

WHAT AWOKE THEM?



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A gentleman in the West of England had business engagements which occasionally called him to a certain small iron-working town in South Wales.

When business is brisk at such places, and work plentiful, the men are kept employed night and day. Nasmyth's steam hammers, some of them several tons in weight, are constantly kept working, beating out the huge masses of molten iron, and thereby causing the very ground to shake beneath their heavy and oft-repeated falls.

With this constant noise the inhabitants of that little town had, by custom, grown quite familiar ; so that in spite of the heavy thuds of the ponderous hammers, men, women, and children could sleep

quite soundly through the night without the least disturbance.

Not so, however, with the man of business above referred to. The din of this heavy hammering drove all sleep from his eyes, so that, eventually, he was compelled to give up all hope of getting an occasional night's rest in the town. Whenever, therefore, he was called into that locality, he always arranged for sleeping accommodation somewhere outside, and beyond ear-shot of those noisy "Nasmyths."

One night, however, from some breakdown in the machinery, these steam-hammers suddenly stopped working; and the consequence was that nearly the whole of this town woke up.

Now, what awoke them? Not the oft-repeated stroke of the heavy hammers, but their sudden cessation.

Yes, they could sleep soundly enough when the hammers were at constant work,

but when these stopped they instantly woke up.

How this reminds one of the state of multitudes of precious souls in the present day. While the gospel hammer is kept at work—and “is not my word a hammer?” saith the Lord”—thousands within sound of it are fast asleep. Let the “hammer” come down ever so heavily, they slumber on.

But the time will come when the true workmen shall all be summoned away. Call the labourers home, shall be heard from their Master’s lips. The hammer of the gospel of God’s grace and glory shall suddenly cease, and never give another stroke. Then shall there be a great waking up of gospel-hardened slumberers; and then, throughout the length and breadth of Christendom shall the bitter cry be heard, “Lord, Lord, open to us.” Alas! for that day.

Though, in his sleep the Christless sinner may have *dreamt* that he was all right, yet in the language of the ancient prophet, "he awaketh, and his soul is empty," Isa. 29 : 8. Then shall there indeed be a famine, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord : . . . they shall run to and fro to *seek the word of the Lord*, and shall not find it," Amos 8 : 11, 12.

Not that this alarm will be of very long continuance. Such fears will soon be hushed, and men be brought to say, "Peace, peace," where no peace is.

A "strong delusion" will quickly follow. Men who would not have the truth shall be entangled in Satan's masterpiece of deceit, and shall "believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness," "because they received not the love

of the truth, that they might be saved,"
2 Thess. 2 : 10-12.

How solemn all this is! It is a matter of *prophecy* to-day ; yet, reader, before your earthly sun is set, it may become a matter of history, it may all have taken place ; nay, the present gospel testimony might close before you have time to finish reading this paper. Scripture reveals nothing to the contrary. Beware therefore, "lest coming suddenly He find *you* sleeping," Mark 13 : 36.

That sin should be dealt with in *unsparing judgment* is the absolute necessity of God's holy nature ; and since He has plainly declared in His written word that "*all have sinned*," it is certain that *all are under sin's condemnation*, Rom. 3 : 9, 23. In the light of this someone may be tempted to ask, How, then, can God express His perfect love to such sinful creatures, and at the same time be truly consistent with

His holy nature and righteous character? Every such question has had its answer at the cross of Christ, where God was by no means making light of man's sin; the very opposite.

He offered Himself without spot to God; and was forsaken of God because of the position He had graciously taken for guilty man.

Remember the waking-up day *will* come. If you never wake up before, you will certainly wake up in the day of judgment. Yes, you will be thoroughly awake then—awake to your eternal destiny; you will descend from the throne of judgment to the lake of fire. You will there have time to think of every blow dealt by the gospel-hammer upon your rebellious heart, of every gracious message sent to you in the day of God's long-suffering. Oh, friend, wake up now! While the Father's arms are still open to welcome, while the Spirit

is still here to strive, while the Saviour
still waits to bless, do come! May the
deep sense of your need and danger bring
you to His feet to-day.

GEO. C.

“ Let not conscience make you linger,
Nor of fitness fondly dream ;
All the fitness He requireth
Is to feel your need of Him.
This He gives you,
’Tis the Spirit’s rising beam.”

“ Come, ye weary, heavy-laden,
Lost and ruined by the fall ;
If you tarry till you’re better,
You will never come at all.
Not the righteous,
Sinners Jesus came to call.”

STOW HILL BIBLE AND TRACT DEPOT,
5, Fife Road. Kingston-on-Thames.

Made and printed in England.