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THOUGH  
WAR  
SHOULD RISE



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MRS HOWARD TAYLOR

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# THOUGH WAR SHOULD RISE

BY

MRS. HOWARD TAYLOR

AUTHOR OF "PASTOR HSI," "HUDSON TAYLOR IN EARLY YEARS,"  
ETC. ETC.

FOREWORD BY

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THE  
UNIVERSITY  
OF CHICAGO

The Lord is my light and my salvation ;  
Whom shall I fear ?  
The Lord is the strength of my life ;  
Of whom shall I be afraid ?

. . . . .  
Though an host should encamp against me,  
My heart shall not fear :  
Though war should rise against me  
Even then will I be confident.

. . . . .  
For in the day of trouble He shall keep me  
secretly in His pavilion :  
In the covert of His tabernacle shall He hide me ;  
He shall lift me up upon a rock.

Psalm xxvii. v. 1, 3, 5.

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## FOREWORD

AMID a life of devotion to the sacred trust of writing the life-story of Mr. Hudson Taylor the gifted authoress of this little book in her private hours of worship and communion has caught a fresh vision of God, and has heard words which she could not well keep from re-echoing at a time like this. For on every hand men's hearts are beginning to fail them for fear. Anxieties are daily multiplying. With an outlook which is increasingly darkened there is a real danger lest the eyes of even those who know the Lord should be diverted from Him, and should fail to see the Bow in the cloud. These messages recall wavering hearts to "the things which cannot be shaken"; and reopen to every reader the springs of Divine comfort and assurance. For in them is

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shared the secret of the Lord by one who fears Him, and to whom His Covenant has afresh been shown.

The immediate peace and the ultimate security alike of God's children is in Himself. Every true help, therefore, toward fuller realization of the reality of His presence and grace is unspeakably valuable. And of the many which are available this one will prove to be amongst the most effective. It has obviously been born in the Sanctuary, and like all the works of God its seed is in itself. None can receive it without being stablished and strengthened and settled in the things which war cannot touch, and which are the abiding certainties of faith and hope and love. May its ministry gladden many and glorify Him.

J. STUART-HOLDEN.

CHINA INLAND MISSION  
LONDON,  
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WHY ART THOU CAST DOWN,  
O MY SOUL ?

It was the 4th of August ; the mobilisation of troops was going on, and the railway carriage was full of anxious, sorrowful people. All faces showed a deep concern. Here was the father, suddenly called from home and loved ones, leaving the cows on the mountains and the hay not yet gathered in. He looks brave and strong in his soldier's uniform, but there is trouble in his eyes that our hearts understand. Beside him is a woman who cannot weep. Tears will not come, although her heart is breaking. Is it husband or son, or both, that she is thinking of ? We can almost hear the firing from the frontier. Will they ever come back again ?

And so all down the carriage, each heart has its own bitterness, not excluding the Director of a well-known Missionary Society, who has just been obliged to close a home

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for Missionaries' children, and make what arrangements he can for the little ones whose fathers and mothers are so far away. Two of them are with him now, gathered to his own and his wife's large, loving hearts. But they are troubled hearts too—their faces tell it—as they think of all the war must mean to those who support the Mission by their small but generous gifts.<sup>1</sup> Could we follow all the conversations that are going on, and the train of thought where lips are silent, we should learn much to deepen the sense of sadness, the painful apprehension, the faces cannot fail to impart. And there is nothing to relieve it, until—Can it be? Yes, some one is singing! Sweet and clear above the vibration of the train rises a child's voice; the voice of a little girl barely five years old.

Jesu, geh' voran  
Auf der Lebensbahn,

Gradually silence stole over the company. Verse by verse, the words came clear of Zinzendorf's beautiful hymn :

Jesu, still lead on,  
Till our rest be won ;  
And, although the way be cheerless,

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<sup>1</sup> A large part of the income of the Basel Missionary Society comes in the pence of the poor.

## WHY ART THOU CAST DOWN 3

We will follow, calm and fearless :  
Guide us by Thy hand  
To our Fatherland.

If the way be drear,  
If the foe be near,  
Let not faithless fears o'ertake us,  
Let not faith and hope forsake us ;  
For through many a foe  
To our home we go.

When we seek relief  
From a long-felt grief,  
When oppress'd by new temptations,  
Lord, increase and perfect patience,  
Show us that bright shore  
Where we weep no more.

Jesu, still lead on,  
Till our rest be won :  
Heavenly Leader, still direct us,  
Still support, console, protect us,  
Till we safely stand  
In our Fatherland.

Quite unconscious in the rattle of the carriage that she was attracting attention, the child sang on, her heart full of simple gladness. She was not burdened, she was not troubled. Father and mother were far away in Africa ; her happy home-school was broken up. But friends were near her. She was being taken care of, somehow. She did not question the future. Her heart just overflowed with love and confidence,

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and the sweetness that the thought of Jesus brings. All the way from Basel to Bern she sang hymn after hymn, while a change spread over her fellow-travellers, until one would hardly have known them for the same company. The missionary with lightened heart, ashamed of his temporary fears, looked round and saw a deeply moving scene. The soldier's face was radiant, as if the sun had slipped out from behind the clouds. Surely faith was triumphing there. To the woman beside him had come the relief of tears. Silently weeping, she too had found again that peace of heart the world can neither give nor take away. Others, all down the carriage, had a softened look, a look of comfort ; and as the little voice went on, faith came back to its supremacy in many a heart.

“ A little child shall lead them.” It is good in these dark days to know how small, weak, and helpless we are, that we may just rejoice in the great, strong, wonderful Saviour Who never leaves us.

“ Is your face turned toward me, father ? ” asked another little one in the middle of the night.

“ Yes, my child.”

Then he was safe and happy in spite of the darkness.

WHY ART THOU CAST DOWN 5

“ Why art thou cast down, O my soul ?  
and why art thou disquieted within me ?  
Hope thou in God : for I shall yet praise  
Him, Who is the help of my countenance,  
and my God.”

What are we but His little children ?  
And has He not a father's heart, a father's  
understanding love—never, never nearer  
than when we need it most ?

A tender child of summers three  
Seeking her little bed at night,  
Paused on the dark stair timidly :  
“ O Mother, take my hand,” said she,  
“ And then the dark will all be light ! ”

We older children grope our way  
From dark behind to dark before ;  
And only when our hands we lay,  
Dear Lord, in Thine, the night is day,  
And there is darkness nevermore.

Reach downward to the sunless days  
Wherein our guides are blind as we,  
And faith is small, and hope delays ;  
Take Thou the hands of prayer we raise,  
And let us feel the light of Thee !

(WHITTIER.)

## A SOLDIER'S ONE DESIRE

Ps. xxvii. 4

DAVID was a man of war from his youth. Brought up in a hard school, he had early learned to face realities and to fend for himself. Courage was natural to him, and he had not lacked opportunities for its development. His instincts were not those of the recluse but of the soldier; of the leader to whom men looked for practical resourcefulness, as well as guidance and inspiration. Moreover, the circumstances were full of danger. We do not know just when the Psalm was written, but it speaks of enemies round about, and of much that might inspire terror. This it was, indeed, that drove him to the Lord as his light and salvation; as the strength of his life, in Whom alone he could be confident. With hosts about to encamp against him, war threatening on every side, his heart turned

## A SOLDIER'S ONE DESIRE 7

to God with *one supreme desire*. What was it, David? What is it, O my soul?

For suddenly, unexpectedly, we too find ourselves plunged in a "day of trouble." War is about us on all hands. It is a practical question, then—what should we seek as above all important at such a time as this?

*One thing* have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple.

"How strange, how contradictory," one almost exclaims! Had David been a dreamer, merely, living in tranquil ease;—but a leader of armies, and in a time of peril? Yes, that was just what gave urgency to his desire. Occupied with God, he did not fear the day of trouble; for then, he knew, God would be occupied with him.

For in the day of trouble He shall keep me secretly in His pavilion; in the covert of His tabernacle shall He hide me; He shall lift me up upon a rock.

What an experience! Who would not desire it? It recalls the depth and fulness of the ninety-first Psalm, with all that flows from it of blessing. And the result is *praise*.

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And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies which are round about me ; and I will offer in His tabernacle sacrifices of joy ; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord.

All David's psalms, or songs, were written thus. They sprang from a heart occupied with God, in the midst of trouble. Is not this the secret of their power and sweetness all down the ages ? And we too, if we are to have a song, must know the same experience. We must be occupied, not so much with what is going on around us, as with our God ; truly delighting in the beauty of the Lord ; enquiring, as to all our hard questions, "in His temple." It is there we breathe the right atmosphere ; find ourselves truly adjusted to the circumstances of life. "Spend time, much time, more time than ever," David practically tells us, "in the presence of the Lord, and in outpouring of heart before Him." It may be difficult, it may seem impossible ; but it is *the one thing* that alone can meet the case. This was the warrior-Psalmist's chief desire, the thing he sought after ; and he desired it not vainly, as something that could not be realised, but definitely, with hope and expectation, "of the Lord." If we too go about it in this spirit, we shall be surprised

to find how much time we are enabled to save from other things for waiting upon God, and how, even when busy outwardly, we continue to be occupied with Him in heart. "Dwell deep," was the Lord's message to the inhabitants of Hazor, when there was "trouble on every side" (Jer. xlix. 29, 30). How much more should it mean for us! *Dwell deep*; possess as never before "the secret place of the Most High." David's experience shall be ours *as we too make it our supreme desire*. Occupied with the Lord, His beauty, majesty, glory, His all-controlling and most blessed will, we shall find that He, indeed, is occupied with us—keeping, hiding, lifting up. And is not this just what we need? to be lifted up *above* our enemies round about; above all the clouding of manifold troubles; lifted up "upon a rock." Only thus can we have the song, "Sacrifices of joy" in such a day as this, He "giveth songs in the night." And are they not to His glory?

The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart hath trusted in Him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise Him.

## WHO IS CONTROLLING HUMAN DESTINY ?

*"The Kingdom is the Lord's ; and He is the Ruler over the nations."*—Ps. xxii. 28.

*"The Lord is my Shepherd ; I shall not want."*—Ps. xxiii. 1.

It has always been dear to us, this tenderest of all the Psalms ; but it shines with new and deeper meaning now, seen in the light of the passage immediately preceding it, against the gloom of present events. "The Lord is my Shepherd ; I shall not want." Then but for Him, I *should* want ; for here all around me are pressing, possible needs. My experience does not differ materially from that of the Psalmist. Here is the wilderness, "the dry and thirsty land where no water is." Here is the proneness to wander, that inbred weakness, the tendency to doubt and fear, to run to any other than my blessed, blessed Master, Who alone can heal and satisfy the soul. Here too are the ignorance

and blindness that know not the right way. Here are enemies, and hosts of evil ; a cup that may so easily be empty ; a need of daily anointing, and the comfort of rod and staff—protection and supporting strength. The days stretch on before us, “ all the days of my life ” ; how surely they lead through many a “ valley of the shadow ” ; how surely they must end, should our Lord delay His coming, in the deeper shadows of death !

But though all this lies behind the Psalm, the song, as the rocky foundation of our experience, does not break in with one jarring note upon the heavenly music. Does it not rather supply the deeper harmonies, awaken the most satisfying chords ? But it is only as we take this Psalm in connection with the one before it that we gain its full depth and sweetness. The twenty-third Psalm depends upon the twenty-second, as all our blessedness in time and in eternity depends upon the suffering there depicted, the *De Profundis* of the heart of God.

We sing of the Shepherd that died,  
That died for the sake of the flock ;  
His love to the utmost was tried,  
But firmly endured as a rock.

Out of the depth in which His lonely cry

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resounded, " My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me ? " flow for us the joy and peace of the assurance, " Thou art with me ; I will fear no evil."

And is there not a special sense in which these two Psalms, taken together, have a message for the terrible days into which we have come ? Suddenly, with little warning, we are plunged in the greatest, the most awful strife of nations the world has ever seen. Where do our strength, our refuge lie ? Is it not just in the double assurance based upon the union of these two Psalms ? the divine, measureless victory of the one, and the certainty of all it has purchased for us—seen in the other ; the green pastures and still waters, and the love of the Shepherd's heart. Here is the victory :

But be not Thou far off, O Lord : O Thou my Succour, haste Thee to help me. . . . Save me from the lion's mouth : Yea, from the horns of wild oxen *Thou hast answered me* (Ps. xxii. 19, 21, R.V.).

Oh, depth of mystery ! the broken heart of God the Sacrifice crying to the broken heart of God the Sacrificer. " But *when He cried unto Him, He heard.*" And this is the assurance that immediately follows :

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord : and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee. For *the kingdom is the Lord's : and He is the Ruler among the nations* (vv. 27, 28).

And with this triumphant chord do we not hear the solemn antiphonal of the second Psalm ?

Yet have I set My king upon My holy hill of Zion. . . . Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron ; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

Oh, how much there is that needs to be dashed in pieces in the life of the nations, all of them, to-day ! the appalling military systems of the modern world ; the pride, the relentless ambition, the selfishness, vice, corruption that dominate our so-called civilisation, as well as the idolatry, superstition, and endless forms of oppression and wrong that hang as a pall of darkness over heathen lands.

Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron : Thou shalt break them in pieces like a potter's vessel. All the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's : and He is the Ruler over the nations.

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He has not left His throne. Even now, to-day—and in the darker days that yet may come—“HE IS THE RULER.” Let us never lose sight of it, never lose joy of it. From His cross He reigns. The Name written there is the Name above every name. The piercèd Hand still rules the universe.

But, for us—Who is He, this Sovereign of human destiny? What is He to our hearts? Brief though it is, in what satisfying fulness the twenty-third Psalm gives the answer. And do we not see, here, more than the Shepherd? Do we not recognise the King, the infinite Lover, the Bridegroom of His people. “Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Belovèd?”

Lord, I take it to my own heart. The days may be dark, the experiences I am called to pass through as “the valley of the shadow of death.” Enemies and the wilderness press in upon me on all hands. The table would be unspread, the cup empty indeed, were we left to human resources. But Thou art not only on the throne; Thou art beside me in the darkness. For every need, every possible “want,” I have “Thy right hand and Thine arm and the light of Thy countenance.” It is enough—oh, how

infinitely more than enough! And just beyond, there is "the house of the Lord for ever"; Thy glory, Thy throne, Thine own immediate presence. But oh, I would not shorten the days in which we may walk by faith, and not as yet by sight. I would not lessen the difficulties that call for the help of Thy strong hand, the sustaining of Thine arm, nor the darkness in which so much the more tenderly Thou makest to shine upon me the light of Thy countenance. I hold it true through all:

The Kingdom is the Lord's: and He is the Ruler over the nations.

"The Lord is my shepherd," the royal Bridegroom of my heart; "I shall not want."

## THE GOD OF THE IMPOSSIBLE

WHAT shall we look at, at a time like this ? Here is trouble and danger all around us. Wars and rumours of wars shake the nations to their very foundations ; distress and want face the helpless populations of even lands that fain would keep out of the dread clash of arms. When no one knows what is coming, or how they will be able to provide for the need of their own households, what is to become of those who, without the ordinary means of subsistence, are engaged in the work of God in heathen lands ? Hundreds, even thousands, who have left home and country, father, mother, children, for Christ's sake and the Gospel's, are faced now with a situation that might be alarming indeed. Far off in China, Africa, India, and in the islands of the seas, how easily they might be forgotten ! How easily might dangers arise around them, greater even than compass

## THE GOD OF THE IMPOSSIBLE 17

their fellow-countrymen at home. How helpless and without resource their situation, looked at—ah that is just it! What shall we look at, at a time like this? What is to be the believer's point of view?

Shut up in the court of the guard, long ago, Jeremiah was meditating painful thoughts over a desperate situation. His city was compassed by Nebuchadnezzar's army: famine stalked its streets; and he knew, moreover, that the long-suffering of God had reached its limit, and the judgment about to fall was from His hand. The prophet was a prisoner, unable to go out or come in. But he was not shut away from God. And to him in this well-nigh hopeless case came the Lord's message: could it be? Yes, for circumstances confirmed it forthwith, beyond a doubt.

Close to a priestly city lay a field in the hill-country of Benjamin. To Jeremiah belonged the right to redeem it. But what could be further from the mind of a poor prisoner, in a country already the prey of dreaded conquerors, than to purchase property that could not be held or in any sense possessed, save on parchment? But the message had come from the Lord: "Buy

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thee the field that is in Anathoth"; and there before him stood the unexpected visitor, Hanameel, his uncle's son, with his urgent request (Jer. xxxii. 6-8).

Then I knew that this was the word of the Lord. And I bought the field of Hanameel . . . and weighed him the money, even seventeen shekels of silver.

The deed of purchase, moreover, was publicly signed and sealed, and handed over with deliberate care to Baruch; the property itself being of small importance compared with the statement with which the whole transaction closed, which also was from the Lord: "Houses and fields and vineyards shall yet again be bought in this land" (vv. 10-15). And the fall of the kingdom, the temple, the very national existence of the people was immediately at hand—as Jeremiah himself had told them, times without number, and was telling them still, amid suffering and tears.

Is there any passage in the whole of his wonderful book more touching than the record of the prophet's appeal to God over all this? (vv. 16-44).

Ah, Lord God! . . . there is nothing too hard for Thee: . . . *behold the mounts, they are come*

## THE GOD OF THE IMPOSSIBLE 19

unto the city to take it ; and the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans that fight against it, because of the sword, and of the famine, and of the pestilence : and what Thou hast spoken is come to pass ; and, behold, Thou seest it.

And Thou hast said unto me, O Lord God, Buy thee the field for money, and take witnesses ; for the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.

“ Behold the mounts ! ” No, came the immediate answer : “ *Behold, I am the Lord.* ”<sup>1</sup> And so to-day the vital question is not what is immediately around us. Yes, “ the mounts ” are there—the famine, the pestilence, it may be ; righteous judgments of God. We have to deal with the God behind all this, and with Him only. And of us too He asks the same heart-searching question : “ I am the Lord, the God of all flesh : *is there any thing too hard for Me ?* ” (v. 27).

Had not the prophet just said it in prayer—“ Ah Lord God ! . . . there is nothing too hard for Thee ” ? Yes, but he had added—was it in faith ?—“ Behold the mounts. ” No, troubled heart, you are to behold something far higher ; you are to look up above the mounts, above all the clash and clamour of circumstance, and to hear the Lord, the

<sup>1</sup> Reminding one of Is. xli. 10 (margin) : “ Look not around thee (be not dismayed) ; for I am thy God. ”

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God of all flesh, Himself confirm your trembling faith, with the question that, in His lips, carries its own answer : “ Is there any thing too hard for Me ? ”

And thus the Lord unfolds His purpose to His servant. Judgment is coming, must come ; but He sits as King upon the water-floods. His will and that alone shall be accomplished. And oh, how glorious His intention is—far surpassing our poor thought!

Moreover the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah *the second time*, while he was yet shut up in the court of the prison, saying,

Thus saith the Lord the maker thereof, the Lord that formed it, to establish it; the Lord is His name ;

*Call unto Me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not* (Jer. xxxiii. 1-3).

What shall we look at, at such a time as this ? The God of the Impossible !

## LOVED AND LOUSED

Rev. i. 5, 6

WE long at this time of crisis and extremity to be what we see some around us are—so delivered from self and personal need that they are free to minister strength and comfort wherever they are found, and to be a power in intercession for others. They seem to be untouched by circumstances. None are more truly living in what is happening around us, taking their full share of the sorrow, toil, and sacrifice we are called to bear ; and yet they are not burdened, they are not anxious ; they seem to live in a joy and calm above all strife. They are heart-free from self and personal interests ; not taken up with their own needs, spiritually or in any other way ; and the more difficult and threatening the outlook, the more do they overflow with help and cheer, the more do they rejoice in Him Whom they

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prove all the time to be "a God of deliverances."

They are, we cannot but see it, "kings and priests unto God." They "*reign in life* through the One, even Jesus Christ." They are not necessarily among the great or wise, as men count wisdom and greatness; but oh, how their lives are to the glory of Him Who has chosen "the foolish things . . . the weak things of the world . . . the things that are despised . . . yea, the things that are not," that He might put an end to all confidence in the flesh, to all glorying save in the Lord. To them He appears as all-sufficient indeed, "a very present help in trouble." He meets their every need, inward as well as outward, even when human resources are at an end and there is terror on every hand.

"How quickly almost all things have changed," wrote one during the most anxious days of this never-to-be-forgotten month (August) that witnessed no fewer than thirteen declarations of war between the nations of Europe. "I think one feels God nearer and dearer, and it is such a joy to me that there is nothing to give up or alter—only to go on more fully in His new covenant, and more deeply into fellowship with Him; to know by the Holy Spirit 'things to come,' and to receive from Him, that we may pass on to others."

“Kings and priests unto God.” Yes, they know what it is to reign even now, in and with Christ, over all the power of the enemy; to rejoice in infinite riches that the world can neither give nor take away; to live every moment, in every breath they draw, every thought they think, not for themselves but for others, ministering grace to all who come in contact with them, and influencing mightily the course of events in the distracted world around by the simple, steadfast faith and unceasing prayer with which they enter into partnership with God in the outworking of His divine purposes.

And we realise that this is just what every Christian ought to be—ought always to be, and more especially at a time like this. But we find ourselves preoccupied with an inward struggle. While we are the prey of anxious thoughts, depressed and burdened, overcome by conscious failure, separated from our Lord in heart by a cold and prayerless spirit, neglect of His Word, or other deadly sin, how can we be “kings and priests” to His glory? The victorious life, the life of intercession—oh, how we need to know it, to live it *now*! How vital it is, for ourselves as well as others. But *we*—we

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seem cut off, debarred, by conscious failure and sin.

And is it not just there that this wonderful ascription of praise meets us? praise to Him Who from His cross, His throne, is "the Ruler of the kings of the earth":

Unto Him that *loveth us*, and *loosed us* from our sins by His blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

The best and surest way to lose sight of our own unworthiness, as well as to find daily deliverance from sin, is to *consider Him*—His love, His precious blood. Never, never do we get beyond the need of claiming the promise that can never fail: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Claiming it afresh to-day, coming afresh for cleansing from all, all that separates between us and Him, let us remember that He has not only loosed us, does not only loose us *now* from all that burdens, all that binds conscience and spirit—He not only sets us free, but He cleanses, looses, frees us in infinite *love*.

<sup>1</sup> Rev. i. 5, 6; the fifth verse being quoted from the Revised Version.

He loved us from the first of time,  
He loves us to the last.

It is upon this ground, this only, that we can ever be "kings and priests unto God." The love is first, then the loosing, *then* the overcoming life, the blessed ministry of intercession; and it is all His doing, His constant, daily inworking, in infinite love.

To Mr. Hudson Taylor, at a period of overwhelming difficulty in his life and work, it came almost as a revelation that *the Lord can make no new discoveries about us*; that His love has foreseen and provided for *all*.

It was through "some very simple statement made by me in a letter," wrote his beloved fellow-worker Mr. John M'Carthy, "on a subject that has always been a help to me, to which my attention was first drawn by old Mr. Castles in the Bible Class at Merion Hall, Dublin: that the Lord can make no new discoveries about *us*. When He chose us He knew what was in us—that Peter would deny Him, and all the rest forsake Him and flee; and *yet* He chose us for Himself and His service. *We* might and should be startled at the revelations that come of failure, shortcoming, and sin; but He *made provision* for them all, long ago, knowing they were there. How great the possibilities therefore that open up before a faith that will lay hold of and appropriate *such* provision!

Every fresh need, every fresh fall on our part, though it brings no change in His love,

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may and should send us to our knees, that we may learn more (even through such shame and sorrow) of its depth and efficacy—its loosing power, the *only* loosing power from “all sin.” “Even were there no heaven to hope for, no hell to fear,” said a beloved Chinese convert, “*how could we sin against such love?*” And every failure to be what we *might* be, for His glory and the help of others, seems tenfold darker, now, at a time when the forces of evil appear to triumph, and He is looking for His Church, His Bride, to stand with Him in the conflict, “called and chosen and faithful.”

Oh, whatever our coldness and deadness of heart, whatever our shortcomings, our sin, let us cast ourselves afresh *to-day* upon the glorious fact that, still, *He loves!* Let us claim in humble faith and steadfast prayer the inworking of His Holy Spirit, that we may “apprehend *with all saints* what is the breadth and length and height and depth,” and may “know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge”: breadth, “as far as the east is from the west”; length, “from everlasting to everlasting”; height, “as the heaven is high above the earth”; and depth infinitely surpassing our deepest need. Believing in it, rejoicing in it “with joy un-

speakable and full of glory," let us turn from ourselves and all our unworthiness to the possibilities there are for us, even for us, in Him. Let us trust Him, expect Him so to work in us, through His Word and by His Spirit, that we too may indeed become "kings and priests unto God," ministering from a royal fulness that would fain pour itself through every cleansed and willing heart upon a world never more desperately needy than now. Loved with the love that passes knowledge, kept in the peace that passes understanding, then let our songs of praise abound through the last watch, through the darkest, of the night.

## IN THE DAY OF TROUBLE

THE deepest desire of all our hearts, as concerns ourselves individually and the loved mission to which we belong, is that we should be enabled to glorify God—really and truly to bring praise to His holy Name—in the many and great difficulties that press upon us now. Can this be? And if so, how can it be? The Psalm many of us have been rejoicing in to-day<sup>1</sup> brings a quite definite answer.

Offer unto God the sacrifice of thanksgiving ; and pay thy vows unto the Most High : and call upon Me in the day of trouble ; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me (Ps. l. 14, 15).

God is speaking. So urgent is it that His people should understand and take in the message, that He calls special attention to

<sup>1</sup> This Psalm, with other passages, comes as the portion for September 8, in the Rev. R. Murray M'Cheyne's Scripture Calendar, *Daily Bread*, used by many members of the China Inland Mission.

it : " Hear, O My people, and I will speak ; O Israel, and I will testify to thee " ; and reminds them of the authority and tenderness with which He speaks : " I am God, even thy God." The subject is " the day of trouble " ; how they may on the one hand obtain deliverance, and on the other be to the glory of Him Who alone can deliver. It is a question of " the salvation of God " (v. 23) ; the working of His mighty hand, when human resources fail, and all hope must be abandoned in the help of man. We have come to such an extremity now, in the history of our mission. In a sense, it is no new experience ; for we have always been dependent, wholly and directly, on the Lord, and have seen Him ministering to our daily needs just as truly as did the Israelites of old during those forty years in the wilderness. But now the very channels He has used seem cut off, or so far depleted that they threaten to run dry ; and we realise what Elijah must have felt by the brook Cherith, when the ravens came no more and the brook dwindled to nothing before his eyes.

" When I arrived," wrote Mr. Taylor on reaching China in 1872, " I found it needful to dispose of the money I had brought out with me, though the exchange was so high ; and we are praying God to

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incline His stewards to send you funds,<sup>1</sup> for our present supplies will soon be exhausted. What a comfort it is to know that though supplies may be exhausted, our Supplier never can be so. . . . The Lord will provide, whether the exchange be high or low.

But His deliverance is conditioned by the attitude of His people : *this* is what He would have them understand and lay to heart. He longs to see a certain attitude in them toward Himself ; not that He needs their gifts and offerings, but that they need the deliverance He only can work out for those who, so to speak, make it possible. " To him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God " (v. 23).

And what is a right attitude, in His sight, for those who are truly " a people near unto Him " in the day of trouble ? As set before us in this Psalm, is it not threefold ?

First, there must be thanksgiving (v. 14) ; a heart overflowing with praise—just because He is God, even our God. Thanksgiving, because of abiding facts : this is more precious to Him than all burnt-offerings and sacrifice. The world is His, He reminds them, and the fulness thereof (v. 12). He can dispense with the flesh of bulls and blood of

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from a letter to Mr. Harris Hill, then Hon. Secretary of the Mission.

goats. But the one thing He cannot dispense with—if He is to reveal Himself in new and deeper ways to His people—is the love and confidence of their hearts overflowing in praise.

Offer unto God the sacrifice of thanksgiving.

Why, that in itself is the greatest of all deliverances! It is *inward* deliverance, before there has been time for outward change of circumstance. And oh, what a heaven of joy it brings to the heart! In the midst of trouble, to know and find Him so near that there cannot but be praise, is an experience so precious that the trouble itself becomes a cause for thanksgiving. God never gives a command, it has been well said, without giving also the enabling;<sup>1</sup> and this is a command upon obedience to which depends further deliverance, and our being enabled to glorify Him. Then how surely may we claim His power—the inworking of the Holy Spirit—that even in our burdened hearts anxious foreboding may be replaced by confidence and praise. Begin, begin this

<sup>1</sup> “ When God commands us to do a thing, it is the highest possible evidence that we can do it. For God to command is equivalent to an oath that we can do it.”—The Rev. Charles G. Finney, *Revivals of Religion*, Lecture vii. p. 117.

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moment, O my soul! to offer this sacrifice with which God is well pleased. Begin to praise Him for the first mercy He shall call to thy mind, and the second, and the third, until the number is too large for counting. Forget self and all thy fears, in the memory of His great goodness; and let the abiding fact that He is God, even thy God, unfold so much of its sweetness that even in the darkest hour there shall be songs of praise.

But there is more than this; and perhaps the second condition (*v.* 14) underlies the first, as cause underlies effect. Is there anything that hinders joy in the Lord, and a spirit of thanksgiving, more than the consciousness that we are holding back something, anything, that is His due; that we are grieving Him by some inward insincerity or unfaithfulness? It need not be, as we see it, a great or important matter. A very little thing is sufficient to shut out from us, for years it may be, the light of His face.

It was so at the time the Psalmist lived and wrote. In those days, when there was need of special help and mercy from the Lord, they used, in presenting their petitions before Him, to promise some special gift or offering, over and above the required sacri-

fices and tithes. The vow was a sacred compact between the soul and God, and had at all costs to be kept. What does it represent for us? Have we never promised, in some pressing need, a life of deeper devotion to the Lord? Have we never, seeing light in His light, prayerfully determined before Him to turn away from questionable habits, to give up self-indulgence, to yield to the control of His Holy Spirit in every movement of our inward life? Have we not been conscious of His confirming such decisions with His own approval and blessing? Here is a bit of personal experience from a far-off mission station; does it strike no answering chord in our hearts?

On New Year's morning I determined to give it up—for the Lord's sake . . . that He might bless us more. I never realised His presence as I did that night. I felt filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost—but, after all, forgot my resolve. HE SAVES to the uttermost, I *know*. But can I hope that He would overlook all this—in His servant, His slave?

“Pay thy vows unto the Lord”: it is a claim God will not waive; and many a life is robbed of blessing He longs to give, just because of some unsettled score like this.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Eccles. v. 2-7; Num. iii.; Deut. xxiii. 21, 22; and Job xxii. 24-28.

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## 34 THOUGH WAR SHOULD RISE

It may be due to forgetfulness. We have forgotten what God will never forget. It may be due to unwillingness to meet the cost. But whatever the difficulty, God is able to deal with it. The solemn, heart-searching word from His lips, "Pay thy vows unto the Lord," carries with it the certainty that He is ready to enable us to do so. And surely, as all increase of power and blessing depends upon it, we *must*, at a time like this, humble ourselves before Him for past unfaithfulness, and seek the unfailing help of His Holy Spirit to "keep our obedience at the furthest extreme verge of the light God has given." Stop short here, and what assurance can we have that He will appear for our help in the day of trouble? How can we, how dare we face, in such an attitude of heart, "the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."<sup>1</sup> That hour is upon us now; and we must immediately look for the fulfilment of the words that follow: "Behold I come quickly." It is no time for playing fast and loose with God. "Instant, unquestioning obedience to the dictates of the Holy Spirit" must be our watchword. "There is a moment when

<sup>1</sup> See Rev. iii. 10, 11.

it is perfectly easy to follow the guidance of the Spirit—the very first moment in which God makes the impression on our hearts.”

Victory is sure if only we are sufficiently in earnest about it. “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you : draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you.” It is a life and death matter ; and He is on our side to Whom “all power” is given. Oh, let us as a mission, that is, every one of us individually, search our hearts before God, in the light of His Word and His Holy Spirit, determined to cut off the right hand or the right foot, if need be, or pluck out the right eye, rather than cherish anything which can hinder His blessing and deliverance at this time of our utmost need ! We are not only traitors to the Lord that bought us with His own precious blood, we are traitors to each other, and to countless numbers of precious, perishing souls in China, if we go on in a life God cannot bless, a holding back from sacrifice, a parleying with sin or self-indulgence that in our better moments we have renounced for Jesus’ sake.

“Offer unto God the sacrifice of thanksgiving” : oh, how easy this becomes when we fully pay our vows unto the Lord !

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Nothing so floods the heart with love and praise. And then the rest is easy :

Call upon Me in the day of trouble.

“ Call upon ME,” not others. Do we not need to watch against too much talking over things, at the expense of prayer? Are not these days in which we must, more than ever, make time for waiting upon God. If we do this as a mission—that is, every one of us—the result is sure ; sure as the faithfulness of God.

“ Call upon ME in the day of trouble ; *I will deliver thee*, and thou shalt glorify Me.”

And to come back to the beginning, is not this what we long for above all things—really to glorify Him? What joy it is to see our principles vindicated, our faith confirmed, our expectations not put to shame; but what incomparably higher joy to see God, OUR GOD, proved afresh to be what He really is, and thus *glorified* before those who know Him and those who know Him not.

Lord, make this threefold attitude of heart most deeply ours.

Whoso offereth the sacrifice of thanksgiving glorifieth Me, and *prepareth a way* that I may show him the salvation of God (*v. 23, R.V., margin*).

## WITH MY SONG WILL I PRAISE HIM

IT had been a stormy night. All through the hours of darkness rain and hail had been driven before the tempestuous wind, and we almost expected to see the mountains covered with snow when daylight should reveal the first ravages of autumn.

Hark—oh, how sweet! the soft, clear notes of a bird. It will not fail to greet the dawn with its simple song. 'Tis but a little chirping; but bright and cheery, as if no wild winds were raging round its nest under the broad eaves. Ah, there is the secret! It has a refuge. It is hidden from the storm. And its morning music goes up unfalteringly, all the sweeter for the sullen moaning of the wind.

Ah, my soul! take home to thee the lesson. The night is dark. All the powers of evil seem let loose upon the trembling earth.

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The flowers we have prized, the sweetness of summer, the beauty, sunshine, safety even of life seem driven before them. But the song is to remain. "He giveth songs in the night." Hidden in the secret place of the Most High, thou shalt not only abide under the shadow of the Almighty: there shalt thou raise thy note of loving trust; there shalt thou *rejoice* in Him. Heaven and earth are watching, listening; and sweeter even than the song of angels, hushed methinks through these terrible hours, is the up-springing of the heart's deep love and praise; the music of the hundred and third Psalm, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy Name." Yes, by His grace, come what may—"With my song will I praise Him."

## WHAT WERE THEY DOING AT THAT FATEFUL HOUR ?

IN the year 1873, when, save for three points on the Yang-tze (Ganking, Kiukiang, and Hankow), there were no Protestant missionaries in the inland provinces of China, a little Conference was held at Chinkiang, near the estuary of that great river, to consider the founding of a Western Branch of the China Inland Mission. It was gathered specially for prayer in view of the seeming impossibilities of the situation, and of the limitless resources of Him Who said : “ With men it is impossible, but not with God, for with God all things are possible.”

“ We have had such happy meetings,” wrote Mrs. Taylor to an intimate friend. “ We all felt refreshed. . . . There was much earnest prayer, and the power of the Spirit was present. Dear Hudson had a message given him for each meeting. . . . Several thoughts on the Passover, especially, were new to me and very precious. I will try to give you the leading ideas.”

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And these thoughts have been so helpful to some of us that we venture to unfold them a little here, in view of the crisis we have reached in the world's history, no less than in the experience of God's people. It is a midnight hour. The storm is upon us, and men's hearts are failing them for fear. A great deliverance is nigh, but also the outpouring of the final vials of judgment. We have reached a crisis in the history of Redemption; and though the uneasy slumbers of Egypt are wrapped in darkness, there is light in the dwellings of Israel.

To go back to that far-off night that seems so near: the Pascal Lamb had been slain and the blood was in evidence, carefully sprinkled on the lintel and side-posts of every Hebrew dwelling. The doors were shut, and each household was assembled within. A great change was before them, not to speak of the impending tragedy that hung over Egypt; and anxious indeed would have been their hearts but for the assurance, "When I see the blood I will pass over you." But though delivered thus from destruction, the people were face to face with experiences that called for much faith and courage. They were to leave their homes that night; to pass from

the wonted and familiar to the strange, the unknown, the way that went through the wilderness, though it led to the promised land. And what was their attitude, their occupation? What were they doing, in view of the mighty happenings in which they were so deeply concerned? All ready to start on their journey—is it not significant for us?—packed and prepared down to the smallest details, they were not breathless with anxiety, nor yet sleeping the sleep of the indifferent. They were awake, alert, and—oh, let us take it in!—they were gathered, in each several household, to a feast.

It might almost seem, indeed, from the first eleven verses of Exodus xii., that the chief purpose of the Pascal Lamb was to provide food for the people at that fateful hour: “*according to every man’s eating shall ye make your count for the lamb.*” But for the shelter of the blood, however, there could have been no feast. In God’s provision the two were one: outside, the token of sacrifice—a life laid down to redeem; inside, the spread table—life sustained and strengthened by actual, personal feeding upon the lamb whose blood had been shed.

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To quote from Mrs. Taylor's notes :

I. The prominent use of the lamb was for feeding: Christ not merely our salvation, but our sustenance.

II. *All* the lamb was to be eaten ; otherwise it was lost to the eaters, though a sweet sacrifice to God : Christ in all His fulness is for us ; any beauty or fulness that we do not lay hold of day by day is lost to us, for we have no greater store to-morrow in consequence.

III. Only those under the blood could eat : we cannot feed upon Christ save as His precious blood cleanses us " from all sin."

IV. To be eaten in the night, before the day-dawn. This may be said to be our night (collectively—the Church) ; but is there not a further meaning that we (personally) may take comfort from in seasons of trial, depression, or sorrow ? that *then* we should eat our passover.

V. " Eat it in haste " : partake at once of a whole Christ, and, in the strength of that food, press onward in our journey. No time to be lost !

*" Partake at once of a whole Christ : no time to be lost ! "* Is it not the message we need, as the midnight hour draws near—is even now upon us ? " At midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the Bridegroom cometh ; go ye out to meet Him." Are we ready ? Sheltered under The Blood, are we girded for the journey—our staff in our hand, our shoes on our feet ? Are we preparing for all that may, that *must* come, by

feeding indeed upon Christ in our hearts, day by day, hour by hour ?

“ He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him ” (John vi. 56).

“ I cannot tell you, beloved Friends,” Mr. Taylor had written a few months previously,<sup>1</sup> “ what blessing God has given me through those words. Out in China, three years ago, we had a time of the deepest trial. The very foundations of society seemed to be upheaved by a mighty power : no one knew what it was, nor to what it was tending. . . . The people were excited as I have never seen the Chinese excited during the eighteen years that I have known them. . . . You know how at Tien-tsin they rose and massacred the Romish Sisters of Charity, the French priests and even the French Consul ; and how in Shanghai, where there were from five to seven thousand foreign residents, and where there were ships of war and a corps of five hundred trained volunteers, even there our fellow-countrymen were scarcely able to sleep from fear of attack. And oh ! you can judge of the anxiety and distress we should have had, scattered abroad as were our fellow-labourers in the interior of the country, one or two here and one or two there, hundreds of miles from the nearest Treaty Port—scattered among the people, without any hand to protect, or arm to trust to, save that of God—you can imagine what would have been our anxiety and distress if we had not been taught

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<sup>1</sup> Report of his address at the Mildmay Conference, London, in June 1872.

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by God's gracious Spirit to lean more upon Jesus, to know more of His abiding with us and being in us than many of us had ever known before, or expected to know down here. And it was largely through this passage, opened up to us by God Himself, that some of us found the peace and rest He gave us in that time of excitement and trial. . . .

“ ‘He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him.’ As many of you are aware, the word ‘dwelleth’ is the same in the original as the word elsewhere translated ‘abide,’ ‘abideth.’ (Compare John xv. 4-10.) ‘He that eateth My flesh,’ then, ‘and drinketh My blood, *abideth* in Me, and I in him.’ And the wording of this verse is worthy of particular notice. It is not that *to eat* His flesh is *to abide* ; it is not that *while* we are eating we are abiding ; but simply that he who does eat, who habitually feeds upon the flesh of that Blessed One, who habitually drinks His precious blood, *is abiding*—‘ abides in Me, and I in him.’ Ah, oh, what a precious truth this is ! Many of us have perhaps had the thought that was upon my own mind for years, when I read and thought about ‘ abiding,’ that the feeding was the abiding ; that while we were eating the flesh, and drinking the blood, we were abiding, and only so long. But that is not what is said here. You know how it is in natural things. We take two, three or more meals a day, as it may be, but never was it God’s purpose that we should be feeding all day long, eating from morning till night ! But while we have our stated times for eating, and cannot dispense with them . . . we live all the day long in the strength of that food, and all the

night long too. The food we partake of does not simply refresh us while we have its savour in our mouth. . . . It is digested and assimilated, and becomes part and parcel of ourselves. We are sustained by it, and it remains in us. . . . And so it is in spiritual things. When our hearts and our eyes are directed to Christ ; . . . when we turn to the food in the Word ; when we feed through the public ministrations of God's house, or in private meditation ; when, as we go about our daily work, we lift our thoughts to Him, and take a little refreshment in communion by the way—then we are feeding upon Him. But the strength we derive from communion with Him is not in us then only, but remains in us all the day through and all the night through. . . .

“ And now, dear friends, let us believe this, and go forth to feed upon Jesus day by day, with increasing joy and satisfaction, delight and refreshment. . . . The word of Jesus is true. . . . God means what He says and all He says, and would have us live in the strength of it. If we find it promised to those who abide in Jesus that they shall bring forth ‘ much fruit,’ let us say with joy and thankfulness to our own souls, for our rest and comfort, that we have been feeding upon Him . . . we have found His flesh to be meat indeed, and His blood to be drink indeed, and now we can go in the strength of it, knowing that Jesus *is* dwelling in us, and we in Him. We expect Him, who is the true vine, to put forth His power of life and fruit-bearing in us, and to manifest His glory both in us and through us. When we offer prayers in His name to the Father, let us expect to receive answers, because it is written that if

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we abide in Him and His word abides in us we shall ask what we will, and it shall be done unto us. Let us go forth expecting to find His power in us able to overcome our tendencies to sin, our proneness to fail and fall ; able to help us in conflict or in difficulty ; because it is written, ' he that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk even as He walked.' But let us actually live on Him, actually dwell in Him, actually draw near to Him, realizing His presence consciously and constantly."

He calls us to a well-spread board—especially in times of danger and difficulty. "Thou preparest a table before me *in the presence of mine enemies.*" To the weary prophet in the wilderness an angel is sent twice over with a meal, and the message : "Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for thee." And in the Upper Room, even as the supreme hour of sacrifice and suffering drew near, did not the Master gather His own to the true Pascal supper, and break for them the bread and pour the wine ?

Yes, in face of "the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth," He calls us to *a feast*. "Partake at once of a whole Christ: no time to be lost!" Our attitude in view of all that is coming, all that is now upon us, is to be one not of fear,

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but “ of power, and of love, and of a sound mind ” ; and it can only be so as we shelter for time and for eternity under the precious, precious blood of Christ, and draw strength and courage, moment by moment, from *His fulness*, which is all for us.

## HE CARETH FOR YOU

CUT off in a lonely Swiss valley, with the war raging near at hand in the great countries round us, we could not help wondering, at times, what would happen if supplies could no longer reach us from home. Our work detained us. We could not go to England with the rest, because the books and papers could not go with us ; and it was no question of leaving them. So, like Elijah by the brook Cherith, we knew we were shut in by the hand of God. But then, Elijah was a prophet, and ravens were sent to feed him. He did not have to depend on banks that could not cash their own cheques, or letters of credit no longer worth the paper they were printed on. And here we must stay all the winter.

Coming down to our little chalet from the dining-room one evening, my husband was surprised to find himself addressed by a

bright-looking, middle-aged woman of the peasant class, who was entirely unknown to him.

“Do you speak German?” was her question.

“A little,” he answered, wondering what was coming.

“Well,” she said, with the greatest simplicity, “I have a hundred and sixty francs for the China Inland Mission. Would it be wise to try to send it just now to Germany? It is for the Liebenzell branch of the work.”

*A hundred and sixty francs!* His breath was almost taken away. It proved that Frau Schmidt, the village nurse, had gathered this money among the people of the valley, walking long distances to receive surprisingly generous gifts, and distributing no fewer than a hundred and eleven copies, monthly, of the German *China's Millions*. This we had known nothing of; and the facts, as she told them, her face glowing with love in the Lord, brought such a surprise of joy to our hearts! But there was more to follow—a little bit of loving-kindness all for ourselves.

“I have been thinking,” this dear friend continued, “about you too. Is it not difficult to get money from England, on account of the war? Would it be any help to you

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to use this sum, and send a cheque for it to Germany or to China ? ”

She did not put it, perhaps, quite so clearly, but that was her meaning. And her desire to help *us*, to whom she had never spoken in her life before, was as plain as it was unexpected and precious. How it did rebuke our little faith ! “ I am poor and needy, yet *the Lord thinketh* upon me.” It was a song for many days.

Still more recently, going out for our daily walk, we passed a dear old couple, gathering in their hay. The work was too heavy for them ; but younger men were all at the frontier, and they had to do as best they could. We smiled across at them, and were going by, when the old woman beckoned to us. Grasping my hand, she said—

“ Are you not missionaries from China ? ”

“ Yes,” I answered. “ We cannot speak much German, but we love you.”

“ We *feel* it,” she said with emphasis.

And then, “ Isn’t this the missionary who spoke at our *Brüderdorf* some years ago ? ”

“ Yes, that was when we were living here before.”

“ I remember,” she said ; “ and I have never forgotten his words.” They had been

very few, and in unpractised German. " He spoke about, ' *Have faith in God.*' Yes, that was it. And it has made me stronger ever since.

" That was what we must remember now," she went on ; " and it was not so much *our faith* he spoke about, as *the faithfulness of God.*" Precious reminder ! how it cheered our hearts.

Going through the village another day, the Pastor met us ; a dear German-Swiss brother, of the " believing " sort.

" Have you any difficulty about staying on ? " he said. Most of the hotels were closing, though it was the middle of the season. " Is Herr Hari shutting up his Pension too ? If so, do come to us. We have rooms to spare, and you will be most welcome."

Another token for good, praise the Lord ! Yes, it is still true, " He careth for you."

And only the other Sunday, faith was once more strengthened. Outside a little chapel on a mountain road, we passed two old, old women seated on a bench.

" Has there been a service here to-day ? " we managed to enquire.

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“ Oh yes,” they responded, “ it is just over.”

“ Had you a preacher ? ”—for we knew the evangelist who generally came might have been called to the front.

“ No, no preacher to-day.”

“ But,” continued one of them (the older and so old and feeble-looking), “ *that* does not matter. A preacher is not necessary.” And she kindled with inward warmth and light. “ We can draw near to God just the same. Yes, alone in my little room at home, I can talk with God ; I can pour out my heart before Him. *He* does not leave us.”

All her men-folk, probably, had gone away—and how would it be possible to get through the winter ? But she was full of courage. “ I can talk with *God*. He does not leave me.”

“ Many that are first shall be last,” I thought as we went on our way, “ and the last first.” Oh, to be among “ the people that *do* know their God ” at this time, and so can be to His glory. For the eyes of the Lord still “ run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart,” however simple, “ is perfect toward Him.”

## TRIUMPH THOU BECAUSE OF ME

A SHEET of note-paper is lying before the writer, yellow with age, and soiled by long exposure to dust. On one side it looks just as though it might have been picked up after a riot—torn and marked by trampling feet. It is covered with small, fine writing in pencil, faint and almost illegible in some places; and what is written is unfinished. Found among quantities of unsorted papers, in boxes and packing-cases unopened for years, it is one of the treasures preserved for us, and given back to us now, as a Mission, in our time of need. The writing is Mr. Hudson Taylor's, and the paper bears no date.<sup>1</sup> It is given without abbreviation.

DEARLY-BELOVED BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST,—We are called at this time to be companions in tribulation, and in the

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<sup>1</sup> That it was written in the year 1870 is to be gathered from its reference to "the war now raging in Europe."

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kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. This year has been to many of us one of peculiar importance, and—while a year of many mercies and much blessing—has been a year of much trial. Our present position in China is most difficult. We know not what a day nor an hour may bring forth. Some of us have already passed through great excitement and danger ; we are all more or less exposed to it now ; and the strong probability is that we shall continue to be so exposed for some time to come. China's affairs are greatly complicated by the war now raging in Europe ; and who can even surmise what the end will be—here or there. We are, from our residence in the interior, much exposed. And, moreover, we are so scattered that we can neither confer together with ease, nor strengthen one another's hands and encourage one another in the Lord by conference. The difficult question has already arisen in some places, and may yet arise in others : ought we, in the presence of these dangers, for the time being to retire from our posts ? It is a question which any or all of us may be called upon to consider at any moment, and in circumstances widely differing one from another. And we *may* have very little time for consideration. Prompt decision one way or the other, immediate action, may become necessary. The difficulty of getting early and correct information may greatly embarrass us. And the timid fears of some who are faithful to us, and the mischievous desire to alarm, if they cannot injure us, on the part of others, may conspire to make our path very, very difficult and trying. Is it not specially needful, at such a time as this, to bear in mind *what* our strength is and *whence* our help

comes ; to remember *whose* we are, and why we are here : and this not only that our minds may be calm and unruffled (without which it will be impossible for us correctly to observe facts or to judge of our position), but that in the peculiar circumstances in which a Father's love and wisdom have placed us, for special and definite purposes, we may know how to influence *others*, how to finish the work He has given us to do.

I judge He is affording us now an opportunity, is giving us now a privilege, which unimproved may never recur, or improved may lead to good never to be undone. We are God's ambassadors, God's witnesses. God is glorified and His people are edified when we duly perform the duties of our position. And our spirit, our temper, the atmosphere in which we live, and the way in which we act, tell more powerfully on the dear converts around us than any words we may speak can do. We are often grieved at the small measure of holy boldness, of independence of circumstances, of resolute firmness *they* manifest. We deplore that they lean so much on outward circumstances and draw so little strength direct from the Almighty God. Can the stream rise higher than its source ? Shall we expect the disciple to be above his teacher ? We stand before the converts and before the heathen as teachers of the flock, as exponents of the faith. Let us seek by our spirit and life to show them how Christians should feel and act in trial and danger. There can be little doubt that ere long the position of the native Christians will be one of great danger and trial. It is evident that as the spirit and power of Christianity become manifest, and their tendency to overturn and sub-

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vert all opposed to them is seen, great and bitter persecution will result. *We* are now in trial and danger, and may *show them* what a Christian should feel and how a Christian should act under such circumstances.

May we not now seek to realise more fully ourselves, and to impress on them the blessed fact, that our God is the *living* God, the *Almighty* God—omniscient and omnipresent too—and that He does and is now doing as He pleases both among the armies of heaven and among the children of men. I think we shall find in the minds of some an almost total forgetfulness or want of realisation of these facts, and that others but very imperfectly apprehend them. Some who do so partially, seem to feel as if the Church were a boat in a storm—not, indeed, without a Helmsman and Pilot Who will do the best He *can* in the present unfavourable circumstances, and Who, we may hope, will eventually bring her through, and even overrule for good her present position. But how few remember that God *makes* circumstances; that He makes His own winds as well as uses them. How few realise that we are now in our present position just because He, who cannot err, sees that of all possible circumstances *these* are the ones most needed and best adapted to promote our good and His glory; sees that, of all possible boons, these circumstances are the best gift an all-wise and almighty God can bestow on us. Could we impress this *fact* on our minds—

*We* have to finish; to fill in what is unwritten. What shall it be?

“ We know that all things work together (lit. *are*

## TRIUMPH BECAUSE OF ME 57

*working together*) for good to them that love God. . . . 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? . . . Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

## IN ME—IN THE WORLD

WAR-CLOUDS hung over the closing year. The conflict that had been raging, month after month, in western Europe still dragged its weary length. The effects could not but be felt far and wide, and added to the terrible unrest with which missionaries, and indeed all foreigners, found themselves menaced in China. It was a time to try the strongest nerve, as well as the most settled faith ; and the workers of the Inland Mission were in a special way exposed to suffering and danger from their isolated positions, far from treaty ports or the possible protection of foreign powers.

But " His children shall have a place of refuge." There is protection better than that of any human arm. " In the world ye shall have tribulation," but " in Me . . . *peace.*"<sup>1</sup> " A world within the world," as a

<sup>1</sup> John xvi. 33.

beloved sister now in China, who had been through the dangers of 1900, put it. "We are not in tribulation, but *in peace* in tribulation. We are not in the world, but *in Him* in the world." And how this soul-possessing reality is needed *now*! As this troubled, terrible year passes away, and we enter on 1915, with all that it may bring, let us do so with a song of praise for this glorious certainty, "Lo, *I* am with you always" (lit. *all the days*, or *day by day*), "even unto the end of the Age"—the end that draws so near!

At the close of 1870, shortly after the deepest personal sorrow of his life, Mr. Taylor sent out the following letter to all the members of the mission. He was then in China; and the period, as we have seen, was strangely like the present. Is not the letter very much what he would write to us now?

CHIN-KIANG, *December 15th, 1870.*

MY DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS—Again, by God's providence, are we brought to the end of the year; and once more I am permitted to invite you to unite at the throne of grace, in confession, thanksgiving and supplication, ere we enter upon the new year, 1871. As heretofore, therefore, I suggest our setting apart the 31st inst. as a day of fasting and prayer.

The past year has been one in many ways re-

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markable. Perhaps every one of our number has more or less been brought face to face with danger, perplexity, and distress ; but out of all these the LORD has delivered us. And some of us, who have drunk more deeply of the cup of the Man of Sorrows than ever before, can testify that it has been a most blessed year to us, and can give God thanks for it. Personally, it has been alike the most sorrowful and the most blessed year of my life ; and I doubt not others have to a greater or less extent felt the same. We have *experienced* His faithfulness, His power to support *in* trouble, and to give patience *under* affliction, as well as to deliver *from* danger. And should greater dangers still await us, should deeper sorrows overtake any of us than we have known as yet, it is to be hoped they will be met in strengthened confidence in His faithfulness.

We have had great cause for thanksgiving in one respect : we have been so placed as to show to the native Christians that *our* position as well as theirs has been and may be again, one of danger and difficulty. And they have been helped, doubtless, to look from foreign power to *God Himself* for protection, by the facts that (1) the former has been felt to be uncertain and unreliable, both with regard to ourselves and to them ; and (2) that *we* have been kept in calmness and joy *in* our various positions of duty. And if we have in any measure failed to improve for their good this opportunity, or for ourselves have failed to *rest* in God's power to sustain in or protect from danger as He sees best, let us humbly confess this, and all our conscious failure, to our faithful and covenant-keeping God.

It is highly probable that the year on which we

are about to enter will be one of the deepest moment to us as missionaries to the Chinese, and especially as resident in the interior. We need to be instant in prayer to our God and Father, who alone is Governor of the Nations, to overrule all the political relations of western powers with China, for the furtherance of His cause and for the glory of His Name. And we need to bear ever in mind that, as *one with Him* to whom all power has been committed, all *our* affairs concern Him as much as, nay more than, they concern ourselves; and that as no man hates his own flesh, so the Lord Jesus *cannot* be unmindful of *His* body, of which we are members. This thought will give us quiet confidence, should we be brought again into circumstances of trial and danger, as it has before.

I trust that we are all fully satisfied that we are God's servants, sent by *Him* to the various posts we occupy, and that we are actually doing His work in them. *He* set before us the open doors into which we have entered; and in past times of excitement He has preserved us in our posts. We did not come to China because missionary work here was safe or easy, but because He called us. We did not enter upon our present positions under the guarantee of human protection, but relying on the promise of *His* presence. The accidents of ease or difficulty, of apparent safety or danger, of man's approbation or disapproval, in no wise affect our duty. Should circumstances arise involving us *apparently* in special danger, I trust we shall have grace to manifest the reality and depth of our trust in Him, and by faithfulness to our charges prove that we are followers of the Good Shepherd Who did not flee from danger or death;

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are true successors of the Apostle of the Gentiles, who was bold in his God, and did his work not fearing those who can kill the body only. But if we would manifest this calmness *then*, we must seek the needed grace *now*. It is too late to seek for arms and begin to drill when in presence of the foe.

I suggest one more subject for prayer ; and that is that God would supply us with all the funds He sees to be needed for our work. Our total receipts for last year showed only a deficiency of about two hundred pounds on the year before. But the ordinary receipts for general purposes (excluding special donations) amounted to little more than half the income of the preceding year. And up to the period of my last advices, the receipts for the present year (more than half of which has passed) have been *very much less* than those of last year. I need not remind you of the liberal help which in our need God has sent to us direct from donors ; nor of the blessed fact that He abideth faithful, and *cannot* deny Himself. If we are really trusting *in Him* and seeking *from Him*, we cannot be put to shame. If not, perhaps the sooner we find the unsoundness of any other foundation, the better. The mission funds, or the donors, are a poor substitute for the Living God.

I cannot conclude without expressing my grateful thanks for your sympathy with me in the removal of some of my dear children to England, and of others of them, and of my dear wife, to the Better Land. Mrs. Gough of Ningpo has kindly taken charge of my little Charles : may the Lord reward her. I would still ask for a continuance of your prayers, both for myself and for the children

now deprived of a Mother's care. If we are only kept in the secret of His pavilion, in the sunshine of His presence, we may learn in the midst of earthly desolation, as perhaps nowhere else, that in His presence there is fulness of joy. There is no *darkness* while we follow *Him*.

Praying that you all may enjoy much of His peace, and may experience much of His joy now, and may be daily preparing for the full blessings of His glory,

I remain, yours faithfully in Jesus,

J. HUDSON TAYLOR.

Forty-four years have passed since then, filled every one of them with goodness and mercy. Shall the year on which we now enter bring any change, any failure, in the faithfulness of God? Nay, verily! But it will bring us opportunities for *proving* His faithfulness, greater and more precious, perhaps, than any previous year has brought. What shall be our attitude toward them? Shall we regard them with fear and mistrust, shrinking from the trial of our faith, which He assures us is "much more precious than of gold that perisheth"; and which by His grace shall be "found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ"? Or, "compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses," forming as we do the rear-guard of God's great army—most

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of which has crossed the flood and joins already in the triumph song—shall we not “lay aside every weight, and . . . run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith ” ?

What are these . . . and whence came they ? . . . These are they that came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

They that are WITH HIM are called, and chosen, and *faithful*.

THE END

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