for the one whom He saves, that He may see the likeness of Christ wrought in him. Can you tell me the name of the good man to whom Jesus spoke a great deal about the new birth? I shall mention two things about him, and this may help you to remember his name. He was a ruler of the Jews, and he came by night, wishing to be taught by the Lord Jesus."

"I think I know, Aunt Mary, was his name Nicodemus?"

"Yes, my boy, and the Lord Jesus could not teach him; and can you tell me why that was."

"No, Aunt Mary."

"It was because Nicodemus had not learned the great fact I have explained to you this afternoon, that man is a perfect ruin. Every man, both the good, amiable man and the wicked, troublesome man. So the Lord Jesus had to say to Nicodemus he must first be born again, before he could teach him anything. Now you will yourself read in the Scripture what the Lord said to this amiable Jewish ruler."

"In what chapter of John's Gospel shall I find it, please?"

"In the 3rd chapter and the 3rd verse, read it dear."

"Jesus answered and said unto him, verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

"And in the 5th verse what does Jesus say, Willie?"

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

"Then, Willie, there are two things by which a man, that means every man who is saved, must be born again. Look again at the 5th verse, and see if you can tell me what these two things are."

"Of water and of the Spirit."

"Very good. It is nice to mark particularly all we read, then we are able to answer questions which may be put to us. Now I think I know a question you would like to put. Do you not wish to know what is meant by 'water' in this 5th verse of the 3rd chapter of John?"

"Yes, Aunt Mary. Is it real water, or is it something of which water is a picture?"

"It is not real water, but it stands for the Word of God."

"Then why does it not say the Word of God?"

"You will be able to answer that question when you have answered one I am now going to ask you. Tell me why you use water every morning?"

"That I may wash and make myself very clean before I go down to breakfast with papa and mamma."

"Exactly so, and God uses His word to do for the soul what you use real water to do for your body."

"Is there any verse in the Bible that says so, Aunt Mary? I shall think of what my water is like when I have my bath in the morning, and what God does with His water, which is His own Word."

"That is nice, Willie. It is blessed to be led to think of the things of God by the actions of our every-day life. Now look at Eph. v. 25, and you will see God speaks of the Word as water, and He uses it for the purpose of removing all in us that

does not suit Him. You have found the 25th verse. Now read it to me."

"Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it, with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish."

"That will do, Willie. Now, from what you have read, we learn Christ so truly loves His own that He cannot allow a soil to be upon them. You can tell me how He removes the soils."

"Yes, this verse says He washes them that they may be clean; but tell me, Aunt Mary, how is it the Word of God does wash the spot off the souls of the children of God?"

"When the believer listens to the Word of God, it causes him to think of things in which he may not have been obedient to God, for the Word shows us what His will is. The Spirit then leads him to go and tell his Father in heaven the wrong thing he has done; to be really grieved about it; and to ask strength from God not to yield any more to that which is displeasing to Him. God hears His child, gives him to feel that the blood of Jesus has put all the sin away, and gives him the strength he requires; for it is written, 'Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.' John xvi. 24."

"And is the fault quite put away?"

"Yes, the Word of God shows us our faults, and leads us to forsake them. When we have made confession of our sins to God the Word tells us they are forgiven. 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' 1 John i. 9."

"But then, Aunt Mary, how does God's Word wash the man that is not saved? You have told me only about the Word washing away the spots on the children of God."

"Quite true. It is of Christ's people we have been talking, but when a sinner listens to the Word of God, and believes what it tells him, that God sees him to be as an unclean thing, that he is ruined and vile, then the Word washes him. In one chapter in the Old Testament we read of a

man who had a dreadful disease called leprosy, and by the word spoken to him he was made clean."

"What sort of a disease is that, Aunt Mary?"

"It is a disease which comes out in the skin. We do not see much of it in this country, but in India and other warm countries there are many lepers."

"Did you see any one with that disease?"

"Yes, many. When travelling up country in India and we were having our horses changed, these poor creatures, covered with leprosy, used to crowd round the windows of the carriage to beg from us."

"What were they like?"

"Their skin was white and scaly, and sometimes they had neither fingers nor toes—some also had lost an arm, for these had dropped off with the disease. They looked poor, starved, suffering creatures, and they had to live away from other people,—in the jungles, or uninhabited waste lands, so that the disease might not spread."

"And what does the Bible say about the leper?"

"The leper of whom I was about to tell you had to go to the priest to get his opinion of his condition. When the priest saw that the disease was *all* over the skin of the man, that he was quite covered with it, then he said *he was clean*."

"How very strange, why did he say so, surely the man was then *unclean*?"

"If you read the verses for me, I will explain to you why the priest said he was clean, when the disease was all over his body. You will find it in the 13th chapter of Leviticus: read the 12th and 13th verses."

"If a leprosy break out abroad in the skin, and the leprosy cover *all* the skin of him that have the plague, from his head even to his foot, whosoever the priest looketh; *then* the priest shall consider; if the leprosy have covered *all* his flesh, he shall pronounce him *clean* that hath the plague."

"That will do. Now I will explain this picture. The leper stands for a sinner. He is before One who sees him *as he is*, and who can tell him his *real* condition. The priest says he is covered with

the disease. The leper listens and *believes* what the priest says, *then* the priest calls him *clean*. When the sinner believes what God in His Word says of him, and acknowledges he is full of sin, then God can say to him, 'Thine iniquity is taken away.' When the sinner believes he is a sinner, then God can say he is clean."

"Did God ever say so to any man?"

"He once did so in a beautiful dream, which one of His prophets had."

"Do tell me about this dream! What was the prophet's name?"

"Isaiah, and the Lord gave him this wonderful dream in the year that Uzziah king of Judah died. He thought he saw the Lord in glorious splendour, seated on a very high throne, and round about Him were blessed angels, called seraphims, and they had each of them six wings. The angels covered their faces with two of their wings, and their feet with other two, and then they used the other two wings for flying."

"And did the angels speak, Aunt Mary?"

"Yes, the prophet heard them saying, in the presence of that scene of the Lord's glory, 'Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory.' Then he thought the doors of the temple moved, and responded to these wonderful words of the seraphims, and the house was full of smoke."

"And what did the prophet think?"

"He felt what a poor insignificant creature he was in the presence of such a scene, and he said, 'Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.'"

"Was it the Lord Jesus he saw in this dream, which was so glorious?"

"Yes, in the gospel of John this vision is referred to as the time when God showed the prophet the glory of the One about whom he was to speak to Israel. Isaiah was the prophet who foretold that the eyes of God's people would be blinded, and that they would not know, or receive their Messiah, when He should come, ready to convert and to heal them."



IN KING'S PALACES.

“OH! a spider! And those nasty webs that get in the way, hanging from the bushes, stretched across the path, or dangling in the corners of the room to be removed by the broom, dirty and disgusting!” I guess there is a little mistake there, my child, for they are not nasty,

nor are their houses dirty at all. That dirt, by which you are able, often, to see them at all, is from you, sir, and you, miss, running and playing in the room, and raising a dust that settles on these beautiful palaces. “Palaces!” Yes, indeed, and composed of the finest threads—finer

than any silk your mother ever used; and as to cotton thread, it is like a great cable, to these delicate builders. And is not that airy house, that filmy dream of a house, that is stretched out by the light of the stars, and ready for the morning sun to sparkle through it and paint it with a thousand beauties, is it not just the fitting lodging-place of the tiny dew-drops that hang like gems all over it? Dirty? I should think not. Only think of the materials of that mansion. They are not of either earth or wood, or weed or leaf. Many an animal and bird that you think very nice is contented with such things as these. But the finest of mills has been at work to form this, within the builder himself; and then with a patience and industry that never seem to yield, he spins and weaves it from himself, clean and pure as the sun's rays, and almost as fine.

Do you live in a city? If you do, you never saw any street laid out with the order that these are. I have called it his palace, but there are his grounds also, and no garden was ever so regular. The master has a sleeping and living apartment that is hidden. Occasionally his lordship comes out to find a thoughtless fly that has been intruding on his premises, and to take it off to his private room. And I wonder if he does not put it to better use than you do, any stray fly you catch, for if he stows it away in his stomach, it helps to form more web-matter, to fill the bushes and the air with these fleecy skeins.

But do you know that all things are made by Jesus Christ and FOR Him? The Bible tells us so. And I find things get to have a better look about them, when I thus see that all things are connected with Christ. For Christ is all. Only think of it: every blade of grass, every green leaf, every little insect that creeps, or skips, or flies, and there are millions of them so small you and I never saw them. Do you know where He has told us anything of the spider?

If you turn to the thirtieth chapter of Proverbs, you will find it in the 28th verse.

There are wonderful things all through this chapter, which are meant to tell of God's thoughts. From the 25th verse to the 29th, we are told of

four things that are little upon the earth, but they are exceeding wise, and then it tells us of the wisdom of each one. The ants prepare their meat in summer. Is not that giving us a lesson of the time for us, while God is inviting in love, and offering salvation? "Now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation." The conies make their houses in the rocks. And will not you, dear children, a feeble folk like the conies, take refuge in Christ, who is the rock? That is the way to be wise. "I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge, and my fortress, my God, in Him will I trust." Then we come to the locusts, who have no king, yet they go forth, all of them by bands. They are just like the Lord's children, not of this world, which has Satan as its prince, but who are waiting to reign with the king. But they are ONE. This is God's purpose now, that His people shall be one, one body waiting for Christ, to whom they are joined.

The fourth of the little things is the spider, who "taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces." This tells a beautiful thing of those that belong to the Lord Jesus. They may be no more esteemed down here than the spider, may even be despised and loathsome, but they are in kings' palaces. The Lord Himself has brought them into His own presence, where is fulness of joy. And you know He said, "I go to prepare a place for you," and, "I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."

What blessed things are all these! Are you willing to be little on the earth? The world is Christ's enemy, for it put Him to death. But there are salvation, protection, fellowship, and glory in Him. Now, before you find out what the world is, for yourselves, take God's word about it, and take life and salvation and peace through Jesus Christ, and that will bring you to the king's palace, our home on high.

God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.

The story is told of a young apprentice that he used to go up into the attic to pray every day at his dinner hour, and when people wanted to know what he asked God for, he said, "It is not for what I want, but I love to be with God; I want to tell Him that I love Him." So did David: he says to God: "Because Thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee." Psalm xiii. 3.

After the Ark had been placed on Mount Zion in a tent which David had pitched for it, he began to think that he should like to build a temple for the Lord's worship. But God sent Nathan to tell him that not he but his son should build the temple; and he told him, also, that He would "establish His throne for ever," which meant, as we know from the New Testament, that God would raise up the Lord Jesus to sit on the throne of David. When David heard this, he went in and sat before the Lord and thanked him for all His goodness to him. You will read his thanksgiving in 1 Sam. vii. 18—29. That was a scene such as God loved to see; David sitting before Him, and pouring out his heart full of thanksgiving; but it was soon to be followed by a series of very painful scenes, to which we must now turn.

David one day wrote a very wicked letter, in which he ordered one of his faithful servants, Uriah, to be killed, in order that he might marry his wife. After this the prophet Nathan was sent to the king to point out his sin to him, and he told him that he should have great trouble in his family, and this came to pass shortly afterwards. The king had neglected to bring up his family in the right way, and now some of them were grown up, and there were very sad quarrels among them. One of his sons killed another. The deed was done out of Jerusalem, and the tidings were brought to David, and it is said the king and all his servants "*wept very sore.*" It was not long before another very serious thing happened. Absalom, David's son, revolted against him, and the old king had to flee out of Jerusalem with his friends; he went weeping over the brook Kedron, up the Mount of Olives, down the valley leading to the Jordan, and had to cross that river. There a

great battle was fought, and Absalom was killed, and after some more fighting, David returned with a very sorrowful heart to his capital.

After this, another trouble came; David had ordered Joab to number the people of Israel, and as he had not done it in the right way, and each man did not offer the redemption money, as he ought by the law to have done, God smote the people with a plague, and a great number died. The avenging angel was standing with his sword drawn over Jerusalem, when David confessed his sin, and prayed to God to heal the people. God told him to offer a sacrifice in a threshing floor belonging to Ornan the Jebusite, and when he had done this the plague ceased; and David then seeing how God had accepted his sacrifice, said that the temple should be built on the threshing floor. He then began to make all necessary arrangements for building the house of God, and settled the work of the porters and singers. Each man was given his post.

Jerusalem must have been a happy city when the worship of God was carried on there as He would have the Jews do it. First there were the priests, the sons of Aaron, who had to offer the burnt offerings and the sin offerings, and to burn incense before the Lord. The Levites were to help them, because the work was very hard; there were so very many sheep, goats, oxen and pigeons to be offered. Two hundred and eighty-eight of the Levites had to sing: there was one man among them, Heman, to whom God gave fourteen sons and three daughters, and he taught all his children, boys and girls, to sing the Lord's praises. What a pretty sight it must have been to see that father leading the choir of his sons and daughters; some of them had symbols, psalteries, and harps, which they played to accompany their voices. There stood also Asaph, the singer, whose name you will find at the beginning of many Psalms, and his sons with him. We are expressly told that the "teacher as well as the scholar" took their places to sing. David wrote those beautiful Psalms which we love to read, and handed them one after another to these singers, that they might take care of them, sing them, and teach them to the

scholars. 1 Chron. xvi. and xxv. 1--8. Read these verses.

I hope, dear children, some of you love to sing the Lord's praises. If you know His love to you, you will not be able to restrain a song of praise. But there is a difference between the singing of the Christian and that of the ancient people of God. If you read the new Testament attentively you will see how much God says about worshipping Him with the heart, far more than He ever said to the Jews. In Ephesians we are told to "sing and make melody in our hearts to the Lord." God loves to listen to the melody of our hearts while He graciously accepts also the fruit of our lips, "giving thanks to His name." God has now no earthly temple built of cedar trees and costly stones, but He has a temple built of "living stones". Every one who truly believes in the Lord Jesus is in this temple, and God expects to have praise from *his heart* and *his lips*. Perhaps some of you may be thinking, I cannot praise with my lips, I have been too naughty, used my lips badly, said hasty, unkind, rude words; will God like to have praise from such lips? Yes, dear children; He does expect every one who is born into His heavenly family to praise Him. The prophet Isaiah, when he saw the Lord's glory, said "Woe is me, for I am undone: because I am a man of unclean lips." Nothing seemed to strike him, when brought into the presence of God, so much as the sin of his lips. But the Lord provided for his trouble, (Isaiah vi. 6, 7,) and when his sin was taken away, then he was ready to serve the Lord and to use his tongue for God. There are two ways in which even a little child, if he be a believer, can render service with his lips to God, One is, to tell other children of the Lord's love and goodness. "Let him that heareth say, Come." And we also serve him when we sing His praises. How beautiful it is to think of the great temple God has now in the world! a temple of hearts; the stones are everywhere, in every clime and country; poor people and rich people, civilized and uncivilized, old and young, all who have "learned the love God has to them." They are all praisers, and they ought to be *always*

so; but alas! the voices of the singing Levites in the old temple were often hushed by sin and its consequence, misery; and it is sad to [think how often the voices of Christians are hushed from the same cause.

But we now must return to our sketch of the history of Jerusalem. David was now a very old man, and he called all the principal people of the land together to Jerusalem, and told them that Solomon was to be king, and that God had said he should build the temple. Then David shewed the people the quantities of gold, silver, brass, and iron, cedar-wood, and great stones, that he had collected together for the temple; and he gave Solomon the pattern according to which he was to make it; this pattern had been taught to David by the Holy Spirit, and Solomon was to follow out the directions exactly.

Soon afterwards David died, and Solomon came to the throne. For seven years of his reign the temple was building. A wonderful work it was; for "the house, when it was building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither, so that there was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron, heard in the house while it was in building." 1 Kings vi. 7.

The reign of Solomon was the greatest time that the city of Jerusalem has ever seen. When the temple was finished, Solomon made a great feast, and called all the people together to the dedication. He offered sacrifices, 2 Chron. vi. 12-14. Then Solomon praised the Lord, and prayed in the court of the temple aloud before all the people, asking God to bless them, and help them in all the various troubles they might come into. The fire of the Lord came down and burned up the sacrifices, which shewed that they were accepted. Picture to yourselves that great concourse of people, so near the altar, and all the priests ministering close to it, and all the sacrifices burnt up, and yet not one of all the people or the priests was touched. The sacrifice was accepted instead of them. You may perhaps remember that several times when the Israelites came near to the place where God shewed His glory, but not obediently, not doing *exactly* what God told them

to do, they were killed. Can you remember some of these instances?

CH. The sons of Aaron were struck dead, because they did not take the fire off the altar, as they should have done: and two hundred and fifty men of Korah's party, who dared to come in a spirit of rebellion, were burnt up. Uzzah, who touched the ark, was struck down dead.

Yes. Those cases were all very solemn indeed; but now, you see, the people were doing what was in accordance with God's mind, and so the fire that consumed the sacrifices left the people unharmed. Well, everything had been set in order for the worship of the temple, then many Gentile kings and chiefs came to pay their respects to king Solomon. They did homage to him, by offering him presents of the produce of their different countries, gold, silver, curiously made vases (or vessels), beautifully worked dresses, harness, spices, horses, mules, and many other things. They looked upon King Solomon as a chief king, ruling over the other kings, and feared him. He possessed a large country, his dominion extended to Tamar (Palmyra) a city far away in the wilderness; Damascus was subject to him; so was Edom and Moab. Where were these places?

CH. Damascus was on the N.E. of Palestine, Edom on the S.E., Moab on the E.

And he had fleets of ships on the Red Sea, which went to India, and very likely to the Malay Peninsula and to the Molucca Islands, to get spices, gold and silver, beautiful and useful kinds of wood, apes, peacocks, and many other things.

All these riches must have been brought on the backs of camels from the coast of the Red Sea, and you may imagine what grand days those must have been in Jerusalem, when the caravan arrived heavily laden, and walked slowly through the narrow streets, till it reached the palace of the king. But there was a yet more wonderful arrival in Jerusalem. The Queen of Sheba, a country which appears to have been in the south of Arabia, heard of the fame of Solomon, and came in person, with a very large retinue, not only to do homage to Solomon, but also to worship the Lord, the only true God, who had made

Solomon so great, so rich, and so wise. Solomon had not only built the temple, but also his own house, of cedar of Lebanon; and in his palace he had a very wonderful throne made of ivory and overlaid with gold; all his drinking vessels were of gold, and he had two hundred shields of gold. All was very grand, beautiful and rich. God had made his people the first nation in the world, and Jerusalem the centre of the earth.

CH. That must have been a happy time.

It was so, no doubt. Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon. 1 Kings, iv. 25.

CH. What a pity that peace and happiness did not last.

When you have been a little longer in this world, dear children, you will see that man is constantly spoiling everything. God gives him what is beautiful and lovely, and man mars it all by sin. I shall have a sad story to tell now of what happened in Jerusalem. King Solomon left off worshipping God, and built in God's own city temples for many false gods. What a horrible thing it must have been to see the old king, who had prayed to God and praised Him in his younger days, bowing down to the hideous image of Moloch or Chemosh! Then came trouble, and the rest of Solomon's reign was filled with wars and rebellion. He was brought back to God in his old age, and then he wrote the book of Ecclesiastes, which shows that all his riches and his grandeur had disappointed him. After his death his son Rehoboam lost all his kingdom, except two tribes; and Shishak, king of Egypt, came up with an army and took Jerusalem; went into the temple and into Solomon's palace, and carried off all he could find, and, among other things, the 200 shields of gold. Poor Rehoboam could not get new gold shields, and he hung up in their place 200 shields of brass.

Several kings reigned after him. I will not tell you all about them to-day, but will pass on to the time when a very wicked woman, named Athalia, killed all the princes of the royal family whom she could find.

A WORD FOR THE LITTLE ONES.

I HAVE often, when preaching the Gospel, looked on the bright faces of the little ones, and greatly desired their salvation. And God has been very good, and given me words of love for them; and I have seen many believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and find rest in Him.

But there are many dear children who think that Jesus saves none but "big people," and, therefore, they do not expect to be saved until they "grow big." O my young reader, Satan puts this thought into your heart to keep you from coming to Jesus, and being saved just now. Do not let him hinder you. Come to Jesus just now as you are. When Jesus was down here He took little children up in His arms and blessed them, and embraced them. They knew Him and praised Him. *Matt. xxi. 15.*

But my young reader may say, "O yes, I know that, but Jesus is not down here now to take me up in His arms, and I do not think He loves now, as He did then; for He is in heaven on His throne surrounded by multitudes of good angels."

Ah! these are more of Satan's bad thoughts; do not let them remain one moment in your heart. You know, the Bible says he is "the father of lies." He is constantly working to get you to believe that Jesus does not love you. But He does love you now as you are reading this paper. How much does He love you? You cannot tell. I will tell you where you may read, in a very few words, His love to you. Open your Bible at the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. Now read the fourth verse. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." Surely, this verse tells you of the love of Christ. It does not say that Christ died for "the god," for He Himself said, "There is none good." And the Apostle Paul said, "There is none that doeth good, no, not one."

My dear young reader, you are bad in your sins, and unfit for heaven; but Jesus loved you, died for you, shed His precious blood to cleanse you from all sin, and fit you for the many mansions

in the Father's house. He now lives "above the bright blue sky," and still loves you, and says, "Come unto Me." We are always ready to believe them that love us. Satan knows that you do not care to believe them that hate you, so he tries to make you believe that Jesus does not love you. I know you love to believe your dear papa, because you know he loves you. Now, we have read in God's blessed book that Jesus loves you; surely you love to believe Him, do you not? I know you do. Well, and if you believe Him just now, what will you get? I think I hear you say, "Forgiveness of sins." Yes, indeed, for Jesus says, "Thy sins are forgiven." *Luke vii. 45.*

Now, suppose you offended papa by some naughty act, and he said to you, "Well, dear, I forgive you," you would believe him, would you not? "Yes, indeed," you say. Well, why would you believe him? "Because he loves me, and means what he says." True, very true, indeed. And Jesus loves you, and means what He says when He says to you, "Thy sins are forgiven." Believe Him, and you will know that your sins are forgiven.

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PAUL PREACHING BEFORE FELIX.

THREE WAYS IN WHICH THE WORD OF GOD WAS TREATED.

A WICKED king of Judah, named Jehoiakim, was sitting in his palace warming himself near the fire; some of his princes and courtiers were standing round him, when others came in and said that they had heard a man read in the temple some words which God had commanded the prophet Jeremiah to write. The king sent to fetch the writing, and a messenger named Jehudi brought it.

Jehoiakim knew very well that what Jeremiah wrote was God's mind, even His own words. He let the man read some of it. It spoke of judgment to come, punishment on the ungodly king, the destruction of the idolatrous city Jerusalem, the coming of enemies, who would spare none. The king heard, but his proud heart rebelled against God's word; he took the roll, and began cutting it up with a penknife. Some who were present, and whose names God has preserved in His Word, begged the king not to destroy the roll, but he would not hear. He cut it up and threw it into the fire, and did not either tremble or mourn when he saw the flames burning it up. A short time after this, the dead body of that king was lying outside the gate of Jerusalem; he had been slain by the enemy, as God had said, and his soul had gone to give account to God.

Many years later, a Roman governor, named Felix, had Paul the Apostle before him; he was talking of "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." Felix was not a hardened man like Jehoiakim. He trembled at God's word, but, sad to say, he did not submit to it with his whole heart. He told Paul to go away, and come again another time, "When I have a convenient season," he said, "I will send for thee." He waited in this way for two years, and then he had to leave the country, and go far away from Paul, where he could not hear the Gospel preached.

Dear children, never put off receiving God's word. God says, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

I will now tell you of another king, who heard

God's word, trembled and submitted to it. His name was Josiah; he was very young, only sixteen years old, but he did not put off listening to what God had said.

That young king had never seen a Bible, dear children, as you have; he had never even seen a portion of God's word, for the roll of the law that God had given His people was lost, and no one knew where it was. But the king had told the priests to clean out the house of God; there was a quantity of rubbish there, and no one had touched it for a long time. While the priests were cleaning it out, the High Priest found there a roll, and gave it to Shaphan, one of the king's officers, who read it to the king. "And when the king heard the words of the law, he rent his clothes," and he sent some of his servants to enquire of the Lord, and to find out what God would have him do. God told him by a prophetess named Huldah, that because "his heart was tender, and he humbled himself before the Lord, he should have a peaceful reign."

Take notice of what this king did; when he heard God's word, he received it, trembled at it, and asked God to tell him more. So when Saul of Tarsus heard the voice of the Lord Jesus call to him out of heaven, he said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" So in like manner Josiah asked to be further instructed in God's ways, and afterwards he "kept a Passover to the Lord."

Dear children, you are sure to be like one of these three rulers. Ask your conscience, each one of you, which of them it is? Perhaps you would not dare to burn the Bible as did Jehoiakim, but do you not often prefer another book to God's Word? God in His mercy has given you His Word; do you slight it? or in your heart hate it?

But if you are like Josiah, and tremble at God's Word; then there is a word for you.

"To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Isaiah lxvi. 2.

'TIS A-COMIN', TEACHER!



THE snow had fallen thickly during the night. The sky was clear, but the wind was very cold and piercing, making one feel grateful to God for warm and good clothing. As I walked quickly along, my eyes rested on a little girl about nine years old, whom I recognized as a scholar from a ragged school where I was a Sunday-school teacher. She was standing by the police-court and anxiously looking down the street, as if watching for something or somebody. I stopped, and said to the child:

"Well, Jessie, dear, what are you doing here, standing alone in this place, your little face almost blue with cold? You look starving, my poor child, why don't you run along?"

"Please, teacher," said Jessie, "I'm a watching for the big van what brings 'em up here of a morning."

"Brings who, Jessie?"

"Them prisoners, teacher, what's took up by the policemen in the streets of a night for being drunk, or what gets a fightin'."

I understood now what she meant.

"But who is it you are expecting to see in the prisoners' van, my child? No one belonging to you, I hope?"

"It's mother," answered Jessie, looking grave and sad.

"Oh! I'm sorry to hear that: tell me, how did your mother get there?"

"Taint the first time, teacher; I've seen her there before. Last night when I left school I was so happy; it was so nice. I was a-thinking of that beautiful story you read to us out of the Bible, of that good man what loved God, and what didn't die, but God sent to fetch him away in a grand carriage, with horses of fire, and the good prophet was then took up all at once to heaven without bein' put in them ugly coffins. Oh, it was nice, teacher. 'I'll tell mother all about it,' I thought. When I got home I ran upstairs. We lives in the top front attic, but the door was locked. I knocked ever so many times, but mother wasn't there. I knew then that she had gone out to get drunk. I didn't like to make a noise to let the lodgers know, so I set up all of a heap across our door, thinkin' if I got to sleep and mother came home she would be sure to tumble over me, and see that I was there. Mother ain't unkind, teacher; she never hits me, but after father died she took to drinkin.' I loves her, and I prays to Jesus to take that wicked drink away from her."

"That's right, Jessie; I am glad you pray to Jesus. Tell Him everything. Did your mother come home at last?"

"No, teacher, she didn't. When it got daylight I went out of the house as quiet as a mouse, and walked about the market, and picked up bits of orange peel to eat. I didn't have no supper last night, and no breakfast this morning. I'm so hungry and so cold." Such was little Jessie's eloquent and telling story.

"I will go across to the ham and beef shop, and get you something to eat," I said to her, feeling only too happy to be able thus to help, in a very small measure, the poor child in her early sorrows.

I quickly returned with a good-sized meat pie and a loaf of bread. "Here, Jessie, here is a good breakfast for you. Can you say, Thank you, to Jesus, for it, dear?"

"Yes, teacher, I can, and to you, too," she answered, while a faint smile crossed her little white face.

When she had eaten half the pie and half the loaf, she carefully rolled up the rest in her pinafore. Her eyes were still eagerly watching in a certain direction, when she called out to me, "'Tis a comin', teacher, 'tis a comin'." She was right. The prisoners' van drove up, and stopped close by where we were standing. I felt it my duty to stay there and protect Jessie, whose position seemed so lonely and so sad. The door of the van was opened, and one by one the miserable offenders came out, and were led inside the police-court to be examined. The last was a most wretched looking woman: at her appearance Jessie pushed through the crowd and cried out, "Mother, mother, look at me; I am here, your little girl!" She was not ashamed thus to claim this poor, wretched creature as her mother. The woman looked confused enough at seeing her child there.

Jessie went into the court, and I continued on my way, musing on the fearful consequences of intemperance. Shall not the parents have a dreadful account to render by and by, when they meet God?

Four years have passed by. It is winter—the month of January. The day is fine, and the sun is peeping out for a little while, just to cheer the ward of the infirmary, where many poor women and children are lying very ill. In a corner of the room by the window, on a little hard pallet—for I cannot call it a bed—is a young girl. She looks about thirteen years of age. Her face, though emaciated, is sweet and pretty. Intelligence and thoughtfulness are written on her countenance. I pass on softly by each bed, giving a nod and a smile to those who are suffering, and expecting a little sympathy from visitors. The pauper nurse comes up to me—

"Your Jessie is dying, ma'am."

"Hush, hush, nurse!" I answered; "don't speak so loud; the child will hear you."

"My Jessie" did hear the remark, and said to me: "Never mind, teacher, it's all right. I am very, very happy."

"My darling, if I had a home, I would take you to it, you should not die here."

"Come closer to me, teacher dear; my eyes are getting so dim. I can't see you, but I know your voice so well. I know 'tis you. I want to tell you something. There are lots of women in the ward, and they are very ill, but they don't love Jesus. They swear, and it frightens me. I have talked to them when I could, and told them about the loving Saviour, who died on the cross for sinners. I told them that God's Holy Spirit had given me a new heart, and that I am going home to heaven to be with Jesus, because all my sins are pardoned, and washed away in the blood of the Lamb of God. Dear teacher, I don't fret because I am here. Jesus had nowhere to lay His dear head. You won't leave?" "No, darling," I said, "I will not leave you."

She seemed to be dozing a little; but presently she said—" 'Tis a-comin', teacher." My thoughts ran back to that snowy morning, four years before, when I had found little Jessie shivering in the cold, watching for the prisoners' van in the street. But it was not the black prison van that met her eyes now; she had a far different object to gaze upon.

" 'Tis a-comin', teacher, 'tis a-comin'!"

"What, dear?"

"That beautiful gold carriage, drawn with the horses of fire. Jesus is a-sendin' for His little Jessie. My Jesus, here am I—lots of angels—I see—teacher, kiss me. Tell Polly Bruce my favourite text for a keepsake. There—remaineth—therefore—a rest—to the people—of God. Jesus wore a crown of thorn—and me—a crown of gold."

She ceased to speak. I thought she was sleeping. The daylight had gone away; the ward was dark; but when they had lit up the gas, I saw that my Jessie's happy spirit had left her suffering body.

THE WORD OF GOD A LIGHT UNTO OUR PATH.



A VERY rich gentleman once met two poor children; he pitied them very much, and thought he would like to take them and make them his own children, so he said to them: "This road will take you to a large castle, which you shall live in, and lest you should lose your way, I am going to give you a lantern, which will only shine on the path which you are to follow."

They took the lamp and followed the road, but soon they came to a path which was very rough and stony. They did not want to go along such a path as that, but the light from the lamp shone brightly on it. What was to be done? Perhaps if they turned the lamp round, the light would shine on another path, which seemed much easier, and looked as if it went in the same direction. They tried again and again to make the light shine on the easy road, but without success.

They shut one side of the lantern, but the light which could still be seen, only turned to the stony way. They shut it a little more, but the faithful light never once shone on the wrong road. At last they shut it altogether and tried to go on without it.

After wandering about in the dark for a long time, they met a man who asked where they were going. The children told him all that had happened, and then he wanted to know what they

were carrying. They told him it was a lamp.

"But of what use is it?" he asked.

"We were told that the light would shine on the path we were to follow," they answered.

"Then why have you shut it?"

"Oh, we did not like the road it shone on, it was so rough and narrow."

"Ah, my children," said the stranger, "open your lantern again and let its light guide you. It will never deceive you, and you will soon find your way."

So the children followed his advice, and very soon found the path they had turned away from. This time they gladly followed it, in spite of the stones and brambles, and soon arrived at the castle.

Dear children, our conduct is often like that of these two little ones.

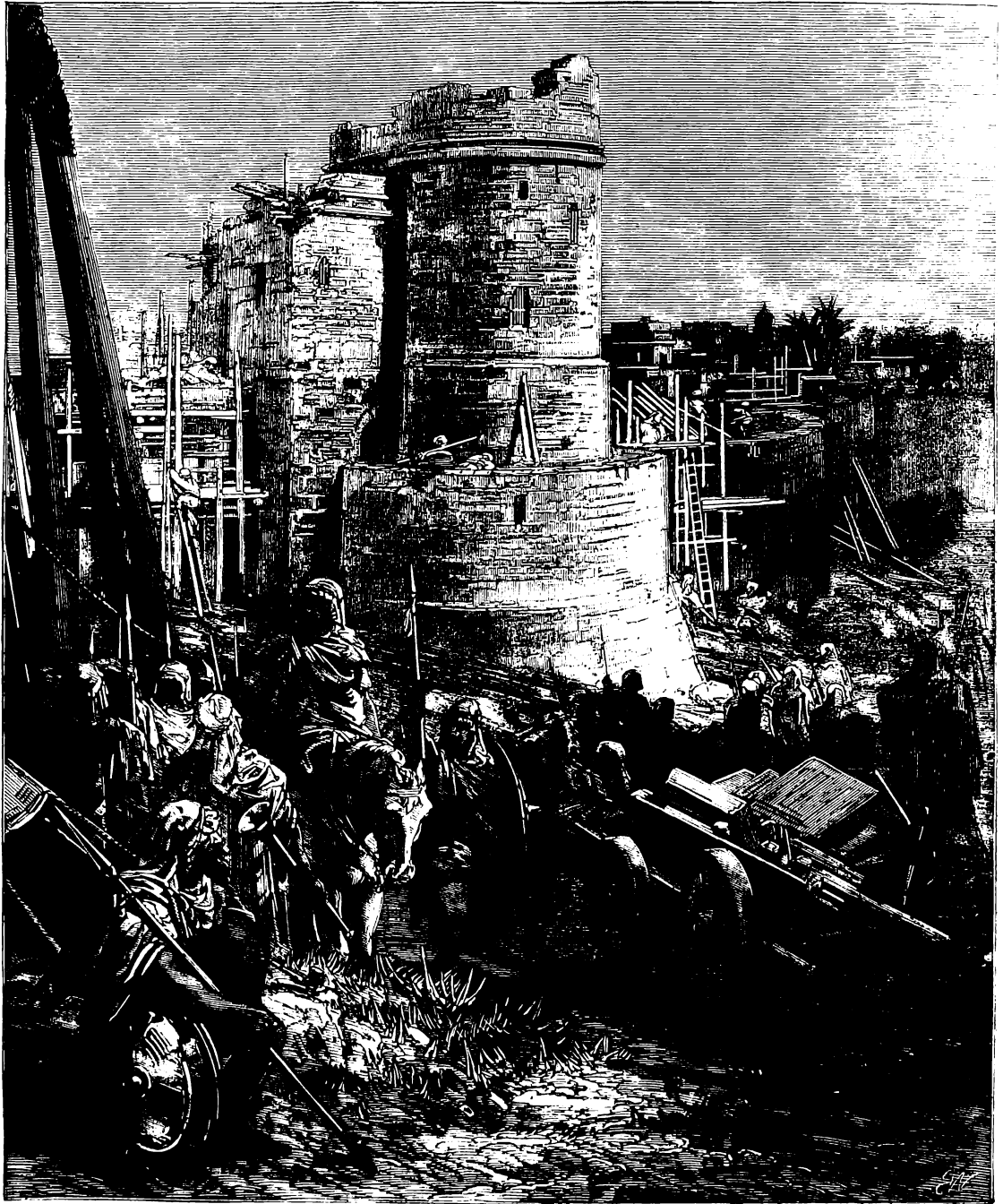
Like the lantern which was given to them, the word of God has been given to us, and is the light which is to shine on our path while we are down here on our way home. God, in His great love, has given us His word, to tell us how we are to act in this world, and what we are to do. But very often we do not like to obey it, and we try to forget it; we shut it up, as the children shut the lantern, and we try to walk alone in the darkness of our own hearts. We like to go our own way, instead of following the path pointed out by the word of God, and then we get unhappy. But God loves His children too much to let them always wander away from Him, and so He sends His servants to warn them, and tell them to let the light shine again, and guide them to the path He would have them walk in.

Dear children, never allow yourselves to shut up the word of God because you do not seem to want to follow it. Sometimes you may find the road difficult; perhaps your companions will laugh at you when you want to read God's word; or perhaps it may cost you something to give up your own will; but never mind how difficult and rough it may seem; follow it, and you will soon find it is the only road to real happiness and blessing.

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." *Ps. cxix. 105.*

"Enter ye in at the strait gate, for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.

Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it." *Matt. vii. 13, 14.*



REBUILDING OF JERUSALEM.

Athaliah reigned very wickedly, and taught the people to worship Baal, and for six years she made the people very unhappy.

All this time a little boy, of the house of David, had been hid by his nurse in a room adjoining the temple. He was a very little baby when Athaliah killed all his brothers, and now he was only seven years old. The old priest Jehoiada brought him out of his hiding place and presented him to the people, telling all the Levites to stand round, armed, and guard the young king. When the people saw him they shouted, "God save the king," and wicked Athaliah, attracted by the sound, came to see what was going on, when the Levites put her to death, and Joash reigned in her place. But when he grew up he turned from the Lord and killed old Jehoiada's son, who rebuked him for his ways.

Another trouble that came to Jerusalem was in the reign of Hezekiah. The whole army of the greatest kingdom in the world, Assyria, threatened Jerusalem. All the strong cities of Judah had been taken, and only Jerusalem remained, and the people were very much frightened; but God sent Isaiah to comfort Hezekiah, and to tell him that the city should not be taken, and then in the night God sent His angel, who slew 185,000 men in the camp of the Assyrians. So the daughter of Zion, as Jerusalem was called, could despise great Assyria, and laugh to scorn her enemies. See Isaiah xxxvii. 22.

But after all these deliverances and mercies the men of Jerusalem did not turn to the Lord; one king after another did that which was not right before Him, and one king Manasseh filled Jerusalem with innocent blood. So God sent enemy after enemy, who came again, and again, and took the men of Jerusalem away to a far off country; first, several princes of the royal family, Daniel and his three friends, then a great many of the people, and then Zedekiah himself; the town was pillaged and burnt; the wall, the temple, the palace, and the houses, were thrown down, and Jerusalem was scarcely more than a heap of ruins, for seventy years.

Ch.—How it was changed since the days of Solomon!

Yes, dear children, that is what sin does, it changes and spoils what God has made *very good*. However, God did not forsake His people; Daniel while in Babylon, prayed for his nation, and confessed their sins; Ezra did also the same; God heard their prayers, and He raised up deliverers for His people Israel. The king Cyrus took Babylon, and gave the Jews permission to return home; Ezra led some of them to the Holy Land, and Nehemiah went afterwards to help them. They built the temple, and walls, and Jerusalem was again inhabited, though not very peacefully. The Lord sent prophets to encourage the people, Zechariah, Haggai, and then Malachi, but they did not go on as God would have them. Though they had no more idols, yet they did not walk truly in the Lord's ways; they had a very good opinion of themselves, and were not troubled for their sins. Then God sent them many great troubles and wars. The king of Syria, Antiochus, oppressed them, and tried to make them worship his idols. Some of them did so, but not all, and then God raised up Judas Maccabeus, a high priest, and some other members of his family, to help them. But, as they sinned again, God sent against them the Roman army, and they made Judah a subject province; while Herod, an Edomite or Idumean, reigned under the Romans over Jerusalem. It was just between 400 and 500 years after the second building of the temple, that our blessed Lord Jesus was born in Bethlehem, a few miles south of Jerusalem. Wise men from the east, wiser far, in the right sense, than the men of Jerusalem, came and announced to the proud inhabitants of Zion, that their King was come. And "*Herod was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.*" they were troubled, for they of Herod's court did not want the "Son of David" to reign over them. "God's Holy Child Jesus," was, however, "presented in the temple," and old Simeon held Him in his arms and gave thanks, while old Anna having seen Him whom she had so long waited for, went and spoke of Him to all "who looked for redemption in Jerusalem." Her words were, no doubt, treasured up by some, for nothing that is said for God

is lost : but the " child Jesus " did not appear again in Jerusalem for twelve years, and then it was in the capacity of a *learner*. " He sat in the midst of the doctors, hearing them, and asking them questions." But it does not appear that the inhabitants of Jerusalem knew of His presence. Again, eighteen years later, He returned to His city, *His*, as son of David, and heir to David's throne, and to His temple, which He claimed as Son of God. It was then, as you will remember, that He exercised authority in His Father's house, and drove out the oxen and the sheep, saying, "Take these things hence; make not *my Father's* house a house of merchandise." It was at the same time that the Lord received Nicodemus by night, and taught that teacher of the Jews that he " must be born again."

Then our Lord went into Judœa, the country near Jerusalem, and gathered disciples round Him. But the Pharisees, who were the people most considered in Jerusalem, were angry, and Jesus retired through Samaria into Galilee. Next time He was in the capital, He healed an impotent man, who had been helpless for 38 years; the Jews sought to slay the great Deliverer, whom God had sent them; so the Lord meekly retired a second time, and laboured in Galilee, feeding the 5,000 near the Lake of Gennesaret, while the Jews having rejected Him, were sitting down in Jerusalem to their paschal lamb. They little knew *whom* they had excluded from their company, and little you know, dear children, what you lose, if you do not live in the presence of the Lord Jesus. But He, ever gracious, came up again to the next feast, at the end of the year, the feast of tabernacles; the rulers tried to take Him, but Nicodemus asked them very gently how they could be so unjust as to condemn Him without hearing Him? This mild answer was enough to bring down their united wrath upon the timid man. Twice during the Lord's stay at that time at Jerusalem, they took up stones to cast at Him, and then Jesus went to the other side of Jordan, and only returned when invited by the sisters of Lazarus. He raised him from the dead at Bethany, a little town on the brow of Olivet, not

far from Jerusalem, and many people came from the capital to see the raised man; some believed on the Lord, but most were afraid to confess Him. A few days after, the multitude conducted the Lord, riding on an ass, to Jerusalem, shouting, "Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord." John xii. 13.

Alas! their shouts were but very little sincere, and it was not a week later that the same Jerusalem multitude shouted "Crucify Him!" "Crucify Him!" "His blood be on us and on our children!" Pilate the Roman governor, asked them if he should crucify their King. But they shouted, "We have no King but Cæsar," and so "*they crucified Him.*"

"And those kind hands that did such good,
They nailed them to a cross of wood.
And so He died; and this is why
He came to be a man and die.
The Bible says He came from heaven,
That we might have our sins forgiven."

Think, dearest children, what an awful sin was then committed by the men of Jerusalem! "They killed the Prince of Life." They rejected God's *own Son* who came to save them. But their sin did not end there; God raised Him from the dead the third day; forty days afterwards He ascended into Heaven from the top of the "Mount of Olives," and ten days later on—the day of Pentecost—God sent down His Holy Spirit upon the believers in the city, and Peter "filled with the Holy Ghost,"—Acts iv. 8—spoke first, and Stephen afterwards, to those very rulers who had condemned the Lord; told them of their sin, but also that God was even then ready to forgive them if they would repent. But they heeded not, they imprisoned Peter and stoned Stephen, slew James with the sword, and, about thirty years after, their sins were come to such a height that God sent against them the Roman army, and after a long and terrible siege their city was taken. Thousands perished with hunger during the siege, many were slain by each other, during their bloody quarrels; thousands were crucified by the Romans all round Jerusalem, others were sold as slaves, and they

were scattered to every part of the earth, to be witnesses to the truth of God's threats. "Verily, there is a God that judgeth in the earth."

Ch.—What a terrible end to the history of Jerusalem!

It is a terrible history, dear children, but do not think that it stops there; the Jews are preserved to be witnesses, not only to the truth of God's threats, but also to the truth of His promises. He has said He will make Jerusalem a praise in the earth; He says, "Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted His people, He hath redeemed Jerusalem." Isaiah lii. 9.

And in Isaiah ii. 2, 3, 4, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of

the God of Jacob, and He will teach us of His ways; and we will walk in His paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

And I will ask you to read Zech. xiv. 4-11, "There shall be no more utter destruction, but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited." "He who has scattered Israel will gather him," and many of the Lord's people think that that happy time is not far distant. However that may be, we know for certain that the Lord may come at any moment to take us who believe in Him up to meet Him in the air, and He has said that, "when Christ who is our life shall appear, we shall also appear with Him in glory," and that "if we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him."

"WERE I TO READ IT MY HEART WOULD FALL INTO IT."

A CHRISTIAN was once offering a copy of the Gospels to a Chinaman. The man looked at the book, but refused to examine it, or purchase it, saying that it was a bad book. A young Hindoo then stepped into the shop, and joined his persuasions with those of the Bible seller. "How can you," he said, "know that any food is bad, if you do not taste it first?" The Chinaman retorted, "That is a book made by the English, a cunning spirit is in it, were I to read it, my heart would fall into it, and then I should do whatever it bid me."

The Chinaman was a heathen, but in his conduct he reminds us of many who in Christian lands shut their "eyes lest they should see, and their ears lest they should hear." They know that if they listened to the voice of the Lord Jesus they could not resist His appeal. His love would soon win their hearts if they "opened the door." Dear children, is it so with you? I hope not. "Behold I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will

come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me." Rev. iii. 20.

The above little incident happened in the island of Mauritius. Perhaps some of you, my young friends, do not know where this little island is, but you will find it, if you look at a map of the world, in the middle of the Indian Ocean. I will now tell you something else that happened there. It forms a contrast to my first story.

A Christian saw a Bengali (native of Bengal, in Hindustan) sitting at the door of his hut diligently reading a little book. He asked him what he was reading so attentively. "Oh, Sahib," he said, "it is a good book, a very good book! In it God speaks to one's heart, and one's heart speaks to God. I like that book very much." The visitor looked at the book, and found from the title, that it was "The Psalms of David."

Can you, dear children, say, "How sweet are Thy words to my taste, yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth?"

AUNT MARY'S TALK ABOUT THE PRECIOUS THINGS OF GOD.

"And in the vision that Isaiah saw, did he see anything more after he fell down and told the Lord what an unholy man he was?"

"Yes, he saw one of the seraphims come to him, who had in his hand a burning coal, which he had picked from off the altar, where the sacrifice was. The seraphim made the coal to touch the prophet's mouth, and he said, 'Lo this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged.' Now, Willie, what was it Isaiah said?"

"That he was a man of unclean lips, and he cried out, 'Woe is me, I am undone.'"

"Quite right, he felt in God's presence he was altogether a sinner; and then what word did the Lord send him by the seraphim?"

"'Lo, thine iniquity is taken away.' And was Isaiah then washed from his sins and made fit for God's presence?"

"Yes, darling, and that altar, from which the angel took the coal, is a picture of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, on which God saw His own beloved Son made sin for us; and now God can make us the righteousness of God in Him, and, by the Spirit, send His Word, which searches into our hearts and consciences. When God's Word touches our conscience, we feel what wicked sinners we are. We see we need to be washed from our sins, and when the Word gets place in our hearts, our affections go out to God, who gave His Son to die, that we might live. Let us adore that Son, our Saviour, who was obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross."

"But why did God give Isaiah that splendid vision of the glory of the Lord Jesus?"

"Because He was about to send him forth to be a minister of His Word; and Isaiah had to see the glory of the One he was to serve, that he might know what a poor insignificant creature he was, and that he might look up always to his Lord in the glory for all the strength he required to do His work. Now, Willie, I am going to point you to a chapter in which you will see the washing both of the sinner and the saint spoken of."

"Oh, I should like to read that; where is it, Aunt Mary?"

"In the 13th chapter of John's Gospel, and the 10th verse. The Lord Jesus was telling His disciples He must wash the feet of His own people, and Peter did not understand what He meant. The Lord wished they should understand that the sinner needs to be washed *all over*, or have his sins clean put away, before he can be a disciple; and then if the disciple is to go on happily in company with His Lord, he must get every fresh sin he commits put away, through what I have already explained to you. The Word must show him wherein he has done anything wrong, and he must go and confess it to his Father, who then says he will cleanse him from the guilt of his sin. Now read the 10th verse to me."

"'Jesus saith to him, he that is washed,'—"

"Stop, darling, I wish to tell you that is the sinner's cleansing. Now, when he has been washed he is a forgiven man. And what does Jesus go on to tell us he requires—as a child of God?"

"'Needeth not, save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit.'"

"Now, Willie, what are our feet given to us for?"

"To walk with."

"Yes, and as we walk through this world, which is so full of sin and under the power of Satan, we are very apt to get defiled, or be led to do what is wrong."

"And, Aunt Mary, then, is the washing of the believer's feet, God making His child see the wrong things he has done, that he may confess and have them all put away?"

"Yes, so you have in that 10th verse the washing, through the Word, of the sinner at conversion, and of the child of God thereafter, when he does that which is unsuited to Christ. The sinner is only once washed all over, or purged from his old sins; but alas, the child of God is daily needing the cleansing power of God's word, if he is to have part with and be in happy company with Christ."

"Now I see, Aunt Mary, God says the sinner is made clean every whit, when he tells God and feels it in his own self that he is unfit for the Holy God to look at, because he is full of sin."

"You are right; the sinner then sees himself as God sees him. We may say, at that moment, God says to the sinner's soul, 'Let there be light.' He gets light from God, and whilst seeing his own badness, he discovers the darkness he was in. Till the light came into his soul he did not know the darkness he was in, nor how bad he really was. But now I must tell you what brought the light into the sinner's soul."

"God brought it, Aunt Mary?"

"Ah, God sent the light, but He used two messengers."

"Who were they?"

"A little patience, my child, and we will have God's own book, telling us their names. The first messenger is spoken of in the 119th Psalm, at the 130th verse. Now, will you be able to find it for me?"

"Here it is, Aunt Mary. 'The entrance of Thy words giveth light.'"

"Now, what gives light?"

"God's words getting into the sinner's soul."

"Very right. We have not a spark of light from God till we have listened to and believed the words of God."

"And that is when we are washed and born again. Is it not, Aunt Mary?"

"Yes. And you shall read where that is plainly stated. Turn to 1st Peter, chapter 1, verse 22. Read only the first clause of the verse, and then stop. 'Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit.'"

"Now pass on, dear, to verse 23, and read after me. 'Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.'"

"Now, Willie, one little verse, which contains the words of the Lord Himself to His disciples; you will find it in John xv. 3. It confirms what Peter, by the Holy Ghost, has written here. Read it darling."

"'Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.'"

"What you read in Peter, Willie, not only answers your question, which was whether we were both *washed* and *born again*, when the light from God enters the sinner's soul, but it also tells the name of the other messenger by whom God sends His *light* into the soul. Look again at the Scripture, and see if you can tell me His Name!"

"The first messenger God sends with the light is His *Word*."

"Quite right, but look who the other is. I think you will find a capital letter beginning His Name, and it is in the 22nd verse of the 1st chapter of 1st Peter."

"Ah, I have found it! It is the *Spirit*."

"Very good. The *Word* of God lets us know what God thinks, and the *Spirit* makes us believe the word He sends to us. Now, these two messengers speak to us about God's precious Lamb, whose blood was shed, that the guilt of sin might be put away. They tell us, too, that God raised Him from the dead; they point us to Him where He now is in the glory of God, and they wish to see in our hearts, who believe, two things; see if you can tell me what they are. Read the last clause of verse 21."

"That your *faith* and *hope* might be *in God*."

"Quite right. We are to trust simply *in God*, who raised up the Lord Jesus after He had been sacrificed for sin, and have no hope but in His God, and our God. Now, I think my little boy must know a little of what Scripture says about man's state by nature, or as he comes into this world, and how God sends *light* into his soul, and thus a man is born again and cleansed from his sins."

"Yes, Aunt Mary, but will you now tell me a little more about God's Old Testament picture of it all, and of the *new birth of this earth*?"

"Gladly, Willie, and you will find God used the same two messengers where he sent light into the world, as when he begets light in the soul of the dark sinner."

(To be Continued.)

THE RUSSO-TURKISH WAR.

YOU have all heard of this dreadful war. Now, all believers in the Lord Jesus are delivered from this present evil world, and so have nothing to do with fightings and wars. We take no sides in them, but our hearts weep over all the wickedness, and especially the cruelties, the sufferings, and the murders of innocent women and dear little children. Every morning when you sit down to a comfortable breakfast, and every evening, when you get into your little comfortable bed, oh, think of hundreds and thousands of little children, without food, or clothing, or homes; their villages all burnt, and their fathers either killed or fighting on the battlefield. Many of you love to pray to the Lord; won't you think of these destitute little ones before Him?

The following letter has just come from a servant of Christ, a young medical man, who has gone to take care of the poor wounded soldiers in the Turkish army. But it is their salvation he mostly cares about, and he earnestly hopes God will use him to save some poor dying ones. Dear praying children he would be glad to think that you remember him and his work in your prayers:--

" Shumla,

" Aug. 6, /77.

" Dear Mr. H———,

" You will see by this note that I am in Bulgaria.

" We had a very pleasant voyage out to Constantinople, where we spent about a week getting the necessary 'passes,' &c. from the Government.

" I delivered your parcel of Tracts at the British Embassy, and had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Gribball, the Chaplain, whose name you doubtless know, and who is a real Christian. I called at the Bible Society, and got a considerable grant of Turkish, Russian and Bulgarian Bibles, which I had hoped to be able to use; but on arriving at Varna, I found it would be quite impossible to use them, and was therefore compelled reluctantly to leave them on the steamer.

" We carried some Turks and Arabs from Malta to Constantinople, and I gave away a few of your Arabic Tracts to the Arabs, who read them with the greatest interest. From the Turks I had several reading lessons, and made one of them read through Luke xv. to the rest. John iii., 14-16 seemed greatly to interest them, and they said, 'Ehi, ehi' (good).

I have not forgotten about your Children's Paper and hope to be able to send you something; but just now I cannot manage to write anything of the kind. Dr. C——— and I are working together here; we came up from Varna about a fortnight since, and shall probably move out in a day or two, as there is likely to be fighting soon near this or Rasgrad:

In many points the Turks could teach us a lesson, and in none more than in temperance. The common soldiers drink *nothing* but water, not by compulsion, but by their religion and choice. I have been here a fortnight now in the midst of a great camp, and certainly have been greatly struck by the total absence of drunkenness, riot, and quarrelling. Such patience in suffering, too, I have hardly ever seen. We had more than 200 wounded, many of them severe cases, at Rasgrad, the other day; none complained; they only asked for a bit of bread and a drop of water. At Shumla Road about 50 sick were put in coal trucks, to be conveyed to Varna by rail. One poor fellow, as soon as ever he was placed on the truck knelt down to pray upon his great coat. It was a most touching sight.

R. H. S.

NEW VOLUMES IN THE PRESS.

The Call of the Bride; and other Gospel Papers. By W. P. T. W. Uniform with "Crumbs for the Hungry." Price 1s.

Talkings in the Twilight. By J. J. J. An illustrated volume for the young.

Canaan and its Conflicts. Meditations on the Book of Joshua. By J. V.

THE CHILD'S BIBLE COMPANION.



BOAZ AND RUTH.—(See page 113.)

BEWARE OF SECRET FOES.*

HOW kind of the Lord to put it into the hearts of some to write nice books for the little ones—such books as will tend to make Himself very precious to your hearts. We gladly give a little story from such an one, not yet quite printed, which we are sure will prove a real blessing to many.

What a nice thing it must be to have wings! Why the very sound of the word has something waving, fluttering, flapping about it. I will tell you what it brings to my mind.

Some years ago, I lived in the country, and the house was covered with ivy—ivy that had grown there for years. The little grey sparrows found it a capital place in which to build their nests; and the chirping and the bustling there used to be round my bedroom window was something wonderful. I liked to have them there, and I almost seem to hear them now, chattering and chirping, and quarrelling sometimes, I am afraid, and to see them flying up and down with straws, and wool, and feathers.

But though I loved the busy sparrow town, and liked to peep into the nests, and look at the pretty eggs that lay within my reach, the gardener could not bear it, and he often brought his ladder, and took them all away. He was an open foe, and came by daylight, and open foes are never to be so much feared as secret ones.

There was a secret one, however, and he came at night, when all was still and dark, when the little grey people were all asleep under cover of the ivy leaves, dreaming, perhaps, of the beautiful nests they had been building all day, or of the fine little families that would soon be filling them; then,—stealthily and silently, through the darkness, came this fearful foe, and with a smothered cry of terror some father or mother sparrow would be borne away, and never would be seen again.

Now, I could protect my little friends from the gardener, by telling him to leave them alone, but of this foe I knew nothing. It is true that I often

heard strange sounds outside my window at night, as if some one was pulling the ivy down, and I heard low cries from the sparrows; but for a long time I had no idea of what was really going on so near to me.

One morning, however, when walking in the garden, I saw a small heap of bones under a tree which grew near the house; they were the bones of birds, picked quite clean, and bleaching in the sun. This set me thinking. How could they come there? If Puss had caught a bird, she would have eaten it, bones and all, I knew that quite well; it was not old Pussy's work, *that* was plain. But whose then could it be? I will tell you how the mystery was solved.

One night soon after this, I was sitting up very late reading and writing, when I suddenly heard such a dragging at the ivy, that I thought for a moment a thief must be putting a ladder against the wall, to get in at my window, which was wide open.

"Now," said I to myself, "I must find this secret out." So I started from my seat, and blew out my candle; then I crept quietly to the window, drew back the curtain, and peeped out. And in a moment I understood it all, I knew how the bones came under the tree, and why I heard those pitiful cries.

It was a calm still night,—not a breath of wind moved the leaves of the trees; the moonlight was falling softly on the lawn, and the dark shadows of the trees were lying motionless on the grass, which was white with dew; the stars were looking down from the deep quiet sky, not a cloud, not a shadow passed across it; all was calm and peaceful around, yet there was mortal terror in the hearts of my feathered friends. I will tell you why. A wing,—a long, soft, white wing, gently fanning, to and fro, was stretching out from the ivy, on one side of the window. It was close to me, I could have touched it with my hand, but I was so much startled at seeing it there, that I stood quite still to watch what would follow; and presently a large white owl flew

* From "Talkings in the Twilight," by J. J. J.

noiselessly away from the spot. Not a sound did he make with his wings as he moved through the air, and the moonlight gleamed on his round head, and hooked beak; but he was not going away, for when he had flown a few yards from the house, he turned, and coming swiftly back, banged himself against the ivy, and clinging fast to it with his talons, searched among the leaves with that hooked beak of his, for his prey. A sharp cry,—a little struggle, and away he went again, and perching on the branches of the tree near the house, finished his cruel work. After all, the poor white owl was only finding his own supper, and perhaps he had some owlets at home who were crying to him for food; but his coming at night when the sparrows were asleep seemed very cowardly and mysterious, but then, he could not see by day.

Owls' eyes are so large that they take in a great many rays of light, and so they are blinded by the light of the sun. They have to mope in a dark corner all day, but in the night they can see distinctly, because their large eyes can use all the light there is. Owls are birds of the night.

Night, dark deep night, hangs over this world, little people. It settled down upon it, on that sad day when Satan led Adam and Eve away from God, and they went out of the light of His presence, into the darkness of their Deceiver's kingdom. All their children have been born in the darkness, and have owls' eyes, they cannot bear the light. There was pity and love in the heart of God, and Jesus Christ came down into the darkness, with light straight from heaven, to give "light to them that sit in darkness, and the shadow of death." But we did not want Him here; His light showed how dark and black our hearts were, and made our eyes ache, so we hung Him up upon a tree, and left Him to die there, and then we put Him in a grave, and rolled a big stone upon its mouth.

"Now," said we, "we have put out the light."

But, wonderful to say, He burst from the grave, and God took Him back to Heaven, and now He

is living to give new sight to all who look to Him for it. If you ask Him He will open your eyes to see the things of God, and will make you children of the light. Evil spirits of the night are ever moving about in the gloom around us, tempting the children of the light to do deeds of darkness.

It is a sad thing for the children of the light to be caught asleep, and resting happily in the gloom around them, like the sparrows in the ivy. It is then that the birds of the night get power over them, and would make an end of them altogether, but for One who never slumbers nor sleeps, and who ever comes to the rescue.

"Ye are all the children of the 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*."—1 Thess. v.

This is written to those who have been to Jesus, the Lord, to receive their sight. I wonder if *you* have been? If not, you will not understand much of what I am telling you, but do go *now*. He has shed His precious blood for you, so there is a free pardon ready for you, and He will give you your sight at once. Your soul will see new things. Then, too, you will have "wings;" the soul that trusts in Christ has wings given to it, that it may mount up above every danger, and escape every snare.

Have you ever thought that only God can make a "flying" thing! Men have often tried, but they have always failed. You can catch and kill the pretty feathered birds, and the painted butterflies, that glide so gracefully through the air, but you cannot make anything that can fly, no one ever could. But the moment a soul trusts in Christ, He makes it able to "mount up with wings as eagles." It has no more fear of hell, because its sins are pardoned, and it delights to soar and sing in the light of God's presence. He who believes in Jesus receives "wings of silver and feathers of gold." The blood of Christ has bought life for him. Wings of silver and feathers of gold! Power to fly, and fitness for the presence of God, in a righteousness which is not ours.

THE KINDNESS OF GOD.

A LADY in Scotland, who owned an estate, but had learned what was more enduring riches than anything on the earth, that is, the love of Christ for sinners, was accustomed to have meetings for prayer and reading the Scriptures and conversation in her house. At one of these meetings they were speaking of the kindness of God in times of sorrow and trial, and it was asked if there were not many there, who could tell of some things in their own life, that showed this in a special way.

An old man who was present, then related this story of the Lord's goodness to him. He said:—

“Many years ago, at the time of famine in this region of country, my wife and myself were suffering great want. At last we had come down to have nothing in the house to eat. And then the question came from my wife, ‘What shall we do?’ I told her to put on the pot for porridge, and we would look to the Lord for oatmeal to make the porridge in it. So she put the water on the fire, and we bowed before our gracious Father in prayer, asking Him to give us, then, oatmeal to keep us from starving, as He had given us salvation through Christ. And now, dear friends, mark this, as the token of His being a living and ever present God. While we were at prayer, we heard a noise near the door, and upon our rising from our knees, we opened the door, and there stood a sack of oatmeal ready for our use! We could see nobody anywhere near, and feeling sure that the Lord meant it for us, took it in, rejoicing in our blessed Lord who had so wonderfully provided for us. We never learned through whose hands it came, but we knew well that it was from the Lord, and that He had sent it just at the right time. He is worthy of all praise.”

All listened with deep interest to the old man's account, but especially the lady at whose house they were gathered. Deeply affected, she told her story, which was really an explanation of this very matter. She said:

“I remember very clearly one evening, during

that time, in which there seemed to be laid on my heart a great weight, the condition of the poor about me, so that I could not go to sleep. I thought, Here I was, having plenty, and some might be at the very point of starving. Oh, if I only knew how to find them out! So deeply did I feel the matter that I arose and called a servant, and bade him take a sack of meal at that very hour of night.

“But where shall I go?” he asked.

“Take the horse, and put the sack on his back, and let him go for himself, and wherever he stops put down your sack at the nearest door, and come home.”

Then I asked the Lord to direct the whole matter, leading the beast to the place where the meal was most needed, as He led the oxen which bore the ark, when the Philistines sent them with it (1 Sam. vi. 14); and as He led the ravens to His prophet Elijah in his need. The servant returned in due time, telling me he had left the sack as I directed, the horse having stopped at a cottage at some distance. After putting down the sack he came at once back, without seeing any one. And now, dear friends, I see the movement of the Lord's hand in all this, and praise Him who has brought it all out to-night. How rich is His mercy. It endureth for ever.”

Now, was not this a precious token of God's kind care, in taking from one of His children to provide for others, just at the right time? If that had happened to you, either as giver or receiver, would you not feel quieted with the thought of how near He was? And if He comes to you to forgive your sins, and make you His own, is He not as near? You may safely rest in Him. “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not, with Him, also freely give us ALL THINGS?”

O Lord! how does Thy mercy throw
Its guardian shadow o'er me,
Preserving while I'm here below,
And guiding safe to glory.

CHAPTER IV.

IF we leave the city of Jerusalem by the gate of Jaffa, we soon get into the "hill country of Judea," mentioned in New Testament story. To represent to yourself this country, you must picture in thought a number of hills clustering on a high land, each hill shaped something like a straw bee-hive, or a top turned upside down. The peg of the top represents a ruined tower, such as is often seen on the top of these hills; the path winds round the bare sides of the hills; the valleys are green, with lovely flowers in the grass, and here and there a few dwarf shrubs adorn the side of the hill, and a few olive plantations are to be seen near the villages. You will not think from the description that the country can be very beautiful now, and yet this very land was once the "glory of all lands." When the early and latter rains fell regularly and abundantly, then the springs gave more water; and when the country was inhabited, the sides of the hills were covered with vines, which were cultivated in terraces; small walls ran round the hills and kept in the soil, to prevent it from being washed down by the rain. The words "Joseph is a fruitful bough, whose branches run over the wall," refer to this method of cultivating the vine, they being so luxuriant as often to run over the little vineyard wall. Vines are cultivated in the same way on the sides of hills in many parts of Europe, in the south of France, and in Switzerland. Judea was in ancient times remarkable for its grapes and wine. The valley of Eshcol was one of the wadies that run up among these hills, and you will remember the enormous cluster of grapes which was gathered there by the spies. It was so heavy that two men had to carry it together on a staff. Travellers tell us that even now, when a little trouble is taken to cultivate the country, its fertility is extraordinary. One of these travellers mentions beans which had grown 12 inches in three days from the time they were put in the ground.

About five or six miles south of Jerusalem, stands

Bethlehem, on a rocky ridge; the slopes down to the valleys beneath are clothed with olive and other fruit trees. The upland lying near was covered with the pastures where king David, while a boy, kept his father's sheep, and where he killed both lion and bear, and probably was inspired to write the 23rd Psalm. It was on those same pastures that the shepherds were feeding their flocks, when, "Lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them." Luke ii. 9—14.

What does Bethlehem mean?

The name signifies House of Bread. Will my young friends try to remember some of the things told about Bethlehem in God's Word?

Jacob's wife, Rachel, died very near the town, and he set up a pillar over her grave. A monument called Rachel's Tomb still marks the spot.

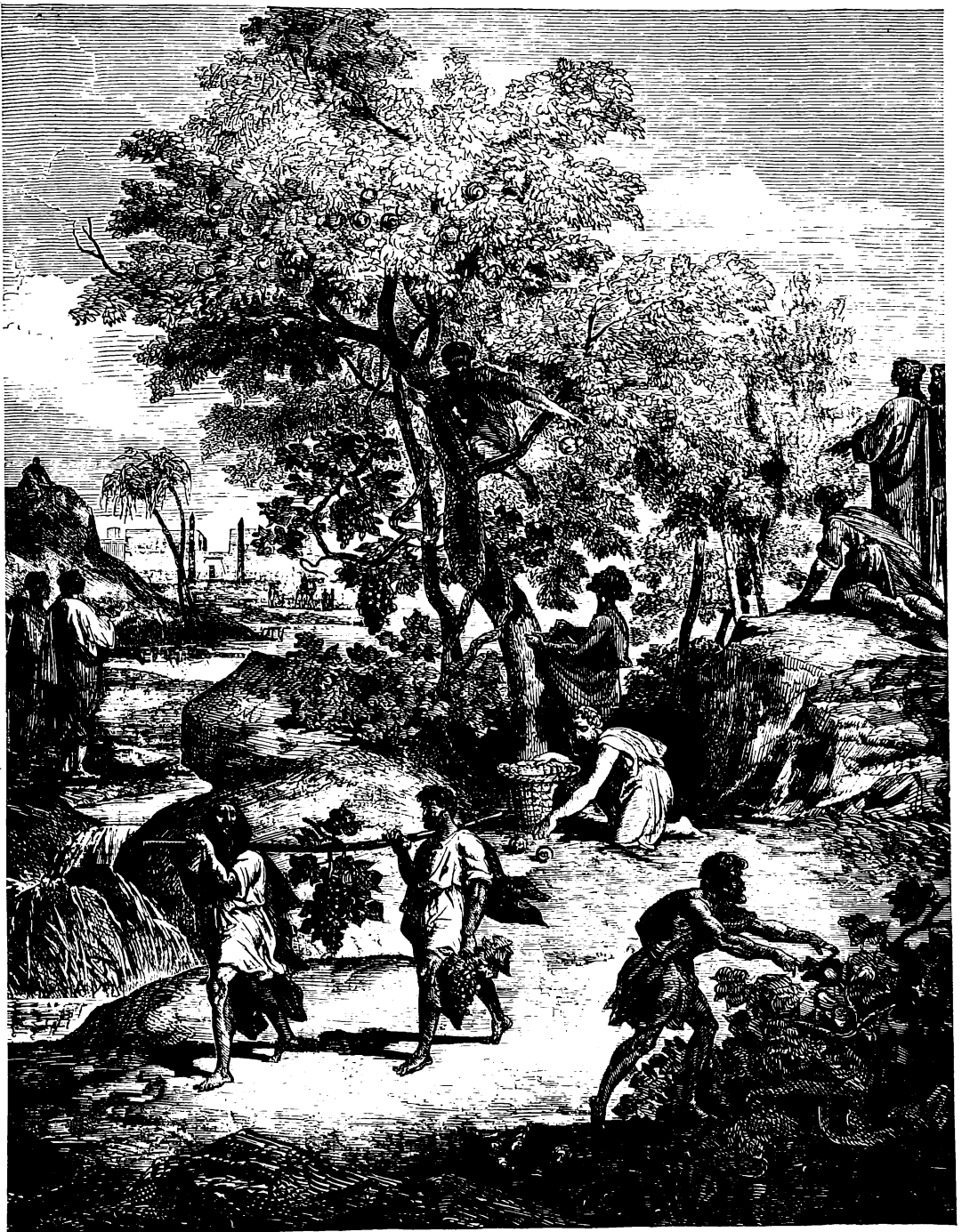
After the Israelites had taken possession of the promised land, a special interest centres round Bethlehem. That town, "little among the thousands of Judea," was to be the birthplace of the "King": and therefore we find the royal family of Bethlehem carefully traced in the Scriptures up to its very origin. The Book of Ruth gives us the first glimpses of this highly honoured family. A man of Bethlehem-Judah, named Elimelech, retired from the country, on account of a famine, and went to sojourn in the land of Moab, with his wife and his two sons.

Where is Moab?

On the other side of the Dead Sea. The hills of Moab are distinctly seen from the heights of Bethlehem. Elimelech did not live to return home, and his two sons also died in the land of Moab; but his widow, Naomi, returned with her daughter-in-law Ruth. Ruth, who was a Moabitess, joined herself to the people of the Lord, and during the first months of distress and difficulty, after her mother-in-law's return home, she supported her by glean- ing. After the harvest was over, she became the wife of Boaz, a wealthy relative of Elimelech's. Ruth's child was called Obed, and he was the father of Jesse, who had eight sons, and was an old man in the days of king Saul. His youngest son was David, whom his brethren despised and left at



BETHLEHEM.



THE GRAPES OF ESHCOL.—(See page 113.)

home to keep the sheep, while they went to the battle; but the Lord chose him to be king of Israel. It was in Bethlehem, at a family feast, that Samuel anointed him. It was while David was fleeing from Saul, and was hid in the cave of Adullam, six miles from Bethlehem, that the Philistines took possession of the valley of Rephaim, and occupied the town of Bethlehem. 1 Chron. xi. 15—19. It was at the same time that he took his old father and mother to the king of Moab, relying no doubt on the relationship that he might claim on account of his ancestor Ruth.

There is still shown in Bethlehem a grotto where cattle were kept, and where, it is said, the Lord was born. This grotto may or may not be the true one. The exact place is to us of little importance. It is, however, interesting to know from the accounts of travellers that little babies may still be seen laid by their poor mothers in the manger of the cattle, when the latter have gone out to graze: the very poor people often, as in other mountainous countries, share their humble dwelling with their cattle.

It is time to go on with our day's journey. Going southward, we soon pass the pools of Solomon, large reservoirs made, or enlarged, by the wise king for supplying Jerusalem with water. Hebron itself is one of the oldest cities in the world, perhaps, along with Damascus, *the oldest*. It is mentioned in Gen. xiii. 18, under its ancient name of Mamre. Abraham long sojourned there, and buried Sarah in the cave of Machpelah, which is close to the town. Abraham himself was afterwards buried in the same tomb, also Isaac and Rebekah, and Jacob and Leah. These tombs are said still to exist. A large monument has been built over them, and a few years ago the Prince of Wales had special permission from the Turkish Government to visit the inside of the building.

It was from Hebron that Abraham started on his wonderful expedition to rescue Lot, who had been taken captive by a great conqueror, named Chedorlaomer. He left Hebron with 318 trained servants, and overtook the victorious army near Damascus, conquered them, and delivered Lot.

About two miles from Hebron, is an old oak, called Abraham's oak, under which he is said to have sat. There is also there a very ancient well encased with stone, the stone bearing the marks of ropes which have been used for ages in drawing up water. It was probably from this spot that Abraham witnessed God's judgment upon Sodom and Gomorrah.

Now try and remember another event connected with Hebron.

When the Israelites were going to take possession of the land, Hebron was in the hands of giant Canaanites, and was known by the name of Kirjath-arba. The city fell to the lot of faithful Caleb, who drove thence those very "sons of Anak" who had so alarmed the poor unbelieving spies. (See Judges i. 20, compared with Numbers xiii. 33.) King David reigned seven years in Hebron, before the party of Saul was conquered; then he reigned in Jerusalem.

The southern part of Palestine beyond Hebron has not very often been visited by travellers. The hills of Judah are succeeded by those of Simeon, and the country becomes more and more desert, every trace of cultivation disappearing, and the palm tree of the desert abounding more and more. It was among these southern hills that David for a long time wandered when persecuted by Saul; and it was here that Nabal the fool was shearing his sheep when David's messengers arrived and he insulted them; but his prudent wife Abigail made peace with David. See 1 Sam. xxv.



AUNT MARY'S TALK ABOUT THE PRECIOUS THINGS OF GOD.

"You have been told of the desolation everywhere, when scripture says, 'The earth was without form and void.' It was a barren scene. There was nothing to please the eye of God when He looked down from heaven. God would not place the man he intended to create on such a scene, so He began to work. And we hear of One who was ready to carry out all that God by His *Word* spake. Now see if you can tell me His name. Look at Gen. i. 2."

"Ah, I have found it out, it begins with a large S again, Aunt Mary. The *Spirit* is the One who was waiting to carry out what God by His *Word* should say. Was He not?"

"Yes. And now let us hearken to what the Word of God said! What did He first say?"

"'Let there be Light.'"

"Yes, *Light* was the first thing God caused to come into this dark earth. Then there was light in the world as well as the darkness that had been there before. Now tell me whether it was the light or the darkness which God said was good? Read the 4th verse."

"God saw *the Light* that it was good."

"Ah, yes, Willie, it was His own beautiful light He praised, and not the darkness that was in the world before, and which was still there. God did not see the light and the darkness mixed up together; He saw them distinct, the one from the other, and he gave to each of them a name."

"Other names besides light and darkness?"

"Yes, other names. See if you can find out the names God gave to the light and the darkness. Read the 5th verse of the first chapter of Genesis."

"And God called the light *Day*, and the darkness he called *Night*, and the evening and the morning were the first day."

"'Day' and 'Night' are the names God gave to the light time and the dark time, and when the world was first set in order, the new day commenced when it began to get dark."

"But it is not so now, Aunt Mary."

"No, our day begins at midnight and closes

then, but you will notice the light came from God in heaven and shone on this dark earth, just as God hath shined into our hearts, now giving us the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of His Son Jesus Christ."

"But does God see the light and the darkness divided in our souls, as He saw the light He sent into the world separate from the darkness that was in the world before?"

"He does, and that is a nice question you have now put to me. This was a fact the Lord Jesus made known to that good Jewish teacher Nicodemus, of whom we spoke a little ago. You must again look at the 3rd chapter of John and read the 6th verse."

"'That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.'"

"Now, are not God's pictures perfect? God said the light He sent into the world was good, but He never said one word commending the darkness. When night comes round there is the darkness, just what it was 'ere ever light was here. Then in the New Testament we read that the nature which man had before he was born again, before that light came into his soul, remains the same. God never allows that a change takes place in it. He condemns it, and tells us we must always count it evil, and not allow it to rule us."

"And does He say that the light He puts in us is good, Aunt Mary?"

"I will tell you that in a little while, Willie; but just now I would like you to find the verse in which God condemns the darkness of our state by nature, and says those who are in the flesh, or in that state of darkness, *cannot please Him*. Look at Rom. viii, and read the 6th verse to me."

"'For to be carnally-minded is death, but to be spiritually-minded is life and peace.'"

"And read the 8th verse likewise."

"'So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.'"

"Now you have seen that the darkness of our natural condition God never praises, but says that

the natural state of man remains what it ever was; but I must tell you also what He says of that which, by means of His two messengers, the *Word* and the *Spirit*, He sends into our souls, only I should like first to speak to you a little more about the *Light*, and then you will see what it is which God sees in our souls, which so pleases Him. Do you know that *Light* was one of the names given to the Lord Jesus Christ, and a name which He Himself owned was a proper name for Him? If we turn to the 1st chapter of John's Gospel, where, many of the names given to Christ are found, we shall find *Light* is one of them. Read the 4th verse."

"In Him was life and the life was the *Light* of men."

"And the 9th verse also."

"That was the *true light* which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.' But, Aunt Mary, when does Jesus Himself say that was a right name for Him to have?"

"Look on to the 8th chapter of this Gospel of John, and read the 12th verse."

"Then spake Jesus again unto them saying, I am the *light* of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

"Now, Willie, when a man listens to God's word, and light enters into his soul, who is it who finds His abode there?"

"Christ, whose name is the *Light*."

"Very good. He is the treasure God puts into a dark earthen vessel, whom God in His great grace has made to hear His word, and by His Spirit believe it. Do you remember when I told you the story of Paul's conversion, what it was that made him blind?"

"Yes, it was the glory which he saw with Jesus of Nazareth, who spoke to Saul when he was going to persecute God's people. Yes, Paul could not for many days after see for the glory of that *light* which had dazzled his eyes. He saw Jesus in the glory, and he afterward said, 'It pleased God to reveal His Son in me,' so the Christ who shone into his soul took up His abode there, and God did not wish to see any more of

Paul, but of the Christ who was now in Paul, shining out in all his actions and words. When Paul got this light, God sent him to tell of Jesus to others who were in the same darkness he himself had been in, 'To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.' Acts xxvi. 18."

"And what is it, Aunt Mary, that keeps people so long in the dark, and they do not care to hear of the Lord Jesus, who is the light?"

"The god of this world, who is the prince of darkness, keeps those who believe not, blinded, by pleasing them with the passing things of time, lest the light should shine into their souls; and another reason is that 'men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil', and, 'Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought of God.' 2 Cor. iv. 4; and John iii. 19—21."

"Then is the devil the god of the world, and the prince of darkness?"

"Yes, and if you remember, I once before told you he was at first an angel of light, but he fell, and now he is a hater of the light. Now, Willie, before we go home, I wish you to see it is no fancy of mine to compare the light coming into the world, with the dawn of light in the soul of the one who has been under the power of the prince of darkness. God Himself speaks of these things, and likens the one act to the other. Turn to 2 Cor. iv. and the 6th verse, and read it to me."

"God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us."

"And what are the earthen vessels, Aunt Mary?"

"Our bodies, out of which God says the life of Jesus should be seen to come. How we should praise God for His grace, who has brought us into the sunlight of His love, and who has said to us who believe."

THE NEGRO'S VIEW OF THE SUBJECT.

I once found myself in company with a party of friends in the gallery of a small village meeting, listening to a discourse from a coloured preacher. One illustration he used was so full of quaint simplicity, and at the same time so expressive of his meaning, that it struck me forcibly. He was showing how a sinner should accept the Gospel.

"Suppose," said he, "any of you wanted a coat, and should go to a white gentleman to purchase one. Well, he has one that exactly fits you, and in all respects is just what you need. You ask the price, but when told, find you have not enough money, and you shake your head—'No, Massa; I am too poor; must go without,' and turn away. But he says, 'I know you cannot pay me, and I have concluded to give it to you. Will you have it?' What would you do in that case?—Would you stop to hem and haw, and say, 'Oh, he's just laughing at me, he don't mean it?' No such thing. There is not one of you who would not take the coat, and say, 'Yes, massa, and thank you too.'

"Now, my dear friends, God's salvation is offered to you as freely as that; why won't you take it as freely? You are lost, undone sinners and feel that you need a covering from His wrath. If you could keep His holy law blameless, you might purchase it by good works; but, ah, you are full of sin, and that continually. Prayers and tears are worthless. You are poor indeed, and if this is all your dependence, I don't wonder that you are turning off in despair. But stop! look here! God speaks now, and offers you the perfect robe of His righteousness, that will cover all your sins, and meet all your wants; and He says that you may have it 'without money and without price.' O, brethren, my dear brethren, do take God's word for it, and thankfully accept His free gift."

What impression the words had on the old man's coloured hearers, I cannot tell; but as our party left the church, one of the ladies remarked to

another, "What a strange idea that was about the coat!" "My dear friend," was the reply, "it suited my state of mind, rough and unpolished as it was. I am so glad that I came here. How simple! How plain! Free grace alone! Yes, I will take God at His word,

'Nothing in my hand I bring
Simply to Thy cross I cling'

EXTRACTED.

"THE BEST ROBE."

Jesus, the Lord, our righteousness,
Our beauty Thou, our glorious dress!
'Midst flaming worlds, in this array'd,
With joy shall we lift up our head.

Bold shall we stand in that great day,
For who aught to our charge shall lay;
While by Thy blood absolved we are
From sin's tremendous curse and fear?

Thus Abraham, the friend of God,
Thus all the saints redeem'd with blood,
Saviour of sinners Thee proclaim,
And all their boast is in Thy name.

This spotless robe the same appears,
When ruin'd nature sinks in years,
No age can change its glorious hue,
The robe of Christ is ever new.

Till we behold Thee on Thy throne,
In Thee we boast, in Thee alone;
Our beauty this, our glorious dress,
Jesus, the Lord, our righteousness.

A BIRD-LESSON.—"This little fellow," said Martin Luther, of a bird going to roost, "has chosen his shelter, and is quietly rocking himself to sleep, without a care for to-morrow's lodging; calmly holding by his little twig, and leaving God alone to think of him.

HOW A CHILD LEARNED HER LESSON.

WHEN I was at school I had a little friend who was only six years old. M—— had begun to learn music, and, like many other young people of her age, did not like the lesson. Indeed the half-hour lessons generally wound up with a cry, and a bad mark from the teacher. But the Lord was teaching M——. Though so young she learned that God loved her, and sent His Son to save her. She used to say upon her fingers, to the kind lady who had the care of her,—

- I. God is love.
- II. God loves me.
- III. And sent His Son.
- IV. To die for me.
- V. That I might love Him.

I remember well how she loved that beautiful text, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." *John* iii. 16. When she had learned to know that the Lord had saved her by His grace, we soon remarked a change in her conduct, and especially in the way in which she behaved at the much-disliked music lesson. She gained a series of very good marks, and everyone was astonished, even the music-mistress herself. One day M's secret slipped out. The music lesson was just over, and she ran singing into the drawing-room. "What makes you so happy?" said her kind friend. "I have got a good mark," said she, "I was just going to be cross during my lesson, but I prayed to Jesus, and He helped me."

I always go to Jesus,
When troubled or distress'd;
I always find a refuge
Upon His loving breast.
I tell Him all my trials,
I tell Him all my grief;
And while my lips are speaking,
He gives my heart relief.

When full of dread foreboding,
And flowing o'er with tears,
He calms away my sorrow,
And hushes all my fears.
He comprehends my weakness,
The peril I am in,
And He supplies the armour
I need to conquer sin.

When those are cold and faithless,
Who once were fond and true,
With careless hearts forsaking
The old friends for the new;
I turn to Him whose friendship
Knows neither change nor end;
I always find in Jesus
A never-failing Friend.

I always go to Jesus,
No matter when or where;
I seek His gracious presence,
I'm sure to find Him there.
In times of joy and sorrow,
Whate'er my need may be,
I always go to Jesus,
And Jesus comes to me.

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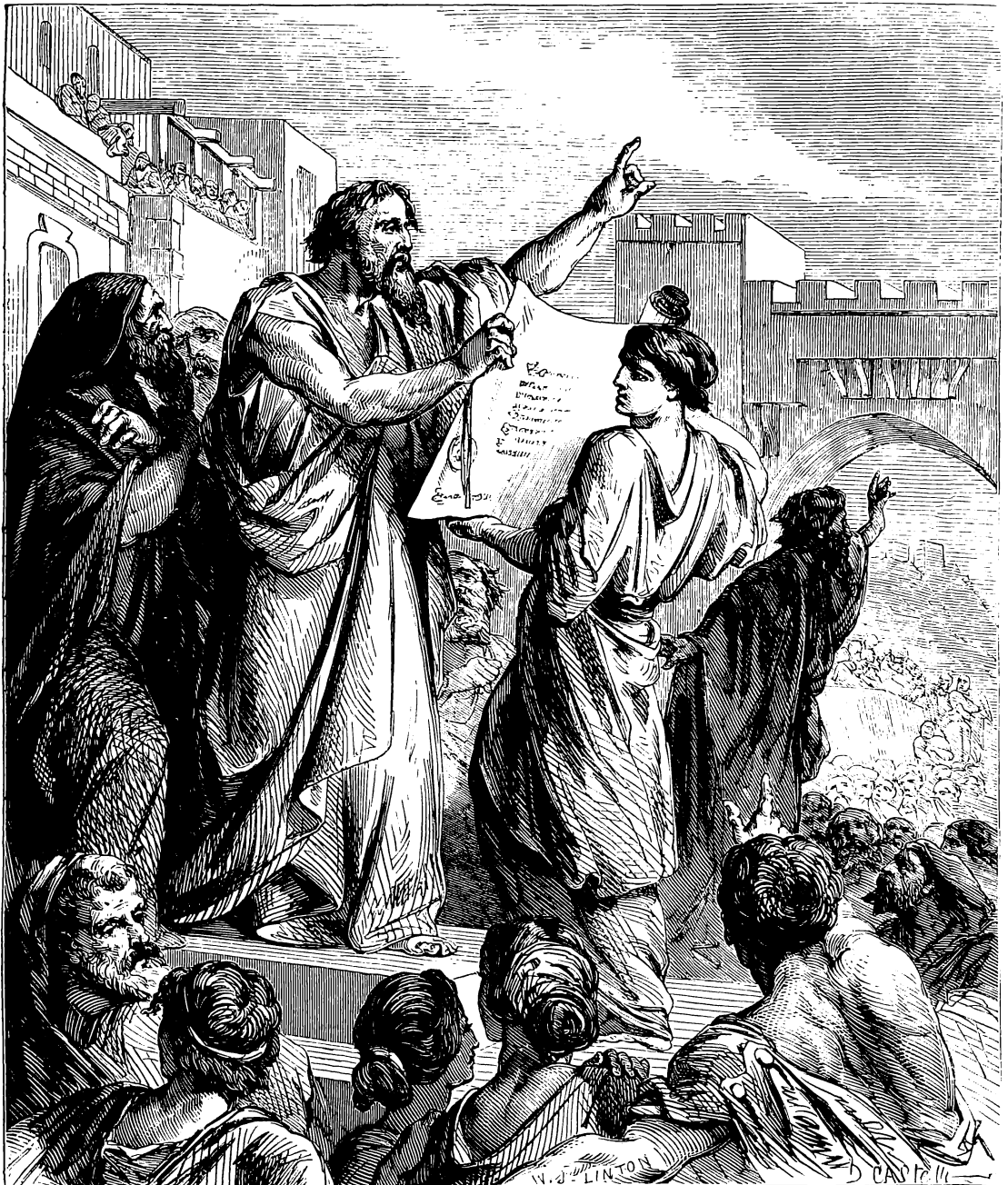
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THE CHILD'S BIBLE COMPANION.



HEZEKIAH READING THE LAW.

READING AND ARITHMETIC.

 NE of the sweetest little books that has been lately published for children is called, "The Narrow Pathway to the Golden Gate." It is divided into chapters with such titles as these: "My Birthday," "My Father," "My Food," "My Clothes," "My Home," &c. From one of them called "My Lessons," the following on **READING** and **ARITHMETIC** is taken:—

"Let us now look at your lessons, which, like those of your early school-days, may be divided into reading, writing, and arithmetic.

The first lesson, of course, for every child is his **A, B, C**; now here is our **A, B, C**:

A, 'All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.' — chap.— v.—

B, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' — chap.— v.—

C, 'Christ died for the ungodly.' — chap.— v.—

A tells us what we are by nature.

B tells us God's way of salvation; and

C tells us the work that procured this salvation.

If we go further on in the alphabet, we reach **D, Doing**.

E, Experience.

F, Feelings.

These, then, ought to *follow* the **A, B, C**, but never to come before it. But some children want to read the alphabet backwards.

Indeed, there are **many** hundreds of people who will not learn this **A, B, C**, because they want to begin with **F**, feelings; and they are waiting to **FEEL** saved, and to **FEEL** better, instead of simply resting on God's word.

A little girl who was converted not long ago, wrote to me as follows: 'Satan often would trouble me with doubts and fears, but I know God is satisfied with Christ's work for me, and I can rest on that.'

Can each of my readers say as much as this? If so, we may leave the alphabet and just look at the

first word we should learn to spell in our lives, which is 'OBEDIENCE.' 'Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice.' — chap.— v.—

Obedience to God, and obedience at home. It is often easier for us to do anything rather than to obey. Whether in conversion first or in Christian life after, we never like to yield our will to God's. Therefore, to the unsaved, Jesus says: 'And this is the will of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.' — chap.— v.— While to the young reader who reads these pages, the apostle writes: 'I beseech YOU, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service; and be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.' — chap.— v.—

We have here, however, more than obedience. We have another lesson, 'not conformed' meaning 'not like unto;' that is, we are not to be following the ways of this world, but the ways of Christ."

You will see, children, that there are some blank spaces here for you to fill up. Hunt up all the texts quoted, and see for yourselves.

"Let us now look a little at the Christian's **ARITHMETIC**; you will find the first sum in addition, in — chap.— v.—

Add to your **FAITH**:—

Virtue,
Knowledge,
Temperance,
Patience,
Godliness,
Brotherly Kindness,
Charity.

Seven Graces.

But YOU cannot add all these to your faith just because you see them here or in the Bible. They must be written in your hearts and lives first.

Now, of course, you have faith to start with: faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, who has saved your soul. The first thing to add to this is VIRTUE, which in this place means courage. Have you added COURAGE to this faith, or COWARDICE—which is it? Have you been brave enough to confess Christ? Let your heart answer this important question to God.

Now the next figure is KNOWLEDGE. What knowledge are you seeking? Is it knowledge of God's Word and of His will; of your home and your Father, and the other things we have told you? This is the only knowledge that can be added to faith.

Now comes Temperance, that is, self-control; not the mere signing of a pledge, but 'Be ye temperate in ALL things,' — chap. — v.—. Does my young friend know what this means? I think even in a child's play it is well to remember such a word as this. Not to be rushing into pleasure as if it were the one aim of life. At such times we are apt to forget ourselves, and Satan often takes advantage of this, and by means of some trifling disappointment causes us to display impatience or anger. The Lord Jesus was the direct opposite of this. There was no unevenness in Him. Not that it is nice to see children stiff and formal in their ways, but rather what another verse teaches—'Let your moderation (yieldingness) be known unto all men; the Lord is at hand.' — chap. — v.—. This temperance, or yieldingness in all things, is the more beautiful in the young, because it is not natural to them in any way.

Add to temperance PATIENCE. This quality, I think, is more generally understood than the former one; but it is a hard lesson to learn, as some of you know, who are at school. A sick bed is another hard place to learn it, though I hope none of you will need to be taught it in this way. We should be saved the hardest part of this lesson if we first gave up our own wills. Jesus had no will contrary to God's; so of course, it was never crossed. Whatever He had to do, He delighted in, because it was His Father's will. Now

we often get impatient under a cross of this sort:

God's ^{MY} self will. ^{will.} caused by the crossing of the two wills, which, however, at once disappears, when we can say: 'Not my will, but Thine be done.' — chap.

— v.—. Patience is easy when obedience is learned first.

And we have a beautiful reason for being patient. 'Be ye also patient; establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.' — chap. —

v.—. It is the coming of Christ before our hearts that will make us patient in all our cares and troubles. 'Let patience have her perfect work,' — chap. — v.—.

Now, these four—courage, knowledge, temperance and patience—are inward qualities; the three that follow are more outward and active. GODLINESS comes first. I think the way to get this character in our lives, is by having the fear of God before us; not a slavish dread of Him, but the fear of Him which is wisdom, and the price of wisdom is above rubies.' Having God before us for an object, as Jesus had, gives us character, "I have set the Lord always before me." — chap. — v.—.

The next thing we get in this wonderful sum, is BROTHERLY KINDNESS. Of course, we all understand that this means kindness towards the whole family of God, not merely towards my earthly relations. What a wonderful thing this kindness is, and how beautiful to see it displayed in this world of ours, especially when it is shown from love to Christ, to those who have no natural claim upon us.

And now we reach the last on the list—the top stone, and yet foundation of all—LOVE; that which shall endure when all else shall cease—the very character of God Himself. 'Love is of God, and he that loveth is of God, for God is love.' — chap. — v.—.

For a better explanation of this last figure than I can give, I must refer you to — chap. —, where Paul speaks of nothing else, from beginning to end. I hope our readers will look out all these quotations."

AUNT MARY'S TALK ABOUT THE PRECIOUS THINGS OF GOD.

What God did on the second day of Creation.

"Come, Willie," said Aunt Mary one morning, when they had a little time to talk again about the precious things of God, "you would like to hear more about the great work of setting this earth in order."

"Very much, Aunt Mary. You told me God caused light to come into the world on the first day; what did He do on the other five days when He was arranging the world?"

"I shall hope to tell you what God did on each of these days, before I finish my talks about these precious things. We saw that in sending light into the world, God gave a picture of what He now does for the sinner. When a ray of Divine light enters the soul of the unconverted man, it shows him the darkness under the power of which he has been. It is in this way the sinner or the child of darkness comes to know God who dwells in light. Now you shall read to me what is written about the second day's work, when God was setting this earth in order. Turn to Gen. i. and read verses 6 to 8."

"And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so, and God called the firmament heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day."

"Thank you, Willie; now look again at the 8th verse, and tell me another name for that which God called 'the firmament.'"

"I see it, Aunt Mary. God called the firmament 'Heaven.'"

"Quite right, dear. We heard nothing about heaven when the earth was in its ruined state, nor on the first day when God sent light into this world, though the light really came from heaven where God is. Did I not tell you that God Himself dwells in the light (1 Tim. vi. 16.), and that Scripture says 'God is light' (1 John i. 5)? When the Son of God, the second person of the Godhead

came into this world, He said, 'I am the light of the world, he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life' (John, viii. 12). Those who believe in Jesus are told they are light, and should behave as children of the light—that means they are to show by their conduct that they love the things which please the God of light. Thus you see how God would have our thoughts of Him connected with the light. Satan is the ruler of the kingdom of darkness."

"But did not God at the very first make the heavens and the earth, and was he now making over again these very same heavens?"

"No, darling! We learn from Scripture there are three different heavens. The Apostle Paul was caught up into the third heavens (2 Cor. xii. 2). When he was there he heard wonderful things, so wonderful that he could not speak of them to those who had not been there themselves. They were those holy things which are only known in the presence of God. The third heavens into which Paul was taken for a little moment is the place where God dwells, but there are those heavens which you see on a clear frosty night, in which the beautiful stars and planets sparkle so brightly. These we may call the second heavens. They are nearer to this earth than the third heavens into which Paul was taken. Both the second and the third heavens were created when the earth was made in its first beauty. It is of these heavens we read in the 1st verse of Gen. i. Read the verse to me, darling."

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

"That will do. Now you never hear that the heavens spoken of in the verse you have read got into disorder, but when God was preparing the earth for man to dwell upon He made another heaven, nearer still to this earth than the bright starry heavens. This heaven was called by that long name which you read in the 7th verse of Gen. i. Could you tell me the word I mean without looking at the text?"

"Yes, Aunt Mary, I remember the word, 'firmament.'"

"Well done, Willie. This firmament or heaven nearest to the earth is the region where the clouds are, and the air which we breathe. The firmament reaches up from being all round about us, to those second heavens in which the stars shine forth. When God first made clouds to float in the firmament, He formed them out of water which rose up into the heavens out of the waters which covered the formless earth."

"What was the water like when it was rising up into the heavens to become clouds there?"

"It looked like vapour, and it was not salt like the water out of which it rose. The saltiness was all left behind in the miry waters below."

"Then, Aunt Mary, was the water in the firmament more pure than that which was on the earth?"

"Yes, Willie, it was purified water that rose as vapour towards heaven. Of this vapour God formed the clouds which floated about in the firmament. The clouds were steadied in the air by the mighty power of God."

"Is it only the power of God which now keeps the clouds from tumbling down upon the earth?"

"Only the power of God, who at the first established the clouds above (Prov. viii. 28). Scripture says, 'He bindeth up the waters in His thick clouds' (Job xxvi. 8). God makes rain to fall from the clouds. Every tiny drop comes down when God desires it should fall upon the earth. I shall read to you what is written in the book of Job about the rain. Turn to the 36th chapter, verses 26, 28, and watch whilst I read the scripture which tells about the rain. 'God is great—He maketh small the little drops of water, they pour down according to the vapour thereof, which the clouds do drop, and distil upon man abundantly.'"

"How very wonderful, Aunt Mary? The fresh rain which comes down from the clouds was once the salt water of the sea?"

"Yes, darling, but I must tell you a little more about the clouds. God calls them His chariot (Ps. civ. 3), and it is in the chariot of God we shall appear in glory with the Lord Jesus when He

comes again to this world. And, Willie, all those who are not there with the Lord Jesus in the chariot of God will see Him in it, but it will not be a happy sight for them. It is said they will wail when they see Him then."

"Will everyone then on the earth see the chariot of God?"

"Yes, dear, we read 'Behold He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him.' Rev. i. 7. That will be the great day, when the power and glory of the Lord Jesus shall be displayed. Those who follow Jesus now when they cannot see Him, will, in the day of His glory, be seen with Him in the chariot of God."

"Thank you, Aunt Mary, for telling me so much about those beautiful clouds which God forms out of the vapour which rises up from the waters below. But does God really form the clouds now in the very same way He did at the first?"

"Yes, He still causes the vapour to ascend. The clouds which are in the heavens, act like a magnet on the waters below, they draw up the vapour towards them, and this makes the air which we breathe; but there is yet another name by which these heavens with the clouds and the air have been called. And this name which I am now going to tell you quite distinguishes them from the second and the third heavens."

"What is the other name besides heaven and firmament?"

"The 'Atmospheric' heavens is a name which is often given to the firmament. The air or atmosphere which we breathe belongs to these heavens."

"Then, Aunt Mary, was it the clouds, the air, and the wind, which God made on the second day?"

"Yes, Willie, and I think we see in the way the clouds were formed a picture of that which is true of the one into whose soul light from heaven has entered. The Lord Jesus in heaven is the object to which the desires and affections of his heart rise. He loses his love for the things of this world, and seeks the things which are above where Christ is (Col. iii. 2.)

(To be continued.)

FROM JERUSALEM TO JERICHO.

THE road from Jerusalem to Jericho has been much frequented by pilgrims and travellers for centuries. In the time of our Lord this road was the final stage of the journey from Galilee to Jerusalem. The Jews who came from the northern parts of Palestine used generally to avoid going through Samaria,—the Samaritans often ill-using them, as we know they did our Lord while on His way through the country (See Luke ix. 51-56). In order to avoid Samaria, the companies of pilgrims came southward, along the east of the Jordan; crossed the river near Jericho; passed through the city, where they often remained for the night: then began the long ascent to the Holy City, passing along the brow of the Mount of Olives, and so arriving at Jerusalem. This road is extremely steep, which you will understand if you think of the following figures:—Jerusalem is twice 1,300 feet above the Mediterranean Sea. The banks of the Jordan are three times 1,300 feet below Jerusalem, that is 3,900 feet; and it is said that the Dead Sea is 1,300 feet deep. So that the bottom of the Dead Sea is 2,600 feet below the level of the Mediterranean Sea.

The descent from Jerusalem to Jericho is very rapid, and passes over a wild, uncultivated country, where highway robbers often attack travellers. This was the scene of the parable of "The good Samaritan;" and I think if you read it over now, slowly, remembering that it was in such a wild country that it took place, you will understand better than you have hitherto done, the extreme kindness of the Good Samaritan, his forgetfulness of *self* in helping his *neighbour*. You will also understand what motives may have influenced the priest and Levite who saw the poor sufferer, and passed by on the other side.—Luke x. 30-37.

The priest and Levite no doubt thought they had sufficient reason for not stopping in such a place of danger. Selfish people always excuse their acts of unkindness by some such reasoning. But our blessed Lord Jesus *became our neighbour*, took our nature, on purpose that He might do the neighbourly act of saving us. It was against him that they came out "with swords and with staves to take

Him," as though He had been "a thief." He did more than merely save us, as the Good Samaritan did. He bore the wrath of God in our place.—Gal. iii. 13-14.

Being in the "form of God," He became man, that He might be our "near-of-kin," and have the right to redeem us.

The old town of Jericho has entirely disappeared; but there is in the neighbourhood a small town, which now bears the same name.

The city of Jericho recalls many interesting events recorded in the Scriptures. It is sometimes mentioned under the name of "City of Palm-trees," as in Judges i. 16. You will, no doubt, remember, dear children, the wonderful way in which the city was taken. It was surrounded seven days, once every day, by the army of Israel; and the seventh day they walked round it seven times, the priests going before, carrying the ark. At the seventh time the people gave a great shout, and the wall fell down.

Was every one in Jericho put to death?

Every one, except Rahab and her family. She, in obedience to the spies, had bound a scarlet thread in her window, and neither she nor her family were hurt.

Now let us read two verses in the New Testament, which speak of these things:—

"By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.

"By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace."—Heb. xi. 30-31.

Later on, Jericho was the scene where God's mighty power was shown in various ways. In the time of the judges, Eglon, king of Moab, got possession of the city, established himself there, and reigned over the people of God. But Ehud, a deliverer whom God raised up for Israel, got into the king's parlour; and by telling the king that he had a secret message for him, he obtained what we should call a private audience. Then, when alone with him, he told the king that he had a message from God for him; whereupon the king rose from his seat, and Ehud stabbed him with a dagger



THE FALL OF THE WALLS OF JERICHO.

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which he had hid under his clothes; and so Israel was rid of this terrible enemy.

We do not hear much of Jericho after this, until the time of the wicked king Ahab; and in his reign Hiel, a citizen of the apostate town of Bethel, rebuilt the walls of Jericho. Joshua had, by God's Spirit, prophesied that a curse should fall upon the man who rebuilt this town; and accordingly it happened when he began to build, his eldest son died; and when he was putting up the gates, which was the last thing to be done, his youngest son died. Comp. Joshua vi. 26, and 1 Kings, xvi. 34.

It would seem that Hiel and the inhabitants of Jericho had defied God in thus rebuilding the walls of their city; but they could not, with all their audacity, make their springs of water fresh. "And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth; but the water is naught, and the ground barren."—2 Kings, ii. 19. But the Lord, in grace, delivered them from this trouble. "And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought it to him. And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land. So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha, which he spake."—ver. 20-22.

The next time we read of Jericho in the sacred pages, He who is "Grace and Truth" was passing through the town. He had, in lowliness, taken His place among the pilgrims going from Galilee to the feast of the Passover; but, indeed, he was going as none other than the Paschal Lamb, "the Lamb" whom "God Himself had provided," the "one man who was to die for the people."

As Jesus entered the town, He healed a blind man; in the town, Zaccheus got up on a tree to see Him pass, and had the honour of receiving the Lord into his house; and as Jesus went out of the town, He gave sight to two blind men. From Jericho you can come in a ride of about an hour and a half to the Jordan,—just that part where the Israelites passed over dryshod, in the time of Joshua. The Dead Sea is not very far off. This

sea is extremely salt, and the waters contain a great deal of bitumen; they are much heavier than ordinary sea water. The shores of the sea are almost uninhabited, and the soil is very salt. You all know, dear children, that it was in this neighbourhood that Sodom and Gomorrah once stood; but you may, perhaps, not be aware that this region was once famed for bitumen-pits, called slime-pits in Genesis xiv. 10; and it was here that Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, or Persia, gained a great victory in Abraham's time, shortly before he himself was conquered by Abraham.

By looking at the map you will see that Samaria is situated to the north of Jerusalem, towards the centre of the country. If we suppose ourselves riding from Jerusalem to this ancient rival capital, we must leave the royal city by the Damascus gate, and we shall go north till we get into the mountains of Ephraim. We pass Neby Samwil on the left and Gibeah of Saul on the right. Both hills were probably included in the old city of Gibeah; one can easily hear on the top of one hill, words spoken on the top of the other. We pass Bethel, and Shiloh lies to our east. The ark of God was for 300 years at Shiloh, from the time of Joshua till the Philistines took it in the battle of Ebenezer, and old Eli died of grief on hearing the sad news. See Joshua xviii. 1, and 1 Sam. iv. 17, 18. It was at Shiloh that young Samuel heard the Lord's call, and it was while ministering there that Eli neglected to correct his sons, and they went from bad to worse till they brought themselves and their family to ruin, and the very name of Shiloh became a byword "Then will I make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all nations of the earth." Jer. xxvi. 6. See also Jer. vii. 12 and Ps. lxxviii 59-60. Shiloh is at present a place of no importance. "Its glory has departed." If we ride fast we can reach Nablous before night. Nablous is the modern form of the word Neapolis, a name given to the ancient Shechem, which occupied this site. The "place of Shechem" is spoken of in Gen. xii. 6, apparently because there was at that time no town there, and Abraham could feed his flocks in the pastures of the fruitful valley.

ON SNARES.

From "Talkings in the Twilight," by J.J.J.

"Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any thing that hath a wing." Prov. i. 17.—(margin.)

NOW I am going to talk about snares, and gins, and traps, and nets, because these are the things with which birds are caught and wounded.

Long ago there lived a man who loved God, and he wrote these words by the Spirit of God,—

"The proud have hid a snare for me, and cords, and have spread a net by the wayside; they have set gins for me." (Ps. cxl. 5.) And again another wrote, "They set a trap, they catch men."

I do hope that this evening I am talking to those who have yielded their hearts to Jesus, and are therefore "mounting up on wings as eagles." If so, it is well that you should know, my dear little friends, that dangers surround you on every side, and cruel enemies also. Yes, there are the same dangers for your precious souls, as there are for the little birds that fly so lightly from tree to tree.

What is a snare? A snare is that which appears good for you at first sight, but which has evil hidden within it.

One very fine day in the Spring, I was travelling in a railway train, and then I saw something which will help me to explain a snare to you. The cold dark winter was over, and the hedges and trees were all dressed in the brightest green.

The grass in the meadows was growing long, ready for hay-making, and the pretty wild-flowers were peeping out every-where. "Oh," I thought, "what a lovely world God has made! Can there be sorrow under so bright a sun?" But hardly had these thoughts passed through my mind when I caught sight of a man crouching down beside a thick hedge, and eagerly watching some-

thing that was going on in the meadow beyond him. What could he be so earnest about? He never turned his head to look at the train as it swept past him. He moved neither hand nor foot, but kept his eyes fixed, intently fixed, on some object that he could see through the lower part of the hedge. Another moment and he was hidden from my view by the thick green boughs, and I could look down and see what it was that interested him so much.

Yes,—I saw that down in the soft green grass there was a net spread. The lovely wild flowers were blooming all about it,

blue, and white, and gold; and over it, or near it, there was a bird fluttering about; there was tempting food upon the net, and all was still, and calm, and sunny, no danger could be seen. High up in the bright blue sky the merry larks were singing, but the hidden fowler knew that when they saw the food they loved laid out before them, and this other



bird apparently enjoying it, they would come down, and be quickly caught.

Ah! that poor little bird, it had once been as free as they, but now it could not soar, or fly, or sing, for it had ventured down to feed upon that fatal net, its feet had been set fast in the sticky slime that covered the snare, the meshes had been drawn over it, and it had been made a prisoner.

And what was it doing there when I saw it? It was a decoy bird then; that is, it was left there to look as if it was free, that it might tempt other birds down to share its own sad fate.

Satan is a master fowler, and he has spread this earth with snares to catch all the souls he can. Most of the people you meet in the streets are like birds hopping about over the fatal net, they do not know their danger, nor do they care to know it; they are busy with the things of this life, and do not like to hear that the fowler is only waiting his own time to draw the net over them, and bear them away into "outer darkness." They will be his for ever then. "For man also knoweth not his time; as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare, so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them." (Eccles. ix.) Thank God, Satan has lost the power to keep one who wishes to be saved. Jesus has broken the chains and bars of his prison house, and all who wish to escape can do so.

Is it not strange that people do not care to get away? It is because they do not believe God when He tells them of their danger. When I was by the seaside a year or two ago I saw a bird that acted very much like this. It was a pretty yellow canary, and had as fine a chance of escape as ever a bird could have. The man whose prisoner it was, kept it, and a number of others, in little cages, tied fast together, and these cages he used to carry on to the parade and place on the ground, that every one who passed by might see the birds and buy them. Now there was a very little boy, out for a walk with his nurse, and I suppose he pitied the pretty yellow birds, and thought he would like to see one of them fly away in the sunlight; so while the man was looking

another way, he opened the door of one of the cages, and out hopped the little prisoner. Its master soon saw it, though, and it was through his shouts of anger at the little boy, that I began to watch the scene. Hop, hop, went the little bird, turning his head first on one side and then on the other, but it never once opened its wings, or tried to mount up in the air. I think it had been born a prisoner, and had never known the joy of flying. At last it reached the edge of the cliffs, and there was nothing beyond it but open space, and far below it lay the rolling sea. The fowler crept after it very gently, watching it with eager eyes, but he knew that it did not love him, and that if it saw him come too close, it might open its wings, and find out that it had power to fly, so he took the cages in his hand, and quietly put them down between the bird and himself. The door of the empty cage stood open, and the other hapless captives hopped from perch to perch in their narrow prisons as they had ever done. It was a moment of choice for the little bird, space before it, and its prison behind it. Which would it choose? The fowler stood still as a statue, he seemed almost to hold his breath as he watched the prey that was so nearly escaping him. Then the little boy,—who must have been, I fear, a very naughty little boy—broke away from his nurse, and rushed towards the bird, and shouted and waved his hands. Now, I thought, it will surely be off! but no, it only went to the very edge of the lofty cliffs, and seemed to look timidly over them, then with two or three quick little hops it went back towards its prison and its companions, and in another moment I heard the click of the cage door, as the man made it fast. Oh, how satisfied he looked as he carried his captives off!

Ah! how many souls are like that poor bird! The door is open, the chains are broken, yet they love darkness rather than light, and at the last Satan will make them fast for ever, because they did not escape when they could.

Now, Satan spreads this earth with gins and snares, not so much to keep those who are happy under his power, as to catch those whom he has lost. But you say, "What is the use of his catching them,

if he cannot keep them for ever?' Just this,—as soon as a soul is in a snare, it is of no use in telling others of the way of escape. It cannot sing, nor can it soar away in the sunlight. And worse than this, it serves Satan as a decoy-bird then; it looks as if it was happy in the things of this world, far off from Christ; and others who see it there, are tempted down to live amongst the pleasures and cares of this sad world.

It is a solemn thing to say, but it is true, that every real Christian whose heart is fixed on the things of this world, and who is living for them, and putting Christ in the second place, is one of Satan's decoy birds. When first I turned to Jesus and received eternal life, I thought I should fly and sing for ever; but alas, I turned my eye

from Christ and looked below at the tempting pleasures of this poor world. Then I saw the decoy birds, busy, and seemingly happy on the things of earth. And soon, too soon, I was but a poor decoy bird myself.

It is never safe to look at others. There is only one object on which the eye should be fixed, and that is Christ. As long as you are occupied with Christ, and obeying His word, no matter what others do or say, you will be "mounting up on wings as eagles," and singing of deliverance. I wasted years, sad years of fluttering about the nets and snares of the fowler; and should have been there now, had it not been for the love and mercy of a living and active Christ; for no one that is snared can make his own way out.

WHAT HINDERS YOU FROM COMING TO JESUS.

WHEN Jairus came to the Lord asking Him to heal his daughter who was dying, Jesus went with him; but as he was going, some people met him, who said, "Thy daughter is even now *dead*; trouble not the master any further." These people did not know Jesus as the *Prince of life*; they thought death could put a limit to His power, and accordingly they discouraged the poor father; but the Lord said to him, "Be not afraid, *only believe*;" and He raised the daughter to life. Sometimes we are tempted to doubt when we see relations and friends whose souls remain dead under the preached word; but we must do as Jairus did, take even the *dead* one to Jesus. Death cannot stop His love, for "He is the resurrection and the life."

Sometimes, too, we get discouraged because our own hearts are so dead and cold, we do not go to the Lord because we feel so cold and dead. This is a great mistake. It is better to go straight to the Lord and tell Him we feel cold and dead, and He will warm our cold hearts with His own love.

On another occasion the Lord was leaving the city of Jericho, and two blind men were sitting by the

wayside begging, and they began to call out, "Have mercy on us, O Lord!" The multitude rebuked them that they should hold their peace. Why, do you suppose, they were told to hold their peace? They were only *blind beggars*, very miserable, no doubt, and despised, and the people did not like to be disturbed by their cries. Perhaps they thought them too miserable for Jesus to take any notice of them.

But this was indeed a mistake, *blind beggars* are just those whom the Lord never refuses. If you will turn to the 3rd chapter of Revelation you will find in the 17th verse, that some are much blamed for not coming to the Lord as *wretched*, and *miserable*, and *poor*, and *blind*, and *naked*. It is to the blind and miserable that the Lord gives His best gifts.

Just as I am—poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need in thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come.

When mothers brought their children to Jesus, the disciples "rebuked those who brought them." Perhaps they thought the children too foolish,

too ignorant, to understand the love of Jesus. But none are too weak, none too ignorant to know that He loves them : and even the little ones He makes His special care. "It is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish."

"When mothers of Salem their children brought to Jesus,

The stern disciples drove them back, and bade them depart ;

But Jesus saw them 'ere they fled,

He sweetly smiled and kindly said,

Suffer the little ones to come unto me."

We have a fourth and very remarkable instance, of the disciples sending away one whom the Lord was teaching in His own way ; a poor, miserable Canaanitish woman came to the Lord, and asked Him to heal her daughter. The Canaanites were very wicked and God had told the Israelites to destroy them. The people of God had not done as He had told them, but those who remained in the land were a miserable and wicked race of people. Not long ago I read in a book of travels that the remains of that nation still exist ; they are called Fellahs, and are most awfully wicked.

Perhaps it was because of their wickedness that the disciples thought the Lord would send her

away. He did not answer her at first, and the disciples said, "Send her away, for she crieth after us." But the Lord's intention was not at all to send her away. He said He was only sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then she came nearer and worshipped Him, and said, "Lord help me." But He said : "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs." Then the poor woman said : "Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table." Then the Lord said unto her : "O woman, great is thy faith : be it unto thee even as thou wilt." And her daughter was made quite well from that hour.

This account shows you, dear children, how the Lord receives the very worst, and does not wish us to discourage them from coming to Him ; but at the same time we must come to Him acknowledging the truth about ourselves, telling Him the *worst*. When the poor Canaanitish woman acknowledged herself no better than a dog, *then* came the help and mercy.

We learn then that death cannot put a limit to the power of Jesus : poor blind beggars are the very ones He heals : little children, weak and helpless, He loves to bless ; and the *deepest degradation* is not beyond His love.

THE CHILD'S QUESTIONS.

"Mamma, does praying save the soul ?

Can prayer remove my sin ?

Can praying free my soul from guilt,
And make me pure within ?"

"No, dearest child, 'tis not by prayer,
That souls from sin are freed ;

Prayer never can for sin atone,
Or meet the sinner's need.

"Remission, God Himself declares,
Is by the blood alone ;

'Tis only through the Saviour's blood,
Salvation can be known.

"From Calvary's cross that cleansing blood,
In rich profusion flowed ;
And by its healing power divine,
The soul is brought to God.

"'Tis sweet to pray ; 'tis sweet to bow,
Before the Saviour's face ;
But they alone can thus draw near,
Who know the Saviour's grace.

"Dear child, believe in Jesus Christ,
The life, the truth, the way ;
Then cleansed by the atoning blood,
You'll find it sweet to pray."

A. M.

THE CHILD'S BIBLE COMPANION.



J. Black

OUT IN THE SNOW.

OUT IN THE SNOW.

DECEMBER! Now for cold weather, and bleak winds wailing down the chimneys, and shrieking around the corners of the houses. Now for deep snows, and grand old slides, too, skating, and coasting down the hills, and hitching to carts on the road, when the kind driver says, "Yes." And now for pinched ears, and smarting fingers, and grand snow-balling. Hey, boys and girls?

Ah! it is all beautiful and splendid, even if we do have to take a little of the pain with the pleasure, the bitter with the sweet. For, is there not the dear old home to run to, and a fine fire to warm the toes, and somebody to soothe the fingers, when they get pinched a little too much?

But ah! what about those who are out of work, and whose fires burn very low, because the coal or wood is gone, and the flour barrel is empty, and the cupboard bare, and the little ones creep quietly to it and looking secretly so as not to make mother cry, say gently to themselves with a sigh of hunger, "Nothing but dishes!"

This often happens, too, and, if it has not come to your house, will you not think of those to whom it may happen this winter; and while you give to such as you know, ask God to give patience to others, and bread and warmth, and the knowledge of His own love to them?

See this mother flying over the snow. What has she in her arms, that she is hugging so close? Why does she take so much pains to cover it? It is a dear little child, a baby. Poor thing! and poor mother! I do not think she would be out in such weather if she were not suffering from want or sorrow. It is a bleak, sad night, and it is a rough place, and the winds will blow no more softly, and the snow will be none the less cold because it is a lone woman and her darling that are exposed to the weather.

Some man once wrote that "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," meaning that He makes the circumstances around the needy and the suffering to come gently to them. But I think it

will be found that God never speaks that way. Rather He makes us to endure by giving His own strength, and grace, by making us happy in Him. He tempers us to the wind.

Do you suppose, if this woman were running with her babe away from a fire, or from some wild beast, that she would think of the cold and the wind? Not at all. She would be full of joy in having it safe, and only eager to get further off from danger.

Man never knows how to speak about God, and His kindness, and so it comes, that this little sentence is only a foolish thing, not telling the truth at all. It is what is called sentimental; but it is not God's word.

In that word we find WE need every thing, in OURSELVES, and not a change in things about us. And God comes to make us new creatures in Christ Jesus. He finds us in our sins, in a lost world, and showing us what Christ has done for us, tells us to believe that, and to rest on Him, and then we are saved. Nothing else than a knowledge of His love in Christ will lift us above every thing. And that will.

A lady once said to me, "If I KNEW I was SAVED, nothing would move me. I would not care for any sorrow, or what anybody did to me, I should be the happiest person in the world, and want nothing in the world."

God does not take us out of the world as soon as we become His, and the world becomes no better to us, but much worse, and yet we are always confident, always happy, because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, who is given unto us.

And now, dear children, December has come, and it closes up the year. Have you during the past year found how precious it is to know the love of God and the work of Christ? If not, do receive that love now. As sinners, I entreat you to be saved, and

"When we are happy in Him
December's as pleasant as May."

OUT OF THE MOUTH OF BABES.

IT was not quite train-time, and among the waiting passengers a gentleman walked to and fro in the long depôt, holding his little daughter's hand.

A commotion near the door attracted the general attention, and several officers brought into the room a manacled prisoner.

It soon became known that he was a notorious criminal who was sentenced to the States prison for twenty years.

The little child looked at him, first with wonder and horror; then, as she saw the settled, sullen gloom of his countenance, a tender pity grew on her sweet face, until, dropping her father's hand, she went over to the prisoner, and lifting her eyes to his face, she spoke a few low words.

He glared upon her like a fiend, and she ran back, half afraid, to her father's hand. But, a moment after, she was at his side again, pressing nearer than before in her self-forgotten earnestness, and this time the prisoner dropped his defiant eyes as he listened, and a slight tremor passed on his hard face. Then her father called, and the little child went slowly away, looking back pityingly.

The train came presently, and the prisoner went quietly into it, and during the journey he gave the officers no trouble.

Upon their arrival at the prison his conduct was most excellent, and continued to be so.

Inmates of that prison having terms of twenty years and over, are allowed a light in the evening, and it was observed that he spent the time in studying the Bible.

Some months passed, during which his good conduct entirely won the confidence of those in charge.

At length some one asked how it came that he brought with him such a reputation for wilfulness, since he had proved himself so quiet and well-behaved.

"Well, sir," said he, "I'll tell you. I did act as bad as I could after they took me; the devil

was in me, and I meant to kill somebody, for I did not care what became of me. I should 'a' done it, too, I know I should; but God sent His little angel to speak to me.

"It was when I was waitin' in the depôt, before I came here. A little mite of a girl was there with her father. She wa'n't much more than a baby, and she had long shiny hair flyin' over her shoulders, and such great blue eyes as you won't often see. Somehow, I couldn't help lookin' at her.

"By'n' by she let go her father's hand and came over to me, and says she, 'Man, I am sorry for you;' an' you wouldn't believe it, but there was TEARS in her eyes! Something 'peared to give way inside then; but I was proud, and wouldn't show it; I just scowled at her blacker than ever.

"The poor little dear looked kind of scared-like, and ran off to her father; but in a minute she was back again, and she came right up to me, and she says, 'Man, JESUS CHRIST is sorry for you.' O sir! that clean broke my heart. Nobody 'd spoke to me like that since my good old mother died, years an' years ago. I'd hard work to keep the tears back, an' all the way down here I was just thinkin' of mother, and a many things she used to teach me, when I was no bigger than that blessed baby—for I'd a good bringing up, though more's the shame to me. Well, the whole on't is, sir, I made up my mind I'd never rest till I found my mother's God, and O sir," he exclaimed, while the tears ran down his face—"O sir, He's saved me—He's saved ME!"

The man is still a prisoner, and no doubt the little child is growing up, the sunshine of some happy home, not knowing that her childish words have led a soul to God.

But if their two mothers had not taught their children well, the one could not have told, nor could the other have understood, the glad story of Christ's love.

Shechem was Abraham's first halting place in Canaan and here he built his first altar to the Lord, for he could not build an altar *outside* the Holy Land. It was here that Jacob bought a parcel of land, and gave it to his son Joseph, and erected an altar to the Lord. Here also God spoke to him, and here he hid under an oak the idols that his family had brought with them from Mesopotamia. It was here that Jacob sank that well which is so noted in the New Testament history as having been the scene of the Lord's conversation with the woman of Samaria. John iv. 5, 6. It was here also that Joseph's body was buried, in the time of Joshua, after having been brought by Moses out of Egypt, and having been carried by the Israelites through the desert during their forty years' wanderings there. See Gen. 1, 24-26. Ex. xiii. 19. Joshua xxiv. 32.

The town of Shechem (called Sychar and Sichem in Gen xii. 6, and John iv. 5) is situated in a lovely valley between the Mounts Ebal and Gerizim, and Jacob's well is a little way off, just at the entrance of the valley. It was on the Mount Gerizim that the Samaritans had their temple. The woman who was speaking to the Lord Jesus while He was sitting on the well said to him, "Our fathers worshipped on *this* mountain." John iv. 20. The mountain of which she was speaking was Gerizim, and the temple was plainly to be seen from where she was standing. These Samaritans traced their origin to the times of the captivity of the ten tribes. When the ten tribes had been taken away to the neighbourhood of Nineveh by the King of Assyria, other people were sent to occupy the country. These settlers were idolaters, and on their arrival were greatly troubled by lions. They sent to the King of Assyria, telling him that the lions were attacking them, and that they had no doubt the reason was their ignorance of the way in which they should worship the God of the country. The heathen often look upon a town, city or country as being under the protection of a certain god, and so often Roman Catholics consider certain so-called saints to be the protectors of certain towns, and villages, and individuals. I need not tell you, dear children, that such thoughts

and beliefs are a great sin against that good God, who has "made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." Acts xvii. 26.

To return to the Samaritans. The King of Assyria listened to the complaint of the settlers, and sent them a priest from among the captives, to teach them how to serve the God of Israel. They did not, however, abandon the worship of their gods, but tried to unite the true and false worships together; and the faithful Jews could have nothing to do with them. They hated the Jews; and when the captives returned from Babylon, and set about building the temple, and the walls of Jerusalem, they mocked them, and did everything they could to hinder them. "Even a fox," they said, mocking, "would break down their wall, if he ran upon it." But the builders prayed and worked, told the Lord their trouble, trusted in Him, and finished the wall. You will read all about this in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, especially in Nehemiah iii., iv., vi., and Ezra iii., iv. Many years after this, the men of Samaria, living at Sychar, heard the word of Jesus, and could say of Him, "We know, indeed, that this is the Christ, the Saviour of the world." John iv. 42.

A few descendants of the ancient Samaritans still exist at Nablous; they roast the lamb for the Passover every year on the top of Mount Gerizim. As travellers have sometimes seen the ceremony of roasting the lamb, and have described it, I can tell you something of it. The lamb is put whole on a spit—this spit is in the shape of a cross. A trough is dug in the ground; this trough is used as an oven, and is heated very hot by making a fire in it. Then the fire is scraped out, and, while the oven is very hot, the lamb is put in, and the oven is closed up while the lamb is roasting. When cooked, it is taken out, and eaten with bitter herbs, and unleavened bread. The Samaritans have in their possession an extremely ancient roll of parchment, on which the law of Moses is written. They say that it was written by the great-grandson of Aaron, but we do

not know whether this is true or not. There are very few Samaritans now—some say there are only forty-eight grown men and their families.

Now can you think of anything connected with Mounts Ebal and Gerizim?

In the Old Testament we read that the Israelites had to read out the blessings and the curses of the law while standing in this valley, half of them over against Mount Ebal, and half facing Mount Gerizim. If you read the 27th chapter of Deuteronomy, and notice all those terrible curses, especially the last verse, where it says, "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them," you may well tremble, and think what a fearful thing it is to break God's law! And if you read on into the 28th chapter you will find the blessings, but they are all conditional, that is to say, they depend upon an 'if.' If you do so you shall be blessed, but if you do not do so you will miss the blessing. You might despair in reading this, and think that you could never get the blessing on such conditions, for you have already broken them. Such, dear children, is always the effect of God's law upon those who submit to it. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." But now turn to the 1st Chapter of Ephesians. You will see there a list of blessings. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."—Ephesians i, 3-7. Just think how many blessings are there and no *if*, no condition at all. God, the Father of our Lord Jesus, *has* blessed us with all spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus. In Deuteronomy you have the law and what the law says, but in Ephesians you see what God's *grace* is; how good *He* is to

give all blessings to each one who believes in Jesus, whose precious blood has purchased the blessings for us.

Leaving Nablous, and still going northward, we pass over a beautiful hilly country till we come to Samaria. This city, now in ruins, was situated on the top of a beautiful hill, surrounded by other hills rather higher than itself. The sides of the hills and the valley below are extremely fertile, and must in ancient time have been covered with vineyards and olive groves. The sight was chosen by Omri, father of Ahab, who bought the hill from a man named Shemer, who owned it, and the place was called Samaria from its first owner Shemer. "And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, Samaria."—1 Kings xvi. 24. Here it was that the wicked kings of Israel, Ahab, Abaziah, and Joram, held their midnight festivals, headed; the processions to the infamous temple of Baal oppressed God's people, and imprisoned the prophets who warned them of their coming doom. The prophet Isaiah alludes to Samaria in Isaiah xxviii. 1, and says that it is on the "head of the fat valley," and also speaks in the same verse of the wicked luxury of the inhabitants of the city.

"Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, which as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand. The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden under foot; and the glorious beauty which is on the head of the fat valley shall be a fading flower, and the hasty fruit before the summer, which when he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he eateth it up," verse 2-4. These verses prophecy the sudden and complete destruction of this city.

If you will turn to the sixth chapter of Amos and read the whole chapter, you will see the terrible destruction foretold upon this place, as well as the luxurious and wicked manner of their life. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."



THE SCAPE GOAT.

From "Little Elsie's Book of Bible Animals."

The great day of Atonement was a solemn time in Israel. It was the only day in the whole year when the High Priest was allowed to go inside the beautiful veil of the Tabernacle and enter the Holy of Holies

After Aaron had dressed himself in his white linen garments, he brought two young goats to the door of the Tabernacle, and cast lots that he might know which goat was for Jehovah, and which for "Azazel," which means "the goat which went away." I am afraid some of my younger readers will not understand the meaning of Azazel, or the Scape-goat now, but when you are older I hope it will be plain to you how both these goats were pictures of the Lord Jesus Christ offering Himself a sacrifice to God, and bearing our sins away for ever, no more to be remembered.

When Aaron had killed the goat which belonged

to Jehovah, he sprinkled the blood seven times before the golden Mercy Seat which covered the Ark, and then he laid both his hands on the head of the Scape-goat, and confessed over it all the sins of the people for that year. That goat was not killed, but was led away, with the burden of sins upon its head, into the wilderness, to a land where no one lived, so that the sins could never be found again.

This is just what you see in the picture. The Lord's goat has been killed, and offered for a sin offering, to make atonement for the people; and here you see the living one being led away into the wilderness, never to be seen any more.

Does not this make you think of that beautiful verse, "Their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more"?

BIBLE LESSONS ABOUT BIRDS.

THE EAGLE.

WE know that God has made nothing in vain. However useless or trifling any thing may appear to us, it was made by Him, and therefore has its purpose. We are told in Col. i. 16, that "all things were created by Him (the Lord Jesus Christ) and for Him." There is not a thing that He has made, but what we may learn something from it about Him. Having this, then, as our assurance, let us see what God says about the eagle.

We find from the description given, that the eagle is swift (Lam. iv. 19); that he makes his nest very high upon the rocks (Jer. xlix. 16); that he has great wings, full of feathers (Ezek. xvii. 3); that he lives to a great age (Ps. ciii. 5); and that he takes great pains with his young, teaching them to fly, bearing them on his wings, &c. Deut. xxxii. 11).

From all these things we may learn something of God's wonderful care of His children. The first mention of the eagle in the Bible is to teach us this. It is in Exodus xix. 4, where, speaking of the wonderful deliverance He had wrought in



bringing His people out of Egypt, He says, "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto Myself."

So also, in Deut. xxxii. 11, "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." Just as the eagle bears up her young, when they have

no strength to support themselves, holding them up by the strength of her wings, so the Lord, by His own power, carried His people out of Egypt, and so He does now for every one that trusts in Him.

Whither did He bring them? He says, "I brought you unto Myself." How wonderful! How blessed! In whatever way God speaks of it, that is always the object in redemption—to bring us to Himself. "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, THAT HE MIGHT BRING US TO GOD" (1 Peter iii. 18).

How nice it must be for the poor little birds

to be carried by such a strong eagle! And we, who are so weak and feeble, may find continual strength by waiting on the Lord. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint." (Isa. xl. 31.) Why should we be weary and faint? Let us go to Him, and He will bear us up with His strength.

Do you, dear child, avail yourself of His strength? Do you come to Him with all your weakness, all your cares (no trouble is too little for Him to care for), all your wants? His strength is sufficient for every need.

One day I was walking by a graveyard, situated on the slope of a hill. The wall which surrounded the graveyard was, at the top, but a few inches in height; but the farther it went down hill, the higher the wall got, until at the bottom the height was about eight feet.

A little child had run along this wall until she came to the highest part of it; and then, struck with fear, stood, unable to go forward or back. Seeing the dangerous position of the child as I passed by, I held up my arms for her to jump into. Without a moment's hesitation, she threw herself into my arms, and was placed safely on the ground.

The simple confidence of that child went to my heart. I recollected the word of God, "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

That child saw just two things—her danger, and the way of escape; and believing, she accepted the proffered arms. And that is just the way God wants you and me to be saved. Do we see the dangerous position we are in; already lost? Well, then, just cast yourself into His open arms; just rest all on Him. And let those who are believers learn from this, to rest every care on Him, resting in His open arms, safe in His love.

To those who wait upon Him, is the promise, "They shall mount up with wings as eagles." And the believer in Christ is indeed lifted up, not by his own strength, but by the mighty power of God; so that he rests securely in the Rock of his

salvation, even as we read of the eagle, that she mounts up and makes "her nest on high. She dwelleth and abideth in the rock, upon the crag of a rock, and the strong place." (Job xxxix. 27, 28.)

What a secure place the eagle has! Far, far above the reach of all prowling beasts, he has his "nest among the stars." (Obad. 4.) Away from all fear and care, he dwelleth in the rock that God hath made. Just as secure is the position of one who believes in Christ. Coming to Him in all our weakness, just as we are, He, by His own strength, places us in the Rock "that is higher than I." (Ps. lxi. 2.) And there, out of the reach of all our foes, we can rest securely; hid in the cleft of the Rock.

But the very same figure is used to warn us against exalting themselves: being puffed up or conceited. "Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the cleft of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill; though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord." (Jer. xlix. 16.)

And we have almost the same words in the third and fourth verses of Obadiah: "The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rocks, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord."

You see there is quite a difference between coming to God in our weakness and letting Him exalt us, and exalting ourselves; between letting God be the strong eagle, bearing us up, and ourselves flying up as eagles.

The evil spoken of here, is just the one so common now, and which, in the pride of man's heart, would make its nest among the stars, seeking, by their own wisdom, to reach those mysteries which God only reveals to babes.

And the end of all such will be, as here, judgment; "thence will I bring thee down." "And

thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shall be brought down to hell." Ah, children! beware of a proud heart.

Sometimes a little boy does something wrong, and is too proud to confess to the one he has wronged.

That is bad; do not be like that. Above all, do not be too proud to confess your faults to God. Tell Him every one of them; do not seek to hide anything from Him; because it is written, "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." "A broken and contrite heart, oh God, thou wilt not despise."

And then there is another lesson to be learned from the eagle. It is this: "Labour not to be

rich; cease from thine own wisdom. Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; THEY FLY AWAY AS AN EAGLE toward heaven." (Prov. xxiii. 5.) Suppose you had spent years and years making some wonderful machine; and, after you had finished it, you should see it flying away like an eagle. It would make you feel sad, would it not?

Jesus says, "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matt. vi. 19-21.)

C. H. B.

AUNT MARY'S TALK ABOUT THE PRECIOUS THINGS OF GOD.

What God did on the third day of Creation.

"Now let us look at what God did on the third day. You will see God spoke twice on this day. He only spoke once on the first day when He sent light into the world, and on the second when He formed the atmospheric heavens."

"And what did God say when He spoke the first time on the third day?"

"You shall read what He said. It is contained in the 9th and 10th verses of Gen. i. Read the scripture, dear."

"And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters called He seas: and God saw that it was good."

"That is enough, Willie. When God first spoke, the dry land came up out of the moving dark waters. The dry land and the waters got each into their own place, separate, the one from the other; but tell me the names which you have read God gave to the dry land, and to the waters, for each got their names from God."

"'Earth' was the name given to the dry land;

and 'Seas' to the waters, when they were gathered together."

"Quite right, darling. Now for a moment we will repeat what you have heard about the work of God. On the first day He sent light by His Word into this world; on the second day He made the firmament, or the heaven above the earth, with the air which the creatures upon the earth now breathe; and on the third day the earth got its name, and was brought out into a new position, over which God said the moving dark waters should never again pass. Now, Willie, I shall ask you to answer me some questions. What was the first day's work the picture of?"

"Of God sending His own light into the soul of a sinner when he is saved."

"Very good indeed; and tell me what we said was pictured by the second day's work."

"That the thoughts of the person who is saved rise up to Christ."

"Very well said. Christ is the Magnet in heaven, drawing up the desires and affections of His own who are in this world. Now you will

easily understand what the first part of the third day's work pictured. At the word of God the dry land emerged out of the waters, and stood in a new position before the eye of God. This is a figure of resurrection ground, and the place of separation from sin, in which God sees the one who has come to Jesus to be. Christ rose from the dead and made this new ground, and now all who believe in Him are seen by God to be with Him on the new ground of resurrection, over which the waters of judgment will never come. Then they get their new name, as the dry land, which rose up out of the waters, got its name. Tell me, darling, by what name unconverted people are called in Scripture?"

"Sinners."

"Yes, that is the name God has given them; and those who have received light from heaven into their souls, and stand with Christ on the ground of resurrection, are called *Saints*. Open your Bible, and you will see the apostle Paul gave this name to all those who were in Rome, to whom he was writing as believers in Jesus. You will find the word in the 7th verse of the 1st chapter of the epistle to the Romans;—read the verse."

"To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be *saints*; grace to you.' But what is the meaning, Aunt Mary, of this new name which those get who come to Jesus?"

"The word saint means a *separated one*, and you can tell me, can you not, what we are separated from when we believe Jesus died for us?"

"Yes, our sins are taken away from us."

"That's quite true; when Jesus rose from the dead, God showed sin was put away. We were sunk in sin once, just as the earth was covered with the moving waters. Now we who believe in Christ are alive unto God through the death of our Saviour, and we stand with Him in a new place before God. The death of Jesus separates us from our sins, and God calls us His saints, or separated ones."

"And can you tell me the meaning of the name God gave to the dry land which rose up out of the waters?"

"Yes, darling; I have been told the word *earth* means *crumbling*, and the gardener says the more fine the dust of the broken-up ground is, the better it produces fruit; whenever he sees a knot of mould he goes to crush it into fine dust, that it may lie softly round the seeds and plants, which grow and yield the lovely flowers we like to look upon. Do you remember, Willie, what the Lord Jesus said about the flowers when He walked on this earth, in company with His loved ones?"

"No, Aunt Mary, but I should like, if you can tell me, to know whether Jesus loved the flowers, for they are so pretty."

"Then you shall yourself read what He said.—The Lord was seeking to teach His disciples to trust His Father for everything. He told them God was their Father, and cared for them, and would give to them everything that was for their good. They had only to do as God wished them, and to trust all that concerned them to His love. Lest they should be led to doubt what He was saying, Jesus pointed to the flowers of the field through which they passed, and bade them learn a lesson from what their eyes rested on. I trust, darling, when you look at the flowers, you will think of what you are now to hear Jesus said about them. Turn to Matthew, chapter vi., and verse 28. There you will find the words of our Lord, which show God's care for the flowers of the field. 'Why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the *lilies* of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith.'

"Now, Willie, you will think of the care of God for His children, when you see the lovely flowers you are so fond of.

(To be continued.)

CHRIST FOR US ALWAYS.



A DEAR little boy was very ill, and while sitting quietly with his mother, she said to him: "My darling son, it makes me sad to have you so sick, and I can scarcely bear to think of the possibility of your being taken away from me. But if you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, as your Saviour, so that I could know you were with Him, it would relieve me greatly, and I could be glad to know you were there."

"Well, ma," he answered, "I do, and sometimes it makes me really happy, but I cannot keep the glad feeling all the time, though I know I belong to Him."

And then the mother's heart was satisfied, and she said, in telling it, "I think I could let him go with confidence now, if it were the Lord's will."

I suppose many little ones understand this boy's feelings, about not keeping their glad thoughts all the time. Play, and study, and the talk of the day, come in, and you seem to forget. But do you think that, at any moment, when Christ is spoken of, you can say, "I know He saved me,

and I belong to Him?" And does it make a difference to you, in your play, and all your dealings with others, what Christ thinks of what YOU do? Possibly not all the time, but He always thinks of us, that is the great thing. And He knows how weak and forgetful we are, and how liable to do wrong every hour, and so He is up there in heaven, before God, for us. And when we do sin, He is our Advocate, and when we confess our naughtiness, God, our Father, is FAITHFUL and JUST to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If you really believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, you ARE His, and He will keep you safe.

A CHILD'S THANKS FOR THE BIBLE.

In heathen lands they bow,
To blocks of wood and stone,
And worship what their hands have made,
For God is there unknown;
There Jesu's precious name,
Is never lisped in prayer;
Darkness and cruelty abound,
And sin and suffering, there.

In heathen lands the sound
Of praise is never heard;
No happy children there are taught
To read God's holy Word;
Before the altars, oft,
The infant's life-blood flows;
O how their sorrows multiply!
How deep their sea of woes!

Here we are taught to read
The blessed Word of God,
Which tells us of the cleansing power
Of Jesu's precious blood;
Which tells us of the home
For all who love the Lord;
O may we greatly prize and love
God's blessed, holy Word.

"THE KISSES OF HIS MOUTH."

HERE was in France, an old lady who was blind. She was a Christian, and her one book was the Bible, which had been printed in raised letters for the blind. This she could read with the ends of her fingers. Did you ever see a blind person read in this way? It is a slower way than with the eyes, and is likely to be hindered sometimes, as was the case with this lady.

She was poor, and had to work hard with her fingers to earn her living. Thus her finger ends became hard, the skin getting so thick that she could not feel the letters. At first she would pare off the thick skin that had formed on her fingers. But it grew all the thicker. So it seemed as if she must give up this great joy of reading the Word of God.

After failing to feel the letters one day, with a sorrowing heart, she took up her Bible to bid it good-bye. With the words, "I must bid you good-bye, my dear Bible," she put it to her lips and kissed it fervently.

To her great joy, she very clearly felt upon her lips the shape of the raised letters, so that she could read, in that way! Her precious Bible, as if answering her kiss, gave her some word of love, and from that time she read the Scriptures with her lips, really kissing it. She could surely say, they were sweeter than honey to her taste.

THE LOWEST PLACE.

Our Lord and Saviour, from Thy birth,

Thy footstep to the cross we trace;

And all along Thy path on earth,

We see Thee take the lowest place.

The world—its bitter hate and scorn,

Was met by Thee with patient grace;

It's taunts in meekest silence borne,

For Thou did'st take the lowest place.

Thus did'st Thou pour contempt on pride,

The pride of Adam's fallen race;

For Thou did'st all Thy glory hide,

To take for man the lowest place.

And for Thy church Thou did'st indeed,
O gracious Lord, Thyself abase;
As servant of Thy people's need,
Stoop down to take the lowest place

That we might learn Thy lowly mind,
(So fully hast Thou met our case,)
And also have the joy to find,
Thy presence in the lowest place.

Yea, from the manger to the cross,
We see Thee go with steadfast pace;
Enduring grief, reproach, and loss,
To suffer in the lowest place.

"A little while," our Lord, and we
In glory shall behold Thy face;
Teach us till then, to take with Thee,
Thy place on earth—the lowest place.

THE KITE.

Once on a time a paper kite
Was mounted to a wondrous height,
Where, giddy with its elevation,
It thus expressed self-admiration:
"See how yon crowds of gazing people,
Admire my flight above the steeple,
How would they wonder if they knew,
All that a kite like me can do?
Were I but free I'd take a flight,
And pierce the clouds beyond their sight;
But ah! like a poor prisoner bound,
My string confines me near the ground.
I'd brave the eagle's towering wing,
Might I but fly without a string."
It tugged and pulled while thus it spoke,
To break the string—at last it broke.
Deprived at once of all its stay,
In vain it tried to soar away:
Unable its own weight to bear,
The winds soon plunged it in the tide.
It fluttered downward through the air,
Unable its own course to guide,
Ah! foolish kite, thou had'st no wing,
How could'st thou fly without a string?

COWPER.

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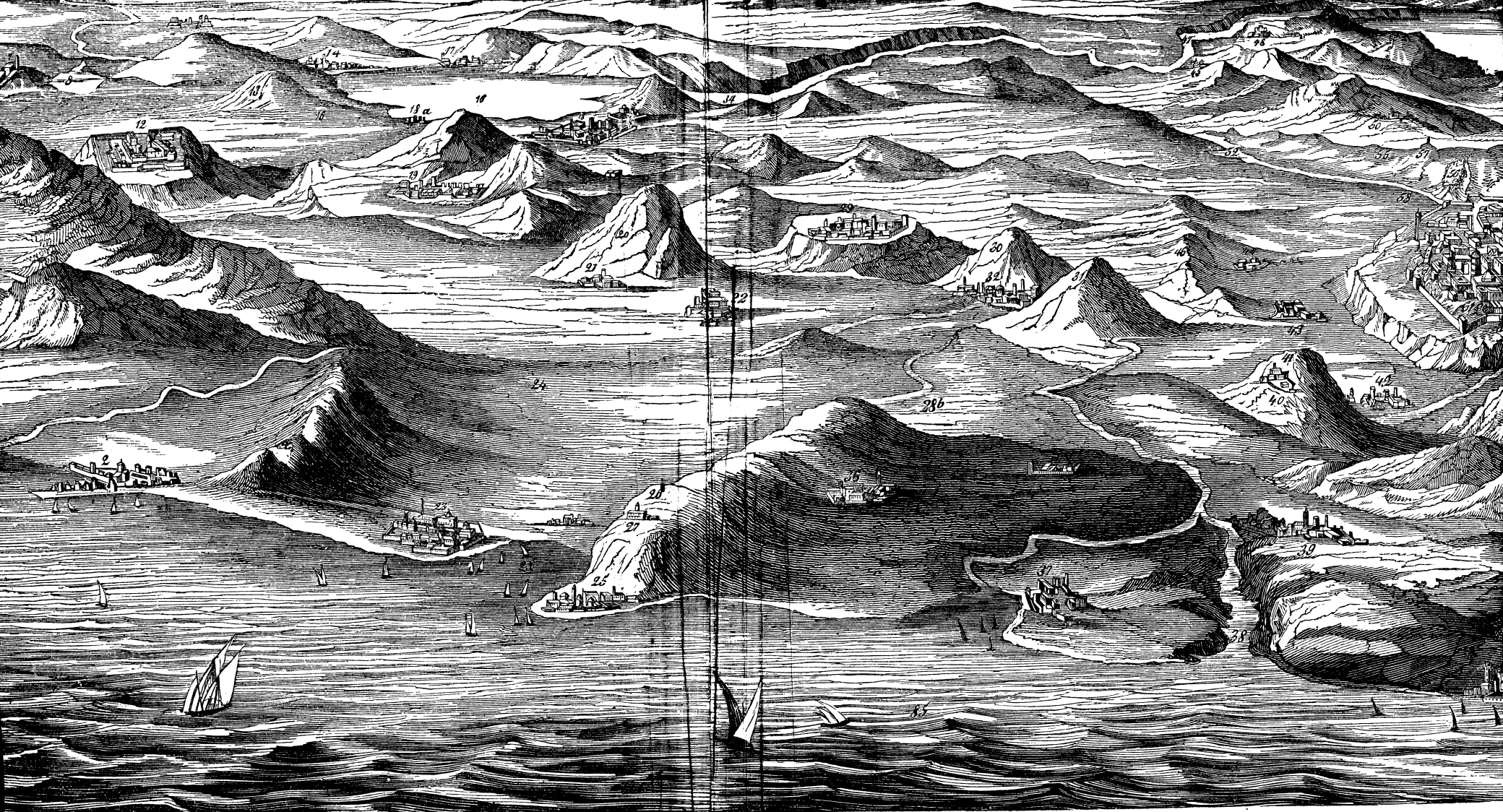


BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE HOLY LAND.

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|---|--|
| 30. The Town of Rama | 49. The Mountain where the Lord was tempted of the Devil |
| 31. Samuel's Grave | 50. The Town of Bethany |
| 32. The Town of Emmaus (about 3 score furlongs from Jerusalem); now Cubeibi | 51. The Village of Bethphage |
| 33. The Village of Bir | 52. The Brook Kedron |
| 34. Bethel | 53a. The Pool Siloam |
| 35. Gilgal | 53b. The Convent of St. Saba |
| 36. Mount Ephraim | 54. The Dead Sea |
| 37. The Place where John baptized | 55. The Mount of Olives |
| 38. The Ruins of Jericho, now Ericha | 56. The Garden of Gethsemane |
| | 57. The Mountain of Ascension |

South Palestine, or Philistia.

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| 58. The Valley of Jehoshaphat | 66. The Valley of Hinnom, or Gehenna | 76. The Convent of St. John |
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| | 74. The Cave of Adullam | 84. The Plains of Moab |
| | 75. Abraham and Sarah's Grave | 85. The Mediterranean Sea |



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE HOLY LAND.

North Palestine, or Phœnicia.

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| <p>Saida
anion
of Lebanon, El-Bekir, with
Leontes
on
rmon, Dschebel-Essheik
of Cæsarea-Philippi
m, or Hûleh
r Abana, or Abassa
Pharpar</p> | <p>12. Szaffat, or Saphet
13. The Mountain of Blessings; now Kerum el Hittein
14. The Ruins of Capernaum
15. The Plain of Gennesaret
16. The Lake of Gennesaret
17. The Town or Village of Bethsaida
18a. The City of Tiberias, now Tabaria
18b. The Town of Magdala
19. Nazareth
20. Tabor; Dschebel-Tor, the Mountain of Transfiguration</p> | <p>21. The Town of Endor
22. The City of Nain
23. The City of Acre, or Akko
24. The Plain of Jezreel, or Esdraelon
25. The City of Hephah, or Caiphah
26. The Mount Carmel
27. The Convent on Mount Carmel
28a. The Bay of Acre
28b. The Brook Kison, or Kishon
29. The Ruins of Samaria; now Sebastia or Sebestich</p> | <p>30. Mount Ebal
31. Mount Gerizim
32. Sichem or Sichar
33. Mount Gilead
34. The Jordan at its outflow from the Sea of Gallilee
35. The Lake of Gadara
36. The Levites' Town of Yakneam
37. The Ruins of Cæsarea Maritima
38. The River Nahr el Anjeh
39. The Town Lydda</p> | <p>40. The Town of Rama
41. Samuel's Grave
42. The Town of Emmaus (about 3 score furlongs from Jerusalem); now Cubeibi
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57. The Mountain of Ascension</p> |
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