

*The Dead that  
Die in the Lord*

A LETTER  
by  
J. T. MAWSON



# THE DEAD THAT DIE IN THE LORD

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*“ Precious in the sight of THE LORD is the death  
of His saints.”*

— PSALM 116: 15.

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*“ And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto  
me, Write, Blessed are THE DEAD which die in the  
Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that  
they may rest from their labours; and their works  
do follow them.”*

— REV. 14: 13.

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*“ Blessed are THEY THAT MOURN: for they shall  
be comforted.”*

— MATTHEW 5: 4.

**T**HE feminine pronouns are used throughout this letter as it was written to one who was sorrowing at the death of a Christian lady. But these may be changed to the masculine as it suits the case of the reader. It is published that "they that mourn" may be comforted.

# THE DEAD THAT DIE IN THE LORD



## The Lord's Portion

**I** AM going to link these three Scriptures together into a golden chain and give it to you in this dark hour. I want it to be a chain of love that shall bind your heart more closely than ever to the Lord Jesus, for I know that only thus can you find solid and lasting comfort. Put the Lord first even in your sorrow. Freely own that He had a prior claim upon the one you loved so well. Acknowledge that He had the right to take her to Himself, and have her exclusively for Himself since He had bought her with His own blood. It will simplify matters for you and greatly ease your grief if you begin with

THREE

this. It was a great shock to you when you found that for the first time in your life there was no response to the cry of your heart from her who was so dear to you. The ears were deaf to your words, the lips mute, and the form unmoved by your entreaty. It was an agonizing experience I know, but remember, that that which was such an unspeakable grief to you was precious in the sight of the Lord. It was blessed for Him to have His greatly-loved and blood-bought treasure in His own presence. He had loaned her to you for awhile (have you thanked Him for this?), and He left her in this lower world that the will of God might be accomplished in her life, and He had waited long for the hour when He would receive her to Himself, and when that hour came at last, it was blessed for Him.

You loved her greatly and **her life** was precious to you, but He loved her more and **her death** was precious to Him. If you can tell how much He loved her then you can tell how precious in His sight her falling

asleep was. Your love, sincere as it is, is human and faltering, and it can be told in human speech, His love is divine and eternal, and how shall it be told? It spoke in the sufferings of the cross. His blood shed for us there was the measure of His love, and love so amazing as His had the supreme right to the one you now miss so much. To own this will be relief to you.

I want you to think of this word. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of **His saints**." The word "saints" in this verse is a beautiful word. It means, of course, those who are set apart for God, but it means more than that; it means those who are characterized by **piety, grace and goodness**. Such, indeed, was your loved one, as I know right well. You loved her because she was lovable, but what made her what she was as wife, mother, sister and friend? Was it not first of all and most of all the grace of the Lord within her? You appreciated this, yet you could not **fully** appreciate all that she was in these beautiful Christian traits, but the Lord could and He

did, and when His work in her was completed, what could He do but receive her into His own presence? and her death was precious in His sight. She was like a flower that He had carefully watched and cultivated in His garden, she was fragrant to you, but, O, how fragrant to Him! And now He has taken her as He had a right to do.

In another Scripture, such as she was are spoken of as His jewels. "They are Mine," He says. You are glad that she was His, are you not? How bitter her death would have been for you if you had not known this; but now for her and for you —

"Death has no sting since Jesus  
died."

He rejoices over her now. She has come safely through all the vicissitudes of life, through all its trials and temptations! What a triumph this is for Him! How many times the devil has tried to snatch her from His hand we do not know, but this we know, that his every effort failed, as they must all



fail in regard to all who belong to Christ. The devil is baffled and beaten and the Lord is triumphant and glad. If you look at things from this standpoint you will see how precious to the Lord was the hour of her death. He has her safely home with Himself in heavenly glory, herself His prize and the fruit of His soul's deep travail, when He suffered for her upon the cross.

### **The Portion of the Dead**

But if the Lord's portion in her death is so blessed, what of hers? Only God's word can tell us this infallibly, and yet there is another witness that we cannot ignore, and that is the general experience of saints themselves. It is certain that the nearer they have come to their departure from this world the less they have feared death, and the deeper has been their peace and the fuller their joy. They have borne witness to the fact that as this life and earthly things receded from them their rest of heart increased

until it became too deep, too blessed to be described, and if they found this outside heaven's gates, what must they have found when they passed inside! This is no delusion, the witnesses are too many and too reliable for us to have any question as to it.

But we are not dependent for our knowledge of the blessedness of those who sleep in Jesus upon earthly voices, not even the voices of the dying but triumphant saints whom we loved so well; it is A VOICE FROM HEAVEN that speaks here, and what it says is recorded for us in the infallible Word of God. A voice from heaven where the dead in Christ have gone has declared that those that die in the Lord are blessed. And to this the Spirit adds His testimony, and says, "Yea, THEY REST from their labours."

Think of the portion of the one for whom you are mourning. She is at rest with her Saviour, with the One who said, "I will give you rest," and who never fails to fulfil His word. Could any companionship com-

pare with that that she now enjoys? Could any earthly joy equal the joy that is hers in the presence of her Lord? It was **good** for her to be here enjoying those natural relationships which are ordained of God, and your tender and loving care for her, and finding in Christian fellowship pleasure that the world does not give, but it is better to be with Christ, **far better** (Phil. 1: 23). It will be a comfort to you to dwell upon this. You considered her wishes and happiness when she was with you, and you laboured for her comfort, and she valued your care and love, but she needs these no longer. She has no need of any kind now, all the burdens and disabilities of this life that called for your care are over for ever; she rests from her labours; she is absent from the body and present with the Lord (2 Cor. 5).

We are not told more than this and we do not need to be told more; we know that in this life it is the companionship of those we love that really makes up life and yields

the greatest joy — possessions, pleasures, pursuits, do not touch or fill the heart, they do not satisfy, only love does this. And the one whom you loved so well is now with the One whom she loves best and who loves her more than ever you could; for the love of Christ passeth knowledge. She is with Him, and her joy is full. She loved Him because He first loved her, and He became more to her than any earthly relation or friend. Because of the supremacy of His love He had the supreme right to her; she owned His right when she gladly went to Him as a bride goes to her marriage, or as a weary traveller passes into his home. He is blessed in having her, and she is blessed in being with Him. Be comforted and rejoice in the thought of her blessedness and joy.

### **The Portion of Those That Mourn**

You will admit that it must be blessed for the Lord to have His redeemed people at home; and that it must be blessed for them

to be there with Him, for as in the new earth there will be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor any more pain, and all tears will be wiped from all eyes, so must it be now in the presence of the Lord. You have no doubt as to all this, but what of yourself? You have sorrow and tears enough, you have been left lonely and desolate; and what a desolator death is! Only those who have themselves stood bewildered and bereaved in the midst of the desolation know it, and what they know cannot be told in words. You hear the words of your friends, and they are sympathetic words, and are spoken for your consolation, but how cold the warmest of them seem to be. You feel that they do not understand what this means to you. There is a certain comfort in what they say, but it does not go far enough. You are grateful to them for their loving sympathy, but there is a depth within you that they cannot reach, and your sorrow lies in that unreachable depth. There is a secret chamber within your heart that the most intimate of your

friends cannot enter, and it is in that very chamber that this sorrow of yours has taken up its abode. Can there be any blessedness for you? Yes, for the Lord Himself has said, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." And He will make good His own word, even to you.

Your sorrow has made more room for Him in your life than ever there has been before; it has made you feel your need of Him as you never felt it before. He has never been far away from you. He is at your side now. He is waiting for you to admit Him into that secret chamber where your grief holds its sway. He would enter there that He might fill it with His own peace, the peace of His presence. He is the great Comforter, and He is this because He fully understands. Nobody else does. Your heart knows its own bitterness, and there are times when your best friends seem complete strangers to you, so little do they understand you and enter into your feelings, but it is not so with Him. He knows you through and through, He

understands, and because, He understands and knows all you are passing through, He can sympathize.

Think of broken-hearted Mary. She brought her sorrow to the feet of the Lord as He waited for her outside the town of Bethany. "If Thou hadst been here," she cried, "my brother had not died." Then she looked up into His face through her tears, and lo! JESUS WEPT. Was not she at that moment most blessedly comforted? She had known that He loved her before, but she had never known that He loved her like that. His tears were more eloquent than words, and she found that His sympathy was greater than her sorrow. He did not speak to her, but He kept close by her side, and you may be sure that it was true of her, then and there, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

And why has that incident been given to us in the Gospel that unfolds for us the glory of the Son of God? For your sake. What

He was for Mary, He is for you. You may realize that He who is the mighty God feels for you, that He enters into your grief, that He knows the aching in your stricken heart, and the silence in your bereaved home, and not only the silence of it but the shadow that has crept into every room of it, a shadow that seems sometimes as though it would overwhelm you or suffocate you. He knows all and knowing all, He desires to fill up your heart with His own comfort. He will not remove the sorrow as He did in Mary's case, but He will give you something greater than it — His own friendship and sympathy. He offers you the full knowledge of a love that death itself cannot spoil — His own love. He can make that love so real to you that you will discover that you can do without everybody and everything but Himself. Yes, neither father, mother, sister, brother, husband, wife, child, or friend, are indispensable to us, they have their place in our natural lives, and their place is a God-given blessed place while it lasts, but He is our life and will be our life



for ever. He is indispensable and He is all-sufficing. He is our joy unspeakable and full of glory. Without every other we may live, but without Him we cannot.

But, finally, we shall live with them. Look up, the day of glory is soon to break upon us with its gladness and rapture, for we are to be "caught up TOGETHER WITH THEM . . . so shall we ever be WITH THE LORD" (1 Thess. 4: 17). Then shall the last tear have dimmed our eyes, and we shall see each other clothed in the unfading, incorruptible beauty of the Lord, for we shall see Him and then we shall be like Him. (1 John 3).

You will please Him if you trust Him wholly, and as you trust Him and lean upon Him, so you will be blessed in your sorrow as no worldling ever was in his greatest joy; you will have your part in this three-fold blessedness:—

The blessedness of the Lord in the possession of the saints.

The blessedness of the dead that die in  
the Lord.

The blessedness of those that mourn.



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