

‘LET NOT YOUR HEART
BE TROUBLED.’

**Is this Possible in
Days of Trial ?**

By J. T. MAWSON.

War Booklets, No. 4

TO THE READER.

This little booklet is issued specially for the comfort and help of those who have yielded themselves to the Lord Jesus Christ, and who consequently can say that He is their Saviour ; who can give thanks that He, the just One, suffered upon the Cross for them who were unjust, to bring them to God. Who can say that they have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Such can look forward to the future, also, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, for Jesus, who died for them, is their deliverer from the wrath to come, and He has said of all who are His by faith "They shall never perish," and "Where I am, there ye shall be also."

If you cannot speak with assurance as to these great matters, you may do so if you will give heed to the Saviour's call. He says "*Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*" (Matt. 2. 28). These gracious words surely apply to you, and never more so than now, in this hour of your need. Accept the Saviour's invitation, and do it now. Then every temporal and eternal blessing that God gives in and through Christ will be yours, and you will have a bright outlook beyond the gloom of these sad and cruel days. That you may do so is the prayer of the writer.

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“Let not your Heart be Troubled.”

“*Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED, NEITHER LET IT BE AFRAID*” (John 14. 2).

HOW is it possible to keep the heart from troubling when trouble is knocking at every door and peering through every window, and when tribulation and sorrow are rolling about us breast high? How, when we are sundered far from those we

love more than life, and know not how they fare? How, when cherished props are broken and useless, and earthly hopes have failed and fled, when the human arm upon which we leaned sustains us no more, and the heart from which we drew our sympathy lies dead and unresponsive to our cry? How can we be unafraid when black hatred and unholy strife are tearing with wolfish jaws not the flesh only, but the very souls of men, and all the foundations of the earth are out of course, and our Lord's promise to return seems so long of fulfilment? Can it be possible to keep our hearts from troubling in such sad days, and in such conditions as these, and to have no fear though the road be rough

and long, and the earthly outlook so appalling ?

It must be possible, for these words are the words of our Lord and Saviour, who can neither deceive nor disappoint us ; many, thank God, are proving how blessed is the possibility that His words disclose. We recently received a letter from a Christian Sergt.-Major in France. He closed his letter thus : “ It is now midnight and the guns are roaring fearfully, and the very place that I am writing this in is shaking ; but as I turn to the dear old Book, I read, “ My peace I give unto you,” and not only do I read it there, I prove it to be true in my own life.”

We also met a man at one of the great military depots at home.

He had had to leave behind a wife and family and comfortable home and enter military life, which was utterly distasteful to him, and, being of an extremely sensitive nature, he felt the change most keenly. Moreover, his drill sergeant was neither considerate nor polite, and he had come almost to the breaking point when on parade one day ; but at that moment he turned to the Lord Jesus, whom he had known as his Saviour for years, and cried silently to Him, “Lord, speak to me, for I cannot bear this any longer.” Clearly and distinctly, he told us, the answer came into his very soul, more real to him than the rough profanity of the drill sergeant : “*Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the*

world." That was all he needed ; a great peace settled upon his heart, and a sense of the Lord's presence, realized in the hour of his extremity, had remained with him ever since and enabled him to go through the hardships and the trials with joyfulness. And that peace that passeth all understanding, that no earthly circumstances can yield, may not only be known at the battle-fronts abroad and in the training centres in these lands, but also in the homes bereft for a while of husbands and fathers and sons.

We shrink from trials and difficulties, and often endeavour to escape them ; it were wiser to go to God for the strength and grace that shall enable us to meet them and go through them, for

then should we be more than conquerors through Him that loves us, and we should learn lessons of His goodness that we should never forget. We naturally love an easy life, but victories that history acclaims and that make names that live upon the lips of men for centuries, are not gained upon beds of sloth or in easy circumstances, but amid appalling privations and stern realities that put to the test the mettle and nerve and sinew of the warrior. Neither does faith flourish and win its triumphs in times of material prosperity, such times cause it to become shrivelled and flaccid ; but in rough days of trial and stress it revives, and thrives and grows strong and valorous. David's chequered

career yields striking proof of this. When his prosperity reached its flood-tide *he forgot God*, whose goodness had followed him all the days of his life, and he could not rest though he lay upon a curtain hung couch in a great palace. There his unsatisfied heart and restless eye led him into that foul sin that stained his name, and makes the enemies of the Lord blaspheme even unto this day. But in the darkest hour of his strange history, when his traitor son pursued him for his blood, and his only bed was the cold earth on the hillside, he could sing "*Thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of my head. I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and He heard me out of His holy hill. Selah. I laid*

me down and slept ; I awaked ; for the Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about" (Psa. 3. 3-6). So trial drives us to God, and "GOD IS" becomes the supreme factor in our lives if we are rightly affected by adversity.

If you are passing through trial you need the comfort of the Scriptures, and if you turn to them you will not be disappointed. A Christian soldier said to us, "I read the Bible now more than ever I did when in civil life, and I never open it without finding something that just fits me." So here are certain texts that we would ask you to consider. First, "*No chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous. Never-*

theless AFTERWARD it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down" (Heb: 12. 11, 12). It is the AFTERWARD, the result of the trial, that tells ; look on to that. This result does not hang in the balance, as may the result of some great battle that rages for days. It is assured to us, we only stand to gain if we are exercised by the trial. Many whom we have met have gained already ; they know God better now than they did before these terrible days came upon them, and the knowledge of God is better than broad acres and piles of gold. Then let faith rear its head in the storm, let it lay hold of God with a strong grip. Let it speak out with con-

fident voice and say, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.” Assured that if that be the end of the trial it shall be well, for He doeth all things well, and to have “lived by faith” and “died in faith,” like those great souls in God’s “Roll of Honour,” in Hebrews xi., is better than to have lived without purpose and “died without mercy.”

Take another beautiful passage, “For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, *yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth*” (Amos 9. 9). This passage has reference to Israel specially, but it may be applied to the present day. The true saints of God are the wheat, fair and priceless in His estima-

tion, and it is necessary that they should be put into the sieve, that they may be ridded of the chaff. Yet in the sifting not a grain shall be lost. God Himself will take care of even “the least.” What comfort there is in that!

The New Testament word for this sifting is tribulation—tribulare—to rub out corn. The tribulum was a wooden instrument fitted with iron spikes for rubbing out corn. And though tribulation cannot be anything but grievous to nature, yet we shall glory in it if God’s purpose in it lays hold upon us (Rom. 5. 3).

The sifting may come in various ways. In Peter’s case Satan was permitted to use the sieve, and in it the adversary hoped to destroy him, but the result of the

sifting was that he was freed from the chaff of self-confidence and boasting. A blessed result. The wheat remained uninjured. His faith did not fail (Luke 22. 32). But whether the sifting comes directly from Satan, or through the circumstances of these sad times through which we are passing, circumstances of separation from home, of sickness, pain, anxiety, bereavement, hunger, nakedness, peril or sword —none of these things can separate you from the love of Christ, and “GOD IS FAITHFUL, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able ; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (1 Cor. 10. 13).

And now back to the text with which we started. God intends that great good should come to you out of your trial, and will see to it that your faith in the trial shall remain undamaged ; but there is more, in the midst of it your Saviour and Lord desires that your heart should be unafraid and that His own peace should be yours. How can these things be ? The peace that He gives is His own peace, and He gives it not as the world gives. The world stands at the doors of its splendid mansions and dispenses its benefactions to the poor and distressed that gather at its gates, but these same poor do not enter the homes from which the good things come. They are not welcomed to the luxuries and the

warmth of the dwellings of their benefactors, they remain outside —aliens and strangers. But not thus does our Lord give His peace to us, and not thus could we know it. He opens the door of His dwelling to us, and bids us “Come and see.” And His dwelling is His Father’s bosom (John 1. 18) — the infinite, changeless, and Almighty love of His Father’s heart. He shows us that that is our home, the place of our rest. He shares it with us as those whom grace has made His friends (John 15. 15), and His brethren (John 20. 17). Can any trouble disturb the deep serenity of the Father’s bosom? Can earth-born storms create forebodings in the heart that dwelleth there? And this is

your refuge, dear Christian heart ; here you may rest in quietness and confidence, no matter how the storms rage about you. “The Father’s hand will never cause His child a needless tear,” and the knowledge of the Father’s love will preserve you from depression and fear ; in it you will find the Lord’s own peace, and you will be comforted. Put Him to the test. “*Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*”

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