

“Helps in Things Concerning Himself” — Vol. 4, 1894

“Thy Sun Shall no More go Down”

Isaiah 60:20

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“Thy Sun Shall no More go Down” (Isaiah 60:20)

These words describe in vivid reality the coming time of blessing for poor scattered Israel, when the daughter of Zion, who now dwells, as it were, in dust, shall awake, and arise and shine, her light being come, and the glory of the Lord be risen upon her.

But they also describe *morally* and *spiritually* all that lies before us, as we by faith survey the coming, nearing day-dawn of the bright Morning Star, in contrast with the fading, falling shadows on our life of pilgrimage below.

As with the New Year opening upon us, we turn over a fresh leaf in the book of history, is it not well to challenge our hearts, and ask where this new date finds us, and what is really before us?

The Lord Jesus Christ is not only the Day-spring and Morning Star, but, blessed be His name, He is the Sun of the one eternal day, and the clearer and brighter He is before our hearts, the greater the ease with which we retire from all down here. All that is eternal and unfailing is on His side; all below and around us is in reality but sunset, the brightness and beauty are gradually but surely fading. If our poor eyes are turned there they are only on what is sinking below the horizon, but when they are fixed like the martyr Stephen on Jesus in the glory of God, how different it all is; then the outline, beautiful beyond all conception, of the eternal realities, unfolds itself before us.

There is one great and blessed fact which stands out to the eye of faith thus fixed on the nearing, heavenly sunrise: it is the blessed establishment of communication between the heart and its *absent object*. This too by the Holy Ghost, the heavenly messenger and glorifier of Jesus, who conveys to the soul the sense and comfort of His love and His blessed thoughts about us -- thus are we really invigorated and revived, thus do the things above display themselves in all their own blessedness before us. We live then in His own sphere with Himself, in all the calm and rest of that blessed region of satisfied desire, and in the peace and power of it we are carried through the raging storms on our own side, superior through His grace to the watery waste around us, *the heart already in the place* where its treasure is, where the sun no more goes down, but where the everlasting light of His presence enfolds it around for ever.

May our hearts, dear readers, turn more than ever there

during this new year; be it days and weeks and months, few or many, and may we be more intently, looking up to, as well as abiding in, Him who came and died and rose again, and sits at God's right hand for us, and looking forward to that blessed moment when His shout shall be heard by all His own raised or changed, who shall follow Him into the Father's house, and there share His heavenly bliss and joys, of which we sometimes sing, when we say: --

“There with unwearied gaze,
Our eyes on Him we'll rest,
And satisfy with endless praise
A heart supremely blest.”

Looking Up and Within

The question asked has awakened a real desire to be, if possible, some comfort as to it. I think I know where many are as to this and such like subjects. Alas! we are all but poor ones as to deep and real heart exercise before the Lord concerning these things that trouble many. Let me first endeavor to emphasize the fact that what so many are longing after, as feeling they have not got, is the consequence of something else.

What is longed for, and rightly too, “affections satisfied,” “tastes imbibed,” “Christ living in us,” “eternal life working” -- all this, and much more akin to it, results from, flows out of, something else. I will try and show what I mean by that *something else*, presently. Now observe that *produced effects* or *consequences* cannot *create* themselves, and if our mind or thoughts dwell much on their absence or possession, we are correspondingly depressed or elated; it is good to be *convicted*, but it does not help us to *dwell* much on our shortness of stature in divine fellowship or realization; and it does not comfort us to see certain qualities and joys which we know ought to be there, but which we are sure we have not. I think I hear the words, “Tell us what is that something which begets all this in the saint.” Well, I will try.

1st. The Christian is of a new order, and united to the Man at God's right hand; the Christian is one with Christ in heaven. Wonderful, blessed fact that! Faith accepts it in all simplicity, and in the measure of faith, and in the power of the Spirit, is realization, communion, and joy.

2ndly. He to whom the Christian is united is a Man in glory, and the whole glory of God shines from Him; *there* he